

DISTRICT TRIP REPORT

Project: Denali Commission Moorings Points Phase 4 – Yukon River

Description: Ruby Trip Report

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Date: 6 June 2011

George Kalli, Jason Norris, and Dee Ginter traveled to the Yukon River community of Ruby, Alaska on June 6th via a charter flight with Security Aviation. The purpose of the trip was to conduct a site visit and scoping meeting related to potential installation of barge mooring points in the community. A total of two barge landing sites were investigated during the site visit. An overview of the community, barge landing sites, and proposed mooring point locations is included as Figure 1.



Figure 1. Overview of Ruby, barge landings, and proposed mooring point locations. The Yukon River flows right to left.

Prior to visiting the barge landings we briefly met with the tribal administrator, Pat Sweetsir. A public meeting was conducted at noon. A total of four residents participated in the meeting. Following is a summary of the information learned during the public meeting and site visit.

We concluded our site visit at 12:30 pm and continued on to a site visit to Huslia.

GENERAL

According to Pat Sweetsir, land along the riverbank in Ruby is public property.

There is a rock and gravel source in the community.

Downstream of the community there is a high rock bluff along the left bank of the Yukon River. A high water mark above the elevation of the landing sites was evident on the rock bluff. Community members told us that the high water mark was from the spring floods of 2010 when water reached Front Street which runs parallel to the river. Where practicable, mooring points should be located higher than this high water mark.

Beaches along the river bank were silty except where gravel has been placed in the vicinity of the landing areas.

There is a separate skiff landing area located between the freight and fuel landings. There is no known need for mooring points at the landing area.

Those in attendance at the public meeting had no objections to the installation of above grade mooring points.

Often when barges approach the barge landing in Ruby they have to wait for people to move their personal skiffs from the landing areas.

Those in attendance at the public meeting were not aware of any potential conflicts with archaeological or cultural resources.

Those in attendance at the public meeting did not foresee any construction problems due to permafrost.

Ruby Construction (Gary Kangus) is a contractor in town with much equipment, including that for drilling. He would be a good point of contact regarding conditions for drilling/pile driving in the region.

Upcoming construction projects in Ruby include a new power plant this summer, a garage for the emergency building, and fire protection piping. In addition, they are pursuing matching funds from the Denali Commission for construction of a road to Ruby Slough.

FREIGHT LANDING SITE

The freight landing is the downstream landing in Ruby. It consists of a ramp perpendicular to the river (Photo 1) with bluffs adjacent on both sides. There is some evidence of bank sloughing but in general, the banks look rather stable.

We were told by Matt Sweetsir of Ruby Marine that there was an existing deadman and cable located upstream of this landing site but we were unable to locate it during our visit.

The location for the proposed downstream mooring point is located by a small creek and adjacent to the stern of a barge that appears to be abandoned in a brushy area (Photos 1 & 2). Google Earth coordinates of this location are approximately 64°44'20.06"N and 155°29'55.61"W. An above grade installation is appropriate at this site.

The location of the proposed upstream mooring point is 150' from the downstream mooring point at the top of bank approximately 8 feet west of a picnic table in a small park area (Photos 3 - 6). Google Earth coordinates of this location are approximately 64°44'20.89" N and 155°29'52.51"W. A below grade installation is recommended here to avoid potential conflicts with activities at the park and picnic area.

Figure 2 is a Google Earth image showing the proposed locations of both mooring points.



Photo 1. Ruby freight barge landing site. Note abandoned barges to the left of the ramp. Proposed downstream mooring point at this site is adjacent to the far end of the furthest barge.



Photo 2. Corps employee standing at location of proposed downstream mooring point. Abandoned barge is to the left of employee partially obscured by brush. A small creek is located immediately behind him.



Photo 3. Looking upstream from proposed location of Ruby freight landing upstream mooring point.



Photo 4. Looking downstream from proposed location of Ruby upstream freight landing mooring point.



Photo 5. View inland from proposed location of Ruby freight landing upstream mooring point.



Photo 6. View of picnic table adjacent to proposed location of Ruby freight landing upstream mooring point.



Figure 2. Overview of Proposed Freight Landing Site Mooring Points

FUEL LANDING SITE

The fuel headers are at the top of a metal staircase located at the base of the tank farm (Photo 7).

This landing site consists of a ramp parallel to the river that angles down the river bluff to the shore of the river (Photo 8).

We were told there were deadmen with cables at this landing site. The fuel operator, Ivan, told us that one mooring point became buried and hasn't been located since the landing ramp was regraded following the most recent flood in 2010. We found a broken mooring cable at the base of the bluff adjacent to the landing ramp (Photo 9). This could be a remnant of the deadman.

Ruby residents informed us that barges have tied off to the utility pole located at the top of the bluff above the broken cable (Photo 8).

Later in the day in Fairbanks we met with Matt Sweetsir of Ruby Marine. He informed us that he had installed a deadman at the fuel landing site, but showed us on aerial photography where two additional mooring points would be useful.

Matt Sweetsir recommended placing a downstream mooring point at the top of bank 75 feet downstream from a staircase that transects the river bank to reach the fuel headers (Photo 10). Google Earth coordinates of this location are approximately 64°44'27.49"N and 155°29'25.64"W. An above grade installation is appropriate at this location.

Matt Sweetsir recommended placing an upstream mooring point 75 feet upstream of the centerline of the ramp at the top of the bluff. Google Earth coordinates of this location are approximately 64°44'29.00"N and 155°29'18.39"W.

Figure 3 is a Google Earth image showing the proposed locations of both mooring points.



Photo 7. Ruby fuel headers adjacent to top of stairs.



Photo 8. Ruby fuel barge landing site looking upstream. The proposed upstream mooring point location is 75 feet upstream of the centerline of the landing. The mooring point would be above ground at the top of the bluff.



Photo 9. Broken mooring cable (located above notebook)



Photo 10. Stairs leading to area of fuel headers. The downstream fuel landing mooring point is to be placed 75 feet downstream of the stairs.



Figure 3. Overview of Proposed Mooring Points at Fuel Landing Site