

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF A SEMI-PERMANENT BRIDGE OVER
SINGAURUK RIVER, BETWEEN NOORVIK AND SELAWIK, ALASKA

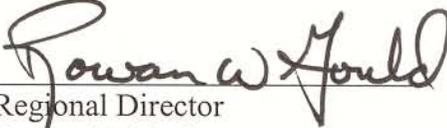
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing to replace a temporary wooden bridge over the Singauruk River with a semi-permanent bridge. The structure would be located between Noorvik and Selawik, Alaska. The purpose is to provide safe winter crossing of the river by snowmachine for refuge staff and residents of Noorvik and Selawik, as well as those in the surrounding region.

An Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared which addressed the preferred alternative and a no-action alternative. In addition to the EA, an archaeological reconnaissance was conducted at the site and Compatibility Determination (CD) prepared. The EA evaluated three potential construction sites. All but the proposed site were rejected because of the greater length of span required to cross the river and associated impacts. General considerations were to establish a structure with the smallest footprint that would meet public safety needs. Potential impacts on cultural resources and the socioeconomic effects were also evaluated. There was no evidence found of past use or occupancy by early man at the site or any historical structures would be affected by this action. The bridge's design was found to result in minimum bank disturbance and water flow. The effects on use patterns resulting in construction of this structure were also found to be insignificant. No increase in use was predicted to result. The preferred alternative was determined not to have significant impacts.

A notice of availability for the EA and CD was published on the agency web site on June 1st, 2004. Copies of the EA, CD and archaeological reconnaissance were mailed directly to the surrounding land managers, Northwest Arctic Borough and tribal governments. No public comments were received from state or federal agencies. Local government entities from Selawik and Noorvik endorsed the proposed action.

Based on my review and evaluation of the enclosed Environmental Assessment and other supporting documentation, I have determined that the building of a free standing semi-permanent bridge, at the northern most crossing of the Singauruk River would not significantly affect the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. Accordingly, preparation of an environmental impact statement on the proposed action is not required.

This document and associated documents and reports are available at the Selawik National Wildlife Refuge Offices in Kotzebue and Selawik, AK. They can also be viewed at the following web site: <http://alaska.fws.gov/nwr/planning/compdeter.htm>


Regional Director
Region 7, Alaska
Date 8/11/04

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Signatures Continued



Refuge Manager

7-22-04

Date