FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION at the FORMER KATALLA STATION, ALASKA

A. Introduction

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will demolish buildings containing asbestos and lead-based paint, test for petroleum-contaminated soil, and remove miscellaneous debris at the former station at Katalla in Prince William Sound. The FAA station was abandoned many years ago and is a remnant of an air navigation communication site. The wood debris will be burned on site. Asbestos in structures, materials with high lead concentrations, and debris will be taken off site to a licensed landfill. Asbestos will be removed from the structures prior to demolition and packaged separately for disposal. Any hazardous waste found on site will be taken to a hazardous material disposal site.

B. Statement of Environmental Significance of the Proposed Action

After careful and thorough consideration of the facts contained herein and in the attached environmental assessment, the undersigned finds the Federal action is consistent with existing national environmental policies and objectives as set forth in Section 101(a) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and that the action will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or otherwise include any condition requiring consultation pursuant to Section 102(2)(c) of NEPA. An environmental impact statement is therefore not necessary for the cleanup activities. Additionally, the FAA bases this finding on the following:

C. Reasons for the Finding

1. Fish and wildlife habitat will not be adversely affected by the environmental cleanup.

2. The cleanup will not affect threatened or endangered species.

3. No cultural properties protected under the National Historic Preservation Act will be adversely affected.

4. The removal of abandoned and unneeded buildings, hazardous wastes, contaminated soils, and debris will eliminate environmental and safety hazards.

5. The project is consistent with the Coastal Zone Management Act.

APPROVED

DISAPPROVED

_____ _____

Bradley Platt, Manager Date
Infrastructure Support Center
Operations and Engineering Group
Anchorage

Environmental Assessment

Federal Aviation Administration
Environmental Restoration of the Former Katalla Station
Katalla, Alaska

1.0 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR PROPOSED ACTION

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) proposes to demolish structures, remove debris and hazardous wastes, and remediate contaminated soils as necessary at their abandoned facilities at Katalla, in Prince William Sound, Alaska (figure 1).

The FAA station at Katalla is a former air navigation communication site, specifically a Very High Frequency (VHF) site.

2.0 PROPOSED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Activities include cleanup of old structures, bulk fuel storage tanks (FST), wreckage, and hazardous wastes and remediation of contaminated soils at the abandoned facilities at Katalla (figure 1). This action would require the reopening of an old road to access the proposed project site and would include brush grubbing, cutting mainly pole-size trees, and use of gravel to fill in uneven and damp terrain.

2.1 General Tasks

The following general tasks would be performed:

- Remove asbestos-containing materials (ACM) from structures as needed in accordance with OSHA guidelines on preparation, handling, and disposal,

- Demolish structures and remove solid waste for transport to approved landfill,

- Burn wood products on site. All ash would be removed. If practical, ash would be sampled for lead content. Ash with lead above Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure (TCLP) standards, which is 5.0 parts per million (ppm), would be disposed of according to Resource Conservation and Recovery Act regulations,

- Excavate lead-contaminated soils as needed. Excavated soils would be placed into supersacks for transport to a hazardous waste facility, and

- Excavate petroleum-contaminated soils (PCS), if found, to Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) cleanup standards for disposal at an approved disposal site.

2.2 Specific Tasks at Katalla

2.2.1 Access Road

The access road is intact but overgrown with 50 years growth of alder and Sitka spruce. The beach landing area portion of the road was uplifted during the 1964 earthquake and would be reestablished.

2.2.2 VHF Transmitter building

This wooden building is still intact but the floor has rotted out. The building sits on the standard FAA 8-inch concrete poured footer. The interior light green paint is lead based. The exterior white paint is not lead based. Flooring consists of two layers of 9-inch tile. Only the white tile layer and associated mastic are ACM. The building's ACM consists of white 9-inch floor tile and associated mastic, exterior foundation putty, and exterior siding tar-paper (two layers). Surrounding the building are approximately eight, 8-foot posts with small transformers.

2.2.3 Quarters Building

This wooden building is partially collapsed. No lead paint is associated with the building. Cement asbestos board (CAB) is located on at least one of the furnace room walls. Nine-inch vinyl asbestos tile (VAT) may be present under a collapsed portion of the building. Asbestos may be present in the furnace.

2.2.4 Pumphouse and Well

This building was not located but would probably be found during the road clearing process.

2.2.5 Engine Generator Building

This building is intact and in good condition. CAB was used in place of sheetrock on all walls and ceiling. Two 5 by 10-foot windows (8 panes each) have ACM in the caulking.

2.2.6 Garage and Storage Building

Both buildings are completely collapsed. It is unknown if any hazardous materials were stored in either of these buildings. An empty transformer is near the garage.

2.2.7 Bulk Fuel Tanks and Pipeline

The bulk fuel tanks and concrete fuel pump pit are still intact. PCS was encountered in this area. Distribution lines enter the ground from the tanks. The pipeline and gasoline storage tank were not located. They may be found during the road clearing process.

2.2.8 Scattered Debris

Approximately 50 cubic yards of debris, including 55 gallon drums are scattered throughout the project area.

2.2.9 Assumptions

1. A work camp will be used during job.

2. The access road from the beach to the facility may be used after brush removal. Assume brush may be sidecast.

3. All buildings would be demolished without ACM or lead-based paint removal.

4. All creosote poles will pass TCLP and can be disposed of as general waste.

5. Twenty soil samples shall be collected around the tanks and fuel pipeline and tested for petroleum constituents.

6. All concrete remains in place. The concrete fuel pump pit would be collapsed and buried.

7. Burning the buildings onsite is an option.

3.0 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION

3.1 No Action

Under the no-action alternative, existing structures, debris, and hazardous wastes at the former FAA station would continue to deteriorate. The FAA would be liable for deteriorated buildings and their associated safety concerns and releases of environmental contaminants and hazards.

4.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Katalla lies at the head of Controller Bay outside Cordova in Prince William Sound, Alaska (Section 32, T19S, R5E, USGS Cordova A-2 Quadrangle; figure 1). The former Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) operated a very-high frequency (VHF) facility in Katalla that served as a radio communications and in-flight support facility from 1955 to 1957 (Dave Hanneman, FAA personal communication, June 2007). Soon after, the technology was made obsolete by the White Alice Communication Systems. The former VHF facility is on United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service land.

4.1 Climate

Prince William Sound has a marine climate with mean temperatures that range from a minimum of 26.8 °F in January to a maximum of 62.3 °F in August. Average annual rainfall is about 96 inches.

Winters are generally mild. Prevailing winds are from the east with an average of 5 to 14 miles per hour (mph). Winds gusts can reach 60 mph.

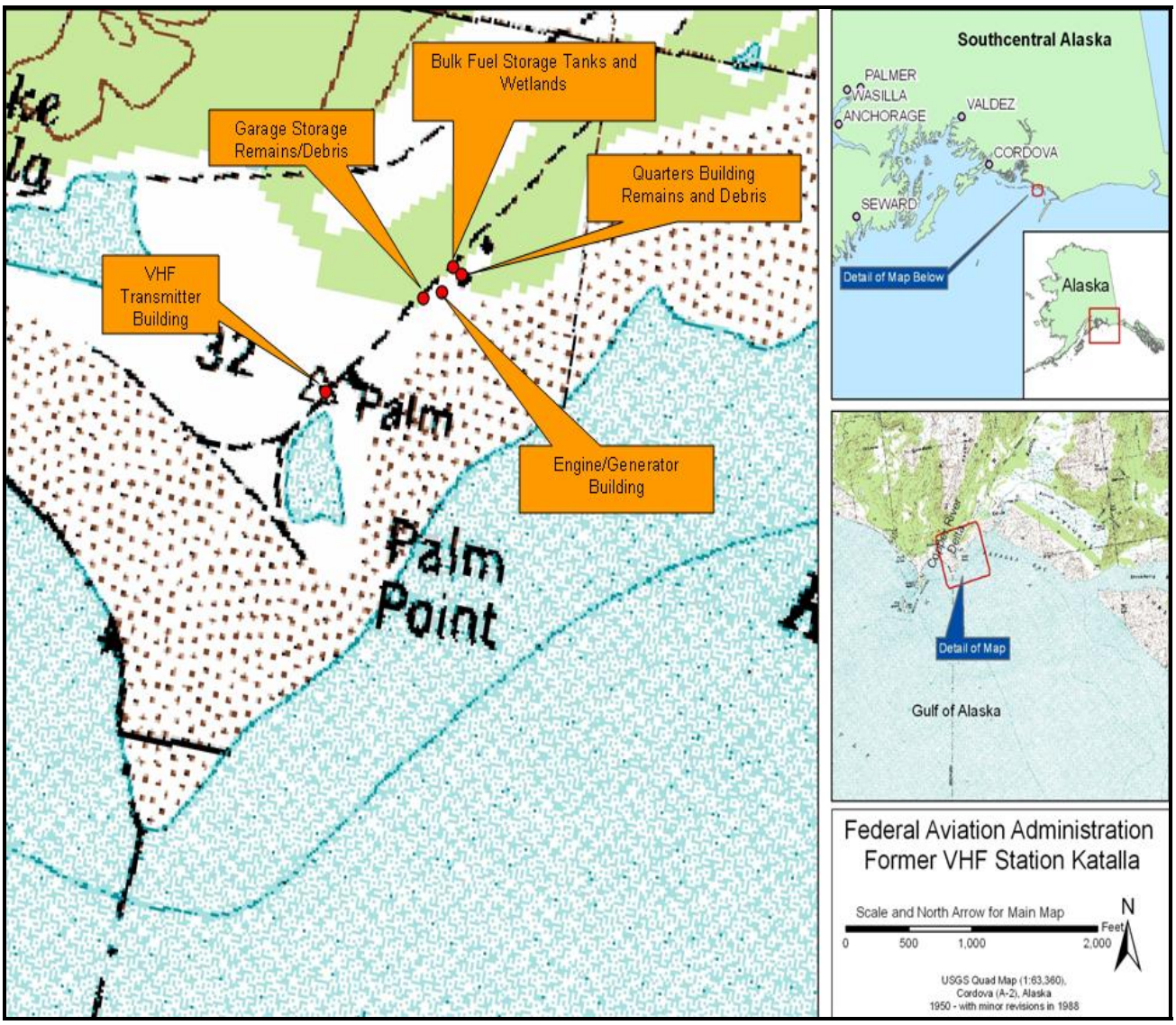

Figure 1: Location of facilities to be removed during the proposed cleanup action

4.2 Topography

The former station is scattered along the Katalla River terrace approximately 1 mile from the coastline.

4.3 Vegetation.

Vegetation (figures 2 through 5) along the old access road has become overgrown since the station closed. Access to the site would require traversing sand dune vegetation, alder (*Alnus sp.*) brush, meadow grasses and forbs, as well as secondary growth of Sitka spruce forest vegetation. Sand dune vegetation is characterized by beachrye (*Leymus mollis* ssp. *mollis*), vetch (*Lathyrus maritimus*), and *Puccinellia phryganodes*, which are the dominant species. A meadow is established along the old road and in the vicinity of the VHF transmitter building (figure 7). Dominant species are salmonberry (*Rubus spectabilis*), cow parsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*), chocolate lily (*Fritillaria camschatcensis*), fireweed (*epilobium angustifolium*), lupine (*lupinus sp.*), baneberry (*actaea rubra*), and beach strawberry (*Fragaria chiloensis*) (Hultén, E. 1968). Grasses such as beachrye and various Poa species also may be found in the meadow.

Figure 2 Sand dune vegetation

Figure 3. Alder brush

Figure 4. Forb-grass dominated meadow and Sitka spruce secondary regeneration

Figure 5. View of intercepted wetlands from old road

The old road was initially constructed through a wetland (figure 6); therefore, in this segment of the road, wetlands are found close to the edge of the road. Water sedge seems to be the

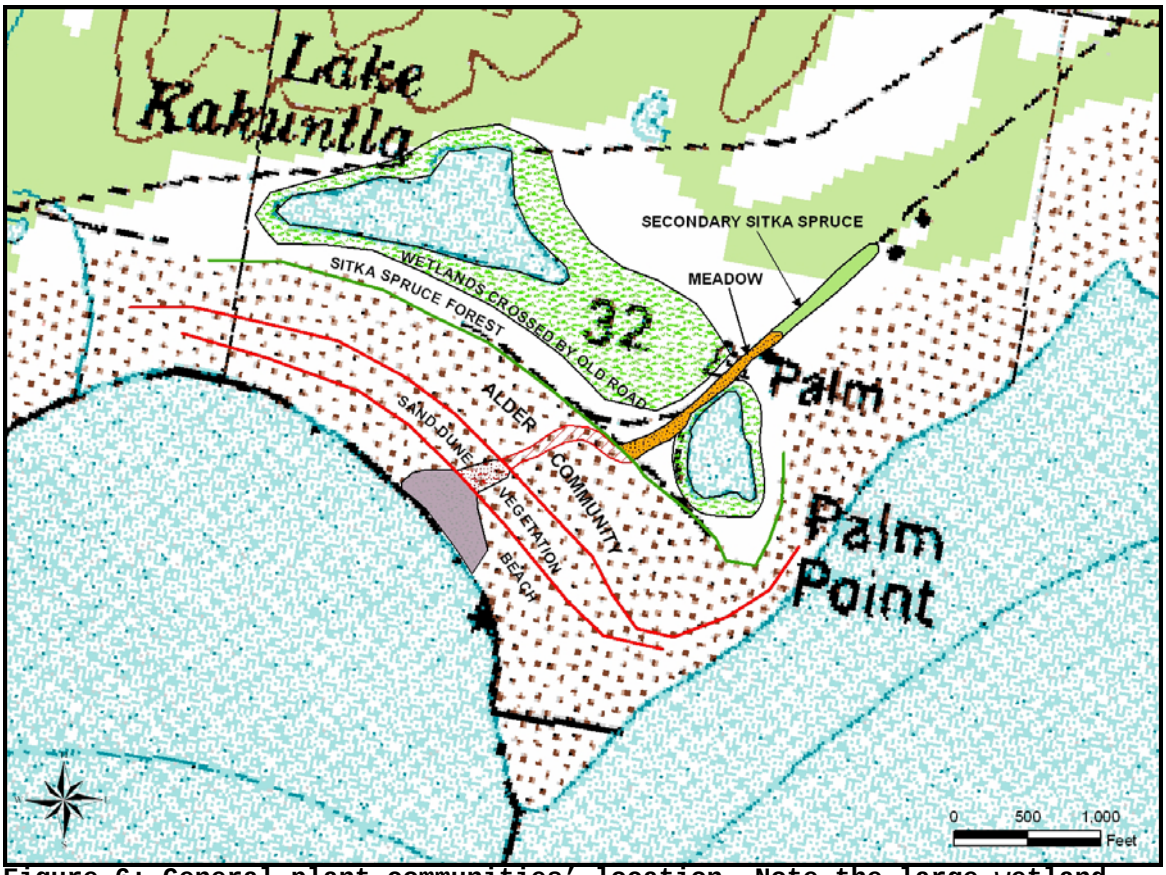

Figure 6: General plant communities' location. Note the large wetland intercepted by the construction of a dirt road in the mid 50's.

dominant species along the fringe of the lake, but the area was not carefully surveyed. Pole-size and middle-size Sitka spruce trees (figure 8) are found at the edges of the old road and in the vicinity of the engine/generator and quarter's buildings.

Figure 7. Meadow field in the vicinity of the VHF transmitter building.

Figure 8. Pole-size and middle size Sitka spruce in the vicinity of the engine/generator and quarter buildings.

The cleanup project includes the removal of three bulk fuel storage tanks (FST) (figure 9) located close to the engine/generator and the quarters' building. Remediation of contaminated soils may be required. A small isolated freshwater pond and adjacent wetlands (figure 10) exists nearby the FSTs; water-sedge (*Carex aquatilis*) and skunk cabbage (*Lysichiton americanum*) are dominant species.

Figure 9. Bulk fuel storage tanks (ASTs)

Figure. 10 Wetlands and isolated freshwater water pond

4.4 Wetlands

Wetlands were filled when the old road was constructed, probably in the mid 50's. The filled area cannot be considered a wetland anymore, but the margins of the lake are close to the berm where the road was built. The above photographs show the isolated freshwater pond and emergent wetland.

4.5 Plant Species of Concern

The list of plants in table 1 on the U.S. Forest Service's list was surveyed during the June 14, 2007 field visit to Katalla. The survey concentrated along the sand dune, old road, and in the vicinity of the buildings proposed for removal. No species of concern was found during the survey. Adjacent wetlands were not surveyed in detail as it is expected that the project would not directly impact those areas.

Table 1: List of plant species of concern in the Chugach National Forest, Cordova Ranger District.

Species of Concern	Community with potential habitat	June 14th Survey results
Bothrychium tunux	Sand dune	Not observed
B. yaaxudakeit	Sand dune	Not observed
Puccinellia glabra	Sand dune	Not observed
P. kamtschatica	Sand dune	Not observed
Arnica lessingii spp. norbegii	Open Sitka spruce forest/meadow	Not observed

Carex lenticularis var. dolia	Margin of intercepted lake and adjacent wetlands/ wetlands nearby ESTs	Not surveyed
Isoetes truncate	Intercepted lake/pond wetlands nearby ESTs	Not surveyed
Romanzoffia unalaschcensis	Sitka spruce forest edges	Not observed

4.6 Migratory Bird Habitat

The secondary growth Sitka spruce forest provides nesting, perching, and feeding habitat for a large number of bird species, including northern goshawks, and several passerine species. Townsend warblers nest on old-growth forest habitat. The coastline and estuaries provide good habitat for waterfowl, colonial seabirds, black oystercatchers, and bald eagles. The area is noted for providing habitat for trumpeter swans and is a duck and geese spring and fall concentration area (Alaska Department of Fish and game 1985). The U.S. Forest Services sensitive bird species list includes trumpeter swan, dusky Canada goose, osprey, peregrine falcon, black oystercatcher, townsend warbler, and northern goshawk.

Peale's peregrine falcons breed from the Aleutian Islands, east and southward through Southeast Alaska, to the Queen Charlotte Islands of British Columbia. Peale's peregrine falcons nest on cliffs from 65 to 900 feet in height along the outer coast of the Gulf of Alaska (USDA Forest Service 1997b). Nest distribution is closely associated with large seabird colonies located on the outer coasts or on nearby islands. Schempf (1992) found that seabird remains, including marbled murrelet, ancient murrelet, and Cassin's auklet, made up most of the prey remains found at aeries in Southeast Alaska. There are no documented seabird colonies near the project site.

The goshawk is a habitat generalist and opportunistic predator; it preys on the ground, on vegetation, and in the air for tree squirrels, ground squirrels, rabbits, hares, songbirds, and grouse that rely on a variety of forested and non-forested habitats. During the visit to Katalla in June, no goshawks were observed nesting in the vicinity of the proposed project site.

Bald eagles commonly re-use nests for many breeding seasons, but locations change over time. Along the Alaska coast, bald eagles prefer to nest in the tallest Sitka spruce trees, which usually average 5 feet in diameter, and are generally nest in trees within 200 yards of the water (http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/projects/angoon_hydro/chap3d.shtml). No bald eagle nests were observed in the project area. Katalla is east of the productive Cooper River Delta Critical habitat area.

Osprey occur in low numbers throughout Southeast Alaska during the nesting period from late April through August (http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/projects/angoon_hydro/chap3d.shtml), usually near lakes, rivers, and coasts. Although the osprey population in Southeast Alaska has historically been low, the availability of nest sites and foraging areas do not appear to be limiting factors (USDA Forest Service 1997b). Osprey nests are generally constructed in spruce/hemlock forest. Snags or trees with broken tops are preferred (Blatt 1995). No osprey nests were observed.

4.7 Fish and Wildlife.

Black and brown bears are found in the general area, especially brown bear during the summer feeding on salmon in the Katalla River. The Katalla River supports anadromous pink and coho salmon as well as resident fish species. Moose also range into this area. The forest and fringe areas are habitat for a variety of fur bearers and rodents such as martin, mink, and red squirrel. Marine waters are rich habitat for Dungeness crab, tanner crab, and ground fish species. No sea otter or harbor seal habitat is noted in the immediate coastline area.

4.8 Threatened and Endangered Species

Several species of whale listed as threatened or endangered occur in marine waters in southeast Alaska. These species are blue, sei, fin, northern right, sperm, and humpback. The gray whale is no longer on the endangered species list. The most common whale species in the area are humpback and gray whales. The coordination letter from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is contained in the Correspondence appendix.

4.9 Cultural Resources

Excerpts from the 2007 Katalla Archeological report are presented here.

Prince William Sound is the home of the Chugach Eskimo and the Eyak Indians. However, various neighboring groups such as the Tlingit and Athabascan visited the area and contributed to an assimilation of the indigenous cultures of this area (Yarborough and Yarborough 1998:137). By the end of the 19th century, many of the Eyak of the Copper River Delta, and the groups living in Controller Bay, were bilingual in Eyak and Tlingit (Ketz and Johnson 1985:31). Katalla was a densely populated Tlingit village prior to Russian contact (Birket-Smith and De Laguna 1938:124). For the most part, settlements were located on the coast with an occasional salmon camp up river. The economy was maritime and followed the zones of greatest economic development (Clark 1984:185).

Russian explorer Vitus Bering and crew anchored near Controller Bay during his second expedition in 1741 and provided some of the first documented accounts of the people in this area (Clark 1984:187). Europeans set up a regular network for commerce. Business accounts of the Alaska Commercial Company indicate that the first trading station in this area was established in 1881. Canneries were set up on nearby Wingham Island and operated for a short stint from 1889 to 1891. The abandoned cannery buildings became occupied by the North American Commercial Company, the rivals of the Alaska Commercial Company (Ketz and Johnson 1983). The fur trade of Controller Bay during the 1890's attracted hunters from down the coast who built temporary settlements in this area.

By the late 19th century, oil and coal were discovered in the area of Katalla. In 1901, Katalla became a boom town of entrepreneurs and planners investing in big-money projects geared to take advantage of the new-found resources. Some of these projects were carried out, like the refinery built near Katalla and a series of railroad tracks and trestles, but in the end all the

facilities were abandoned. The development of this area had a significant impact on the Native people of this area (Ketz and Johnson 1983).

4.9.1 Cultural Resources in Katalla Area & Previous Archaeological Surveys

No prehistoric sites have been identified in the area of potential effect (APE) from previous archaeological surveys. Any prehistoric findings in the project area would be unlikely since this area was greatly disturbed twice: first when the FAA cleared and then covered the area with several feet of fill to build pads for the buildings and an access road, and second during the 1964 earthquake (Brad Platt, FAA personal communication, June 2007). According to Birket-Smith and Laguna (1938:124), Katalla the town site, was a former bustling Tlingit village. The reported location of the Katalla village site is 1 mile southwest of the Katalla FAA facility. Due to the short distance between the two areas, there is a possibility that prehistoric artifacts are present but covered by earth.

In 1983, the Chugach Alaska Corporation sponsored an archaeological survey in the vicinity of Katalla and the APE being considered for this undertaking. Just north of the Katalla FAA station, the survey crew reported ruins of two to three old structures and an associated land fill that appear to be remains of a Katalla Railroad camp (COR-275). The survey also located a small cemetery (COR-328) near the railroad tracks by a stream that empties out of Lake Kahuntla (Ketz and Johnson 1985). Both sites are just outside the APE.

4.9.2 2007 Survey

The survey route was random and used visual inspection to focus on buildings and associated debris and areas that would be disturbed during remediation and removal within the APE. When the Katalla FAA facility was built in 1955, the area was flattened by bulldozers and fill was used to build pads for the buildings (Brad Platt; Federal Aviation Administration, personal communication 2007). No subsurface testing was conducted because no signs of cultural remains predating the FAA were evident.

The original road bed with more than 50 years of second growth was used to access the VHF facility. Associated debris from the FAA station (figure 11) and remains of the Copper River and North West railroad trestle were dispersed along the road (figures 12 and 13). Of particular interest was a small culvert that looked to be fashioned from 55-gallon drums (figure 12). While these historic features are within the APE, they would not be affected by the cleanup project as the access road would be brushed to clear foliage, and no construction or permanent alteration of the road would occur. Equipment used to transport materials along the road would avoid features, objects, and debris from the Copper River and North West railroad.

Figure 11. FAA lamp post and debris from the VHF facility along access road.

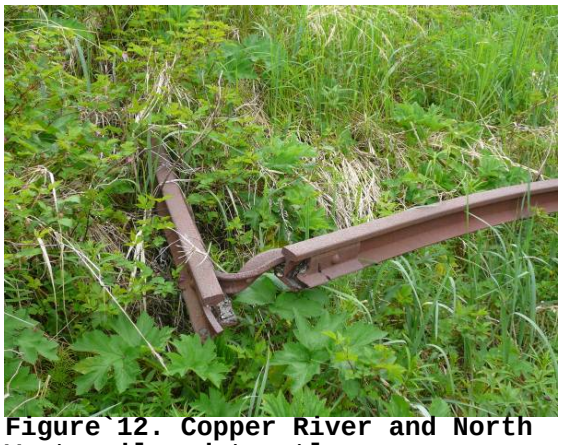

Figure 12. Copper River and North West railroad trestle.

Figure 13. Culvert fashioned from 55-gallon drums.

The structures at the FAA station were built according to a standardized construction plans. The following describes the buildings to be demolished or removed, along with the Alaska Heritage Resource Survey (AHRS) numbers assigned and FAA building type numbers.

Building	Bldg #	Built	AHRS	Description
VHF transmitter	Similar to 402	1950's	COR-570	16-ft by 16-ft single story, wooden structure, with metal roof and tar-paper siding on standard FAA 8-inch concrete footer. Interior floor is rotted out, but remnants of white tile flooring are present. Several 8-ft posts with transformers surround the structure. Used for aerial navigation. VHF equipment has been removed. (figure 14)

Figure 14. Left: Exterior of VHF transmitter building. Right: Interior of VHF transmitter building. (COR-570)

Building	Bldg #	Built	AHRS	Description
Garage and Storage	200	1950's	COR-568	Collapsed. Remains include wood, corrugated metal, and 55-gallon drums. Dimensions of the garage are approximately 10ft by15 ft. Dimensions for the storage are approximately 20 ft by15 ft. (figures 15 and 16)

Figure 15. Garage and storage remains (COR-568).

Figure 16. Garage and storage remains (COR-568).

Building	Bldg #	Built	AHRS	Description
Engine-generator	Similar to 600	1950's	COR-567	Wood structure on concrete foundation. 18-ft by 28-ft single-story shelter for generator, tools, and workshop. Skeleton frame of building is intact, but in poor condition. Inside of building is deteriorating. Includes associated remains of metal and wood piles. See bulk fuel tank column. (figures 17 and 18)

Figure 17. Exterior, engine-generator building (COR-567)

Figure 18. Interior, engine-generator building (COR-567).

Building	Bldg #	Built	AHRS	Description
Quarters	100	1950's	COR-566	Collapsed, with exception of a portion of the north wall and concrete chimney. 30-ft by 45-ft single story quarters building. 2-inch diameter metal pipe sticking up from ground about 3 ft on east side of structure. Includes associated remains. (figure 19 and 20)

Figure 19. 0Quarters building remains (COR-566).

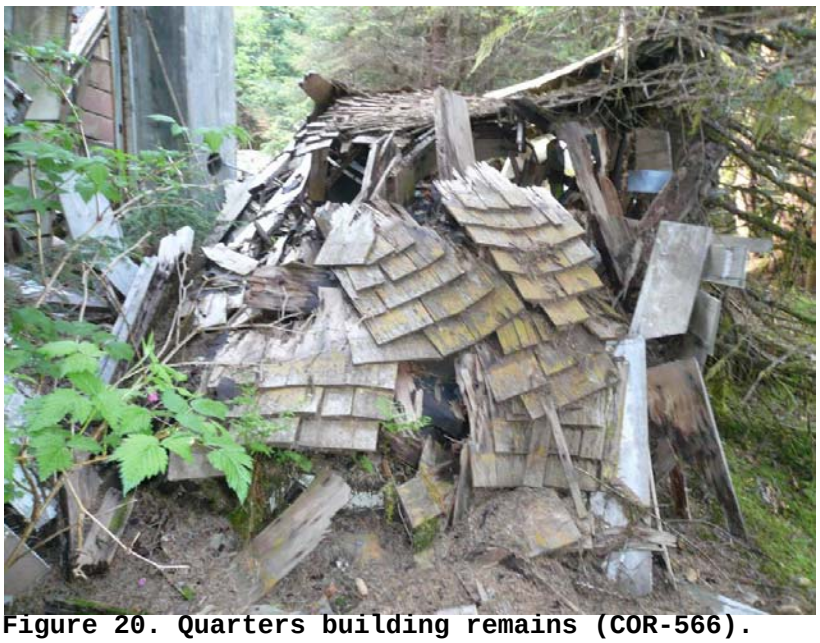

Figure 20. Quarters building remains (COR-566).

Building	Bldg #	Built	AHRS	Description
Infrastructure	various	1950's	N/A	Posts used for transformers and electricity are scattered throughout the APE. Pump house and well that are unconfirmed. Metal pipes surfacing a few feet from ground are present in garage area and quarters area. (figures 21 to 25)

Figure 21. FAA lamp post along access road

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Figure 22. Metal pipe near quarters building.

Figure 23. Utility box near VHF building

Figure 24.Utility pole near. access road

Figure 25. Concrete Fuel pump stand

Building	Bldg #	Built	AHRS	Description
Bulk Fuel Tanks	N/A	1950's	*COR-565	*Three 10,000-gallon aboveground fuel storage tanks with 480 ft of pipe extending to beach. [There are also two 500-gallon aboveground fuel tanks near engine building; one unconfirmed 500-gallon underground storage tank and septic system near quarters building; one unconfirmed 500-gallon tank across from the engine/storage building (unknown if above or underground)]. (figures 26 and 27)

Figure 26. Three 10,000-gallon storage tanks

Figure 27. Tanks outside engine-generator building (COR-565)

Building	Bldg #	Built	AHRS	Description
Access Road	N/A	1950's	COR-569	The access road is intact, but overgrown with 50 years of foliage. The road leading up to the APE was uplifted as much as 10 feet by the 1964 earthquake. Remains of railroad trestles, light posts, apparent culvert made of 55-gallon drum can be seen along the road. No culturally modified trees were found. (figures 28 and 29.)

Figure 28. Access road (COR-569).

Figure 29. Access road (COR-569).

4.9.3. Discussion and Conclusion

During the Corps survey, no subsurface archaeological deposits were found in the APE where buildings, storage tanks, and associated debris would be removed. Exposed round surfaces, root wads, and cut banks were opportunistically inspected. No subsurface sites or culturally modified trees were identified. Any pre-contact remains in the APE would be unlikely because this area was first disturbed when the FAA cleared and then covered the area with several feet of fill to build pads for the buildings and an access road, and then again during the 1964 earthquake (Brad Platt, FAA personal communication, June 2007).

A statewide survey and determination of eligibility of CAA structures was done by Paul Chattey in 1999. While the Katalla FAA facility is not included in the *Programmatic Agreement between the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Alaska Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Regarding the Demolition and Decommissioning of FAA Stations in Alaska* (PA), it is within the period of significance delineated by Chattey. Chattey found that some FAA stations around Alaska are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under both Criteria A (events) and Criteria C (construction). Chattey stated that the period of significance for the CAA was between 1940 and 1958, when air navigation facilities were constructed for safety, and radio towers were built to assist in communications within and outside the territory, including Katalla.

Originally the Katalla FAA facility consisted of a VHF transmitter building, garage and storage buildings, an engine-generator building with two 500-gallon aboveground storage tanks, one 500-gallon fuel tank across from the engine building, a quarters building with one 500-gallon underground storage tank and septic system, three 10,000-gallon bulk fuel storage tanks with 480 feet of pipeline running to the beach, a concrete fuel pump pit adjacent to the bulk storage tanks, a 10-foot-wide gravel access road, and associated infrastructure. Generally, CAA structures were built according to a standard construction model. This gave CAA buildings a distinct appearance and many stations had similar (if not identical) buildings. Some variation in building style came from assembling the similar materials in different ways. Considering the construction date and the architectural evidence at the Katalla FAA facility, it is likely that these structures were the “stick-built” style. This later generation of construction used “standard lengths of lumber, concrete foundations, drop siding, and gable roofs covered with cedar shingles,” but followed standardized building types (Chattey 1999, volume one:12). Coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer has been conducted.

Figure 30. Katalla FAA facility, oblique photo 1953 (courtesy FAA photo archives).

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

5.1 No-Action Alternative.

The deterioration of the structures is a safety and environmental hazard. Debris would remain scattered on land and in the water. FAA would continue to be liable for the former stations. Current land owners would like the deteriorating structures and contamination removed so that future land use is not hindered.

5.2 Proposed Action

5.2.1 General.

Minor temporary increases in noise from the operation of heavy equipment are anticipated. The demolition, soil cleanup, and debris removal work would concentrate activities in disturbed areas where development has taken place. Demolition activities would temporarily affect the ground surface because of the use of heavy equipment. A limited amount of vegetation clearing is necessary to access the structures for removal. Bird and other wildlife would be disturbed and shifted to adjacent areas. Temporary impacts to air quality would result from the operation of heavy equipment and the burning of wood debris. Given the remote location from a population

center and that the weathered wood and brush have no petroleum-based material or other materials that give off black smoke, an Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation open burn permit is not necessary. Construction crews would be housed on a vessel or in a field camp on site. There would be no effect to cultural properties.

5.2.2 Specific Impact Categories

Vegetation. Access to the proposed project site would require trampling or clearing an estimated 1 acre of dune vegetation, 2 acres of alder brush, 4 acres of meadow grasses and forbs, and selective cutting of pole-size conifers in an area of 2 acres of Sitka spruce secondary growth trees. A potential negative impact on plant communities is the introduction of noxious weeds and non-native species with the use of heavy machinery. No noxious weeds or non-native species were at the site during the field trip. To avoid any introduction, equipment would be cleaned before arriving at the site. Vegetation clearing to access the structures and debris accounts for the majority of the environmental affects. Vegetation clearing would be kept to the minimum as practical.

Wetlands. Wetlands would not be filled or impaired under this action. Although grubbing would occur along the old road, efforts would be taken to minimize the grubbed brush at the margins of the lake where the berm is adjacent to the wetlands. Fresh emergent wetlands next to the three ASTs would only be impacted if remedial action is required to clean up soil contamination extending into these wetlands. The most probable scenario would be to limit soil remediation activities outside the wetlands.

Migratory Bird Habitat. The cleanup project would have negligible effects on migratory bird habitat, because of its low and localized scale. Only a relative small area of secondary Sitka spruce forest and brush would be removed. These vegetation communities are locally abundant. The proposed site has been previously disturbed and the dominant vegetation communities are at various succession stages. Cutting mature trees would be avoided to the extent possible to avoid impacting potential nesting habitat for Northern goshawks and bald eagles. The removal of meadow vegetation and salmonberry thickets would temporarily displace passerine bird nesting and perching habitat. To avoid disturbing nests, clearing should occur prior to or after the nesting season (May 1 through July 15). The habitat impact would be only temporary and would be mitigated by promoting revegetation such as the scarification of the road to loosen compacted gravel and soil and the overlay of previously grubbed vegetation debris on top of the scarified road. The organic matter would expedite the establishment of natural vegetation seedlings.

The Chugach National Forest, Cordova Ranger District, have identified a falcon nest site on the cliffs west of the Fox Islands. The proposed barge landing and cleanup site would be located about 1/2 mile from the nest site. There is no suitable nesting habitat for peregrine falcons in or near the project area. No sightings of Peale's peregrine falcons have been documented in or near the project area, and no falcons were observed during the June field trip. There is a documented bald eagle nest site on Fox Island, but that is about a mile from the barge landing site. No previous nesting surveys have identified nesting sites within the boundaries of the proposed project site, and none were observed during the field visit. The removal of Sitka spruce trees at

the proposed project site would remove potential osprey nesting habitat, but the limited amount of tree removal would have an insignificant impact when compare with the extended area of habitat available in Katalla.

Neotropical migratory birds are wide-ranging species that require a variety of habitats for foraging, breeding, and wintering. Individual project areas such as this one are generally too small or restrictive to effectively detect population changes or to significantly affect habitats for migratory species and regional biological diversity.

Fish and wildlife. The access road would not cross any anadromous streams; therefore, no direct impact on fish is expected from this action. At the barge site there would be temporary impacts caused by loading and unloading heavy equipment. Small mammals would be affected within the cleared vegetation zones. Large mammals would be deterred temporarily from the area during construction.

Threatened and Endangered Species. There would be no affect to any species or their habitats as a result of the cleanup project.

Cultural Resources. In considering the Katalla FAA facility for eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places, the Corps finds that the station is lacking in several aspects of integrity. Despite the changes from the earthquake to the area, the station remains in the same general area in which it was constructed (location). The site has retained basic features that are expressive of its design. The spatial layout of the buildings in relation to each other is apparent, as is basic configuration, proportions, and window pattern (design). The site retains its basic physical appearance within the environment (setting). Not enough equipment or structures are standing or present at the site to convey its association with its significance to the CAA to a passerby. The towers, antennae, and navigation equipment has been removed. Several buildings have collapsed, and unrelated debris and deteriorating 55-gallon drums are scattered throughout the site (association). The property does not retain sufficient key materials to indicate preferences and types of technologies afforded to the builder at that time in history (materials). The buildings and structures at this site were constructed from standard architectural plans that the CAA used throughout the state. It is not a special example of skill or craft for this time (workmanship).

The Katalla FAA facility retains integrity of location, design, and setting; however, it lacks integrity of association, materials, and workmanship that result in a lack of feeling. The period of significance for CAA stations evaluated by Chattey is 1940 to 1958. CAA facilities during that period were significant due to their association with events (Criterion A) and their construction (Criterion C). The stations were designed to increase safety by improving and providing navigation facilities such as radio communications towers and to facilitate transportation by building numerous airports. Due to a lack of integrity, the Katalla FAA facility does not convey its association with these significant events. In general, the CAA structures and buildings had a distinctive appearance and most stations had identical buildings. Of the structures in the area of potential effect, the VHF transmitter, garage/storage, engine/generator, and quarters were structure types mitigated under the Programmatic Agreement. The Katalla

FAA facility is not

eligible for the National Register of Historic Places; therefore, there will be no historic properties affected by the proposed undertaking**.**

Coastal Zone Management Program. The Katalla cleanup project as proposed would be consistent with the provisions of the Coastal Zone Management Program to the fullest extent practical. Katalla is not within a designated service area.

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation (DOT) Act. The 4(f) section of the DOT Act requires consideration of publicly owned parklands, recreational areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites in an environmental assessment. The Katalla site cleanup is not within nor would it affect any of these categories of land uses.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The Katalla FAA station demolition, debris removal, and soil cleanup action would not have a significant effect on the human or natural environment; therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

7.0 AGENCIES AND PERSONS CONTACTED

A scoping letter describing the project was sent in October 2006 to State and Federal agencies. Preliminary scoping was conducted with agencies responsible for threatened and endangered species and natural resources. A determination of eligibility under NHPA was sent to the SHPO. Correspondence is in Appendix A.

8.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

Lizette Boyer, Biologist, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Estrella Campellone, Biologist, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Diane Walters, Editor, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Helen Lindemuth and Margan Grover, Archeologists, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

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CORRESPONDENCE APPENDIX