

**HATCHER PASS RECREATIONAL AREA ACCESS,
TRAILS AND TRANSIT FACILITIES**

**Coordination
Plan**

June 2009



COORDINATION PLAN
HATCHER PASS RECREATIONAL AREA ACCESS, TRAILS, AND
TRANSIT FACILITIES

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CEQ.....	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR.....	Code of Federal Regulations
EIS.....	Environmental Impact Statement
FTA.....	Federal Transit Administration
lead agencies	FTA and MSB
MSB	Matanuska-Susitna Borough
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOA	Notice of Availability
NOI	Notice of Intent
P.E.....	Professional Engineer
Plan	Coordination Plan
ROD	Record of Decision
SAFETEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A legacy for Users
the Project	Hatcher Pass Recreational Area Access, Trails and Transit Facilities

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Coordination Plan (Plan) will guide the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) during agency coordination and public involvement activities necessary for the Hatcher Pass Recreational Area Access, Trails, and Transit Facilities Project (the Project) environmental review process. The Plan¹ adheres to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) guidance and will ensure that early and continual input from agencies and the public be incorporated into the decision making process for the Project.

The FTA proposes the Project to construct transit facilities, access roads, parking lots and trail connections in the Hatcher Pass area.

The MSB is concurrently developing a separate project to include alpine ski lifts and trails, and a small day lodge as well as Nordic and other non-motorized multiple use trails and a small chalet and conference facility. The MSB-funded project will be assessed under NEPA as a secondary or cumulative project; however, close coordination between MSB and FTA is essential to both projects and thus this Plan includes the MSB.

As this Plan describes a process, rather than a result, most design changes will not affect the plan, allowing it to remain largely unchanged throughout the process. However, this Plan is intended to be dynamic to allow small revisions and additions to best respond to feedback and project management changes as needed. In addition, information about public involvement, agency coordination, and materials associated with the project is available on the project website at www.hatcherpass.com. Complete information and results about public involvement and agency coordination will be available in an Appendix of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Project.

1.1 Project Location

The project is located 55 miles north of Anchorage, Alaska in the heart of the MSB, Alaska's fastest growing community, at approximately 61.734 north latitude and 149.299 west longitude

¹ This Plan complies with the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) Section 6002, as a plan for coordination (SAFETEA-LU Section 6002: Section 139(g)(1)). This Plan also addresses the agency coordination required by federal regulation outlined in Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

(Sections 2-5, 8-11, 14-22, and 26-30 of Township 19N, Range 1E, Seward Meridian) (United States Geological Survey Quadrangle Anchorage C6, C7, and D7 1:63,360 Scale). The project area is currently accessible from both the Glenn and Parks Highways.

1.2 Project Background

The Project is the result of almost 30 years of planning and site analysis during which 3 development corporations have evaluated development opportunities in Hatcher Pass. A study in the 1980s from the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources found that a moderate-sized, seasonal development was the most feasible development. The State of Alaska then adopted the Hatcher Pass Management Plan in 1986, and amended it in 1989 to create a Government Peak Subunit to accommodate ski area development. In the 1990s, the MSB and Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority funded another study, which found that a large four-season resort plan was not financially feasible. Within the last eight years, the development lease was transferred to the MSB. A Hatcher Pass Special Land Use District is currently being drafted by the MSB with the guidance of local residents, which will establish management goals for the Government Peak Subunit. Environmental studies for the project area began in the summer of 2008 and public and agency scoping was initiated in the fall of 2008.

1.3 Project Description

The Project is being funded by the FTA and would construct transit facilities, access roads, parking lots, and trail connections for two day-use areas that would accommodate skiing and other non-motorized recreational opportunities for local and regional residents in the project area.

The project proposes development of the Northern Alpine and Southern Nordic Areas:

Northern Alpine Area

- Reconstruction of an existing gravel access road approximately 2,000 feet in length.
- Reconstruction of an existing gravel parking area.
- Construction of an enclosed passenger transit facility near the parking lot.

Southern Nordic Area

- Construction of a new access road off of Edgerton Parks Road, approximately 5,500 feet in length.
- Construction of a parking lot, overflow parking, and trailhead connections.
- Construction of an enclosed passenger transit facility.

2.0 PROJECT MANAGEMENT

2.1 Project Team

Three primary entities comprise the Project team:

- FTA
- MSB
- Project Consultants

Additional Information is Available:

For information about this Plan, contact Linda Gehrke at (206) 220-7954 or linda.gehrke@dot.gov.

For information at the Hatcher Pass Project, visit the website at www.hatcherpass.com.

2.1.1 FTA and the MSB

Together the FTA and the MSB authorize, review, and approve work completed by consultants.

The FTA contact is R. F. Krochalis, Regional Administrator of FTA Region 10 and Linda Gehrke, the Deputy Regional Administrator. The following MSB staff is involved in facilitation and review of the project:

- Borough Manager - John Duffy
- Land and Resource Division Manager - Dave Heier
- Transportation Planning and Environmental Division Manager - Brad Sworts
- Community Development Director - Linda Brenner
- Recreational and Library Services - Dan Keyese
- Public Affairs - Patti Sullivan

2.1.2 Project Consultants

2.1.2.1 *Lead Consultant: DOWL HKM and RWS Consulting*

MSB has contracted DOWL HKM and RWS Consulting to be the lead consultants for the project. The DOWL HKM consultant team will conduct environmental analysis, traffic studies, noise studies, and civil design. RWS Consulting functions as the MSB Consultant assisting in project management. The following team members are involved in the project design and preparation of the NEPA document:

- Project Manager - Stewart Osgood, P.E., DOWL HKM
- Project Manager - Ron Swanson, RWS Consulting
- Project Engineer - Steve Noble, P.E., PTOE, DOWL HKM
- Design Engineer - Shawn Hull, P.E., DOWL HKM
- Planning and Public Involvement Manager - Maryellen Tuttell, AICP, DOWL HKM
- Environmental Manager - Kristen Hansen, DOWL HKM
- Environmental Specialist - Heather Campfield, DOWL HKM
- Public Involvement Lead - Michela Spitz, DOWL HKM

2.1.3 Subconsultants

Subconsultants working for DOWL HKM on this project include ABR, Inc. to provide stream assessment and fish and aquatic habitat surveys; and Cultural Resource Consultants to provide archeological services.

2.2 Agency Participation

Coordination with interested agencies as early as practicable in the environmental review process² is critical per NEPA. FTA has identified and invited potentially interested agencies to become either Cooperating or Participating Agencies. An invitation letter was mailed to federal, state and local agencies on June 2, 2009, requesting a response in writing 30 days after receiving the letter, indicating what level of involvement they would take in the environmental review process.

In pursuant of SAFETEA-LU Section 6002, the FTA and MSB being the lead agencies must develop coordination plans; provide opportunities for public and participating agency involvement in defining the purpose and need and determining the range of alternatives. FTA and MSB will collaborate with participating agencies to determine methodologies and the level of detail for the analysis of alternatives. In addition, lead agencies will provide oversight in managing the EIS process and resolving issues.

² SAFETEA-LU Section 6002

Once Cooperating and Participating Agencies are determined, the following will occur:

- Cooperating and Participating Agencies will be consulted regarding EIS analysis methodology as appropriate.
- Coordinate with cooperating and Participating Agencies throughout EIS and project development to address issues.
- Provide a review copy of the Draft EIS to Cooperating Agencies for review and comment.
- Resolve major issues as early as practicable in the environmental review process and during all phases of project development for permit submittals.
- Document official communications and agreements with resource agencies.
- Provide copies of Draft EIS, the Executive Summary, technical reports, and drawings for continuous review and comment by Cooperating and Participating Agencies during the official comment period and at public hearings.

Cooperating and Participating Agencies for the Project are listed in Table 1.

2.2.1 Lead Agencies

As project leads, FTA and MSB are responsible for preparing the EIS.

2.2.2 Cooperating Agencies

Cooperating agencies are any other Federal, State, and local agencies with jurisdiction or special expertise with respect to any environmental issues, which should be addressed in the EIS. Such agencies have been invited to serve as cooperating agencies at the beginning of the environmental review process.

2.2.3 Participating Agencies

Participating agencies³, are those federal and non-federal agencies that may have an interest in the project. Such agencies have been invited to participate in the environmental review process. FTA invited Tribal Governments to act as participating agencies at the beginning of the environmental review process.

2.3 **Issue Identification and Resolution**

An Interagency Team including representatives from FTA and MSB, Cooperating and Participating Agencies will be formed to provide a forum for coordination at key project milestones. Members of the Interagency Team may use this forum to identify issues regarding the project's potential impacts that could substantially delay or prevent project approval. However, it is not necessary to use this forum to identify and resolve issues, as contact with FTA and MSB project staff is encouraged at all times.

If issues among co-lead agencies cannot be resolved at the staff level, they will be raised to an Executive Sponsorship Team that consists of representatives from FTA, and MSB.

MSB may request FTA to convene issue resolution meetings to resolve issues that could delay completion of the environmental review process or could result in denial of any approvals required for the project. If resolution cannot be achieved, FTA must notify the Governor, Congress, and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). FTA will publish any unresolved issues in the Federal Register⁴.

Table 1: Cooperating and Participating Agencies

Cooperating Agencies
XXXX
Participating Agencies
XXXX

³ SAFETEA-LU Section 6002: Section 139(d),

⁴ SAFETEA-LU Section 6002: Section 139(h)

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

The Project will undergo environmental review in accordance with NEPA, FTA regulations and policies including SAFETEA-LU Section 6002 requirements, Efficient Environmental Reviews for Project Decision-making. The Draft EIS for the Project is anticipated to be available in October 2009. Figure 1 highlights the milestones of the EIS process.

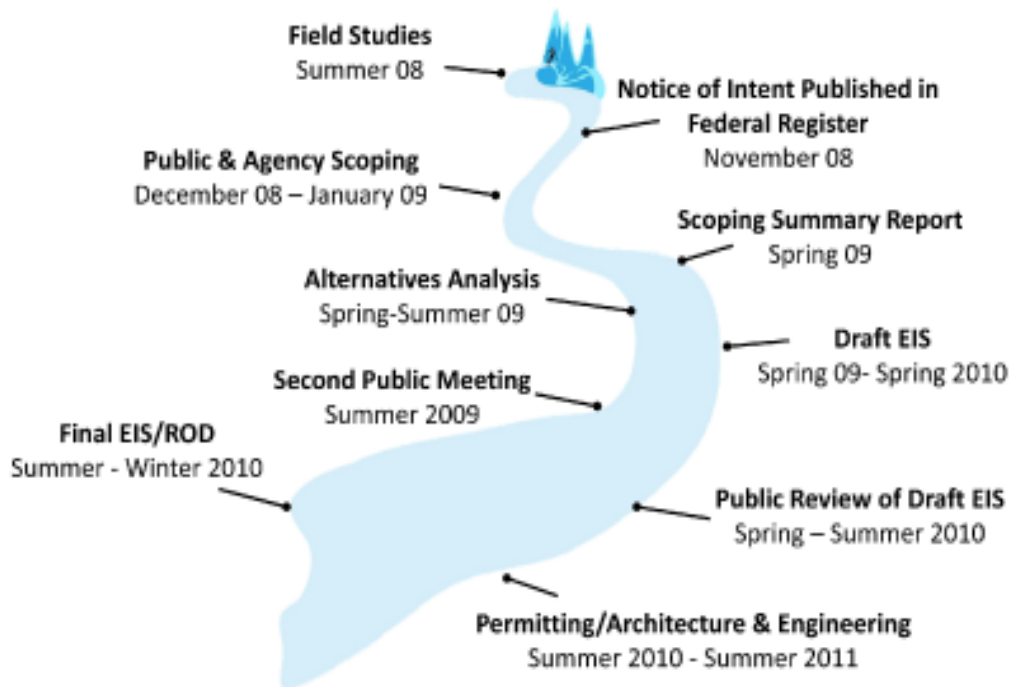


Figure 1: Environmental Review Process and Milestones

FTA established the following goals and objectives to guide the environmental review process:

Goal A: Ensure open exchange of information, ideas and concerns between FTA, MSB, and the Cooperating and Participating Agencies about the project, its potential impacts, and appropriate mitigation.

- Objective - Engage interested agencies to evaluate the scoping effects, alternatives to be considered, design development, mitigation measures, and project purpose and need.

Goal B: Facilitate an efficient Environmental Review process. Avoid unnecessary future conflicts that could result in permit objections.

- Objective - Provide early opportunities for interested agencies to express concerns and issues with the project so they may be addressed early in the process.

Goal C: Avoid substantial design changes during permit review.

- Objective - Address resource agency feedback and concerns during project development, design and mitigation through early and continuous communication throughout the process.

Consistent with 23 CFR 771 and SAFETEA-LU, an EIS will be prepared and FTA has or will complete the following steps as part of the EIS process:

- File Notice of Intent (NOI)
- Develop Purpose and Need
- Consider Alternatives
- Provide Scoping
- Analysis Alternatives
- Prepare Draft EIS
- File Notice of Availability (NOA)
- Draft EIS comment period
- Prepare write Final EIS
- Record of Decision (ROD)

3.1.1 Notice of Intent

As required by SAFETEA-LU⁵, FTA published a NOI in the November 2008 federal register. The described the type of work, logical termini, length, and general location of the Project as well as anticipated Federal approvals required.

⁵ Section 6002: Section 139(e)

3.1.2 Purpose and Need

The purpose and need of the Project will be developed by comprehensively describing the reason for action, along with a detailed description of the project area.

3.1.3 Alternatives

A range of feasible alternatives will be developed to meet the purpose and need and the steps taken will be documented.

3.1.4 Scoping

As required by SAFETEA-LU⁶, FTA will provide the earliest as possible opportunity during scoping for participating agencies and the public to comment on the purpose and need for the project and the range of alternatives to be considered. Through this process, all likely permits necessary and significant issues will be identified.

The general approach to scoping includes:

- Identify interested or stakeholder agencies;
- Identify potential issues and needed fieldwork or analysis;
- Gather existing environmental data; and

Efforts thus far include:

- An e-mail sent to the agency scoping distribution list on May 2, 2008, followed by individual telephone calls for preliminary scoping.
- Scoping letters with an invitation to the agency scoping meeting was sent to agencies on December 2, 2008. E-mail reminders for the agency scoping meeting was sent to individuals listed on the scoping distribution list, November 4 and 26 and December 3, 2008.
- The first agency scoping meeting was held on December 8, 2008, for the EIS. A 30-day comment period was provided for input on scoping, project purpose and need, and project

⁶ Section 6002: Section 136(f)

alternatives to assist project schedule progress. For those unable to be present at the location of the meeting a teleconference, as well as a website where the presentation could be downloaded for viewing, was provided to allow agencies to participate in the meeting. The scoping meeting and comment period was announced in the scoping letter sent to agencies and the NOI posted in the Federal Register.

- The second agency scoping meeting was held on June 2, 2009, for the EIS. For those unable to be present at the location of the meeting, a teleconference was provided to allow agencies to participate in the meeting. The presentation could be downloaded for viewing via the web. A 30-day comment period followed to provide agencies the opportunity to submit comments on project purpose and need, alternatives analysis, project field reports, and next steps in the EIS process.

3.1.5 Alternatives Analysis

Based on scoping and potential impacts, identify alternatives to dismiss and to carry forward for analysis and develop criteria to evaluate alternatives.

3.1.6 Draft EIS

The Draft EIS will be prepared to document the project development as well as perform initial analysis of alternatives carried forward to determine significant impacts and draft mitigation.

3.1.7 Notice of Availability of Draft EIS

The Draft EIS will be made available for public's comments and agency review by publishing an NOA in the federal Register as well as appropriate media.

3.1.8 Prepare Final EIS

After publication of the Final EIS, the FTA is expected to issue a ROD, which will present FTA's specific project environmental decisions and approvals and itemize any mitigation measures incorporated into the project.

4.0 GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION

The intent of consultation and coordination is to cooperatively identify and resolve issues that could delay completion of the environmental review process or could result in denial of any required approvals. Consultation is led by FTA and MSB to ensure early and continuous exchange of information.

Government-to-Government consultation is between FTA as the lead Federal agency and federally recognized Tribal Governments. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act also requires that federal agencies consult with federally recognized Tribal Governments (as well as the State Historic Preservation Office [SHPO]) regarding potential effects on historic properties prior to making decisions that could affect those properties. Using the State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities' 2008 listing of Alaska's Recognized Tribes, FTA identified and invited interested federally recognized Tribal Governments to participate in the Project's environmental review process. FTA will engage in early and continuous consultation with interested Tribal Governments throughout the project. Specific consultation activities will be coordinated with major project milestones.

4.1 Efforts to date

Efforts thus far include:

- Identified interested Tribal Governments;
- Sent scoping letters to agencies and Tribal Governments with general project information and background on December 2, 2008;
- Invited Tribal Governments to attend the agency scoping meeting that was held on December 8, 2008. A 30-day comment period followed giving Tribal Governments the opportunity to provide input on scoping, project purpose and need, and project alternatives to assist project schedule progress. For those unable to be present at the location of the meeting, a teleconference was held, and project presentation material was made available to allow agencies to participate in the meeting from their respective locations. The scoping meeting and comment period was provided in the scoping letter sent to agencies and the NOI posted on the Federal Register; and

- Initiated Government-to-Government and Section 106 consultation with interested Tribal Governments. FTA will provide general project information and request notification of any traditionally religious and cultural resources within the project area that may need further review or discussion. If a denial to be a Participating Agency is received, a copy of the reply will be submitted to the CEQ.

4.2 Future Efforts

In the future, FTA will:

- Meet with representatives of Tribal Governments as needed throughout the Section 106 process to review issues regarding historical or cultural resources;
- Meet with representatives of Tribal Governments as needed throughout EIS and project development to review issues that include but are not limited to historical or cultural resources, subsistence resources, and tribal land;
- Seek to resolve major issues as early as practicable in the environmental review process and during all phases of project development prior to permit submittals;
- Document official communications and agreements with Tribal Governments; and
- Provide copies of Draft EIS, the Executive Summary, technical reports and drawings, for continuous review and comment by Tribal Governments during the official comment period and at public hearings.

5.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The public includes local community groups, elected officials, businesses, residents, and patrons of the area. Early and continuous public involvement is essential for a successful and efficient environmental review process. The public will be given ample opportunities to interact with, and receive responses from FTA and MSB on issues of interest or concern throughout each phase of the Project. FTA and MSB will use various means to continuously invite the public's participation in the environmental review process for the Project.

5.1 Public Involvement Goals

FTA and MSB have established the following goals and principles to guide the environmental review process:

Goal A: Seek public input on the project's proposed purpose and need via scoping.

- Objective - Use various means of notification and tools for response to allow ample opportunities for comment by public.

Goal B: Actively seek public input throughout all project stages of planning and development, and engineering.

- Objective - Use various means of notification and tools for response to allow ample opportunities for comment by the diverse public.

Goal C: Consider, answer, and account for public inquiries, suggestions and ideas in the decision-making process.

- Objective - Use the Scoping Summary Report to track and organize comments for review by FTA and MSB. In public meetings/forums address where public comments have specifically been addressed in the decision process.

Goal D: Ensure a valuable public involvement process.

- Objective - Monitor the effectiveness of the public involvement efforts.

5.2 Public Involvement Tools

Public hearings, meetings, project briefings, and communication tools and materials are used to obtain input and share project information. Public meetings, open houses, and other events offer hands-on opportunities to engage the public in learning about the Project, identifying community issues, and reviewing design options or resolving construction issues. Table 2 (see Page 19) summarizes outreach tools used at project milestones and the tools are further discussed in more detail below. Listed below are the tools FTA and MSB will use to involve the public:

- Public hearings
- Open houses
- Project website, mail and e-mail address
- MSB Assembly briefings
- One-on-one briefings
- Mailings
- Display advertisements
- Radio advertisements

5.2.1 Public Hearings

Objective: Inform the public about the project as it progresses and allow comments to be made formally to FTA, MSB, and other members of the public.

Approach: Hold a series of public hearings during various stages of the project. Provide meaningful materials that clearly state project information, design, environmental impacts and any related issues. Provide an opportunity to receive feedback through multiple vehicles such as court reporter, written comments and electronic comments.

When: No public hearings have been held to date.

5.2.2 Open Houses

Objective: Provide opportunities for the public to view display boards showing the project's impacts, alternatives, progress and other project related information. Allow the public an opportunity to talk to FTA and MSB about various project related disciplines such as environmental, engineering/planning, architecture, real estate and the development of a purpose and need for the improvements, alternatives that meet the purpose and need, potential environmental effects of the project, and other concerns they may have about the project.

Approach: Hold meetings during scoping and in conjunction with the Draft EIS public hearings. The meetings will be held during a two- to three-hour timeframe to accommodate various schedules.

When: Public scoping meetings were held on Thursday, December 11, 2008 and Wednesday, May 27, 2009 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Colony Middle School, 9250 Colony Schools Drive. Additional open houses will be held as requested and during the Draft EIS comment period.

5.2.3 Project Website, Mail and E-mail Address

Objective: Maximize public access to timely project information. Provide interactive opportunities and online information to support public meetings and to allow those that cannot or do not wish to attend meetings the opportunity to be informed of the project and the opportunity to submit comments.

Approach: Create project website with all electronic versions of project materials. Create and provide electronic and physical contact information for receiving comments.

When: A project website was launched prior to scoping and will be updated throughout the project. The website contains links to information regarding the project area, current uses of the area, project history, project elements, proposed concept, environmental information, land use plans, meeting information, timelines, project documents, press releases, comment information, FAQs, project team members and contact information, and project related links. The MSB has been and will be posting presses on their website under the Public Affairs Department.

- On November 16, 2007, MSB issued a press release announcing they were moving forward on the Project.
- On August 5, 2008, MSB issued a press release announcing that fieldwork for the environmental study was commencing.
- On September 18, 2008, MSB issued a press release notifying the public that the regional ski area concept at Hatcher Pass won unanimous support from the MSB Assembly.
- On December 3, 2008, MSB issued a press release announcing the public scoping meeting would be held on December 11, 2008 and seeking public comment.

5.2.4 MSB Assembly Briefings

Objective: Have an informed elected body that can communicate project details directly to constituents and to provide timely and accurate information during the decision making process.

Approach: Provide an opportunity to discuss project details or emerging issues either with elected officials or their staff. Continually provide elected officials information materials throughout the project to maintain awareness and understanding about the project.

When: On March 24, 2009 a briefing was presented at a joint meeting of the MSB Planning Commission and the MSB Assembly. Additional briefings will take place in preparation for each project development milestone or as events demonstrate a need.

5.2.5 One-on-One Briefings

Objective: Provide an opportunity for community members to meet with project staff to discuss emerging issues or impacts. Resolve emerging issues during the design process and collaboration with impacted parties.

Approach: Continually monitor project's progress, paying particular attention to potential impacts to community members. Hold a meeting with potentially impacted parties to address concerns and discuss specific issues.

When: Upon identification of specific project-related issues or at the public's request.

5.2.6 Mailings

Objective: Provide information and notification of public meetings pertaining to the project.

Approach: Provide consistent information about public involvement opportunities and project milestones in a clear communications vehicle.

When: A public scoping meeting notice postcard was sent to all residents and property owners within the Fishhook and Buffalo/Soapstone community council areas - including the Motherlode and Hatcher Pass Lodges prior to the scoping meeting held on December 11, 2008.

A postcard will be sent to notify the public of the public hearing/open house to be held after the release of the Draft EIS.

5.2.7 Display Advertisements

Objective: Notify the public of project progress and about events or opportunities for input about the project through publication of display advertisements in local and community print publications.

Approach: Place display advertisements in the Anchorage Daily News and the Frontiersman to notify the public of project progress and about events or opportunities for input about the project.

When: A display advertisement was posted announcing the public scoping meeting would take place on December 11, 2008, providing an opportunity for public comment. Public notices or press releases will be issued prior to the Draft EIS publication and other public meetings held at major milestones.

5.2.8 Radio Advertisements

Objective: Notify the public about events and opportunities for input about the project through airing radio advertisements through local radio stations.

Approach: Air radio advertisements on KMBQ to notify the public about events and opportunities for input about the project.

When: For the three days prior to the first public scoping meeting, held on December 11, 2008, KMBQ aired announcements five times a day. Following the first scoping meeting additional announcements were aired on KTNA, KMBQ, KSKA/APRN, and KAYO. Radio announcement will be aired prior to the Draft EIS publication and other public meetings held at major milestones.

Table 2: Public Outreach Tools

Outreach Tools Used for Hatcher Pass Recreational Area Access, Trails & Transit Facilities								
Project Milestone	Public Outreach Tools							
	Public Meetings & Open Houses	Public Hearing	MSB Assembly Briefing	Mailings	Fact Sheets Handouts	Community Events	Webpage	News Media
Public Scoping Meeting	2 held		1 held	Prepared	Prepared		Established	Contacted
Alternative Development	Displayed						Displayed	
Notice of Draft EIS availability and 45 day comment period								
Notice of Final EIS availability								
Final EIS								
ROD								

6.0 PROJECT MILESTONES

At each of the major project milestones, the FTA and MSB will coordinate with the agencies, Tribal Governments, and public as follows (See Table 3 on Page 22 for a concise timetable of milestones):

- **NEPA Scoping:** Interested agencies, Tribal Governments, and the public have been contacted and invited to agency or public scoping meetings at which FTA and MSB provided project information and sought input on the project. A 30-day scoping comment period followed each scoping meeting during which comments could be submitted to FTA and MSB.

Following the 30-day comment period, a scoping summary report will compile comments received from interested agencies, Tribal Governments, and the public.

Interested Agencies and Tribal Governments will be contacted and invited to become Participating or Cooperating Agencies.

- **Finalized Scope:** A finalized scope of the EIS based on comments received from agencies and the public during the scoping period will be developed. Documented comments will be included in the Draft and Final EIS.
- **Analysis of resource methodologies:** FTA and MSB will provide proposed analysis methodologies and level of detail required for analysis of each alternative to the Cooperating and Participating Agencies for a 30-day review period, prior to beginning analysis of alternatives (SAFETEA-LU Section 6002: Section 139[4][C]).
- **Information provided by agencies:** resource agencies will be helpful in providing resource-specific data, and assisting with determining regulatory compliance requirements. Agencies will need to provide information and evaluation through the completion of the Draft EIS.
- **Section 106 letters of preliminary views and concurrence:** FTA will coordinate with the State Historical Preservation Office and the Tribal Governments regarding the presence and eligibility of cultural resources, in compliance with Section 106.

- **Draft EIS:** Lead agencies will review and approve Draft EIS. Cooperating agencies will receive a preliminary Draft EIS for a 30-day review period prior to publication of the document. FTA will work to address comments received from these agencies on the preliminary draft. In compliance with this FTA's new policy and unless otherwise requested, a paper copy of the executive summary of the Draft EIS and a CD of the complete Draft EIS will be sent to the project's contact distribution list. Cooperating agencies and local libraries will receive a complete copy of the Draft EIS.
- **A 45-day Draft EIS comment period:** A comment period will follow publication of the Draft EIS. A NOA will be published in the Federal Register.
- **Preferred Alternative Selection:** FTA and MSB expect to identify a preferred alternative based on the Draft EIS, which considered public and agency comments received during the Draft comment period, and other agency input. The preferred alternative is expected to be included in the Final EIS.
- **Final EIS:** The Final EIS will include a separate appendix with comments received by FTA, along with responses to the comments. A NOA will be published in the Federal Register. Complete Final EIS will be available for review at FTA, MSB, local libraries, and local jurisdictions. The complete Final EIS will also be available on the project website.
- **Project Alternative Selection:** After publication of the Final EIS, FTA and MSB will select the project alternative to be built.
- **ROD:** After the 30-day no action period has elapsed since the issuance of the Final EIS, FTA would issue a ROD containing its specific environmental decisions and approvals on the project and itemizing any mitigation measures incorporated into the project per 40 Code of Federal Regulations 1505.2. The ROD is a FTA decision document. The ROD will incorporate any comments received on the Final EIS and responses to those comments. The ROD will be distributed to interested agencies and Tribal Governments. A Notice of Final Federal Agency Action will be published in the Federal Register. The ROD will be posted on the project website. With the Federal Register notice, a claim seeking judicial review of the Federal agency action will be barred unless the claim is

filed within the 180 days after publication in the Federal Register per Section 6002(a) of SAFETEA-LU, codified as 23 U.S.C § 139(I).

- **Begin Final Design and Project Construction:** FTA and MSB will continue to coordinate throughout final design and construction with interested agencies to obtain permits and other approvals.

Table 3: Project Milestones Timeline

Milestone	Date
Submitted NOI to FTA	November 2008
NOI published in Federal Register	November 2008
Scoping Letters sent	December 2, 2008
Public Notice posted	December 2008
Begin 30 Day Scoping Period	December 2, 2008
Tribal Government and Agency Scoping meeting	December 8, 2008
Public Scoping meeting	December 11, 2008
Participating and Cooperating Agencies Identified	January 2009
Scoping Summary Report	January 2009
Alternatives	January-May 2009
NOA published in federal Register	April 2010
Begin 30 Day Review by Cooperating Agencies	April-May 2010
Release Draft EIS for Public Review	May 2010
45 Day Public Review of Draft EIS	May-July 2010
NOA published in federal Register	November 2010
Final EIS released	November 2010
ROD issued and Notice of Final Federal Agency Action published in Federal Register	December 2010
Permitting Process	September- December 2010

Revise Table as appropriate

