



Glacier View Access External Scoping Report

Anchorage Field Office

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Background

Decision to Be Made

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is considering whether to authorize a 3.6 mile-long, 15-foot-wide gravel road right-of-way (ROW) for a thirty-year term to AK Remote Construction and if so, under what terms, conditions, and stipulations.

AK Remote Construction, LLC has submitted a ROW application for access along a combined total of 3.6 miles of roadway. This includes a recently constructed 0.4-mile segment and an additional 3.2 miles of existing road. The proposed ROW would follow a network of existing 4x4 and off-highway vehicle (OHV) trails and does not authorize the construction of any new roads or trails. Within the ROW corridor, AK Remote Construction would be permitted to remove downed trees, limbs, and brush as necessary to maintain safe passage. The ROW would be non-exclusive and remain open for public use.

In accordance with 43 CFR 2804.25, we are required to process ROW applications and conduct the appropriate National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis as outlined in 43 CFR 2804.25(a)(4).

The road would be used primarily for transporting construction equipment between private properties. In the event of an emergency at the property located in Section 34, the route could also be used for emergency evacuation purposes.

Key features of the proposal include:

- No new road or trail construction authorized
- Vegetation maintenance (e.g., pruning, removal of downed trees/brush) allowed within the corridor
- Non-exclusive ROW, remaining open to public use
- No gates or access restrictions permitted

Hunter Creek Crossing:

Because Hunter Creek is an **anadromous stream**, a valid **Fish Habitat Permit** from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game is required for the duration of the ROW. A current permit (valid through **December 31, 2025**) has been submitted and states: "No in-channel activities, including stream diversions, snow or ice bridges, bank modification, placement of fill, water withdrawal, or other in-channel structures were requested in your plans."

While erosion control measures such as water bars may be needed, the BLM is **not evaluating bridge construction** over Hunter Creek or the nearby Knik River side channel as part of this application.

External Scoping

The BLM conducts external scoping to gather input on issues of concern, refine the proposed action, and identify reasonable alternatives. This process can also uncover new issues, identify cumulative impacts from other foreseeable actions, and determine permits or surveys needed for the Environmental Assessment (EA) and consultation process.

BLM held a 30-day public scoping period from **February 24 to March 25, 2025** to collect feedback from the public and project stakeholders. The scoping period was hosted on the BLM's National NEPA Register page: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2036508/510>, which remains publicly accessible.

Notices were sent to landowners along East Justin Road and Buckshot Lane, as well as Eklutna, Inc., Eklutna Village, CIRI, Inc., Matanuska-Susitna recreation groups, the Mat-Su Borough Parks and Recreation Department, and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Issue Collection and Analysis

Outreach

During the scoping process, the BLM received multiple requests to broaden public outreach for this project. In response, future public outreach efforts—including the distribution of this scoping report—have been expanded to include the residents of Phoenicia Circle, S Berut Road, S Byblos Road, S Sidon Road, S Batroun Road, S Tyre Road, S Tripoli Road, and Ed Rush Road. Additionally, outreach will include the Chickaloon Village Traditional Council (CVTC), the South Knik River Community Council (SKRCC), the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG), the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), the State of Alaska Public Access Assertion Team, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and any private parties who participated in scoping and requested to be added to the mailing list.

Issue Category Development

The BLM received 111 responses via the project website, email, phone, and postal mail during the external public scoping period. The BLM reviewed responses to identify the issues raised and categorized these issues into similar topic categories. BLM will use the issue categories to assist with the development of alternatives and the effects analysis in the EA. The following 11 issue categories were identified:

1. Noise
2. Increased traffic
3. Anadromous stream
4. Riparian areas, erosion, and water pollution
5. Wildlife
6. Subsistence
7. Recreation
8. Visual Resource Management

9. Unauthorized use
10. Public access
11. Tree and vegetation removal and fuel loading

Responses Received During Scoping

Table 1 presents the general issue category and captures the sentiment that pertains to each issue category. While only a few representative comments per issue have been included in Table 1, each comment receiving during scoping has been recorded and considered.

Table 1: Responses Received During Scoping

Issue Category	Representative Sentiment
Noise	<p>The “construction and use of the road” would “reduce the area’s natural beauty and tranquility,” which is important to “quality of life” and the area’s “rural character.”</p> <p>There would “be an increase in audio disruption of the natural soundscape” which would affect the “outdoor experience.”</p> <p>BLM should analyze changes to the soundscape, evaluate noise pollution, and share that information with the general public. The effect of increased traffic over a full thirty-year term is of “great concern.”</p>
Increased traffic	<p>“Higher traffic volumes would degrade air quality, increase noise pollution, and create safety hazards for local children and residents.”</p> <p>“Increased traffic, noise, dust, and potential safety risks from heavier vehicle use would disrupt our daily lives, endanger my children, and degrade the tranquility we value.”</p> <p>There is concern that this area will resemble similar access point to the Knik River area and become “overrun by vehicle vandalism, broken glass and nails embedded in the sand from countless drunken parties. Piles of gun shells next to exploded propane tanks, toilets, refrigerators or anything else one can drag out in a truck to destroy including setting fire to the vehicles themselves.”</p>

<p>Anadromous stream</p>	<p>"The proposed ROW crosses Hunter Creek which is a known area where anadromous fish traverse. Heavy equipment and repeated crossings by vehicles will damage the creek bed. Salmon numbers are already in decline in this area."</p> <p>"...this ROW will cross Hunter Creek twice, disturbing a protected area where anadromous fish spawn each year. These fish are vital to our ecosystem, and their protection should be a priority."</p> <p>"The proposed right of way will cross salmon spawning habitat at multiple points... an increase in traffic through salmon habitat by commercial sized equipment will be detrimental to habitat health for salmon."</p> <p>"While walking back there in late September and October you can see many salmon swimming up the streams and creeks. There are also many eagles up in the trees just waiting for their feast. It is very important to me that we protect these salmon habitats and conserve this area for generations to come. Please consider the irreversible damages that can happen if more damage and pollutants are brought back to this area."</p>
<p>Riparian areas, erosion, and water pollution</p>	<p>"Anyone who has traversed this area knows that there are many braiding creeks and streams. Putting a road will have a significant environmental impact on the surrounding creeks and streams potentially polluting the water and causing harm."</p> <p>"This ROW will undoubtedly destroy vital riparian areas along the Knik River and Hunter Creek, causing significant disruptions to the local ecosystem. These areas are crucial for maintaining the health and balance of our natural surroundings, and their destruction will have far-reaching consequences."</p> <p>"While [Hunter] creek may appear narrow in winter (10-15 feet wide at the Section 29 crossing), it expands to 60-70 feet in the summer and floods parts of the trail."</p> <p>BLM should take a "hard look" at impacts to all species in the sensitive riparian areas, consider a no action alternative, seasonal or time limited use, and low ground pressure vehicles.</p>

<p>Wildlife</p>	<p>“Besides disturbing the fish population, heavy equipment and other motorized vehicles will negatively impact the wildlife in the area (moose, bear, lynx, water fowl, etc).”</p> <p>There are many “nesting birds” as well as “migratory birds” in the region, and the area is “a heavily used flyaway corridor and refueling stop for many, many avian species.”</p> <p>“The Knik River valley is an extraordinary place with extraordinary wildlife and scenic values. We have enjoyed viewing hundreds of swans return to the Knik River valley every spring, watched salmon feed on salmon carcasses and watched bears, wolves and Dall sheep, among many other waterfowl and wildlife sightings.”</p> <p>“...BLM must take a hard look at how each of these species could be affected by the proposed action during their annual lifecycles, which may include spawning, breeding, nesting, staging, calving, rearing, hibernation, foraging, sporing, and other crucial components of their life cycles.”</p>
<p>Subsistence</p>	<p>“ BLM should also consider what impacts such development may have on sport and subsistence hunters who participate in such opportunities on these public lands.”</p> <p>“The proposed ROW will necessarily cross salmon spawning streams, cross under eagle nests, and disrupt the moose and bear habitat which many of the residents rely upon for subsistence.”</p>
<p>Recreation</p>	<p>There are many diverse user groups who recreate in the area year round: fat bikers, hikers, runners, dog walkers, skiers, skijorers, ATV/OHV users, hunters, trappers, fishermen, boaters (kayaks, canoes, packrafts, air boats, jet boats), snowmachiners. Additionally, an outfitter “uses this route daily to transport their customers with highway vehicles to boats on the Knik River to be shuttled to the glacier via jet boat and airboats.”</p> <p>“What steps will be taken in order for back country users... to access and safely cross this road”?</p> <p>“Any actions to restrict or exclude the public’s access to public lands where they recreate is at odds with the intent of the designated Knik River Public Use recreation area... BLM should ensure that the proposed ROW is not given priority over other public uses of these lands.”</p>

<p>Visual Resource Management</p>	<p>“Protect the natural beauty in this part of the Knik River Public Use Area that belongs to all of us... This area should be placed in a conservation for future generations to enjoy. As a young person that lives in this area it has been nice to grow up in such a beautiful and peaceful place.”</p> <p>“During my visits, I have been fortunate to explore and appreciate the region’s unspoiled beauty, abundant wildlife, and fragile ecosystems... one of the many reasons I love to return to this specific area... it is so beautiful and untouched.”</p> <p>“We chose this area because of the quiet, beauty, and friendly neighborhood.”</p>
<p>Public Access</p>	<p>“Any authorization by BLM for this route should not give any person or entity the right to restrict or control other uses of this route. If the ROW is issued, there should be no right provided ... to construct or maintain this route in any way that would inhibit or restrict other uses of the route. It should remain a fully non-exclusive public use route/road/trail.”</p> <p>“The proposed access road traverses through existing trails within the Knik River Public Use recreation area, that are currently used by the public for recreational purposes.”</p>
<p>Unauthorized use</p>	<p>BLM is aware of the “construction of a road...to access private property in Section 34 without proper approvals,” “the creation of a switchback road through densely forested public lands, an area once steep and impassable, all carved out by excavators,” the “un-permitted 30+ ft wide trail across BLM land to access their land, and the “requests [that] have been made [to BLM] to return the land for this 1/4-mile road to its natural state.”</p>
<p>Tree and vegetation removal and fuel loading</p>	<p>BLM is also aware that the unauthorized construction “removed significant trees and substantially modified public lands without permission.”</p> <p>...after cutting the timber, the company discarded it in large piles of slash material, creating a significant fire hazard for the area. This negligent action poses a direct risk to public safety, wildlife, and surrounding ecosystems.”</p>