

HAMMER SLOUGH
ED

MEMORANDUM

State of Alaska
Department of Environmental Conservation
Southeast Regional Office

TO: Eric Decker
Water Quality Program

DATE: March 30, 1995

FILE NO:

THRU: TELEPHONE NO: 465-5358; FAX: 465-5362

FROM: Sally Schlichting 
Environmental Specialist
SERO Water Quality

SUBJECT: Tentative Revised 303(d) List:
Hammer Slough, Petersburg

During my recent review of the Environmental Assessment for the Petersburg Airport Runway Resurfacing Project, significant discussion occurred regarding the allegedly impaired stream, Hammer Slough Creek, which is situated close to the project. Hammer Slough is currently on the State's Tentative Revised 303(d) List for impairment from sedimentation and habitat modification.

According to City of Petersburg staff, turbidity events in Hammer Slough have been observed during periods of high flow, but a source has not been confirmed. It was originally suggested that the airport was providing a key source of sedimentation through the use of sand and gravel during the winter. However, according to DOT and their consultant, Dunn Environmental, the airport makes only minimal usage of sand and gravel during the winter months, relying primarily on urea for ice control. Thus it could be concluded that any runway runoff would be fairly free of sediment. Another possible cause may be due to activities in the municipal quarry further upstream from the airport, or the condition may simply be a result of natural causes. With regard to impacts due to habitat modification, no evidence was presented that such impacts have occurred. In speaking with the City of Petersburg, DOT and DEC Sitka District staff, the consensus was that there is no clear indication Hammer Slough is impaired.

It is recommended that a site visit be conducted, to include walking the stream's entire length and interviewing local citizens for year-round observations. Until this is accomplished, impairment cannot be confirmed.

cc: Bill Ballard, DOT/PF
Leo Luzcek, City of Petersburg
Jim Clare, City of Sitka
Ursula Spannagel, SERO

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