

XXXXXXXXXXXXX
Division 10

February 28, 1949

TO: Mr. J. S. Bright, Deputy Commissioner, Washington, D. C.
FROM: H. A. Stoddart, Division Engineer
SUBJECT: Monthly Report for February 1949 for Division No. 10

Temperature continued close to normal for the southeastern Alaska area, but precipitation in the form of snow has been extremely heavy, making the snow removal problem the most severe that has been noted for many years. Only by frequent operation of equipment on around-the-clock and overtime basis has it been possible to maintain roadways open for traffic. The adverse weather also has reduced the efficiency of survey crews and the results accomplished are less than had been anticipated.

By assembling a crew of temporary employees in Juneau, reasonably good progress has been made on the design of several projects, of which the most important is Section B-1 of the Glenn Highway, extending 54 miles easterly from Palmer. Design work on this contract is nearly completed and the plans are being traced. The total estimated cost including engineering and contingencies is \$2,520,000. The design provides for 13,000 lineal feet of guard rail to protect the roadway on the supported grade leading out of Matanuska Valley.

Other projects for which the design is being advanced to completion are the Wards Cove Project near Ketchikan involved in the proposed pulp mill at that point, the surfacing from the Gastineau Channel Bridge to Douglas, the surfacing of the Forest Highway through Wrangell and the surfacing of the highway through Petersburg. The design also is in progress for the Richardson Highway Section C extending approximately 40 miles south of Big Delta, Richardson Highway Section F extending from Gulkana to approximately Mile Post 82 at the Tonsina Lodge and the Richardson Highway Section H extending 36 miles northerly from Valdez. It is anticipated that the designs for the Richardson Highway Sections will be completed in about six weeks.

The Forest Service is taking steps to obtain the right-of-way for the Kenai River Bridge by condemnation. The five bridges designated as Section F-3 of the Turnagain Arm Project are to be advertised in the near future as soon as minor revisions and details of the plans have been completed.

FEB 1949

At the request of the Alaska Road Commission, provision has been made for the contractor on Section A of the Richardson Highway, by supplemental agreement, to improve the approach from Ladd Field to the city limits of Fairbanks. The improvement is 1700 feet in length and will cost approximately \$20,000. The contractor has agreed to perform the work at the unit prices prevailing on the main contract.

In the Anchorage area, by similar procedure, an arrangement has been made for the improvement of Fourth Street between the city limits of Anchorage and the Fort Richardson area, and also for the eight miles of the Glenn Highway to Fort Richardson previously excepted from the Glenn Highway Section A improvement. The two latter additions will be covered in one supplemental agreement which is now in the process of preparation. The scope of the work has been discussed with the contractor who has agreed to accept contract unit prices for this work also. The additions to the original contract will cover eight miles to the military reservation and seven-tenths mile on the auxiliary approach road from Anchorage to the reservation. The estimated amount of work covered by the Glenn Highway supplemental agreement is approximately \$300,000.

The only construction now active is the limited operation in progress at Portage on the Turnagain Arm Project where Lytle and Green are clearing and placing borrow for roadway embankments and the bridge subcontractor is driving timber piling for the several trestles located in that area.

We are advised that contractors on other projects are engaged in assembling and loading equipment for shipment to Alaska ports. Some consideration is being given to shipping road equipment over the Alaska Highway, but before deciding to use this method, the interested contractors are making a personal investigation.

Due to the adverse weather previously noted, no actual progress has been made on the tank farm construction at Anchorage except for the shipment of material to the site. It is understood, however, that the contractor has a crew organized and is preparing to begin actual construction immediately, or at least as soon as the weather moderates. The Alaska Road Commission representatives are still confident that the facilities can be made ready for operation to receive the shipment of bituminous materials scheduled for April 30, 1949.

In addition to the new income tax voted by the Territorial Legislature, there has been enacted legislation to provide a property tax amounting to ten mills on the property valuation or on the cost of construction. As an incentive to new industries, the Administrator of the Tax Commission is authorized to permit a fifty percent reduction for an initial ten-year period. The new property tax legislation will not affect property within municipalities as the tax will not be imposed in addition to the existing municipalities tax levies. We are not prepared to comment on the effect of the property tax on industry at this early date.

Mr. L. H. Miller arrived from Denver to fill the assignment of Materials Engineer on a temporary basis, it being understood that his term of assignment will not exceed three months. No information has been received to date regarding the availability of an employee who will be permanently assigned to this position. Mr. E. H. Cowan has arrived at Seward to fill the assignment of District Construction Engineer and information has been received that Mr. W. A. Wood is en route from Billings, Montana, to fill a similar position in the Juneau District. Also, information has been received that Mr. M. M. Flint is en route to Juneau to replace Mr. H. P. Hart as Division Construction Engineer. Messrs. Virgil Cave and R. M. Preshaw have arrived at Seward to serve as Resident Engineers and Mr. John A. Hewes has indicated his acceptance of reinstatement with Public Roads to serve as Resident Engineer for southeastern Alaska. While information has been received that a few of the lower-grade engineering aides have been recruited in the St. Paul area and as an encouraging factor it develops that inexperienced survey assistants will more generally be available in Alaska than last year, it remains that the personnel problem is extremely critical and in view of the very short period remaining before construction season starts, the rate of progress of recruitment must be radically improved if we are to avoid a situation that will be very damaging to the position of the Public Roads Administration in Alaska.

HAS:rb

XXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Division Ten

February 28, 1949

TO: Dr. L. I. Hewes, Chief, Western Headquarters, San Francisco,
California

FROM: H. A. Stoddart, Division Engineer

SUBJECT: Monthly Report for February 1949 for Division No. 10

Temperature continued close to normal for the southeastern Alaska area, but precipitation in the form of snow has been extremely heavy, making the snow removal problem the most severe that has been noted for many years. Only by frequent operation of equipment on around-the-clock and overtime basis has it been possible to maintain roadways open for traffic. The adverse weather also has reduced the efficiency of survey crews and the results accomplished are less than had been anticipated.

By assembling a crew of temporary employees in Juneau, reasonably good progress has been made on the design of several projects, of which the most important is Section B-1 of the Glenn Highway, extending fifty-four miles easterly from Palmer. Design work on this contract is nearly completed and the plans are being traced. The total estimated cost including engineering and contingencies is \$2,520,000. The design provides for 13,000 lineal feet of guard rail to protect the roadway on the supported grade leading out of Matanuska Valley.

Other projects for which the design is being advanced to completion are the Wards Cove Project near Ketchikan, involved in the proposed pulp mill at that point, the surfacing from the Gastineau Channel Bridge to Douglas, the surfacing of the Forest Highway through Wrangell and the surfacing of the highway through Petersburg. The design also is in progress for the Richardson Highway Section C extending approximately forty miles south of Big Delta, Richardson Highway Section F extending from Gulkana to approximately Mile Post 82 at the Tonsina Lodge and the Richardson Highway Section H extending thirty-six miles northerly from Valdez. It is anticipated that the designs for the Richardson Highway Sections will be completed in about six weeks.

The Forest Service is taking steps to obtain the right-of-way for the Kenai River Bridge by condemnation. The five bridges designated as Section F-3 of the Turnagain Arm Project are to be advertised in the near future as soon as minor revisions and details of the plans have been completed.

At the request of the Alaska Road Commission, provision has been made for the contractor on Section A of the Richardson Highway, by supplemental agreement, to improve the approach from Ladd Field to the city limits of Fairbanks. The improvement is 1700 feet in length and will cost approximately \$20,000. The contractor has agreed to perform the work at the unit prices prevailing on the main contract.

In the Anchorage area, by similar procedure, an arrangement has been made for the improvement of Fourth Street between the city limits of Anchorage and the Fort Richardson area, and also for the eight miles of the Glenn Highway to Fort Richardson previously excepted from the Glenn Highway Section A improvement. The two latter additions will be covered in one supplemental agreement which is now in the process of preparation. The scope of the work has been discussed with the contractor who has agreed to accept contract unit prices for this work also. The additions to the original contract will cover eight miles to the military reservation and seven-tenths mile on the auxiliary approach road from Anchorage to the reservation. The estimated amount of work covered by the Glenn Highway supplemental agreement is approximately \$300,000.

The only construction now active is the limited operation in progress at Portage on the Turnagain Arm Project where Lytle and Green are clearing and placing borrow for roadway embankments and the bridge subcontractor is driving timber piling for the several trestles located in that area.

We are advised that contractors on other projects are engaged in assembling and loading equipment for shipment to Alaska ports. Some consideration is being given to shipping road equipment over the Alaska Highway, but before deciding to use this method, the interested contractors are making a personal investigation.

Due to the adverse weather previously noted, no actual progress has been made on the tank farm construction at Anchorage except for the shipment of material to the site. It is understood, however, that the contractor has a crew organized and is preparing to begin actual construction immediately, or at least as soon as the weather moderates. The Alaska Road Commission representatives are still confident that the facilities can be made ready for operation to receive the shipment of bituminous materials scheduled for April 30, 1949.

In addition to the new income tax voted by the Territorial Legislature, there has been enacted legislation to provide a property tax amounting to ten mills on the property valuation or on the cost of construction. As an incentive to new industries, the Administrator of the Tax Commission is authorized to permit a fifty percent reduction for an initial ten-year period. The new property tax legislation will not affect property within municipalities as the tax will not be imposed in addition to the existing municipalities tax levies. We are

not prepared to comment on the effect of the property tax on industry at this early date.

Mr. L. H. Miller arrived from Denver to fill the assignment of Materials Engineer on a temporary basis, it being understood that his term of assignment will not exceed three months. No information has been received to date regarding the availability of an employee who will be permanently assigned to this position. Mr. E. H. Cowan has arrived at Seward to fill the assignment of District Construction Engineer and information has been received that Mr. W. A. Wood is en route from Billings, Montana, to fill a similar position in the Juneau District. Also, information has been received that Mr. M. M. Flint is en route to Juneau to replace Mr. H. P. Hart as Division Construction Engineer. Messrs. Virgil Cave and R. M. Freshaw have arrived at Seward to serve as Resident Engineers and Mr. John A. Hewes has indicated his acceptance of reinstatement with Public Roads to serve as Resident Engineer for southeastern Alaska. While information has been received that a few of the lower-grade engineering aides have been recruited in the St. Paul area and as an encouraging factor, it develops that inexperienced survey assistants will more generally be available in Alaska than last year, it remains that the personnel problem is extremely critical and in view of the very short period remaining before construction season starts, the rate of progress of recruitment must be radically improved if we are to avoid a situation that will be very damaging to the position of the Public Roads Administration in Alaska.

Activities in the field were so reduced during the month of February that monthly reports have not been submitted by the District Engineers.

HAS:rb

PUBLIC ROADS ADMINISTRATION
DIVISION 10
SEWARD DISTRICT

NARRATIVE REPORT FOR
FEBRUARY 1949

TURNAGAIN ARM PROJECTS

Sections C & D - Mile 58 to Quartz Creek
Section F-1 - Portage to Peterson Creek

There is no activity as these projects have been closed down since the previous report was submitted, with the exception of a small amount of clearing work that is starting on the extreme north end of Section D along with the clearing on the extreme south end of Section E.

Section E - Quartz Creek to Portage

The contractors camp at Portage was reopened January 21, after being closed since December 15, and the contractor started driving piling during the week starting January 24. Good progress is being made on this work and the contractor is driving about two bents per day. The contractor expects to start pouring precast beams for the bridge within two weeks.

A 1-1/2 C.Y. shovel was started in the pit near the mouth of Quartz Creek during the week ending February 12 and fair progress is being made. Material is being placed in the fill across the tide flats between the mouth of Quartz Creek and Portage. It is the contractors objective to place a lift of borrow across this swampy area, which will enable hauling over the road after the frost goes out of the ground. The contractor has a new 2-1/2 C.Y. shovel at Portage which he expects to start in the borrow pit near the Portage camp within the next few days. A clearing crew is working south, up Quartz Creek, from Turnagain Arm. The clearing operations have just reached the north end of Section D, but no appreciable amount of work has been performed on this Section.

Section F-2 - Peterson Creek to Indian

No contract work has started on this section. A small crew is staking clearing on this project. Field work has been retarded considerably as the depth of snow exceeds three feet. Most of the engineering personnel has been moved back to Portage to handle the contract work at that point.

Section G - Indian to Potter

Plans have been completed by the Alaska Railroad and railroad officials indicate the work can be advertised as soon as funds are available.

GLENN HIGHWAY

Section A - Anchorage to Palmer

The contractor who has subcontracted the grading work expects to begin operations in about two weeks if weather permits. Operations will start at the Knik River bridge and progress toward Anchorage. Grading operations will be closely followed by base course and plant mix. Previous reports indicated that suitable sources of material for the section through Fort Richardson had been agreed to with Army officials. Subsequent developments proved the commitments previously made by the Army as to sources of material were not firm. It has been necessary to reopen negotiations with the officials at the Post and it appears that a source suitable to the Government, the contractor and the post officials has now been located. Sampling to determine the suitability of the material is now being done. Completion of plans on which to base the supplemental agreement is being deferred pending consummation of negotiations as to source of material.

RICHARDSON HIGHWAY

Sections A and B - Fairbanks to Big Delta

As far as is known the contractor still plans to start about April 15, as stated in previous reports. Two men in Fairbanks are sampling sources of material for plant mix.

ALASKA HIGHWAY

Section B - Johnson River to Tok Junction

As indicated in the previous report, the contractor on this project intended to start operations May 1. Information received from the Alaska Road Commission indicates that Thompson Pass will not be open before May 15, and the contractor has been so informed. No information has been received as to any changes he may have made in his plans.

KENAI RIVER HIGHWAY; FOREST HIGHWAY PROJECT 5-B1

All data on which to base the condemnation for right-of-way has been completed and forwarded through channels. If at all possible, this project should be placed in line for construction this year. One bent at the north end of the existing bridge will have to be replaced within the next two or three weeks in order to keep the old bridge in service. Plans for doing this work with maintenance forces are being made now, and necessary material is being assembled.

SEWARD MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS

As previously reported, snow, except in Seward, is below normal. Slide difficulties have not been serious and probably will not become so. Maintenance operations at the present time consist of thawing ice from frozen culverts, removing some glaciers from the road that have started causing trouble during the current thaw, and some snow removal between Hope and Moose Pass.

PERSONNEL

Some personnel recently transferred from the States have established residence in Seward with the thought of possibly moving later as work in the interior opens up and engineering crews are organized. It is planned to use the Girdwood camp for taking care of personnel that may arrive before construction jobs are started. Experienced sub-professional personnel in the SP-6, SP-7 and SP-8 grades apparently will be particularly difficult to find in sufficient numbers to staff our construction projects.

B. M. French
District Engineer

March 1, 1949