

**Wildlife Restoration MULTI-YEAR GRANT
INTERIM PERFORMANCE REPORT**

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

**Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Wildlife Restoration Grant**

GRANT NUMBER: AKW-27

PROJECT NUMBER: Project 3.0

PROJECT TITLE: Forest Road Improvements for Hunter Access—Matanuska and Susitna Valleys

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: September 1, 2017–December 31, 2022

PERFORMANCE YEAR: October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021

REPORT DUE DATE: December 29, 2021

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Authorities: 2 CFR 200.328
2 CFR 200.301
50 CFR 80.90

I. PROGRESS ON PROJECT OBJECTIVES DURING PERFORMANCE YEAR

OBJECTIVE 1: Repair 2.3 miles of Palmer Fishhook Road.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: This objective was completed the last performance period and no additional work was done on this objective.

OBJECTIVE 2: Repair 1.9 miles of Willer-Kash Road.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: During this performance period, Alaska State Parks Design and Construction (ASPD&C) section, in conjunction with the Division of Forestry (DOF) and Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) was able to complete final construction

plans, projects specifications, and contract documents for advertisement and contract procurement purposes by March 2021. Preliminary field surveys and assessment of existing road conditions were completed in early to mid-October of 2020. All construction permits were applied for and acquired simultaneously during engineering design development, prior to advertisement of the project.

The first solicitation was canceled because all of the bids received were higher than the originally allocated project budget. After evaluating options, it was determined that the best course of action was to rescope the project and resolicit bids for the project.

With a reduction in the scope of work, the construction solicitation was repackaged and rebid in April/May of 2021. The successful low bidder for the contract was Western Construction & Equipment. Award of the Contract and Limited Notice to Proceed (NTP) was issued on June 9, 2021, in the amount of \$253,703.00. Per the Contract, a Full NTP for commencement of on-site work was not issued until July 6, 2021, on which construction activities commenced on-site. The Division of Forestry notified nearby landowners and known user groups well in advance of construction through public notice, social media and direct mail and email and responses were supportive of the road improvements.

A total of 6,576 linear feet (1.25 miles) of the existing road was reconditioned and another 6,345 linear feet (1.20 miles) of road embankment was constructed. Embankment construction consisted of a uniform 1-ft thick overlay of selected material; Type A borrow. A total of 3,958 cubic yards of material was used for embankment construction and a corresponding 10,037 square yards of geotextile separation material was installed. One existing dysfunctional culvert was removed and replaced, and three new culverts were installed at strategic locations to improve drainage. The 30-foot-long culverts were installed with the flared end-sections to properly divert flow into and out of the culverts. Additionally, the contractor successfully reconstructed and regraded the drainage ditches along the road alignment to direct surface runoff. The contractor installed appropriate signage as required.

Substantial completion of the Contract was issued on August 5, 2021, and final completion was issued on Sept. 8, 2021, upon achievement of final stabilization and issuance of DEC clearance. Notice of project completion was issued on Sept. 23, 2021, and final acceptance was issued shortly after, upon receipt of DOL Notice of Completion and DOL Tax Clearances.

Soon after the completion of the road work, DOF completed a site inspection on a particularly rainy day and found that the locations that had new material laid on top of geotextile were holding up very well. Some of the areas that had been reconditioned were saturated and soft on the upper two to three inches surface, but solid below. On a follow-up inspection on September 30, 2021 with both ADF&G and DOF present, these areas appeared to have firmed up prior to freezing conditions.

OBJECTIVE 3: Repair 1.8 miles of Zero Lake Road

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: This objective has been removed from the project and no work was done on this segment during this performance period.

OBJECTIVE 4: Educate wildlife recreationists and hunter user groups about sustainable road use practices.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Currently The team is discussing options to complete this objective in the next performance period.

II. SUMMARY OF WORK COMPLETED ON PROJECT TO DATE.

This project was awarded in September 2017, just as the DOF Project Engineer was taking on his new role as Area Forester for the Mat-Su/Southwest in Palmer. In December 2018 he accepted a new position as the Coastal Region Forester. An acting Area Forester was appointed in December 2018 and remained in that role until April 2019 when he accepted the Area Forester position. These personnel transitions combined with a delay in processing the Reimbursable Services Agreement (RSA) between ADF&G and DOF delayed implementation of engineering designs and procurement processes. The RSA was completed during the fall of 2019 and ADF&G and DNR secured the RSA for the grant funds for the project. DOF contracted the design work on the Willer-Kash segment with RECON, LLC, in spring of 2019 and design work was completed to a 100% final package in March 2019. Bids for work on the Willer-Kash road were not solicited in 2019 due to staff changes within DOF and a busy fire season. Initial road repair work on the Wendt Road / Moose Range segment started the summer of 2018 and was completed summer of 2019. The results of the semi-experimental sump drains created in wet areas along that road were adequate and effective. 2020 included significant effort and coordination between resource and administrative staff at ADF&G, DOF and ASPD&C to set up an RSA from DOF to ASPD&C to take on the design and construction portion of this project. Unfortunately, several delays in setting up the RSA resulted in no physical road work completed on project deliverables during this period. However, in October of 2020, survey work was completed by ASPD&C, laying the framework for the roadwork to be completed in 2021.

During the 2020-2021 performance period, ASPD&C section, in conjunction with DOF and ADF&G, completed final construction plans, projects specifications, contract procurement documents and advertisement by March 2021. A preliminary assessment of existing road conditions was completed in October of 2020. All construction permits were applied for and acquired simultaneously during engineering design development, prior to advertisement of the project.

The first bid solicitation was cancelled since all bids received were higher than the originally allocated budget. With a reduced scope of work, the construction solicitation was repackaged and rebid in April/May of 2021. The successful low bidder for the contract was Western Construction & Equipment. Award of the contract and limited notice to proceed was issued on June 9, 2021, in the amount of \$253,703.00. Per the contract, a full notice to proceed for on-site work was not issued until July 6, 2021, on which construction activities commenced on-site.

A total of 6,576 linear feet (1.25 miles) of the existing road was reconditioned and another 6,345 linear feet (1.20 miles) of road embankment was constructed. Embankment construction consisted of uniform 1-ft thick overlay of selected material, Type A borrow. A total of 3,958 cubic yards of material was used for embankment construction and a corresponding 10,037 square yards of Geotextile, Separation material was installed. A total of 4 culvert sections were installed at 4 identified locations, each measuring 30-ft in length and installed with corresponding flared end-sections to properly divert flow into and out of

the culverts. Additionally, the contractor successfully reconstructed and regraded drainage ditches along the road alignment and appropriate signage was installed.

Substantial completion of the contract was issued on August 5, 2021, and final completion was issued on Sept. 8, 2021, upon achievement of final stabilization and issuance of DEC clearance. Notice of project completion was issued on Sept. 23, 2021, and final acceptance was issued shortly after, upon receipt of DOL Notice of Completion and DOL Tax Clearances.

III. SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT REPORTS AND/OR AMENDMENTS.

Amendment #3 was submitted to FWS and approved on June 16, 2021. This amendment added the remaining \$40K in federal funds that remained in Project 2.0 (Maud Road Extension Improvements) with match provided by DOF. The intention of this funding was to add back into the project some of the elements that had been removed when the scope of work was reduced in the second bid solicitation. Unfortunately, the RSA to get these funds to ASPD&C was not finalized until mid-July, at which time the contractor was not interested in taking on any more work as part of the project, primarily due to the short amount of time remaining to complete the project. Currently the team is working together to determine how to best spend the remaining funds on the project during summer 2022 through a small contract.

IV. PUBLICATIONS



Figure 1.—Constructed road embankment section along Willer-Kash Road, with established ditches, fill slopes, and drainage transitions into existing adjacent vegetation.



Figure 2.—Reconditioned road section with reestablished ditching for drainage purposes along Willer-Kash Road.



Figure 3.—Hydro-seeded and stabilized fill slopes on constructed road embankment sections along Willer-Kash Road.



Figure 4.—Hydro-seeded and stabilized fill slopes at culvert install locations along Willer-Kash Road. Barrier rocks were installed to deter off-road parking and mitigate possible damage to the culvert structures due to vehicular traffic.



Figure 5.—Geotextile fabric was installed where surface fill was added to separate the two surfaces and improve long term stability of the road surface.



Figure 6.–Four culverts were installed to address road surface and surrounding area drainage.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THIS PROJECT

No recommendations at this time. Project will continue on schedule to complete Objective #4 summer 2022.

Prepared by:

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Date: December 7, 2021