



What is the West Susitna Access Road Project?

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) West Susitna Access Road (WestSu Access) project is a proposed 22-mile-long public road and associated facilities in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) that will connect Alaska's existing road system to more than 6 million acres of State of Alaska lands in the area of the Susitna River to near Alexander Creek. This proposed gravel road will assist in meeting Southcentral Alaska's growing demand for improved access to public land, personal properties, waterways, and recreational areas.

Why is DOT&PF doing this project?

The purpose of the WestSu Access project is to provide a safe public road linkage from the existing road system west to recreational resources and public lands owned by the State of Alaska and MSB. Once constructed, the road would provide access to more than 6 million acres of State lands for public recreation and economic development, enhancing the region's transportation infrastructure and economy.

Is this the same as the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority's (AIDEA's) West Susitna Access Project?

No. DOT&PF's WestSu Access project is wholly independent of AIDEA's proposed industrial road. It does, however, leverage the work that AIDEA completed, including the alignment options for 22-plus miles of proposed road; the environmental, cultural resource, design, and planning documents; and public input to develop the project as quickly and efficiently as possible.

What is the project's status?

DOT&PF initiated a National Environmental Policy Act environmental assessment (EA) process in July 2024 to consider the project's purpose and need, actions to meet those needs, and potential environmental impacts and mitigations. Many of the potential impacts have been identified in other studies.

What would the road look like?

The WestSu Access project would be a gravel "pioneer" road similar to the Nenana-Totchaket Road. The project is expected to include a combination of boat launches and crossings over the Little Susitna River, Fish Creek, the Susitna River, and Alexander Creek. The project team is currently working to define design criteria and the geometry of the road. This information will be available for public input and ultimately be included in the draft environmental document.

Where will the road go?

Largely based on data from DOT&PF's 2013/2014 West Susitna Surface Access Reconnaissance Report and AIDEA's industrial road project, the DOT&PF has considered four preliminary alignments in addition to a No-Action Alternative:

- West Susitna Parkway Alternative (the proposed action)
- Point MacKenzie Rail Extension Alternative
- Refuge Avoidance Variant
- Point MacKenzie Route

DOT&PF's proposed action is the West Susitna Parkway Alternative. This route leverages an existing MSB right-of-way to the extent practical, which is subject to change pending wetlands and cultural resources data collection outcomes. It also completely avoids the Susitna Flats Game Refuge.

Will this be a public road?

Yes. Once completed, the public can access areas west of the Susitna River to Alexander Creek.

What is the project schedule?

DOT&PF initiated an EA process in July 2024 to evaluate the pioneer road's potential environmental effects and mitigations, with the desire to begin construction in 2025.

How will the project be funded?

The WestSu Access project is listed in the 2020-2027 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP ID 34206 & 34461), making it eligible for federal funding. The total anticipated cost for the project's design and construction is around \$74M, of which the State is contributing about \$5M.

How can the public be involved?

The public will have multiple opportunities to provide comments during the environmental review process. While the public is welcome to send comments to comments@westsuaccess.com at any time, DOT&PF will host two public meetings and a 30-day public comment period from July 23 through August 23, 2024, focused on collecting input on the purpose and need and road alignment. Another public comment period will be posted when the draft environmental document is published. DOT&PF will also keep the public informed throughout the effort through presentations at community council meetings, updates to the MSB Assembly, e-newsletters, and via the project website: westsuaccess.com.

How can I be kept informed about the project?

Sign up for project-related emails and see up-to-date materials on the project website: westsuaccess.com.