



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

NORTHERN REGION
Design, Engineering and Construction

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Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-5388
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dot.alaska.gov

In Reply Refer To:

Richardson Highway MP 237-257 Rehabilitation
State/Federal Project Numbers: NFHWY00817/0714029
Geotech
No Historic Properties Affected
ATTENTION: This finding contains no (0) DOEs

July 10, 2025

Igor Zarembo
Mayor
City of Delta Junction
PO Box 1755
Delta Junction, AK 99709

*Panana
bridge - MP 275*
Delta Jct - MP 266
Landfill - MP 257.2

Dear Mayor Zarembo,

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has assumed the responsibilities of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under 23 U.S.C. 327 and is proposing to rehabilitate the Richardson Highway from milepost (MP) 237-257. Prior to rehabilitation, DOT&PF is proposing geotechnical testing at two existing material sites (MS 71-0-024-2 and MS 71-0-033-2) and one potential new material site (at Richardson Highway MP 236) (Table 1 and Figure 1).

Table 1. Project location

Material Site	Township	Range	Section(s)	USGS Quad Map1:63,360	Meridian
71-0-024-2	13S	10E	4	Mount Hayes D-4	Fairbanks
71-0-033-2	14S	10E	5	Mount Hayes D-4	Fairbanks
Proposed New MS	15S	10E	6	Mount Hayes C-4	Fairbanks

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by DOT&PF pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated April 13, 2023, and executed by FHWA and DOT&PF.

"Keep Alaska Moving through service and infrastructure."

Consultation for this project is being conducted in accordance with the 2017 *First Amended Programmatic Agreement... for the Federal-Aid Highway Program in Alaska*. The DOT&PF, acting as a Federal agency, finds that no historic properties would be affected by the proposed project pursuant to 36 CFR 800.4(d)(1), implementing regulations of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. This submission provides documentation in support of this finding, as required at 36 CFR 800.11(d).

Project Description

Project activities include (Figures 2 -4, and Attachment 1):

- Excavate 8 test holes and 7 test pits at MS 71-0-024-2
- Excavate 9 test holes at MS 71-0-033-2
- Excavate 10 test holes at proposed new material site at MP 236

Test holes will be drilled using a track mounted Central Min Equipment (CME) 850 drill rig with 6 1/2" diameter continuous flight hollow-stem augers and sampling with standard penetration tests (SPT) or split spoons on five-foot intervals to depths of approximately 35 feet below the ground surface. The CME weighs approximately 28,000 pounds with an average ground pressure of 2.9 PSI.

Test pits will be excavated with a John Deere 225D or similar sized excavator. Upon completion, test pits will be backfilled level to the original ground surface and organic material spread over backfilled area.

Access to test hole locations will be by ATV or on foot. Vegetation will be cleared with a chainsaw when necessary. When completed, test holes will be backfilled with cuttings or bentonite chips.

Area of Potential Effect (APE)

The APE for the geotechnical investigations is shown on Figure 1 (outlined in red) and encompasses each area of geotechnical testing at MS 71-0-024-2 (at MP 247.75), MS 71-0-033-2 (at MP 242), and the potential new material site (at MP 236). Proposed test pit and test hole locations are shown on Figures 2 through 4. Proposed test pits (TP) are shown in orange and proposed test holes (TH) are shown in green. The difference between test holes and pits is described above.

Identification Efforts

A search of the DOT&PF Northern Region Cultural Resources Library and the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey-Portal (AHRs Portal) database on June 30, 2025 indicated that there are no (0) AHRs sites within the APE.

The currently active areas of MS 71-0-024-2 were surveyed in 1980 (ALASKARCTIC 1980) and was described as "brown silt mantle overlying glacial outwash gravels." Surface examination and subsurface testing did not reveal cultural materials. The proposed expansion of this MS has not been investigated. There were no cultural resource survey documents found for MS 71-0-033-2 and the potential new material site at MP 236 has not been surveyed for cultural resources.

Since the areas selected for geotechnical testing have not been comprehensively investigated for cultural resources, a Monitoring and Inadvertent Discovery Plan has been prepared for this Project and an archaeological monitor will be present for all geotechnical testing (see Attachment 2). DOWL has been contracted to complete a desktop survey and a cultural resources survey of the main project area which extends from MP 237-257 of the Richardson Highway. The results of those survey efforts will be incorporated into the findings letter for this project. The DOT&PF believes that this effort is sufficient for this stage of the Project.

Finding of Effect

Given the information provided, and that there are no historic properties in the APE, DOT&PF seeks concurrence from the Alaska SHPO with a finding of **no historic properties affected** for the Geotechnical investigations portion of the Project under the condition that the geotechnical investigations are monitored by SOI-qualified individual(s) at all three existing or proposed material site locations.

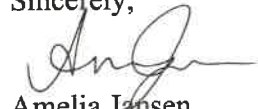
Consultation Efforts

Due to the limited nature of this geotechnical investigation, DOT&PF reached out to the DOT&PF Liaison in the SHPO office (see Attachment 3) to inquire whether it would be appropriate to submit a direct to findings letter for the geotechnical investigation portion of this project with the understanding that consultation for the project as a whole would be initiated at a later date once the project description was better developed.

The following consulting parties are being contacted regarding this project: the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO); The City of Delta Junction, Healy Lake Village, Mendas Cha-ag Native Corporation, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Doyon, Limited, and U.S. Army Garrison Alaska – Fort Greely.

If you wish to comment on this finding, please contact me at the address above, by telephone at 907-451-2273 or by e-mail at amelia.jansen@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,



Amelia Jansen
Environmental Impact Analyst
Archaeologist (PQI)
State of Alaska DOT&PF, Northern Region

Enclosures:

- Figure 1: Project Vicinity Map.
- Figure 2: MS 71-0-024-2 Preliminary APE.
- Figure 3: MS 71-0-033-2 Preliminary APE.
- Figure 4: Potential New MS Preliminary APE.

- Attachment 1: Drilling and Exploration Plan
- Attachment 2: Monitoring and Inadvertent Discovery Plan.
- Attachment 3: Conversation between DOT&PF and the SHPO office outlining procedures.

References:

Alaska Department of Natural Resources

2023 Office of History and Archaeology, Alaska Heritage Resources Survey, AHRS Portal.
<https://dnr.alaska.gov/ahrsportal>

ALASKARCTIC

1980 Archaeological Clearance Report for Material Site 710-017-2, Material Site 710-022-2, and Material Site 710-024-2 Richardson Highway Alaska.

ASRC Energy Services

2012 Richardson Highway MP 235 Ruby Creek Bridge #0594, BR0A1-2(3)/60262
Cultural Resource Report Donnelly, Alaska.

Electronic cc w/ enclosures:

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