



CLIENT

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

CONTRACT

Jane Gendron, Regional Environmental Impact Analysis Manager
907.456-4491

COST

\$38.5 million (total project)

YEAR COMPLETED

2008

KETCHIKAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT RUNWAY SAFETY AREA - GOVERNMENT CREEK RELOCATION

Ketchikan, Alaska

This \$38.5 million safety improvement project is the largest single construction contract funded by the FAA Alaskan Region. The project involved a 750-foot shift of the entire runway along its centerline to minimize impacts to sensitive and important habitat surrounding the airport. The project included major environmental challenges, including the relocation of a significant salmon stream, a bridge across the new stream channel, a tunnel under the runway, placing fill in Tongass Narrows, and creating a new estuary. These complex project components required coordination throughout the project development process and into construction. Environmental impact categories requiring substantial coordination, mitigation, and permitting included: fish, wildlife and plants (EFH); historic sites; water quality; wetlands; and temporary air quality construction impacts from an on-airport asphalt plant site.

Since relocating a fish stream of this magnitude and habitat importance had not been attempted in Alaska, USKH expanded its team to include hydrologists and a fluvial geomorphologist with extensive experience in stream relocations. DOT&PF and USKH formed an interdisciplinary team of resource and permitting agency specialists to establish the parameters for designing and constructing the new stream channel and estuary, determining appropriate mitigation, and developing a 5-year plan to monitor performance of the new habitat. USKH and its subcontractors are completing the first year of monitoring efforts in 2008. To date, the stream and estuary are performing well hydraulically and from a habitat standpoint. Observers report three salmon species and resident fish using the new habitat.



1. Government Creek
2. Aerial of project site