

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

DIVISION OF PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

OFFICE OF HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

EI- 13273
SARAH PALIN, GOVERNOR

550 W. 7TH AVENUE, SUITE 1310
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501-3565
PHONE: (907) 269-8721
FAX: (907) 269-8908

September 24, 2007

File No.: 3130-1R Surface Transportation Board

SUBJECT: Northern Rail Extension, Eielson Air Force Base (North Pole) to Fort Greely (Delta Junction), Alaska; State of Alaska Field Archaeology Permit 2006-08

Victoria Rutson
Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
Office of Economics, Environmental Analysis and Administration
Washington, DC 20423

Dear Ms. Rutson,

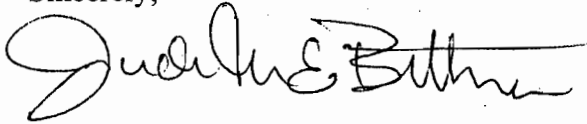
The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) received your letter and the attached report titled *Results of the 2006 Cultural Resource Survey of Proposed Alaska Railroad Northern Rail Extension Routes and Ancillary Facilities, Alaska, Volumes I and II* by Northern land Use Research, Inc. (December 2006) on August 23, 2006. We have reviewed the report and find that it meets the requirements of the State of Alaska Field Archaeology Permit.

We also reviewed the report in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and offer the following comments in regard to identifying historic properties in the area of potential effect:

1. We agree that the prehistoric sites are eligible for the National Register under criterion D.
2. We need more information on the cabins and other historic features before we can concur that they are not eligible for the National Register. They should be evaluated under their historic context (for example, 20th century trapping in interior Alaska). If a cabin has lost historic integrity due to recent modifications, then these changes should be described. Also, keep in mind that a collapsed cabin may still be eligible under criterion D.
3. Be sure to evaluate properties that may be indirectly affected by this project. Examples include the agricultural landscape near Delta Junction and Eielson Air Force Base as well as the Trans Alaska Pipeline System. Both features are in close proximity to the rail corridor and must be evaluated for eligibility prior to an assessment of effects.
4. The photographs in the report appear to be black and white photo copies and are difficult to decipher. Future report submissions should have higher quality figure reproductions.

Please consider these comments when requesting our concurrence on the Surface Transportation Board's findings of eligibility and effect (36 CFR 800.4 and 800.5). You may contact Stefanie Ludwig (269-8720) or Doug Gasek (269-8726) if you have any questions or if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Judith E. Bittner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Judith" being more prominent.

Judith E. Bittner
State Historic Preservation Officer

JEB:sll