U.S. Department of Homeland Security

United States Coast Guard

Commander
U. S. Coast Guard Sector

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16600
May 6, 2008

Mr John Duffy
Borough Manager
350 East Dahlia Avenue,
Palmer, AK 99645

Mr Duffy:

In response to your e-mail request of March 25, 2008, my office completed an analysis of the proposed waterway project in support of a ferry terminal serving Anchorage and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. Our analysis was limited in scope, and included only information that you presented and that we received from the Southwest Alaska Pilot's Association. In a full-scale waterways analysis, my office would have solicited for public comments from a wider variety of sources.

Based on the analysis completed by my office, it is my determination that the proposed project would create an unnecessary risk to the Port of Anchorage and its facilities. Vessel traffic concerns; extremes of tide, current, and ice conditions; and the potential for a marine casualty involving passenger, tank, and hazardous materials carrying vessels all combine to create an unjustifiable level of risk to public safety, the marine environment, and the economic interests of the Alaskan people. As it is currently presented the proposed project for a ferry landing at the South Port of Anchorage is not acceptable. I recommend denial of the plan as it is currently presented.

Enclosed is a summary of the analysis that was completed by my office. If you have any questions concerning the analysis of this project, please direct them to MST2 Gary Bullock at 907.271.6721 or Gary.M.Bullock@uscg.mil.

Sincerely,

J. J. LO SCIUTO
Commander, U. S. Coast Guard
Alternate Captain of the Port Western Alaska

Enclosure

Report of USACE Permit Application Risk Assessment

USCG COTP Zone: WESTERN ALASKA
USACE District Engineer Office: ANCHORAGE, AK

Structure or Project: MAT-SU FERRY LANDING SOUTH PORT OF ANCHORAGE
Location: ANCHORAGE, AK

New Structure or Project
Application Number: NOT ASSIGNED
Date of Public Notice: NONE

Existing Structure or Project
Date USACE Permit Issued: NOT ISSUED

Recommended Action: Deny permit

Comments (must be included when it is recommended that a permit be issued with conditions or that the permit be denied as well as whenever it is recommended that an existing permit be modified, suspeneded or revoked)

After reviewing concerns voiced by industry organizations including the Southwest Alaska Pilots Association, it is my determination that the proposed project would create an unnecessary risk to the Port of Anchorage and its facilities. Vessel traffic concerns; extremes of tidal, current, and ice conditions; and the potential for a marine casualty involving passenger, tank, and hazardous materials carrying vessels all combine to create an unjustifiable level of risk to public safety, the marine environment, and the economic interests of the Alaskan people. As it is currently presented, the proposed project plan for a ferry landing at the South Port of Anchorage is not acceptable. I recommend denial of the plan as it is currently presented. ***It should be noted that this is a limited analysis based on comments received from a small proportion of interested parties. If a full-scale analysis is to be conducted, this office shall solicit information from a greater number of sources.***

Summary of Completed Risk Assessment

	RIN	Percent Cumulative Risk
Project Location	**1834.811**	**50.00%**
Public Safety Impact	21.081	0.57%
Environmental Impact	11.730	0.32%
Economic Impact	1802.000	49.11%
Vessel Traffic / Port Operations	**1834.811**	**50.00%**
Public Safety Impact	21.081	0.57%
Environmental Impact	11.730	0.32%
Economic Impact	1802.000	49.11%

Approved by: _____
Captain of the Port

For each area of concern, assess the risk to the structure or project based on where it is located on a waterway.

Area of concern	Mishap			Category related risk estimates				
				Likelihood Score			RIN	Percent Cumulative Risk
				Cat I	Cat II	Cat III		
Public Safety Impact	A.	Allision	Once the proposed project is put in place, it will be in close proximitiy to a much larger port complex. Restricted maneuveribility combined with extreme tidal, current, and ice conditions already present a considerable hazard. If the proposed project, a passenger terminal, were present in the vicinity, risk to public safety would dramatically increase.	3			10.0000	0.27%
	B.	Barge breakaway		1			1.0811	0.00%
	C.	Grounding		3			10.0000	0.27%
	D.							
Total estimate of risk to public safety associated with project location							*21.081*	*0.57%*
Environmental Impact	A.	Oil Spill	While the project itself wouldn't create a significant increase in risk of environmental damage, its proximity to existing and planned port facilites would reduce maneuverability of oil and hazardous materials carriers in the near vicinity.		2		9.9189	0.27%
	B.	HAZMAT Exposure			1		1.8108	0.05%
	C.							
	D.							
Total estimate of risk to the marine environment associated with project location							*11.730*	*0.32%*
Economic Impact	A.	Allision	Approach to the plannd project is severely restricted, and is made more difficult by tidal, current, and ice conditions throughout most of the year. Significant risk of allision or grounding is present due to extreme tide, current, and ice conditions. Once the proposed project becomes a major mode of transportation to and from Anchorage, significant economic impact would be felt if the project were to become unavailable for any extended period of time.			3	901.0000	24.55%
	B.	Grounding				3	901.0000	24.55%
	C.							
	D.							
Total estimate of risk to economic loss associated with project location							*1802.000*	*49.11%*
TOTAL RISK ESTIMATE FOR PROJECT LOCATION							**1834.811**	**50.00%**

For each area of concern, assess the risk to the port or waterway based on the structure or project's impact on vessel traffic or port operations.

Area of concern		Mishap	Risk Factors	Category related risk estimates				
				Likelihood Score			RIN	Percent Cumulative Risk
				Cat I	Cat II	Cat III		
Public Safety Impact	A.	Collision	Proximity of the proposed project to existing and planned dock facilities increases the rick of a collision occurring, and is compounded by extreme current and ice conditions. These severe conditions also create a significant risk of a breakaway, the effects of which would have a greater impact on public safety if the proposed passenger vessel were involved. Water depths at the proposed location restrict maneuverability of vessels in the area, and the proposed project would create further restrictions, possibly resulting in a grounding incident.	3			10.0000	0.27%
	B.	Barge breakaway		1			1.0811	0.03%
	C.	Grounding		3			10.0000	0.27%
	D.							
Estimate of risk to public safety associated with impact on vessel traffic / port operations							*21.081*	*0.57%*
Environmental Impact	A.	Oil Spill	Existing and planned port facilities include terminals for tank vessels as well as hazardous materials carriers. Increased risk of a grouding or collision created by the proposed project increases the likelihood of significant harm to the environment in the event of such an incident.		2		9.9189	0.27%
	B.	HAZMAT Exposure			1		1.8108	0.05%
	C.							
	D.							
Estimate of risk to marine environment associated with impact on vessel traffic / port operations							*11.730*	*0.32%*
Economic Impact	A.	Allision	Considering the sheer volume of cargo that passes through the port of Anchorage and the significance of the port facilities to the people of Alaska, considerable economic damage would ensue of the facilites were unavailable for any period of time. Chances of damage occuring to port facilities or vessels calling upon the Port of Anchorage would be significantly increased by the presence of the proposed project.			3	901.0000	24.55%
	B.	Grounding				3	901.0000	24.55%
	C.							
	D.							
Estimate of risk to economic loss associated with impact on vessel traffic / port operations							*1802.000*	*49.11%*
TOTAL RISK ESTIMATE FOR PROJECT IMPACT ON VESSEL TRAFFIC / PORT OPERATIONS							**1834.811**	**50.00%**

General Project Information

USCG COTP Zone: WESTERN ALASKA
USACE District Engineer Office: ANCHORAGE, AK

Project: MAT-SU FERRY LANDING SOUTH PORT OF ANCHORAGE
Location: ANCHORAGE, AK

New Structures or Projects

Application Number: NOT ASSIGNED
Date of Public Notice: NOT ISSUED

Existing Structures or Projects

Date USACE Permit Issued: NOT ISSUED

Recommended Action:

Comments (must be included when it is recommended that a permit be issued with conditions or that the permit be denied as well as whenever it is recommended that an existing permit be modified, suspeneded or revoked)

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