

# Sterling Highway MP 45–60 Project

## Project Overview

Updated April 2021



### Project Background

Built in the 1940s and 1950s, the Sterling Highway was originally constructed as a gravel road and not designed for the amount of traffic it sees today. In the late 1970s, the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) determined that it was necessary to redesign portions of the roadway. It had become increasingly congested, especially during summer months, creating safety issues for travelers. Several studies in the 1980s and 1990s looked at routes for the proposed highway. In 2000, DOT&PF and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) began the Sterling Highway Milepost (MP) 45–60 Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Environmental studies, engineering, and public involvement efforts were conducted from 2000 to 2018, resulting in final selection of the Juneau Creek Alternative. The current design work is based on the Juneau Creek Alternative as specifically described in the EIS.



### Description of Improvements

The project will **reconstruct the east and west ends of the existing roadway from approximately MP 45–46.5 and MP 56–58** to widen shoulders; bring the roadway curves into compliance with design speeds; and add passing lanes, pathways, and wildlife undercrossings. Additionally, the project will **construct 10 miles of new roadway north of Cooper Landing and the Kenai River, between MP 46.5–56**. Traffic studies predict that 70 percent of traffic will use the new highway rather than travel through Cooper Landing. A **new Resurrection Pass trailhead and parking lot** will be constructed, with trail connections to the Resurrection Pass and Bean Creek trails as well as the Juneau Creek Falls overlook.

**New intersections** are being designed at the connection of the old and new highways. Construction will also include a **new bridge spanning Juneau Creek Canyon**. In terms of wildlife protection, the design features **four wildlife crossing structures**, including the first wildlife overpass of a highway in Alaska.



### Cost and Schedule

Construction is estimated at approximately \$500 million. The project will be constructed in five phases, and construction began in 2020. It is expected to be complete by 2025. Federal Highway Trust Funds are anticipated to cover 90 percent of construction costs. The State of Alaska will supply the remaining 10 percent of funding.



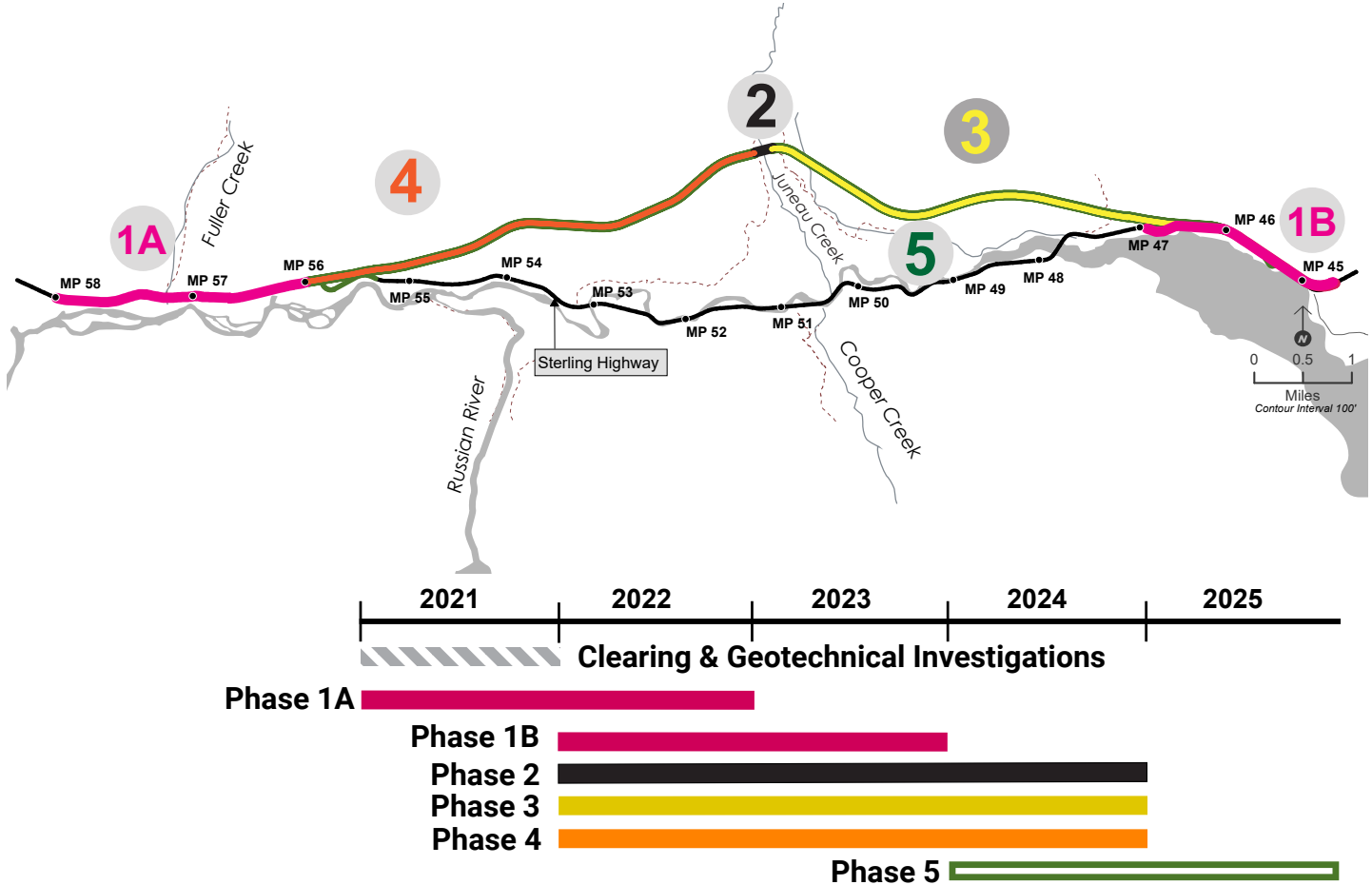
**Phase 1 (Construction 2021–2022):** The first design phase focuses on the east and west ends of the project, as shown in the figure above. DOT&PF has contracted with HDR to design the west end, MP 56–58, and provide environmental and public involvement support. R&M Consultants (as a subcontractor to HDR) is designing the east end, approximately MP 45–46.5. The west end will be constructed in 2021–2022, and the east end will be constructed in conjunction with Phase 3.

**Phases 2–5 (Construction: 2020–2025):** DOT&PF is designing the Juneau Creek bridge in-house (Phase 2). DOT&PF selected DOWL to design the middle section, from MP 46.5–56 (Phases 3–5). Design work on these phases is underway. DOT&PF also selected the contractor, Kiewit, under the Construction Manager/General Contractor contracting method to construct Phases 2–5.

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### How Can I Get Information?

DOT&PF plans to hold quarterly public meetings in Cooper Landing to provide updates and answer questions. Please join our mailing list or visit our website to receive future notices. DOT&PF also intends to provide monthly updates via our mailing list, the Cooper Landing Crier, and the Moose Pass Messenger. All public materials, including information from past public meetings, are available on our comprehensive website.

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