



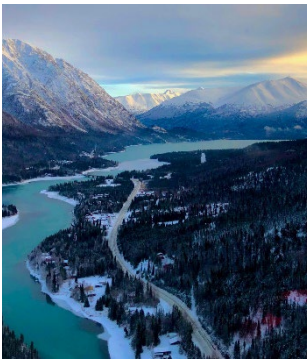
Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, Section 17(b) Easement Guidebook

Introduction

The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), Section 17(b) authorizes easements across Tribal lands for public access to otherwise isolated federal lands and major waterways as determined reasonably necessary. The initial process of describing and determining the location of 17(b) easements occurs during public land selection and conveyance and is ultimately recorded with each of the land patents.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Western Federal Lands Highway Division (WFLHD) is developing an ANCSA Section 17(b) Guidebook. This Guidebook aims to help Federal Land Management Agencies (FLMAs), Native Corporations, and their partners develop a consistent approach to identifying, developing, revising, and removing Section 17(b) easements across Alaska. Additionally, it will offer information and resources to ensure that these easements fulfill their intended purposes.

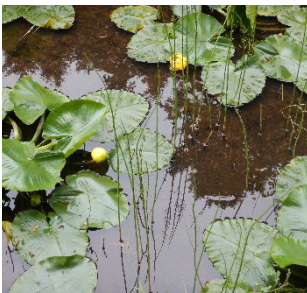
The FHWA is leading this project in collaboration with several partners, including the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Park Service (NPS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (Alaska DOT&PF), and the Denali Commission.



Why is this Guidebook Needed?

ANCSA Section 17(b) easements are rights reserved to the U.S. for public access, taking the form of roads (60 feet wide), trails (25 or 50 feet wide), airstrips, or one-acre sites. These easements are scattered across the state and can only be used for temporary access. The allowed transportation methods depend on the specific easement conditions.

BLM oversees the establishment of these easements, usually initiated when a Native Corporation selects lands for conveyance. The BLM reviews the land for public easement needs, gathers input from Native Corporations, federal agencies, the State of Alaska, and other stakeholders; and documents the findings. Approved easements are included in an appealable decision, and the lands are conveyed to the Native Corporation with the easements reserved to the U.S.



Native Corporation and FLMA staff often encounter challenges determining where Section 17(b) easements are located; how to add, remove, or revise them when needed; and where to go for assistance. This project aims to develop a Guidebook to provide a consistent approach for identifying, establishing, modifying, and removing Section 17(b) easements, usable by all FLMAs, Native Corporations, and other stakeholders.





Scope of Work

The primary tasks to develop the ANCSA Section 17(b) Guidebook are:

Data Collection and Analysis

- Collect and synthesize available data related to ANCSA 17(b) easements statewide.
- Research and identify relevant laws, regulations and policies governing ANCSA 17(b) easements as well as applicable agreements.

Stakeholder Outreach

- Solicit input and conduct focus group discussions as appropriate with partner FLMAs, Native Corporations, and other entities that may offer perspectives regarding ANCSA Section 17(b) needs, challenges, and opportunities.

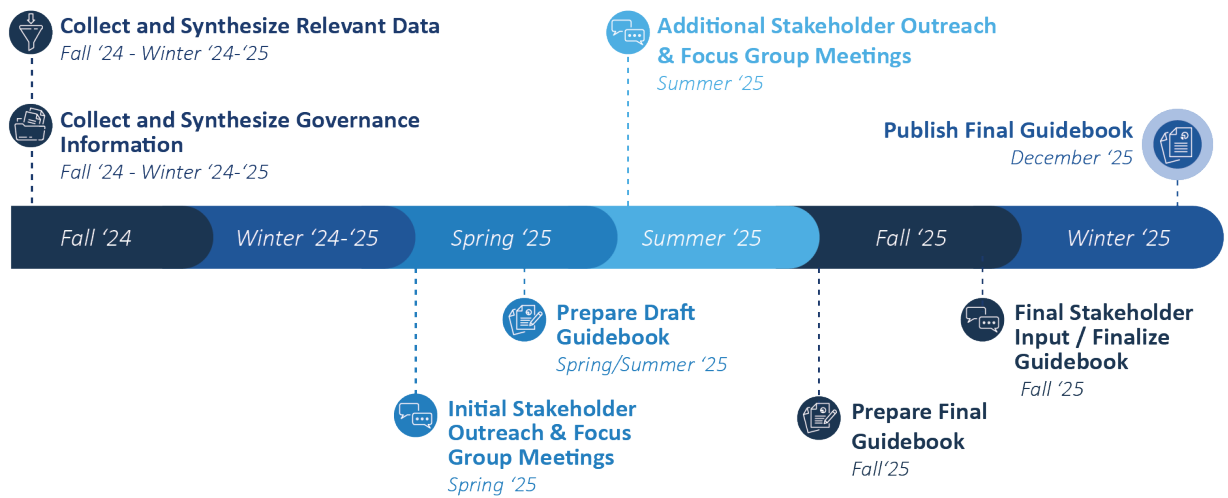
Guidebook Development

- Document the process for identifying, developing, revising, and removing ANCSA 17(b) easements.
- Develop a draft Guidebook for review by WFLHD, partner FLMAs, Native Corporations, and other interested parties.
- Develop a final Guidebook for governmental and non-governmental audiences.



Schedule

Research and data collection for this Guidebook began in October 2024. The milestone schedule is shown below, with the final Guidebook anticipated to be completed by December 2025.



Contacts

To stay up to date on the project, visit this project page regularly and contact Cole Grisham, Project Manager, for more information.

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How to Engage

The project's anticipated timeline is October 2024 through December 2025, with engagement of partner agencies and other applicable parties throughout. For more information on the Guidebook and Office of Federal Lands, visit the following websites:

- **Project Website** | ancsa17bguidebook.com
- **Federal Highway Administration** | dot.gov

