

HB

757

(7)

COMMITTEE REPORT

2/14/80

HOUSE

FURTHER: FINANCE

Date: 2-31-80

Mr. Speaker:

The Committee on STATE AFFAIRS has had HB 757

"An Act making a special appropriation to the Department of Natural Resources, division of parks; and providing for an effective date."

under consideration and (a majority of the committee) (the committee) reports it back with the following recommendations:

- do pass do not pass
- do pass with attached amendments(s)
- replace with CS for _____ same title
 new title
- and recommends _____
- AND attaches a "Letter of Intent" New Fiscal Note
- reports it back without recommendation
- referred to the _____ Committee

MEMBERS SIGNING
DO PASS

John G. White

Robert [unclear]

MEMBERS HAVING
OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

CHAIRMAN

FOREST SERVICE
Seward Office
Box 275

REPLY TO: 7750 Forest Highways

November 6, 1979

SUBJECT: Resurrection River Road; Interagency Meeting



10: Files

On October 5th a meeting was held in Seward to discuss the future development and maintenance of Resurrection River Road. Those in attendance were:

Clay Beal, Forest Supervisor - USDA Forest Service
Dwane Klassen, Forest Engineer - USDA Forest Service
Kerry Martin, Resource Management Assistant - USDA Forest Service
Doug Warnock, Deputy Director Alaska Area - National Park Service
Paul Hartel, Ranger in Charge - Kenai Fjords National Monument
Howard Wagner, Planner - National Park Service
Johnny Johnson, Seward City Manager
Darrel Schafermeyer, Seward Assistant City Manager
John Horn, Alaska DOT - Maint & Ops, Anchorage
Ed Hollier, Alaska DOT - Maint & Ops, Soldotna
Bill Frazier, Alaska DOT - Maint & Ops, Seward
Margaret Branson, State Legislator
Herman Leirer - Interested citizen
Betty Elge - Seward Chamber of Commerce

The road was originally built about 1970 with State, Borough, and City money and equipment for about a \$400,000 investment. A \$200,000 concrete bridge was constructed in 1978 by the State over an unnamed creek.

Each agency's current involvement is as follows:

USDA Forest Service - the last 3.3 miles of the road is on National Forest land and is under special use permit to the City of Seward and the Kenai Peninsula Borough. The Forest Service is in the process of developing a recreation trail from the present road terminus to the Upper Russian Lakes area. The Forest Service presently has no maintenance responsibilities other than management of the special use permit.

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City of Seward, in conjunction with the Kenai Peninsula Borough, holds the permit and was responsible for the construction of the road and its present maintenance. The City supports the concept of the road as a gateway to the Harding Icefield to encourage tourism in the local area. However, they have a higher priority project (access to the proposed Fourth of July Shipyard site) and cannot afford any financing or personnel for the Resurrection River Road at this time. The road is entirely outside the City's corporate limits. The city originally intended to complete the road, a bridge over Resurrection River and visitor facilities at the glacier prior to d-2 stopping their involvement. The bridge and other facilities were never completed. There is access across the river in the early spring when the water is low.

The State of Alaska, Department of Transportation, has the road on its current maintenance schedule but due to lack of funding, only that portion of the road actually on State land has been maintained to any degree. It is also their last priority for maintenance. This year, they have built the first mile or so of the road bed up, cleaned ditches and built some diversion dikes to control flooding, as the river is now higher than the road in some locations.

National Park Service has no specific plans for the Exit Glacier area at this time but does recognize its potential and will continue to include it as their planning progresses and funds become available. They are legally bound, except through special legislation, from spending money outside the Monument's boundary. If the road were not already in existence, they probably would not look at constructing a new road. Since it is in place they would be encouraged if visitors could use it to get to Exit Glacier.

It was agreed upon by all parties that the road is desirable because of its recreation potential; however, it is recognized that some problems exist in bringing it up to minimum standards and maintaining it. These are:

1. Levees and dikes will probably be needed since the river is now higher than the road in some locations.
2. It is in a flood plane which may raise some questions as to the use of Federal Monies and about the cost/benefit analysis of a road that essentially goes no where.
3. An "off the cuff" estimate of \$300,000 per mile for construction and \$400,000 for the bridge was made.
4. The necessity of a lot of rock rip rap in diverting the river and the road availability of that rock.

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5. Would an EIS be needed? Probably not since it would be reconstruction of an existing road.

6. Preliminary engineering surveys indicate that the road should be relocated to save it from the river. This would probably be financially and environmentally unfeasible, thus leaving the road to be repaired where it is.

7. To get any funding, the Forest Service has to budget at least 2 years ahead, the State DOT must have the road on the 6 year plan or the State Legislature could pass a special appropriation.

To accomplish the goals of reconstructing the Resurrection River Road, it was agreed that a cooperative agreement would be drawn up by the Forest Service and would include specific actions to be taken by the individual agencies involved (NPS, City, State, and USFS).

Specifically, the following actions were agreed upon:

USDA Forest Service will a) put the road reconstruction project into the FY 82 or 83 budget; b) write the coop agreement for other agencies to review and sign; c) will do the centerline survey on the road if FY 80 funds are available.

State Dept. of Transportation will do minimum maintenance to prevent total loss of the road. When the road is reconstructed they would be able to maintain it if they have to. If funds available they may be able to assist in the survey.

City of Seward Will write to Alaska DOT stating their position in support of the road but due to higher commitments they would be unable to participate in an active way. They will pursue any opportunities to acquire money to repair the road. They will continue to maintain the permit in their name.

National Park Service will continue to develop plans for facilities at Exit Glacier and for the bridge over Resurrection River. Until special legislation occurs that will allow them to expend funds outside the Monument boundary, they can only show their active support for the road's existence.

Margaret Branson, State Legislature, will look into what money might be available through special legislation

Kerry T. Martin
KERRY T. MARTIN
Resource Management Assistant