

BLM 2009 Land Conveyances**FY2006 Request: \$4,232,000****Reference No: 39994****AP/AL:** Appropriation**Project Type:** Planning**Category:** Natural Resources**Location:** Statewide**Contact:** Bob Loeffler**House District:** Statewide (HD 1-40)**Contact Phone:** (907)269-8625**Estimated Project Dates:** 07/01/2005 - 06/30/2010**Brief Summary and Statement of Need:**

The BLM 2009 Conveyance Project is a federal effort with the goal of completing federal land transfers in Alaska by 2009. The project was initiated by the US Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in FY05 with the objective of accelerating the remaining land transfers, in order of priority, to individual Alaska Native Allottees, Alaska Native Corporations and the State of Alaska. The conveyances must be completed in this sequence to ensure that entitlement objectives for both the Alaska Native Corporations and the state are achieved. Completing conveyance of the lands is critical to furthering economic development, which in turn will generate additional revenue for the State of Alaska.

Funding:	<u>FY2006</u>	<u>FY2007</u>	<u>FY2008</u>	<u>FY2009</u>	<u>FY2010</u>	<u>FY2011</u>	<u>Total</u>
Fed Rcpts	\$4,232,000						\$4,232,000
Total:	\$4,232,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,232,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input 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
<u>One-Time Startup:</u>	0	
Totals:	0	0

Additional Information / Prior Funding History:

SLA04/CH159 \$1,268.0 federal

Project Description/Justification:

This federal funding will enable DNR to participate in the accelerated land transfer project. The BLM 2009 Conveyance Project will result in the state receiving approximately 10 –12 million acres still owed to the state under the Statehood Act. The project will also result in the transfer of over 8 million acres of federal land to Alaska Native Corporations formed under ANCSA. This CIP is necessary so that the state can respond to and participate in this project. The state will need to review and respond to a significantly increased number of BLM conveyance decisions, decisions on easements and navigable waters, and requests for reconveyance of state land found to have been conveyed to the state in error. The state will also receive significantly more decisions to transfer land to the state under the remaining statehood entitlements and will need to process many additional title documents. The federal BLM has agreed to provide funding for the state's increased workload that results under this project.

The land entitlement granted to the state through the Statehood Act and other federal laws will result in the eventual transfer of over 105,000,000 acres to the state. To date, approximately 91,000,000 acres have been transferred. Of this 91 million acres, about 45 million acres have been surveyed and patented. These lands have provided Alaskans with land for the largest state park system in the nation, provided us with the rich oil fields of the North Slope that have brought billions of dollars into the state treasury and to individual Alaskans through the Permanent Fund Dividend Program, and have enabled the state to transfer hundreds of thousands of acres into private ownership through state land sale

programs. The remaining 15 million entitlement acres to be transferred will further add to the state's overall wealth and prosperity. Final survey of the remaining 60 million unsurveyed acres will more cost effectively allow the state to use and develop its land and resources.

Alaskans including individual Native allottees, Native Corporations and the citizens of the state have waited too long for these federal land transfers to be completed. For example, the deadline for filing most Native allotments was 34 years ago, in 1971, yet thousands of allottees are still waiting for final approval of their allotments. Similarly, 34 years after the passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), Native Corporations still await transfer of almost 10 million acres, and final survey and patent to many millions more acres. Finally, the state was promised over 105 million acres at Statehood in 1959, yet we still await the transfer of 15 million acres and the survey and patent of nearly 60 million acres.

The remaining entitlements to all of these groups significantly impedes the use and development of the lands. Clearly, allottees cannot use lands they do not yet own, nor can the Native Corporations or the state close out their remaining entitlements until they know where the remaining individual Native allotments will be located. Each allottee is eligible for up to 160 acres. The resulting overall ownership uncertainty has a chilling effect on development in some areas of the state because secure land title is a fundamental prerequisite to development. Confusion about the eventual owner puts any significant exploration or investment on hold until the ownership is established. There are areas of the state where exploration or development -- with its benefits of revenue to the state, and jobs and income for our citizens -- awaits resolution of ownership. In some cases, even land ownership questions involving a small portion of an area can cause a delay on use of neighboring lands. In this way, the remaining entitlements hamper economic development across the state in a way that is disproportionately larger than the actual remaining acreage owed.

Resolving these entitlement issues will make land available to individual Alaskans for their personal use and enjoyment, and to the ANCSA Corporations and the state to encourage the use and development of Alaska's lands.

Why is this Project Needed Now:

This project provides the tools and the staff to so that the state can participate in BLM's accelerated land transfer process. Over the past five years, DNR has received an average of 50,000 acres per year from the federal government. For the most part, high acreage, uncontested conveyances have been completed. What remains are smaller tracts that are subject to some type of encumbrance, withdrawal, or competing selections that are more difficult to adjudicate and resolve. Continuing the current method of processing multiple smaller conveyances, revisiting areas repeatedly as each small acreage gain is made is expensive and slow. It would take more than 60 additional years to finish the state's remaining entitlements using the existing staffing and methods.

Specific Spending Detail for the FY06 portion of the project:

Personal Services: \$838.4 Description-The table below identifies the 15 positions established through the FY 04 Supplemental that will continue to be funded entirely or partially by this CIP.

Task	Receiving Agency	Position	PCN No.	Cost in \$000s	Subtotal by Task
Project Management	DNR	NRM III	10-1841	92.6	139.6
	DNR	AdmnCk III	10-1753	47.0	
State Selections	DNR	NRM I	10-1845	72.5	184.3
	DNR	NRS I	10-1846	57.5	
	DNR	NRT I/II	10-1854	54.3	
Native Allotment Reconveyances	DNR	NRS II	10-1847	68.8	68.8
ANCSA Conveyances Review	DNR	NRM II	10-1730	82.5	367.7
Access Review Coordinator	DNR	NRM I	10-1856	72.5	
Navigability Coordinator	DNR	NRM I	10-1855	72.5	
ANCSA – 17(b)	DNR	NRS II	10-1858	68.8	

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ANCSA - RS 2477 (Fbks)	DNR	NRS III	10-1857	37.2**	
ANCSA - RS 2477 (SC)	DNR	NRS II	10-8255	34.2**	
ANCSA - support	ADF&G	NRS II*	RSA'd funds	68.8	
ANCSA - support	ADF&G	NRS I*	RSA'd funds	57.5	
Survey of state TA'd lands	DNR	LS I	10-1848	78.0	78.0
*Or comparable ADF&G classification					
** Positions 50% funded by BLM 2009					

The following are the general tasks that these positions perform. Some tasks occur primarily in the early years of the CIP, such as prioritization of state land selections and work on Native Allotments. Land transfers to the state, and the related review of decision documents and land record keeping will increase later in the project.

Tasks for this project will include:

Project Management – Overall coordination of the land conveyance acceleration effort. Staff in this category will serve as liaison between the affected state and federal agencies, report on overall progress of the project, and provide the documentation necessary to support these reporting functions.

State Land Selection Prioritization – This team will work with existing staff to re-evaluate and revise ownership priorities for the remaining General Grant lands (including overselections), approximately 30 million acres. Work products will include GIS maps, databases and reports. This task will largely occur in FY 05 and FY 06.

Native Allotment Reconveyances – This team will respond to the increased number of casefiles that require reconveyance of state land back to BLM for conveyance to individual allottees.

State Conveyances – This team will deal with the significantly increased amount of land being conveyed to the state, approximately a tenfold increase from current volume. Tasks include review of incoming title documents, communication of errors for correction and updating of state computerized records.

ANCSA Conveyance Review – This team will review ANCSA conveyances to ensure state interests have been adequately protected (i.e. access to navigable water bodies) as well as public interests (i.e. reservation of 17(b) easements, RS 2477 historic trails).

Survey of State Tentatively Approved Lands – This team will coordinate priorities of workload with BLM and review draft survey plats.

Travel \$15.0 Description- Project management staff will travel to various ANCSA regions to participate in comprehensive ownership resolution discussions. Survey staff will do periodic field inspections to resolve survey disputes. The specific details of when travel will occur have not yet been arrived at between BLM and the state. It is assumed at least one trip for two people will occur for each of the twelve regions. Up to seven of the twelve regions may be addressed this fiscal year as the basis for this preliminary estimate.

Services \$228.6 Description - The above task categories will require the general office supplies and/or contractual services to supplement staff in one or more of the above task categories. Specifically, it also includes \$126.3 to the Alaska Department of Fish & Game via a Reimbursable Services Agreement to continue funding on two existing position established in FY04. This combined amount is a placeholder for minimum, reasonable expenditures and unanticipated expenses associated with responding to the BLM streamlining measures.

Commodities: \$5.0

Capital Outlay: \$13.0

Project Support:

Federal Government, including Senators Stevens and Murkowski and Representative Young, US Bureau of Land Management, Alaska Native Corporations, individual Alaska Native Allottees, mining industry, Resource Development Council, other advocates of land and resource development, municipalities (primarily boroughs), individual Alaskans.

Project Opposition:

None known or anticipated.