



# Ambler Road Environmental Impact Statement

Wiseman Public Scoping Meeting

## MEETING NOTES

November 17, 2017

Wiseman Community Center, Wiseman, Alaska

## Project Team Participants

Bureau of Land Management (BLM): Laurie Thorpe

HDR: John McPherson, Katherine Wood

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G): Audra Brase

National Park Service (NPS): Linda Hasselback

## Public Participants

Approximately six people attended the meeting.

## Meeting Purpose

To share information about the BLM's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process, and to gather input from the public.

## Meeting Topics

### 1. Introductions by Laurie Thorpe, BLM

Laurie Thorpe introduces the project team participants. Tim La Marr was not present during this meeting.

### 2. Presentation by Laurie Thorpe, BLM

#### ***Background***

Laurie has worked with BLM out of the Anchorage office for 10 years, and is the Project Manager for this project. The purpose of today's meeting is to share information about the BLM's EIS process, and to get input from the local communities. Without that input, the EIS process will not be effective. Public input about issues and concerns is very important. Attendees are welcome to mark on the maps any areas of concern. We will take those back with us. We also have a second set of maps to leave here for your use.

## **Project Background**

In the 1950s, mineral exploration efforts discovered significant mineral resources on the south side of the Brooks Range. In the 1980s, the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) was established. Congress passed the law recognizing the mineral potential in the Ambler Mining District and the need for transportation access. Section 201(4)(b) directs the National Park Service (NPS) to authorize a surface transportation route through Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve, but there is no mention of the BLM in that language. We are not required to authorize access, but we do have to respond to the application for right-of-way. In 2009-2010, the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) began evaluating multiple road and rail routes that could provide access to the Ambler Mining District. Some of you were probably involved in those meetings, and participated in scouting out some of those routes.

## **Comment from Jack Reakoff**

There have been no meetings until now with this community on this road. DOT has totally bypassed any kind of public comment from this area. In 2013, project ownership was transferred from DOT&PF to Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA).

## **Question from Annette Burroughs**

So is AIDEA a state agency?

## **Response from Joy Huntington, AIDEA**

It's a quasi-state agency and quasi-corporation. They aren't funded through General Funds. They actually invest in projects around the State, different infrastructure projects like the Red Dog Road, a shipyard in Ketchikan or Skagway. They invest in projects, and those projects pay them back over the life of the project. They finance using their initial seed money that they were created with, and then they get money back from projects. They have already been paid back for the Red Dog Road. Their profit, they give a dividend back to the State of Alaska so it's kind of the opposite from using General Funds. They do receive oversight from the governor's office. The governor appoints members on their board. There is an Alaska Native on their board currently. Russell Dick is from the southeast. AIDEA is the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority. They are kind of like an investment bank arm of the State. The State can invest in projects where infrastructure is needed. One of the best neutral examples is the Fed Ex hangars in Anchorage. FedEx is a high need in the state with all the shipping, but Fed Ex couldn't afford to finance the hangars on their own so AIDEA actually financed them and, I believe, owns them. Typically they'll own the project as well and then that opens the project for private financing mechanisms and private ownership, which is different from public ownership, public domain, which is a key part in this project as well. FedEx pays AIDEA back to use the hangars. That's a good example of a need in the State that gets financed by AIDEA that may not otherwise be possible just using public dollars or private industry doing it themselves.

**Question from Heidi Schoppenhorst**

Who are the stakeholders in the investment contract? If it's the State of Alaska is it the people of Alaska?

**Response from Joy Huntington, AIDEA**

So by stakeholder you are asking who is to benefit from AIDEA's projects? Their board is appointed by the governor. But AIDEA's work benefits the State. The mission statement is to create jobs, promote economic development for the residents of Alaska. Sounds like it would be a good idea for AIDEA to come out to Wiseman. By financing projects and earning money back, they pay that money to the State through dividends.

**Response by Katherine Wood, HDR and John McPherson, HDR**

Some money that AIDEA makes goes to the General Fund. Basically Alaska residents own AIDEA.

**Question from Heidi Schoppenhorst**

They don't get to vote on who the stakeholders are? Or who the board members are?

**Response by John McPherson, HDR**

The governor decides who the board members are so if you don't like the board or the decisions they're making, then you need to change the governor.

**Question from Jack Reakoff**

My question about AIDEA, before they built hangars, before they built the Red Dog mine, did those companies have to commit to using those facilities? Are they in legal binding obligation?

**Response from Joy Huntington, AIDEA**

I don't want to get too far out of my direct knowledge base. It is my understanding that the AIDEA board at the end has to look at the project's feasibility from both an economic and environmental standpoint, and get approval from the regions through the Northwest Arctic Borough. The governor is going to form a committee to make a decision on the eastern side, because there's not an organized borough on this side. But because of that and the AIDEA board, the project has to pencil out financially for them to do it. Typically they don't invest in projects where there is an ambiguous return. So my assumption would be, yes, they have to have agreements in place.

**Additional Response from Katherine Wood, HDR**

AIDEA does have lease agreements and formal contracts. Like with Fed Ex, they have a contract that sets the lease rate and the terms and conditions.

**Question from Heidi Schoppenhorst**

Where does their investment money come from?

**Response from Katherine Wood, HDR**

When AIDEA started, there was initial seed money from the State of Alaska. I'm not sure how much and when exactly that happened. They've developed projects, and over time that funding amount has grown. So as they have made money some of that goes back to the General Fund, and some of it they keep so the board can use those funds to invest.

**Question from Heidi Schoppenhorst**

So the State of Alaska Finance Committee would have had to approve their original start up?

**Response from Katherine Wood, HDR**

The Legislature probably—you should go look for that. A lot of people have been asking “who is AIDEA? What are they doing?” They're not a commonly known part of our state government but they are. In 2015, AIDEA submitted an SF-299 application requesting right-of-way for the road. In 2016, AIDEA spent the first half of the year responding to requests for additional information from the application recipients (BLM, NPS, U.S. Coast Guard [USCG], and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers [USACE]).

**Question from Annette Boroughs:**

Do we know the entities that are prompting AIDEA to do this? Who asked for the road? Who is behind AIDEA wanting to go out there and saying, “We need a road, get us a road”? Who is asking AIDEA to build this road?

**Response from Katherine Wood, HDR**

The company that has active prospects out there is Trilogy Metals so they are the ones that are interested. But there are a number of holdings out there, and a number of different mining companies that have indicated that there are assets there, but they can't finance on their own the infrastructure to get there.

**Question and Comment from Heidi Schoppenhorst**

Why would they want to transport their materials way out of the way rather than a road that goes to the coast where they can barge materials out? Obviously it's not the mining companies that want this road. And the State is in the hole, we're broke. They took half our dividends. Why would we want to pay that much money to build a road that goes through a National preserve and everything else for no reason? It's going to cost the mining companies a lot more money to transport their material out. It's a stupid idea. I don't like the idea, and it's extremely detrimental to the environment.

**Comment by Laurie Thorpe, BLM**

These are very good questions. And that's why we're here, to hear your questions and concerns so we can get answers.

In 2015, AIDEA submitted their application for a right-of-way permit. It would involve bridges over navigable waters and filling waters and wetlands of the U.S. and other operations associated with the construction and operation of the 211-mile long road, all-season industrial access. In 2016, the agencies requested more information in order to conduct National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The application was complete by June 30, 2016, which triggered a timeline for BLM action on the application. BLM filed a Notice of Intent on February 28, 2017, to prepare an EIS initiating a 90-day public scoping period. BLM did not want to impact your subsistence activities during the summer and fall months so extended the public scoping period through January 31, 2018.

In 2017, NPS began a separate but parallel Environmental and Economic Impact Analysis (EEA) for the portion of the road on NPS land, as directed by ANILCA. Their process is similar to NEPA, but it's not NEPA. They are here so they can hear the same things we're hearing. The NPS is required to select a route, and issue a permit. The BLM doesn't have to authorize a route.

### ***Proposed Project***

The right-of-way application from AIDEA proposes a road across public and private land to the Ambler Mining District to increase job opportunities, and otherwise encourage the economic growth of the state, including the development of its natural resources.

Without that access, the mineral assets associated with the Ambler Mining District would remain unused, and AIDEA would not be able to support economic development and increase job opportunities within a region known for high unemployment rates.

### ***Road Elements***

Maps are available to see the route. We encourage your participation by marking on the maps. We will also leave a set of maps here for your use. AIDEA's proposed alignment begins at the Dalton Highway Milepost 161, and extends westward along the south side of the Brooks Range to the south bank of the Ambler River.

The type of land crossed by the road includes State lands (61percent), Federal land managed by BLM and NPS (24 percent), and lands associated with two Alaska Native corporations (15 percent).

The road would be 211 miles long, all-season, gravel two-lane road with industrial access only. It would not be open to the public. It includes bridges, material sites, maintenance stations, airstrips, and related infrastructure and utilities.

Vehicles using the road would include trucks hauling mineral exploration and development equipment, supplies, fuel, and ore concentrate. The road would be designed to accommodate large semi-trailer trucks.

### **Comment and Question from Annette Burroughs**

You mentioned an area with high unemployment. You're talking about a remote area with no people in it. Typically, what we've seen is when companies come, they bring their own people. That's why I'm wondering who is behind AIDEA? They're going to bring their workforce in depending on who they are. I don't think there is anything in it for Alaska.

#### **Response from Katherine Wood, HDR**

That's the kind of thing that when we get to the Draft EIS there will be a much more detailed analysis. We've heard from a lot of people, how many jobs, what kind of jobs, who are going to get those jobs, will there be a local preference, does local preference mean Alaskan or does it mean my town? Those are the kinds of questions that we will try to answer so the folks who are making decisions on this project will have an understanding of what that means.

#### **Comment and Question from Annette Burroughs**

We've seen that happen on the North Slope. How do we correlate what was promised and what we're actually seeing? They built roads into Pogo. What you see is Canadians coming to work in those mines. They're Alaskans while they're staying in our country, and the resources and the jobs and the money all goes out of our country when the federal law says you're supposed to be United States based. Is it somebody from our country that has the mining claim? That's a big issue I think, jobs for Alaskans.

#### ***Proposed Project Area***

The proposed project area begins at Milepost 161 of the Dalton Highway. It is 211 miles long, and ends at the Ambler mineral belt area as shown on the Proposed Project Area Map.

#### **Question from Jack Reakoff**

Is there a Doyon agreement where it goes across Doyon land?

#### **Response from Katherine Wood, HDR**

I don't think there are any agreements yet. This is the initial step in the permitting process with BLM granting the right-of-way or not. And then after that, AIDEA will have to get right-of-way from all the other property owners and from the State of Alaska.

## **Response from Joy Huntington, AIDEA**

The route was shifted slightly to go across the Doyon lands right about the time the application was being submitted because Bettles and Evansville asked that it not go across their land, specifically Evansville, Inc. They did not want the road going that close to their community so AIDEA shifted it to a northern route that goes across Doyon land to avoid Evansville and Bettles land at their request. AIDEA has met with Doyon, but there is no agreement with Doyon in place. Doyon is listening to their villages as well waiting to see the outcome of this process.

### ***Agency Roles***

BLM is the lead federal agency for preparing the EIS. BLM is coordinating with all the other agencies. BLM has authority to grant or not grant a right-of-way across BLM-managed lands. BLM must also comply with ANILCA Section 810 and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is a Cooperating Agency, and would be responsible for the wetlands permits that would be required. The USACE would evaluate the project application under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and would use the EIS as the basis for its permit decisions.

The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) is a Cooperating Agency, and would be responsible for bridge permits over navigable waters, and would also use the EIS as a basis for its decisions.

The State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is a Cooperating Agency, and would be responsible for state permits. Even though the State doesn't do NEPA, they have a robust permitting process. DNR would make land management decisions for right-of-way access across state-managed lands.

The Northwest Arctic Borough (NAB) is a Cooperating Agency. NAB will provide traditional knowledge and input on subsistence, cultural resources, and coordination with Tribal members and affected communities. The NAB would also enforce local permitting requirements, and would advise the BLM on NAB's responsibilities under State law and Northwest Arctic Borough regulations. I expect that the tribal councils of Alatna and Allakaket will provide traditional knowledge on subsistence and cultural resources if they become Cooperating Agencies.

The NPS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are all Participating Agencies.

We have also heard from Alatna and Allakaket that they want to be Cooperating Agencies so we will probably enter into Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) with them.

### **Comment from Annette Burroughs**

Back in the day, when they were going to do the Haul Road there was the Hickel Highway. That was a route that was phased out. Is that part of this route?

## **Response by Jack Reakoff**

No, that has nothing to do with this. It's a totally different route.

### ***What is an EIS?***

This EIS is a site-specific EIS for the proposed Ambler Road. An EIS is a document required under NEPA, which requires federal agencies to assess the environmental consequences of their decisions. An EIS is required for actions by federal agencies that significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

An EIS includes the following:

- Project Purpose and Need.
- Issues raised during scoping (internal/external).
- Project alternatives.
- Description of potentially affected environment (resources like wildlife, vegetation, hydrology, fisheries, cultural resources, and the human environment). We determine what we know about those resources now, and look at how they would be impacted by this project.
- Environmental consequences of all the alternatives.
- Proposed mitigation, which can involve the design of the route or best practices management that may be applied to minimize impacts.

### ***So where are we now?***

We published the Notice of Intent to produce an EIS in February 2017, and are now in the Scoping Process requesting public participation. The Scoping Period ends January 31, 2018. Should the project get funded further, then a Draft EIS will be developed with draft alternatives by March 2019. Public review would be held on that Draft EIS. Based on that feedback, we would revise and issue a Final EIS. After that, the BLM would issue a Record of Decision.

### ***Draft Purpose and Need***

Project need is based on the requirement for the BLM to respond to a right-of-way application from AIDEA for surface transportation access to currently inaccessible, economically valuable mineral deposits in the Ambler Mining District.

Project purpose of the BLM action is to provide AIDEA with: (1) technically and economically practical and feasible surface transportation access across BLM-managed lands for mining exploration and development in the Ambler Mining District, and (2) authorization to construct, operate, and maintain associated facilities for that access.

### **BLM Decisions to be made**

The BLM must decide whether or not a right-of-way shall be granted, and if so, the terms and conditions that will be included in the right-of-way. We are not required to select an action alternative in the EIS. We always have to include the no-action alternative. That alternative is an essential part of an EIS so that we can use that baseline to compare the other alternatives that are analyzed.

### **Comment and Question from Annette Burroughs**

You're talking about putting in a road. There are motorcycles showing up now at Coldfoot in the middle of the winter. People come from South America to get to Deadhorse. Any time you put in a road you're going to have a lot of people from all over the world. When that road was put in, my dad who was on the land use planning commission that said, "Let's keep it closed at the Yukon River to industrial traffic only." He went to Juneau or someplace to make that proposal. He said people don't know what they're going to be getting into. There's nothing out there. You run into that with the general public in remote places. I have flagged in some very remote places. I have complained for years that the State wants to put money into reality shows bringing people up Ice Road Trucker, and you can't even call if there is an accident. And most of the accidents, even with death don't even make the paper. Rescue is the good Samaritan. I've seen people who wiped out, had a concussion, and were hitchhiking with a truck driver trying to make it back to Anchorage. And the truck driver looked really concerned that they would make it and have his passenger alive. That's the kind of assistance the State gives with communication and safety. What have they ever done for safety? For game violations, as a flagger I've seen plenty of it. I flagged the Taylor Highway, and they would shake down anybody who went through, and look at any wildlife that was harvested. We don't have anything like that on the Haul Road. It will eventually be open to the public.

### **Comment from Heidi Schoppenhorst**

If they've used state money, it will be open to the public.

### **What is Scoping?**

Scoping is the process used to get input on the issues, impacts, and potential alternatives that will be addressed in the EIS. The intent of scoping is to:

- Inform agencies and public about AIDEA's application and the proposed project.
- Identify resources, impacts, and issues of concern to be addressed in the EIS.
- Obtain input to help refine the purpose and need and the alternatives to study.
- Identify potential mitigation measures that may be needed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate for project impacts.
- Obtain information to help evaluate the project with applicable laws.

When BLM published the Notice of Intent, we identified these issues for analysis in the EIS:

- Air quality
- Special status species
- Subsistence use and access
- Climate change effects
- Fish and aquatic species
- Critical minerals
- Invasive species
- Water
- Travel management
- Mining
- Wetlands and riparian
- Demand for gravel resources
- Recreational activities
- Wilderness characteristics
- Public access
- Social and economic impacts
- Cultural resources
- Wildlife and biological resources
- Impacts to rural and traditional lifestyles
- Geology and soils
- Reasonably foreseeable future activities

#### **Comment and Question from Annette Burroughs**

Regarding safety, there is one man who enforces. He is with us today because of this meeting. What the State can afford for enforcement you can already see. We have a huge amount of road, and one or two people who are sometimes up here during the heaviest part of the years to cover a huge amount of country. So already, you have a precedent set that the State can't afford to help out with safety to open up any more country to the general public, and that's what you will have. What about going from the mining district to the coast? That's not cutting through the Park Service. And you will see much more native oversight, i.e., we want our people involved that aren't working.

#### **Comment from Heidi Schoppenhorst**

That would be a lot faster too.

#### ***ANILCA Section 810***

Under Section 810 of ANILCA, the BLM must determine whether the project "may significantly restrict subsistence uses." This analysis will be included in the EIS.

If alternatives may significantly restrict subsistence uses (either abundance, access, or availability), then this will be identified in the analysis, and ANILCA Section 810 hearings will be held at the same time as public meetings upon release of the Draft EIS. They are a separate but concurrent process. It's highly likely that the project would significantly restrict subsistence uses. We are likely to hold the ANILCA 810 hearings.

### ***National Historic Preservation Act Section 106***

Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties and places of religious and cultural significance.

Tribal entities, the State Historic Preservation Officer (Judy Bittner), and other interested parties are consulted to identify significant places and ways to reduce or mitigate potential effects. Our staff archaeologist Crystal Blackburn will be working on this with our HDR specialist Dawn Ramsey to initiate that process.

### **Question from Jack Reakoff**

On the entire route or just the BLM land?

### ***Response from Laurie Thorpe, BLM***

On the entire route. Our analysis has to cover the entire route even though our right-of-way authorization would be only for the BLM-managed land. But the EIS and Section 106 processes have to cover the whole route because of those connected actions.

### **Response from Katherine Wood, HDR**

And because the USACE will have to issue permits for the impacts to waters across that whole route, and for all those different agency needs, the EIS has to look at the whole route.

### ***Section 106 Process Public Involvement***

(Section 106 Process Public Involvement flow chart discussed)

The final part of the Section 106 process is the development of a Memorandum of Agreement or a programmatic agreement and a Cultural Resource Management Plan. The document would cover how construction workers would handle the discovery of historic or cultural sites that had not been identified earlier. It would also cover how sites that we do know about will be handled. The consulting parties would have to come to an agreement. State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPO) and our experts really provide a lot of guidance on that with the input of the potentially affected communities on what's out there. It is bringing them all together and coming up with a good plan on how to handle that. The programmatic agreement has to be finalized with the Final EIS.

## **NPS EEA Process**

The AIDEA proposal includes two alternative routes across NPS lands (North and South). Under ANILCA, NPS is legally required to permit access across NPS lands, prepare an EEA to evaluate which route is preferable based on environmental, social, and economic effects and develop permit terms and conditions

## **EEA Public Input**

NPS seeks comments on route selection and permit terms and conditions. They are looking for comments from you. The comment period is open through January 31, 2018. To comment go to <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/Ambler>.

## **Comment from Jack Reakoff**

The Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Research Commission just met Tuesday and Wednesday. I was at that meeting. We're going to make comments to the NPS about the routes and concerns about the road in general. The Subsistence Research Commission is going to be sending a letter in regards to that issue.

## **Schedule**

Scoping concludes January 31, 2018. A draft EIS will be developed by March 29, 2019, followed by public review. The ANILCA 810 hearings would be held during that time. A Final EIS based on public and agency review of the draft will be produced by December 30, 2019, and the Record of Decision is targeted to be completed by January 30, 2020. Right now, the project is only funded through the scoping phase, a development of the alternatives to be addressed in the EIS, and a data gap analysis. Future funding really depends on the outcome of this scoping and what we hear for issues and concerns. If the range of alternatives is within what has already been looked at, then we probably have enough information to continue the process. But if there is something that we missed, a different route that hasn't been looked at, and there's a need for a lot more data to be collected, then it will depend on whether AIDEA can come up with the funding from their resources or not. We're just not sure yet. There are some unanswered questions. We just have to see how the process goes.

## **Question from Heidi Schoppenhorst**

What happens if you run out of funding?

## **Response from Laurie Thorpe, BLM**

Then the project is stalled.

## **Question from Jack Reakoff**

And that's AIDEA funding that stops at the scoping process so would they make an appropriation or is that a legislative appropriation?

### **Response from Joy Huntington, AIDEA**

My understanding is that there would have to be more funds provided through the governor's discretion to continue moving forward on the EIS. AIDEA does have their own funding, but on this particular project they were given the go-ahead by the governor's office only through this phase. The funding is beyond my level. I'm really here just to listen. If I can help with any of the background, I will try.

### **Response from John McPherson, HDR**

You may recall the governor put all the mega projects on hold, and this was one of them. He did then authorize AIDEA to spend money through scoping, some alternatives evaluation, and the data gap analysis.

### **Comment from Jack Reakoff**

There was the 2014 executive order and then that was retracted.

### **Response from John McPherson, HDR**

That's right.

### **Comment from Heidi Schoppenhorst**

So potentially, the state administration is looking at the feasibility of this, and they want the information from the EIS. They're not dead set on this.

### **Response from Katherine Wood, HDR**

I think a lot of people want to see what the EIS says. What would what it take for it to be permissible, what will it cost, and then can we afford it? Without that level of detail, we don't know if it pencils out.

### **Comment from Annette Burroughs**

I don't see how anything would ever be paid back for scoping.

### **Response from John McPherson, HDR**

That's true. This wouldn't be paid back, but the decision on whether to move forward with the EIS will be made and eventually, the outcome of the EIS would determine whether or not the project goes forward.

## Question from Annette Burroughs

What about other mineral resources? What percentage does the state or the federal government get when the big companies are taking these resources? Especially if it's a foreign company like Pogo or a Canadian company. They're taking our resources, bringing in their workforce, there's nothing in it for Alaska. Why should any dollar come out of our dividend to help them build a road? What's in it for Alaska? Why do we want to see our wilderness country opened up? Would Alaska ever get paid anything? Would AIDEA get paid back anything for building a road out there?

### **What's Next?**

BLM is collecting comments and feedback. They will consider input received to potentially refine the Purpose and Need, determine issues and impacts to be studied, determine alternatives to be studied, and potentially identify mitigation measures to apply to the project.

### **Substantive Comments**

Writing substantive comments assists BLM to make good decisions.

- Be as specific as possible about what you are concerned about.
- Refer to a section or page number of a particular referenced document.
- Present new information.
- Share issues relevant to the environmental analysis.
- Suggest alternatives to the proposed project and the reason(s) why they should be considered.
- "I don't like this" or "I do like this" is not useful. Explain why.

There are several ways to comment on the proposed project:

- Submit a comment form in the box
- Submit comments via the website: <http://www.blm.gov/AmblerRoadEIS>
- Fax to: (907) 271-5479
- Email to: [blm\\_ak\\_akso\\_amblerroad\\_comments@blm.gov](mailto:blm_ak_akso_amblerroad_comments@blm.gov)
- Mail to: 222 West 7th Avenue, Stop #13, Anchorage, Alaska 99513

## 3. Comments

***Below are a compilation of verbal comments received at this meeting.***

### **Comment from Jack Reakoff**

(A hard copy of these comments was provided, and Mr. Reakoff read it aloud, though not word-for-word. The hard copy will be included in the record. *Note: The following was edited for acronyms, punctuation, and spacing to assist reader comprehension.*)

The State received the Haul Road in October 1978. They scrambled to set up temporary shops. They hired an old timer here in Wiseman, and some of the other crew rented cabins here to stay in the first winter. The temporary shop was in Coldfoot.

### **Comment from Jack Reakoff, continued**

The oil industry built the Haul Road, and gave it to the State. If an endeavor is economical, it will pay for its installation and maintenance. The State does not receive very little royalty or tariff from mineral extraction. North West Borough will have property taxes. The State will lose tremendous amounts of money...money that [it] cannot afford to be squandered any time but especially now.

This road was maintained for the industrial traffic with permits to go north of the Yukon given to people who lived north of the Yukon River or industrial users. That included hunting guides, miners, etc.

The hunters in Fairbanks figured out right away, long before the Dalton Highway was open that they could stake a mining claim on the North Slope for 12 dollars, and get a permit to go north. They could come up to the check point and go right through the check point because they were industrial users. There were hundreds of hunters hunting on the North Slope after 1981 when the Board of Game opened the corridor to archery hunting.

The Ambler Road will see the same thing except on a faster time scale. In 1974, the legislature closed this area statutorily to all-terrain vehicle and firearm use. There is no restrictions outside the 5-mile Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area (DHCMA). Once you get past the 5-mile line, ATVs and firearms are wide open. And every hunter that wants to hunting will go down and buy his permit for \$35 because he's going to stake a mining claim out in the Ambler Mining District. That's what's going to happen. Nobody is fooling me into believing this is an industrial road, because it is an industrial road, and you can buy an industrial permit for \$35. The hunters will stake \$35 mining claims in the Ambler Mining District. They'll bring air boats, jet boats, powerful ATVs, snowmachines to hunt all the way to the coast. Go down to the Yukon River in the fall. They launch hundreds of boats in the river. Those big boats will be able to hunt all along the coast north of Kotzebue. Those boats could go in the ocean. This is a far-reaching effect of this road. This Road to Resources has been talked about by the Alaska Council for Sportsman for Wildlife for years. The Ambler Road will expand the terrain of devastation high-competition combat hunting seen on the Denali, Steese, Taylor, Glenn, and other roads in Alaska. The Dalton Highway has ATV and firearm restrictions, except for very limited uses on federal lands of the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area (DHCMA).

The political push for the Ambler Road is the affluent and politically powerful sport hunters of Fairbanks, Wasilla, Anchorage, and Kenai. Bill Walker thinks if he gives them the Ambler it will give him political support. I don't think he's going to get any political support. The legislature doesn't like Bill Walker. And this Ambler Road is going to be jammed down the local people's throats for political token, but I don't think that's going to work with Bill.

## **Comment from Jack Reakoff, continued**

The Dalton maintenance is a state expenditure. There are seven maintenance camps from Livengood to Deadhorse. There is a tremendous cost to the state for wages, insurance, and retirement for the crews. They work one week on and one week off. The state pays for charters to fly the crews up and back. The equipment and fuel as well as parts and supplies, all have been trucked up. All of the remote operations are not cheap. The Ambler Road would be just as expensive, but likely more expensive.

This road costs over a million dollars a mile to maintain. Two hundred and ten miles of road, at minimum, \$210 to \$250 million a year. Does AIDEA have that \$250 million a year to maintain the Ambler Road? I don't think so.

There would be need for airfields to be built near the camps to change out the crews. That's not calculated in this cost. A minimum of three to four camps on the Ambler Road. Coldfoot would maintain the first 60 miles, but the budgeting would need to be increased for the Coldfoot site. Most likely Coldfoot, John River, Alatna, and Ambler would be the camp locations.

The State Department of Transportation always vastly understates the cost of new roads to get the project started. The Manley to the Yukon River "Road to Nome" section is an example. Actual cost [is] three times the DOT estimate. Taking that as a minimum understated cost for the Ambler Road, due to very large river crossings, [and] extensive permafrost requiring geotextile, this is a very expensive road.

The Ambler Road would most likely cost at least a minimum of \$1.2 billion dollars. This is not counting the cost of airfields and maintenance camps and the camps themselves and all the equipment that goes along with it. This road has some huge problems that the Dalton Highway doesn't have. This road is transecting every drainage going east and west. When you build a road with culverts across all these drainages, everybody in the interior of Alaska knows you build augeis behind them. You're going to have massive augeis problems all along the whole Ambler Road, because it's transecting the grain of the drainages. Also crosswind. You're going to have wind drifting across the road. The Dalton Highway has some drifting problems but most of the time it's going into the wind. So there are huge maintenance issues with this Ambler Road. These are not little issues. These are giant issues. Steam trucks. All the stuff it needs to maintain the road to keep augeis off the road. Look what happened to the Sag River. Swamped with augeis. There are some major live water sections over there in the Ambler District especially at the head of the Alatna, the head of Kobuk, wide water. That's why there is so much spawning there.

The State of Alaska receives very little revenue from mineral extraction. If the foreign companies want a road and this is a viable project, they should fully fund the Ambler Road. It is not a viable project; otherwise, they'd fund it. They built this road, because it's a viable project, and they gave it to the State.

### **Comment from Jack Reakoff, continued**

As a State resident who has had more than half my Permanent Fund Dividend taken by the State legislature and governor, I am highly opposed to the Ambler Road boondoggle. In fact, an article last winter by the industry talked about a railroad from Ambler to the Norton Sound to a deep water port. I was reading about the Ambler Mining District. I thought I was going to hear about the Ambler Road, but no, the article was written by the industry and was talking about a railroad extraction. They can ship tons of material by train only 250 miles to the coast to Port Darby, which is deep water in Norton Sound. Ocean-going ships can come right up close to land and dump millions of tons of material right into the ships to ship to the smelters.

The industry was not talking about the Ambler Road. Yeah, they'll take an Ambler Road. They'll take anything they can get. That doesn't mean that they are actually under any obligation to AIDEA to ship that material. They'll access for exploration, but the State of Alaska and the Department of Transportation has not fully explored all the viable options. The railroad was one of the options, but they discounted that immediately because they did not calculate the maintenance costs into the equation. The train maintains the snow off the railroad, whereas the Ambler Road is a very expensive road to maintain.

The State of Alaska has not explored the other more economically viable options to ship the copper ore to market. Railroad, winter ice road to port on the lower Kobuk or Hatham Inlet. There's no discussion about an ice road down to the coast and stockpiling ore at Hatham Inlet, which is by Kotzebue. There was an article in the news that Lockheed Martin are expected to house PLR Logistics freighting blimps in Kenai. Freighting blimps could actually carry 41,000 lbs. There's no discussion of that option to take this mineral right out of Bornite right off to the coast and dump it ready to ship off. There's no discussion of short ice roads, or barging the material, [or] getting roads lower in the Kobuk where they've got water to use barges. There's no discussion of anything but building this very expensive road.

And I'm not happy with the State Department of Transportation for only giving one option to AIDEA. And we know the calculations DOT makes. They make the calculation of one-third the cost to get their foot in the door so then they have to ask for additional appropriations. That's what AIDEA is going to do. They're going to have a multi-billion dollar road that they are going to have to construct. The Alatna and John River are deep mud. They're going to have to cross that. It's extremely expensive. There's drill pipe on this road that goes down 300 feet because it's muck underneath it. It's thawed, and it's got live water under it, and you have to have good bedding on that especially with heavy traffic. So there's very little calculation done by the DOT. I have serious questions about AIDEA swallowing everything that DOT gave them. It's not a \$385 million road. The bridges alone might cost \$385 million.

The fish and wildlife resources of the area will be highly affected by mobile hunters and fishers launching boats and all-terrain-vehicles from the Ambler Road.

## Comments from Jack Reakoff, continued

One only needs to look at the 40-mile caribou hunt in the fall from the Steese and Taylor Highways to see what the Ambler Road will be when the Western Arctic Herd tries to cross the road. The herd already has maximum use by subsistence hunters. Harvest is 12,000 caribou annually, and that's approaching maximum sustained yield for the Western Arctic Herd. You will have a whole bunch more hunters because they will have industrial mining claims. The herd already is maximized by subsistence hunters and a few sport hunters. Road access hunters will usurp the Western Arctic Caribou herd allocation to an entirely new road access user group. Road access will allow boats to be launched in the Kobuk drainages to hunt the entire drainages to the Chukchi Coast.

Local subsistence hunters will have their seasons and bag limits vastly reduced. There's families that use 15-20 caribou. That's their primary food on the Kobuk River. Other communities that rely on the Western Arctic and Teshukpuk herds will also be affected by the reallocation of bag limits including Anaktuvuk Pass, Allakaket, Bettles, and Wiseman/Coldfoot.

There will be a reallocation. Instead of a five caribou bag limit per day, it will be one bull. Look at what the bag limit is on the Fortymile Herd. It goes down to one bull because we have thousands of hunters. There will be articles published in national magazines about the new road, "Here's how you do it." People will blog how to get on that Ambler Road. There will be massive amounts of hunters show up. Non-resident hunters also.

Sheefish population spawning grounds on the Kobuk and Koyukuk Rivers will be highly affected. The Sheefish is highly sought fish for sport use already. Sheefish are very sensitive to catch and release mortalities. There will be fishing guides setting up camps. Koyukuk stock is a major spawning component of the Yukon River. The Alatna River right below the road is where the Sheefish spawn. And you go over the hill and the same hydrology is in the Kobuk, and everybody is going to be on the Kobuk also. Those fish are going to be highly affected by this road.

Moose populations will be affected up and down the Koyukuk, Wild, John, Alatna, and Kobuk drainages. Boats will be launched in each one of those rivers, and they will cover extensive areas.

ANILCA Title VIII 810 analysis would show extreme detriment to subsistence users on the federal public lands. Wiseman/Coldfoot would be in the affected area. So for the federal lands there is a strong need for an 810 analysis.

These are a few of the reasons I am voicing my opposition to the Ambler Road.

My questions would be who is going to fund this checkpoint? There's got to be a checkpoint for an industrial road. Can't have motorcycles and everybody and their brother driving up this road. Who is going to fund that? Where is that in the analysis? Are the mineral companies made a dedicated signed-on that they are actually going to use this road and pay all these tariffs? Have they? No, they have not. And they will not because they can't. It costs \$10,000 to ship one truck to Deadhorse. It's going to cost at least \$10,000 to \$15,000 to ship from Ambler into Fairbanks, and put it on a train. That's a cost-prohibited cost per load.

The industry in the article I read wanted a railroad. They want to get the minerals to the port. You don't take tonnage through the interior of Alaska. You ship it to the coast like Red Dog. Don't reinvent the wheel here. The maintenance of this road, AIDEA has swallowed hook, line, and sinker DOT's numbers, and I don't think AIDEA has actually done the engineering where they can state that this is a \$385 million road. I don't think AIDEA has done that; otherwise, they wouldn't be such a proponent, because they're the ones who are going to fund it. If they thought this road is going to cost \$1.2 billion, and if they thought the industrial was not going to ship mineral on it to get any tariffs off it, they'll be real concerned about that. If I was the AIDEA board, scratch that off this list.

That's not a viable project. I'm concerned about going across Native corporation lands and allotments without proper easements. Those are my concerns about the road.

#### **Response from Katherine Wood, HDR**

The scoping period is open through the January 31, 2018, so if you think of more things and you want to add onto it verbal or written, it all gets the same consideration. A couple of other folks have not had a chance to say anything. Do you have any questions or comments?

#### **Comment from Jason Carson**

I'm just road maintenance here listening. You're talking about a million dollars a mile maintenance per year. I don't think that number is accurate, because I have 65 miles, my jurisdiction from the Koyukuk to Deitrich. I don't think the Dalton budget is, we get a lot of federal money also for our summer time stuff. Obviously, I don't know what the numbers are. That's not my department.

#### **Comment from Jack Reakoff**

That's what Dwight Stellar told me year ago. Dwight Stellar used to be in charge of the whole Dalton Highway. And he told me it was a million dollars a mile. What he's calculating is wage, insurance, retirement, plus the cost of shipping the fuel in there so it's the overall cost. All the creeks come down against this road. You're going to need a lot of steam trucks at every camp, because it's a different kind of road.

#### **Comment from Jason Carson**

I would include the money we've got from the feds, because that's part of the cost. They've done a lot of improvements lately. They've built the road up so we don't have the aufeis coming across the road up near Deadhorse. I worked on the sag when it was coming across the road. Hopefully, they would engineer it better.

#### **Response from Jack Reakoff**

That's what I didn't see in the profile. The profile looks like it's a low-based road like the old Haul Road. When they built it, it washed out right up above Wiseman in three places because they didn't have river-training devices. I'd have to look at the real engineering of the Ambler Road. Did they actually have real hydrologists putting in river-training devices? The Alatna River and the John River have big drainages coming up against this road. Did DOT actually do proper engineering? If they say \$385 million for a 211-mile road that's cheap engineering. I really call that into question.

**Response from Katherine Wood, HDR**

That's definitely part of the analysis we will need to do. Take a look back at that to see if that is realistic. Is it accurate based on the events that we've been having lately and the changes that DOT has been making to designs?

**Comment from Jason Carson**

The logistics up here, and we've been up against budget restraints and the State. We get a lot of federal funds. The logistics for the Ambler Road would be pretty crazy. I think they would scab it together to begin with, because that's what they did with the Haul Road, and then they would have to improve it. That's a huge undertaking. I would think the private entities, the mining companies, that's how I thought the road was going to be put together with a lot of private funding. I don't know how all this works. The State can't afford it right now. I can appreciate trying to bring resources and money to the State by developing areas. I live in Fairbanks. These guys live up here probably most or all of their lives so I can understand their concerns. I see a lot of resources out there. It's definitely an eye opener.

**Question from Unnamed commenter**

What is Bornite really going to do for power because mines really use a lot of power?

**Response by Jack Reakoff**

That is a giant question, because at Donlin Creek Mine they're going to build a 14-inch gas line from Cook Inlet all the way there by Crooked Creek similar to the Pebble Mine. There is phenomenal power demand for these kinds of mines. Where's all the gas or diesel fuel going to come from? How many trucks? How many barges? How much is it going to cost for the industry to actually mine economically? That's why Donlin is putting in a gas line. There's no gas resource really close. Are they going to put in gas line from the North Slope over the Brooks Range? There's a huge amount of calculations that aren't included. Somebody better look into this.

**Response from Katherine Wood, HDR:**

That's what the EIS is meant to do, to answer all those questions.

**Comment from Joy Huntington, AIDEA:**

Another resource that is not here today, I do believe that Trilogy does have a preliminary economic assessment. Trilogy is a publicly traded company so any documents they produce determining feasibility economically for their projects have to be public. So check out their website. That would be a good place to get information about the mining project. AIDEA is tracking that as well. More information will become available as they do their studies as well. AIDEA has been very clear that without the interest of the mining companies the project won't move forward.

**Comment from Heidi Schoppenhorst**

With all of the detriments, costs, travel, planning, etc., if we're going to spend mass amounts of money there has to be phenomenal reward. It just seems a huge cost. We all know people who want to open up the road just to open up the resources for more hunting areas because most of the rest of

the State is hunted off. We've unfortunately already sold most of the animals in the State to non-resident hunters. We all know that is the real reason behind this. It's a huge detriment to the wildlife populations that are becoming less and less in Alaska. What is the giant reward for this? It can't be the mining for the State. It's not going to help anybody in Alaska at all. It boils down to a large cost to State and the government so people can go hunting. It would be more cost-effective help the villages over there if they built a railroad with access to the coast and barge them out. They can load mass amounts of material on barges. It would create jobs for those people who live over in those communities. This [road] is going to be a giant mess. It's going to destroy things that benefit all of the people. Not only our state but all our visitors.

There are a lot of hunters that are already flying out there. There have to be some places that we try to preserve and that is more financially beneficial to protect our renewable wildlife resources. People come from all over the world to see this really special place. In Alaska, we have this country that is still pretty wild. Tourism is going to go away too if we tear everything up with roads and four-wheeler trails. No one wants to go there. We should try to be good stewards of this state if we want it to benefit future generations. That's in the best interest of Alaska.

#### **Comment from Jack Reakoff**

Discussing the game resource, the moose population density against the Brooks Range is 0.1 moose per square mile. Its two moose per square mile in the Tanana Valley. The perception is this road is going to access this phenomenal amount of moose. Actually there's really no density populations. In 135 section of this road there's 45 moose to be harvested. It's a lottery draw permit for the 45 moose. People here hunt under the federal subsistence regulations. They take three or four moose. The rest of the 41 allocation is given to the general. There's not an unending supply of this resource. These are very sensitive resources so there will be additional need for studies, [for] ADF&G to monitor this harvest, [and provide] additional enforcement. When there is no enforcement on the Dalton Highway terrible things happen. I've seen people go crazy when they think there isn't enforcement.

#### **Comment from Annette Burroughs**

People in the cities on their internet do not understand that there are places in Alaska that have no communication possible. I can't take a cell phone from this building and make a phone call. There's hundreds of miles on the Taylor highway, and you see all kinds' even foreigners and non-residents. Whether or not they have a hunting license, they've gotten game. All you see is the reporting that happens on tags, but you're blind to vast amounts of information. There's a lot that goes under the radar because there's only two guys that cover hundreds of miles. There's a lot of poaching, foreign hunters, non-resident hunters acting like resident hunters. They should be going with a guide if their foreign but they're not. You see it if you're out flagging. I've seen it. There's no communication or help for accidents. Safety is a huge issue.

#### **Comment from Jack Reakoff**

There is no EMS [emergency medical service] system here. In Coldfoot, EMTs [emergency medical technicians] come from the pump station. There's no pump stations along this road. EMS issues for

this road need to be looked at. Calculations for this road of medevac expense, there's no answers for them. Where is the gas and power coming from? On Donlin Creek, Western Caribou Regional Council has to review that stuff. There's massive amounts of barges coming up the Kuskokwim River to go to Donlin Creek. There's a gasline. They have a plan. Trilogy has no plan, and says, "Sure we'll take this road." AIDEA is swallowing it. Hard rock mining is very expensive. Is the copper price adequate to support a mining operation to build a pipeline or haul millions of tons of diesel? I don't think this is a viable project. There is no penciling out. There is no plan in place, and that should be integral before the road approval. Is it a viable project? And is the road necessary if the company doesn't use it?

**Comment from Brandon:**

My concerns mirror everybody else's. My biggest concern is the enforcement manpower. The [Alaska] State Troopers are short, and [the] budget scenario is looking bleaker and bleaker by the day, and that is a major concern. The road is an artery for caching AV [aviation fuel] gas, of all sorts of equipment for state license guides, and private airplane and helicopter operators can use the road to cache fuel. That's limiting them in what square acreage they can cover. Adding another 150 nautical miles north and south of the road plus the length of the road, 60,000-plus new square miles of easily accessible ground to access by aircraft. The sheer volume increase that can be used in the field, [and] the numbers of hunters and frequency of trips is going to go up exponentially. The federal agencies are not doing that much better when it comes to funding. NPS is looking at a 10 percent cut this year alone. USFWS is looking at a 5 to 10 percent cut this year. Future years are totally unknown Enforcement is a major issue.

**Comment from Annette Burroughs**

There was a time in Alaska when guides had their own areas, and no other guides guided in those areas. When the Haul Road was new, I talked to a truck driver who took his kid from Valdez to Deadhorse. They counted 29 bears, and saw every color of black bear, [and] even saw polar bear. He said now if you go from Valdez to Deadhorse, you might see a bear once every six trips. Roads do affect wildlife populations. When my dad was young, there was hundreds of thousands of caribou between Fairbanks and Anchorage. Now that's called "The Valley." It used to be farming, but it's filled up with people so the caribou aren't there. They're gone, and it's happened so quickly. We want wildlife to be here for our children. Things have gotten worse with hunting. The numbers of non-resident hunters has escalated. The resident harvest, you can't slow it down.

**Comment from Laurie Thorpe, BLM**

Thank you for allowing us to come and present the project to you, and to explain the process. You have provided some really good comments and issues.

**Question from Jack Reakoff**

Will these comments be compiled into a document? I want to read what everybody else had to say.

**Response from Katherine Wood, HDR**

We will be preparing a Scoping Summary Report that documents all the different range of issues and input that folks have given. If you gave us your email, we will send out an email newsletter telling everybody that it is available.

**Question from Dave L**

Law enforcement has not been discussed on the road at all.

**Response from John McPherson, HDR**

It is proposed to be an industrial road. There would be commercial trucks that get a permit.

**Response from Katherine Wood, HDR**

Other folks have asked if other small entities could apply for a commercial permit. How would that term "Commercial permit" be defined? Shipping groceries? Small-scale mining? And those are questions we have to answer.

**Comment from Jack Reakoff**

With \$55, you could get a mining permit, and that's how it worked on the Dalton Highway. It was closed to hunting. In 1981, the board opened it to archery. There were lots of instantaneous miners, and they were really hunters. Lots of them heading up north. You could probably get the numbers of the checkpoint logs. That's going to be the way it is. They would be industrial users. You can't stop them. Those are State lands, and state lands don't have guide use areas. There's going to be 10 guys hunting in one area. DNR just hands out all kinds of permits.

**Question from Dave Thomps**

What about people coming the other way? Kobuk has a road to Dall Creek, and there's a road from Dall Creek to Bornite. Bornite's connected to the new road. What about non-industrial users using the road?

**Response from Joy Huntington, AIDEA**

From what I understand, even people from the villages like Kobuk [and] some of the closest ones right now, what is being proposed is agreements or contracts be put in place for use of the road. Right now, there are feasibility questions about the project both environmental and economic. Once we get further in the process and some of those questions about permits and access are answered, the agreement to use the road would be the next step in that process. Even if folks in a community have winter access to the road they would need a CDL (commercial driver's license). The idea is that if there is a corporation in the community like a store, in some communities the village corporation runs the store. If they had a CDL and had a permit to use the road, they could potentially haul groceries and different items out to sell in the community. But members of the community without a CDL would not be able to use the road under what's being presented, because it's meant to be an industrial limited access road.

**Comment from Dave Thomps**

Right now, there's a road that goes to the oilfields, a winter road to Nuiqsut, and that goes through all the closed portions, but anybody in Nuiqsut can drive it without a CDL. So what's the difference between that and anybody in Noatak and Kobuk?

**Comment from Heidi Schoppenhorst:**

They're going to throw that out right away. If it's built with public funds and maintained with public funds, how will they be able to do that?

**Response from Joy Huntington, AIDEA**

The idea [is] that it not be constructed with public funds. These are all really valid concerns. So the question about security and enforcement, the idea that has been proposed is that similar to [what] Alyeska Pipeline has a contract with Doyon Security to provide security on that private infrastructure. If you question how that process is going to happen, your concerns should be brought forward. That's the idea that there be private companies and possibly the village corporations could submit a proposal or bid out security on the road, checkpoints, and things like that. Kind of like Pogo. They do the enforcement, they have a toll at their road, and they limit access on that as well. They do keep people off their own private mechanisms.

**Question from Jack Reakoff:**

Who would fund that security?

**Response from Joy Huntington, AIDEA**

So everything that has been proposed in the project is meant to be incorporated into the tolls that are being paid from the users of the road.

**Response from Katherine Wood, HDR**

It would be the mining companies paying tolls to use the road, and that funding would fund all the maintenance and security. There would have to be a contract in place to make that viable.

**Question from Heidi Schoppenhorst**

Are there commercial guide use areas on the state land?

**Comment from Jack Reakoff**

There are all kinds of guide use areas, and they are all over that whole area, but those have unlimited guide access. There can be 10 guides, 50 guides, 100 guides. The existing guides that are there are going to get swamped. They are going to have a lot of new guides show up. The CDL [commercial driver's license] requirement [is] probably for larger vehicles, but for your average miner with a pickup the State does not require a CDL. They're a commercial entity. I don't think AIDEA is going to be able to require them to have a CDL.

**Response from John McPherson, HDR**

What they have proposed is that you would have to have a CDL, and a permit from AIDEA to use the road.

**Response from Joy Huntington, AIDEA**

So if AIDEA says you have to meet these criteria be it a resident of a community with a CDL, certain stipulations. What this process will hopefully come up with is ways to address some of the concerns that are being brought forward, and that's what BLM and HDR are going to look at. Could AIDEA say you can't be one of these small claimholders? That would be a good question. With the private industry you can basically stipulate [that] this is who is going to use this private infrastructure regardless of the State saying you can access it if you're using state infrastructure. What's being presented is that AIDEA has a lot of leeway over who gets those permits. Another way to provide

comments [is] AIDEA board members are from around the state and they do have public comment periods at their board meetings. It would be a good opportunity for you to bring some of your concerns about the contracts and permits that are provided for the proposed project. It's a way to bring some of those concerns directly to the AIDEA board.

**Question from Heidi Schoppenhorst**

Is it possible to get a list of the AIDEA board members?

**Response from Joy Huntington, AIDEA**

Yes, if you go to the AIDEA website they have the board members [listed] there, and they have a schedule of their meetings.

**Question from Heidi Schoppenhorst**

So all the board members were appointed by the governor?

**Response from Joy Huntington, AIDEA**

I think all the board members were appointed by the governor, but don't quote me. The governor's office does have a big influence on the AIDEA board. They are appointed, but also the Commissioner of Revenue and the Commissioner of [the] Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development both have seats. But those positions are also appointed by the governor. When the question came up earlier about who is pushing AIDEA, a lot of the knowledge of this mineral district has been out there many years. It has surfaced a few times, but [it's] not had the traction to move forward. But the governor's office, I think Palin but Parnell continued it, started the Roads to Resources program. The governor said let's open up some of these resources so they kind of pushed DOT and then AIDEA to get this on the table and start looking at it. This mineral district has existed for a long time.

**Question from Heidi Schoppenhorst**

Is this the only proposal that has been made in regards to the Ambler Mining District? I have heard about this road to Ambler for years. I haven't heard about any other alternatives.

**Response from Katherine Wood, HDR**

When the DOT was managing the project they did do some studies to look at other alternatives. That DOT report is available on the AIDEA project website, [www.ambleraccess.org](http://www.ambleraccess.org). But that is part of the work of the EIS to go back and do due diligence through those studies, and determine if the analysis still holds water, or if we need to bring something back on the table.

**Question from Heidi Schoppenhorst**

Did any of the other alternatives go to the coast?

**Response from Katherine Wood, HDR**

There were alternatives that the DOT looked at to the coast.

**Response from Joy Huntington, AIDEA**

There was one that went to the Red Dog port that said this infrastructure is already there. AIDEA already owns the Red Dog port. The criteria that were utilized were which has the least impact to the environment, to subsistence resources, feasibility from the terrain, the cost. This is a whole new process, and they may find ways of mitigating things that weren't found before so this could produce different results when looking at those options. At that time, it was determined that the route to the west coast was going to have more impacts to caribou and more impacts to the environment given the wetlands and other areas.

**Comment from Jordan Johnson**

One thing I don't hear addressed is what kind of benefits to subsistence use does this road have for residents north of the Yukon River? Would we not even be able to access this road if we don't have a permit when we live up here?

**Response from Laurie Thorpe, BLM**

Currently, that's the proposal. Industrial access only.

**Response from John McPherson, HDR**

Those are good questions. What is the exact definition of industrial?

**Comment from Annette Burroughs**

Ninety percent of the hunting guides that I have talked to when I am flagging are non-residents. They guide non-residents to get our game. There's nothing in it for Alaska. In Canada, they retained guide areas. In Alaska, with the stroke of a pen no longer were there guide areas. My dad had a guide area with 17 guides. Now it's gotten worse.

**Comment from Laurie Thorpe, BLM**

Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you.

**Question from Jack Reakoff**

Will there be a meeting when we get to alternatives?

**Response from Katherine Wood, HDR**

The next meeting will be once the Draft EIS is available showing the alternatives and what they mean in terms of benefits and impacts.

**4. Closing**

The meeting was adjourned.