

U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security

United States  
Coast Guard



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Fish and Wildlife Service

Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge



October 22, 2009

Commanding Officer  
USCG Rescue 21  
Project Resident Office Alaska  
100 Savikko Road  
Douglas, Alaska 99824

Refuge Manager  
Kodiak National Wildlife  
Refuge  
1390 Buskin River Road  
Kodiak, AK 99615

Dear Interested Parties:

The U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are seeking your input on a proposal to permit, construct, operate and maintain search and rescue communication facilities in Middle Cape area of the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service received a Right-of-Way application under ANILCA 1310(b) from the U.S. Coast Guard to site a new facility within the National Wildlife Refuge. The proposed site is located near the refuge's southwest coast in the vicinity of Halibut Bay. A proposed repeater site would be located on Twin Peaks just southwest of the Village of Akhiok on Koniag Corporation land.

### **Why is the Coast Guard Proposing New Facilities?**

The U.S. Coast Guard has identified the need to modernize and replace its antiquated maritime search and rescue communications system in Alaska as part of a nationwide mandate. New locations and new equipment will fill existing coverage gaps in Very High Frequency (VHF-FM) marine communications used for Coast Guard operational missions, including search and rescue, maritime pollution prevention and response, maritime law enforcement, and homeland security. The system, known as "Rescue 21," is the maritime equivalent of a "911" communications system, enhancing maritime safety by helping to minimize the time that search and rescue teams spend looking for people in distress.

These facilities would provide improved day-to-day operational (command and control) capabilities for the Coast Guard.

### **What is the U.S. Coast Guard Proposing?**

The proposed action is to install Coast Guard VHF-FM communication sites in the vicinity of Middle Cape, Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, south-central Alaska. This facility would provide radio coverage for the Shelikof Strait region west of Kodiak Island, Alaska. A second facility would locate repeater equipment to connect the Middle Cape site to the existing earth station in the Village of Akhiok.

A typical communications facility for these areas would include two 12' long x 13' wide x 16' high solar arrays, a 10' x 16' generator hut, a 8' x 10' communication hut, an approximately 60' self-supporting tower, a wind generator and tower, a ten (10) 500 gal. propane tank array, and a 16' x 16' helicopter pad depending on terrain. A typical repeater site includes a 20-foot tower with microwave dishes, a vertical axis wind generator, a solar array, and a 6'x8' electronics hut.

Enclosed are maps displaying the proposed sites.

### **What Happens Next?**

The U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will conduct the required National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance measures to decide whether to issue the ROW permit and to authorize the construction, operation, and maintenance of those facilities. This Environmental Assessment (EA) will analyze the effects of construction, including the staging and mobilization of materials and construction forces, and the eventual operation and annual maintenance that would be performed.

The U.S. Coast Guard will prepare written project proposals and potential environmental effects in accord with the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR 1500-1508) and as required by USCG COMDTINST M16475.1D, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife regulations and policies.

A preliminary review of communication coverage identified potential locations for remote fixed facilities. Options for staging materials and mobilizing construction forces will also be included in the EA analyses. The proposed facility was analyzed for reception from a 1-watt radio held 2 meters above the surface of the water.

Alternatives to the proposed action may be developed depending on issues identified during this initial "scoping" period. At this time, we would like to hear any comments, issues, and concerns you have that would help shape or further develop the project proposals.

We are contacting you so your concerns or ideas can be considered early in the development of the project proposals. Your comments will be most useful if they are received by November 20, 2009. However, comments will be accepted and reviewed up until the time the decisions on the projects are made.

Please send comments to William Freeland, Environmental Protection Specialist, U.S. Coast Rescue 21 PRO Alaska, 100 Savikko Rd., Douglas, AK 99824. Comments may be written, sent by e-mail ([William.A.Freeland@uscg.mil](mailto:William.A.Freeland@uscg.mil)), or faxed to this address at 907-463-2959 (Attention: Kodiak Middle Cape Rescue 21 Communication Facilities). Questions may be directed to William Freeland at 907-463-2955.

This is not the only opportunity you will have to comment on this project. When the EA has been prepared and distributed, you will have an opportunity to make further comments. If you

would like to be kept informed about this project, please complete and return the attached "Interest Response Form" and you will be placed on the mailing list.

Pursuant to 7 CFR Part 1, Subpart B, Section 1.27, all written submissions in response to this notice will be made available for public inspection, including the submitter's name and address, unless the submitter specifically requests confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses submitted on official letterheads and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

Sincerely,



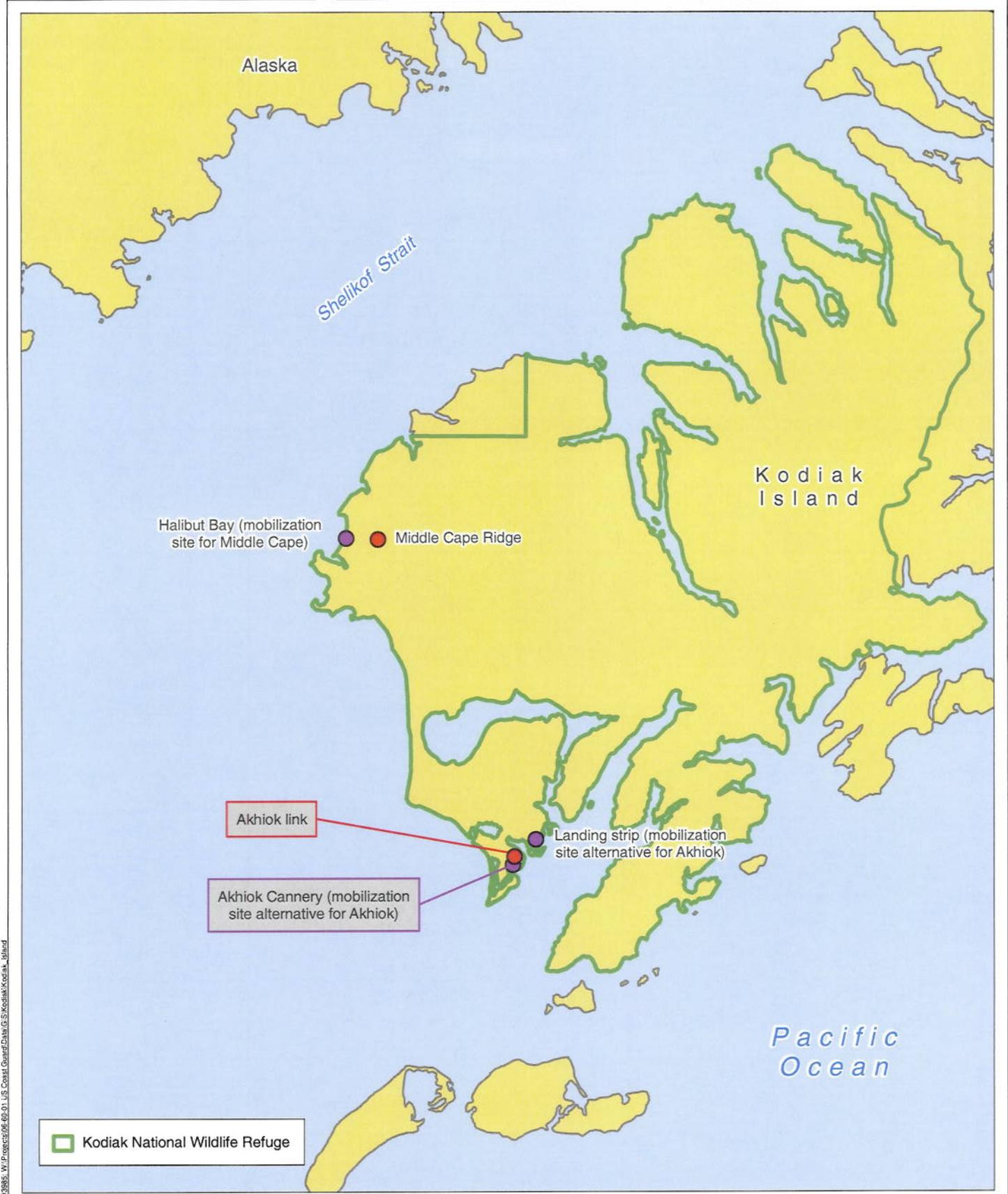
Joseph S. Calnan, Commander  
Commanding Officer  
US Coast Guard Rescue 21  
Project Resident Office  
Douglas, Alaska

Sincerely,

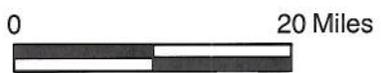


Gary Wheeler  
Refuge Manager  
Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge  
Kodiak, Alaska

Enclosure



Prepared by Mike Yarnes, 10/28/09, Map #3985, W:\Projects\06-60-01 US Coast Guard Data\GIS\Kodiak\Kodiak\_Island



**Proposed locations for Rescue 21 communication and mobilization sites  
Kodiak Island, Alaska**

## Interest Response Form

Please include me on the mailing list for

- ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR PROPOSED  
U. S. COAST GUARD COMMUNICATION SITES ON  
MIDDLE CAPE RIDGE AND AT AKHIOK, KODIAK ISLAND,  
ALASKA

as described in the attached letter.

Complete this form and return to:

U.S. Coast Guard  
Rescue 21 PRO Alaska  
100 Savikko Rd.  
Douglas, AK 99824

Please Print Clearly:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

We are trying to save paper and conserve resources. Please respond if you wish to be kept informed and receive future mailings for this project. Please indicate if you would like a paper copy, CD, or can download website copy of notices, documents, and decision records.

- Paper copy       CD       Download web content