

MEMORANDUM**State of Alaska**Department of Fish and Game
Habitat SectionTO: Kate Kanouse
Southeast Regional Supervisor

DATE: August 5, 2020

FILE: FH08-I-0002

SUBJECT: Duck Creek JNU Airport
Tree Cutting Trip ReportFROM: Greg Albrecht 
Habitat Biologist

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On August 4, 2020, I visited the realigned portion of Duck Creek within Juneau International Airport security with Airport Operations staff to discuss tree cutting for airfield safety. Bear and deer pass through the Cessna Drive culvert and migrate down the thick alder corridor (Figures 1, 2) that has grown up around Duck Creek and gain access to the airfield. Waterfowl and corvids also use the thick trees for cover and perches. Airport staff would like to cut trees on the south side of Duck creek to be able to more effectively detect and deter mammals and birds that pose an airfield safety risk, as well as discourage their use of the area.

Fish Habitat Permit FH08-I-0002 was issued for the realignment and reconstruction of Duck Creek and does not mention maintenance of tree cover on the floodplain or adjacent to the creek^a, as those areas are outside of ADF&G authority. However, Airport Operations staff requested my assistance to determine tree cutting methods to achieve wildlife and airfield safety objectives without causing unnecessary degradation of the constructed intertidal fish habitat.

The Duck Creek channel was constructed with 3–4 ft tall banks sloped at a 45 degree angle, which along with tall grass provide shade for the creek. Alders on the south side of the creek provide shade as well and are thick at this early stage of colonization. Alders on the shoulder of the roadway and in the field south of the creek presently provide no fish habitat function (Figure 3). Therefore, I recommend considering cutting trees as necessary on the south side of the creek, while leaving a dominant alder every 10–20 ft along the south bank within 10 ft of the creek (Figure 4). The trees left standing could be pruned high enough to see wildlife moving in the creek and along the banks (about 6 ft) and would still maintain shade value and other riparian functions. I also recommend airport staff consult the 2007 Environmental Impact Statement for the airport runway expansion project to ensure there are no environmental commitments that may affect tree cutting, and the City and Borough of Juneau, which regulates riparian vegetation removal.

^a FH08-I-0002 states: “Riparian vegetation will be planted. Plantings will be designed to discourage use of the stream segment by large birds.”

ATTACHMENT #4



Figure 1.—Channel enclosed by grass and alders.



Figure 2.—Alders south of Duck Creek.



Figure 3.—Alders growing on road shoulder.



Figure 4.—Aerial map showing recommendations for complete and selective tree removal to maintain fish habitat value.

Email cc:

- Al Ott, ADF&G Habitat, Fairbanks
- ADF&G Habitat Staff, Douglas
- Dan Teske, ADF&G SF, Douglas
- David Harris, ADF&G CF, Douglas
- Roy Churchwell, ADF&G WC, Douglas
- John Mccomas, USDA APHIS, Juneau
- Patty Wahto, JIA, Juneau
- Teri Camery, CBJ, Juneau
- Ben Soiseth, USACE, Fairbanks
- Doug Cooper, USFWS, Anchorage
- Habitat Conservation Division, NMFS, Juneau