



Gravina Access Project

Alternatives Evaluation Summary Report

Public Comment Summary



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1.0 Project Background

The Gravina Access Project (GAP) is a high priority project authorized by the Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century (TEA-21), which allocated approximately \$20 million toward “constructing a bridge joining the Island of Gravina to the Community of Ketchikan on Revilla Island.” The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) contracted with HDR Alaska, Inc. in 1999 to conduct engineering and environmental studies of the project area and develop and investigate options for improved access between Revillagiedo and Gravina islands.

In Spring 2000, the project team developed 18 alternative concepts for crossing Tongass Narrows. These included multiple types of bridges, ferry connections that would augment the existing airport ferry service, and underwater tunnels. A screening process, based on input from federal, state, and local agencies, was used to evaluate these options and help identify the proposed reasonable alternatives that would be studied in greater detail in the draft environmental impact statement.

In 2001, the project team conducted additional engineering and environmental studies of the build alternatives to further refine the design and engineering requirements of the alternatives and to generally characterize the potential environmental impacts that might result from construction and long-term use of the project. With information obtained from these studies, the DOT&PF identified a recommended alternative (F3) for the community’s consideration and discussion.

2.0 Introduction

On January 7, 2002, the DOT&PF announced their recommended alternative for the Gravina Access Project—Alternative F3, a bridge alternative that crosses Pennock Island. Since the announcement, the Gravina Access Project team has sought public input from community members on the evaluation of all of the alternatives currently under consideration, including DOT&PF’s recommendation for F3 and the no build alternative.

This document summarizes the public comments received between January and April 2002 on the reasonable alternatives since DOT&PF’s announcement in January. The public has provided input in various ways, including email, written correspondence, and through verbal input at various public meetings. Tables 2 and 3 provide a summary of the public comments received via comment sheets, letters, and email. Table 2 summarizes comments specific to the F3 Alternative, and Table 3 summarizes the comments on the issues ranging from the affected environment, bridge design, economic impact, navigational issues, and other alternatives. Also included in this document in the appendix are the following: DOT&PF’s January 7, 2002 press release; media material promoting the open house meetings in Ketchikan; the February 2002 Gravina Access Project newsletter; copies of public comment sheets, letters, and emails received; meeting sign-in sheets, and articles and editorials published in the Ketchikan Daily News.

3.0 Description of Reasonable Alternatives

Table 1 provides a summary description of the project alternatives as currently configured, including terminus locations, general alignment across Tongass Narrows, and bridge clearances and dimensions. All of the alternatives include a road on Gravina Island to connect the crossing terminus with both the airport terminal and developable land at the northern end of the Airport Reserve property. Roadway construction immediately south of the airport runway would be designed to accommodate runway expansion as a bridge over the road.

Table 1. Description of Reasonable Alternatives

<i>Alternative and Mode</i>	<i>Bridge Vertical Clearance (VC), Horizontal Clearance (HC), Height (H), and Length (L)</i>	<i>Termini</i>		<i>General Alignment Across Tongass Narrows</i>
		<i>Revillagigedo Island ("Takeoff")</i>	<i>Gravina Island ("Touchdown")</i>	
No-Action	N/A	Existing airport ferry terminal	Existing airport ferry, east of Airport	Existing (2.8 miles north of downtown)
C3(a) Bridge	VC = 200'; HC = 650' H = 250'; L = 0.9/1.0 mile	Signal Road	South of airport terminal	1,600' north of airport terminal
C3(b) Bridge	VC = 120'; HC = 500' H = 150'; L = 0.8 mile	Signal Road	At airport terminal	2,600' north of airport terminal
C4 Bridge	VC = 200'; HC = 650' H = 250'; L = 0.9/1.0 mile	Tongass Ave. north of Cambria Drive	South of airport terminal	1,600' north of airport terminal
D1 Bridge	VC = 120'; HC = 500' H = 150'; L = 0.6 mile	Tongass Ave. near airport ferry	At airport terminal	Due east of airport terminal
F3 Bridges	<u>East Channel:</u> VC = 60' ; HC = 500' H = 100'; L = 0.4 mile <u>West Channel:</u> VC = 200'; HC = 650' H = 250'; L = 0.5/0.6 mile	Tongass Ave. south of U.S. Coast Guard base and north of Forest Park Subdivision	South of airport	<u>East Channel:</u> 1.1 miles south of downtown <u>West Channel:</u> 3.2 miles south of airport terminal
G2 Ferry	N/A	Peninsula Point	Lewis Point	2.1 miles north of airport
G3 Ferry	N/A	Downtown, near Plaza Mall	South of airport	0.9 miles south of airport
G4 Ferry	N/A	Adjacent to existing ferry terminal	Adjacent to existing ferry terminal	2.8 miles north of downtown

4.0 Brief Summary of Public Involvement Activities

**We'd Like Your
Input!**

The public and the Ketchikan community were encouraged to provide input. Many avenues existed for the community to learn about the reasonable alternatives under consideration. The following list summarizes the public involvement activities in which the community could learn more about the project and provide input.

- Technical reports and an evaluation of the alternatives were made available to the public at the Ketchikan Public Library and at the Gravina Access Project Office in January.
- The website was updated with digital versions of the Technical Reports and descriptions of recent project activities.
- For the February 11 and 27, 2002 Public Open Houses at the Ted Ferry Civic Center in Ketchikan, advertisements appeared in the Ketchikan Daily News. Notices were also distributed throughout the community and postcard notices were mailed (for the Feb. 11 Open House).
- Notices advertising both meetings were posted at the following locations: Chamber of Commerce offices, the AMHS/IFA Ferry Terminal, Ted Ferry Civic Center, Cape Fox Lodge, Ketchikan Public Library, Wells Fargo Building lobby downtown, Salmon Landing Market, Ketchikan City Hall, Ketchikan Gateway Borough Planning Office, Tatsuda's Market, Carrs, A & P, UAS, and Saxman City Hall.
- A Public Service Announcement was sent to three Ketchikan radio stations (KFMJ, KGTW, and KRBD) to advertise the upcoming open house meetings.
- Published and made available the latest Gravina Access Project newsletter in the February 9th Ketchikan Daily newspaper. The newsletter also was available at the open houses and made available on the website.
- Additional input forums, in addition to the two Open House Meetings, included:
 - Jan. 7 Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly meeting
 - Jan. 21 Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly meeting
 - Feb. 7 Ketchikan City Council meeting
 - Feb. 8 Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce at City Council Chambers
 - Feb. 8 Saxman City Council, Saxman IRA Council, and the Cape Fox Corporation Board at Saxman City Hall
 - Feb. 19 Ketchikan Visitors Bureau meeting
 - Feb. 26 Ketchikan Gateway Borough Planning Commission meeting
 - Feb. 28 Cape Fox Corporation CEO, Saxman Mayor, and Marine Pilot
 - Feb. 28 Ketchikan Economic Development Authority meeting
 - March 5 U.S. Coast Guard meeting
 - March 6 Project Development Team meeting
 - March 6 Elected officials meeting at Ted Ferry Civic Center
 - March 12 Ketchikan Gateway Borough Planning Commission

5.0 Summary of Public Comment

The public was given many opportunities to comment on the project alternatives and the evaluation of project impacts. From DOT&PF's recommended alternative announcement in January through March 15, the project team accepted comments on DOT&PF's recommended Pennock Island alternative (F3) and the evaluation of alternatives that led to that recommendation. While the deadline for submitting public comment was March 15, comments received through mid-April are included in this summary. Approximately 150 comments were received through letters, emails, and comment sheets between January and April 2002. Comment sheets were provided to the public at the public open houses in Ketchikan, and public comments were submitted by mail or sent via email through the website or directly to Gravina Access Project team members. The following tables present a summary of the written questions, comments, and concerns expressed by the public; the comments have been presented in this format for easy reference.

In addition to public comments received, the following agencies submitted letters or emails that are also summarized in the tables. Copies of these letters and other correspondence can be found in Appendix E.

- Alaska Coastwise Pilots Association
- Cape Fox Corporation
- Greater Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce
- Island Wings Air Service
- Ketchikan Visitors Bureau
- Northwest Cruiseship Association
- Organized Village of Saxman
- Sierra Club
- SouthEast Alaska Pilots Association
- Southeast Alaska Conservation Council
- Tongass Conservation Society
- U.S. Department of Commerce – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- U.S. Department of Transportation – United States Coast Guard

Table 2. Public Comments Submitted Specific to Alternative F3 (January – April 2002)

Issue	Public Comments on Alternative F3
Aviation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bridges are a possible hazard to aviation.
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There are too many unresolved issues related to cost for F3. ▪ F3 would quadruple the property value on Pennock Island, which would quadruple property taxes. ▪ F3 is the second most expensive alternative to build and the most costly in life cycle cost.
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The backtracking that most Ketchikan citizens would face if F3 was selected is stupid and unacceptable. ▪ Low bridge to Pennock – detrimental to ship travel, hurt tourism, would interfere with Native burial grounds.
Economic Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The effects to marine traffic from F3 seem too great, having potential negative impacts on the local economy. ▪ A bridge to Gravina simply doesn't make sense – 190 million dollars spent to a roadless, undeveloped, unpopulated area, with no water, sewers, or electricity. ▪ I oppose the bridge alternatives across the Tongass Narrows because of anticipated negative impacts on the economy, aviation safety, and expense to taxpayers. Although ferry options appear expensive, their costs can be adjusted in the future by management of schedules, staffing, contracting, and other business practices.
Favor F3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ F3 will be an excellent addition to the community. ▪ The best bridge option to Gravina Island is via Pennock Island. ▪ F3 would connect the private lands surrounding Ketchikan. ▪ F3 will be an excellent addition to Ketchikan – jobs, transportation, and homes all close to our city core. Yes! ▪ The Greater Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce expressed their desire for and acceptance of F3. ▪ Although one of the most expensive alternatives, F3 gives the Ketchikan community the opportunity to expand. ▪ F3 is the best alternative to Gravina both aesthetically and practically. ▪ F3 is the most logical location for bridge spans to Gravina Island. ▪ F3 would provide road access to three islands, rather than just two. ▪ A bridge to Gravina by way of Pennock is very important to Ketchikan – for transportation means and to boost the community's deteriorating economy. ▪ The bridge would encourage development and growth to our community. ▪ We need this bridge! If a high bridge is not feasible from Ketchikan to Pennock, then F3 should be built. The cruise ship industry will have to adapt to the West Channel. Use a pilot boat to assist. ▪ F3 would work for the Ketchikan community. We need improved access to Gravina Island and increased availability of land for residential and commercial development. I believe that all parties should be heard and all concerns should be addressed but this community needs to move forward and look to our future. ▪ A bridge would give the community of Ketchikan better access – it would also supply many jobs. I like the F3 option. ▪ Build the bridge – we need the access to Gravina Island, we need the jobs, and we

Issue	Public Comments on Alternative F3
	<p>need to look to our future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Third Avenue by-pass is now under construction but after everything, it is near impossible to build, and will cost far more than a more realistic lower elevation route. Don't let the same thing happen with the hard link to the airport. The Pennock/two bridge connection is the only sensible route. ▪ F3 makes the most sense. ▪ The Greater Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce strongly concurs with a Pennock Island Crossing alignment for a bridge structure. In all regards, this alignment appears to best meet the community's needs and foster future access and growth on Pennock, Gravina, and Revilla Islands. ▪ F3 best meets the needs of the community and provides an avenue for future development on the islands of Pennock and Gravina. ▪ I recommend a Pennock Island crossing, particularly F3. With contingencies that if F3 proves too detrimental to the community and its future economy, then some form a high crossing on the East Channel should be included in the options. ▪ We heavily endorse the low-bridge version of F3. As a 34-year Ketchikan resident, and my husband 48 years, this project has been studied at least three times. It is time for a bridge to be built to Pennock and Gravina Islands. ▪ Please consider that the "nay" sayers may be more politically active and you may be hearing from a proportionally higher number of them. We believe they do not represent a majority opinion. Many who favor the bridge simply won't have the time or feel strongly enough to voice their opinion.
Native Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The F3 bridge will endanger the sacred sites and burial grounds of the local Native people and thus violate the rights of the Tlingit Nation.
Navigation & Pilotage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Southeast Alaska Pilots' Association (SEAPA) has navigational and safety concerns with F3. SEAPA supports improved access to Gravina Island, but does not support an option which obstructs the East Channel. ▪ The SouthEast Alaska Pilots' Association supports improved access to Gravina Island, but does not support F3. ▪ F3 severely limits the use of Tongass Narrows by large vessels and will delay all vessels due to added congestion caused by limited use of East Channel if a 60-foot vertical bridge clearance is not altered to accommodate the large vessels calling in Ketchikan and transiting through Tongass Narrows. ▪ As a towboat owner/operator with 27 years experience in Tongass Narrows, I am concerned F3 will create severe navigational restrictions from Mountain Point to Peninsula Point. ▪ Increased difficulty of vessel maneuvers, the delays in ship arrivals and departures, and the reduced capacity of the port caused by F3 are very substantial. F3 creates a less efficient port in Ketchikan.
Planning & Project Process/Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How can the Pennock Island crossing alternative be used and not change the comprehensive plan which includes the Pennock/Gravina Neighbor plan. Three years of planning was put in to that and now with no input from the association, the plan would change. ▪ Organized Village of Saxman has drafted a resolution to reject F3: "To reject any bridge that will hinder the free flow of cruise ship traffic into the Ketchikan area" and to "call for a public vote by the people before any action is taken." ▪ The Southeast Alaska Conservation Council (SEACC) supports safe, efficient,

Issue	Public Comments on Alternative F3
	<p>reliable, and cost-effective improvements to the transportation systems in Southeast Alaska – F3 fails to meet these and other reasonable criteria.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Too many unresolved issues related to cost, safety, and public process to allow the project to go forward. All it will take is an incident or two to shut down our visitor industry. ▪ The Ketchikan Borough Assembly recognizes that additional EIS studies are to be carried out to better document the extent and seriousness of the following issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased navigational risk associated with restriction of travel on the east channel; ▪ Economic costs associated with these risks (potential reduction in cruise ship stops and less time in port); ▪ Loss of certain development opportunities for the City of Saxman caused by the low east channel bridge immediately north of that city; and ▪ Increased traffic through the city core. ▪ The Assembly urges DOT&PF to consider all possible improvements that will alleviate these issues once they are better understood. These improvements might include, but are not limited to, removal of navigational hazards to improve sea-going traffic; an increase in the height of the East Channel bridge to enable larger vessels to use that waterway; and street or routing improvements to reduce traffic congestion in the downtown.
Wetlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bridge will damage both wetlands and endanger what’s left of the old growth stand and subsistence area around Bostick Bay.

Table 3. Public Comments Submitted on Reasonable Alternatives (January–April 2002)

Issue	Public Comments on All Reasonable Alternatives
Affected Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How does building a bridge that proposes impacting over 86 acres of wetlands with 1,734,900 cubic meters of fill and seriously impacting essential fish habitat satisfy the NEPA policy (which declares a national policy will encourage productive and enjoyable harmony between man and his environment; to promote efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment and biosphere and stimulate the health and welfare of man; to enrich the understanding of the ecological systems and natural resources important to the Nation; and to establish a Council on Environmental Quality)? ▪ Gravina’s deer population sustains black bears and a wolf pack. The island is a popular hunting and trapping place for area residents. ▪ The F3 bridge would fill over 86 acres of wetlands and affect 1.22 acres of essential fish habitat.
Airport Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most people want to get to wherever they are going FAST. The Pennock crossing adds more miles, time and gas dollars – a minimum of ½ hour – to access the airport. ▪ F3 puts more cars through the downtown where traffic moves slowly. ▪ If F3 was selected, three-quarters of Ketchikan’s residents would experience costly and frustrating backtracking. ▪ The runway extension plans will put the new road under the runway. ▪ I don’t see any good reason to build a bridge. It will not make the trip to the

Issue	Public Comments on All Reasonable Alternatives
Airport Parking	<p>airport any quicker for most people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inconvenient airport access could be a major factor in turning people in favor of a bridge. ▪ The community needs a Park & Ride at both ends of town for the bus and for a water taxi. This would greatly reduce downtown congestion. ▪ Would like DOT&PF to address the projected travel time from various locales, including road conditions (i.e. summer tourists downtown, and using a bridge in the wind, rain, and fog that dominate our weather) thus addressing efficiency. Addressing time is essential when taking transports into consideration. ▪ The bridge is being proposed as a matter of convenience. A much less costly scenario than building a bridge is to revamp how luggage is handled.
Bridge Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Don't want my car parked over on Gravina when out of town. Concern with having to pay for parking in the planned parking garage. This would be an extra and unwanted expense. ▪ No parking is currently available at the airport, so people will still have to ride some form of public transportation if the bridge is built. ▪ Where will the parking area be built? How far from the terminal? ▪ If a parking garage/area is to be located a significant distance from the terminal and a shuttle is needed, the public needs to be aware of this especially since the purpose and need is cost and convenience. <p>How about a draw bridge in the East Channel? A draw bridge would cost more, but it would stop the complaint of navigation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Constructing one low bridge and one high bridge still allows for large ship passage and keeps the span closet to the air traffic low. The route across Pennock was chosen well in that both bridges are relatively short and it provides a high approach for the high bridge. ▪ The F3 bridge crossing point is not central to Ketchikan's population center, and will lengthen airport commute times for many residents. Traffic will be routed through the already congested downtown core, which supports heavy foot traffic during summer months. ▪ Move toward an alternative route on the north side of Ward Cove with highest possible clearance without interfering with incoming airport traffic, less environment impact, capable of supporting water, sewer, electrical and communication lines. This plan would help traffic congestion on land and water and is highly accessible to proposed electrical intertie, mainland accessibility and boost rather than hinder the economy of Ketchikan with opportunities for tourism, recreation, and industrial activities. ▪ North end bridges would hamper floatplane traffic. ▪ Bridges would change the unique character and charm of Ketchikan; and would be dangerous during fog and bad weather. ▪ Should be wider than 40' to accommodate big trucks and further road expansion. ▪ Residents of Pennock Island should have a ramp way on to the bridge to make it worth the inconvenience of having it near their property and water source. ▪ Bridges spans will need to have range lights and boards on them. ▪ Will the bridge be designed to withstand 100 mph winds? ▪ Allowing 200 feet of vertical clearance for both the East and West Channel bridges would allow continued access to all of Ketchikan and Tongass Narrows

Issue	Public Comments on All Reasonable Alternatives
	for most vessels.
Bridges in Southeast Alaska & Elsewhere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sitka’s bridge is beautiful and does not block the harbor. ▪ Juneau’s bridge connects two settled areas. ▪ The first Juneau-Douglass bridge was a tall, structure that aircraft managed to miss during its existence. The old bridge withstood Taku winds and the winds coming off Mendenhall Glacier. With increasing maintenance needs, a wider bridge was built and opened in 1981. That was ten years after a request to build a bridge to Ketchikan’s less-wind-affected airport on Gravina Island. Now the residents on the north end of Douglass Island want a third bridge to shorten trips to the airport, Fred Meyer, Costco and K-Mart. ▪ Compare Ketchikan to Norway – if Norwegians can replace a ferry with a bridge, they do. (Examples include: Raftsundetbrua, has a concrete cantilever design, similar to the proposed Gravina Access Project West Channel Bridge; Austevoll has two concrete cantilever bridges, the Stolmabrua [301 meters] and Storekalsoybrua)
Cost	<p><i>Cost Analysis</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The DOT&PF’s threshold for determining the viability of any alternative needs to reflect not only the construction and life-cycle costs of each project, but needs to reflect the net economic impact to the Ketchikan area for each alternative. The DOT&PF analysis needs to examine not only a 25-year time horizon, but a 50-year time horizon as well. ▪ How accurate are the economic loss estimates under F3? Simulations need to be performed, as does a more comprehensive economic analysis, in order to more accurately define this impact. <p><i>Positive</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The money spent on this project will provide a tangible, physical asset that the community will use for decades to come. ▪ If the federal government is willing to provide the funding for this project, we should take it. ▪ The proposed bridges will have a very high construction cost, but once completed the maintenance costs will be low, especially compared to operation of airport ferries. ▪ Ketchikan has waited years for its bridge – there is plenty of time to raise another \$50 million and build this bridge the right way: with two high spans on Pennock Island over the East and West Channels. <p><i>Negative</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With vacant stores and declining school enrollment, how can the community afford to operate and maintain these bridges without high expense? ▪ Two high bridges don’t seem to be cost effective. ▪ For the cost of \$190 million, we might as well move the airport to the Ketchikan side. ▪ Ketchikan taxpayers will also foot the bill for bridge maintenance, and building the 3.2 miles of new road to get from the bridge to the airport. ▪ Money should go towards state ferry system rather than bridge. ▪ Money should be spent to keep three state parks in Ketchikan open instead. ▪ Money should be spent instead to enable DEC to keep inspecting our restaurants

Issue	Public Comments on All Reasonable Alternatives
	<p>and school cafeterias.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As a longtime resident of Ketchikan who came in 1946, I see no great benefit in a bridge at an excessive cost. ▪ The proposed bridge is a prime example of a fiscally irresponsible and completely unnecessary project. To build a \$190 million, mile-long bridge in place of existing, reliable airport ferry service is sheer waste. ▪ I believe the low level of development on Gravina Island does not justify a \$190 million bridge, especially with the potential for increasing congestion in one of the busiest ports in the world. ▪ How can state officials claim a personal income tax is needed while recommending this sort of expenditure? (Alaskan’s share of the bridge is \$34 million, 20% of \$170 million) ▪ Bridges are too expensive – retain ferry service.
Cruise Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creating an alternative route or delayed time to dock at the port would not make any difference in port-time for the ships. Oftentimes the cruise ships are going circles or going very slowly in the channel, waiting for daylight or the proper time to approach and come into Ketchikan. ▪ Cruise ships do not have to dock in the downtown area. Ward Cove could be developed into an alternative site for Cruise Ships to dock ▪ Cruise ship companies will avoid Ketchikan because cruise ship captains will convey to their companies their inevitable fears of hazards to navigation to such large vessels being forced to take the West Channel. ▪ I am in support of a hard-link to Gravina. However, I want to make certain that the cruise industry and sea pilots feel that the DOT&PF’s recommended alternative will not hinder traffic or cause a loss in one growth industry. ▪ Large vessels avoiding the port because of a low bridge will mean fewer passengers in Ketchikan resulting from fewer large vessel port calls.
East Channel of Tongass Narrows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The East Channel bridge for F3, as described in the draft Alternatives Evaluation – Summary Report, would close the Tongass Narrows East Channel to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) vessels, not to mention other large vessel commercial traffic. This closure will lead to increased maneuvering as northbound vessels make for the city pier, USCG pier, and the proposed NOAA pier, further delaying vessels transiting through the narrows. From a mariner’s perspective, restricting vessel access in East Channel is not ideal. (NOAA – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) ▪ Obstructing the East Channel will significantly increase the risks associated with maneuvering in the harbor. ▪ Closing the East Channel will impede safe transit of large vessels by reducing all vessels to a single point of transit, a no passing zone. The West Channel is a blind passage from main docking facilities in Ketchikan and will not provide for visual clearance prior to committing large vessels to transiting. ▪ The span across the East Channel must have a 200’ clearance to accommodate large vessels. ▪ The bridge should be high span rather than low span. ▪ East Channel affords more room and lighter currents. ▪ East Channel should never be sacrificed with a low vertical bridge clearance, as it is a primary route on the Inside Passage to points north.

Issue	Public Comments on All Reasonable Alternatives
Economic impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Larger cruise ships will refuse to enter the narrow channel on windy days and possibly bypass Ketchikan altogether. ▪ There still aren't enough people showing interest in how this project will affect the Ketchikan community – the long-term consequences of building a low span over the East Channel would be catastrophic. ▪ The community has been subject to the constraints of a ferry alternative for the last 25 years – DOT&PF's document states "a high level of economic growth on Gravina Island is not likely with a ferry alternative, but possible with a bridge alternative." ▪ The economic studies conducted thus far have been detrimental to the overall success of the recommended crossing. The impact conclusions are speculative, inconclusive and misleading. Clearly there has been more than adequate time for in-depth research in this area in the more than 18 months you have had to arrive at this juncture of the process. It is with bitter disappointment that I ask to see a more in-depth study of socio-economic impacts/benefits to the community, in the draft, with complimentary projects and plans taken into account. ▪ The socio-economic impact to this community will be huge – I am in strong opposition to any build alternative. ▪ The DOT&PF placed less importance on the overall economic impact to the Ketchikan area of each alternative, than it placed on the relative costs of development of each alternative. ▪ The socio-economic impact to this community will be huge if a bridge is built. The negative impact on the tourism as well as surface navigational and aviation safety hazards are well documented. Add to the idiocy of building a bridge that most of the Gravina residents do not want, in the hopes of luring industry that Revilla residents do not want (i.e. private prison) and it gives us plenty of reason to cancel any plans to construct a bridge. ▪ The real growth industry in Ketchikan is the cruise ship/tourist industry, and anything that impacts that business in a negative way is bad for Ketchikan. ▪ Ketchikan has consistently been a maritime community and needs support for ferries and maritime jobs because those are the skills currently in the population. ▪ Access to the Ketchikan port is of utmost importance. ▪ Any downsizing of the waterways that compromise the Ketchikan port will likely precipitate a corresponding downsizing of its existing economy. ▪ Ketchikan is an economically depressed area that is currently struggling to cope with the cost and facilities for such basics as sewer disposal, solid waste disposal, enough electricity, road maintenance, and more – we shouldn't be considering adding to these burdens on the basis the availability of "pork barrel" money.
Ferry Access to Airport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Current ferry access is adequate and superior to any bridge alternative. ▪ The ferry crossing is interesting and different. Baggage is the only difficulty. ▪ To make luggage handling more convenient, Ketchikan should provide luggage trucks at the top of the ramp, similar to how the Alaska Marine Highway manages foot traffic luggage. ▪ Improving and streamlining how the ferry system operates, such as tollbooth bottlenecks and invalid return trip tickets, would ease the passage and also the outcry for a bridge. ▪ Ferry operations do not pose substantial risks to aviation safety or operations.

Issue	Public Comments on All Reasonable Alternatives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ferry alternatives provide the best opportunities for sustained economic growth in this community that depends upon tourism, aviation transportation by floatplanes, ship yard business for repair and maintenance of the ferry, and regular maritime operations (including full-time employment for ferry personnel). ▪ It has always amazed me that the Borough has done so little to make the ferry service convenient. Having a better system for passenger luggage would be a good place to start. Improvements in luggage services are likely far less expensive than building a bridge. ▪ The flexibility available to do north-of-the-airport and south-of-the-airport ferry stops, plus a Pennock Island stop if that were desirable, makes improved ferry service a clear first choice. ▪ We could have the same direct-across-the-channel-route that we have now, and a second, harbor tour route with stops on Pennock Island, downtown, north or south Gravina or wherever else we wish. It could be an attraction rather than a liability. It could complement rather than compete with larger ships and floatplanes. It could steadily employ local people throughout its business cycle. Almost all of the ferry dollars would be locally spent, a distinction shared by none of the other alternatives. ▪ The advantages of improved ferry access to Gravina is avoidance of the disadvantages of any of the bridge options. ▪ I support increased access to Gravina Island from Ketchikan by means of improved ferry service rather than by a bridge. ▪ My preferred alternative is no bridge – use ferries only. ▪ If bridges are built, retain a ferry service for “walk-on” travelers who don’t want to drive to the airport.
Floatplane Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed bridges will impede safe flight through the Narrows. ▪ As an air taxi operator, I view the bridge to be a serious hazard to flight operations in the Ketchikan Harbor. Seaplane flight operations in the harbor are congested already as we share the harbor with cruise ships, tugs, barges, fishing vessel, charter boat operators, sailboats, skiffs, etc. ▪ Due to expected negative impacts on aviation operations (specifically Special VFR Clearances for floatplanes during low ceilings and limited visibility), F3 is not acceptable. This problem exists for all bridge alternatives examined. ▪ The downtown floatplane traffic will be very restricted in departing and landing in marginal VFR flight conditions with additional obstacles to circumnavigate. ▪ The weather conditions for flying in southeast Alaska are marginal anyway without adding another obstruction (a bridge). ▪ Building a high bridge in Ketchikan is problematic, with Ketchikan being the first or second in floatplane traffic in the world. ▪ Building a bridge will endanger the flying public – no matter where you put a bridge, it will be in the flight path of small aircraft.
Job Creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved ferry service would provide many meaningful jobs. More ferries and more ferry terminals (one downtown or at the south end for example). This would also help drivers avoid the downtown traffic. ▪ I don’t know of any bridge builders in Ketchikan. ▪ Building the bridge would create jobs in the Ketchikan area. ▪ The bridge will be a construction boom the likes of which Ketchikan has never

Issue	Public Comments on All Reasonable Alternatives
	<p>seen. People presently living in Ketchikan can do almost none of the work for a project of this magnitude. The likelihood that construction folks will bring their families here and settle is very low.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not very many of the salary dollars will end up staying in Ketchikan. Even maintaining a bridge will probably require expertise not available here. ▪ A strong development plan should be in place for retaining workers once they've finished building the bridge so they will stay in the community and build other things (i.e. golf course, shopping centers, industrial buildings, and housing developments). ▪ Hire locals first. ▪ Local labor could be used in construction; development of Gravina would create jobs. ▪ But higher paying jobs will go to those from outside the area with experience.
Land Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Would provide long-term benefits by opening up new building opportunities, too much of the land is tied up in National Forest which limits building options. ▪ The Forest Service wants to log 40 mmbf and build up to 22 miles of new road from central and south Gravina Island in an entirely roadless sale. ▪ The nearby Native villages of Saxman and Metlakatla strongly oppose the timber sale because it will disrupt their traditional, cultural and subsistence uses of the island. ▪ Gravina would have great vehicle type recreational opportunities, but the possibility of implementation of "the Roadless Rule" is very realistic. Why not use the money to construct the tie road from Revilla Road to the Shelter Cove road system? This would open up a large area for all of us to enjoy without compromising our beautiful waterfront. ▪ Ketchikan community needs more land development. ▪ F3 Alternative will open up land. ▪ There is nowhere to build – the no action alternative is not an option. ▪ Access to Gravina Island will open up many areas for fishing, hiking, and sightseeing.
Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed bridges will have a very high construction cost, but once completed the maintenance costs will be low, especially compared to operation of the airport ferries. ▪ Where will the money come from to maintain the bridge? ▪ Locals will have to pay for road/bridge maintenance. ▪ Ferry services are cheaper to maintain than bridges.
Native Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pennock Island is Tribal Burial ground. Building of new homes on Pennock Island will further desecrate our Indian graves. I see two centuries of exploitation of all our natural resources and land being stolen. ▪ Pennock Island was and still is Tribal Burial grounds for the Tanda Kwaan (Tongass Tribe) and Saanya Kwaan (Cape Fox people). Pennock Island's graveyard starts from the southern tip to the northern tip of the island on the Ketchikan side.
Navigation	<p><i>Traffic Management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If the Coast Guard and cruise ship industry are concerned about safety of ship traffic, they should consider the creation of a vessel traffic safety system in Ketchikan (similar to the ones in use at major ports such as Seattle and San

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	<p>Francisco). With a VTS System in place, ship traffic would be regulated and would most likely be just as safe as it is right now.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ketchikan Harbor is one of the most, if not the most congested harbors in Alaska. ▪ Blocking off some access to the harbor by putting in a bridge will reduce the working waterfront of Ketchikan by creating congestion, especially from huge cruise ships turning around in the channel. Someone will have to monitor the turn zone, ships will have to take turns, and ships will have to allow for additional time to perform this maneuver. All this will cost money. ▪ If the West Channel is the only navigational channel, the flow of maritime traffic will be greatly altered and made much more difficult for those who handle ships. ▪ Scheduled delays will occur to await the passage of other vessels to clear the West Channel. The waits could be a long time if waiting on a cruise ship or a tug pulling a barge. ▪ Greater potential for a collision with another vessel in the West Channel. ▪ The Gravina Access Project Monte Carlo Navigation Simulation describes a greater risk in West Channel than East Channel by 24%. ▪ In an earlier safety study the U.S. Coast Guard identified Tongass Narrows as having the highest risk of any waterway in Southeast Alaska due to water congestion. ▪ To substitute a secondary channel for a primary channel with increased risk and congestion is a crippling blow to maritime commerce transiting Tongass Narrows. ▪ The natural bifurcation of East and West Channels of Tongass Narrows has always provided for orderly arrival/departure and for through traffic of Tongass Narrows by all waterway users. ▪ The Tongass Narrows is the busiest commercial waterway in Southeast Alaska. ▪ F3 severely limits the use of Tongass Narrows by large vessels and will delay all vessels due to added congestion caused by limited use of East Channel if a 60' vertical bridge clearance is not altered to accommodate the large vessels. <p><i>Pilotage</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building low or high bridges across the Tongass Narrows presents considerable safety concerns to seaplane pilots and their passengers. Low ceilings and poor visibilities are a continual challenge to navigation. ▪ Heavy rain, snow, fog and turbulent winds would make safe flight over bridges difficult. ▪ Maneuvering times will be increased, as all ships will be forced to turn around on arrival or departure. Ketchikan harbor would become a cul-de-sac port as the open accessibility from either end is sacrificed. ▪ Any vessel using the West Channel and destined to moor at the Ketchikan berth 1 or 2 will require several major maneuvers while in extremely confined waters. ▪ Project contractors found that the bridge will make cruise ship maneuvers risky and inconvenient to city docks. The bridge will force ships to thread through a narrow, tide-whipped passage with rocks near the water surface – a route which ship masters and captains say is too dangerous to use regularly. ▪ I see most of the negative comments coming from the sea pilots. Is it because they get paid by the trip and not the hour that concerns them about it taking longer to the dock? Or is this really a dangerous recommendation to build F3? ▪ If access to the port is not convenient, and becomes more risky for vessels, the

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	<p>port will experience fewer calls from large vessels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ West Channel is deep, but narrow. There is only enough room for one vessel at a time. Once you are committed to the West Channel, you cannot turn around if north of the narrows. ▪ West Channel current is substantial, especially during spring. ▪ There is more debris in the West Channel. ▪ Safety and efficiency are critical in the approaches to the downtown berths for cruise ships which are now mostly in the 800 to 975-foot range and cannot easily be turned around in front of the berths. ▪ F3 introduces need for all ships to turn around in front of their city-front berths, either on arrival or departure. This changes the area used as an anchorage East of Pennock Reef into a turning basin for approach to or from the West Channel. This would mostly eliminate that portion of port capacity represented by anchored ships.
No-Action Alternative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The needs of the area business owners, residents, and Gravina users are already being met by the present transportation system. ▪ Don't see an economic need to build bridges at this time or the near future. ▪ The best bridge from Ketchikan across the Tongass Narrows is no bridge at all. ▪ The Gravina Access Project involving a bridge creates more problems than it solves, is not efficient, convenient, and cost-effective way to access the airport, is not how the state should spend scarce funds, and is not what Ketchikan needs. ▪ It's not worth \$190 million for a bridge to an airport that sees a daily maximum of 1,000 passengers, when Ketchikan already has a fast, efficient and reliable ferry system in place. ▪ The no-action alternative should not be considered. The Ketchikan community has significant infrastructure and lands on Gravina Island that cannot begin to realize their potential. ▪ Other than driving to the airport, there would be very little gained for the general public with a bridge, unless they just want another road to dump their garbage along. We are opposed to any bridge option. ▪ I have read through some of the technical reports on line, and nothing I have heard or read has convinced me that building a bridge is justifiable for any reason other than short term economic benefit from the construction jobs.
Opening Land on Gravina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building the original high land bypass on the Revilla side would serve the purpose of opening up land, providing a way around the town for emergencies, construction detours, and an alternative for those who wish to avoid downtown. Thus, land on Gravina would not need to be "opened up." ▪ Have hiked and camped on Gravina Island – it is a rare jewel that should be preserved as wilderness as much as possible. ▪ Strongly in favor of Gravina Island roads, and recommend that the DOT focus on helping the Borough get through the regulatory maze of building the road from the airport to Lewis Reef. Also a road could be built south of the airport to open up further waterfront property for industrial development if and when the demand occurs. The DOT could assist with a Gravina Island barge transfer facility, for transporting bulk goods, as well as beefing up the existing ferry service. ▪ Hard link access would open Gravina land to various uses. ▪ Gravina Island has much to offer for future development, wildlife viewing,

Issue	Public Comments on All Reasonable Alternatives
	recreation opportunities, and avenues for job creation.
Other Alternatives	<p><i>Bridge</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The DOT&PF should focus on a high span over the East Channel as the number one priority of the whole project. Everything else (like a parking garage) should take second place. ▪ A high bridge crossing at C3 that disrupts the airspace of the airport is unrealistic. The footprint of this bridge option is disturbing – too much of it exists in the waters along the Gravina Island shoreline. The sharp curve on the alignment coupled with the prevailing winds in the area do not speak well for large/tall vehicles carrying cargo loads across the bridge. ▪ F1 addresses aviation concerns and marine concerns. ▪ F1 is acceptable to the marine community, but not to the aviation community. <p><i>Ferry</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ferry route alternatives G-2, G-3, and G-4 have the least impact on Tongass Narrows. ▪ The three ferry alternatives G4, G3, G2, and alternatives C3(a) and C4 all preserve the harbor and the East Channel for large ships, and have the fewest impacts to the aviation community as well. ▪ I am strongly supportive of increased access to Gravina Island from Ketchikan. If we are to build a bridge, I support F3. But I do not believe that a bridge to Gravina is in Ketchikan’s best interests for many years to come. An improved ferry access option is the best alternative for Ketchikan for the foreseeable future. With a brand new ferry, keeping the present ferry and terminal does not seem like a wasteful option or “no action.” ▪ I support the G4 alternative of improved ferry service near the existing site. I am opposed to the bridge alternatives for several reasons. <p><i>Underwater Tunnel</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recommend underwater tunnel. Tunnels will not impede cruise ships nor would they interfere with boats traveling up and down the Tongass Narrows. <p><i>Other Options</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Instead of building bridges, pave the road to the power station in the south and to the Waterfall community and Settler’s Cove in the north. The Tongass Highway can certainly be upgraded for a lot less than a bridge. ▪ A Gravina crossing, whether in the vicinity of Pennock Island or elsewhere, should not constrict the free flow of commerce that presently exists. If it is to be a bridge, it should be high enough and wide enough for the largest vessels presently using each of the channels of Tongass Narrows. The minimum air draft clearances should be 200’ in the East Channel and 150’ in the West Channel.
Pennock Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concern that the proposed two-bridge crossing would provide no access to land on Pennock. ▪ As a Pennock Island resident, I see my pre-bridge lifestyle going out the window. ▪ As an owner of a guided sea kayaking company that does kayaking trips in the Tongass Narrows, a bridge would take away from the aesthetic qualities of this tour. Also, as a resident of Pennock Island, I live there for its rural lifestyle, and a bridge to Pennock Island would destroy this lifestyle. ▪ F3 shows a great deal of disrespect for the Pennock residents and the unique

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Project Progress	<p>lifestyle they elect to enjoy. I have not heard a single Pennock resident support this route for a bridge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A project office should be established in Ketchikan immediately, and staffed with knowledgeable local personnel. The office should be visible and accessible to all. Currently the locale for materials is inadequate, and staffed by people who have a business to run, and little time to concentrate on this project. You are mandated by the NEPA process to give equal time to all the alternatives, regardless of which one you prefer. ▪ “The problem with Ketchikan is we squander many opportunities because of our inability to form a consensus of opinion.” ▪ The Greater Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce urges the DOT&PF to also further consider the F1 alternative with the High Low Pennock Island Bridge. It is important the DOT&PF to prove that the initial costs associated with the F1 alternative are not justified by the annual and long term impacts to the community, both social and economic. The Chamber also believes that the F3 alternative should move forward at this time. Concurrent with this effort, the F1 alternative should be further investigated so that the community can rightly weigh the costs and benefits of transit through the East and West Channels. The simulation effort at the end of April with the NW Cruise Association is one example of information gathering for both options that needs to occur. ▪ Without being detrimental to the overall project, I would like to see F1, High/Low Pennock Island Crossing advanced far enough and quickly enough that if impacts from F3 are deemed too costly to the community, then F1 would be the next consideration, or some form of mixture between F1 and F3. I am concerned that if this option (F1) is not further studied, it may become a major issue for SEIS discussion later in the process. That kind of delay is something both Ketchikan and DOT&PF wish to avoid.
Toll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No toll should be instated.
Vote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The split is about 50/50, and I will continue to encourage the Assembly to schedule a vote, so that a true reading of the public sentiment on this project can be obtained.



APPENDIX A

Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Recommended Alternative January 7, 2002 Press Release



APPENDIX B

Media Material Promoting the Open
House Meetings in Ketchikan:

Newspaper display advertisements

Flyers

Postcard

Public Service Announcements



APPENDIX C
February 2002 Newsletter



APPENDIX D
Copies of Public Comment Sheets



APPENDIX E
Copies of Letters Received



APPENDIX F
Copies of Emails Received



APPENDIX G
Meeting Sign-in Sheets



APPENDIX H
Published Newspaper Articles and Editorials
