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# SUSITNA HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION  
PROJECT No. 7114

## PUBLIC SECTOR SURVEY REPORT

FRANK ORTH & ASSOCIATES, INC.

CONTRACT TO

FINAL REPORT

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ORZA-EBASCO  
SUSITNA JOINT VENTURE

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ALASKA POWER AUTHORITY

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SUSITNA HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT

PUBLIC SECTOR SURVEY REPORT

Report by

Frank Orth & Associates, Inc.

Under Contract to  
Harza-Ebasco Susitna Joint Venture

Prepared for  
Alaska Power Authority

Final Report  
February 1984

**ARLIS**  
Alaska Resources  
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Anchorage, Alaska

NOTICE

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The communities of Talkeetna, Trapper Creek and Cantwell have been identified as potential impact areas of the Susitna Hydroelectric Project. A current inventory of the social and economic characteristics of these communities has been undertaken to measure project-related impacts.

The public sector survey is one of three surveys that was conducted to develop community profiles of Talkeetna, Trapper Creek, and Cantwell. The purpose of the public sector survey was to gather information on employment, operating budgets, and plans for agency expansion in each community. Interviews were also conducted of households and businesses in these communities. The results of the household and business surveys are documented under separate cover.

## 2.0 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The agencies surveyed were identified from several sources, including contacts made during the project feasibility study, personal knowledge of the surveyor, and telephone listings. Nineteen agencies of a possible total of 21 agencies responded, representing a 90 percent sample.

The agencies surveyed are listed in Table 1. These agencies include federal and state departments as well as public schools and libraries. Between November 14 and 18, 1983, agency representatives were interviewed by telephone from Anchorage. The intention was to talk with the manager of each identified agency. In cases where the manager was unavailable or did not have the requested information, the interviewer solicited the name of an agency contact who could provide the information. Follow-up calls were attempted, with at least two contacts made.

The questionnaire consisted of 22 questions and required approximately ten to fifteen minutes to administer, depending upon the availability of information and the length of answers. A sample survey is in Appendix A.

The survey provided information on employment in the public sector on a community and area-wide basis. The results are summarized below.

### PROJECT AREA PROFILE

#### Geographic Location and Duration

Most of the agency offices in all three communities are centrally located where they are accessible to the majority of the community residents. The majority of the agencies interviewed have been established in their respective community for ten years or more; the newest offices opened in 1975 and 1976.

TABLE 1  
AGENCIES INTERVIEWED

Community	Agency
Talkeetna	Federal Aviation Administration, Flight Service Station Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Talkeetna Elementary School Susitna Valley High School Alaska Railroad National Weather Service, Meteorological Office United States Postal Service, Talkeetna Post Office Talkeetna Community School Talkeetna Public Library
Trapper Creek	Department of Public Safety, Alaska State Troopers Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Trapper Creek Community School United States Postal Service, Trapper Creek Post Office Trapper Creek Elementary School
Cantwell	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Department of Public Safety, Alaska State Troopers United States Postal Service, Cantwell Post Office, Cantwell School, Railbelt School District, Alaska Railroad, Cantwell Section

## Employment

In all agencies except two, the majority of the employees had been residents of the community for more than one year. In addition, agency employment was higher in the winter than in the summer. This increase in winter employment can be attributed to seasonal employment at the public schools. Employment in most of the remaining agencies was stable throughout the year. Furthermore, 9 out of 19 agencies used part-time summer employees and 13 out of 19 agencies used part-time winter employees. In several cases, the number of part-time employees was larger than the number of full-time employees.

## Agency Budgets

Half of the agencies interviewed prepared annual budgets, while at the remaining agencies, budgets were prepared at other levels of the agencies' organization, such as in a regional or state office. Therefore, not all of the agency representatives contacted were knowledgeable about the operating costs of the local office. Nonetheless, most agency representatives had a general idea about the budget and were able to respond to questions regarding budget trends and factors affecting those budgets. Budgets for the agencies interviewed ranged from a low of approximately \$200,000 to a high of about \$800,000. The budget planning period averaged six months.

All of the agencies began the fiscal year in July or October, which corresponds with state and federal fiscal years, respectively. The agencies exhibited no clear overall trend in funding. For example, current levels of funding from the previous five fiscal years increased for 90 percent of the Trapper Creek participating agencies, decreased for 60 percent of the Cantwell agencies, and no clear trend was demonstrated in Talkeetna.

Nine of the 19 agencies responded that they had experienced problems in the last fiscal year. Problems mentioned included budget constraints, availability of workers, inadequacy of facilities, declining enrollment, increasing enrollment without additional staff, and bureaucratic complications.

### Future Development

Overall most agencies in the project area planned to maintain existing service levels for the next year. While six of the nineteen agencies mentioned plans to expand their existing service levels, the plans were either uncertain or limited. The limiting factors were related primarily to budget and funding availability.

## COMMUNITY PROFILES

### Talkeetna

Of the nine Talkeetna agencies interviewed, seven had been established in the community longer than ten years. All of the agencies have been in Talkeetna more than five years.

The survey results indicated that Talkeetna experienced a relatively large seasonal fluctuation in employment. For example, employment for the agencies was 16 full-time and 12 part-time employees in the summer compared with 30 full-time and 18 part-time employees in the winter. The levels of employment were stable year round in all of the agencies, with the exception of the two public schools. The higher average employment level during the winter can be attributed to the seasonality of school employment. The employment levels by season are presented in Table 2.

Full-time employment by season for the past six years is presented in Table 3. During the 1978-1983 period, employment levels fluctuated slightly in the summer and winter. Most of the employees for both summer and winter resided in Talkeetna for more than one year.



TABLE 2  
 EMPLOYMENT BY SEASON, 1983  
 (Number of Employees)

	Summer		Winter	
	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time
Talkeetna	12	16	18	30
Trapper Creek	1	11	10	14
Cantwell	<u>7</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>19</u>
TOTAL	20	41	41	63

TABLE 3  
 CHANGE IN FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT BY SEASON  
 1978-1983  
 (Number of Employees)

	Summer						Winter					
	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Talkeetna	13	13	12	12	12	16	30	30	26	26	27	30
Trapper Creek	11	11	11	11	10	11	11	11	11	14	14	14
Cantwell	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u>
TOTAL	33	34	35	37	36	41	44	47	40	61	62	63

Budgets for the six agencies that responded to this question ranged from approximately \$20,000 to \$800,000. Their fiscal year began in either July or October, with planning beginning several months in advance. There was no clear trend in levels of funding over the past five years. Three agencies had increased funding levels each year, whereas one agency decreased, and three agencies maintained their funding levels. One agency experience fluctuations in funding levels. Five of the agencies had experienced problems in the last fiscal year, including inadequate facilities, insufficient staff and funds, and overcrowded school classrooms.

Five of the nine agencies had plans to expand their services. The remaining agencies anticipated maintaining their current level of service, at least in the short term.

#### Trapper Creek

The Trapper Creek survey included interviews with five agencies. Each agency had been established in Trapper Creek for a minimum of five years. Two of the agencies had been located in the community for more than ten years.

Similar to Talkeetna and Cantwell, winter employment in Trapper Creek was higher than summer employment due to the seasonal employment at the elementary schools. The summer employment for Trapper Creek was 1 part-time and 11 full-time employees. Employment increased to 14 full-time employees and 10 part-time employees in the winter. Full-time employment levels for the past six years had been stable with a total increase of 3 employees from 1978 to 1983.

The annual budget of Trapper Creek agencies ranged from approximately \$20,000 to \$170,000. For three of the agencies, planning for their fiscal year began about eight months prior to the budget adoption.

Four agencies in Trapper Creek experienced increased funding levels over the past 5 years. Two agencies had not experienced problems during the past year. The three agencies that did experience problems cited difficulty in meeting increased demand and inadequate funding.

Only one of the agencies had plans to increase staffing. The other agencies were planning to maintain their existing service levels.

### Cantwell

Five agencies participated in the Cantwell survey. All five agencies had been established in the community for more than ten years and four agencies had been established for more than 20 years. The oldest agency was formed in 1923.

Agencies had 14 full-time and 7 part-time employees in the summer and 19 full-time and 13 part-time employees in the winter. Similar to Trapper Creek and Talkeetna, this increase can be attributed to school employment. The agencies reported a slight increase in full-time employment over the past six years. Ninety percent of the employees were residents of Cantwell for one year or more.

The three agencies responding to the question on budgets indicated that their budgets ranged from approximately \$100,000 to \$370,000 a year. The average budget planning period was approximately nine months. The two agencies that had information on agency funding levels for the past five years reported that the levels were the same and a lot less, respectively. Three of the agencies reported funding problems due to inadequate funds, declining enrollment, and inadequate staffing. Four of the agencies had no plans to change service levels; one agency planned to decrease its level of service.

**APPENDIX A**

Questionnaire # \_\_\_\_\_

Community \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**SUSITNA HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT  
PUBLIC SECTOR SURVEY**

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (907) \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Representative Interviewed: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

First Contact Attempt

Contact Made: 1. YES \_\_\_\_\_

2. NO \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

Second Contact Attempt

Contact Made: 1. YES \_\_\_\_\_

2. NO \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

Third Contact Attempt

Contact Made: 1. YES \_\_\_\_\_

2. NO \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am conducting a survey for the Alaska Power Authority, as part of the Susitna Hydroelectric Project. A more complete understanding of the public and governmental agencies in the area is needed to plan for the construction and operation of the Project. The survey questions are about your agency and its plans for the future.

We would like you to participate in this survey. Your answers will be confidential and voluntary, and will be greatly appreciated.

Q-1 What are the main services your agency provides from this office?

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Q-2 What geographical area or areas does this office serve?

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Q-3 What special groups, if any, does this office of your agency serve?

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Q-4 How many years has this office been in this community?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ (code)  
b. \_\_\_\_\_ (actual number of years)

1. LESS THAN 1
2. 1-2
3. 3-5
4. 6-10
5. MORE THAN 10

Q-5 How many persons, including yourself, were employed during the summer of 1983? (Be sure to include people who work under contract, such as clerical workers, janitorial service workers, food service workers, and/or bus drivers.)

FULL-TIME (more than 34 hrs/week) \_\_\_\_\_

PART-TIME (less than 34 hrs/week) \_\_\_\_\_

Q-6 Were most of these summer 1983 employees people who lived here for one year or more, or people who lived here for less than one year; or a mixture of both?

1. RESIDENT FOR ONE YEAR OR MORE \_\_\_\_\_

2. RESIDENT FOR LESS THAN ONE YEAR \_\_\_\_\_

3. MIXTURE OF BOTH TYPES OF RESIDENTS \_\_\_\_\_

Q-7 How many persons, including yourself, were employed during the winter of 1982-83? (Be sure to include people who work under contract, such as clerical workers, janitorial service workers, food service workers, and/or bus drivers.)

FULL-TIME (more than 34 hrs/week) \_\_\_\_\_

PART-TIME (less than 34 hrs/week) \_\_\_\_\_

Q-8 Were most of these winter 1982-83 employees people who lived here for one year or more, or people who lived here for less than one year; or a mixture of both?

1. RESIDENT FOR ONE YEAR OR MORE \_\_\_\_\_

2. RESIDENT FOR LESS THAN ONE YEAR \_\_\_\_\_

3. MIXTURE OF BOTH TYPES OF RESIDENTS \_\_\_\_\_

Q-9 How many persons, including yourself, were employed during the summer in the last 5 years? (Be sure to include people who worked under contract.)

	<u>1982</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1978</u>
FULL-TIME (>34 hrs/wk)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
PART-TIME (<34 hrs/wk)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Q-10 How many persons, including yourself, were employed during the winter in the last 5 years? (Be sure to include people who worked under contract.)

	<u>1982</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1978</u>
FULL-TIME (>34 hrs/wk)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
PART-TIME (<34 hrs/wk)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Q-11 What is your office's budget for this community for this fiscal year?

\_\_\_\_\_

Q-12 What are your fiscal year dates?

\_\_\_\_\_

Q-13 What month do you begin preparing your budget for the next fiscal year?

\_\_\_\_\_



Q-14a How does the present fiscal year's budget for this office compare to the budgets in the previous 5 years?

- 1. A LOT MORE IN THIS BUDGET THAN IN PREVIOUS YEARS \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. MORE IN THIS BUDGET THAN IN PREVIOUS YEARS \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. ABOUT THE SAME IN THIS BUDGET AS IN PREVIOUS YEARS \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. LESS IN THIS BUDGET THAN IN PREVIOUS YEARS \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. A LOT LESS IN THIS BUDGET THAN IN PREVIOUS YEARS \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. FLUCTUATED, NO CONSISTENT PATTERN \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. NO BASIS FOR COMPARISON \_\_\_\_\_

IF 1, 2, 4, 5, or 6, THEN:

Q-14b What are the main factors which contributed to this change in the budget?

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Q-15a Did your agency experience any problems in the last fiscal year?

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. YES
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. NO

IF YES, THEN:

Q-15b What were those problems?

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Q-16a Does your office have any plans to expand its services in this area?

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. YES
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. NO
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. NOT SURE

IF YES, ASK NEXT TWO QUESTIONS.

Q-16b What are your expansion plans?

WHERE \_\_\_\_\_  
WHEN \_\_\_\_\_  
WHAT \_\_\_\_\_  
NUMBER OF NEW HIRES \_\_\_\_\_  
BUDGETED/FUNDING \_\_\_\_\_

Q-16c Are there any factors which would limit your expansion plans?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q-17a Does your office have any plans to decrease its level of service in the next fiscal year?

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. YES  
\_\_\_\_\_ 2. NO  
\_\_\_\_\_ 3. NOT SURE

IF YES, THEN:

Q-17b What are these plans?

WHERE \_\_\_\_\_  
WHEN \_\_\_\_\_  
WHAT \_\_\_\_\_  
OTHER COMMENTS \_\_\_\_\_