



# State Legislative Priorities

FY 2013



GINO GUSSE



# Matanuska-Susitna Borough



# Port MacKenzie Rail Extension

## 3 MILLION CUBIC YARDS OF SOIL MOVED

-TRUCK/RAIL EMBANKMENT IN PORT COMPLETED

-RAIL LOOP 2/3S COMPLETE



Ken Graham



THE LONGEST RAIL CAR LOOP IN ALASKA FOR THE EFFICIENT OFF-LOADING & LOADING OF BULK RESOURCES FROM TRAIN TO SHIP. SHIP: TOO LARGE TO FIT THROUGH THE PANAMA CANAL, THE VESSEL, "JP AZURE," EASILY TIED UP ALONG THE FENDERS AT THE DEEP DRAFT DOCK AT PORT MACKENZIE JUNE 2010. MAP: SYMBOLS SHOW MINERAL DEPOSITS. A 32-MILE RAIL LINK NEAR HOUSTON ON THE ALASKA RAILROAD MAINLINE WILL CONNECT TO THE DEEPWATER DOCK AT PORT MACKENZIE. RIGHT: A TRUCK TRAVELING ON THE RAIL EMBANKMENT/HAUL ROAD.

## COMMITTED USERS

- **PacArctic, Inc.**, trucking and logistics, subsidiary of Koniag Inc; 20-year lease at Port MacKenzie. "The rail link is part of our long-term plan." —King Hufford III, PacArctic
- **Central Alaska Energy**, fuel importer will provide Alaskans another source of ultra low, sulfur fuel; 25-year lease at Port MacKenzie.
- **Usibelli Coal Mine**, up to 4 million tons of coal a year could export via Port Mac. Usibelli says it needs two ports to handle record exports.
- **Accelergy Corporation** plans for a \$5 billion coal-to-liquids plant in Western Cook Inlet. Port Mac Rail makes project viable. —John D. McClellan
- **Alutiiq**, subsidiary of Afognak Native Corp., transport sealift modules for North Slope and housing for western Alaska, 30-year lease at Port MacKenzie

## REQUESTING: \$60 MILLION

- with this funding, two-thirds of the rail embankment & bridge work will be completed and hundreds of new jobs will be created.
- EIS completed, Record of Decision issued November 2011
- Funding to date: \$92.5 Million
  - rail/road loop ready for rail by Sept. 2012, is 2/3s complete
  - bid opens in December for first 5 miles of rail embankment
  - bid opens in February 2012, for another 6.2 miles of embankment

### Description & Justification:

The 32-mile Port MacKenzie Rail extension will bring Alaska economic diversification, state revenues, and thousands of new jobs.

This new rail link will shorten the distance to tidewater, lowering transport costs for bulk resources and providing the tipping point for mineral deposits to develop into working mines. The value of mineral production is projected to be nearly \$1 billion a year over 100 years, according to ISER, Institute of Social & Economic Research.

State revenues are estimated to reach \$300 million annually in taxes, royalties, and fees. Some 3,000 construction-related jobs and 4,000 mining jobs will be created. Any of the gasline projects will gain savings by transporting pipe north by rail through Port MacKenzie.

# Proposition 2

Proposed \$32 million transportation bonds for 11 roads and 4 pathways



Projects in every  
Assembly District

Overall road package is  
\$64 million, with \$32 million  
in state funds

**VOTER APPROVED**



On every \$100 spent, the State would pay \$50 to match the Borough's \$50

Would cost local taxpayers \$76.52 annually  
on average assessed property

Roads	Purpose	Cost
Palmer, Dogwood Ave. and Felton Street Extension	Circulates east-west traffic through downtown Palmer. Constructed in partnership with Alaska DOT.	\$2,150,000
Machetanz Elementary school access	Would extend Trunk Road south to Nelson Road providing access to Machetanz Elementary while avoiding traffic through neighborhoods.	\$4,150,000
Wasilla, Clapp/Mack Road Extension and pathway	Will create additional north-south connection between Parks Highway and Knik Goose Bay Road, reducing congestion on a State traffic highway safety corridor. Pathway gives access to Menard Sports Center.	\$3,500,000
Big Lake and South Big Lake Rd Intersections	Improvements will accommodate increased traffic volumes.	\$1,000,000
Houston, Hawk Lane Upgrades & Paving	Will upgrade and pave a road that was originally designed to be an emergency access road. Provides connection from Big Lake Road to Houston schools and senior citizen center.	\$1,000,000
Seldon and Lucille Street Upgrades & Intersection Improvement	Visibility will be increased on the north and south approaches of the Lucille and Seldon intersection. Will upgrade two segments of substandard roads, Lucille from Spruce Ave. to Seldon and Seldon Road from Lucille to Wards Road.	\$5,000,000
Sullivan and Caudill Road Upgrade	Upgrades two substandard roads by adding lane width and shoulders.	\$2,500,000
Caswell Lakes Road to Bendapole Road to East Pass the bait Avenue to Hidden Hills including Caswell Loop Upgrades	Will upgrade substandard roads, adding width and paving with access to new Emergency Services building.	\$1,100,000
Willow Lake Dr. Upgrade, Paving & Extension	Upgrade, pave and extend road.	\$900,000
Vine Road Upgrade & Pathway	Vine is the only existing north-south connection between Knik Goose Bay Road and the Parks Highway. Will widen lanes, provide shoulders, pathway.	\$5,000,000
Seldon Road Extension & Beverly Lake Road Upgrade	Will upgrade Beverly Lake Road and provide a connection between Church Road and Beverly Lakes Road.	\$3,750,000
Butte, Old Glenn Highway Paved Pathway from Plumley Road to Knik River Bridge	Will provide the missing connection between Plumley and the Knik River Bridge for pedestrians.	\$1,250,000
Sutton, Paved Pathway from Sutton Elementary School to Glenn Highway	Will provide a dedicated pathway connecting the elementary school, the new library, and neighborhoods to the existing pathway on Glenn Highway.	\$500,000

**=\$32 M**



**Bonds will not be issued to pay for projects unless matching funds are received from the State.**







# Bogard Road Extension



Brad Sworts/MSB

FUNDING: \$31 MILLION TO COMPLETE

- ONLY CONSTRUCTION \$ NEEDED
  - READY FOR CONSTRUCTION
- SUMMER 2012

## BOGARD ROAD EXTENSION — \$31 MILLION

The funding will construct the last link of a corridor from Palmer to Wasilla that will reduce the number of deaths, collisions, and vehicles on the nearby Palmer-Wasilla Highway. A parallel corridor, the Palmer-Wasilla Highway has the highest fatalities and major injuries per mile in the state.



The funding will provide for the construction of 3.5 miles of road between the Glenn Highway in Palmer and Trunk Road. The construction of this segment will provide the last link for a second, east-west corridor between the Borough's two largest cities. The Bogard Road Extension will relieve traffic congestion on the Palmer-Wasilla Highway, one of the top five most dangerous roads in Alaska, nominated as a highway safety corridor because of its frequent traffic collisions. Construction could begin immediately upon receipt of funds.





# KNIK ARM CROSSING

## 2.7-MILE CROSSING CONNECTS ANCHORAGE WITH MAT-SU BOROUGH

- CREATES A SECOND CONNECTION TO AND FROM SOUTHCENTRAL FOR USE DURING EMERGENCIES AND EVACUATION.
- OPENS UP LAND IN WESTERN COOK INLET.
- SUPPORTS THOUSANDS OF JOBS DURING CONSTRUCTION, THOUSANDS MORE ONCE THE BRIDGE IS OPEN.

## **REQUEST:**

FUND THE BRIDGE PROJECT **RESERVE ACCOUNT**, SO THE PROJECT BECOMES ECONOMICALLY VIABLE



# Substandard Roads and Bridges

There's a pressing need to upgrade bridges deemed unsafe by the State's Dept. of Transportation in the fastest growing community in Alaska. With funding provided, vehicular traffic and emergency response across bridges will return to normal levels. Many road surfaces, right-of-way, and drainage need rehabilitation.



Stefan Hinman/MSB



Typical erosion on substandard bridges



Patty Sullivan/MSB

## AFTER

The new Welch Bridge restored vital services delivered by heavy truck to more than 30 residents. Fire response, fuel delivery, and septic-haul away were prohibited from crossing this bridge near Hatcher Pass after it was downgraded by the State in June. The Borough acted quickly replacing the bridge this fall with appropriated State funds.

FUNDING NEEDED:  
\$6 MILLION

## BEFORE

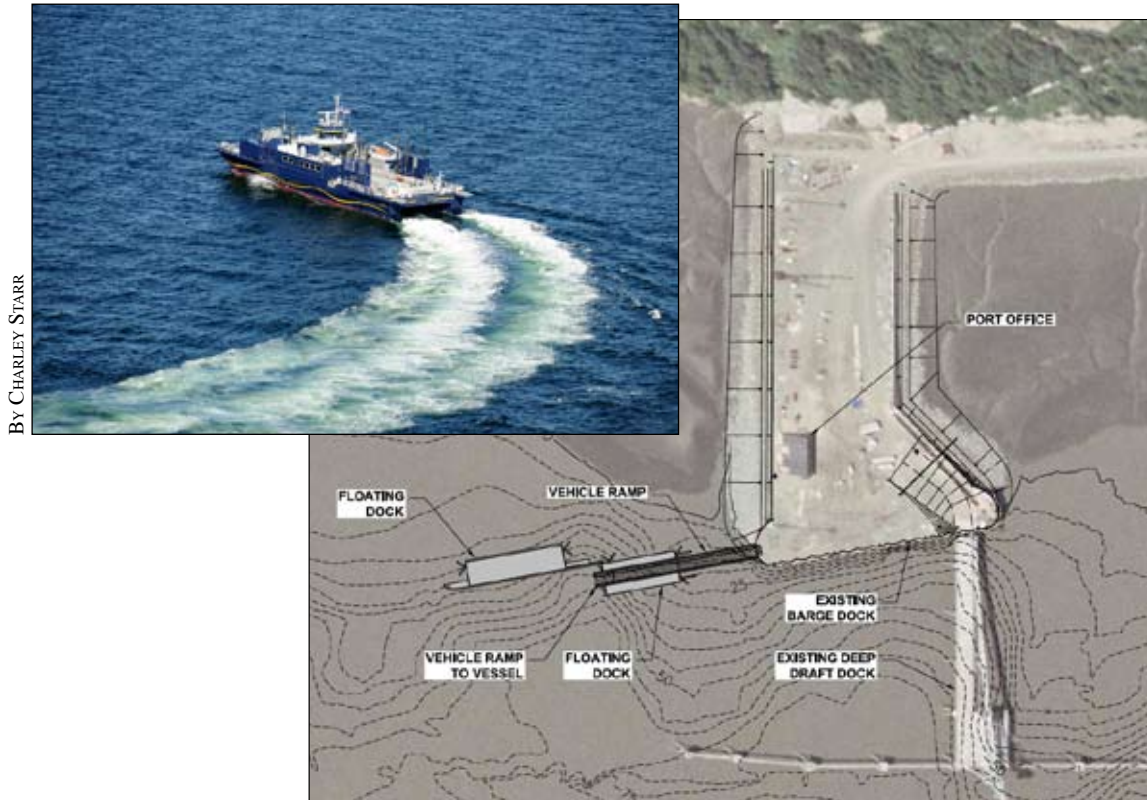
Welch Bridge was a "retired" flatbed of a railcar with the wheels knocked off. It worked as a bridge for 37 years.

## Description:

- Completing the environmental, design, permitting and construction to rehabilitate or replace several vehicular bridges throughout the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and correct problems on many substandard roads.
- Several Borough bridges have been identified as unsafe by the State of Alaska. Significant road problems also exist, including degraded surfaces, insufficient storm drainage and gravel surfaces.
- Long the fastest growing community in Alaska, the Mat-Su must provide safe, passable roads and bridges that can allow for emergency response, and handle both commercial and residential traffic.
- This request for funding is in line with the Borough's overall emphasis and priority on promoting economic development through basic transportation infrastructure.



# PORT MACKENZIE FERRY LANDING



## PORT MACKENZIE FERRY LANDING — \$4 MILLION FOR PHASE 2

Phase 1-will provide infrastructure for passenger loading/offloading. Design completed.

Phase 2-will complete the project by providing infrastructure for vehicles, freight, and construction equipment.

The M/V Susitna ferry is performing sea trials in Ketchikan. The Borough will take ownership of the craft in January. By enabling freight and passenger service, the ferry landing will raise Port MacKenzie to the top of the list of Alaska ports for sizeable manufacturing projects. Oil service companies hope to construct the massive sea lift modules in the vast industrial space at Port MacKenzie. Construction of the Knik Arm Crossing could be aided by ferry service. The ferry will spur resource development, gas exploration, and geothermal power development in areas that today are accessible only by plane.

The ferry connection will stimulate the regional economy of Cook Inlet. Anchorage, alone, stands to benefit \$50 million a year in annual income and 730 jobs with ferry and Port Mac Rail connection, according to ISER, the Institute of Social & Economic Research.

Resolutions asking for ferry service have been adopted by the Kenai Peninsula Borough, Kenai City, and Tyonek Native Corp. Private commercial business owners in Kenai are working on concept designs for their own landings.

The Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport is including the ferry in its emergency operations plan. During an earthquake, the ferry may be a vital link between Mat-Su and Anchorage.

# Hatcher Pass Nordic Ski Area



Hatcher Pass receives snow earlier than other ski areas in Southcentral Alaska and holds onto it longer.

## HATCHER PASS SKI & RECREATION AREA — \$4 MILLION FOR PHASE 2

Hatcher Pass Nordic Ski Area is the premier site for cross-country skiing, running and mountain biking in the Mat-Su valleys. Commanding views of rugged peaks and valley floors draw people here. Its central location would draw crowds of Nordic skiers, 1,850 skiers mid-week and 9,860 skiers on weekends for the overall season. The well-designed cross-country trails will provide an area for statewide high school and international competitions. Trails will also be available for hiking, running, and mountain bike events in the summer.

**Phase 1** to be completed fall 2012— \$6 million federal

- Final Environmental Impact Statement Dec. 2010
- 1 mile access road & parking
- transit facility
- 10K beginner & intermediate year-round trails

**Phase 2** will provide an access road extension, parking lot, a chalet, stadium for competition, and 5-10 kilometers of lighted Olympic-class trails for \$4 million.

Designed by an Olympian—the Nordic trails will take all levels of skiers through spruce to towering mountain views, while also bringing economic benefits to the region as the first Alaska venue for Olympic class competitions.

This project promotes economic diversification by creating new jobs and new recreational draw to the region. It supports school sports programs, ski clubs, and competitions, holding tremendous support from the community.

These infrastructure elements must be completed in order for the project to succeed.



# South Denali Visitor Center



Alaska State Parks photo



TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$35 MILLION

**REQUESTING: \$22 MILLION**

FUNDED: \$3 MILLION GOVERNOR'S 2012 BUDGET

FUNDED: \$8.9 MILLION STATE 2009

FUNDED: \$1 MILLION FEDERAL 2010

YEAR 1	BUILD ACCESS ROAD TO TRANSPORTATION HUB, BEGIN CONSTRUCTION, BEGIN DESIGN ON VISITOR CENTER
YEAR 2	FINISH CONSTRUCTION ON HUB, FINISH DESIGN ON CENTER, BUILD ACCESS ROAD TO VISITOR CENTER
YEAR 3	BUILD VISITOR CENTER



Denali as seen from Curry Ridge.



## SOUTH DENALI VISITOR CENTER—\$22 MILLION

Creating access to the other face of Denali—the south side—this Visitor Center will support year-round recreation as a warming facility for snow machiners or information center for hikers. Just a short drive from Anchorage, adventure can take place in a day. That's not possible for the longer trip to the north side. The close proximity will draw up to 350,000 annual visitors who will take in the sheer scale of Denali and the Ruth Glacier through panoramic windows.

Also different, the access road remains open even when snow begins to fly. In a single year, visitors spend \$101 million in the Mat-Su. When the Center opens its doors, tourists are projected to spend an additional \$44 million in the Mat-Su each year, according to ISER, Institute of Social and Economic Research. Visitors will come for the trails, the wildlife, the view. The Visitor Center will be efficiently designed to reduce its annual operating and maintenance costs. The EIS was signed in 2006. Tremendous collaboration energizes the project. The State of Alaska, National Park Service, Matanuska-Susitna Borough, and private entities are partnering.

For more information visit [www.southdenali.alaska.gov](http://www.southdenali.alaska.gov)

# Palmer Hay Flats Natural Science Education & Community Center



Design for the Palmer Hay Flats Natural Science Education and Community Center—**\$1 million**  
This \$6.3 million natural science, education and community center will be a lasting legacy, enhancing Mat-Su Borough tourism while providing scientific, historical and cultural education greatly lacking in our communities.

## FUNDING:

- \$1 million for design
- \$4.5 million construction
- \$500,000 environmental & permits

**A** main building will house a grand hall with gathering space before interpretive displays, views to the refuge, a reception counter, and access to a deck. A multipurpose area will hold classrooms, community meeting space and offices.

Located close to half of Alaska's residents, the Palmer Hay Flats Game Refuge is 45 square miles of wetlands, tidal sloughs, forest, and lakes, offering a living laboratory to students and tourists through this Center. Ducks, geese, sandhill cranes, moose, muskrats, salmon, and more live here. Two amphitheatres are planned for hands-on learning. Native culture, Colonist history, and the rich landscape add to the uniquely Alaskan experience. The tremendous collaboration by public and non-profit groups shows strong support.

John.Moosey@matsugov.us

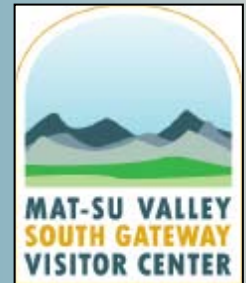


Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge  
Future home of the Natural Science Education & Community Center

FRED HIRSCHMANN



# Mat-Su South Gateway Visitor Center



## South Gateway Visitor Center—\$2.5 million funding needed

780,000 annual visitors enter the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and could stay longer. A must-see center will point newcomers to recreational, retail, and service-based activities, while providing restrooms and a chance to take in the mountain view.

The “gateway” visitor center will welcome 100,000 visitors a year and serve as a jumping-off point for information and amenities. This inspiring, beautiful facility will be emblematic of the Mat-Su. A destination in its own right, the center will offer interesting activities and learning experiences.

Among the eight goals of the Center: to showcase the natural and cultural assets of the Mat-Su valleys; to create an “information bridge” between visitors and local organizations and businesses.

The proposed site is the Homestead RV bluff property at mile 36 of the Glenn Highway. Right from the start, from a single bluff, visitors will take in towering Pioneer Peak and waterways below with thrashing salmon.

Visit [www.matsuvallyvisitorcenter.com](http://www.matsuvallyvisitorcenter.com)

# Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

## **MAT-SU POPULATION GREW 50 PERCENT IN THE LAST DECADE MORE THAN ANY OTHER ALASKA COMMUNITY**



Mike Weller/MSB

Above: Knik Goose Bay Road connecting to the Parks Highway

**B**orough residents continue to suffer from injuries, fatalities, and traffic congestion on poor transportation infrastructure.

The above-average population growth has swollen roadways with a traffic flow beyond road capacities. Three of Alaska's most dangerous roads: the Parks Highway (Wasilla to Big Lake), the Palmer-Wasilla Highway, and Knik-Goose Bay Road grow busier each year.

### **ACCIDENT REPORT**

Parks Highway, Lucus Road to Big Lake

1977-2007: **37 fatal accidents**, 9.85 fatalities & major injuries per mile

Knik-Goose Bay Road

1977-2007: **35 fatal accidents**, 7.35 fatalities & major injuries per mile

Palmer-Wasilla Highway

1977-2007: **27 fatalities**; 16.70 fatalities & major injuries per mile





# CASWELL LAKES FIRE STATION



CASWELL LAKES—THE ONLY BOROUGH FIRE SERVICE AREA  
WITH NO FIRE STATION



The Caswell Lakes Fire Station 13-1 will blend into a residential neighborhood on the corner of Caswell Loop and Deep Woods Way. This drawing suggests the neighborhood style of the fire hall, though it will be smaller with two bays.

## Requesting: \$2 Million

### **CASWELL LAKES IS THE YOUNGEST FIRE SERVICE AREA IN THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH**

- This fire hall will provide essential life safety and fire protection services.
- The ISO rating will be lowered with this station. Homeowners are paying for fire protection now and absorbing high home insurance costs. With a new fire station, home insurance rates could possibly be drastically reduced, as much as cut in half.
- Tens of thousands of visitors drive the Parks Highway on the way to Denali, yet this fire service area has no station from which to respond to the many calls for help.
- The new station will blend in with the neighborhood, resembling a house.
- It will provide a public meeting space, which presently does not exist.



MAYOR LARRY DEVILBISS  
JOHN MOOSEY, BOROUGH MANAGER  
[john.moosey@matsugov.us](mailto:john.moosey@matsugov.us)

Mat-Su Borough Public Affairs  
Patty Sullivan (907) 745-9577  
[psullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:psullivan@matsugov.us)  
[www.matsugov.us](http://www.matsugov.us)