

U.S. Department of the Interior
Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council

Final
Environmental Impact Statement

Proposed IMS Infrastructure
Improvement Project
Seward, Alaska

September 1994

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Proposed IMS Infrastructure Improvement Project Seward, Alaska

Cover Sheet

Draft

Final

1. Type of Action: Proposed Institute of Marine Science (IMS) Infrastructure Improvement Project.

Administrative

Legislative

2. Lead Federal Agency: U.S. Department of the Interior, on behalf of the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill (EVOS) Trustee Council.

3. Description of the Action: The EVOS Trustee Council is proposing to improve the existing infrastructure at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks, Institute of Marine Science (IMS) in Seward, Alaska, to enhance the EVOS Trustee Council's capabilities to study marine mammals, marine birds, and the ecosystem injured by the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill. The improvements are intended to help focus and carry out a long-term research and monitoring program for the EVOS area as part of an overall restoration plan. The project would be constructed adjacent to the existing campus of the IMS Seward Marine Center. The project would have two components: (1) a research and wildlife rehabilitation component; and (2) a public education and visitation component.

The research and wildlife rehabilitation component would consist of approximately 22,000 square feet of interior space made up of wet and dry laboratories, staff offices, and a library for studies and rehabilitation of marine mammals, marine birds, and other marine life. There would be approximately 46,000 square feet of exterior space containing outdoor research habitat, and tanks and pools for pinnipeds, sea otters, and marine bird species. The outdoor and indoor facilities would be supported by a life support system using seawater from Resurrection Bay. Freshwater sources include a spring located approximately 2,500 feet south on Lowell Point Road or one or more wells drilled on the IMS Seward Marine Center. A 50-space, 37,000 square foot, parking lot for staff vehicles would be constructed adjacent to the existing IMS/Rae Building parking lot. A research vessel and submersible may be acquired for research purposes.

The public education and visitation component would consist of approximately 20,000 square feet of additional interior space to promote public awareness of the marine environment. It would function in concert with, and in support of, the research and wildlife rehabilitation component. This component would include exhibits, interpretive displays, and public areas. A 166-space, 90,000 square foot visitor parking lot would be built adjacent to the public education and visitor component and 67,000 square feet of outdoor plaza space, sidewalks, and landscaping would complete the site. A stormwater drainage

system with an oil/water separator would be incorporated to handle the additional runoff. No joint EVOS restoration funds would be involved in the construction or maintenance of this component.

The two components would share approximately 27,000 square feet of interior building-support space, including the life support system and the facility's mechanical, administrative, and curatorial functions.

Funding for the project would come, in large part, from EVOS funds. Overall, the total project capital budget would be approximately \$47.5 million, of which approximately \$37.5 million would come from EVOS funds. In 1993, \$12.5 million of state EVOS restitution funds were appropriated by the Alaska Legislature in 1993 to the City of Seward for the planning, design and construction of the proposed project. In addition, approximately \$25 million of EVOS monies have been requested to fund the research and wildlife rehabilitation component of the proposed project. Lastly, approximately \$10 million would be raised from private donors to fund the public education and visitation component of the proposed project. Revenue from public education and visitation would be used to offset the operational costs of all of the proposed improvements.

4. Environmental Effects of the Proposed Action: Issues of concern related to Alternative I of the proposed project relate primarily to the increase in visitor populations in Seward during peak summer months (July through mid-September). This includes potential effects on visitor circulation through Seward, affordable overnight accommodations, camp site availability, and the small town atmosphere enjoyed by many Seward residents and visitors.

Other concerns and effects relate to the lack of affordable housing for short-term construction workers, and long-term, full time employees of the facility during operation; the displacement of the Youth/Teen Center and possible relocation of the ferry service; water quality; the loss of lease revenues to the city; and the loss of campsites in Waterfront Park.

Several economic effects to the City of Seward would be beneficial. This would include the increase in employment opportunities, the additional payroll dollars to be spent in Seward, revenues to the city resulting from utility service to the proposed facility, and the enhancement of a very visible waterfront property. Seward would also benefit from improved research capabilities at the IMS and an educational opportunity for the community.

5. Alternatives to the Proposed Action:

a. Research and Wildlife Rehabilitation Component Only (Alternative II)

Alternative II would have only one component, research and wildlife rehabilitation. The structures and facilities would generally be the same as described above under Alternative I, with the public education and visitation components eliminated, including the 166-space visitor parking lot. The square footage of the indoor space with Alternative II would be reduced from Alternative I by 26,000 square feet to 49,000 square feet. The upper level of the building would be eliminated, resulting in a one-story structure.

The outdoor areas for research habitat and research tanks and pools would be the same as Alternative I, although the subsurface visitor walkway surrounding the tanks would accommodate researchers only. The parking requirement for the research component would be 50 vehicles for research staff and associated visitors. Parking would be made available in a newly constructed, 37,000 square foot lot adjacent to the north of the existing IMS Rae Building parking lot, as described for Alternative I. The visitor parking lot and associated stormwater drainage system would be eliminated. A research vessel and submersible also would be considered for this alternative.

The capital construction cost of Alternative II would be reduced from Alternative I by approximately \$10 million as compared to Alternative I. This \$10 million difference would not affect the EVOS funding, however, as funds for the public education component in Alternative I are intended to come entirely from private donations and fund raising efforts.

A notable difference of Alternative II is the elimination of those concerns and effects related to visitor population increases, particularly the potential adverse effect on the quality of life in Seward and the adverse effects on traffic circulation and transportation.

b. No Action Alternative (Alternative III)

The No Action Alternative would mean that none of the actions proposed with Alternatives I or II would occur. Environmental conditions at the proposed project site and in the project vicinity would remain as they currently exist.

6. Other Environmental Impact Statements, Reference Papers, and Technical Papers: This Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) refers to numerous reference and technical papers previously prepared for the project site and updated, as needed, for this proposed project. Applicable portions of these documents are referenced in the appropriate discussions throughout the EIS, and a bibliography of references is included as part of the EIS. Copies of referenced documents have been placed in libraries in Seward, Homer, Kodiak, Cordova, Valdez, and Anchorage (Oil Spill Public Information Center).

7. Public Comments: Public hearings on the Draft EIS for the proposed IMS Infrastructure Improvement Project will be held on July 26 and July 28, 1994, in Seward and Anchorage, Alaska, respectively. Written and verbal comments were accepted until August 8, 45 days after the Environmental Protection Agency's Notice of Availability regarding the Draft EIS appeared in the Federal Register. Verbal and written comments received during the public comment period were thoroughly considered and appropriate revisions were made to the Draft EIS. The revisions are reflected in this Final EIS.

8. Contact: For further information regarding this EIS, contact:

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Anchorage, Alaska 99501
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(800) 478-7745 (within Alaska)
(800) 283-7745 (outside Alaska)

**PROPOSED IMS INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
TABLE OF CONTENTS**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Page</u>
1.0	PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION	1-1
1.1	PROJECT BACKGROUND	1-1
1.2	PURPOSE AND NEED	1-3
1.3	THE NEPA PROCESS	1-6
	1.3.1 Scoping	1-6
	1.3.2 Draft EIS	1-7
	1.3.3 Public Comment and Final EIS	1-7
	1.3.4 Record of Decision	1-7
1.4	OTHER LEGAL MANDATES AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS	1-8
	1.4.1 Federal Permits and/or Approvals	1-8
	1.4.2 State Approvals	1-10
	1.4.3 Local Approvals	1-11
1.5	RESULTS OF THE SCOPING PROCESS	1-17
	1.5.1 Public Comments	1-17
	1.5.2 Agency Meeting	1-23
	1.5.3 Significant Issues Considered in the EIS	1-23
	1.5.4 Issues Raised That Will Not Be Addressed in the EIS	1-25
	1.5.5 Alternatives Suggested But Not Selected For Inclusion in the EIS	1-26
1.6	KEY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE DRAFT EIS AND THE FINAL EIS	1-27
2.0	ALTERNATIVES, INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION	2-1
2.1	INTRODUCTION	2-1
2.2	ALTERNATIVE I - THE PROPOSED ACTION	2-1
	2.2.1 Proposed Site	2-1
	2.2.2 Adjacent Sites	2-5
	2.2.3 Proposed Improvements	2-7
	2.2.4 Construction Program	2-15
	2.2.5 Operating Characteristics	2-35
	2.2.6 Projected Revenues	2-37
	2.2.7 Projected Expenses	2-40
2.3	ALTERNATIVE II - RESEARCH AND WILDLIFE REHABILITATION ONLY	2-41
	2.3.1 Construction Program	2-41
	2.3.2 Operating Characteristics	2-41
	2.3.3 Projected Revenues	2-46
	2.3.4 Projected Expenses	2-46
2.4	ALTERNATIVE III - NO ACTION	2-47

The high level of tourist activity during the summer results in a relatively high proportion of RVs on Seward area roadways. RVs tend to be highly visible due to their size and relative lack of maneuverability when compared with typical passenger vehicles. ADOT/PF data indicates that RVs account for approximately 4 percent of traffic volumes on the Seward Highway in the vicinity of the Small Boat Harbor. Recreational vehicles are defined by ADOT/PF as larger vehicles with six tires or multiple rear-axles. Smaller vehicles, such as pick-up truck campers and mini-vans, are categorized as "autos". As a result, common perceptions may suggest a higher relative proportion of RVs in Seward than is indicated in the ADOT/PF data. The ADOT/PF categorization is appropriate for use in this analysis, as these smaller RVs impact traffic operations in a manner similar to autos.

Horizon Year Traffic Volume Forecast: Traffic counts from ADOT/PF indicate that traffic volumes on Third Avenue/Seward Highway within Seward have increased at an annual rate of approximately 4 percent. This rate was applied to existing peak month traffic volumes to arrive at forecasts for the 1998 analysis horizon year. These peak month traffic volume forecasts are summarized in Figure 3-16.

3.12.3 Traffic Operations

A peak hour level of service (LOS) analysis was conducted to assess traffic operating conditions at intersections in the proposed project vicinity. An LOS analysis provides a qualitative label of operating conditions and traffic congestion, based on quantified criteria. It assists in interpreting the significance of the traffic volumes such as those shown in Figures 3-15 and 3-16. Values range from LOS A, indicating free-flowing traffic with little or no delay, to LOS F, indicating extreme congestion with long delays. At unsignalized intersections, the LOS is measured in terms of reserve (or unused) capacity. Table 3-22 summarizes the different LOS criteria.

**TABLE 3-22
LEVEL OF SERVICE CRITERIA FOR UNSIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS**

LOS	Reserve Capacity	Expected Delay
A	400 or more	Little or none
B	300 to 399	Short
C	200 to 299	Average
D	100 to 199	Long
E	0 to 99	Very long
F	less than 0	Failure - extreme congestion

Source: Transportation Research Board, Highway Capacity Manual, 1985.

For this analysis, LOS were developed following procedures presented in the *Highway Capacity Manual: Special Report 209*, Transportation Research Board, 1985. The LOS were calculated using the peak hour volumes shown in Figure 3-16, and thus, represent a peak month, peak hour condition. Table 3-23

LA-20	3-20	3.7.2 city has "identified the property as being available for use by the project. No formal document or agreement has been made about how the property will be transferred - lease, sale, gift, etc. What is the "Port of Seward" referred to in this paragraph?	LA-32	3-35	5th para - Inlet Fisheries was to build a canning facility, but lease restructured in 2/94 to delete that requirement. Operation now only consists of receiving and freezing plant
LA-21	3-22	8.8.1 middle of page - originally the Alaska Skill Center - now the Alaska Vocational Technical School not Vocational and Technical. Don't forget the shipyard and sawmill and most importantly creation of national park and growth of visitor industry	LA-33	3-36	2nd para the name of the coal company is Suneel Alaska Inc.
LA-22	3-23	Old maps on file in this office indicate that most of Tracts 3 and 4 were filled in during the '50's to allow for construction of the dock face as it is today. The old maps indicate buildings on piling in this area. No record of what became of them. (see copies of attached maps)	LA-34	3-40	Fig 3-8 why the tremendous decline in trade employment in first half '93?
LA-23	3-25	3.9.1 current description of the properties are Tracts 2,3,4,5, and 6 Waterfront Tracts. This is an unrecorded land division for lease purposes. The underlying land ownership is made up of portions of Alaska Tideland Survey 174 and former Alaska Railroad Land acquired through metes and bounds description deed from the U.S. Government. They are called "tracts" rather than "parcels"	LA-35	3-41	3.10.3 water - two new wells installed at Ft. Raymond and at least one old well upgraded.
LA-24	Fig 3-5	The label says this is Land Ownership. The legend is more use oriented, and the uses on the map do not match the legend. Except for the U of A parcel the legend refers to residential and commercial uses rather than ownership. Additionally, the majority of the map indicates residential in areas that are the central business district.	LA-36	3-47	Table 3-9 -line four - city of Seward - these are totals including part time and seasonal. Actual Full Time equivalent -89. Line 12: Seward General Hospital and Wesley Rehab are two different entities. Wesley is private and Seward General is City. Last line - Delete - Seward Marine Industrial Center is a place, not an employer.
LA-25	3-27	3.9.2 legal description of the IMS site is Block 5A Oceanview Subd Addition No. 1	LA-37	3-49	sewer - Fourth of July Creek area (SMIC) is served by a separate sewer system. Only airport area and small portion of Cliff Addition not served within the community
LA-26	Fig 3-6	The title says Existing Land Use. This needs to be clarified that it is actual use of each individual parcel and not the Land Use Plan. Needs major corrections	LA-38	3-53	Electric - city has five versus three generators. Power line from mile 3-18 also upgraded to 115KV capacity but energized only to 69 KV.
LA-27	3-29	Adjoining lands: Waterfront campground vs Iditarod Campground. There is not a tourist information center in the ferry building - only brochure racks. The park is not used for the community Xmas tree. The tree is placed in the center of the 4th Ave extension to the dock - between the Ladies park and the teen center. How can you be to the north of Fourth Avenue when it runs north and south. The area north of Jefferson, west of Third and east of 6th is principally residential uses.	LA-39	3-60	Solid Waste and recycling - Recyclable collected by local volunteer groups and delivered to KPB Seward transfer site
LA-28	3-30	Zoning code was modified in 1990 or so to make zoning and planning districts identical. A new district was added in 1993 - urban residential. Total of 13 districts. AVTEC Center vs College	LA-40	3-61	Health and Social Services: Resurrection Bay Health Center purchased and operated by Seward General Hospital. The optometrist visits Seward from Kenai.
LA-29	3-31	Zoning - Administrative permits generally issued by City Clerk. Ord 94-25 adopted 6/27/94 revises Land Uses Allowed table which includes a category for Major Visitor Attractions by Conditional Use Permit	LA-41	3-62	Camping - Note that the various campgrounds (Iditarod, Marathon, N&S Resurrection) are all within the Waterfront Park and the names have been generated internally by the Parks and Recreation Dept for record keeping purposes. No one in the general public will know what these names mean.
LA-30	Fig 3-7	Ord 94-27 adopted 6/27/94 changed some zoning on this map - some R3 to UR. Also R3 on 6th should be AC	LA-42	3-63	Fig 3-12 Map is not correct - remove the platted blocks shown east of Seventh Ave (actually Ballaine Blvd). The Waterfront park and its campgrounds are between Ballaine Blvd and the shoreline. The dot-dash heavy line out in the water is the pre-earthquake shoreline - it really doesn't need to be on the map. If it is needed, it ought to be labeled. Resurrection is spelled incorrectly in the legend. The bike path is shown incorrectly.
LA-31	3-33	Zoning on Adjacent Lands: 2nd para 5th sentence - Original Townsite versus USS 1116			Table 3-16 The names of the campgrounds are misleading. Show all the campgrounds within the waterfront park as being within that park. Other campgrounds such as Forest Acres and Spring Creek are in different areas of town. I think what is referred to as Seaview the beach area south of the harbor breakwater and is not in the Waterfront Park.

LA-73 4-29 improvements.

LA-74 4-31 2nd para. If the TUSTUMENA relocates to other than a city dock, the city will lost \$28,000 in berthing fees and \$5300 for depot lease (see table 4-3)

LA-75 4-38 Land Use Regulations: the platting does not require public hearing (PH). The CUP requires a PH only before P&Z. The rezone would have a PH at both P&Z and Council.

LA-76 4-31 Change "lditarod Campground"

LA-77 4-38 3rd para - change "lditarod Campground"

LA-78 4-43 Kerry Martin Community Development Director versus Planning Director

LA-79 4-44 City expenditure Characteristics Who made the value determination? It would appear that if these are correct the 12% represents property value, not property area.

LA-80 4-45 last line change lditarod Campground - capitalize lditarod

LA-81 4-46 last line lditarod

LA-82 4-48 2nd para - city code and UBC will probably not allow on site housing of workers

LA-83 4-52 2nd para - with loss of part of the lditarod Campground and increased demand, private enterprise may move into develop additional campground capacity

LA-84 4-55 2nd para - city sign code does not allow for off site signing. Such signing as discussed here will require P&Z Commission variance

LA-85 4-56 Fig 4-4 Correct map - pre-earthquake shoreline, remove all lots east of Ballaine Blvd, and railroad dock location

LA-86 4-57 Fig 4-5 correct map - shoreline and remove lots east of Ballaine Blvd

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LA-89 4-62 remove extra blank line in middle of page.

LA-90 4-63 why is the existing Rae Bldg parking included as overflow parking for SAAMS. It is not used to capacity for Rae Bldg and as I read this, there will be additional employee parking developed between the existing Rae Bldg parking and Washington St. I also assume visitation to Rae building will be terminated with SAAMS project.

LA-91 4-63 last para - where would the anticipated off site bus lay over area be located

LA-92 4-64 top full para - what effect would the bus noise have on the office occupants of the Seaview Plaza across the street?

LA-93 4-86 boat harbor and downtown. Also what about sidewalks along Ballaine or along Adams, and Jefferson between Ballaine and 5th

LA-94 4-87 If the earthquake debris is cleaned up and the tidepools are installed, why is the proposed alternatives BENEFICIAL

LA-95 4-71 considering the industrial nature of the site, the project should be BENEFICIAL on the aesthetics of the site.

LA-96 4-80 Schools - elementary school will most likely reach an over populated status without the project within a few years. The project may just accelerate the situation.

LA-97 4-81 2nd par under 4.5.9. Only one hotel proposed in downtown. The other is in the harbor. No new action on either in the last year.

LA-98 4-81 3rd para under 4.5.9. The new boat launch ramp is on the east side of the small boat harbor which is west of the railroad dock

LA-99 4-82 1st full para - the city P&Z issued the new hotel a conditional use permit for an off site parking lot. Subsequently the Council changed the land use plan and zoning to CBD which requires no CUP.

LA-100 4-85 2nd and last para under 4.6.1: The proposed site included the old ARR dock and associated engine houses, and other buildings. The 4th Ave dock is a remnant of the old ARR dock. The ferry office is the old railroad depot building which still stands. The large warehouse on the IMS site is part of one of the old ARR buildings.

LA-101 4-85 under 4.7.10 2nd para - I doubt that the recycle program will be too affected. The volunteer groups collect only aluminum which they turn in to the Borough Transfer site for credit. They are supposed to receive funds for the aluminum. The Borough transfer facility contractor operates the large recycle dumpsters

LA-102 4-85 Last para - the land involved here represents much less than 12% of city land.

LA-103 Appendix B Nortech Report Table of Contents - 4.3.1 - Community Development Dept instead of Planning Dept.

LA-104 4-85 page 22 - What gas station - there has never been a gas station on this site. There was one across the street on the north side of Railway Ave at 4th. It was last in operation prior to the '64 earthquake

LA-105 D-10 Middle para: South of Port Ave, the Seward Highway becomes Third Ave, South Harbor Street not "Drive" or "Avenue". Correct all five reference.

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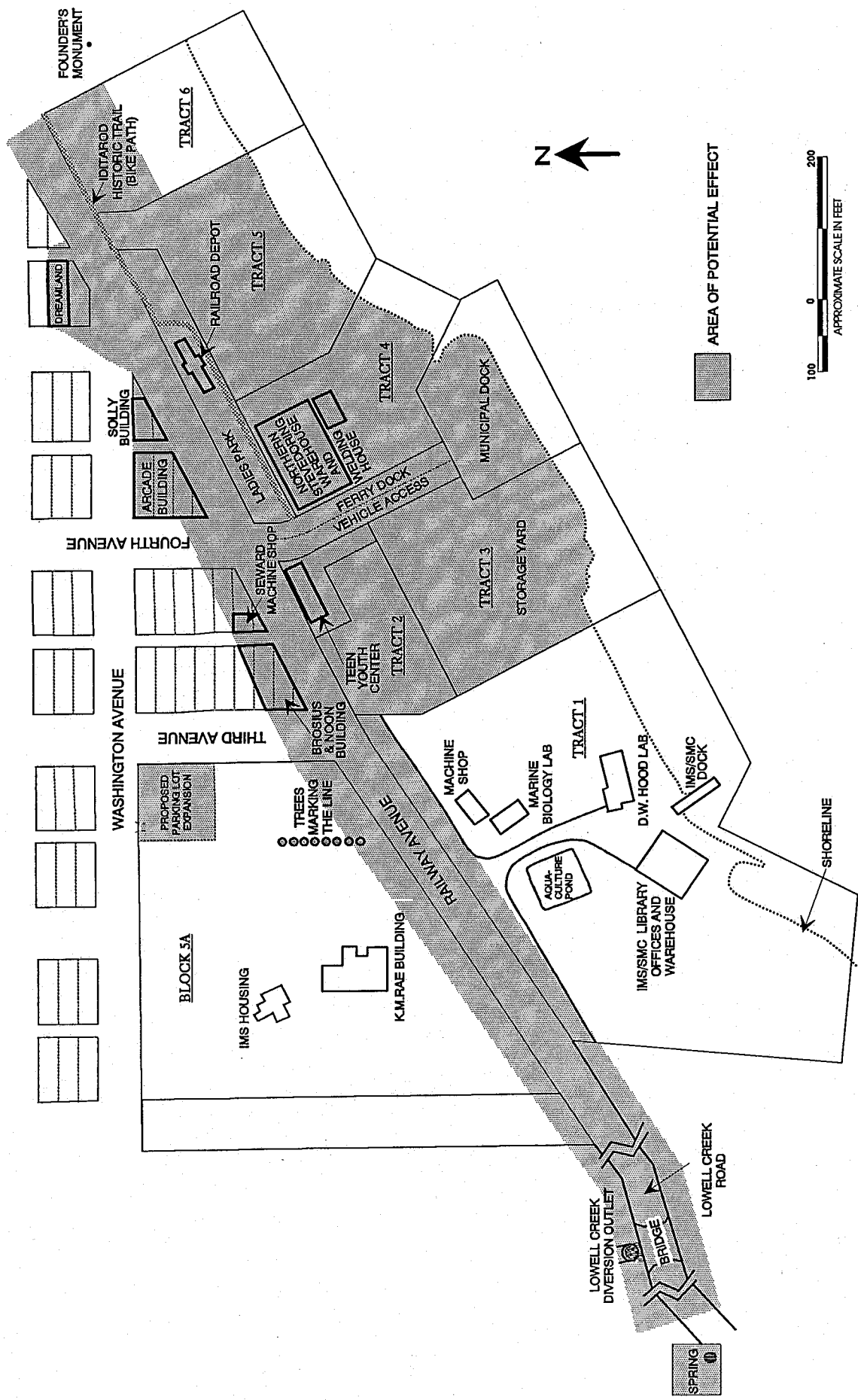
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AREA OF POTENTIAL EFFECT
 IMS Infrastructure Improvement Project
 Seward, Alaska

di-sodium hydrogen orthophosphate, anhydrous Na ₂ HPO ₄	100 g	Alax Chemicals	Location: / / / / / Y-L1 / / / / / / / / / /
Urethane	50 ml	General Biological Supply House Inc.	Location: / / / / / Y-L1 / / / / / / / / / /
Diatomaceous Earth	1 lb.	Schaar and Company	Location: / / / / / Y-L1 / / / / / / / / / /
Dibutyltin oxide (CH ₃ (CH ₂) ₃ Sn(=O))	2x100 g	Aldrich Chemical Co.	Location: / / / / / S-L1 / / / / / / / / / /
Dihydrostreptomycin Sulfate	5 g	Sigma	Location: / / / / / S-L1 / / / / / / / / / /
Dimethyl Sulfoxide (DMSO) (Methyl Sulfoxide) (CH ₃) ₂ SO	2x1l+500ml	J.T. Baker; Sigma; Crown Zellerback Corp.	Location: / / / / / Y-L1 / / / / / / / / / /
Warning: Harmful if absorbed through skin or inhaled. May cause eye damage. Causes irritation. Avoid contact with eyes, skin and clothing. Avoid breathing vapor. Keep in tightly closed container. Use with adequate ventilation. Wash thoroughly after handling. First Aid: In case of contact, immediately flush eyes or skin with plenty of water for at least 15 minutes. For eyes, call a physician. If inhaled, remove to fresh air and, if necessary, give oxygen or apply artificial respiration. Call a physician.			
Dimethylglyoxime, powder CH ₃ C(=NOH)C(=NOH)CH ₃	1 oz.	J.T. Baker	Location: / / / / / Y-L1 / / / / / / / / / /
Dioxane (stabilized) C ₄ H ₈ O ₂	1 qt.	Mallinckrodt	Location: / / / / / Y-L1 / / / / / / / / / /
Flammable. Vapor harmful. Tends to form explosive peroxides especially when anhydrous. Keep away from heat, sparks and open flame. Keep container closed. Use only with adequate ventilation. Avoid prolonged or repeated contact with skin. Do not allow to evaporate to near dryness unless absence of peroxides has been shown. Addition of appropriate reducing agents will lessen peroxide formation. Store at room temperature above 53 deg.F.			
Dioprenylamine, free base, purified	10 g	Sigma	Location: / / / / / S-L2 / / / / / / / / / /
Harmful if absorbed through skin. Causes irritation.			
Disodium (Ethylenedinitrolo) tetraacetate, 2 hydr. 2x1/4lb+1b C ₁₀ H ₁₄ O ₈ N ₂ Na ₂ .2H ₂ O		J.T. Baker	Location: / / / / / Y-L1 / / / / / / / / / /
Disodium Ethylenediaminetetraacetate, powder C ₁₀ H ₁₄ O ₈ N ₂ Na ₂ .2H ₂ O	3x1lb+1/4b	Fisher; J.T. Baker; Mallinckrodt	Location: / / / / / Y-L1 / / / / / / / / / /
Disodium Ethylenedinitrolo tetraacetate, dihydrate Na ₂ C ₁₀ H ₁₄ N ₂ O ₈ .2H ₂ O	50 g	J.T. Baker	Location: / / / / / S-L1 / / / / / / / / / /
Disodium Phosphate, anhydrous powder	1 lb.	Schaar and Company	Location: / / / / / Y-L1 / / / / / / / / / /
Dithiothreitol	5 g	Sigma	Location: / / / / / S-L2 / / / / / / / / / /
DL-6,8-Thioctic Acid (DL-α-Lipoic Acid), Oxidized	500 mg	Sigma	Location: / / / / / S-L1 / / / / / / / / / /
DL-Alanine (DL-Aminopropionic Acid)	25 g	Sigma	Location: / / / / / S-L1 / / / / / / / / / /
DL-β-Phenylalanine	25 g	Matheson, Coleman & Bell	Location: / / / / / Y-L1 / / / / / / / / / /
DL-Citrulline	1 g	Sigma	

