

STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF MINING, LAND AND WATER
Northern Regional Land Office

Preliminary Decision

ADL 422612: Designated Material Site: AS 38.05.550
ADL 422681 Private Non-Exclusive Easement: AS 38.05.850

Related Actions

ADL 422685: Material Sale Contract: AS 38.05.555

This Preliminary Decision (PD) is the State's preliminary best interest finding regarding a proposed disposal of interest in state land. The public is invited to comment on this PD. The deadline for commenting is **March 30, 2026**. Please see the Public Notice section of this decision for requirements related to submitting comments for consideration.

Proposed Action

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Mining, Land and Water (DMLW), Northern Regional Land Office (NRO) proposes establishing the 90-acre area as designated material site ADL 422612. This site designation would impose the following constraints on all future contracts issued pursuant to this designation:

- No Mine Zone. A 100-foot non-development zone will be imposed on the western side of the material site, which abuts the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Right-of-Way.
- Coordination. Contractors within the site shall coordinate with all current users within the site prior to material extraction.

DNR additionally proposes issuing a 100 foot width indefinite Private Non-Exclusive access easement, ADL 422681, to protect access to this site.

Proposed Related Actions

The related actions will be processed separately; however, public notice is being conducted concurrently. These include the following:

ADL 422685, a material sale contract for 50,000 cubic yards to the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. This action is dependent upon the site being designated pursuant to AS 38.05.550.

Scope of Decision

The scope of this decision is to determine if it is in the State's best interest to designate this area as a material site (ADL 422612), and what, if any, additional operating requirements should be implemented specific to this site. The scope of this decision also is to determine if it is in the State's interest to issue an indefinite Private Non-Exclusive access easement (ADL 422681), and what terms and conditions should be required. The scope of administrative review for this

authorization is limited to (1) reasonably foreseeable, significant effects of the uses to be authorized; (2) applicable statutes and regulations; (3) facts pertaining to the land or resources; and (4) issues that are material to the determination that issuing the authorization is in the interest of the State of Alaska. All other aspects of the applicant's project are outside the scope of this decision.

Authority

The file is being adjudicated pursuant Alaska Statutes AS 38.05.035(e) (best interest finding), AS 38.05.127 (navigable and public water), AS 38.05.550-565 (material sales), AS 38.05.850 (permits), AS 38.05.945 (notice), AS 27.19 (reclamation), and the Alaska Land Act as amended.

The authority to execute the Preliminary Decision and the Final Finding and Decision has been delegated to the Regional Managers of DMLW.

Administrative Record

The administrative record for the proposed action consists of the Constitution of the State of Alaska, the Alaska Land Act as amended, applicable statutes and regulations referenced here-in, and the casefile for the application serialized by DNR as ADL 422612.

Location and Legal Description

Location: The site is located at approximately MP 76.5 of the Dalton Highway, as depicted in Attachment A, Site Map.

Legal Description: Portion of Section 31, Township 015 North, Range 012 West, Fairbanks Meridian, containing approximately 90 acres, more or less. The western boundary of the site is the eastern edge of the Trans-Alaska pipeline lease, and the eastern edge of the site is the protracted section line between Sections 31 and 32.

Borough/Municipality: The site is not located within a municipality or an organized borough.

Regional Corporation: The site is located within the Doyon, Limited boundaries. No corporation lands are involved.

Village Corporation: There are no village corporations located within 25 miles of the project location.

Title

The land within the proposed site is selected under General Grant (GS) 3835. The State anticipates receiving title to these lands and is working to ensure the continued availability of materials such as sand, gravel, and rip rap within the Dalton Highway Corridor. This site will not be designated prior to the State receiving title such as Tentative Approval (TA) or a patent.

Adjacent Landowners

The Trans-Alaska Pipeline runs through the access road of the material site. Public notice will be sent to Alyeska.

ADL 422612 Material Site Designation

ADL 422681 Private Non-Exclusive Easement

Third Party Interests

Federal Authorizations:

FF-091811, GCI Fiber Communication Co Inc, issued telephone right-of-way.

FF-096588, Alascom Incorporated dba AT&T Alaska, issued telephone right-of-way.

FF-012505, Alyeska Pipeline Service Co, issued pipeline right-of-way for the Trans Alaska pipeline.

FF-020604, Alyeska Pipeline Service Co, access road right-of-way for 81-AP-3

This section will be updated in the Final Finding and Decision to include all interests and reservations that will be subject to in the TA or patent.

Background

On December 30, 1971, a Utility Corridor was established by Public Land Order (PLO) 5150 to protect the route of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. PLO 5150 withdrew lands to the federal government and caused them to be unavailable for conveyance. BLM has issued a decision revoking PLO 5150; once revocation is complete, lands selected under the Statehood Act within the corridor are available for acquisition (by the state). This adjudicatory process is being conducted in anticipation of timely conveyance of these lands to the State. A final decision to designate will not be made until the State has equitable title to these lands.

Planning and Classification

This site is not currently classified. 11 AAC 55.040 requires that prior to designating a material site, land be classified unless it is from an established source, which is defined as a "material site used within the preceding 10 years and not reclaimed or revegetated". Federal records indicate a material sale contract to DOT&PF (AKAK 1062336) is pending. Field inspection of the site indicates the site is not fully reclaimed or revegetated. Pursuant to 11 AAC 55.040(i)(5)(a), classification is not required for designation of this site. Additionally, classification is not required to issue an access easement necessary to access a site designated under this exemption. The proposed location is an existing material source and it is appropriate to designate the site so it remains available to support projects in the area.

Traditional Use Finding

The area is not within an incorporated borough or municipality and therefore a traditional use finding is required under AS 38.05.830.

Continued operation of a material site in this location is not expected to adversely affect subsistence resources or known traditional uses which may include hunting and gathering related activities. Additional traditional uses may be identified during the public notice period. If further traditional uses that may be impacted by the material sites become known, they will be discussed in the final finding and decision.

Access

Access to the site is currently provided by constructed road 81-APL-3. Alyeska holds an easement for the road for TAPS purposes: other users are presumed to be authorized in individual permits and contracts. Once the state receives title to these lands, the state will be subject to existing easements and ADL 422681 will provide continued access to this site for other users.

Waterbodies

The Public Access Assertion and Defense Section has determined there are no public or navigable waters within the project areas.

Access Along Navigable and Public Waters

AS 38.05.127 requires that when the department is disposing of any interest in state land, DNR identify navigable and public waters, and easements necessary to ensure access along the water is to be reserved unless regulating or limiting access is necessary for other public purposes.

There are no public or navigable waterbodies within the project areas. No easements will be created and reserved pursuant to AS 38.05.127.

Public Trust Doctrine

The Public Trust doctrine does not apply to this proposed location.

Mineral Orders

No state or federal mining claims have been identified on these lands. DMLW is separately considering closing the entirety of the proposed material site to mineral entry.

Mineral closing orders, where established, close an area to new exploration and development of locatable minerals. Such mineral orders do not apply to leasable minerals (such as oil, gas, coal, etc.), or exploration licensing for such, nor do they preclude reasonable surface access to these resources.

Environmental Risk

There are no known environmental contaminants within the subject material site. Adherence to standard material sale contract operating requirements for fuel and hazardous substances will minimize the risk of leaks or spills resultant from operations.

Agency Comments

The DMLW conducted an agency review from September 19, 2025, through October 10, 2025. The following agencies were solicited for comments regarding this proposed material site designation and material sale:

Rachel Longacre, Director's Office, Division of Mining, Land and Water (DMLW), DNR

Realty Services Section (RSS), DMLW, DNR
Public Access Assertion & Defense (PAAD), DMLW, DNR
Resource Assessment & Development Section (RADS), DMLW, DNR
Statewide Abatement of Impaired Lands (SAIL) Section, DMLW, DNR
Mineral Property Management, DMLW, DNR
State Pipeline Coordinator's Section (SPCS), DNR
Office of History and Archeology (OHA). Division of Parks, DNR
Heather O'Claray, Statewide Right-of-way (ROW) Chief, Alaska Department of
Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF)
Kahlil Wilson, Right-of-way Section, DOT&PF
Dan Jordan, Property Management Section, DOT&PF
Audra Brase, Regional Supervisor-Fairbanks, Habitat Division, Alaska Department of Fish
and Game (ADFG)
Maria Wessel, Habitat Biologist, Habitat Division, ADFG
Jonathan Kirsch, Habitat Biologist, Habitat Division, ADFG
United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

The following comments were received:

USACE Comment: If the site is expanded, it is encouraged that operator reach out to USACE to see if a permit is required. Additionally, if dredged or fill materials are placed into United States waters, including wetlands, an authorization from the Department of Army is required. Land clearing associated with developing a material source would require an authorization from USACE.

DMLW Response: Thanked for their comment.

DFG Comment: DFG had no objections to the designation of this material site.

DMLW Response: Thanked for their comment.

DOT Comment: DOT had no concerns with the designation of this material site.

DMLW Response: Thanked for their comment.

Public Notice

Pursuant to AS 38.05.945, this PD will be advertised for a 30-day public comment period, starting on February 27, 2026. In addition, the Coldfoot and Steven's Village post office(s) located near the proposed material site designation will be requested to post the notice pursuant to AS 38.05.945(b)(3)(C). The notice will also be posted on the State of Alaska Online Public Notice

website pursuant to AS 38.05.945(b)(3)(B) located at:
<https://aws.state.ak.us/OnlinePublicNotices/Default.aspx>

In accordance with AS 38.05.946, Doyon, Limited is a municipality or a corporation entitled to receive notice under AS 38.05.945(c), and may hold a hearing within 30 days after the receipt of the notice.

The public is invited to comment on this PD. All comments received during the public comment period will be considered in the FFD. A copy of the FFD, along with instructions on filing an appeal, will be sent to all persons who comment on the PD. If public comments result in significant changes to the PD, additional public notice may be given.

To be eligible to appeal, a person affected by the FFD must provide written comments during the public comment period per AS 38.05.035(i).

Written comments about this project must be received in this office no later than on March 30, 2026, to be considered.

To submit comments please choose one of the following methods:

Mail: Department of Natural Resources
Division of Mining, Land and Water
Northern Region Office
ATTN: Haley Evans
3700 Airport Way
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709
Email: haley.evans@alaska.gov
Fax: (907) 451-2751

Questions about this project can be directed to Haley Evans at (907) 451-2806.

Survey and Appraisal

A survey for this material site is not required per AS 38.04.045. DMLW may require a survey in the future, should conditions arise that warrant a survey. If a survey is required, the applicant will be responsible for the costs of the survey.

Discussion

The project area has been identified by DOT as an important material site referred to as "Material Site 65-9-078-2". The majority of this land was previously disturbed. This site was developed during the construction of the Dalton Highway and Trans-Alaska Pipeline in the 1970s. Golder drilled this pit in 2003. DOT and Alyeska have had numerous contracts at this material site. A site inspection on August 20, 2025, indicates the site remains in use today with both signs of active use as well as sorted stockpiles present.

This site is not directly adjacent to the Dalton Highway and is accessible via a road named 81-APL/AMS-2. Access to the site is currently authorized under federal authorization FF-020604, totaling 1.77 acres. This road is gated at the Dalton Highway. Authorized site users have keys to open the gate. To ensure and protect continued access on this road, we propose reserving a Private Non-Exclusive Easement. The purpose of this easement would be to protect access for governmental purposes, material sale contracts, pipeline and utility management purposes, and other uses not prohibited by AS 19.40. AS 19.40.200 prohibits disposal of interest in this location except for a limited number of exceptions, including for oil and gas transportation purposes, utility purposes, and certain material sales. Notwithstanding the disposal prohibitions in AS.19.40.200, AS 19.40.210(c) allows for motorized easements to be granted to access federal lands, native allotments, and native corporation lands.

A general public access easement allowing motorized use would be contrary to statute, as it would be accessing exclusively State land. A Private Non-Exclusive Easement would comply with statutory restrictions by protecting and guaranteeing only those uses allowable under statute. Additionally, some of the uses occurring within material sites along the Dalton Highway require site control to protect public safety as well as to protect privately owned resources/materials staged in storage areas for efficient deployment. The width of this easement is set at 100' to ensure adequate width for the equipment associated with DOT and pipeline operations.

BLM has issued a decision revoking PLO 5150. Once revoked, these high priority selections will be available for conveyance to the State under the Statehood Act. Once this land belongs to the State, future material sale contract issuance will require that the site be designated.

To ensure continued material availability necessary for the Dalton Highway, TAPS, and other uses, designation of this site as described above is the site's highest and best use.

Designation of the above referenced material site serves the best interest of the state and public by ensuring continued material availability while maximizing efficiency and minimizing the need to transport materials on public roadways.

Material Site Designation

The material site is being designated under disposal of material statutes AS 38.05.550 and AS 38.05.555. This decision will designate this site as a material site for the long-term sale and extraction of materials until closed by DMLW. Although DMLW may continuously sell materials without further finding or notice once the site is designated, the DMLW must also ensure that state land and natural resources be available for the maximum use consistent with the public interest. To that end, the DMLW will continue to carefully review individual sale requests and operation plans once sites have been designated, to ensure resource consideration and multiple use issues are appropriately evaluated. The following requirements are routinely incorporated in a material sale contract issued to a private party: insurance and performance guaranty.

Recommendation

Based upon available information, as well as review of relevant planning documents, statutes, regulations, and case files related to this application, the DNR, DMLW, NRO proposes designating

ADL 422612 material site, as well as granting a Private Non-Exclusive Easement ADL 422681 to access the site. This decision considers ownership of the site, the need for reasonable access to material sources in the region and the project site, and agency concerns. The designation of this material site and subsequent contract issuances will assist with the management of the Dalton Highway transportation corridor.


Haley Evans
Natural Resource Specialist

2/27/26
Date

Preliminary Decision

I find that the proposed action as recommended above may be in the state's best interest and is hereby approved to proceed to public notice. Additional operating requirements identified during the public comment period may be included in the Final Finding and Decision and subsequent authorization.


Dianna Leinberger
Northern Region Manager

2/27/26
Date

Attachments

Attachment A—Site Map
Attachment B—Example Mining and Reclamation Plan
Attachment C—Example Negotiated Contract
Attachment D—Example Private Non-Exclusive Easement