

Fed Hwy Proj.

6/19/58

Honorable Albert Thomas
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Thomas:

I wish to acknowledge receipt of the data transmitted by your office concerning certain alleged practices of the Bureau of Public Roads in Alaska with respect to specifications contained in highway construction contracts.

Highway construction in Alaska was placed under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Public Roads following passage of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1946. The policy of that agency has always been to promote highway construction by contract methods based on competitive bidding. To the extent possible this policy is being pursued in carrying out its responsibilities in Alaska. A transition from construction by Government forces and equipment to contract construction is being carried out as rapidly as possible, commensurate with the public interest. Every effort is being made to secure the maximum possible benefit from funds available for highway construction in the Territory and the program for the current construction season involves a greatly increased volume of contract construction with the hope of attracting the fullest possible competition in bidding from responsible construction firms. All information available is being furnished to prospective bidders and I wish to assure you that all bidders are being treated equally.

A detailed report concerning the specifications setting forth the contractor's responsibilities in permafrost areas is being requested from the field. A more complete reply will be forwarded to you upon receipt of this information.

Please be assured that this matter is being given careful attention and that every effort is being made to proceed with highway construction in Alaska in a manner that will result in the maximum use of the personnel and equipment of the construction industry.

Sincerely yours,

LSR

Louis S. Rothschild

Bureau of Public Roads
EEErhart:mk:6/18/58
Control No. FR-2349
Signer's Copy
Return to Public Roads

Under Sec'y. (2-cc)
Federal Hwy. Projs. Div.
Mr. B. D. Tallamy
CC Unit - Room 810
Mr. Royster - Room 814

EE

C. 1. 1

Albert Thomas
D.D.

at London

This letter refers to Mr.

I am sending it along pursuant to our
previous conversation today.

Regards.

A.T.

C O P Y

C O P Y

More than a year ago the functions and personnel of the Alaska Road Commission were transferred from the Department of Interior to the Department of Commerce. At this time, the Bureau of Public Roads sent a new man to Alaska as regional engineer from Oklahoma whose name is Mr. E. H. Swick, Swick coming fresh out of the soft dirt and loose rock country of Oklahoma knows nothing about Arctic construction conditions. The organization he inherited in Alaska has convinced him that he should force the contractors to take all the risk attendant to construction condition where permafrost might be encountered. We contractors are forced into position where in order to bid a job intelligently we must take core borings every few feet along a new location or have to guess at the quantity of permafrost to be expected.

Furthermore, the jobs are usually funded and advertised for bids in mid-winter so that construction can start about June 1. We contractors are usually notified in September or October that we have about fifteen days to inspect the job in order to be prepared to bid the following January or February.

You can easily see how it is possible for a favored contractor to be given sufficient advance notice to permit him to thoroughly investigate the job during the preceding summer. With this advanced information and with the proposed new permafrost clause in the specifications, which makes the contractor responsible, it is easy to see how such favored contractor could have all the information and the other competitors could be frightened into a higher price or in not bidding at all.

I do not think, however, that this is the real intent of the Bureau. I think the real intent on the part of some of the employees is to force all contractors to bid high and justify a return to the Force Account System formerly pursued at a gross waste of the taxpayer's money.

Therefore, it is not an imposition on you and your staff, and if it does not violate any of your policies, I am wondering if you would write a letter to the Hon. Sinclair Weeks along the lines of the rough draft which I am enclosing herewith. I am convinced that if the people in Alaska persist along some of the lines they have been following in the past that this Bureau and others are fit subjects for an appropriate investigation.

If this request is out of line, please let me have your feelings in the matter.

C O P Y

C O P Y

ALASKA CHAPTER ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS OF AMERICA
306 Central Building * Post Office Box 992
Anchorage, Alaska

April 22, 1958.

To: Officers and Directors, Alaska Chapter, A.G.C.

This concerns the subject of "permafrost" as an item in BFR specifications. Particular reference is made to a clause in the Nenana road job specifications, bid April 15th. under Article 4.6 PERMAFROST WHICH STATES:

ANY PERMAFROST CONDITION THAT MAY BE ENCOUNTERED BY THE CONTRACTOR IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THE CONTRACT WORK SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED A CHANGED CONDITION OR UNFORESEEABLE WITH THE TERMS OF THE CONTRACT SUCH AS TO ENTITLE THE CONTRACTOR TO ANY ADJUSTMENT IN CONTRACT PRICE OR CONTRACT TIME.

It is contended this is an unfair clause and while probably legal, is nullified in principle by other specifications for the same job which acknowledge permafrost to be a changed or unforeseeable condition as shown in ARTICLE 400-3.11 PILES IN PERMAFROST which recognizes the possibility of encountering permafrost and provides for extra payment for thawing ground to permit driving of piling.

This is a paradox that furnishes an escape hatch for the BFR as to added costs of handling permafrost in extensive areas and narrows down liability for contract adjustment to minimum, restricted limits.

The BFR, being primarily personnel of the former Alaska Road Commission, is fully cognizant of the existence of permafrost in many localities. In fact the ARC used the possibility of encountering permafrost as a major argument to support its roundly criticized force account policy by maintaining that permafrost being unpredictable as to areas and scope justified force account to explore and open up such areas. In substance the specifications for the Nenana road project acknowledge the likelihood of encountering permafrost and place the onus of speculation on the contractor. The latter must estimate his bid on equivocal factors under the assumption that entire areas are permafrost or rely upon conjecture as to locations and quantities. Variations under such circumstances would not enhance the prestige of contract work in the eyes of the BFR.

Mr. Swick, Regional Engineer, was not in Juneau when we endeavored to discuss this matter in connection with the Nenana job. His assistant, Mr. Neimi, former ARC official, was not convinced by our appeal for modifications of ARTICLE 4.6 and stated that forthright recognition of permafrost conditions as unforeseeable would enable contractors to claim that such conditions existed when in reality only seasonal frost prevailed. Such an attitude is typical of Neimi.

Since provisions set forth in ARTICLE 4.6 of the Nenana job are likely to become standard if unprotested the question occurs "is it objectionable enough to pursue for modification and if so should action be initiated by the Chapter manager/ ^{or} the Chapter Highway Committee?"

Your comment will be appreciated.

Yours very truly.

L. A. Moore, Manager

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Alaska 74 Ken.
X Cong. Books

TO: Mr. Paul W. Royator

DATE: July 5, 1958

FROM: Eric E. Stewart

SUBJECT:

Mr. Turner advised on July 7 of a bill submitted by Senator Neuberger which, if enacted, would provide funds for paving the Alaska Highway both in Alaska and in Canada. The cost of this work is estimated at \$150,000 per mile and Public Roads is given as the source of this cost information.

I made inquiries here in the Washington office and was unable to determine that Alaska Highway paving estimates had been furnished to any member of Congress. I did find a copy of an estimate prepared by Engineering dated June 22, 1955 for regrading, base course, bituminous plant mix surfacing, bridge and culvert replacement on 172 1/2 miles of the Alaska Highway in Canada (Dawson Creek to the Alaska Boundary) at \$90,000 per mile or a total of \$109,890,000. An estimate for major reconstruction, base course, bituminous plant mix surfacing and major structures on the 110 mile Canadian section of the Almasa Cutoff was also made at the same time (6/22/55). This was given at \$135,000 per mile or a total of \$14,850,000.

I telephoned the Juneau office and discussed the subject of Alaska Highway paving estimates with Mr. Niemi (Mr. Swick was absent). Mr. Niemi said that such estimates had not been furnished to Senator Neuberger. He referred, however, to information furnished to Mr. D. D. Day of the Keiser Corporation in response to a request received January 15, 1958. Mr. Day asked for approximate cost figures for new highway construction, reconstruction and maintenance in Alaska. He was furnished the following which could have been in turn made available to Senator Neuberger:

New construction, including grading, drainage, base course and 1 1/2" plant-mix surfacing - \$150,000 per mile.

Reconstruction, drainage, base, bituminous plant-mix surfacing - \$90,000 per mile.

Maintenance - \$1500 - 2000 per mile, per year.

Mr. Niemi advised that for the 71 mile unpaved section of the Alaska Highway in Alaska, all regrading has been completed and base course constructed on the portion from the Alaska boundary 40 miles westerly.

(More)

He said that present plans were to construct a bituminous surface treatment on the entire 71 miles since traffic was light and that therefore plant-mix pavement was not considered necessary at this time. Bituminous surface treatment is estimated at \$10,000 per mile. Bids received last week on a 35 mile job were in excess of the estimate by about 22 percent and were rejected.

Mr. Niemi stated that the cost of base course and bituminous plant-mix surfacing (1 1/2" thickness) in the Territory was now being estimated at from \$30,000 to \$50,000 per mile, depending on material sources and project location.

During the telephone conversation July 7 with Mr. Turner, he also asked about the current status of paving by the Canadians on the 51 mile section of the Alaska Highway from Dawson Creek to Fort St. John. It was learned, from the Juneau office, that this is now under construction at a cost of \$2,650,000 (construction items only) for plant-mix pavement 24 feet wide, 3 - 4" thick with 6 foot dressed shoulders. This figures about \$52,000 per mile without engineering and contingencies. Asphaltic materials being used are from the oil wells in the Dawson Creek area.

It was also learned that the Hart Highway (Prince George, B.C. to Dawson Creek) is being paved in sections. A 45 mile section from Prince George northerly has been paved and another 15 mile section is now under construction. In addition, a 25 mile section from Dawson Creek southerly has been black topped.

The Haines Cutoff has been paved from Haines to the Canadian line. There is no paving on the 110 mile Canadian section.

Later

It has also been learned that the Alaska Rail and Highway Commission (Junge's Office) has been in contact with Senator Neuberger's office regarding paving costs on the Alaska Highway.

JUN 24 1958

Smith, Brown & Root, Inc.
Kansas City,
Kansas

Gentlemen:

Your telegram of June 14 advised of the imminent date for the opening of bids on a project in Mt. McKinley National Park in Alaska by the Bureau of Public Roads and that the project specifications contained a clause concerning permafrost conditions not considered to be in the public interest. You inquired whether the date of bid opening would be deferred pending study of the contract specifications.

The specification to which you referred was under study in connection with other projects in Alaska at the time your telegram was received. The field office of the Bureau of Public Roads charged with the responsibility for administering the highway program in the Territory has been asked for a complete report on the matter.

Regarding the project in Mt. McKinley Park to which you referred, six bids were received and opened on June 17. The low bidder was the M-B Contracting Company, Seattle, Washington and the bid amount was \$637,381.50. Other bidders and bid totals were as follows:

Green Construction Company, Des Moines, Iowa	\$ 686,208.50
Morrison Knudsen Company, Anchorage, Alaska	797,261.00
Patti - Mac Donald Construction Co. Anchorage, Alaska	797,485.30
Rogers and Babler Anchorage, Alaska	811,989.00
Smith, Brown & Root, Inc.	1,042,207.50

You will note that good competition was received in response to the advertisement of this project. Advice received

From the Public Roads field office indicates that there was no criticism from prospective bidders in regard to the permafrost provision. It is understood that a representative of your firm commented on the embankment construction specification before bids were opened but not on other design or specification features.

Recommendation of award of contract to the low bidder has been made by the Bureau of Public Roads. The National Park Service has advised that award was made on June 20, 1958.

As mentioned above, a study is being made of use of the permafrost provision in those areas in Alaska where this condition may be revealed during construction operations. From information presently available it is not apparent that the inclusion of the provision in highway project specifications is contrary to the public interest. However, your action in calling this matter to my attention is appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

F1

Louis S. Rothschild

Bureau of Public Roads
EEErhart:nk:6/20/58
Control No. 42154 Return To Public Roads
Signer's Copy
Under Sec'y. of Transportation

354

- cc - Federal Hwy. Projs. Div. ✓
- Mr. B. D. Tallamy
- CC Unit - Room 810
- Mr. Swick (2-cc)
- Mr. Royster - Room 814

RECEIVED
JUN 23 1958
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
BUREAU OF PUBLIC ROADS

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
TELETYPE SERVICE
TELETYPE UNIT

1958 JUN 16 AM 8 32

1958 JUN 16 PM 12 37

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
SECRETARY'S
OFFICE TELETYPE UNIT

WUB057 PD

FAX KS KANSAS CITY KANS JUN 14 944AMC

UNDER SECRETARY ROTHSCHILD

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

ON TUESDAY SEVENTEENTH BPR TAKES BIDS ON PROJECT
NP1-A~~4~~ IN MT MCKINLEY NATIONAL PARK. THESE
SPECIFICATIONS CONTAIN PERMAFROST CLAUSE TO WHICH
OBJECTION HAS BEEN TAKEN AS NOT IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST.
WILL BID DATE BE DEFERRED UNTIL YOU HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO
REVIEW THIS SUBJECT? APPRECIATE AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR
REVIEW OF THIS MATTER

SMITH BROWN & ROOT INC

828AME JUN 16.

P.O. 1137 - Custom Tables

See thanks you letter 6/11/58
from Cong. in "Alaska Seal." Fed Hwy Proj

23-10

June 9, 1958

Honorable E. L. Bartlett
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Bartlett:

Reference is made to your letter dated May 14, addressed to Mr. Edgar H. Swick, Public Roads Regional Engineer at Juneau, Alaska relative to a petition from Homer residents urging that a bridge in lieu of earth fills be constructed at the proposed crossing of the North Fork of the Anchor River, in order to minimize the likelihood of interference to the salmon run.

Your interest and that of the Homer residents, in this regard is appreciated.

As stated in your letter, Mr. Howard Myhill, President of the Homer Chamber of Commerce also wrote one of our offices in Alaska relative to this matter. Mr. Swick replied to Mr. Myhill by letter dated May 9, a copy of which is enclosed. It will be noted from Mr. Swick's letter that in accordance with our general policy concerning fish and wildlife, our improvement program in the Anchor River section was carefully reviewed by the Commercial Fisheries Department of the Federal Government in Juneau in order to conserve the fishery resources. The proposed designs for large culverts, instead of a bridge, were reviewed and approved by that agency.

It is believed that the structures contemplated at this crossing offer the most practical solution to the joint highway and fishery problem. The approved design will also result in a considerable monetary saving and thereby conserve funds badly needed throughout the Territory for other highway construction and improvements.

We trust that the above information adequately replies to your request for advice relative to action taken in this regard. Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely yours,

PFR
Paul F. Royster
Assistant to the
Federal Highway Administrator

Enclosure

(1)
CALewis:nk Control No. PR-2287 (6/9/58) CC Unit - Room 810 E. W. Swick (2-cc)
Files (2) Federal Hwy. Projs. Div. V B. D. Tallamy Mr. Royster-Rm814

BUREAU OF PUBLIC ROADS

*Operations
(chart)*

*Completed
5/28/58*

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Mr. Paul F. Royster, Assistant Commissioner
for Operations, Washington, D. C.

DATE: May 28, 1958

FROM : *EH* E. H. Swick, Regional Engineer 10
Juneau, Alaska

SUBJECT: Alaska Congressional Correspondence

Attached for your handling is a reply to a letter of May 14 from Delegate Bartlett concerning possible damage to fisheries resulting from highway construction activities at Anchor River on the Kenai Peninsula.

att reply Swick 5/28

Attachments 2:

- Copy letter from Delegate Bartlett, May 14, 1958
- Letter to Delegate Bartlett, May 28, 1958

RECEIVED
MAY 28 1958
BUREAU OF PUBLIC ROADS
WASHINGTON, D. C.

pp-2287

A.R.S.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU OF PUBLIC ROADS
REGION 10
P. O. BOX 1961
JUNEAU, ALASKA

May 28, 1958

Honorable E. L. Bartlett
Delegate from Alaska
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Bartlett:

Your letter of May 14, 1958 expresses some concern regarding damage to fisheries resulting from highway construction activities at Anchor River on the Kenai Peninsula. Mr. Howard Myhill, President of the Homer Chamber of Commerce, wrote us on this subject on May 5, 1958, and supplied your office with a copy.

Attached is a copy of our May 9 reply to Mr. Myhill which indicates the measures which are being taken by Public Roads in Alaska to conserve our fishery resources. The situation at the north fork of the Anchor River has been fully coordinated with the Commercial Fisheries Department of the Federal Government and our design of large culverts in place of a bridge has received their approval. This design will result in considerable monetary saving and will thereby conserve funds so badly needed throughout the Territory for highway construction and improvement.

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely yours,



E. H. Swick
Regional Engineer

Enclosure

ENCLOSURE

May 9, 1958

Mr. Howard Myhill, President
Homer Chamber of Commerce
P. O. Box 93
Homer, Alaska

Dear Mr. Myhill:

Your letter of May 5, 1958, transmitted a resolution and petition pertaining to proposed construction across the north fork of the Anchor River. Your concern is the damage to migrating salmon.

We wish to assure you that the whole Anchor River section of our improvement program has been carefully reviewed by the Commercial Fisheries Department of the Federal Government here in Juneau. Our designs have been reviewed and have received approval of that agency. The Bureau of Public Roads has gone to considerable expense for field surveys to find the best and most economical solutions to joint highway and fisheries problems.

It is the policy of Public Roads to consult with the Fish and Wildlife Service on all projects wherever located so that conflicts may be resolved before damage is done. We appreciate your concern, and hope the above information will provide the assurance which you seek regarding the preservation of the fishery resource at Anchor River.

Sincerely yours,

E. H. Swick
Regional Engineer

cc: Mr. Zimmerman

WJNiem: jai

22-10

MAY 6 1958

AIR MAIL

Mr. Charles D. Jones
Box 82
Nome, Alaska

Dear Mr. Jones:

The Secretary of Commerce has asked me to reply to your letter of April 15 concerning the development of a highway from Fairbanks through the Seward Peninsula to Nome, Alaska.

A Federal-aid primary highway system comprised of the main through routes and a Federal-aid secondary system comprised of the principal secondary and feeder roads were proposed by the Territory and approved February 26, 1957, by the Bureau of Public Roads in accordance with provisions of Section 107 of the Federal-aid Highway Act of 1956.

Roads from Fairbanks through Livengood and Eureka to Tofty, and from Nome to the vicinity of Bunker Hill, are on the Federal-aid secondary system and are, therefore, eligible for improvement and maintenance with Federal participation. The 400-mile intervening section is not on the secondary system but is marked for possible future system designation. In this connection, the Bureau of Public Roads recently approved the expenditure of \$20,000 for a location study and economic analysis to determine feasibility of a complete through routing.

We certainly understand your deep interest and concern in this matter but further developments must await the results of the above-mentioned studies. We are forwarding a copy of your letter to our regional engineer at Juneau, who administers Federal-aid highway matters in Alaska. Your interest in this highway is appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Paul F. Royster
Assistant to the
Federal Highway Administrator

JPBowler:rg
RETYPE
PFRoyster/ptw
Control PR-2039 (5/2/58)
cc: E. H. Swick (2)
B. D. Tallamy

C. E. Mannerow
G.M. Williams
E. E. Erhart
Files
CCUnit

Nome Alaska,
April 15, 1958.

Honorable Sinclair Weeks
Secretary of Commerce
Washington D C.

Sir:- As this is a gripe, I question it ever getting to your desk and I may get letter (29) or whatever you have for a kiss-off, I want to get it off my chest and will send it on regardless of results.

I have been a resident of Nome and on the Seward Peninsula for fifty nine years and have done every type of work but tending bar, which I did on the wrong side to my financial detriment. I have followed placer mining in all its phases as a shovel stiff, straw boss, gang boss superintendent and General Manager and conducted operations for myself.

I served several seasons as General Foreman for the Alaska Road Commission mining in the winters and prospecting on my own. I was appointed Superintendent of operations in 1918 until April of 1925 when I was appointed U S Marshal and served until September 30 1938.

I have served in the Legislature as a member in the House in the First Legislature in 1913 and in several sessions later in the Senate being chosen as President of the Senate in 1953.

When Roosevelt took the U S off the Gold Standard it was the Kiss of Death to our economy, especially so when mining was declared a useless occupation and made a crime to Not Turn Your Gold Into The Government at a pegged price so with all cuts in connection with the carrying on a mining operation it is an extremely hazardous occupation, but to one who has the virus from the gold bug, like a mole, he is unfitted for other occupations and WANTS TO MINE.

The Geologic Survey Reports as well as those of the Mining Bureau, ALL stress the Seward Peninsula as being the richest portion of North America as to the Diversity of Minerals on it.

When the BPR took over the road building in the Territory at the first meeting of the Board 97 was made a Priority for road between Fairbanks and Nome and through a portion of the Peninsula KNOWN TO BE POTENTIALLY WELL POSSESSED with valuable minerals. So we were all hopeful of getting only what was left from the appropriations to the Alaska Road Commission when the other Divisions were taken care of. When the Army Got through with demands for what THEY considered Essential, our hopes EVAPORATED. Here is the appropriation as decided upon

		1959
Third Division	5,000,000.00	3,446,000
Fourth "	4,000,000.00	2,365,000
First "	2,000,000.00	1,141,000
Second "	1,000,000.00	652,000

of the money appropriated for the Second Division 100,000.00 dollars was earmarked for surveys.

With the Plan of the BPR to build to a standard it absolutely blocks ANY REAL ROAD CONSTRUCTION onto these portions where discoveries have been made. If we can just get a pilot road into them we can get over them with crawler type machines and justify these twenty five thousand dollar a mile roads. As one of the oldest settled parts of Alaska which has turned around a hundred millions in gold AND OTHER PRODUCTS TO THE U S We feel that we are being discriminated against and are being treated like Unwanted Step Children.

In addition to Direct appropriations both of the First and Third Divisions secured a healthy sum from the sale of Timber in the Forests Reserves which is spent on Road Construction in the Respective Reserves.

I solicit your help in trying to influence the BPR to consider the Future of the Territory in a balanced development and give us and inducement to develop our own resources and not to have to live off of the Taxes appropriated to sustain the Army and the Defense are as declared BY THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES. Give we Little fellows who have lived off of our own production HELP NOW and open the way for REAL DEVELOPMENT when we have shown BIG MONEY the possibilities.

I am
Respectfully yours

Chas. D. Jones
Box 82
Nome

PR 2039

return to Erhart

April 25, 1958

Mr. Mannerow:

I discussed the attached letter with you by phone. Since it involves Federal-aid system and program matters in Alaska, matters for which Engineering is responsible, I believe the reply should be from Engineering. I have so advised the correspondence control unit.

The letter mentions that the road from Fairbanks to Nome was made a "priority road" when Bureau of Public Roads took over in Alaska. This statement is incorrect. This route is not on the Federal-aid system.


Eric E. Erhart

25-21.1

BUREAU OF PUBLIC ROADS

Return to T. J. Kennedy

Mr. E. H. Swick, Regional Engineer
Juneau, Alaska

April 15, 1958

E. H. Holmes, Assistant Commissioner
Washington, D. C.

Alaska HPS-1(5)--Route Study, Nome to Fairbanks

We wish to acknowledge receipt of your memorandum of March 6 advising of several studies underway or proposed utilizing Alaska $1\frac{1}{2}$ -percent Federal-aid funds.

Our comments were invited on your approval action on a \$20,000 study of a possible highway connection between Nome and Fairbanks. The study would, in large part, consist of assembling and analyzing previous studies including a military railroad reconnaissance. Some additional aerial investigations are also anticipated.

Although, as you point out, the development of a highway route between these two places is probably a long way off in the future, the fact that there is considerable local interest in the matter would justify such a study so that future discussions on the route could be based on factual engineering data permitting a professional appraisal of its merits.

We concur in your approval of the project.

JHL
JJK
AKM
4/16/58

TJKennedy:sab
cc: Hwy. Planning DF ✓
Mr. E. H. Swick

REM

REC'D MAIL ROOM
APR 15 - 1958

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Mr. E. H. Holmes

DATE: April 7, 1958

FROM : G. M. Williams *Gmw*

SUBJECT: HPS-1(5) Location study of route from Fairbanks to Nome, Alaska

Mr. Swick's memorandum of March 6, 1958, concerning the Nome-Fairbanks route, referred to the Office of Engineering by Mr. Kennedy, has been reviewed.

Sections of the route west of Fairbanks and north and east of Nome are on the Federal-aid secondary highway system. The 400-mile intervening section is marked on our system maps for future secondary system designation. The Department of Defense has shown an interest in the part of the route from Fairbanks to Galena.

While development of the route is probably a long way off in the future, we see no objection to going ahead with the location analysis at this time, as planned by Mr. Swick. Your attachment is returned.

Attachment

BUREAU OF PUBLIC ROADS

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Rm 3046TO : Mr. E. H. Holmes, Assistant Commissioner for
Research, Washington, D. C.

DATE: March 6, 1958

FROM : E. H. Swick, Regional Engineer
Juneau, Alaska 10

SUBJECT: Alaska HPS Work Program

*cc to Considerable
Committee
Revised Report
8-12-57*

By our memorandum to you dated August 9, 1957, approval was given here to a work program for utilization of the 1957 1 1/2 percent funds in Alaska. Subsequently a second work HPS program was approved in effect with the execution of a contract for economic studies of a ferry system for Southeast Alaska. This ferry study was set up as HPS 1(5) in the amount of \$35,000, and was financed from the primary monies programmed under HPS 1(2).

This office now is approving a further allocation of 1958 primary 1 1/2 percent monies in the amount of \$20,000 to a project to be identified as HPS 1(5). The work to be accomplished under this item is outlined briefly in the attached copies of memoranda from our Design Section. Involved is the assembly from a number of sources of all the information which has been gathered over the years on a possible highway routing from Nome to Fairbanks (including a military railroad reconnaissance), a study of this material in light of modern requirements for highway location, the examination of available high level air photographs as a part of route reconnaissance, and possibly a few low level flights at pinpointed locations where information is lacking or where a critical location control exists.

Public Roads is under considerable pressure from local groups and from the Highway Commissioners representing the Nome and Fairbanks Judicial Divisions (two members of a five man commission) to proceed with the construction of a Nome-Fairbanks Road. Involved is about 400 miles of undeveloped country between road termini short distances east of Nome and west of Fairbanks. Over the entire distance frozen ground is involved and the Yukon River presents a major stream-crossing problem. We have countered pressures for the immediate programming of funds to extend the routing from each end, with statements that it was necessary first to make an overall location analysis of the road, and it is such an analysis that we propose to make with 1 1/2 percent monies. Simultaneously if a suitable individual is available we propose some form of economic analysis concerning the feasibility of the routing. With fewer than 2,000 people at Nome and no port there,