



Bureau of Land Management

Anchorage Field Office
6881 Abbott Loop Road
Anchorage, AK 99507
<http://www.anchorage.ak.blm.gov>

**Environmental Assessment
Clover Pass School**

Ketchikan Gateway Borough
A-28334
AK-040-06-EA-027

Location:

Lot R-1, USS 2554, Section 7, T. 74 S., R. 90 E.,
Copper River Meridian
2.16 acres, more or less

Prepared By:

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Realty Specialist
April 4, 2006

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, residents of Ketchikan have requested the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Anchorage Field Office (AFO) to preserve an old structure, known as the Clover Pass School. The school operated during the late 1940's through the 1960's, and in 2005 was added to the National Register of Historic Places. The BLM conveyed the land previously under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP), to the Ketchikan Independent School District whom later was merged with Ketchikan Gateway Borough (KGB). The land reverted to the BLM due to non use in 1989, however there were no legal documents other than a decision letter allowing this reversion. Many people who attended the school are still in the area and the school has sentimental value to the community. Community members requested that BLM find a way to save the old school building that was falling apart due to lack of maintenance and vandalism.

Various ideas and plans have been discussed over the years to patent the land to another entity that would preserve the school and now the KGB has applied for a patent to the land. KGB and Historic Ketchikan (a non-profit group) have entered into an agreement to work together to provide a Historic Community Center for the public of Ketchikan. The BLM does not own the school. Historic Ketchikan owns the school house and will be the managing entity for the site while KGB is the title holder. Historic Ketchikan (HK) plans to repair and improve the school and the surrounding lands. The building will be used as a community center. They will hold various community activities in the building and charge for its use. Collected fees will go into the repairs and upkeep of the building and surrounding lands.

A. Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action:

The purpose for the Proposed Action is to save a historic building that was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in June of 2005. The school building is run down and requires repair. The need for the Proposed Action is to provide community use for the Ketchikan public and visitors.

B. Conformance With Land Use Plan:

Currently, there is no Land Use Plan in effect for this area. The Proposed Action would occur within an area covered by the Draft Ring of Fire Resource Management Plan (RMP) and is not inconsistent with any alternative in the draft.

C. Relationship to Statutes, Regulations, Policies, Plans or Other Environmental Analyses:

There are not any statutory or regulatory provisions or other plans which are pertinent to the Proposed Action.

D. Alternatives Considered But Not Analyzed in Detail:

No alternatives were considered other than the No Action alternative.

II. PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVE

A. Proposed Action:

The Proposed Action is to convey the KGB a parcel of land in Ketchikan, described as Lot R-1, USS 2554, T. 74 S., R. 90 E., Copper River Meridian. This land will be patented under the Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) Act of 1926, and managed by Historic Ketchikan.

Park benches and a playground will be installed. The playground and an area for parking will be cleared and grubbed and then graveled and compacted. Parking is necessary due to the lack of off road parking available in the area. These areas are small and do not require any large vehicles. Some outdoor lighting will be installed; however, the location and type of lighting has not been determined and will not be known until construction starts.

HK plans to repair the building including repair to windows, doors, skirting, and roof, which will help protect the site from vandalism.

All the work will be done by volunteers. If it's necessary to use equipment other than standard or 4 wheel drive trucks there is access from Knudson Road and Potter Road. At some point the use of a small truck crane and compactor may be required.

The building faces Potter Road and is approximately 20-30 feet in from the road. It is located at the corner of Potter and Knudson roads. The land can be accessed by both roads. Most of the surrounding land is level and has dense tree growth of smaller size. Heavy underbrush is present around the building site. Some of this undergrowth will be removed to allow for the playground and parking areas. This work will be done using landscape techniques known for the area.

HK has started repairing parts of the building and is planning to continue as soon as the patent is issued. Once the construction is finished any collected fees will go towards maintenance and utilities.

The patent will be issued with a reversionary clause required by regulation which will require the land to be used for community center purposes.

B. No Action Alternative:

Under the No Action alternative, BLM would not issue an R&PP patent to the KGB, this would leave the school building in its present condition. Future land proposals at the site would be subject to section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

If the land were not patented to KGB, the likely outcome would be the BLM having to take a more proactive approach towards maintenance and rehabilitation of the structure, as the building is listed on the National Register of Historical Places. The community center would not be available to the public.

III. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

A. Critical Elements

The following critical elements are either not present or would not be affected by the Proposed Action or the No Action Alternative:

ACEC's
Air Quality
Energy
Environmental Justice
Farmlands, Prime/Unique
Floodplains
Invasive, Nonnative Species
Native American Religious Concerns
Subsistence
Threatened and Endangered Species
Waste, Hazardous and Solid
Water Quality, surface & Ground
Wild & Scenic Rivers
Wilderness

1. Cultural Resources:

The Clover Pass School was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2005. It is significant to local history due to its role in the community from 1947 to 1961 when it was closed over local protest. It continued to serve the Clover Pass community for decades, afterwards as a community center, polling place, summer library and other community events. The building retains its integrity of location, design, setting, material, workmanship, feeling and association.

The proposed action will have a beneficial impact upon this National Register site by allowing the community to continue to use this building in a manner compatible with its original use.

B. Land Status:

The Proposed Action is located on public lands managed by the BLM on Lot R1 of USS 2554. The KGB once had an R&PP patent on these lands, however the

lands reverted when the use was changed without notifying BLM. This was many years ago when the requirements of the R&PP Act were not well understood.

The land adjacent to this parcel is privately owned and State owned. Lot R2 is patented to the Mental Health Land Trust which is on the north side of R1. Most of the privately owned land in the area belongs to people who have lived there for years and have been trying to save the school. Most of the land owners attended school at that location. There are no houses or other adjacent occupancies to the parcel.

The parcel was selected by the University Land Office, however they relinquished the selection so KGB could acquire the patent for the R&PP Clover Pass School.

C. Vegetation:

The area is considered urban and the vegetation in the area includes small trees, shrubs, grasses and moss but has not been classified and is an un-typed area.

D. Visual Resources:

The Visual Resources would be enhanced by the Proposed Action. The parcel is not on a main road, it's on a side road that intersects with another small road, about ¼ to ½ mile from the main road. The school house and property are located at this intersection. There is nothing near to or surrounding the land in question with the exception of vegetation. The park and playground will improve the site immensely.

This Proposed Action falls into the VRM category III, as stated in the Ring of Fire Draft RMP (2.4.4.1) Alternative D, with the objective we protect visual resources consistent with the multiple use...to partially retain the existing character of the landscape...change should be moderate...not dominate the view...

E. Wildlife:

There have been no wildlife surveys completed to determine the numbers or distribution of wildlife in the area of the Proposed Action. Wildlife that's been seen includes black bear, moose, Sitka black tail deer, and various birds including eagles. However, this wildlife is present throughout the Ketchikan area and the Proposed Action is not anticipated to affect the wildlife in the area.

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

A. Impacts of the Proposed Action:

Since the building is already present and the location of the land and building are in an area that is sparsely populated, the Proposed Action should not have an impact on the land. The short time of construction will cause a disturbance,

however that is strictly temporary.

1. Vegetation:
Small trees and under-story vegetation will be disturbed when the area is partially cleared for the playground.
2. Noise:
During periods of construction activity, Noise will be created for short periods of time. Noise would be similar to that produced at any construction site for a small building, and once the initial phase of repairs are complete, maintenance will be infrequent.

B. Impacts of Alternative #1 - No Action Alternative
Under the No Action Alternative impacts will continue to occur from natural forces such as wind, water, vandalism, and human activity in the area.

C. Cumulative Impacts:
There are no reasonably foreseeable future actions within this area.

D. Mitigation Measures:
Mitigation measures are not appropriate for the No Action Alternative.

V. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

- A. Persons and Agencies Consulted:
Historic Ketchikan, Terry Wanzer, President
Historic Ketchikan, Dave Kiffer, Executive
KGB. Leslie Real, Planning
KGB Steve Corporon, Assistant Manager
Assembly of Ketchikan
University Lands Office, Mary Montgomery
BLM, Linda Ressigue
- B. List of Preparers:
Shirley Rackley, BLM Realty Specialist
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