

Rec'd 12/12/05

EI-1847



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, ALASKA
P.O. BOX 6898
ELMENDORF AFB, ALASKA 99506-0898

DECEMBER 06 2005

Regulatory Branch
North Section

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

Dear Ms. Rutson:

Thank you for your October 12, 2005, letter inviting us to be a cooperating agency in the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Alaska Railroad Corporation's proposed new rail line between Eielson Air Force Base and Fort Greeley, Alaska. We agree that portions of the proposed project could affect waters of the United States under our regulatory jurisdiction, and thus would require Department of Army (DA) authorization pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and/or Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899.

We are willing to be a cooperating agency in the preparation of the EIS, provided a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is jointly prepared and scrupulously followed that clearly documents our respective expectations, roles, and responsibilities, with the emphasis placed on producing a quality document, rather than meeting an estimated and inflexible schedule. One of our expectations would be that the final EIS contain sufficient information for us to make a permit decision, particularly the information required to determine compliance with the Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines (40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 230) and our public interest review (33 Code of Federal Regulations Part 320). The goal would be to ensure that our review process is integrated and concurrent with the EIS to the fullest extent possible in accordance with 40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 1502.25.

We look forward to working with you on the preparation of the MOA. Our point of contact in this effort will be Ms. Christy Everett. You may contact her by email at christy.a.everett@poa02.usace.army.mil, by phone at (907) 474-2166, by FAX at (907) 474-2164, or by mail at 3437 Airport Way, Suite 206, Fairbanks, Alaska, 99709-4777.

Sincerely,

Steve Meyers
Chief, North Section