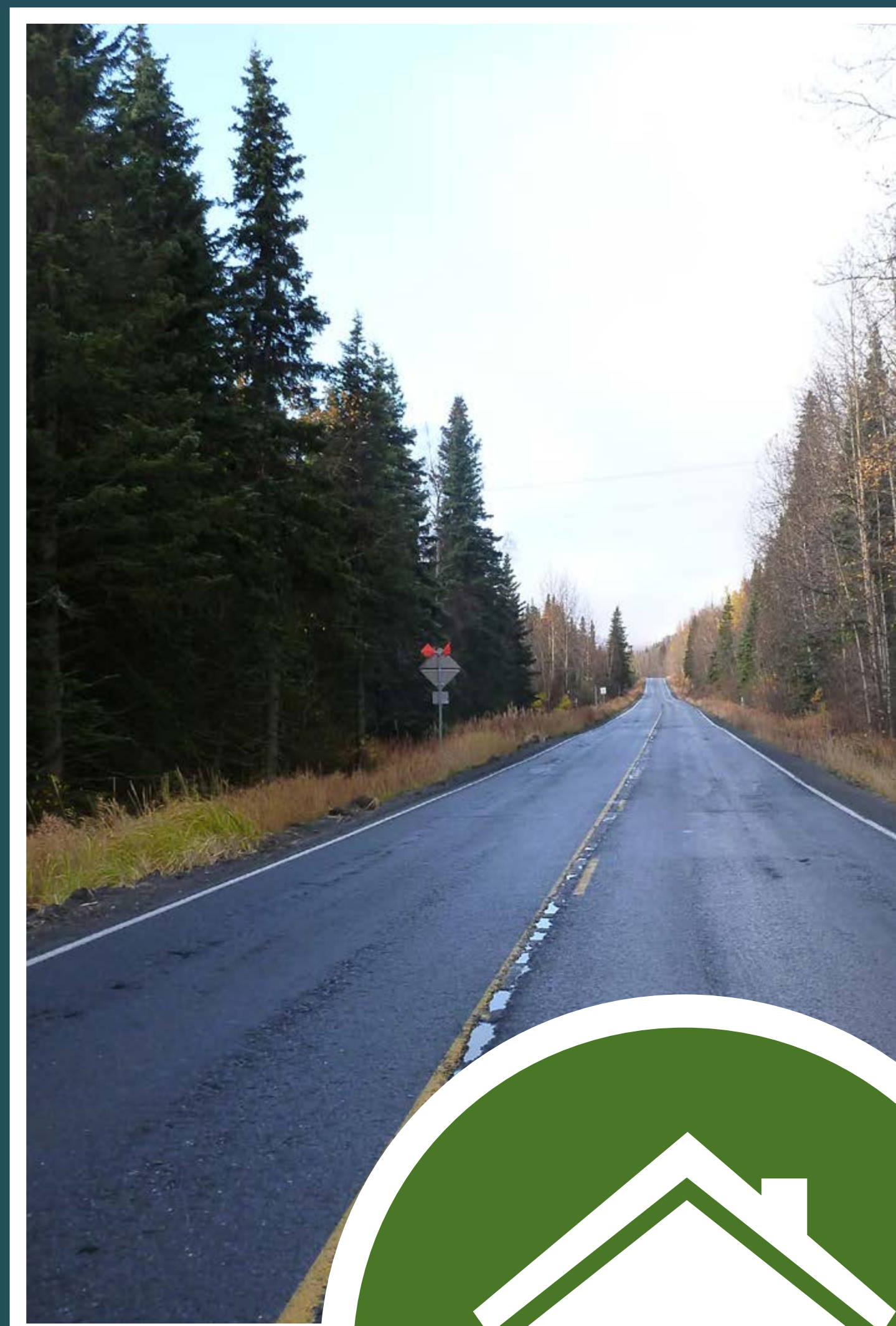
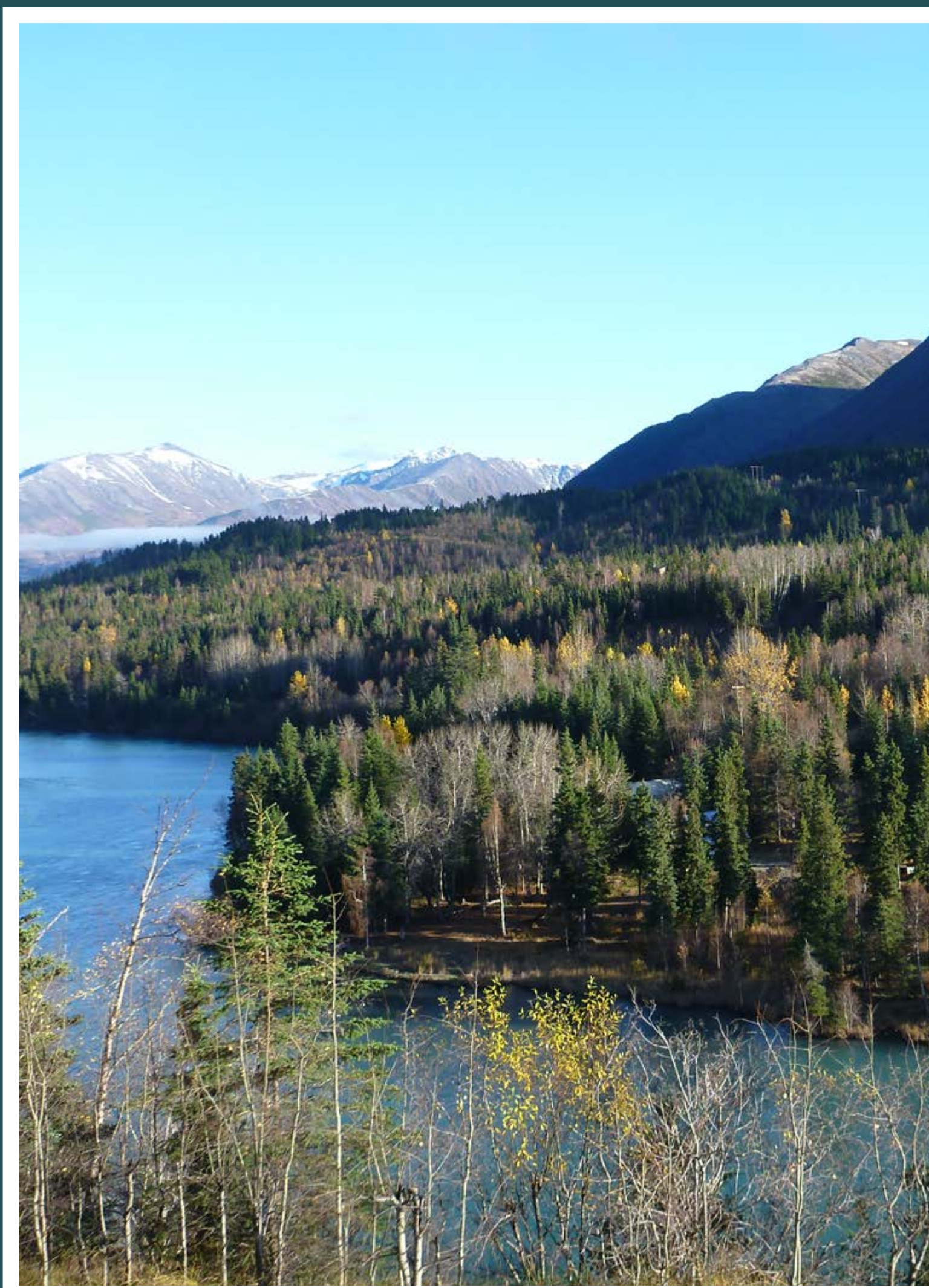
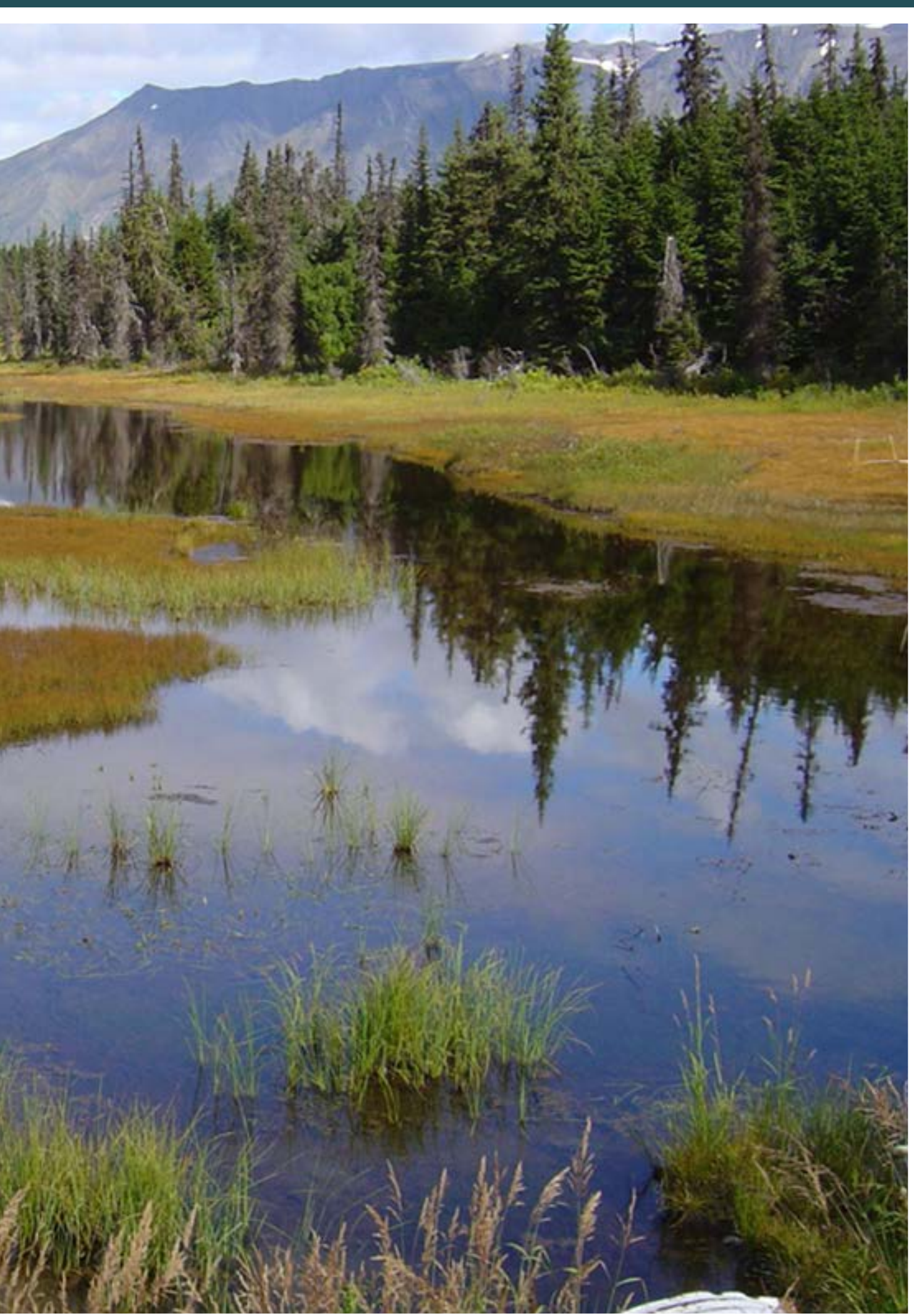


Welcome!



Public Meeting

**Sterling Highway Milepost 45-60
Final Environmental
Impact Statement &
Final Section 4(f) Evaluation**



Meeting Purpose

The purpose of today's meeting is to share information and receive your input.

Purpose & Need

Purpose

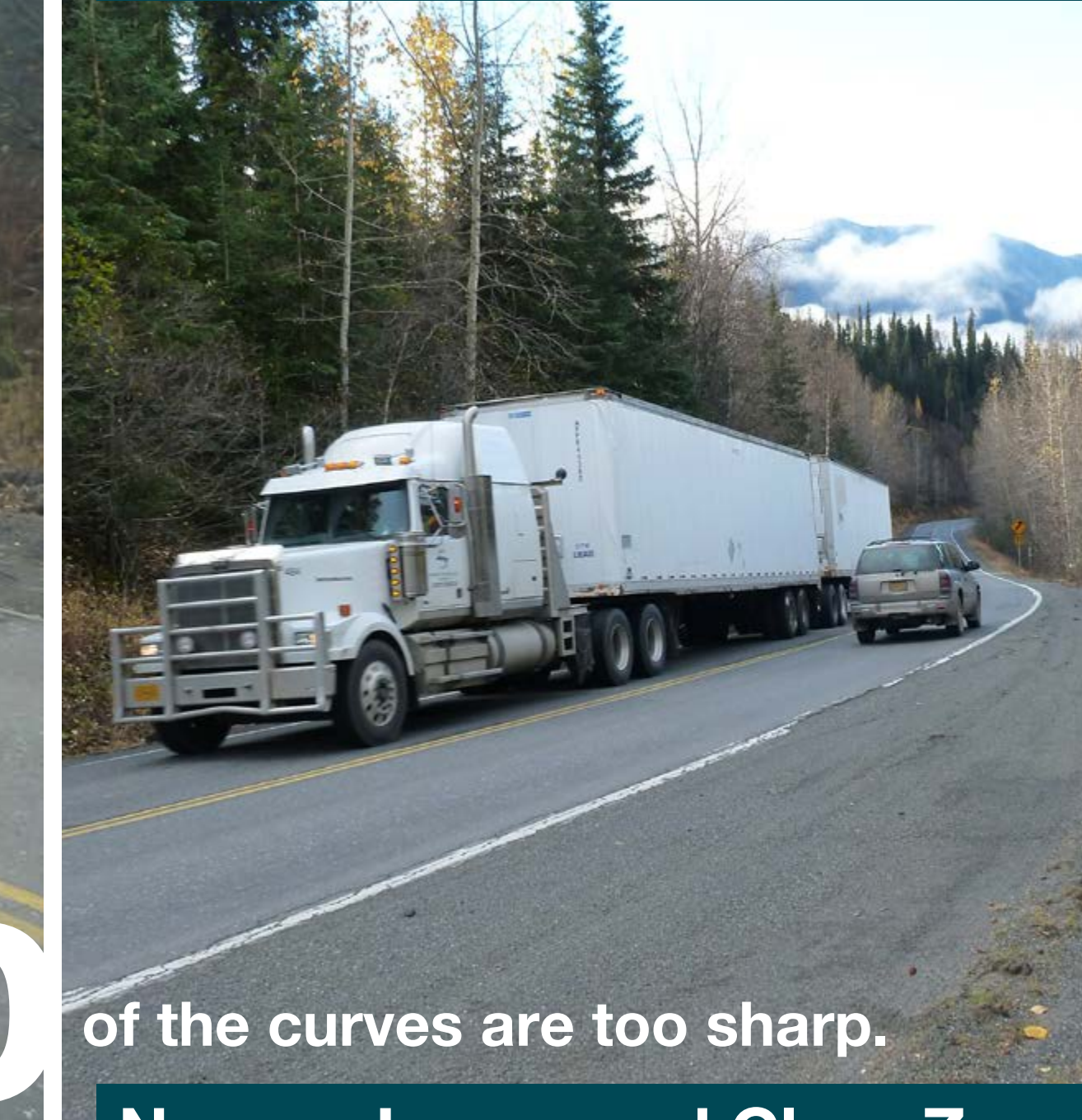
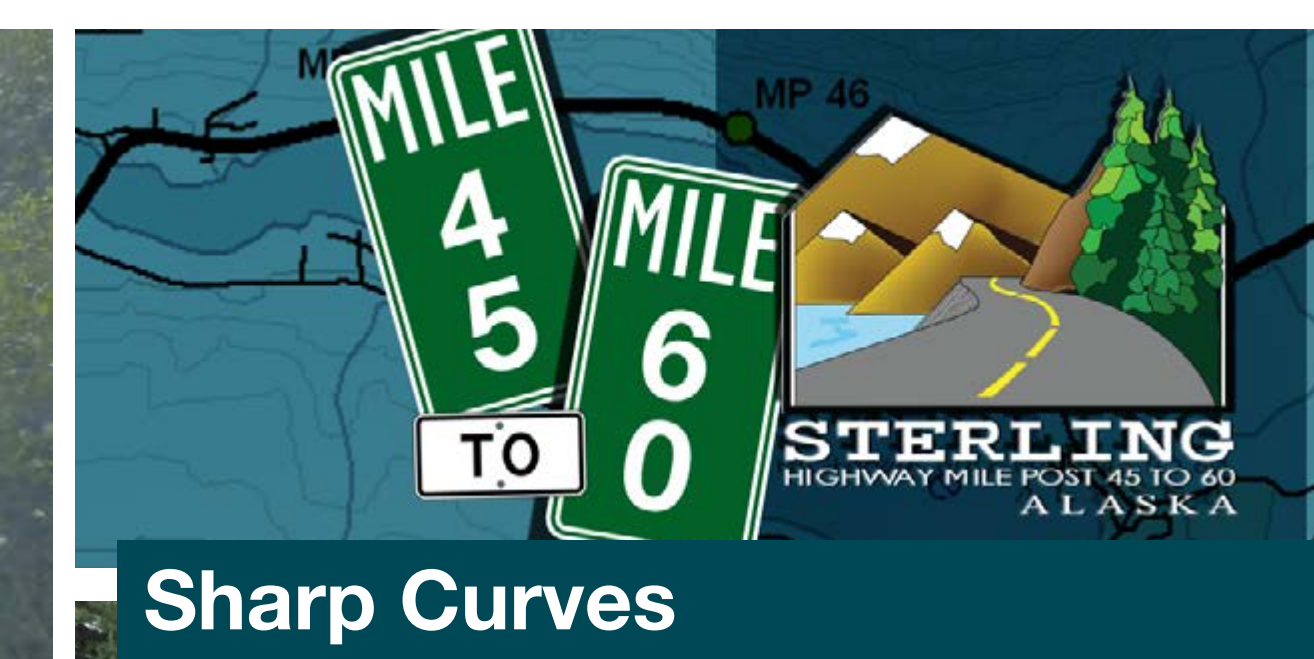
The purpose of the project is to bring the highway up to current standards to efficiently and safely serve through-traffic, local community traffic, and traffic bound for recreation destinations in the area. DOT&PF and FHWA recognize the importance of protecting the Kenai River corridor while still achieving this transportation purpose.

Need

- » Reduce Highway Congestion
- » Meet Current Highway Design Standards
- » Improve Highway Safety



49%



of the curves are too sharp.

Narrow Lanes and Clear Zone



91% of lanes are too narrow

14

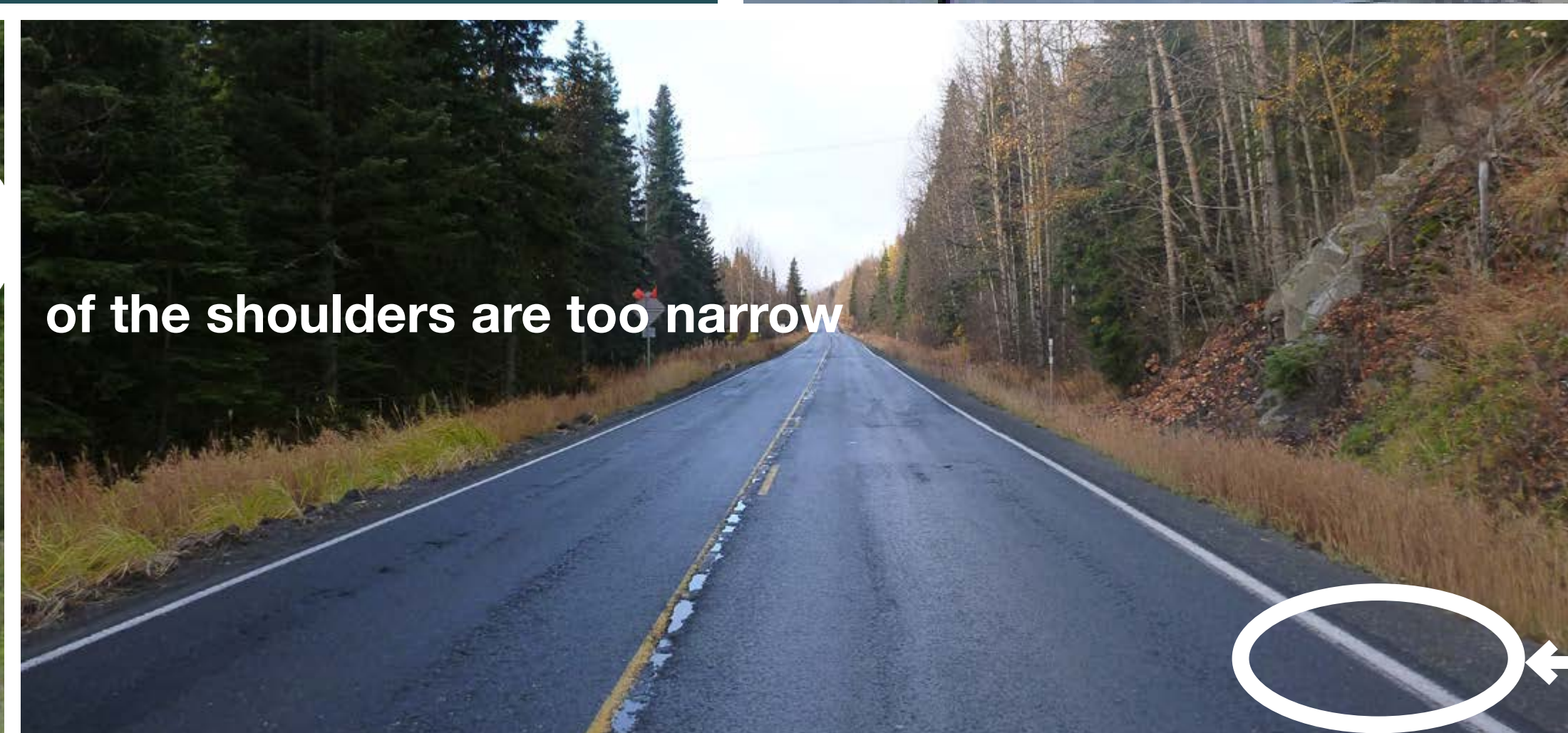
out of 15 miles do not meet standards for clear zone—the roadside border area to provide a safe vehicle runout area.

Clear zone should be 30 feet.

Narrow Shoulders



100%



of the shoulders are too narrow

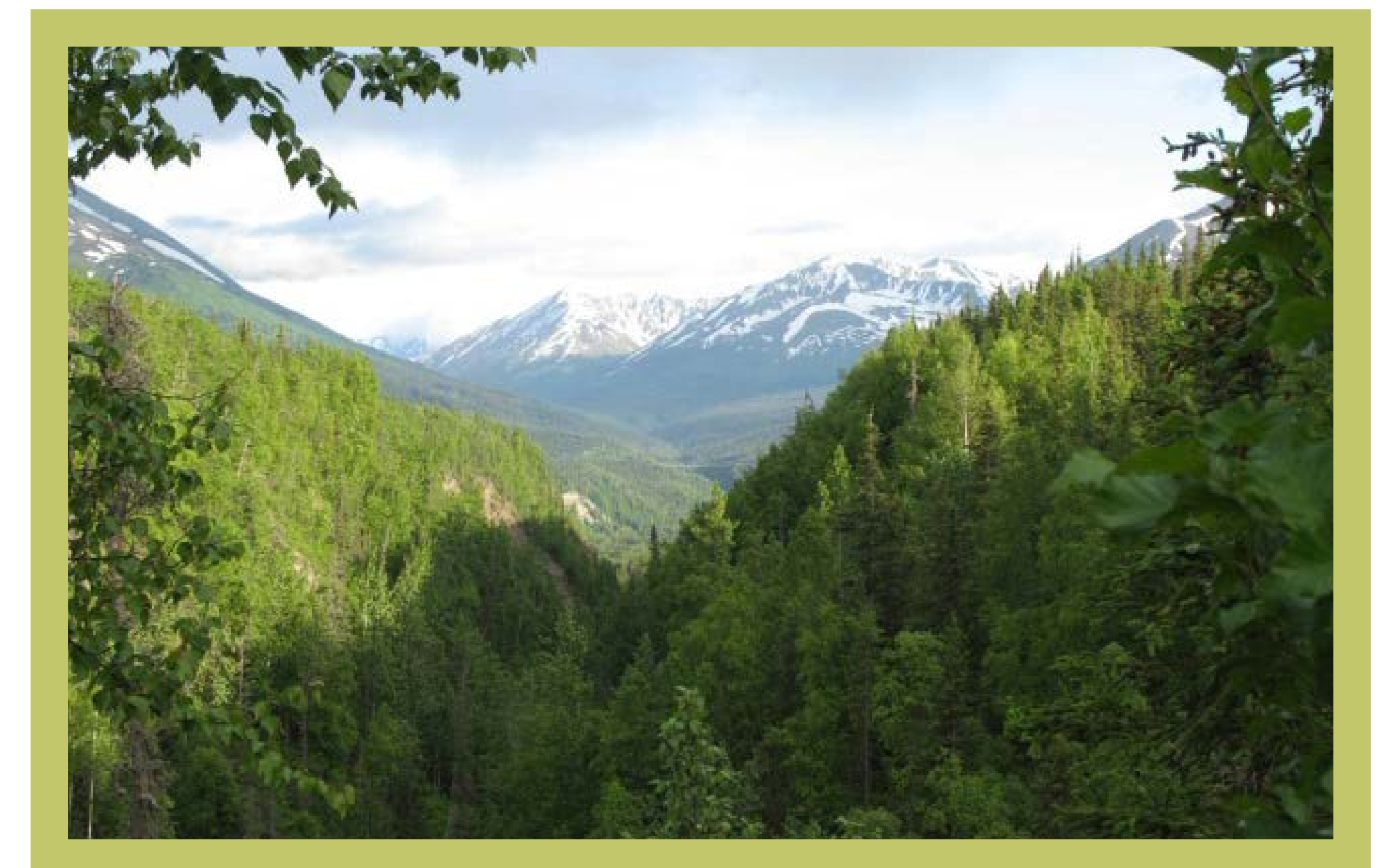
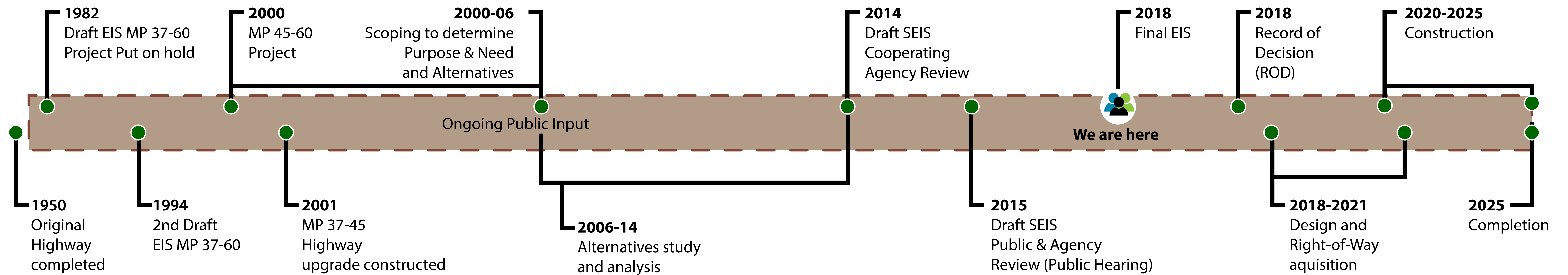


Narrow or nonexistent shoulders increase the chance for run-off-the-road accidents.

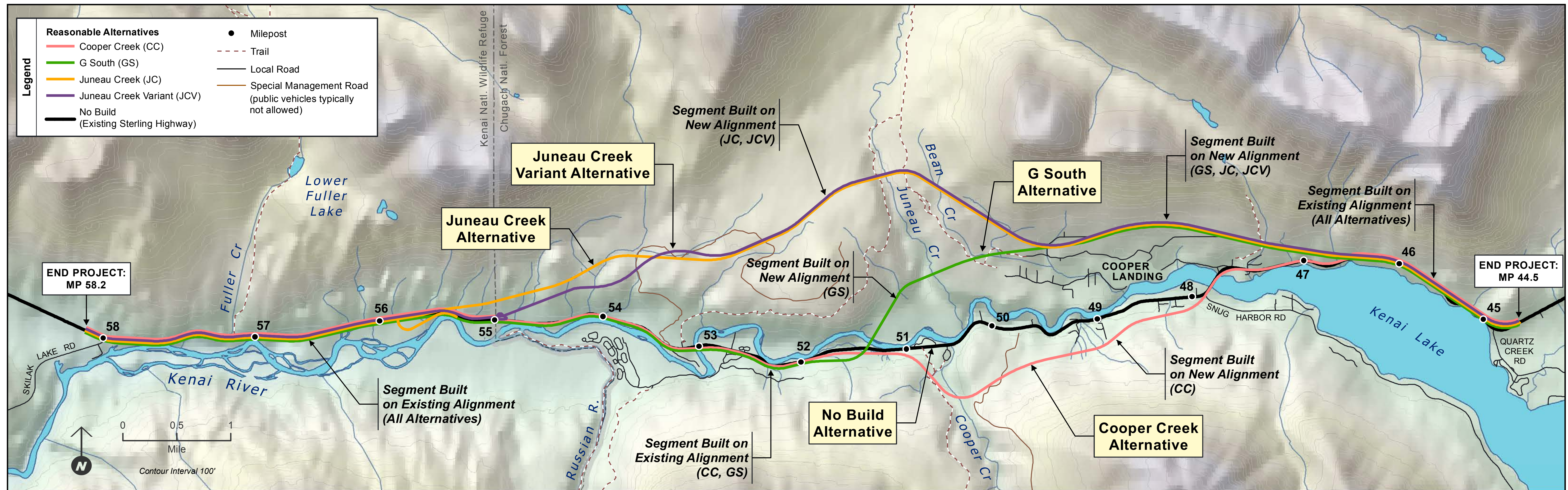
Timeline



Project Timeline and NEPA Steps



Alternatives Evaluated in the EIS



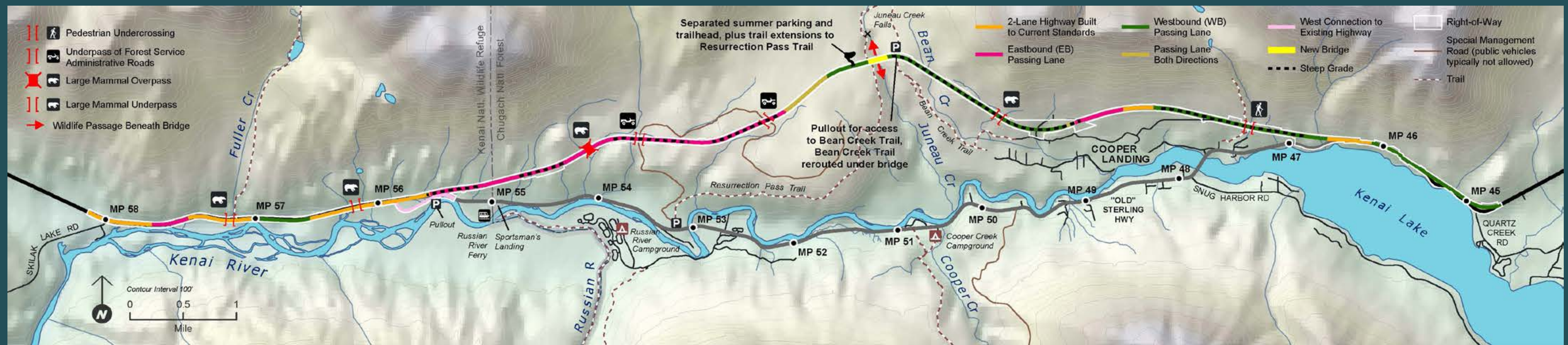
What's New in the EIS?



The Draft Supplemental EIS was published in March 2015. The 2018 Final EIS includes changes.

- » **Identification of a preferred alternative (Juneau Creek) (Section 2.7/2.8)**
- » **Changes based on comments:**
 - Safety information (Section 3.6)
 - Cultural resource mitigation (Section 3.9)
 - Additional information on spills (Section 3.19)
 - More specific wildlife crossing information (Section 3.22.3.2)
 - Analysis of access to State Management Unit 395
 - Information about land exchange (Sections 3.27.4.3 & 3.27.7)
- » **New Least Overall Harm Analysis (Section 4.8)**
- » **New Studies/Appendices**
 - Crash analysis (Appendix A)
 - Draft 404(b)(1) Analysis for wetlands (Appendix G)
 - Financial Plan (Appendix H)
 - Wildlife Crossing Mitigation Analysis (Appendix I)
 - Comments and Responses on the Draft SEIS (Appendix J)
 - An agreement on mitigating historic and cultural resources (Appendix K)

Why Juneau Creek?



Why is the Juneau Creek Alternative preferred?

Changes since the G South Alternative was identified as preferred:

- » Comments increased the weight given to protection of the Kenai River.
- » Commitment to land exchange by Kenai National Wildlife Refuge and Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (CIRI).
- » Impacts to Kenai River Special Management Area and Kenai River Recreation Area by the Cooper Creek and G South alternatives were found to be greater than de minimis.

Other factors—Juneau Creek Alternative would:

- » Move most traffic away from the Kenai River.
- » Remain north of the Kenai River, not crossing it at all.
- » Avoid most property and community impacts.
- » Have lower cultural impacts than the other alternatives.
- » Separate local traffic from through traffic.
- » Perform best of all alternatives for traffic.

Mitigation



» Property

- Compensate land owners at fair market value.
- Install directional signs to Cooper Landing business area.



» Cultural / Archaeological / Historic Resources

- Compile existing data and oral histories.
- Prepare scholarly and educational publications.
- Prepare nomination of the Sqilantnu Archaeological District for the National Register of Historic Places.
- Excavate archaeological sites that would be impacted.
- Follow specific protocol for any artifacts or human remains found.



- ## » Wetlands:
- Pay compensation for wetland losses or undertake equivalent conservation project.



» Recreation

- Build trail segments and trailhead parking.
- Provide pullouts requested by land managers.
- Snow River Bridge mitigation.



» Wildlife

- Build wildlife crossings under and over the highway.
- Design bridges to allow for wildlife passage along a waterway.
- Construct only during certain seasons to protect fish and birds.



» Commitments to work with adjacent land managers on the final design for

- Visual aesthetics
- Access
- Vegetation plan and invasive species
- Wildlife mitigation
- Wetland and water protection

Next Steps



**We
are
Here**



- » **Final EIS has been issued for public and agency review.**
- » **Public and agency comments are being accepted through April 16, 2018.**
- » **Consider comments and revise the Final EIS if needed.**
- » **Select an alternative.**
- » **Issue a Record of Decision.**

**March -April
2018**

**Final EIS 30-Day
Comment Period**

**April-May
2018**

**Consider
Comments on Final
EIS**

**By June
2018**

**Record of Decision
(ROD)**

2018-2020

**Design and
Right-of-way
Acquisition**

2020*

Construction
*Funding Dependent

2025*

Completion
*Funding Dependent

Comments



**April 16, 2018
Comment Deadline**

Your comments are important. The public and agencies are encouraged to review the Final EIS, accompanying appendices, and technical reports. Comments should be postmarked no later than April 16, 2018.

When providing comments, it is most helpful to focus comments on:

- » The alternative, impact, or proposed mitigation.
- » Concerns about the alternative and its effects on the environment.
- » Any incomplete or inaccurate information.
- » How the project or alternative would affect you.

Comments can be submitted:

- » Via the website using the comment form: www.sterlinghighway.net
- » Email: sterlinghwy@hdrinc.com
- » Standard mail:
DOT&PF Central Region
Sterling Highway MP 45-60 Project
PO Box 196900
Anchorage, AK 99519-6900