



February 22, 1949

Hon. Julius A. Krug,  
Secretary of the Interior,  
Washington, D. C.

Col. M. J. [initials]
IPT [initials]
AFG
GMT
WHD [initials]
GHS

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I appreciate the opportunity afforded by your invitation of February 10 to comment on the department's proposal that the width of right-of-way for roads in Alaska should be as follows:

Alaska Highway	600 feet
Other primary Roads	300 feet
Secondary Roads	200 feet
Feeder and Branch Roads	100 feet

The proposal is simply fantastic. If adopted it would push the would-be settler back as if he were not wanted in Alaska. It would in many cases push him up a mountain, over a cliff, or into a stream or lake. It would multiply the difficulties which for him are very considerable already. It would present problems in driveway construction, maintenance, snow clearance and in the obtaining of driveway permits through your right-of-way in the first place. (Don't try to tell any Alaskan who has had dealings with the department that there would not be red tape and delay in connection with that.) It would be an open invitation to trespass.

And for what? I confess I am unable to think of a single good reason for tying up all this territory right where we want people, accommodations for travelers, service facilities, etc. I drove to Alaska over the Alaska Highway last summer and am willing to testify that, even from the standpoint of appearance and interest to the traveler, developments along the road itself are exactly what is needed.

My idea of a reasonable right-of-way reservation, which would amply protect all the interests of the federal government, is as follows:

Alaska Highway, Other Primary Roads, and Secondary Roads	200 feet
Feeder and Branch Roads	100 feet

*No reply will be made other than simple acknowledgment*  
JAS

You mention that the proposal of the department represents a compromise between a recommendation of the Alaska Field Committee and some other unnamed interests. I find it impossible to believe that anyone acquainted with actual conditions in Alaska would recommend a 600-foot right-of-way or anything approaching that dimension. Accordingly, I am sending a copy of this letter to the head of each of the Interior Department agencies in Alaska for comment. When such comments have been received, I will communicate further with you.

Sincerely yours,

E. L. Bartlett

cc: Governor Gruening  
Kenneth Kadow  
Lowell Puckett  
Col. John Noyes  
Clarence Rhode  
Don C. Foster  
Col. J. P. Johnson  
G. D. Jermain  
Jos. M. Morgan (Recl.)  
Grant Pearson  
John Reed  
Alfred Kuehl