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The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20310-0108

Dear Ms. Darcy:

Thank you for making the trip to Alaska last month and your ongoing work on the CD-5 issue. I appreciate your personal visit to the Alpine oil development site bordering the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A), though I regret that you did not have time to meet with my senior Energy Committee staff while in Alaska.

As you are aware, almost immediately prior to your visit, I visited Alpine together with Secretary Salazar, Deputy Secretary Hayes, and Senator Reed, my counterpart on the Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior and the Environment. Our main purpose was to better understand the CD-5 Alpine Satellite Development permit appeal (POA-2005-1576) for a roaded-bridge and pipeline crossing of the Colville River Delta.

My impressions from the site visit, and I believe those of my colleagues, were quite consistent with the Interior Department's position as outlined in Deputy Secretary Hayes' letter to Colonel Koenig on May 3rd of this year. Specifically, that letter stated that "Based on discussions that we have had with FWS and EPA, in particular, we believe that environmental concerns raised about the bridge crossing can and should be addressed and mitigated."

That letter also noted "extensive and important negotiations" with the principal stakeholders in the area, including Native communities and the municipal and State governments, identifying "several measures to minimize the potential impacts to hydrology, subsistence, and historic landmarks in and around Nigliq Channel." To directly reiterate the point, the support of each of these entities, which is dependent on a roaded bridge, is vitally important and should be a primary consideration.

Month by month since late spring, I have been reassured that resolution of the appeal was imminent, and that we would have the decision on whether a roaded bridge to access the NPR-A will be permitted or whether the COE will kill the project by mandating the added and unnecessary risk, noise, expense, and environmental impact of continuously running aircraft and buried pipeline.

President Obama pledged, in his May 14th address to the nation, the accelerated development of new areas within the NPR-A. It will be difficult if not impossible for Americans to realize or

take seriously the President's commitment if basic infrastructure in and around the NPR-A remains prohibited or impeded by his agencies.

It has now been five weeks since your visit and many months since the appeal was filed. Your prompt personal attention to this issue is requested, along with a progress report and a date when we can expect a decision. While I understand that major decisions require considerable patience and resources, the nation is running short of both.

Sincerely,



Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator