

Mat-Su Joint Land Use Study

Public Meeting Round #1

Project: Mat-Su Joint Land Use Study

Date/Time: 8/11/08 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Location: Settler's Inn Restaurant

Reporter: Nicole McCullough, WHPacific

Participants:

Emerson Krueger, MSB PM

Art Scates

Lauren Kruer, MSB

Boots Scates

Nicole McCullough, WHPacific

Colonel Doehl, AK Air National Guard

William Bruu, MSB Planning Commission

Major Deb Blanchard, AK Army National Guard

Meeting Summary: The meeting began with an open house and participants reviewed the display boards, which included information about the following:

- Scope
- Schedule
- Goals
- Issues
- Study Area Maps
- Contacts

Because of the small group, Emerson Krueger, Matanuska Susitna Borough project manager, invited everyone to sit around a table to informally discuss the JLUS. He opened with a general discussion about the purpose of the plan, what the known issues were and potential outcomes of the study.

Noise - Art did not think the noise was significant and he had not heard of anyone complaining. Boots agreed.

Colonel Doehl said that it is very important to be able to complete training missions in the study area, particularly the landing zones at Point McKenzie. He had not heard of any problems with noise complaints related to this area.

Emerson said that he learned that animals, such as caribou, are not impacted by aircraft noise. Colonel Doehl said that in his experience, unless the aircraft was flying very low, animals do not pay attention to the noise.

Bill brought up the topic of trying to get a note added to plats in areas that might have noise impacts from military aircraft noise. In particular, the group discussed the likely influx of new residential areas in the Point McKenzie area with the new correctional facility and other port development. Bill said that Title 27 did not allow plat notes. Emerson agreed that this was a problem but thought it could be worked on. Lauren agreed that a recommendation could be made.

Lauren said that the Big Lake Plan may need to add information about military aircraft noise.

Lighting - There was a discussion of the lights at the Correctional Facility. Borough planners are aware of the potential interference with aircraft if the lights are bright and are not directional. Colonel Doehl said that with technology today, the lighting issue can be minimized and it is more manageable than it used to be.

Private Airfield conflicts – Colonel Doehl said that the military tries to avoid busy private airports. Art asked if there were any height restrictions. Bill described the approach paths. Colonel Doehl described FAA separation and airspace restrictions.

Communications - Bill said he would like to see someone on the committee that was involved in communication. There was discussion about contacting someone from FCC to get involved. Colonel Doehl said they work with FCC and he would let his communication people know about the JLUS. Art agreed and said that if big industries move into the port area, this could have an important communication impact.

Nelchina Plateau Recreation Impacts – There was discussion about the recreational impacts that might occur around Nelchina Plateau. In particular, there was at least one complaint from someone backpacking in the area about low flying aircraft. Colonel Doehl said the only time they really fly in this area is when they are rescuing someone, usually a 4-wheeler or snowmachiner that has gotten into an accident. This happens about once a week. More than 90% of the time it is because an emergency locator beacon accidentally went off.

Miscellaneous – Lauren said that it is very important to maintain open communication with the military.

Art said that he thinks the port at Point McKenzie and the military complement each other. Emerson said that the Port has fewer restrictions on what kind of cargo they can accept and even ammunitions are allowed. This could benefit the military. Colonel Doehl said Styrker vehicles could also pass through the port and could be put on the railroad north to Fort Wainwright.

There was discussion about where to have the next meeting. Emerson suggested Big Lake as a location for the next meeting. Art and Bill agreed.

Mat-Su Joint Land Use Study

Public Meeting Round #1

Project: *Mat-Su Joint Land Use Study*

Date/Time: *8/12/08 6:00 – 8:00 pm*

Location: *Willow Community Center*

Reporter: *Nicole McCullough, WHPacific*

Participants:

Emerson Krueger, MSB PM

Norman Wakeman, Willow Community
Council

Nicole McCullough, WHPacific

Colonel Doehl, Alaska Air National Guard

Meeting Summary: Emerson provided a brief review of the purpose of the JLUS and possible outcomes. He asked Norman if there were any questions about the study. Norman said that he did not have a problem with the noise and had not heard anyone complain. He asked about the old airstrip in Willow and wondered if it were upgraded if it would be of use to the military. Colonel Doehl thought it probably would be of limited use.

Nicole asked Colonel Doehl about the impact of Operation Red Flag in the study area. He stated that most of the impacts are north of the Alaska Range and that the biggest impact is probably to civilian aircraft. He said that the Pave Hawks will probably be replaced within about 12 years.

Emerson asked Norman if he would support holding the next JLUS open house in conjunction with a Willow Area Community Council meeting. Norman thought that would be a good idea.

Mat-Su Joint Land Use Study

Public Meeting Round #1

Project: Mat-Su Joint Land Use Study

Date/Time: 8/14/08 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Location: Glacier View Bible Church

Reporter: Nicole McCullough, WHPacific

Participants:

Emerson Krueger, MSB PM

Neil and Barbara Swenson

Nicole McCullough, WHPacific

Rex Close

Rick Brenden

Garry Wolske

Mario and Mary Cerami

Margaret Wolske

Willena Brenden

Henry E. Farrar

Meeting Summary: Emerson began with a brief summary of the project and Nicole talked about the purpose of the project and the scope of work. The issues were discussed.

Communication/ Airspace Conflicts – There was concern about communication between military and civilian aircraft in the area, in particular, low flying C130s. Rick said the local frequency of 122.9 should be monitored by the military to avoid potential conflicts. Someone stated they knew of an instance when a military aircraft flew under someone trying to land. Someone stated that the military pilots that fly in the area should receive a packet of information about specific requirements about flying in the area. Rick said that he cannot find the assigned frequency for Matanuska Glacier.

Noise – The military practices refueling over the Matanuska Glacier. This doesn't seem to be a problem. It is a concern sometimes when there are low flights over the houses. They can make things rattle.

Wildlife Conflicts – There was discussion about possible impacts to wildlife from military aircraft. The general consensus was that civilian aircraft probably are more of a concern. Calving season was probably the most critical time and consideration to avoid that time would be essential. There is a raptor viewing area on Sheep Mountain but that is probably not a conflict.

Miscellaneous – There is a great influx of air traffic during hunting season, almost non-stop.

Rick suggested that the real estate agents disclose when land is near potential military operations.

Backpackers – Nicole raised the question if they hear of any backpackers complain about the noise. Generally the residents did not think that was an issue. A bigger issue is trespass by the backpackers.