

December 2, 2024

Nicholas Baggett ATTN: Kenai Field Office P.O. Box 6898 JBER, Alaska 99506-0898 Nicholas.S.Baggett@usace.army.mil

Subject: Individual Permit Application POA-2023-00433; Sitka Seaplane Base

Dear Mr. Baggett,

On behalf of the City and Borough of Sitka (CBS), DOWL is submitting an individual permit application to place fill material in wetlands and Sitka Harbor for a proposed Seaplane Base (SPB), west of the City of Sitka, Alaska (Attachments 1 and 2). The new SPB will replace the existing SPB located on the eastern shore of Sitka Channel, near Eliason Harbor and downtown Sitka. The new SPB would be located near 1190 Seward Avenue on the northwest side of Japonski Island, approximately 1.5 miles west of downtown Sitka at 57.0568 North Latitude; 135.3595 West Longitude (Sec. 34 and 35, Township 55S, Range 63E, Copper River Meridian, United States Geological Survey Quadrangle Sitka A5).

Regulatory Setting: The proposed project will involve work in terrestrial wetlands, and intertidal and marine waters of Sitka Harbor under U.S. Army Corps of Engineers jurisdiction per Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Waters of the U.S. impacted by the proposed project include wetlands.

Purpose and Need: The purpose of the Project is to provide safe and reliable seaplane access to Sitka by constructing a new SPB and deactivate/decommission the existing 65-year-old base which is at the end of its useful life and in poor condition. The project is needed to address capacity, safety, operational, and condition deficiencies at the existing SPB, which is located in a congested location with conflicting adjacent uses has insufficient capacity and space to accommodate current and future demand. It has poor, unsafe dock conditions for fueling and maneuvering, is adjacent to a congested sea lane and has only eight docking spaces which are reduced to four during low tide. The current SPB also has wildlife conflicts with a nearby seafood processing plant and requires pilots to navigate a busy channel with ship traffic.

Please review the provided information at your earliest convenience and deem the application is complete. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me by email at jgrabel@dowl.com or by telephone at (907) 562-2000.

Sincerely, DOWL

Como Unil

Josh Grabel Environmental Specialist

Attachment(s):

- 1. ENG Form 4345
- 2. Figures
- 3. Supplemental Information

ATTACHMENT 1 – ENG FORM 4345

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

APPLICATION FOR DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY PERMIT

Form Approved -OMB No. 0710-0003 Expires: 08-31-2023

For use of this form, see 33 CFR 325. The proponent agency is CECW-CO-R.

The public reporting burden for this collection of information, OMB Control Number 0710-0003, is estimated to average 11 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or burden reduction suggestions to the Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, at <u>whs.mc-alex.esd.mbx.dd-dod-information-collections@mail.mil</u>. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR APPLICATION TO THE ABOVE EMAIL.

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

Authorities: Rivers and Harbors Act, Section 10, 33 USC 403; Clean Water Act, Section 404, 33 USC 1344; Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act, Section 103, 33 USC 1413; Regulatory Programs of the Corps of Engineers; Final Rule 33 CFR 320-332. Principal Purpose: Information provided on this form will be used in evaluating the application for a permit. Routine Uses: This information may be shared with the Department of Justice and other federal, state, and local government agencies, and the public and may be made available as part of a public notice as required by Federal law. Submission of requested information is voluntary, however, if information is not provided the permit application cannot be evaluated nor can a permit be issued. One set of original drawings or good reproducible copies which show the location and character of the proposed activity must be attached to this application (see sample drawings and/or instructions) and be submitted to the District Engineer having jurisdiction over the location of the proposed activity. An application that is not completed in full will be returned. System of Record Notice (SORN). The information received is entered into our permit tracking database and a SORN has been completed (SORN #A1145b) and may be accessed at the following website: http://dpcld.defense.gov/Privacy/SORNsIndex/DOD-wide-SORN-Article-View/Article/570115/a1145b-ce.aspx

(ITEMS 1 THRU 4 TO BE FILLED BY THE CORPS)

1. APPLICATION NO. POA-2023-00433	2. FIELD OFFICE CODE		3. DATE RECEIVED	4. DAT	LE APPLICAT	ION COMPLETE
(ITEMS BELOW TO BE FILLED BY APPLICANT)						
5. APPLICANT'S NAME 8. AUT			UTHORIZED AGENT'S NAME AND TITLE (agent is not required)			
First - Joseph Middle -	Last - Bea	First - Josh	Middle -	-	Last - Gr	abel
Company - City and Borough of Sitka		Company - DOWL				
E-mail Address - joseph.bea@cityofsitka.org		E-mail Address - jgrabel@dowl.com				
6. APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:		9. AGENT'S A	DDRESS:			
Address- 100 Lincoln St.		Address- 5015 Business Park Blvd #4000				
City - Sitka State - Alaska Z	Zip - 99835 Country -	City - Anchor	age State - A	laska	Zip - 9950	Country - USA
7. APPLICANT'S PHONE NOS. w/AREA CODE		10. AGENTS PHONE NOs. w/AREA CODE				
a. Residence b. Business 907-747-1803	c. Fax	a. Residence	b. Busines 907-562-20		c. Fax	(
	STATEMENT OF		ON			
11. I hereby authorize, Josh Grabel to act in my behalf as my agent in the processing of this application and to furnish, upon request, supplemental information in support of this permit application 12/3/2024 12/3/2024 DATE						
NAME, LOCATION, AND DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT OR ACTIVITY						
12. PROJECT NAME OR TITLE (see instructions) New Sitka Seaplane Base						
13. NAME OF WATERBODY, IF KNOWN (if applicable)		14. PROJECT STREET ADDRESS (if applicable)				
Sitka Harbor		Address 1190 Seward Avenue				
15. LOCATION OF PROJECT						
Latitude: •N 57.0568 Longitu	ude: ∘W -135.3595	City - Sitka	S	tate- Al	laska	Zip- 99835
16. OTHER LOCATION DESCRIPTIONS, IF KNOWN (see instructions)						
State Tax Parcel ID Municipality City and Borough of Sitka						
Section - 34 and 35 Township -	55 South	Range	- 63 East			

17. DIRECTIONS TO THE SITE

From Sitka Airport, follow Airport Road toward the City Center. Turn left on Tongass Drive. Turn left on Seward Avenue and follow to the end of the road. Project is located north of the dead end cul-de-sac.

18. Nature of Activity (Description of project, include all features) See supplemental information.

19. Project Purpose (Describe the reason or purpose of the project, see instructions) See cover letter.

USE BLOCKS 20-23 IF DREDGED AND/OR FILL MATERIAL IS TO BE DISCHARGED

20. Reason(s) for Discharge

Fill material would be excavated from wetlands, and excavated and discharged to waters of the U.S. for construction of a new seaplane base. Based on the nature of the activity, impacts to waters of the U.S. are unavoidable.

21. Type(s) of Material Being Discharged and the Amount of Each Type in Cubic Yards:

Type Amount in Cubic Yards Type

Amount in Cubic Yards

Type Amount in Cubic Yards

See supplemental information

22. Surface Area in Acres of Wetlands or Other Waters Filled (see instructions)

Acres 2.45

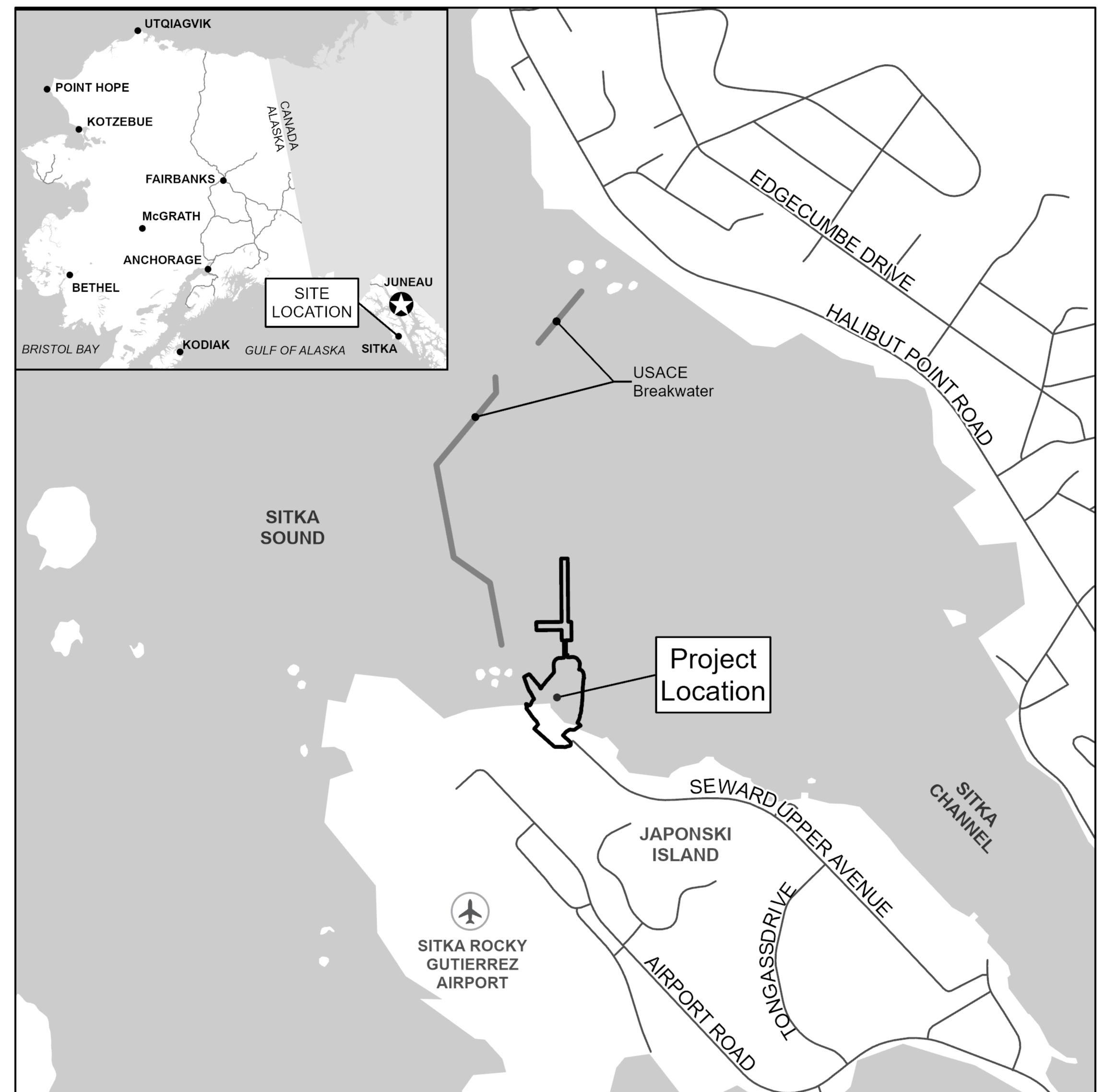
or

Linear Feet

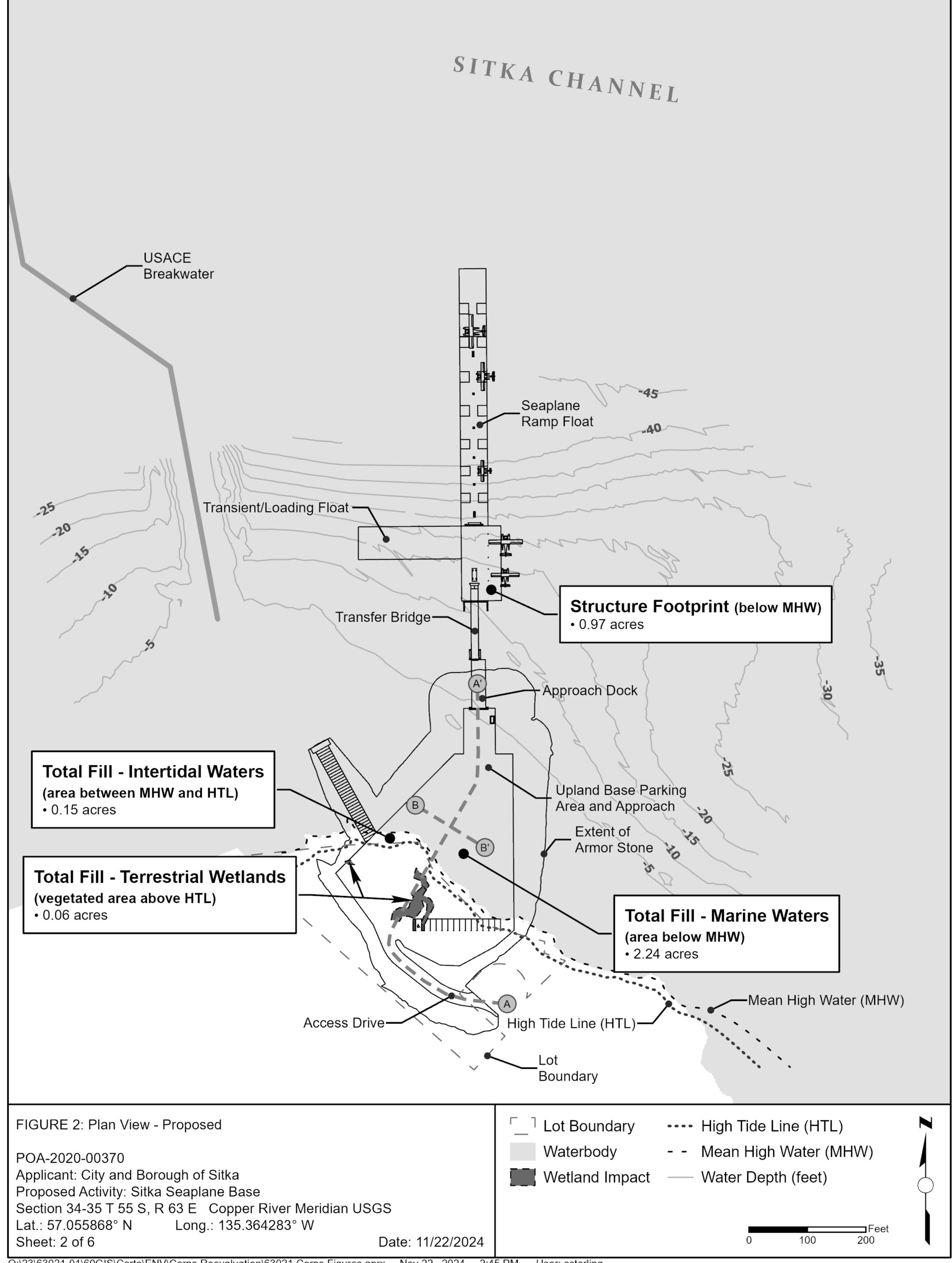
23. Description of Avoidance, Minimization, and Compensation (see instructions) See supplemental information.

24. Is Any Portion of the Work Already Complete?				
25. Addresses of Adjoining Property Owners	, Lessees, Etc., Whose Property	Adjoins the Waterbody (if mo	ore than can be entered here, please att	ach a supplemental list).
a. Address- SEARHC- 222 Tongass Dr				
City - Sitka	State	- Alaska	Zip - 99835	
b. Address- U.S. Coast Guard- 611 Airport F	Road			
City - Sitka	State	- Alaska	Zip - 99835	
c. Address-				
City -	State	-	Zip -	
d. Address-				
City -	State	-	Zip -	
e. Address-				
City -	State	-	Zip -	
26. List of Other Certificates or Approvals/De	IDENTIFICATION	al, State, or Local Agencies f	or Work Described in This Ap	plication.
AGENCY TYPE APPROV	AL* NUMBER	DATE APPLIED	DATE APPROVED	DATE DENIED
See supplemental Information.				
* Would include but is not restricted to zoning	, building, and flood plain permit	S		
27. Application is hereby made for permit or p complete and accurate. I further certify that I applicant.				
	12/3/2024			
SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT	DATE		URE OF AGENT	DATE
The Application must be signed by the p authorized agent if the statement in bloc			(applicant) or it may be sig	ned by a duly
18 U.S.C. Section 1001 provides that: W knowingly and willfully falsifies, conceals	-			
statements or representations or makes statements or entry, shall be fined not m	or uses any false writing or o	locument knowing same	to contain any false, fictitio	32

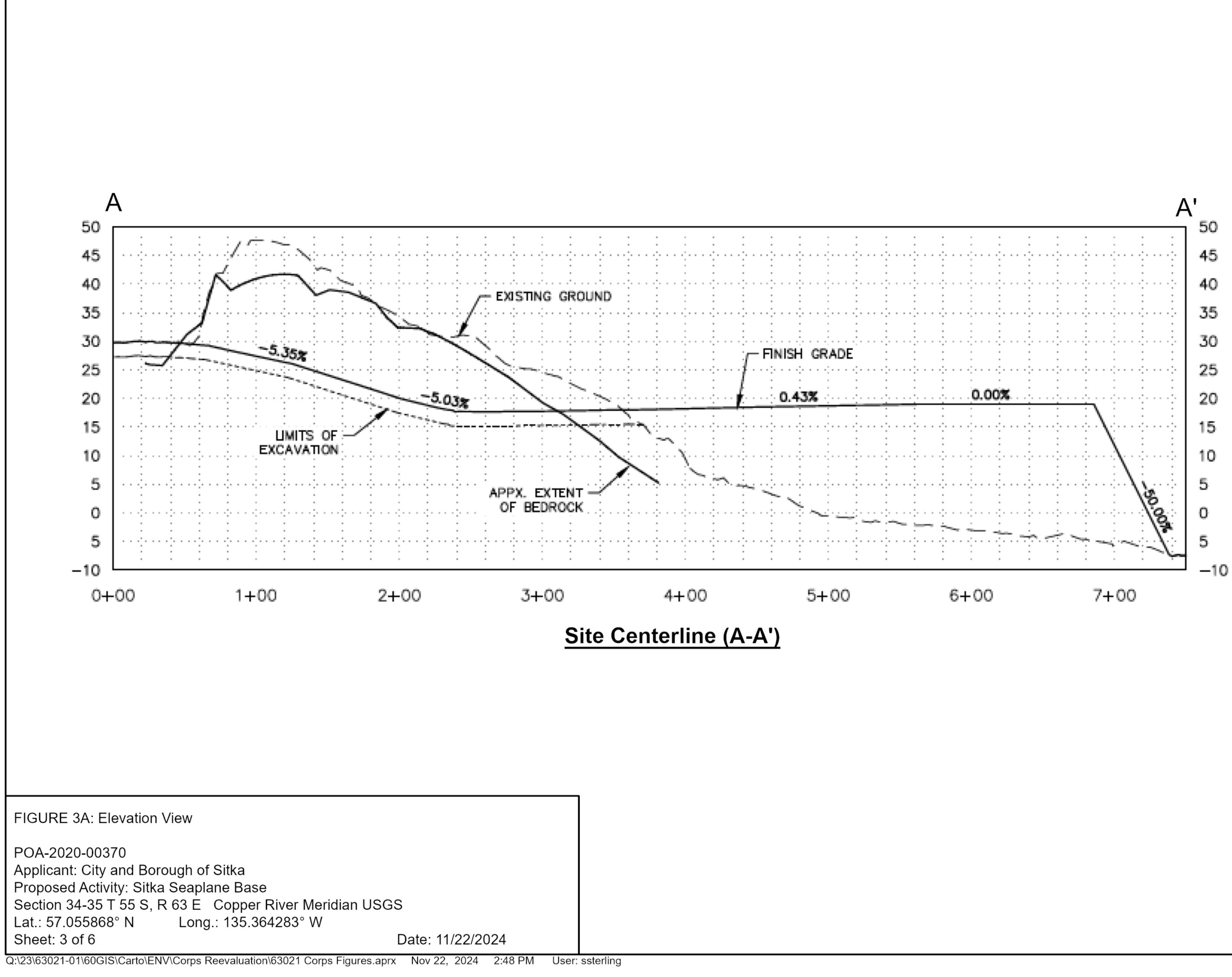
ATTACHMENT 2 – FIGURES

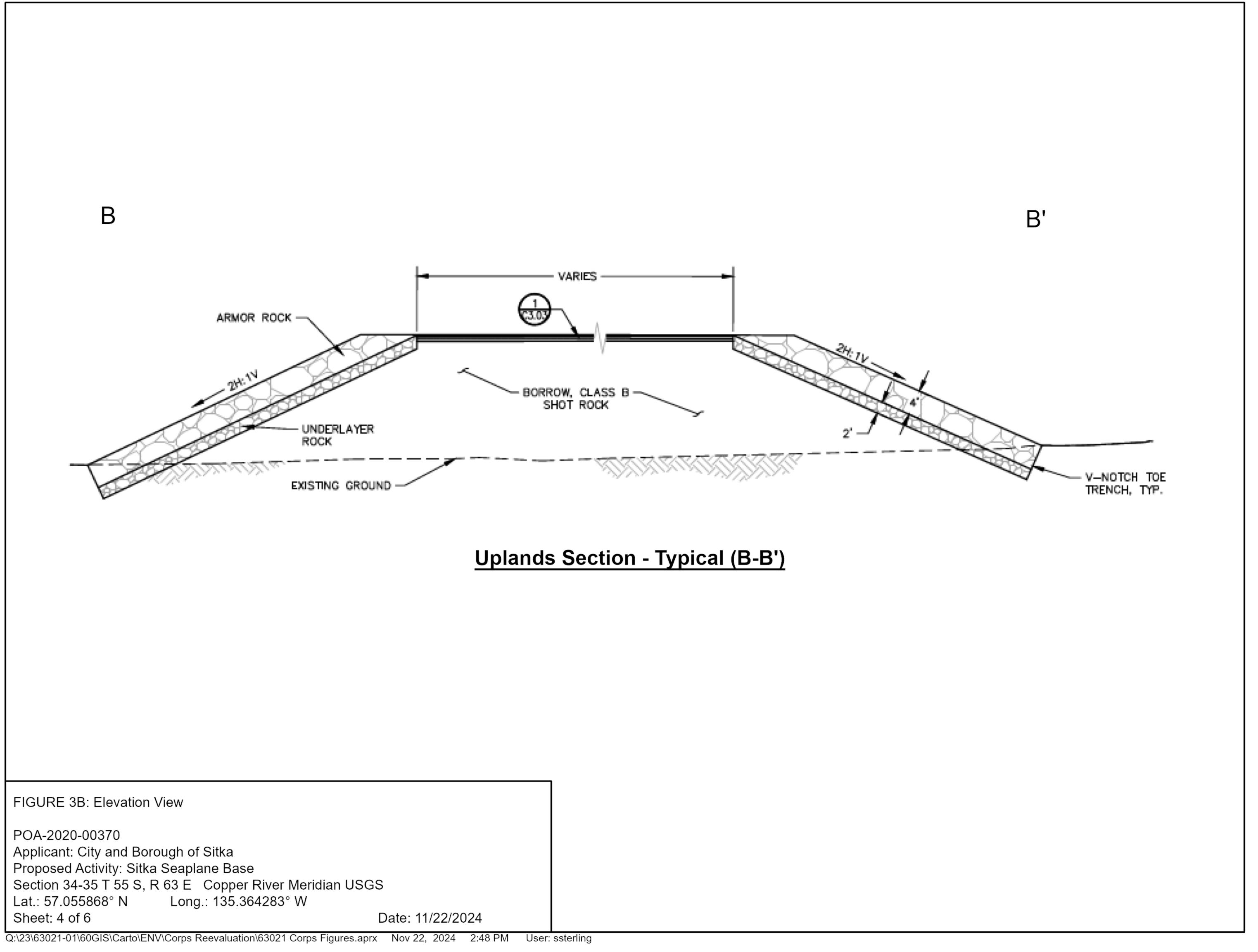


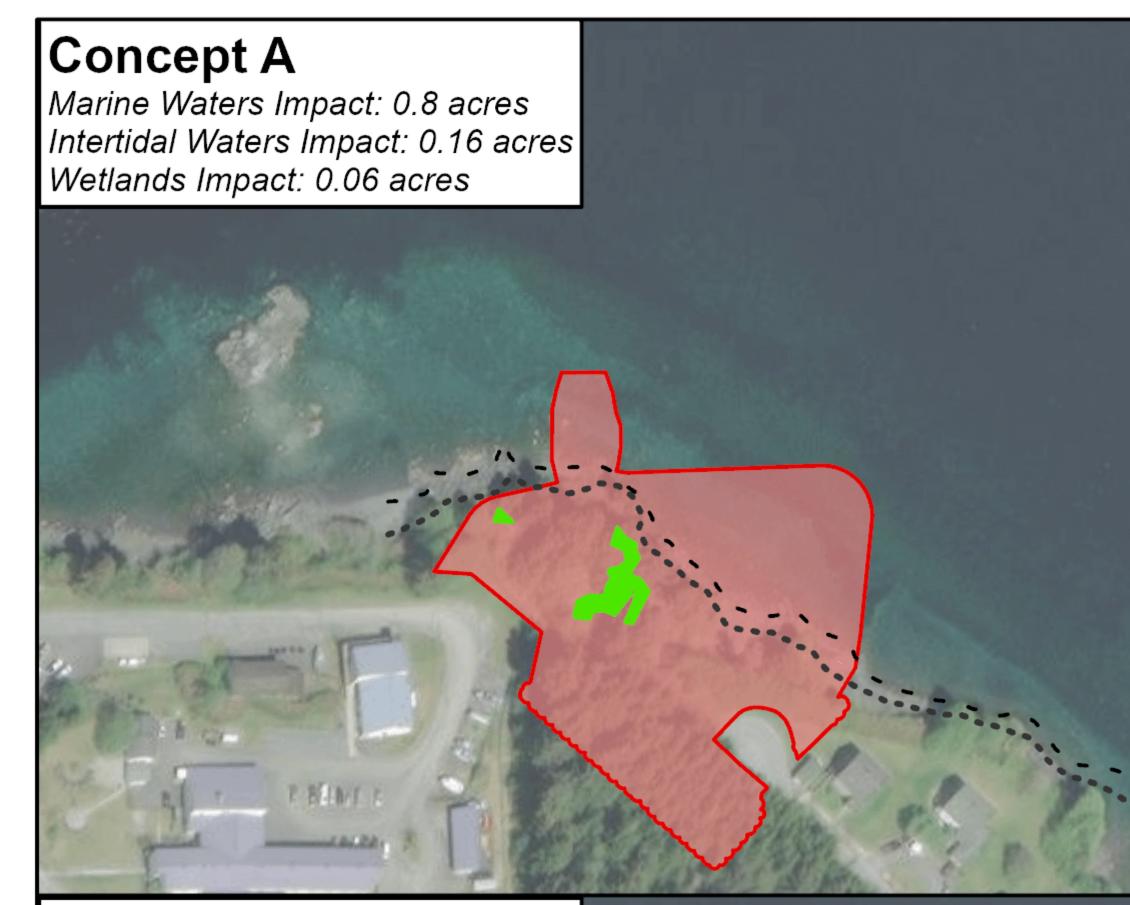
				Alicetooo
FIGURE 1: Vicinity Map		Project Outline		
POA-2020-00370 Applicant: City and Borough of Sitka Proposed Activity: Sitka Seaplane Base Section 34-35 T 55 S, R 63 E Copper River Meridian US Lat.: 57.055868° N Long.: 135.364283° W	GS	— DOT&PF Road		Mile
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Concept C

Marine Waters Impact: 0.76 acres Intertidal Waters Impact: 0.16 acres Wetlands Impact: 0.06 acres

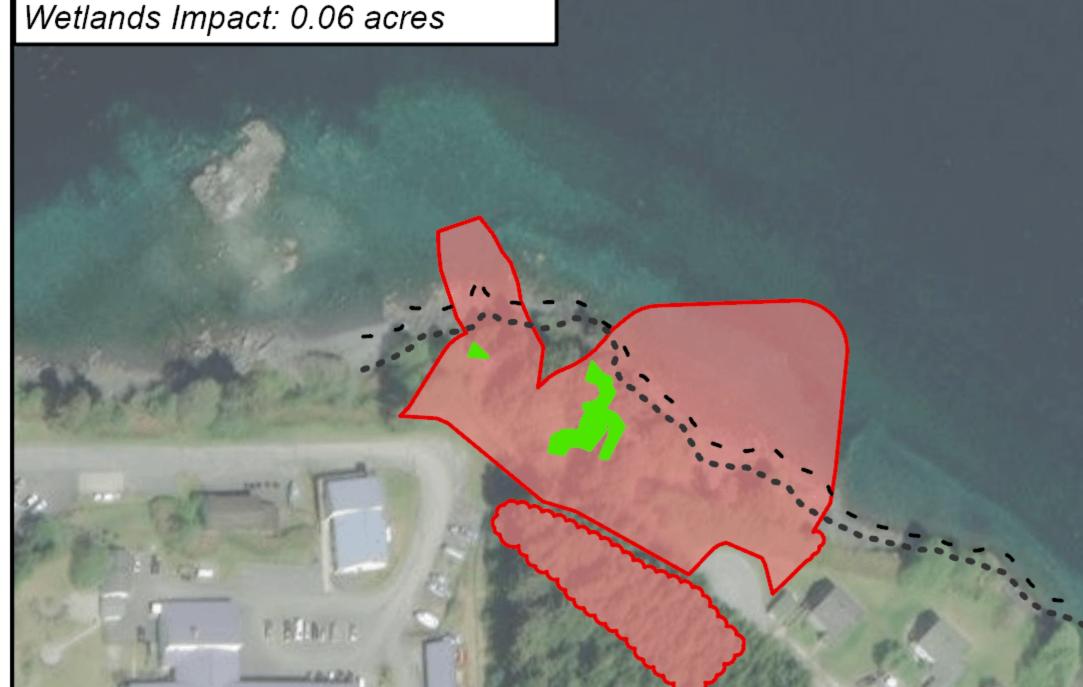
Concept B

Marine Waters Impact: 0.11 acres Intertidal Waters Impact: 0.04 acres Wetlands Impact: 0.05 acres

Concept D Marine Waters Imp

Marine Waters Impact: 1.87 acres Intertidal Waters Impact: 0.21 acres Wetlands Impact: 0.06 acres

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Concept E

Marine Waters Impact: 1.34 acres Intertidal Waters Impact: 0.16 acres Wetlands Impact: 0.06 acres

Concept F

(Preferred Concept) Marine Waters Impact: 2.24 acres Intertidal Waters Impact: 0.15 acres Wetlands Impact: 0.06 acres

P. BELLET

FIGURE 4: Concept Alternatives	Concept Footprint
POA-2020-00370	Wetland Boundary
Applicant: City and Borough of Sitka Proposed Activity: Sitka Seaplane Base	High Tide Line (HTL)
Section 34-35 T 55 S, R 63 E Copper River Meridian USGS Lat.: 57.055868° N Long.: 135.364283° W	Mean High Water (MHW)
Sheet: 5 of 6 Date: 11/22/2024 Q:\23\63021-01\60GIS\Carto\ENV\Corps Reevaluation\63021 Corps Figures aprx Nov 22, 2024	0 150 300 2:47 PM User: ssterling

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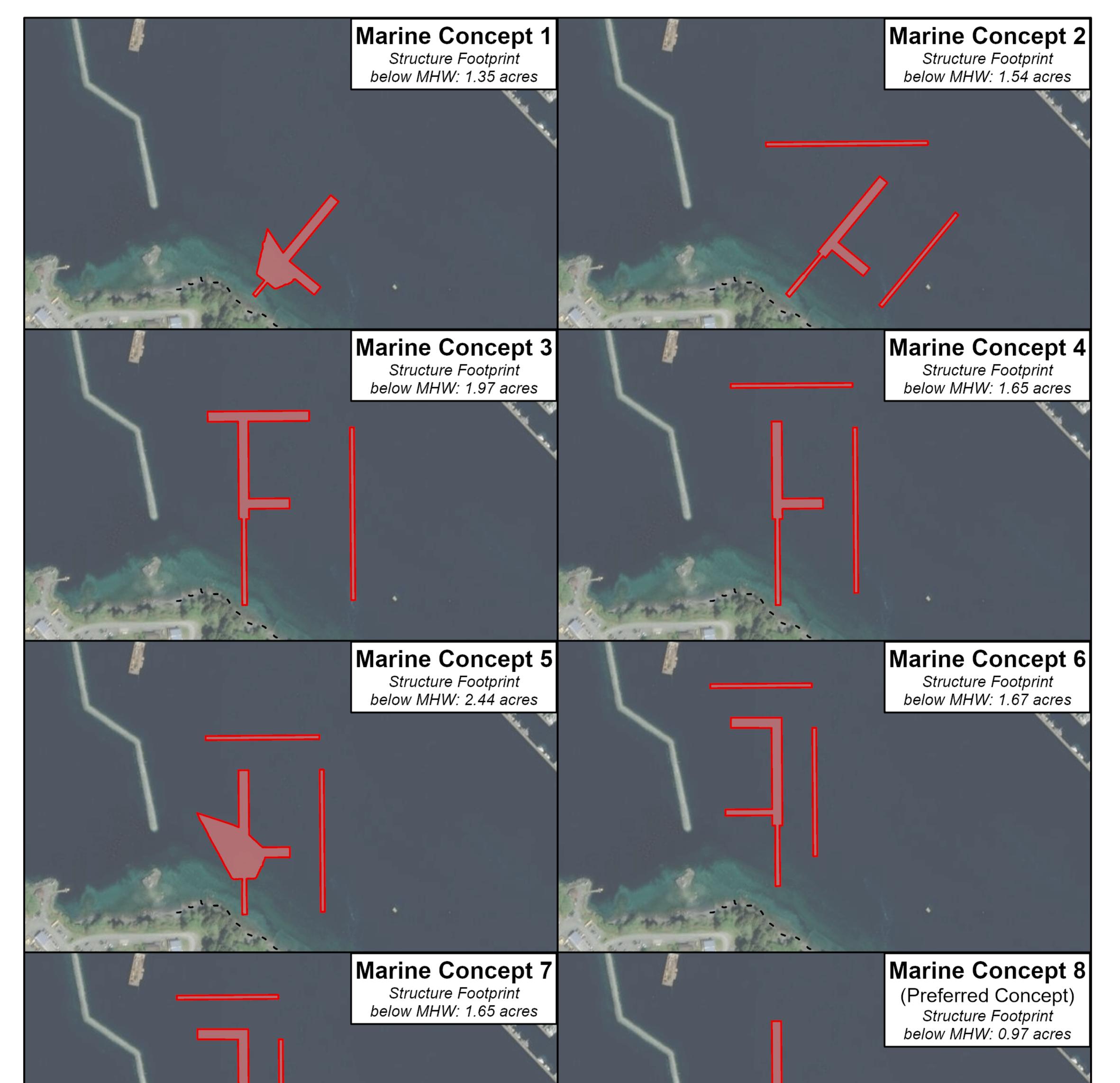


FIGURE 5: Marine Concept Alternatives	Marine Concept Footprint
POA-2020-00370 Applicant: City and Borough of Sitka Proposed Activity: Sitka Seaplane Base Section 34-35 T 55 S, R 63 E Copper River Meridian USGS Lat.: 57.055868° N Long.: 135.364283° W Sheet: 6 of 6 Date: 11/22/2024	Mean High Water (MHW)

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ATTACHMENT 3 – SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Supplemental Information

Block 18- Nature of Activity

The project would construct an approximately 3.86-acre gravel pad in uplands, wetlands, and waters of the U.S. on which a haul out ramp and approach dock would be based. The pad would also provide space for vehicle turnaround, parking, basic amenities, curb, vehicle driveway, security fencing, and landscape buffer (Figure 2) (Note: certain components would be in uplands). Material would be excavated from the side slopes above Sitka Channel to level the proposed fill pad, including from wetlands mapped during the 2020 wetland delineation.

Proposed Action (Current)

The proposed action is to construct a new SPB in Sitka Channel (Figure 3A and 3B) and deactivate the existing SPB (Figure 4). The current proposed action consists of the following:

Marine Components (0.97 acres in waters of the U.S.)

- o Seaplane Ramp Float to support 10 Cessna and 4 Beaver seaplane berths
- Transient/Loading Dock
- o Drive-Down Float
- o Transfer Bridge
- \circ $\;$ Approach Dock foot approach dock on pile foundation

Fill Material in Section 10/404- Base Parking Area and Approach (2.45 acres in waters of the U.S.)

- Seaplane Haulout Ramp
- o Utilities include electricity, water, and lighting
- o Security fencing
- \circ 14 Parking spaces
- $\circ \quad \text{Vegetative Buffer}$
- Access Driveway
- $\circ \quad \text{Covered Shelter} \\$
- o Other Services (locations to be determined at next design phase)
 - o Aircraft tie-downs
 - Maneuvering room
 - Fire Truck Access
 - o Restroom

Component	Current Proposed Action
Marine Components	0.97 acres in WOUS
Seaplane float with ramps	417 x 46 ft
Transient Loading Float	175 x 56 ft
Drivedown gangway	128 x 68 ft
Transfer Bridge	120 x 12 ft
Approach Dock	80 x 24 ft
Base Parking Area and Approach (acres)	2.45 acres in WOUS
Seaplane haul out ramp	230 x 30 ft
Utilities	electricity, water, and lighting
Parking spaces	14
Security fencing	934 ft
Vegetative Buffer (acres)	0.12
Access driveway	200 x 23 ft
Covered waiting area	yes
Other Actions	
Deactivation of Existing SPB	yes
Construction phasing	Upland Base Parking Area and Approach first, then marine components

Table 1. Sitka SPB Project Construction Components

The Project would place fill in 0.06 acres of wetlands above HTL, 0.15 acres of intertidal waters between HTL and MWH, and 2.24 acres in marine waters below MHW, resulting in 2.45 acres of fill impacts in WOUS subject to Section 404 of the CWA (Figure 2). Additionally, approximately 0.97 acres of structures below MWH will be placed to support floats, ramps and bridge in marine waters.

Block 21. Type of Material Being Discharged and the Amount of Each Type in Cubic Yards

Construction Component	Cut/Fill Type	Area (Acres)	Total Volume (CY)*
Excavation of Wetland	Cut	0.06	Cut
Fill in intertidal waters (Section 404: Area Between HTL ~13' and MHW ~9.16')	Armor Rock, Underlayment, and Class B Shot Rock	0.15	1,860
Fill in marine waters (Sections 10/404: Area below MHW ~9.16')	Armor Rock, Underlayment, and Class B Shot Rock	2.24	29,150
Total		2.45	31,010
Structures below MHW	Transfer Bridge, Seaplane Ramp Float	0.97	

Table 2. Approximate Fill and Structure Quantities

Block 23- Description of Avoidance, Minimization, and Compensation

Site selection alternatives: Several design alternatives were considered. FAA seaplane base planning criteria and aviation user input were used to evaluate 12 sites in 2002 for a safe takeoff, landing, taxiing, and docking operations and to accommodate facility needs to adequately address forecast operations capacity.

The 2002 study evaluated sites in four steps:

- Site identification
- Fatal Flaw Screening (including topography, wind characteristics, wave characteristics)
- Conceptual Layouts and Evaluation
- Preferred Alternative Recommendation

Nine sites were determined to have fatal flaw due to topography, wind and wave conditions, and other marine traffic congestion issues. Three sites were identified as reasonable alternatives all located on Japonski Island's northeast shore. Additional site selection analyses conducted in 2012 and 2016 recommended the site at the northeast end of Japonski Island as the Proposed Alternative (DOWL HKM).

Design alternatives:

On-site fill pad alternatives included (Figure 4):

Concept A- is a large fill pad footprint at approximately 2.4 acres in overall size. Concept A included a 2,400 square feet office, waiting shelter, restrooms, and shop. Also included was a 2,400 square feet

building expansion option and 20 vehicle parking stalls. Concept A consists of 0.06 acre of wetland and 1.0 acre of waters of the U.S. Impacts.

Concept B- is the smallest fill pad footprint at approximately 1.1 acres in overall size. The majority of the fill footprint is restricted to the existing parcel with the exception of the seaplane haulout ramp. This concept avoided impacts to the historic bunker. Concept B included only 9 vehicle parking stalls and no waiting shelter. Concept A consists of 0.05 acre of wetland and 0.2 acre of waters of the U.S. Impacts.

Concept C- is a mid-range development footprint at approximately 2.0 acres in overall size. Concept C included a 2,400 square feet office, waiting shelter, restrooms, and shop. Also included was a 2,400 square feet building expansion option and 11 vehicle parking stalls. Concept A consists of 0.06 acre of wetland and 0.9 acre of waters of the U.S. Impacts.

Concept D- is the largest upland development footprint at approximately 3.1 acres in overall size. Concept D included a 600 square feet terminal building with covered shelter, waiting, and restrooms. It included 30 vehicle parking stalls. Concept A consists of 0.06 acre of wetland and 2.1 acres of waters of the U.S. Impacts.

Concept E is the 2nd largest footprint at approximately 2.6 acres in overall size. Concept E included a 200 square feet covered shelter and 15 vehicle parking stalls. Concept A consists of 0.06 acre of wetland and 1.5 acres of waters of the U.S. Impacts.

Concept F is the preferred alternative with 3.9 acres in overall size. Concept F consists of 0.06 acre of wetland and 2.4 acres of waters of the U.S. Impacts. The preferred alternative is the only practicable alternative that meets the project purpose and need, minimizes impacts to intertidal waters between the HTL and MHW, and reaches deeper water necessary for seaplane access. The preferred alternative would improve the safety of seaplane operation in the channel, along with reducing traffic and congestion in Sitka Channel. The preferred alternative would reduce conflicts with marine vessels during landing and takeoff with a relocated seaplane lane. The relocated seaplane lane moves taxi operations into a wider, less congested section of Sitka Channel. Concept F would balance excavation and fill and expand into the channel to shorten the required marine elements, reducing the costs of site development and maximizing the operational and cost efficiency of the site as a self-sustaining SPB.

Different marine concepts included (Figure 5):

Marine Concept 1- was originally prepared in 2016 prior to more recent wind and wave studies, thus no wave protection included in concept. Concept 1 consists of 1.35 acres of waters of the U.S. footprint.

Marine Concept 2- entire facility moved offshore into deeper water to eliminate dredging requirement. Floating wave attenuators added. Concept 2 consists of 1.54 acres of waters of the U.S. footprint.

Marine Concept 3- facility has been rotated and located in deeper water to eliminate dredging. Contains floating wave attenuators. Concept 3 consists of 1.97 acres of waters of the U.S. footprint.

Marine Concept 4- is similar to marine concept 3, but with the north wave attenuator detached and moved further from the seaplane float. Concept 4 consists of 1.65 acres of waters of the U.S. footprint.

Marine Concept 5- is similar to marine concept 4, but facility located closer to shore to reduce the access trestle length. Concept 5 consists of 2.44 acres of waters of the U.S. footprint.

Marine Concept 6- is similar to marine concept 4, but transient float relocated to the west side of the facility. Concept 6 consists of 1.67 acres of waters of the U.S. footprint.

Marine Concept 7- is similar to marine concept 6 with a longer and narrower trestle to avoid dredging and north and west floating wave attenuators. Concept 7 consists of 1.65 acres of waters of the U.S. footprint.

Marine Concept 8- is the preferred alternative. This is the 2024 65% design. Concept 8 consists of 0.97 acres of waters of the U.S. footprint. Concept 8 has the smallest structure footprint in Section 404/10 waters and removes the use of wave attenuators.

The 2018 Memorandum of Agreement between USACE and EPA is being followed for avoidance, minimization, and compensation in Alaska for the proposed project.

Avoidance: Avoiding impacts to waters of the U.S. is not practicable. Wetlands and tidal waters are unavoidable due to the size requirements of the fill pad in proximity to deeper waters to meet the project purpose and need. In addition, the existing parcel size above the High Tide Line is not sufficient to accommodate project infrastructure and must be expanded into Sitka Harbor.

- The gravel topped fill pad size requirement is based on the proposed seaplane parking, vehicle parking, Seaplane Haulout Ramp, and maneuvering requirements of multiple vehicles with seaplane operations.
- The wetlands identified during the 2020 wetland delineation are centrally located within the parcel and avoidance is not practical.
- FAA planning criteria for seaplane bases recommends at least 4 feet of water for seaplane bases, necessitating structures out to the required depth in Sitka Harbor.
- No design alterative completely avoided waters of the U.S.

Minimization: Emphasis has been placed on minimizing unavoidable impacts to waters of the U.S. by limiting fill discharges to the minimum amount and size necessary to achieve the project purpose.

Design Methods

- The proposed fill material and seaplane floats in Sitka Harbor are the minimum fill and structures needed to meet the project purpose.
- For fill pad concepts, Concept F had the largest fill footprint in waters of the U.S. while concept B had the smallest fill footprint in waters of the U.S. Ultimately, Concept F was selected based on the size and layout of the fill pad features required to meet the project purpose. All of the features would not fit within a smaller landward footprint and still meet FAA requirements.
- Concept F removed a 2,400 square feet building from the fill pad to reduce impacts to Sitka Harbor. This design change further reduced the fill footprint in waters of the U.S.
- The majority of the parcel 19208000 at 1190 Seward Avenue is uplands except for 0.06 acres of wetlands.
- Marine Concept 8 removed breakwater features and minimized structures in Sitka Harbor.

Construction Methods

• Construction activities would be conducted according to the APDES Alaska Construction General Permit including a SWPPP identifying appropriate BMPs to use during construction to prevent erosion and untreated runoff from reaching nearby waterbodies.

Compensation: The project has been designed to minimize impacts to waters of the U.S. to meet the project purpose and site selection criteria.

- The existing floats and ramps would be removed from the existing seaplane location, but piles would be left in place.
- Approximately 2.45 acres of Section 404/10 wetlands and waters of the U.S. would be impacted by the proposed fill and excavation activities.
- Compensatory mitigation would be provided by purchasing credits from a mitigation bank or inlieu fee program to replace functions lost from aquatic resources.

Block 26- List of Other Approvals for Work Described in This Application

The following permits would be required:

- DNR (Tideland conveyance)
- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) (Section 401 CWA; Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System [APDES] General Permit for Discharges from Large and Small Construction Activities/National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Section 402 Permit)
- CBS (Floodplain Regulation Development Permit)

Additional required consultations and approvals include:

- Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and Local Indian Tribes, Alaskan Native Villages and Native Hawaiian organizations (National Historic Preservation Act [NHPA] and US Department of Transportation Act Section 4(f))
- NMFS (Endangered Species Act [ESA], Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation & Management Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act [MMPA])
 - o Biological Opinion, Incidental Harassment Authorization, EFH Assessment
 - USFWS (ESA, MMPA, Fish & Wildlife Coordination Act)

References

DOWL HKM. 2012. Sitka Seaplane Base. Siting Analysis. Sitka, Alaska. Prepared for City and Borough of Sitka.

DOWL. 2016. Sitka Seaplane Base. Siting Analysis. Sitka, Alaska. Prepared for City and Borough of Sitka.