



NENANA TOTCHAKET Listening session

Monday, December 12, 2022 6p.m.

Meeting Facilitators

DOT&PF:

Jocelyn Swindel - Commissioners Office

Danielle Tessen - Commissioners Office

Michael Lund - Construction Chief

Department of Fish and Game:

Tony Hollis - Wildlife Biologist

Mark Nelson - Wildlife Biologist

Department of Natural Resources:

Curtis Knight - Natural Resource Manager 1 (Agriculture)

Erik Johnson (Moe) - Natural Resource Specialist

Lorraine Henry - Commissioners Office Communications

Timothy Shilling - Natural Resource Manager (Land Sales)

Community Partner:

John Baker

Meeting Rules Established by Community:

1. Respect, be kind.
2. For everyone to be heard.
3. No interrupting

4. Listen before you speak.
 5. See all perspectives.
 6. Be open minded.
 7. Speak loudly.
 8. No belittling, be positive.
 9. Time limit, but everyone needs to opportunity.
 10. Video is allowed, unless unwanted by speaker.
 11. State name & who you are.
-

Meeting Opener:

John Baker - Opening Remarks

Kat McElroy - Opening Remarks: Talking Stick Introduction.

Whoever has the talking stick gets to speak, we won't interrupt.

Meeting Opener:

Jessica Shaw - Ground rules established by community

Rules established by community, that we all agree too.

Marylin Duggar, Kat McElroy & Jessica Shaw - Meeting Ground Rules Facilitators

State Agency Introductions

Listening Session Remarks from the community:

Speaker: Lived in community for some time and has interest

in project. I think it would be good for community to share STIP information,

how this project came about and what the history is. I looked at the current

STIP, and didn't see this project listed? Are there other projects in the

works, can that information be shared here? Agriculture lands: Community

doesn't separate different areas, who can be the project liaison? Is any

community member willing to be part of this team to express concerns and be

part of the project? Can the community be provided with a timeline and history

of how this project came about. Is the longterm goal for this road to be extended to Nome?

Speaker: Spoke with Jocelyn Swindel last night regarding plans for the road to be extended to Nome and if it involved in this project. What are the future plans that isn't being communicated?

Speaker: Since the current road was built, there has been a lot of change. Trash, unauthorized hunters leaving remains behind, hunters using ATVs, unauthorized signage, airboats disrupting waterways. Hunting in the area should be for Nenana community members.

Speaker: I grew up in the Nenana community, we could live off land with hunting, fishing and farming in years past. Since the road and bridge were built, I haven't been able to live off land like years before. I spend most days picking up trash, and often hear outsiders fighting. People have lived off this land for thousands of years, this won't stay that way if the new road is built. We have not been told publicly on why this road is being built. We have been told there is economic interest, such as gas and coal that hasn't been communicated to the public.

Speaker: I don't support road project, community members who live off land will not be able to continue. Logging sales on the Kantishna River has already started and building this road will open this up even more. These lands have trees that are 150 years old, and I want to see if stay this way. If the project happens or future plans are made, I want to see the community be part of the planning and project. I also have questions on how

this road is affecting agriculture.

Speaker: I am currently a farmer in community, our counts are small compared to lower 48. This year across the state, farming supplies are high in various parts of the state, some places three times higher. I supply many community members with farming, and food supply may need to come from outside the community. I have a question for Fish and Game: In Palmer, are there more moose than in the bush?

· Tony Hollis (Fish and Game): I am not familiar with Palmer, but that moose uses the ag projects in Delta. We can provide more information at a later date in our FAQs.

Speaker: When I first heard about the new project, my initial fear was farming, nothing is stopping someone from buying land to farm. I came to Nenana to make a living, and it's not like the lower 48 here in Nenana. Here in Nenana, you can live off land. I feel that decisions are being made, and the community is not being involved. This is taking away from community members way of living.

Speaker: I moved to Nenana to farm, and I want to see it Nenana developed and the new road to be built. If we are going to produce food and hunt, we need economics. Currently, stores won't buy my product unless I can commit to providing enough produce long term. I understand hunting concerns, so how do we fix it? The state is selling land so Alaska can survive.

Speaker: I am a lifelong community member of Nenana; I think the road will benefit the economy.

Speaker: I moved to Nenana in 2003, and my wife grew up in Tanana. When the road to Tanana was built, it made it possible for my wife and family to travel airfare cost were too expensive. I understand hunting concerns, and we need to find a solution. I would like to come back to the Nenana community, but hearing arguing at the last meeting was hard. My hope is all members of this community can work to understand everyone's point of view.

Speaker: I have recently started farming and believe this is good for the wildlife. As far as logging, I would like to see wood to go to use instead of burn in a wildfire. I am concerned that enough hay is not being produced to feed my farm, and we need to make changes to keep our farms moving forward.

Speaker: I support agriculture, living off hunting and fishing in Alaska, local farming, and I think furthering development is a great idea. I agree with other community members, that people are now coming to hunt in our community and not respecting that land, as a community we need to find a solution.

Speaker: I love Nenana and the community here, seeing the way the last meeting went was disappointing and our community is better than that. I would like to see the community to work together to build future that works for everyone. I have heard concerns from both sides, and they both have pros and cons. I don't think it is the mayor's job to make the final decision on these kinds of things and all voices should be heard. I connected with various community members regarding this project, we established a better meeting format, so everyone's voice is heard.

Speaker: I can see both sides, I am currently a heavy equipment operator and helped build the existing road. My son shot his first moose over the bridge, now I don't visit area because it is so overpopulated. I see benefits from both sides, and I believe small businesses could benefit but living off the land seriously affected from this project. I do think it is important that we hear from both sides and get the correct information out to community. I believe it is so important that the community should have input.

Speaker: I grew up on the Kantishna, my interest is for environmental, hunting and fishing. I have heard there is 15 million currently funded for this project, with the possibility for another 15 million to be added. I'm having a hard time to understand why the road needs to be extended all the way to the Kantisha, when you only need additional 5 miles. I understand improving the existing road, but why is the additional 20 miles of road needed? Fish and wildlife counts are already low, if the extension of the road is built more boats will be running and counts will decrease.

Speaker: I am from Fairbanks, growing up I fished on Gulkana and Klutina rivers. I am new to farming, and am learning as I go. I have seen numbers decrease; farmers now need supplemental income to get by. Climate and food needs change, anyone with funding can choose the way they would like to make changes. Currently, wildlife cannot support all of Alaska, and we can't rely on imported farming.

Speaker: I feel for community members who have had to take

care of hunting abuse. I worked for big corporations, and I don't feel like they are interested in our land. If the road is constructed, the amount of production that can be grown could be increase.

Speaker: I am from Nenana, and I left for school to study natural resource management. My biggest concern is, what is the return on investment for this road? What else is being planned that is not being shared with us? We need more honesty from the state when planning occurs. In order to survive in this land, we need the ability to produce more. As far as food sources being brought in, like the discussion around bison, are we thinking about things that work with this land? I also feel that we need more soil studies before the road is built. With 23 different farm conservation plans, what tools and factors are members using when planning their farms? We need biodiversity, and I feel that fish and game has failed in regard to our land.

Speaker: I have lived in Nenana since 2008, I think this road is a good idea. When the exsisting road was built, I began hunting in the area and the moose counts were good. However, when the second drill pad was implemented is when I saw things change. There are certainly challenges with the extension of the road, but we can cater to that. Up the Nenana River there are logs ready to harvest, and you would not know that unless you are able to go there. They have done a good job maintaining the forest, and the road gave me better access to go hunting.

Speaker: I am a lifelong Nenana resident. This project is not new, my grandfather wrote a letter in 1921 about the land and what it could handle. Eva has done a lot of work and is a great resource for what is possible

for the land. I would like to see us get along, and work together to make these decisions. I believe we can learn a lot from those who have studied this land and should take that into consideration.

Speaker: I have trapped down the proposed road and my father had a native allotment in that area. I was concerned when Doyon went through the area, and I can see where trapping in the area is hard especially when you don't have all of the information on upcoming plans. There is a lot of tradition there, but my family and I had to leave Nenana in the past to find work.

Speaker: I bought the Trapper Creek Farm and have only been here a year. I am a logger, trees are a renewable resource, they age, and they need to be cut down. DNR does a good job monitoring the land in this area for lumber which is a good resource. One thing we can't stop is growth, but the trash bothers me too. With time, if we police our own neighbors, we can figure that out. With substance living, that is good thing, but our community and families are growing, and we need more resources. I am for the road, there is a lot of talk about jobs that could come from this, and we have to take the next steps.

Speaker: I have been here 25 years, I spend a lot of time on the trails. I fell in love with the community and the wild country that we have here in Nenana. It takes an army of people to put in trails and we must work together. I've put in the trapline trails, and I have helped to maintain and open up trails which took a lot of time. I was upset when I put in the

trail that became drill rig roads, but this is our life. I, like many of you, live a substance lifestyle and wish to keep my family here. We maintain these trails, and the open country is nice but it is 2022 and this is Alaska. I am 100 percent for development, I've seen it done responsibly when the bridge was put in and with the lumbar trails. It can be done, and we can police ourselves.

Speaker: Please, no Round up.

Speaker: Thank you to Scott and four of his students from FFA for attending. I appreciate how we are sitting around here talking today respectfully and are setting the example for these students. Thank you.

Speaker: After the meeting at the school, I heard DOT did work out to Kantishna. After our last meeting, that was the first time I had heard the road would be going all the way to Kantishna. I am in support of the 12 mile road, I Love outdoor activities, and the state needs to be protected. We have untouched land that is our best resource. Community members can visit culture lands where others can't. Can a DOT employee explain why the road is going all the way to Kantishna and tell us more about the survey?

Mike Lund (DOT&PF): DOT&PF is in position to provide access for an agriculture and food source needs. Right now, we have the ability to improve the current 12 mile road and extend the road with input from the community. Before we can start this process, this involves survey work to learn more about the project.

Danielle Tessen (DOT&PF): This project was broken into two phases when we heard the community feedback. Your voice matters, we were

first going to do this project in one phase and after hearing concerns we changed that.

Speaker: It is hard to say which is the best when circumstances are different. My family lost a trapping line to the state. Our fish counts can be affected by various locations and countries. There is a lot of resources here on our lands.

Speaker: We need a process for community members to have a voice in development.

Speaker: I have been following the core permit and the project website, there may be new information that only phase 1 is included?

John Baker (Community Partner): Phase 1 is fixing existing road, phase 2 is separate and DOT&PF wants to hear from community.

Speaker: Can you speak to the permit for phase 2?

Mike Lund (DOT&PF): We broke this project into phases because we heard from community. We will not start work until we do more public outreach. For permit clarification, it is easier to permit the entire project and make changes later.

Speaker: I am contracted as civil engineer; core of engineers will not allow for phases when submitting the permit. It must include entire project when applying. It is then up to DOT for Construction and a timeline.

Speaker: Can you prove wetlands permit timeline, and is there a comment period or did it already close?

Marylin Duggar: Do we feel like everyone was heard?

Closing Remarks:

John Baker: If the communities are willing to participate in projects, for their community then the goal is met. I am proud to be part of a project that is community owned, and DOT&PF can support.

Media Contact:

Danielle Tessen

danielle.tessen@alaska.gov

