

## Department of Transportation and Public Facilities



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

NORTHERN REGION  
Design and Engineering Services

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[dot.alaska.gov](http://dot.alaska.gov)

In Reply Refer To:

Nome Center Creek Road Rehabilitation: **2nd UPDATE**  
State/Federal Project Numbers: NFHWY00397/0135003  
No Historic Properties Adversely Affected

October 31, 2024

Erin Reinders  
Planning Commissioner  
City of Nome Planning Commission  
PO Box 281  
102 Division St.  
Nome, AK 99562

Dear Ms. Reinders:

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has assumed the responsibilities of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under 23 U.S.C. 327, and is proposing to rehabilitate Center Creek Road in Nome, Alaska. The proposed project area is legally described in Table 1 and shown on Figures 1-2.

Table 1. Project location

Township	Range	Section(s)	USGS Quad Map1:63,360	Meridian
011S	034W	11, 14, 23, 26	Nome C-1	Kateel River

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by DOT&PF pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated April 13, 2023, and executed by FHWA and DOT&PF.

Consultation for this project is being conducted in accordance with the 2017 *First Amended Programmatic Agreement... for the Federal-Aid Highway Program in Alaska*. The DOT&PF, acting as a Federal agency, finds no adverse effect on historic properties by the proposed project

pursuant to 36 CFR 800.5(b), implementing regulations of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. This submission provides documentation in support of this finding, as required at 36 CFR 800.11(e).

### **Background**

On March 25, 2021, a findings letter was submitted by the DOT&PF Northern Region PQI to the SHPO office to satisfy National Historic Preservation Act requirements for cultural resource review with a finding of no historic properties adversely affected for the Nome Center Creek Road Rehabilitation Project. The SHPO concurred with that finding on April 6, 2021.

An update was then released on June 30, 2021 that extended the DOT&PF right-of-way (ROW) along Center Creek Road in several locations where ROW acquisition was occurring to accommodate culvert extensions, which required an expansion of the project Area of Potential Effects (APE). That update presented a finding of no historic properties adversely affected. The SHPO concurred with that finding on July 12, 2021.

Changes to the project description since the June 30, 2021 update findings letter are limited to the expansion of the APE to accommodate the relocation of buried utilities at the south end of the project area.

### **Changes to the Project Description**

- Expansion of the APE at the south end of the project area (see Figures 1-3 in pink).
- Relocation of buried utilities (runway 10-28 approach lights, buried conduit, and cables) at the south end of the project (see Figure 3, in yellow hashed lines).

### **Area of Potential Effect (APE)**

The updated APE (see Figures 1-3, shown in pink) is extended from that presented in the July 12, 2021 findings letter to accommodate the replacement of the runway approach lights and associated conduit and cables (see Figure 3, shown in yellow hash marks).

### **Identification Efforts**

A search of the Office of History and Archaeology's (OHA) Alaska Heritage Resources Survey Portal (AHRSPortal) database on October 30, 2024 indicated that there are no (0) AHRS sites within the expanded APE (see Figures 1-3).

One AHRS polygon, NOM-00176 (Nome Cemetery), is located approximately 200 feet to the south of the nearest portion of the expanded APE. The Nome Cemetery is situated on a naturally vegetated unfenced parcel that contains hundreds of wood and stone grave markers. The cemetery is the main cemetery for the community of Nome and has been in use since about 1900 (Mobley and Mobley 2010). The cemetery was determined not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The SHPO concurred with that determination on 3/22/2012.

### **Additional Identification Efforts**

A search of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources Division of Mining, Lands and Water Revised Statute (RS) 2477 database of public rights-of-way did not show any associated resources within the Project APE.

A review of the DOT&PF Northern Region Cultural Resources Library revealed that the expanded APE has undergone multiple cultural resource reconnaissance surveys (Carlson et al., 2011; Mobley and Mobley, 2010; Meinhardt et al., 2018). Archival photographs (1962) of that area revealed that most of Center Creek Road and Cemetery Road have been previously dredged for gold prior to World War II. Mobley and Mobley (2010, Pp. 25) suggest that the area is heavily disturbed and devoid of obvious cultural features. The DOT&PF Statewide Cultural Resource Manager-Archaeologist (PQI) believes that the previously completed cultural resources reconnaissance surveys are adequate, and no additional survey is necessary for this 2<sup>nd</sup> project update.

### **Finding of Effect**

Expanding the APE to accommodate the replacement of the runway approach lights and associated buried conduit and cables has not altered the overall finding of effect for the Nome Center Creek Road Rehabilitation project, no new cultural resource sites were identified within the expanded APE. The DOT&PF seeks concurrence from the Alaska SHPO with a finding of **no historic properties adversely affected** for the project presented in this 2<sup>nd</sup> Update.

### **Consultation Efforts**

In addition to the Alaska SHPO, the DOT&PF is sending this 2<sup>nd</sup> update to: Bering Straits Native Corporation; City of Nome; City of Nome Planning Commission; King Island Native Corporation; King Island Native Community; Nome Eskimo Community; Nome Museum and Library Commission; and Sitnasuak Native Corporation.

Please direct any comments to me at the address above, by telephone at 907-451-2227, or by e-mail at [holly.mckinney@alaska.gov](mailto:holly.mckinney@alaska.gov). Your timely response will greatly assist us in incorporating your concerns into project development. For that purpose, we respectfully request that you respond within thirty days of your receipt of this correspondence.

Sincerely,



Holly J. McKinney  
Cultural Resource Manager (FHWA) -Archaeologist (PQI)

Enclosures:

Figures 1-2: Location, Vicinity, and APE Map.

Figure 3. APE Map- Zoomed in.

References:

2011 Carlson, E.S. et al.: Cultural Resources Survey of Nome Airport Runway Safety Area Expansion, Nome, Alaska. Report prepared by Northern Land Use Research for DOT&PF project number Z614160000.

2018 Meinhardt, R.L., A. Ramirez, J. Lambin, and M. Daniels: 2017 Historic Structures Survey (HSSR) for the Nome Seppala Drive Rehabilitation Project, Located in Nome, Alaska. Report prepared by True North Sustainable Development Solutions, LLC for DOT&PF Project number Z620030000.

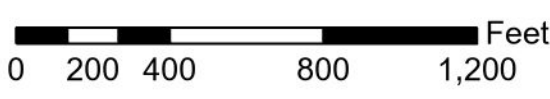
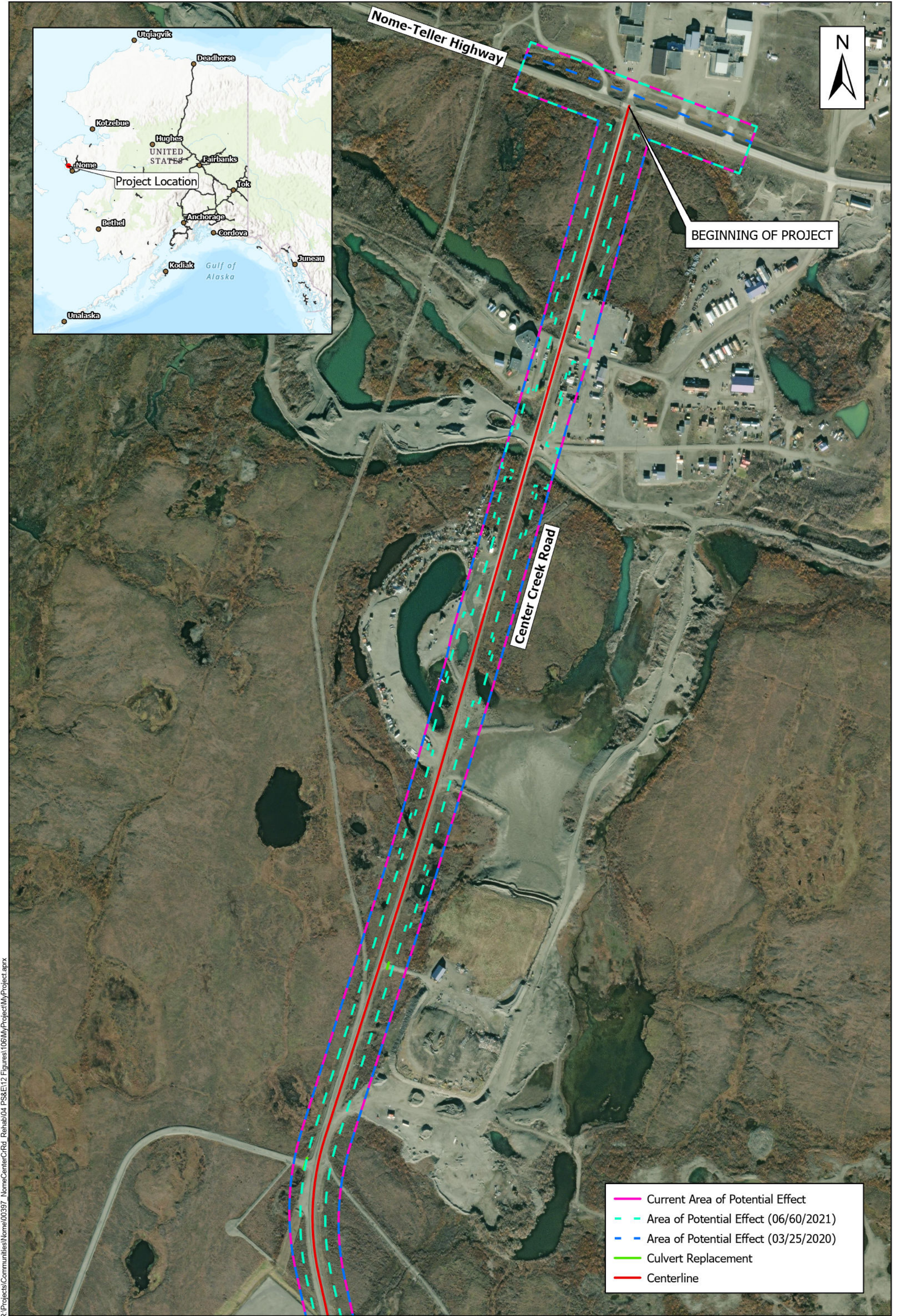
2010 Mobley C.M. and C.O. Mobley: Nome Snake River Bridge Replacement. Report prepared by Mobley and Associates for DOT&PF Project number Z767450000.

CC w/ enclosures:

Amelia Jansen, DOT&PF Northern Region, Environmental Impact Analyst  
Melissa Jensen, DOT&PF Northern Region, Environmental Impact Analyst  
Christopher Johnson, P.E., DOT&PF Northern Region, Project Manager  
Katrina LeMieux, DOT&PF, Statewide NEPA Manager  
Kerri Martin, DOT &PF Northern Region, Regional Environmental Manager



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NOTE: Imagery acquired October, 2022

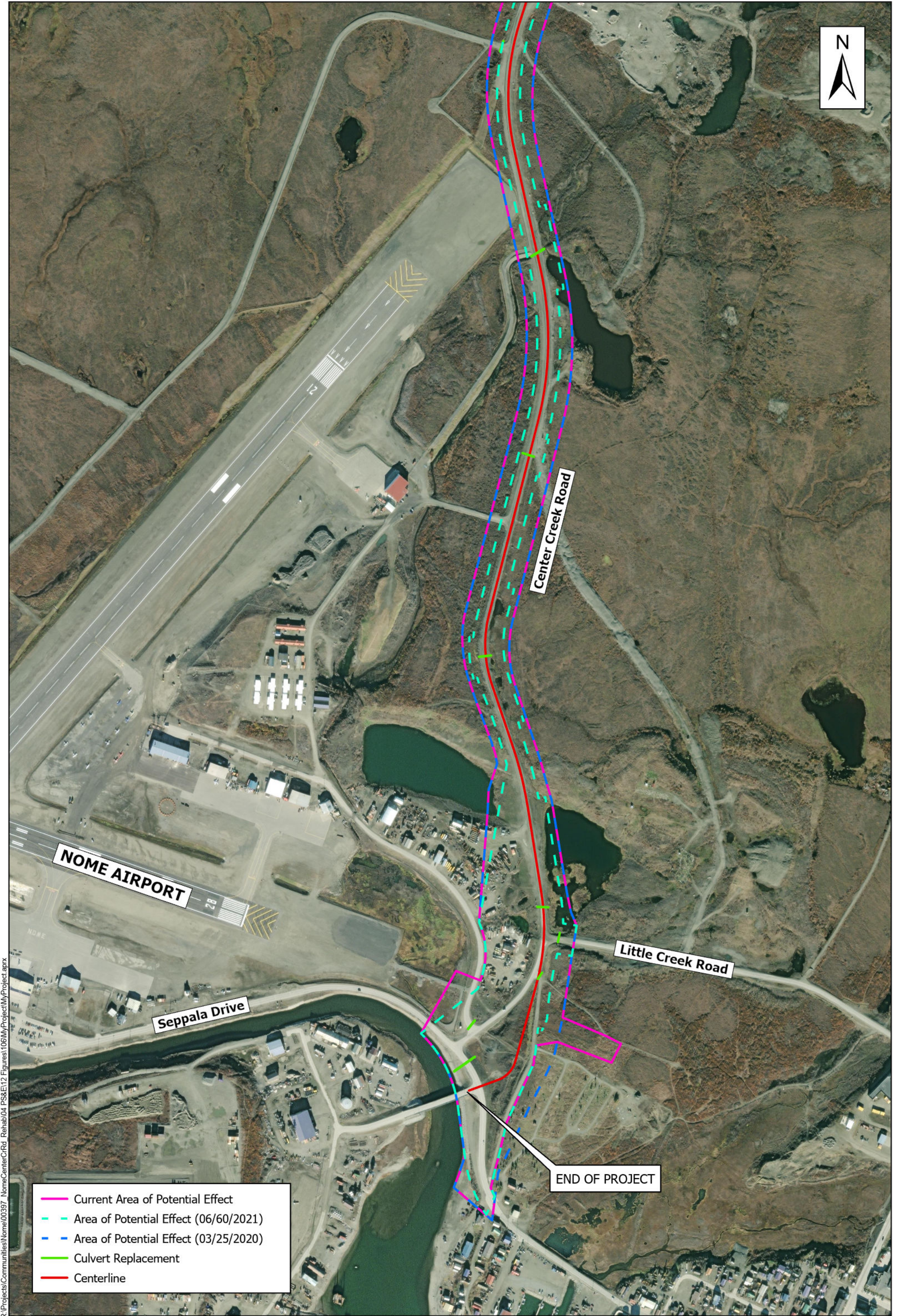


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Date: September 2024	Figure 1 of 3
Project Vicinity and Location	
Center Creek Road Rehabilitation NFHWY00397	



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- Current Area of Potential Effect
- Area of Potential Effect (06/60/2021)
- Area of Potential Effect (03/25/2020)
- Culvert Replacement
- Centerline

0 220 440 880 1,320 Feet NOTE: Imagery acquired October 2022

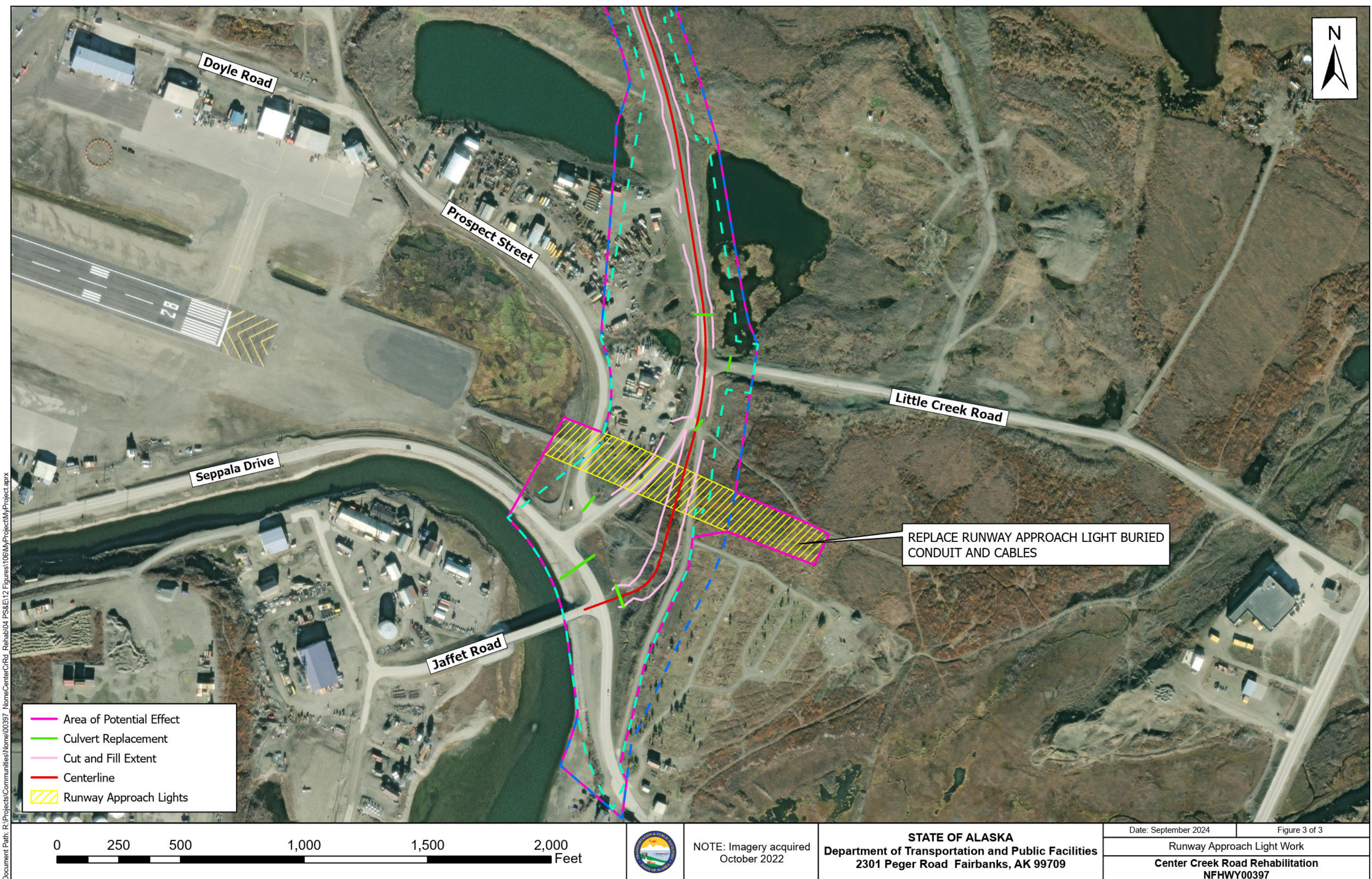


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Date: September 2024	Figure 2 of 3
<b>Project Vicinity and Location</b>	
<b>Center Creek Road Rehabilitation</b> NHFHWY00397	



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- Area of Potential Effect
- Culvert Replacement
- Cut and Fill Extent
- Centerline
- Runway Approach Lights

0 250 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 Feet



NOTE: Imagery acquired October 2022

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Date: September 2024	Figure 3 of 3
Runway Approach Light Work	
Center Creek Road Rehabilitation NFWY00397	