

Sherrie M. Siverson

From: Karsten Rodvik
Sent: Tuesday, April 7, 2020 4:26 PM
To: Sherrie M. Siverson
Subject: FW: [External Outside Email] Ambler Road

-----Original Message-----

From: Cliff Eames <cliff520@kennylakeak.net>
Sent: Tuesday, April 7, 2020 4:26 PM
To: Karsten Rodvik <krodvik@aidea.org>
Subject: [External Outside Email] Ambler Road

To whom it may concern,

I am adamantly opposed to the development of the Ambler Road and was of course very disappointed to see AIDEA, in what appears to be a very cynical exploitation of the Covid-19 crisis, decide to spend \$35 million on a destructive project when the State is in such a very rocky financial situation. This decision would be a terrible decision in any case, but it is especially so now. The subsistence opportunities of rural residents who depend on the area's fish and wildlife are at risk not only from both road development and a mine, but from the inevitable incidental effects of creating road access. Those residents should not have to compete with fishermen and hunters from outside of the region who don't depend on the area's fish and wildlife. Additionally, the region's wildlands, scenic beauty, soils, vegetation, clean water, clean air, and natural sounds and natural quiet will be diminished. I sincerely hope that AIDEA will reconsider its exceptionally shortsighted decision in the face of the substantial opposition that has been expressed by Alaskans from throughout the State.

Sincerely,
Cliff Eames

Kenny Lake, AK

HC 60 Box 306T
Copper Center, AK 99573

Sherrie M. Siverson

From: Blythe Marston <blythe.marston@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 9:06 AM
To: Sherrie M. Siverson
Subject: [External Outside Email] Re: AIDEA Board Meeting Oct 23, 2019

Sherrie,
You asked. for the proper spelling of my name as a member of the public who spoke at the April 15, 2020 AIDEA meeting. It is Blythe Marston.

Could you please send a list of those who publicly commented as well as copies of their comments? Also please send a copy of the Phase I Findings and Conclusions. Apparently the Phase I report is not available on line or otherwise.

Thank you
Sincerely,
Blythe Marston

On Tue, Apr 14, 2020 at 12:20 PM Sherrie M. Siverson <SSiverson@aidea.org> wrote:

Here is a link to the AIDEA Board Meeting archive minutes page. The various meeting dates have linked to meeting agendas, audio recordings, minutes, and resolutions passed.

The West Susitna Access Road project was first discussed at the October 23, 2019 meeting.

<http://www.aidea.org/About/Board/ArchiveAIDEABoardMeetings.aspx>

Sherrie M. Siverson

Executive Assistant | Board Administrator

AIDEA | Alaska's Development Finance Authority

813 West Northern Lights Blvd. Anchorage, AK 99503

Sherrie M. Siverson

From: Okada, Marcy M <Marcy_Okada@nps.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 9:28 AM
To: Sherrie M. Siverson
Subject: [External Outside Email] Gates of the Arctic National Park Subsistence Resource Commission Comment Letter for April 15, 2020 AIDEA Board Meeting
Attachments: GatesoftheArctic_SRC_comment_letter.docx

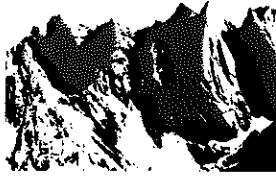
Dear Ms. Siverson,

Please find a comment letter from the Gates of the Arctic National Park Subsistence Resource Commission addressing the agenda for the April 15, 2020 AIDEA Board Meeting.

Thank you,

Marcy

Subsistence Program Manager
Gates of the Arctic National Park/Pres.
Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve
4175 Geist Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709
(907)455-0639



**Gates of the Arctic National Park
Subsistence Resource Commission
4175 Geist Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709
(907) 455-0639 or Fax (907) 455-0601**

April 15, 2020

Sherrie M. Siverson
Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority
813 West Northern Lights Boulevard
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
ssiverson@aidea.org
907-771-3008

Dear AIDEA Board members,

At this time, the Gates of the Arctic National Park Subsistence Resource Commission (SRC) opposes spending the 35 million dollars of the Arctic Transportation funds to go towards the design phase of the Ambler Mining District Road Project. Only the legislature can appropriate state funds, and this was done without their approval or oversight. State and federal review processes for major infrastructure projects should be halted during this unprecedented time in our history, when people are rightfully concerned about their families' health and other uncertainties caused by the pandemic. This is not the time to move forward with unwanted projects in near secrecy. We strongly request you to rescind this resolution and return the 35 million to your revolving fund to better address the current public health crisis.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Taqulik Hepa, Gates of the Arctic SRC Chair

Jack Reakoff, Gates of the Arctic SRC Vice-Chair

Sherrie M. Siverson

From: Ruth McHenry <ruthmc216@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 10:05 AM
To: Sherrie M. Siverson
Subject: [External Outside Email] Fwd: Ambler and West Susitna Access

Ms. Siverson,

I accidentally sent this email to you with the email address of a Copper Basin organization with which I work, which does not have these access routes as issues. Please consider it an individual comment.

Thank you,
Ruth McHenry

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject: Ambler and West Susitna Access
Date: Wed, 15 Apr 2020 09:58:12 -0800
From: Ruth McHenry <cca@coppervalleyak.net>
To: ssiverson@aidea.org

Good morning,

I called in on this morning's AIDEA board teleconference. Thank you for taking public comment. I wish to re-iterate and add to my testimony.

I live in Kenny Lake, Alaska, and have lived in the territory (then state) since 1945. I urge you to decide to **not** go forward with Ambler Road and West Susitna Access. Alaska must not imitate the mistakes of the South 48, where wildlife populations have been fragmented or destroyed by road development.

I've had the pleasure of visiting parts of the region that would be affected by the proposed Ambler Road and mining development: Ambler, Iniakuk Lake, Bettles, and the Koyukuk River where the Dalton Highway crosses its branches. The waters and surrounding landscape are unforgettably beautiful. The people we met were unforgettably hospitable, and they were willing to live without some modern conveniences in order to make such fine country their home. For many of them, the region's remoteness was an asset that allowed them to live more simply. They were proud of their abilities to live off the land. They did not wish to be road-linked to the rest of Alaska, because it would so profoundly change their communities and harm their subsistence economy.

There are many parallels between the Ambler Road and the West Susitna Access:

- Fragmentation of wildlife habitats would occur, as mentioned.
- Construction and road noise also affects species, particularly migratory songbirds, whose numbers are in steep decline across the continent.
- Invasive species follow roads. We've certainly seen that here in the Copper Basin, where white sweet clover is expanding and replacing native species.

- It is unlikely that access roads to mines would remain closed to the public. The Haul Road demonstrated that. When they do open, they put more pressure on wildlife populations. Non-local hunters also reduce subsistence opportunities for local residents.
- Air water and soil pollution are persistent problems with mining operations and their access roads. Road dust, which may or may not contain metals, has negative effects on plants and animals. Fuel trucks often overturn on Alaska's highways. AIDEA should realize that this is inevitable on any Ambler or West Susitna access road. Communities and wildlife will pay the cost in threats to health. If bonding is inadequate (as studies have show is the usual case), taxpayers pick up the financial tab via EPA, DEC, and other agencies.

I urge AIDEA to instead funds for small renewable energy projects to assist communities in addressing climate change. That would create jobs for Alaskans all over the state and keep Alaska's money local.

Sincerely,

Ruth McHenry

--
Ruth McHenry, Volunteer Executive Director
Copper Country Alliance
HC60 Box 306T
Copper Center, AK 99573
907-822-3644

Sherrie M. Siverson

From: Christin Swearingen <mushroomchristin@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 11:04 PM
To: Sherrie M. Siverson
Subject: [External Outside Email] Re: [External Outside Email] Comment

Hello,

I missed the call in meeting today, but I want to voice my opposition to the Ambler Road project, and ask AIDEA to rescind the \$35 million transfer. I think it is highly inappropriate to be funding a controversial and environmentally harmful megaproject during a pandemic, when critical organizations like the Blood Bank of Alaska are underfunded.

Thank you
Christin Swearingen
Anchorage, AK

On Fri, Mar 27, 2020 at 2:22 PM Christin Swearingen <mushroomchristin@gmail.com> wrote:

Hello,
Could you please forward my comment to AIDEA?

I oppose providing \$35 million to the fieldwork, design, and permitting of the Ambler Road. That money should be spent on Alaskan businesses, and families who currently need it.

I am a biologist and have a master's degree in Natural Resources from UAF. If Ambler Road is built, irreparable harm will be done to the fragile tundra, including habitat near and inside Gates of the Arctic National Park. I am especially concerned about harmful impacts to the Western Arctic caribou herd. From what I've heard on the call and from what I've read, communities in the region that would be affected are opposed to the proposed road. You are disregarding public process and community needs for private industry profits.

State and Federal review processes for major infrastructure projects should be halted during this pandemic.

Thank you,
Christin Swearingen
Anchorage AK

On Fri, Mar 27, 2020, 11:29 AM Christin Swearingen <mushroomchristin@gmail.com> wrote:

Great, thanks!

On Fri, Mar 27, 2020 at 11:21 AM Sherrie M. Siverson <SSiverson@aidea.org> wrote:

I will add your name to the list. When Public comments begin, I will call on those who wish to make comments by name. Thank you. Sherrie

From: Christin Swearingen <mushroomchristin@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 11:11 AM
To: Sherrie M. Siverson <SSiverson@aidea.org>
Subject: [External Outside Email] Comment

Hello,

I would like to testify at the meeting on Ambler road at 1:00 today. Could you please add me to the list?
Thanks.

Christin

Sherrie M. Siverson

From: Blythe Marston <blythe.marston@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 11:08 AM
To: Sherrie M. Siverson
Subject: [External Outside Email] AIDEA Board Meeting April 15 Written Comments on Item 7B

Sherrie,

Please include the following public comments in the record regarding item 7B of the AIDEA April 15 Board Meeting. Please make the comments available before any decision is made.

AIDEA should not approve Resolution No G20-15 West Susitna Access Road for the following reasons:

1) The Phase 1 study on this subject was partly paid for by AIDEA and the Mat Su Borough. The report from Phase I apparently is not available to the public. No further AIDEA action should be taken with regard to the West Susitna Road Access Project until the public, the AIDEA Board, and the Mat SU Borough have received the Phase I Report and have had an opportunity to review its conclusions and recommendations.

2) Summary and Next Steps of the January 2014 West Susitna Access Reconnaissance Study, however, is publicly available and states at 7-4 that next steps should: a) include assessing “the value of resource extraction potential being lost due to lack of transportation access” and b) “should this project be furthered, seeking public input and comment from relevant stakeholders is a critical next step.” Apparently, neither of these two recommended steps have been taken. When AIDEA staff was asked on April 14, 2020 about notice regarding the project or resolution, the response was that that would be a Mat Su Borough obligation. The Mat Su Borough Planning Department had little or no notice of Resolution G20-15 when asked on April 14, 2020.

Further, public comments on April 15, 2020 suggested that Mat Su Borough Assembly Members were not briefed on the proposed Resolution. Further, some members of the public who expressed a wish to comment were unable to comment on April 15, 2020 due to the inability to access the meeting from Bush phones. Please see Mark Miller, Talaheim Lodge April 15, 2020 Emailed Comments.

For those stakeholders without internet access (which is common in the geographic area affected by Resolution G10-15) no notice was provided. Having to watch an AIDEA website for potential meetings that affect stakeholders who may or may not have internet service is ineffective notice particularly when the Mat Su Borough has the business and property tax records of the vast majority of stakeholders.

Finally, although at the April 15, 2020 meeting an opportunity to file written comments was offered, given that action is scheduled to take place on April 15, 2020, the opportunity to file written comments at such a late date is effectively meaningless. No opportunity was provided for on the Agenda or Notice of Meeting. For lack of notice, opportunity to review, and effectively comment on Resolution No. G20-15, the Resolution should fail or at the very least be tabled until adequate notice and opportunity to comment is provided.

3) The proposed Phase II study appears to be the granting of funds to a private entity for a road study necessary to develop a privately held mine. Mat Su Borough has not expressed interest in pursuing Phase II at this time and nothing in the record indicates why this may be so. That information should be available to the public and the AIDEA Board before AIDEA makes a decision to approve Resolution No. G20-15 or to provide any additional funding for a Roads to Resources Project.

4) At a time when the State of Alaska is experiencing a health and economic crisis of a scale not previously seen, AIDEA should not, without a notice and an adequate record, support a project that fails to demonstrate how the proposed Resolution benefits Alaskan stakeholders. Apparently, despite direction from a previous study in 2014, no analysis has been completed as to whether Alaskan stakeholders support it or the estimated value of the potential resource extraction potential lost due to lack of transportation access. The first issue is one that suggests no further action should be taken until stakeholders are noticed and given an opportunity to comment and the second issue is one that the private entity benefiting from further study should be required to complete. Without taking these steps the State, MatSu Borough and AIDEA are unable to determine whether or how the proposed action benefits the State of Alaska or its citizens.

Please do not pass Resolution No. G20-15 or at a bare minimum, table the resolution until meaningful notice and opportunity to be heard by stakeholders is complete.

Sincerely,
Blythe Marston

On Wed, Apr 15, 2020 at 9:05 AM Blythe Marston <blythe.marston@gmail.com> wrote:

Sherrie,

You asked. for the proper spelling of my name as a member of the public who spoke at the April 15, 2020 AIDEA meeting. It is Blythe Marston.

Could you please send a list of those who publicly commented as well as copies of their comments? Also please send a copy of the Phase I Findings and Conclusions. Apparently the Phase I report is not available on line or otherwise.

Thank you
Sincerely,
Blythe Marston

On Tue, Apr 14, 2020 at 12:20 PM Sherrie M. Siverson <[SSiverson@aidea.org](mailto:ssiverson@aidea.org)> wrote:

Here is a link to the AIDEA Board Meeting archive minutes page. The various meeting dates have linked to meeting agendas, audio recordings, minutes, and resolutions passed.

The West Susitna Access Road project was first discussed at the October 23, 2019 meeting.

<http://www.aidea.org/About/Board/ArchiveAIDEABoardMeetings.aspx>

Sherrie M. Siverson

Sherrie M. Siverson

From: Blythe Marston <blythe.marston@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 16, 2020 9:37 AM
To: Sherrie M. Siverson
Subject: [External Outside Email] Re: AIDEA and AEA Board Meetings

Sherrie,

Thank you for getting back to me about being disconnected and unable to rejoin the AIDEA meeting on April 15th. I have checked with others and it appears that you are correct. Access to teleconferencing is a statewide problem.

Could I ask that AIDEA consider two ideas for future meetings for which public comment opportunities are offered:

1) Please consider placing executive sessions at the very beginning or end of meetings. with the public being asked to stay on the line in excess of 3 hours of silence, many more lines and personal time were tied up than need to be and public participation is discouraged rather than encouraged.

2) If written testimony is to be meaningful, it should be received before Board members make a decision. Yesterday, the offer was extended but only hours before the decision was made. Even if members of the public could get written testimony to the Board, the Board was presumably in executive session on other matters and would not have time to consider it. In the future, please consider posting with the AIDEA agenda that written testimony will be accepted and by what time it should be submitted so that it can meaningfully be considered before a decision is made.

Thank you,
Blythe Marston

On Wed, Apr 15, 2020 at 3:50 PM Sherrie M. Siverson <SSiverson@aidea.org> wrote:

I never disconnected the public telephone line, so there is no reason why you shouldn't have been able to call back in at any time. During the past several board meetings, we were told by callers that telephone lines are ringing busy or not connecting because of so many teleconferences throughout the city and State. Even our board members had trouble reconnecting today.

The AIDEA meeting adjourned at approximately 1:25 p.m. The AEA Meeting began at 1:45 p.m. and adjourned about 10 minutes ago.

I will post the audio recording online tomorrow. Thank you. Sherrie

Sherrie M. Siverson

From: Danny Rosenkrans <rosenkransdanny@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 17, 2020 5:41 PM
To: publiccomment
Subject: [External Outside Email] Ambler Road Funding Comment

I request that AIDEA rescind the allocation of funds in support of the Ambler Road Project. Jay Hammond advocated against the use of State monies for industry that cannot operate without governmental support (something about socialized capitalism). It is not a good idea nor appropriate direction for the State to be utilizing funds for new "mining road jobs". Many Alaskans anticipate that support for established commercial fisheries operations will be necessary and would be a better use this year. This approach would support many Alaskan family businesses and numerous individual fishermen. In addition, the "create new jobs" does not effectively help the State's economy, nor create a substantial number of jobs for Alaskans, as many mineral and O&G industry jobs are held by non-residents.

If the mining companies need assistance for road infrastructure, they should organize their own industry internal pool of funding, contribute to it, prioritize its use, not hold out their hands for help. This State's greatest and most unique resources are its residents, natural beauty, and sustainable industries. Building roads through pristine landscapes to areas where the residents are opposed is tragic!

--

Danny Rosenkrans
PO Box 432
Copper Center, AK 99573

Sherrie M. Siverson

From: publiccomment
Subject: FW: [External Outside Email] To all Board Members

From: Frank Keim <frankkeim@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, April 18, 2020 8:27 AM
To: publiccomment <publiccomment@aidea.org>
Subject: [External Outside Email] To all Board Members

I tried sending the following comment to each board member countless times in countless ways. Hopefully this gets through.

April 15, 2020
AIDEA Board Members

Hello,
Somehow, I was bumped from your meeting today, so am responding by email to express my indignation (read anger) at the Board's resolution last month to transfer 35 million dollars of State funds to the Ambler Road Project.

I am a 60-year resident of Alaska, mostly in Fairbanks, and planned to read my statement to the Board. Since I wasn't able to do that, I include it here:

"It's presumptive of you to have done what you did in the cloak of night, that is, without adequate opportunity for Public input, and during a period of global health crisis when everyone's attention was focused on the Covid-19 national public emergency! That is the opposite of TRANSPARENCY!
So, I am against this resolution to transfer 35 million dollars of Public money away from small businesses to pay for the initial phases of the Amber Road Project.
Further, I request you rescind your decision to transfer the money immediately!
Thanks."

Note: My wife was with me and remarked: "What you did was an abuse of the Public trust. You are stealing from the Public in a time of crisis! This is shameful behavior!"

I suspect you probably will ignore this email, but at least my wife and I did our job as patriotic citizens. I wish the Board had done the same.

Frank and Jennifer Keim
2220 Penrose Lane
Fairbanks, Alaska
99709
775-762-3510

April 15, 2020

To AIDEA Board:
Attention: Tom Boutin (tboutin@AIDEA.org)

Hello Tom,

Somehow, I was bumped from your meeting today, so am responding by email to express my indignation (read anger) at the Board's resolution last month to transfer 35 million dollars of State funds to the Ambler Road Project.

I am a 60-year resident of Alaska, mostly in Fairbanks, and planned to read my statement to the Board. Since I wasn't able to do that, I include it here:

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Frank and Jennifer Keim
2220 Penrose Lane
Fairbanks, Alaska
99709
775-762-3510