

Appendix D – Air Quality Conformity Meeting Summary



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Highway
Administration**

Memorandum

Western Federal Lands Highway Division
610 E. Fifth Street
Vancouver, WA 98661-3801

INTERAGENCY CONSULTATION TANANA RIVER RECREATION IMPROVEMENTS AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY

March 3, 2021 • 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. • TEAMS Web Conference

MEETING NOTES

Attendees	Organization
Adeyemi Alimi	ADEC
Cynthia Heil	ADEC
Randi Bailey	Alaska DOT&PF
Adam Moser	Alaska DOT&PF
Karl Pepple	EPA Region 10
Jackson Fox	FAST Planning
Stephen Morrow	FHWA
Brandon Stokes	FHWA
Jennifer Chariarse	FHWA
Leigh Oesterling	FHWA
George Noel	FHWA
Melissa Goldstein	FHWA
Paul Kendall	PND Engineering, Inc. (consultant)
Anna Kopitov	PND Engineering, Inc. (consultant)

Summary

Stephen Morrow led the meeting with introductions and a summary of the Tanana River Recreation (TRRA) Improvements Project. He presented a project figure showing the proposed road extensions and other project elements. He also stated the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the project-level Air Quality Conformity of the TRRA Improvements Project. Karl Pepple asked if the project was part of the latest Regional Conformity Analysis. Jackson Fox confirmed the project north of the levee was part of Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System (FMATS) and is within the Transportation Improvement Plan TIP/metropolitan planning area boundary and received a conformity determination. However, it is not clear if the project was included in sufficient detail. The area south of the levee is within a *donut area* outside of the metropolitan planning area boundary (just south of the Tanana Levee). Both the TRRA Improvements project and Tanana Lake Recreation Area are inside the PM 2.5 nonattainment area.

Leigh Oesterling asked if Cinch Street would be closed. Paul Kendall stated that Cinch Street would be gated at the levee/Cinch Street with additional gates installed at Cinch Street and Northlake Lane and at a pedestrian trail. This would limit Cinch Street to pedestrian access.

Adeyemi Alimi asked if the project was in a CO Maintenance area? Jackson Fox confirmed that it was not within a CO Maintenance area.

Mr. Fox also explained that the South Lathrop Street extension was included in the FMATS 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Air Quality Conformity Analysis and Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP); however, he was unsure of whether the analysis included the specific project information in the model. He confirmed that headbolt plug-ins were not part of the conformity analysis, as these were a later addition. Mr. Morrow noted that the headbolt plug-ins would result in net benefit to PM 2.5 and Mr. Fox added that plug-ins are not a conformity concern. Mr. Morrow added that paving South Lathrop Street Extension and Northlake Lane would reduce fugitive dust conditions generated by the existing gravel roads. Mr. Fox agreed that pavement would reduce dust conditions and benefit both PM 10 and PM 2.5 conditions.

Ms. Oesterling noted that it is likely that the question of regional emissions analysis would not need to be reopened as long as the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) analysis included the project information. Ms. Oesterling added that the next steps of the interagency conference would be to determine if the TRRA Improvements project is part of a conforming plan or TIP, and then whether the project is a local air quality concern to the interagency group. Ms. Oesterling noted, in her assessment, that the project was not of air quality concern.

Mr. Pepple asked if the project area was a recreation area. Mr. Morrow responded affirmatively and added that the TLRA provides year-round recreation (e.g., ice fishing, boating, swimming, ice skating), provides access to the Tanana River via Tanana Lake motorized boat launch, and public access to federal lands of Fort Wainwright for recreation purposes (e.g., hunting, food gathering [berries]). Mr. Adam Moser also inquired if the project was a standalone project or if the DOT has an associated project. Brandon Stokes and Mr. Fox clarified that the FHWA is delivering the project (design and construction management), but DOT is providing design for overhead powerlines and plugins.

There was consensus among the agencies that the project did not pose a local air quality concern. Mr. Fox stated the project was in the TIP, and the project was not of air quality concern. Mr. Pepple stated that as long as it was confirmed the project was part of the TIP there is no need to update the regional emissions analysis. Mr. Pepple also concurred that the project was not of air quality concern. Mr. Alimi stated that as long as it was confirmed the project was part of the TIP there is no need to update the regional emissions analysis., Mr. Alimi concurred the project was not of local air quality concern. Mr. Morrow restated for

confirmation the agency comments that there were no local air quality concerns and that additional project-level modeling would not be required.

Ms. Oesterling summarized the requirements for a project-level conformity determination, including documenting that interagency consultation was completed (pending feedback from Mr. Fox).

Mr. Alimi requested that NEPA mitigation measures controlling dust during construction be included. FHWA agreed and requested specific language if available. Mr. Alimi agreed to provide example language, if needed. Mr. Pepple and Mr. Morrow agreed that dust control should be included as best management practices (BMPs) and addressed in the environmental assessment. Mr. Morrow also informed the conference that the environmental assessment is scheduled for release in late April with a 30-day public comment period.

Next steps:

- i. Is the project part of a conforming plan/TIP? Yes, but Mr. Fox to confirm.
Confirmation –Mr. Fox confirmed March 9, 2021 the Lathrop Street Extension project (south of the levee) was included in the Regional Conformity Analysis for Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System Metropolitan Transportation Plan.
- ii. Is the project of local air quality concern? No.
- iii. FHWA to prepare a formal conformity determination that would be included in the environmental assessment. Ms. Oesterling offered to provide example.
- iv. FHWA will provide a summary of the meeting to be distributed to attendees for comments/edits. A final summary of meeting notes will be included in the environmental assessment.

There were no further comments or questions. Mr. Morrow stated the FHWA would draft meeting notes and email attendees for edits. He thanked everyone for their time and attendance and ended the meeting at 11:00 a.m.