

HB

176

HFIN

FILE

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2007 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: 1
Bill Version: CSHB 176(RES)
(H) Publish Date: 4/10/07

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____ Dept. Affected: Natural Resources
Title: Creating Fort Rousseau Causeway State RDU: Parks & Recreation Mgt
Historical Park Component: Parks Management
Sponsor: Rep. Wilson
Requester: H RES Component No. 452

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Personal Services	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5
Travel						
Contractual	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Supplies	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Equipment	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	16.8	16.8	16.8	16.8	16.8	16.8

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
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CHANGE IN REVENUES ()						
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF	16.8	16.8	16.8	16.8	16.8	16.8
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type--Do not abbreviate)						
TOTAL	16.8	16.8	16.8	16.8	16.8	16.8

Estimate of any current year (FY2007) cost: 0.0

Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2008 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Costs associated with managing the Fort Rousseau Causeway State Historical Park in its initial development of trails and picnic sites includes some Park Ranger presence and maintenance crew; supplies for brochures, trail maintenance, equipment maintenance and fuel; and boat charter costs associated with accessing the site.

Discussion is underway to develop a contractual plan for the area with the intention to generate revenue.

Prepared by: Chris Dugornes, Acting Director
Division: State Parks
Approved by: Tom Irwin, Commissioner
Agency: Natural Resources

Phone 269-8702
Date/Time 3/27/2007
Date 3/27/2007

4/18/07



Sitka Trail Works, Inc

801 Halibut Point Road, Sitka AK 99835
 Phone: 747- 7244 email: trail@aci.net
 Deborah A. Lyons, Executive Director

Wednesday, April 18, 2007

Re: HB 176

Dear Co-Chairs Chenault and Meyer and Members of the Alaska State Legislature House Finance Committee,

My name is Deborah Lyons, I am the Executive Director of Sitka Trail Works, a 501(c)(3) in good standing with the State of Alaska. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of HB 176, an Act creating the Fort Rousseau Causeway Historical State Park. Sitka Trail Works has over 300 member- households and we have a partnership Memorandum of Agreement with the City and Borough of Sitka, the USDA Forest Service, Alaska State Parks, the National Parks Service and the Sitka Tribe of Alaska in support of the projects in the Sitka Trail Plan.

My job description with Sitka Trail Works charges me with the responsibility to work as hard as possible, with very modest resources, but all the good will and support of our partner organizations to make all the trail projects in the Sitka Trail Plan come to life. After hearing today's testimony I hope you will agree that through our organization and partners, the community of Sitka is stepping up to the plate and taking the initiative to find funds to help restore historic Fort Rousseau for the public benefit. We are not coming to you asking for the State to do it all alone with general fund dollars. We do need your help in assure that the capital investment that being made into historic Fort Rousseau is protected and conserved through permanent management of the area which State Park status would provide.

There are fourteen new trail projects in the Trail plan which guides Sitka Trail Works activities, of which the World War II Causeway project is one. I have attached the project map and description from the plan. The general idea of the project is to renovate the 8,000 foot Causeway road as a hiking trail that takes folks to view the historic World War II structures. Visitors to the park will learn about Alaska's role in the Second World War and also enjoy an absolutely spectacular scenic setting. The park would also provide the opportunity to picnic and camp in the area.

It is not our typical hiking trail project but it is certainly one of my favorites. My Father served in the Navy at Okinawa in the Second World War and I think of the pictures in our family album when I view historic photos of Sitka's Navy and Army bases. Establishing a State Park to interpret and share Alaska's role in the World War II is more than just a

Sitka Trail Works Mission Statement: To contribute to the overall health of the community through the development, maintenance and promotion of a comprehensive trail system in the Sitka area.

job to me, it has a lot of personal meaning and is my own way to acknowledge and thank our service men and women.

When we, (myself and the Sitka Trail Works Board of Directors), started on this project we knew that funding for Alaska State Parks was tight and we thought that restoring the area and charging for tours would be a way to create enough revenue to pay for maintenance of the park. Through grant writing, Congressional funding and other funding (possibly the Cruise Ship tax funds) we thought we could raise enough dollars to do the capital improvements necessary to make the area clean, safe and enjoyable once again. Our funding picture is summarized below.

Grant funds secured by Sitka Trail Works for the World War II Causeway Project:

- \$140,700 Alaska Trails Initiative FY 2006
- \$124,500 Alaska Trails Initiative FY 08 (applied for)
- FY 08 SAFETEA-LU \$212,000
- FY 09 SAFETEA-LU \$172,260

As you can see we've made a good start.

Others here today will speak to the cultural, historic and recreational value of this future State Park. Because your interest is primarily financial I will focus on providing that sort of information and stand ready for any further questions you may have.

For the record I would like to reiterate our goals and objectives. They are also included in the Fort Rousseau Development plan. The plan lays out the development objectives and goes on to estimate the approximate revenues that could be earned from tours on the site. This revenue will pay for future maintenance and hopefully generate enough revenue to support other State Parks in the system.

Project Development Goals

- I. Restore local recreational opportunities.
- II. Preserve and interpret state and national history
- III. Provide a quality visitor experience, compatible with community values
- IV. Honor and accommodate Sitka Tribe of Alaska concerns:
 - a. Minimal interference with subsistence harvest of kelp and seaweed
 - b. No disturbance of burial sites
 - c. Acknowledge the role of Alaska natives in WW II

Objectives

- I. Make the area clean, safe and accessible so that it can be enjoyed in its present state.
- II. Perform the necessary environmental, cultural and historic surveys and site mapping to document current conditions.

Sitka Trail Works Mission Statement: To contribute to the overall health of the community through the development, maintenance and promotion of a comprehensive trail system in the Sitka area.

- III. Produce a site plan and an Interpretation plan to guide the capital investment and development of the area.
- IV. Secure the capital investments needed to install the dock, install interpretative signage, complete historic building restoration, construct visitor center/administration building, and repair portions of the causeway road.

In 2004 Sitka Trail Works began corresponding with members of the Alaska's Federal Congressional Delegation to see if there was any Federal funding available for the projects in the Sitka Trail Plan. We wrote and met with all the members of the delegation, carrying 35 letters and resolutions of support for the projects from the Sitka City and Borough Assembly, community organizations and individuals. Our efforts were well received and in response to our requests and requests from other trail organizations in the State Senator Stevens created the Alaska Trails Initiative program, allocating over 4 million dollars in FY 2005 and over 2 million in FY 2006 to the State of Alaska for a competitive grants trail program. Senator Stevens specifically named the World War II Causeway project as eligible to apply for funding. In 2005 STW was awarded a grant of \$140,700 to begin work renovating the Causeway. \$60,000 of those grant funds have been given to the State of Alaska DNR and State Historic Preservation office to pay for the necessary site mapping and cultural resources survey and inventory, which will take place this spring. Another \$14,000 was used for a Phase I Environmental Assessment to determine current levels of hazardous materials. That work was done last summer. I don't know how often private parties come before you with the good news that they took it upon themselves to find funds to give to the State to assist with project costs...but today is one of those days! The remainder of the Alaska Trail Initiative grant funds has paid for a clean up of the Causeway which included quite a bit of brush and garbage removal, all done under the supervision of the SHPO's office. STW has also applied for an FY 08 Alaska Trails Initiative grant of \$124,000 which will complete the historical survey and site planning. These funds will also, finally, allow us to build the gravel trail linking all the historical features. We will find out whether or not we have been awarded those additional funds in early June of 2007.

Once the interpretation plan is completed we will be able to spend the SAFE-TEA LU funds on the interpretive signage, building restoration etc. The interpretation plan will guide the capital expenditures. The SAFE-TEA LU funds were made available through close coordination between Congressman Don Young's office and Senator Lisa Murkowski. As part of Sitka's 4th of July celebration last year. General Sharrow and Congressman Young visited Sitka and we had a special Causeway tour for them and Armed services personnel and their families with Transportation provided free of charge by Allen Marine. It was a great event and it is wonderful to have the support of the delegation for this project. I hope I have given you enough information to understand the level of financial commitment that is being made by our community and I hope you will approve of legislatively designating the Fort Rouseau Causeway Historical State Park.

Thank you once again for hearing this bill.

Sitka Trail Works Mission Statement: To contribute to the overall health of the community through the development, maintenance and promotion of a comprehensive trail system in the Sitka area.



Alaska State Legislature

Representative Peggy Wilson
House District 2
Putting Alaska's Families First

SPONSOR STATEMENT

Committee Substitute House Bill 176 (RES)

"An Act creating the Fort Rousseau Causeway State Historical Park."

In the build up for WWII, the Department of the Army constructed fortifications at several locations encircling Sitka Sound. An 8,000 foot rock and gravel road was built connecting several small islands west of the then Navy's Sea Plane and Operating Base in Sitka. This causeway terminated at the Army's command headquarters named Fort Rousseau on Makhnati Island.

Some of the original concrete structures built by the military are still in fair condition. They include a tri-level command post, anti aircraft gun batteries, three ammo magazines and two bunkers. Construction of the Sitka Airport in the late 1960's, eliminated pedestrian and vehicle access. The Causeway lands, most of which belong to the State of Alaska, remained under management by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities as part of the Sitka Airport. This management is being transferred back to the Alaska Department of Natural Resources and would be ultimately managed by the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation similarly to Sitka's other two small, urban historic state park units – Old Sitka and Castle Hill.

The proposed Fort Rousseau Causeway State Historical Park is a small, 58 acre upland area with a sliver of tideland's large enough for the footprint of a dock. It is consistent with the purpose behind the establishment of parks. In part, it promotes growth and development and provides opportunities and enjoyment for our citizens and visitors alike.

In FY 2006, an Alaska Trails Initiative grant was awarded to the Sitka Trail Works for Phase 1 of the WWII Causeway development. This included cleanup under the supervision of the State Historic Preservation Office. Phase 1 will continue with site assessment and survey work.

History is a bridge to the past. The Causeway has been added to the National Register of Historic Places and designated a historical landmark by the National Parks Service. Preservation of the unique historical features of the Fort Rousseau area will remind all visitors about Alaska's role in WWII and allow for a glimpse into the life of the soldiers who stood ready to defend their country.

March 28, 2007

25-LS0181NE



Alaska State Legislature

Representative Peggy Wilson

House District 2

Putting Alaska's Families First

SECTIONAL ANALYSIS

Committee Substitute House Bill 176 (RES)

"An Act creating the Fort Rousseau Causeway State Historical Park."

HB 176 amends Title 41.21 under Parks and Recreational Facilities. This legislation establishes the above named park and corresponding language for management and uses within its boundaries.

Section 1. Amends uncodified law by adding legislative findings citing the general purpose of state parks and establishing that the Fort Rousseau Causeway State Historical Park is in the best interest of the state.

Section 2. Amends AS 41.21 by adding new sections to article 2.

Sec. 41.21.190 establishes the purpose of AS 41.21.190 – AS 41.21.194.

Sec. 41.21.191 establishes the boundaries of the Fort Rousseau Causeway State Historical Park by describing the exact land and water parcels by referring to normal cadastral survey information.

Sec. 41.21.192 assigns the control, maintenance, and development to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Sec. 41.21.193 allows the DNR commissioner to designate incompatible uses within the park.

Sec. 41.21.194 clarifies that any land and water outside of the boundaries as established may only be added by an act of the legislature.

March 28, 2007

25-LS0181AE

Sitka Fort Rousseau Historical State Park (World War II Causeway) Development Plan Summary

Provided by Sitka Trail Works, Inc.
Executive Director, Deborah Lyons

Project Development Goals

- I. Restore local recreational opportunities,
- II. Preserve and interpret state and national history
- III. Provide a quality visitor experience, compatible with community values
- IV. Honor and accommodate Sitka Tribe of Alaska concerns:
 - a. Minimal interference with subsistence harvest of kelp and seaweed
 - b. No disturbance of burial sites
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Objectives

- I. Make the area clean, safe and accessible so that it can be enjoyed in its present state.
- II. Perform the necessary environmental, cultural and historic surveys and site mapping to document current conditions.
- III. Produce a site plan and an interpretation plan to guide the capital investment and development of the area.
- IV. Secure the capital investments needed to install the dock, install interpretative signage, complete historic building restoration, construct visitor center/administration building, and repair portions of the causeway road.

Project Narrative

Sitka Trail Works, members of the community, and the Sitka State Parks Advisory Board, are collaborating to restore the abandoned Fort Rousseau site for public recreation and cultural interpretation. The site is located on Alaska State lands with a few small in-holdings under the jurisdiction of the BLM. (See the attached project description from the 2003 Trail Plan). Sitka Trail Works has a full time Executive Director, office staff, a nine member, all-volunteer Board of Directors and over 300 active supporting member households. The organization is guided by the 2003 Sitka Trail Plan and the Memorandum of Understanding with the State of Alaska and City and Borough of Sitka. Extensive successful fundraising has already occurred and preliminary clean up and planning for the area is underway.

Once the area is restored and developed locals and visitors would be able to access historic Fort Rousseau by boat, via a dock in Whiting Harbor, and could walk 5,000 ft of the original 8,000 ft Causeway. Guided tours would be offered and visitors would be able to view the ammo magazines, gun emplacements and enter the old command post, while learning about Alaska's role in the Second World War. One single wooden structure, the old fuse house, is a candidate for reconstruction and could become part of the interpreted features. The area is level, vegetated with alders, spruce and wildflowers. It is exceptionally scenic affording fantastic views of the town of Sitka and Sitka Sound. Revenues from the tours would support maintenance of the area.

Sitka Trail Works has received an Alaska Trails Initiative Grant (ATI) of \$140,000 and will be receiving Federal Transportation funds (approximately \$340,000) in FY 09 and FY 10 to be applied to the project. Total cost to develop the area is expected to be over \$1 million dollars and to take four to five years.

Placement of a dock and interpretive signage by FY 09 would allow the area to begin returning revenue from cruise ship tourists being lightered to Whiting Harbor. Ultimately, restrooms, a small interpretation center and an apartment for the on site personnel could be constructed. It would be most economical to combine these functions in a single simple building, most likely on Sasedni Island. Final recommendations for interpretation and site design will be finalized in Phase One planning documents currently being developed by AK DPOR staff. It may be possible to repair the Causeway and allow a vehicle to be driven to the interpretation center, but special arrangements would need to be made with the FAA to allow traffic through the airport. Preliminary discussions suggest this could be allowed if limited to pre-screened official or approved personnel. Even limited access by a vehicle would allow for less expensive maintenance and upkeep.

In FY 07 ATI grant funds were used to clear brush from the old causeway road, to clean up garbage and debris and correct some unsafe conditions around the old structures. All work was accomplished under the supervision of the State Historic Preservation Office, and with the permission of the landowners. This work accomplished a primary objective; making the area clean and safe so that it can be enjoyed in its present state.

The project is now in Phase One survey and assessment. Sitka Trail Works has transferred \$60,000 in grant funds via Reimbursable Services Agreement (RSA) to the AKDNR DPOR and the SHPO for site mapping, site interpretation and cultural resources work. STW also engaged Carson Dorn Engineering to do a Phase 1 site assessment for hazardous materials (\$14,000). STW has applied for additional Phase One funding of \$130,000 to finish the cultural resources survey and the site and interpretation plans. Further clean up within the buildings is needed and continuing brushing and maintenance. These services will be provided by STW in FY '08 from the ATI grant funds.

When the State personnel have completed their work, and produced a site plan and an interpretation plan STW will use those documents to raise further funds, possibly from private foundations and Federal Historic grant programs. In the meantime, STW is exploring use of cruise ship head tax dollars for construction of the proposed dock in Whiting Harbor and has submitted a Congressional appropriations request for funds to repair a portion of the Causeway. ATI funds for construction of the dock or other capital improvements have also been applied for, but may not be available until FY 09. An FY '08 \$100,000 State Legislative Capital match has also been applied for.

The goal is to improve the area so that local can picnic and camp there and tours can be offered to visitors. Conservative preliminary projections suggest that \$80,000 in revenue from commercial user tour fees could be paid to the State annually. This source of income would allow the State (and/or a contract vendor) to pay for the cost of operations and maintenance.

Historical Background

In the 1940's the Department of the Army constructed fortifications at several locations encircling Sitka Sound, all designed to protect the Sitka Naval Air Station from attack by the Japanese. An 8,000 ft. rock and gravel road was built connecting seven islands west of the Sitka Naval Operating Base. The causeway road joined historic Fort Ray on Charcoal Island with Army command headquarters named Fort Rousseau, on Makhnati Island. Three concrete ammo magazines, wooden troop support structures and gun emplacements were built out along the island chain. In 1945 the post was de-commissioned but still remained accessible to residents and staff at the BIA hospital on Japonski Island. Access to the Causeway and the historic ruins was severely limited when the Sitka airport was built. Over time, no vehicle traffic was allowed to cross the airport runway, and the only way to access the causeway was to go by skiff to Whiting Harbor. The area deteriorated; unmaintained, subject to vandalism, and illegal camping.

Repeated unsuccessful attempts were made by private citizens, the City and Borough of Sitka, the Historical Society and the National Park Service to place the Causeway under management for recreation and historic preservation. Lack of funding, clear management authority and even a lack of appreciation for the unique historic significance of the area contributed to failure of these attempts. Fortunately, the

Causeway was added to the National Register and designated part of the Sitka Naval Operating Base and US Army Coastal Defenses National Historic Landmark by the National Parks Service.

The land, most of which belongs to the State of Alaska, remained under rather passive management by the FAA as part of the Sitka Airport. Today the FAA is in the process of transferring these lands (unnecessary for airport management) back to the State. Portions of the Causeway constructed over submerged lands were recently discovered to belong to the BLM. BLM is developing Recreation and Public Purpose status for these small lots under their jurisdiction.

The World War II Causeway project was included in the 2003 Sitka Trail Plan. This cooperative planning document was signed by all the local land managers and is coordinated and implemented by the non profit Sitka Trail Works. The plan lists major recreational infrastructure objectives for the community for the next twelve years. The World War II Causeway project, on page 46, envisions development of the entire causeway area for recreation and hiking. Access is to be restored via a dock in Whiting Harbor (or in conjunction with the planned airport runway expansion). Management authority is to be placed with AK DNR DPOR. (See attachment).

When the 2003 Sitka Trail Plan was adopted Sitka Trail Works went to work building needed partnerships and finding the necessary funds to renovate the old Causeway. With the support of the City and Borough Assembly, Sitka State Parks Citizen's Advisory Board, Sitka Historical Society and many others, Sitka Trail Works successfully secured funding for the project from several sources. See the outline of funding raised to date, expenditures to date, future funds and future anticipated expenses. STW plans to continue in their fundraising efforts and their goal is to assist with raising the necessary capital funding to develop the area for recreation and tourism.

Project Development and Capital Funding Plan

Funds committed to date: (In hand)

1. \$144,000 FY 2006 Alaska Trails Initiative (ATI) grant to Sitka Trail Works, Phase I WW II Causeway
2. \$340,000 FY 2009-10 Federal Transportation Bill appropriation for the WW II Causeway

Funds currently applied for: (Probable)

3. \$130,000 FY 2007 Alaska Trails Initiative (ATI) Additional Phase I funding
4. \$100,000 FY 08 AK State Legislative Capital Matching grant

Future funding: (Probable with continued work by Sitka Trail Works))

5. \$152,000 FY 2007 ATI Phase II - Interpretation signage and building restoration
6. \$500,000 FY 2008 Cruise ship tax revenue Whiting Harbor dock
7. \$250,000 FY 09 AK Legislature Capital Grant Visitor Center and building restoration
8. \$250,000 FY 09-10 Rasmuson Foundation for Visitor Center
9. \$200,000 FY 2010 Federal Transportation Bill for Causeway repair
10. \$300,000 FY 09 FUDS-EPA-Private Foundation- Clean-up/containment of fuel areas

Allocation of funds

1. \$144,000 \$70,000 to Sitka Trail Works - Causeway has been cleared of brush, garbage removed. Safety problems are being resolved. Initial Environmental assessments completed by contract with Carson Dorn. World War II consulting services and Sitka Tribe of Alaska consulting fees paid.

\$10,000 via RSA (Reimbursable Services Agreement) to AK DPOR for site plan and interpretation
 \$50,000 via RSA to the State Historic Preservation Office - \$25,000 for site mapping by DNR DPOR and \$25,000 to begin cultural resources survey and inventory.

- 3. \$130,000
 \$30,000 via RSA to complete site and interpretation plans
 \$50,000 via RSA to SHPO to complete cultural and historic resources inventory and survey.
 \$20,000 Sitka Trail Works FY 07 brushing, clean up and project development
 \$30,000 Hazmat clean up (batteries, fuel contamination, asbestos)
- 4. \$100,000
 Apply \$100,000 State Capital match for SAFE-TEA-LU funds and ant needed capital projects
- 5. \$152,000
 STW- Site Interpretation signage and features
- 2. \$340,000
 Apply SAFE-TEA-LU appropriation to capital costs of site interpretation and building restoration

World War II Causeway – Fort Rousseau Historical State Park Development Timeline				
	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08	FY 09 First year of tours
Expense projections				
Site maintenance – Clean up and brushing. Project development.	STW – ATI grant funded \$70,000	STW- ATI grant funded. \$20,000	STW – ATI grant funded. \$20,000	AK DPOR or Vendor Contract \$54,670 (see projections)
Outside investments to project – Funds raised by Sitka Trail Works				
AKDPOR Site and Interpretation planning	\$10,000 ATI RSA	\$30,000 ATI RSA		
SHPO	\$50,000 ATI RSA	\$50,000 ATI RSA		
Install dock			\$500,00 Cruise ship tax	
Tour Revenues				\$67,200 (See projections)
Install Interpretation signage, etc.			\$152,000 ATI	
Construct visitor Center				Multiple grant sources

Fort Rousseau Historical State Park - World War II Causeway

Tour Income projections

Capacity	Visitors	Ticket	Revenue
100%	4480	\$ 20	<u>\$ 89,600</u>
75%	3360	\$ 20	<u>\$ 67,200</u>
50%	2240	\$ 20	<u>\$ 44,800</u>

If the WWII Causeway tours are advertised on the Cruise ships, sales of tours can be expected to be equal to or greater than a similar tour business, Bike and Hike.

Bike & Hike tours average 3,500 per year. If the cruise ships advertise the tours they will also add a commission charge to the tour.

The visitor may pay \$50-\$70 for the tour with \$20-\$40 going to the cruise line, \$10/head for vessel transportation and \$20 to AKDPOR.

Income projections could increase significantly if AM and PM tours are offered or higher fees were charged.

Sample Vendor Operated Expense Projections.					
Assuming the area is developed and tours can be offered					
FY 2009 at the earliest					
Salaries and wages					
	Supervisor	8400	\$ 8,400.00	14 wk 40 hrs @ 15/H	
	Tour guides (3)	7280	0	14 wk 40 hrs @ 13/H	
			\$21,840.00		
	Interp Center	6160	\$ 6,160.00	14 wk 40 hrs @ 11/H	
			\$36,400.00		
Payroll taxes (15%)			\$ 5,450.00		
Veh Fuel			\$ 980.00		70 wk 1 fill up x 14 wks
Boat Fuel			\$ 1,960.00		140 wk
			0		
Veh. Maintenance			\$ 700.00		\$50/wk
			0		
Interp materials			\$ 3,500.00		
Advertising			\$ 500.00		
Safety equipment			\$ 250.00		
Maintenance supplies			\$ 2,100.00		\$150 wk
Occupancy expense			\$ 1,000.00		fuel, electricity, water
	Total		\$52,850.00		

Cultural Interest Trails

World War II Causeway	
Total Length	1 mile
Difficulty Level	Easy, ADA accessible
Trail Surface	Varies
Associated facilities	Interpretive signs, Whiting Harbor float & reconstructed WWII emplacements

Project Description

The Sitka World War II causeway has the potential to be the best and most informative World War II historic walk in Southeast Alaska. Users of this trail would be able to explore fascinating underground ammunition bunkers or stand on a gun platform and look out to the open ocean. The Causeway Trail has commercial potential as a destination for independent visitors and cruise ship passengers.

A floating dock facility at Whiting Harbor is proposed and the causeway would be developed to wheelchair accessible standards. The causeway riprap would be repaired where needed. A survey of World War II artifacts would be prepared to guide the development of the trail and its interpretation. Tours could be offered during the summer.

Public Needs Met

This trail would be a monument to one of the significant periods in Sitka's history. It would

World War II Causeway

be available year-round to residents and would provide an historical excursion for visitors. The Sitka Americans with Disabilities Act Committee has placed a high priority on completing this project.

Planning and Design

Planning would include the completion of a cultural resource survey and completion of the necessary permits. Negotiations with the landowner, the Alaska Dept. of Natural Resources, would also be needed. A topographic survey, design of the float, trails, and interpretive materials would follow.

Lead Agency and Project Participants

Lead agency: Sitka Trail Works, Inc.
 Project participants: Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, City & Borough of Sitka, Sitka Historic Preservation Society, commercial users, State Historic Preservation Officer.

World War II Causeway			
Items	Quantity	Cost/Unit	Total (x 1,000)
Trail Construction	1 mile		\$135.0
Signs, Information & literature			\$40.0
Whiting Harbor Float			\$300.0
Causeway Riprap Repair			\$200.0
Historical Restoration & Improvements			\$150.0
Vault Toilet			\$75.0
Contingency			\$100.0
Planning, Design & Administration			\$150.0
Total Projected Cost			\$1,150.0



Cultural Interest Trails

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Lead Agency and Project Participants

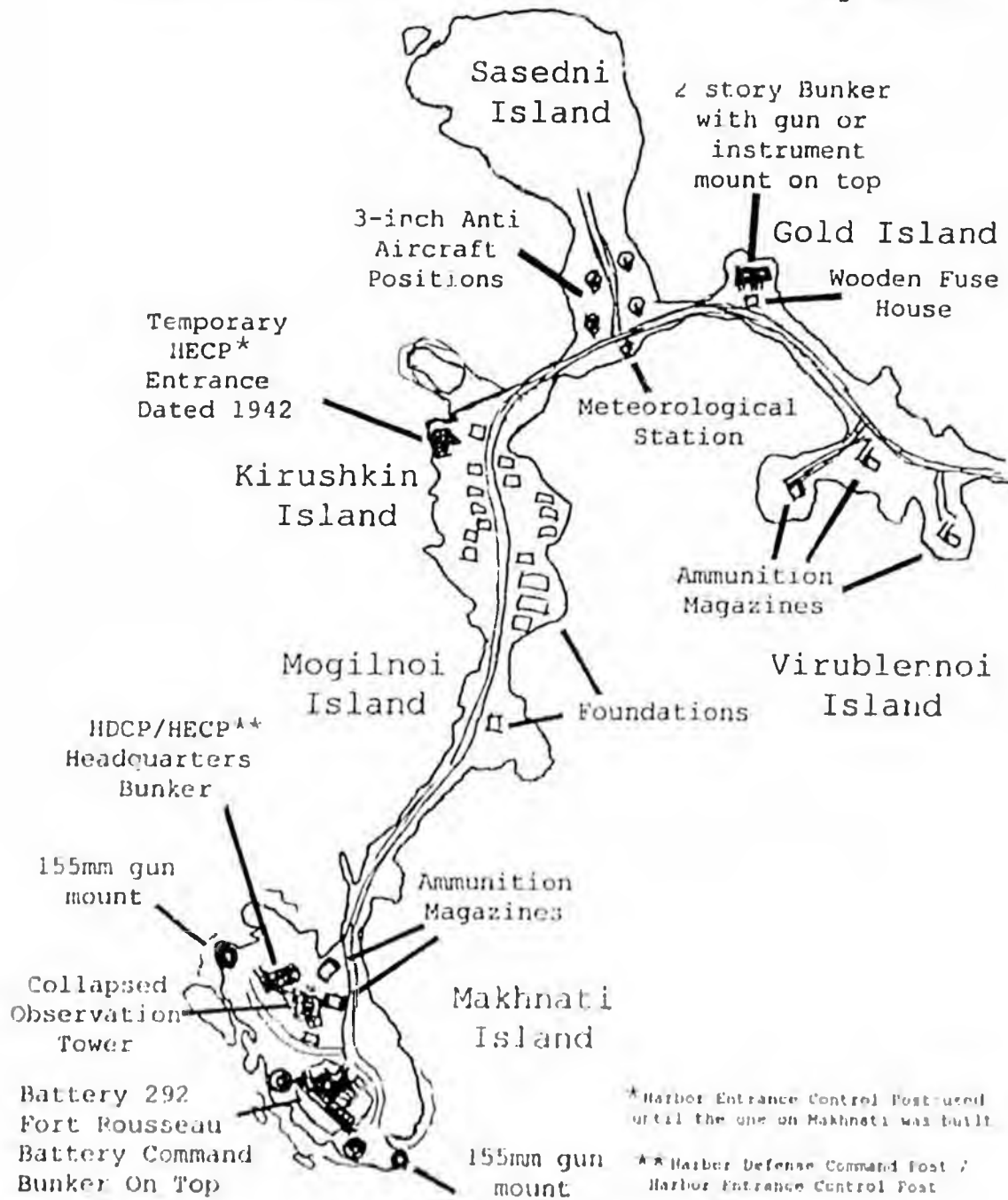
Lead agency: Sitka Trail Works, Inc.
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Historical Restoration & improvements			\$150.0
Vault Toilet			\$75.0
Contingency			\$100.0
Planning, Design & Administration			\$150.0
Total Projected Cost			\$1,150.0



Sitka Causeway WWII Remains Today

Map By
Matthew Hunter
May 2000





Sitka Historical Society

Isabel Miller Museum

330 Harbor Drive Sitka, Alaska 99835
Voice: 907 747 6455 Fax: 907 747 6588

Sitka's history lives on at one of the nation's premier small museums

Karen L. Meizner
Administrator

Sharyn Ferrick
Marketing Manager

27 April 2004

Representative Don Young
2111 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Don Young,

Re: Letter in Support of Sitka Trail Works

Sitka Trail Works addresses a community need that spreads across the spectrum of Sitka's residents. Sitka's trails are an essential part of Sitka's community and have historical significance.

References can be found in early writings after the Alaska purchase, to the Indian River Trail, trails up Mt. Verstovia, Gavin Hill and Harbor Mountain.

Just prior to WWII, when the U.S. government was realizing that war in the Pacific was a possibility, preparations for a possible war with Japan came to Sitka. In 1937, a Navy seaplane base was established on Sitka's Japonski Island, and by 1939, it was a Naval Air Station; Fort Ray was established on nearby Charcoal and Alice Islands in 1941, and a top secret radar installation was built on Harbor Mountain. The trails across Gavin Hill and up Harbor Mountain became an important part of the harbor defense system established here.

As part of the enormous military preparations in Alaska, the trails established behind Sitka and on Japonski Island serve as a visual reminder of a historic time when the United States prepared for a foreign invasion.

The Sitka Historical Society and the Isabel Miller Museum heartily endorse the efforts of Sitka Trail Works in preserving, maintaining and promoting our natural history and historic past.

Sincerely,

Karen Meizner
Administrator

cc. Senator Ted Stevens, Senator Lisa Murkowski and Sitka Trail Works

RESOLUTION No. 2005-28

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA SUPPORTING DESIGNATION OF THE WORLD WAR II CAUSEWAY MARINE PARK BY THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE

WHEREAS, the community of Sitka deeply values the preservation and interpretation of historical sites within the City and Borough in order to further the education and understanding of citizens and visitors of the events that have shaped our local, state and national heritage; and

WHEREAS, the WW II Causeway project involves the design and construction of an ADA accessible walkway that will link refurbished and interpreted features of the military ruins, including gun emplacements, bunkers and an infirmary along a one mile roadbed built by the Army in the 1940's; and

WHEREAS, the Causeway is a contributing property of the Sitka Naval Operating Base and US Army Coastal Defenses National Historic Landmark and Darrell Lewis, the USDI NPS National Historic Landmark historian stated in a letter dated July 19, 2005 that, "Rehabilitation and interpretation of this property would compliment and enhance other preservation efforts... in the landmark,"; and

WHEREAS, the World War II Causeway project is listed on page 46 of the 2003 Sitka Trail Plan and the City and Borough of Sitka are partners to the plan and have contributed time and resources to the development of the beneficial projects found there in; and

WHEREAS, the Sitka State Parks Citizens Advisory Board has recommended creation of the World War II Causeway Marine Park in order to clarify management authority and to allow for Federal Transportation funds to be utilized for the project; and


WHEREAS, Sitka Trail Works has applied for and will be receiving an Alaska Trails Initiative Program grant of \$133,000 for Phase I development of the site and a clear and proper designation of the Marine Park property will facilitate the orderly development of the project among the State agencies involved; and

WHEREAS, the project is designed to generate revenues through user fees and will complement and support the other historic State Parks in Sitka at Castle Hill and Old Sitka; and

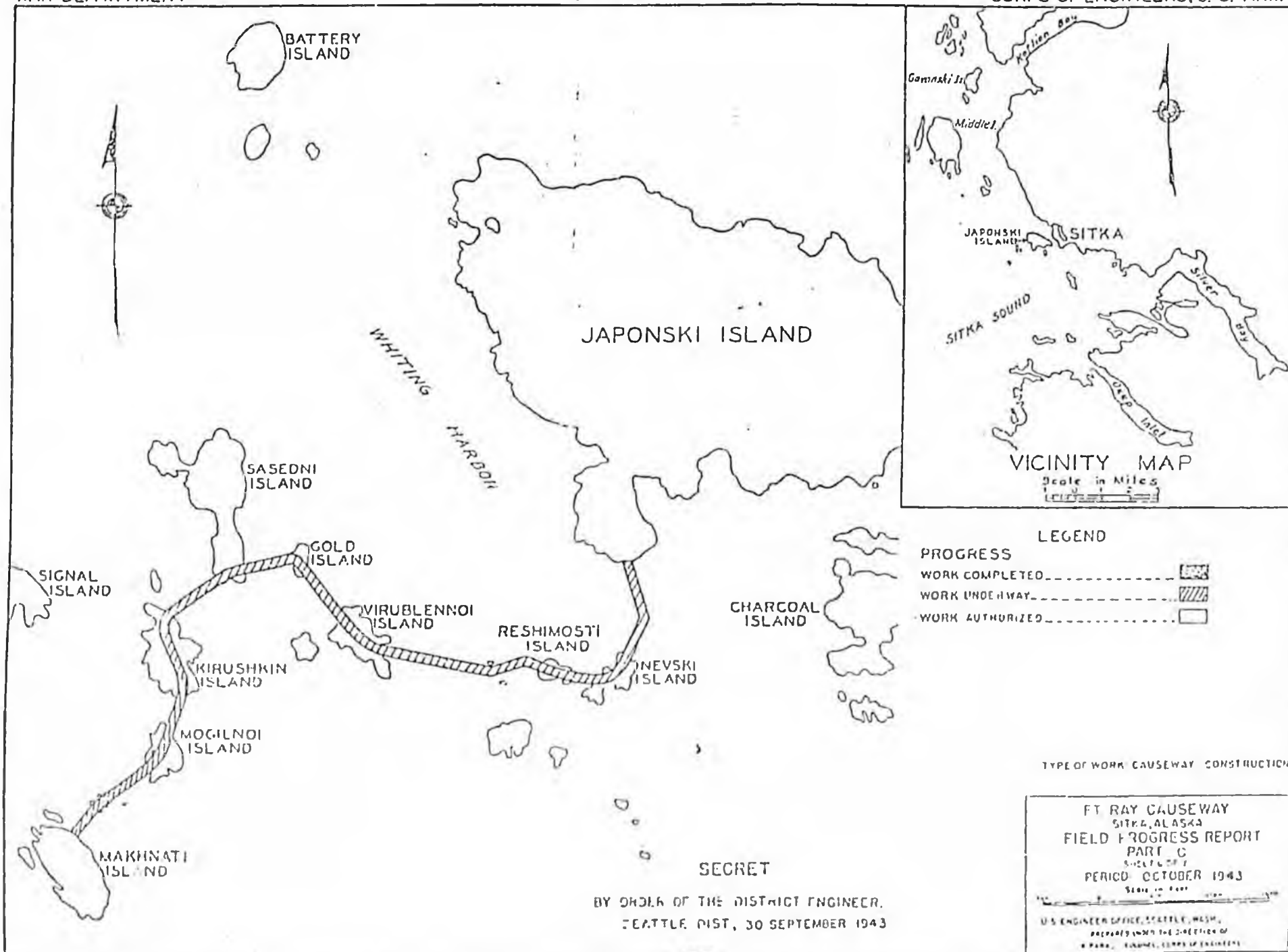
WHEREAS, amendment of AS 41.21 will describe the property and formally include this valuable project within the Alaska State Park system providing for management of the site for the public benefit in perpetuity;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska by this resolution affirms and supports the designation of the World War II Causeway property as a State Marine Park by an act of the legislature of the Great State of Alaska

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED by the assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska on this 25th day of October 2005


Marko Dapcevic, Mayor


Colleen Pellet, CMC, Municipal Clerk



LEGEND

PROGRESS	[Solid Hatching]
WORK COMPLETED	[Dashed Hatching]
WORK UNDERWAY	[Diagonal Hatching]
WORK AUTHORIZED	[Dotted Hatching]

TYPE OF WORK CAUSEWAY CONSTRUCTION

FT RAY CAUSEWAY
 SITKA, ALASKA
 FIELD PROGRESS REPORT
 PART C
 PERIOD: OCTOBER 1943
 U.S. ENGINEER OFFICE, SEATTLE, WASH.
 PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF
 A. PARK, CHIEF, CORPS OF ENGINEERS

SECRET

BY ORDER OF THE DISTRICT ENGINEER,
SEATTLE DIST, 30 SEPTEMBER 1943

SECRET

15



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
240 W. 5th Ave., Room 114
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

IN REPLY REFER TO:
H34 (AKRO-RCR)

RECEIVED

APR 10 2007

APR 4 2007

Representative Craig Johnson, Co-Chair
House Resources Committee
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Representative Johnson:

This letter is in support of HIB 176, a bill to designate the Fort Rousseau Causeway a State Historical Park. As you know, the Fort Rousseau Causeway in Sitka is part of the Sitka Naval Operating Base and U.S. Army Coastal Defenses National Historic Landmark (NHL), created in 1984 to commemorate Alaska's role in World War II. Per the Historic Sites Act of 1935 the National Park Service administers the National Historic Landmarks program for the Secretary of the Interior. In this role the National Park Service provides guidance and technical assistance to NHL owners and interested parties.

Since its designation the Causeway portion of the NHL has suffered from neglect and vandalism. Cut off from Japonski Island, the road system and the rest of the NHL by the Rocky Gutierrez Airport, the Causeway has not received the interest that the Sitka Naval Operating Base portion of the NHL has seen. In 2004, Sitka Trail Works (STW) contacted our office regarding their plans to develop a trail system and interpretive plan for the World War II buildings on the Causeway. The National Park Service believes that the best preservation of an historic site occurs when the site is used and appreciated, and we have been working in support of STW since being contacted.

Designating the Fort Rousseau Causeway a State Historical Park would lend further recognition to Alaska's vital role in World War II and encourage preservation efforts currently underway. We support this designation and encourage passage of HB 176.

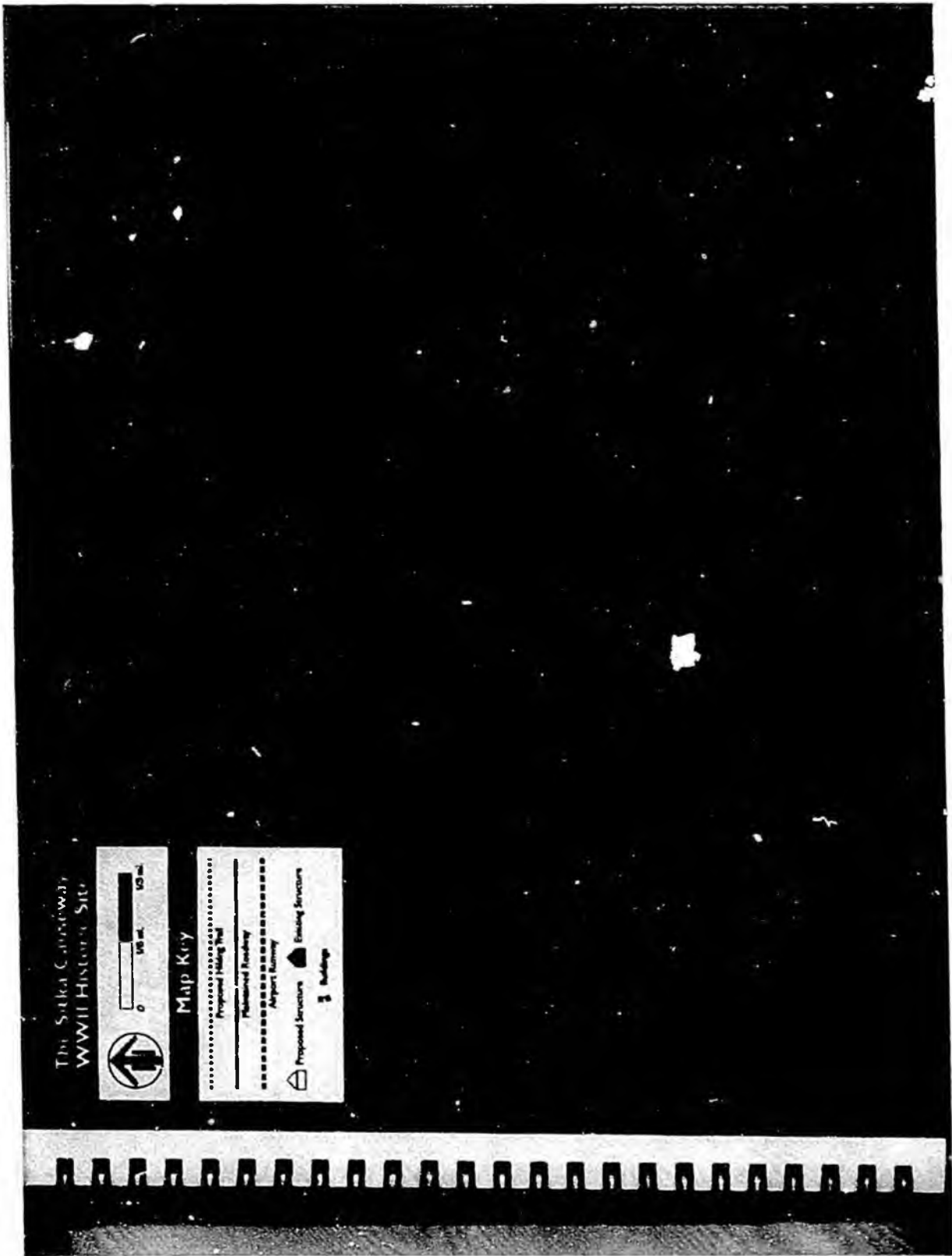
If you have any questions or concerns regarding these comments please contact Darrell Lewis, Historian, at (907) 644-3470.

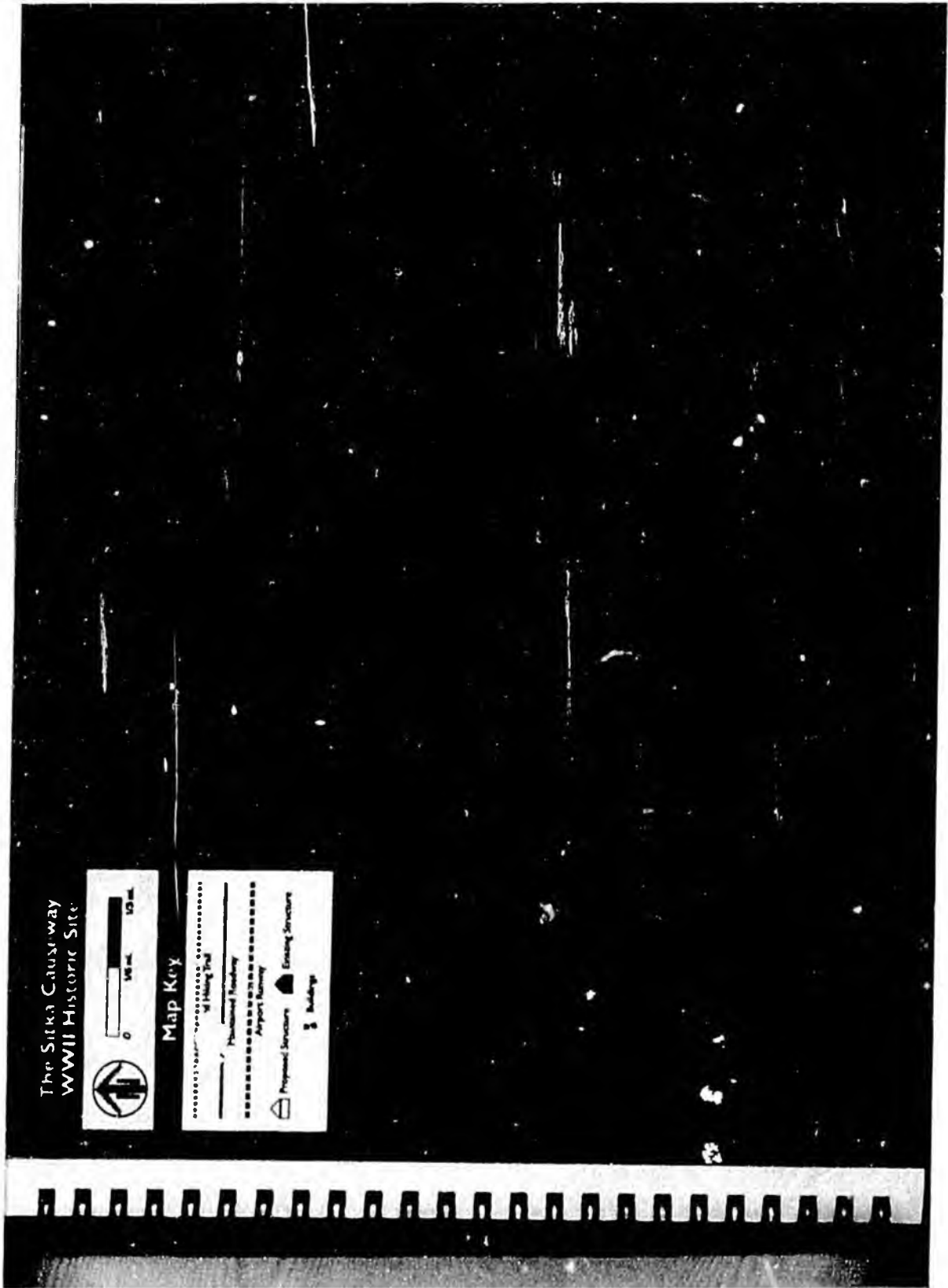
Sincerely,

Marcia Blaszak
Regional Director

cc:

Representative Peggy Wilson, State of Alaska
Judith Bittner, Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer
Deborah Lyons, Executive Director, Sitka Trail Works





Sitka Historic Preservation Commission

*City and Borough of Sitka
100 Lincoln Street
Sitka, Alaska 99835
2 April 2007*

Dear House Resources Committee:

I am writing in support of HB 176, An Act Creating the Fort Rousseau State Historical Park, as Chairman of the Sitka Historic Preservation Commission, an advisory body of the City and Borough of Sitka.

Our Commission strongly urges approval of HB 176 as an important measure for preserving significant parts of the World War II-era fortifications of Sitka and its approaches. Even though actual combat never came to the Sitka area, the work which started here in 1937 on what became the Sitka Naval Operating Base and U.S. Army Coastal Defenses represented the first major American fortification of its North Pacific territory, Alaska.

Even aside from its military significance, the installation brought profound and lasting change to Sitka, arguably much more than any event since the Transfer of 1867, and may be fairly said to have propelled this old community into the modern world.

Awareness of Sitka's World War II-era history and interest in that period are still widespread among the people of Sitka, and also among visitors. Even though the numbers of World War II veterans among the visitors are fast dwindling, they still come, as do many of their relatives and descendants, eager to glimpse what remains here of the work of "the Greatest Generation".

However, historic structures which are the visible legacy of that era are dwindling too, from the action of the forces of nature, and of the pressure of community and commercial development. Continuing expansion of the Sitka airport, which covers parts of the old fortifications, and of housing development in the area by Shee Atika Inc., the local Native corporation, in particular are affecting some of what remains. Even though access to the Causeway is only by sea, it is not inconceivable that development of one sort or another could eventually block the public from that historically-significant area as well if it is not protected.

In recent years, local volunteers, led by Sitka Trail Works Inc., have done a great deal of work in cleaning up the Causeway and making it accessible by boat. Even though land access to the Causeway is unlikely ever to become possible again, because of the safety and security requirements of the airport, Sitka Trail Works has made plans for a dock to allow Sitkans and visitors to go ashore on the Causeway. Besides the historical significance of the Causeway, it offers unparalleled marine views of Sitka's approaches, the outer islands, and Mt Edgecumbe. Even aside from the opportunity for local people to use the area for recreation, visitor-season tours to the Causeway could become an important part of the local tourist economy.

The State of Alaska has already done a great deal to preserve and use historic structures from the World War II era fortifications, particularly the Japonski Island seaplane apron and the two large hangar buildings, used now by the University of Alaska Southeast and Mt. Edgecumbe High School. A further very significant step for preservation and protection of the remaining historic structures could be taken with the creation of the Fort Rousseau Causeway State Historical Park.

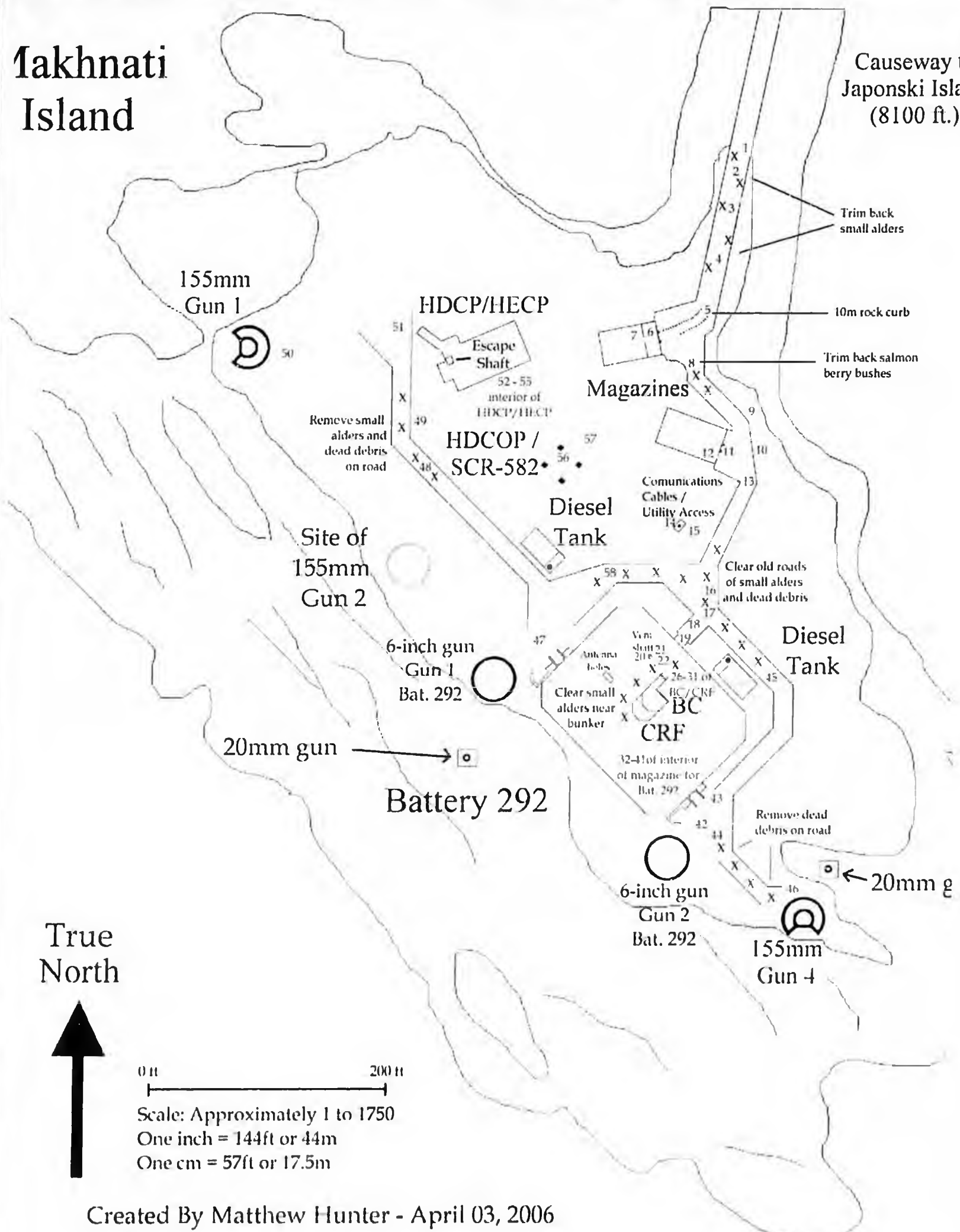
Accordingly, the Sitka Historic Preservation Commission urges the House Resources Committee to approve HB 176.

Sincerely

Peter Gorman, Chairman, Sitka Historic Preservation Commission
2 April 2007

Takhnati Island

Causeway to Japonski Isla (8100 ft.)



True North



0 ft 200 ft
 Scale: Approximately 1 to 1750
 One inch = 144ft or 44m
 One cm = 57ft or 17.5m



Ft. Rousseau WWII Era Cannon



Ft. Rousseau WWII Ammo Magazine

Makhnati
Island

Sasedni Island

Naval Air Station

Fort Ray

Castle Hill

Sitka Sound

