

McGrath Ramp Paving and Repair

FY2002 Request: \$632,500

Reference No: AMD 35283

AP/AL: Appropriation

Project Type: Construction

Category: Health/Human Services

Location: McGrath

Contact: Nico Bus

House District: Rural Interior (HD 36)

Contact Phone: (907)465-2406

Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2001 - 06/30/2002

Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

The Forestry firefighting ramp at the McGrath airport is in severe disrepair and danger of prop strikes and aircraft damage during critical fire fighting times is high. DOT is completely rebuilding the McGrath runways and parking ramps this summer with federal funding. After repeated attempts to secure federal funding for this project, the FAA recently denied Forestry's request to include this ramp. A SAVINGS of \$1.47 million will be realized if this ramp project is done while the DOT contractor/equipment are already in McGrath, thus avoiding separate mobilization costs.

Funding:	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	Total
Gen Fund	\$632,500						\$632,500
Total:	\$632,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$632,500

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	0
Totals:	0	0

Additional Information / Prior Funding History:

McGrath is the sole fire support to southwestern Alaska short of Palmer. It is used for retardant and aircraft, detection and air attack planes, helicopters, and as a hub for mobilizing village firefighting crews.

Project Description/Justification:

Construction now, while the DOT contractor is mobilized would be the most cost effective means to reconstruct the Forestry ramp. The Forestry ramp is severely deteriorated and has become increasingly worse over several years. On hot days, which are not uncommon in McGrath, aircraft will actually sink into the tarmac during taxi and when parked. Forestry uses "hard stands" for parking to load retardant and aircraft must then taxi immediately off the ramp to the runway to get underway. The ramp has "potholes", is patched extensively, has large areas where aircraft cannot safely maneuver, and is in desperate need of repair/replacement. The danger of prop strikes and aircraft damage is significant, which could easily disable a plane in a location that could preclude other aircraft from reaching the retardant facilities. The funding requested would provide for leveling of the ramp and paving to a 4" thickness which is required to meet load bearing requirements of loaded retardant air tankers.

Specific Spending Detail:

\$557.5 Provides for paving the ramp area of 300' x 600' x 4" deep. This will only pave over the existing ramp area.
 \$ 75.0 Provides for pre-leveling of the current ramp prior to paving at an estimate of approximately \$1.5 per ton for leveling with asphalt.

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Assumes that funding will occur so that the current DOT contractor can perform the work in order to save the mobilization costs to McGrath for equipment and supplies of \$1.47 million, which is what the DOT McGrath Airport project has already paid for their overall project.

Project Benefits:

The ramp work will benefit McGrath, villages and communities, and all of Southwest Alaska that depend upon Forestry for wildland fire protection. The continued ability to mobilize village firefighting crews from the area is critical to employment that is a major source of income for some villages. The following crews are mobilized through McGrath: ANIAK, CHEVAK #1 & #2, HOOPER BAY #1, #2, #3, LOWER KALSKAG, NIKOLAI, NONDALTON #1, #2, SCAMMON BAY, SHAGELUK, SLEETMUTE, UPPER KALSKAG. Firefighting aircraft are contracted early in the year and in great demand nationally, so if an aircraft is damaged on the ramp, Forestry would be unable to replace it easily during the fire season. Rapid response from McGrath, rather than from Palmer, increases Forestry's ability to keep fires small when they cause less damage and cost less.

Projected Revenue to the State: Savings of \$1.47 million if ramp construction occurs in conjunction with DOT McGrath airport project.

Project Support: BLM, Alaska Fire Service, City of McGrath, Contract private sector aircraft vendors.

Project Opposition: None

Does this project leverage other funding for the state?

It will take advantage of federal funding already under contract by DOT for the McGrath Airport Project and save the state mobilization costs of \$1.47 million.

Project History:

No prior appropriations have occurred. However, DOT has had the McGrath Airport project planned since 1987 and has had actual construction planned, but then postponed for the last three years. Forestry has consistently attempted to include the firefighting ramp in the project, and has also prepared CIP requests annually to be prepared in the event the project materializes.

Alternative Approaches/Financing Considered:

Fund the project through CIP at a later date – would incur separate mobilization costs that could currently be covered by the federally funded project.