

South Tongass Highway Rehabilitation Deermount to Surf

Frequently Asked Questions

1. *When will this project be constructed?*
2. *What will traffic look like during construction?*
3. *Will this project move the highway from its existing location?*
4. *Will the speed limits in the project area change when construction is complete?*
5. *Will the State need to acquire right-of-way (ROW) for the project? Whose properties will be affected?*
6. *What is an encroachment? How does this impact me?*
7. *How is the project funded? What will it cost?*
8. *Will there be changes to the pathway and sidewalks in the project area?*
9. *Will the project add more parking near the pathway?*
10. *How will this project impact existing private and commercial driveways/access off the highway?*
11. *Will trees be cleared in the existing State right-of-way for this project?*
12. *Will crosswalks be added as part of this project?*
13. *Will there be new bus stops constructed with this project? Where will they be built?*

1. When will this project be constructed?

Construction is anticipated to begin in 2023. The start date may extend to 2024 to meet environmental, ROW, and seasonal construction restrictions. Most of the construction work should be completed in two seasons. Some minor tasks such as signing and striping may extend into a third construction season.

The construction schedule will fully comply with environmental permit conditions. These restrict work near three eagle-nesting trees during the nesting and fledging season from March 1 to when the eagles fledge. Usually fledging occurs, around mid-August. Permit conditions also restrict in-water work to construct a new fish-passage culvert within Saxman Creek.

2. What will traffic look like during construction?

The project is developing construction phasing and traffic control plans to manage traffic delays to highway users while Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) rebuilds the highway in a timely manner. Due to the narrow corridor and seasonal construction constraints, some unavoidable impacts to traffic flow will occur.

3. Will this project move the highway from its existing location?

Due to the proximity of the coastline, utilities, and existing development, as well as the area's natural topography, the DOT&PF does not anticipate major shifts in the existing alignment. Planned improvements will straighten some curves to improve sight distances and facilitate traffic movements. The project's preliminary design maintains the highway's 11-foot-wide lanes and provides shoulder improvements.

4. Will the speed limits in the project area change when construction is complete?

DOT&PF continues to examine posted speeds in the project area and is considering whether to change posted speed limits.

5. Will the State need to acquire right-of-way (ROW) for the project? Whose properties will be affected?

The project is in the ROW phase. ROW will need to acquire tracts and resolve encroachments. Property owners affected by property acquisitions will be assigned a ROW agent to facilitate the negotiation process.

6. What is an encroachment? How does this impact me?

Some property owners may also be contacted about encroachments in the existing State-owned ROW. An encroachment is an unauthorized use of a ROW by improvements, objects, items, or obstructions. Encroachments are resolved by removal or may be allowed with a permit. Encroachment permits will be determined on a case-by-case basis.



Please visit <http://southtongassrow.com/> with questions about encroachments or permits.

7. How is the project funded? What will it cost?

This project is fully funded in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), the spending plan for Federal Aid. The project will be funded with a mix of federal and State dollars, with an approximate 90% federal/10% State ratio. The project will cost roughly \$44 million.

8. Will there be changes to the pathway and sidewalks in the project area?

The existing pathways and sidewalks adjacent to the highway in the project area will be rehabilitated. The new pathway will create a continuous ADA-compliant pathway along South Tongass Highway from the U.S. Coast Guard Base to the Mountain Point vicinity.

The project also provides for a new sidewalk on the land side of the highway between Deermount Street and Community Connections.

9. Will the project add more parking near the pathway?

DOT&PF is aware of public parking shortages near the pathway. The project design adds some parking areas along the corridor.

10. How will this project impact existing private and commercial driveways/ access off the highway?

Some impacts to existing driveways could occur. If driveway modifications are necessary, DOT&PF will work with property owners to finalize driveway configurations.

11. Will trees be cleared in the existing State right-of-way for this project?

Given the narrow corridor, some tree clearing is required. DOT&PF may clear trees up to the limits of the ROW line.

12. Will crosswalks be added as part of this project?

Crosswalks are included at Cemetery Drive, Dog Salmon/South Tongass Service Station, and Totem Row.

13. Will there be new bus stops constructed with this project? Where will they be built?

Bus stop pullouts and shelters will be constructed as part of this project. DOT&PF has coordinated with the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Transit Manager to determine locations for potential stops/shelters.

Bus pullouts are planned near these locations:

- » Forest Park Drive
- » Totem Row
- » Dog Salmon Avenue
- » Dog Salmon/South Tongass Service Station
- » Shoup Street
- » Surf Street