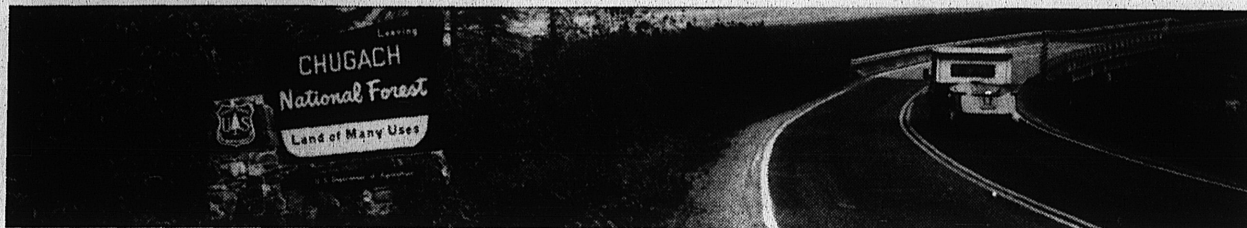


Concern 1: Land Availability



Under the terms of the Initiative, each potential relocation site proposed to Alaskan voters must meet certain requirements with respect to characteristics of the land. Each site must consist of 100 square miles of contiguous land, which must be owned by the State or be available to the State at no cost. The land must also be available within sufficient time for relocation to begin by October, 1980.

The analysis of land status has become one of the most difficult and complex components of the site selection process. At each phase of the screening process a separate evaluation has been undertaken to determine land status according to criteria developed by the CSSC and the project team.

At the beginning of Phase 2 the Committee identified categories of land which would be considered available to the State within the time frame established by the Initiative. These categories were: State lands (patented, tentatively approved, and selected); Federal lands (D-1 Federal withdrawals for classification and public interest); and Borough lands (patented, tentatively

approved, and selected). Two categories were excluded from further consideration because of unavailability to the State: D-2 (withdrawals for possible inclusion in the four national systems) and Village withdrawals.

During Phase 3 analysis, four additional factors were identified by the Committee for screening land from further consideration. Two of these factors were related to land availability. Areas with a significant percentage of private ownership or where significant percentage of the land is allocated to military reservations were considered unavailable to the State. State parks and state-designated recreation areas were considered valuable assets to the State which should not be disturbed and were also excluded from further consideration.

During subsequent work phases, a more detailed analysis of private ownership and other legal encumbrances will be made for each potential relocation site. Detailed information on land status and ownership in each of the recommended sites will be included in the final project report.

Concern 2: The Natural Environmental Factors



Building in Alaska can be extremely difficult and the consequences of poor planning can be seen by all. Some villages and towns are flooded each year by nearby rivers and streams. Rough, bumpy roads reflect the uneven settlement of underlying permafrost. Houses and buildings constructed on unstable slopes are subject to sliding when earthquakes occur. Buildings on northern hill slopes endure colder winters and deeper snows and thus are faced with higher heating costs and greater inconvenience than those on south slopes. In some places, wildlife have been displaced, even destroyed, by poor road locations.

All of these problems can be avoided. Knowing where such areas are and where such hazards and resources exist is the first step. To identify natural problems in various phases, the CSSC was aided by the Scientific Resource Team, the statewide resource inventory of the Federal/State Land Use Planning Commission, and Dames & Moore, consultants in the applied earth sciences.

Within the general area of natural environment concerns, various factors were used to evaluate areas of Western Alaska in terms of fitness, or qualification, for a new capital. Areas were separately mapped and divided into subareas of high, moderate, or low potential for the building and operation of a new capital in terms of each factor. These natural problems or limitations continue to be studied in increasing detail as the selection of all potential land areas is narrowed to not more than three potential sites.

Areas of concern in the natural environment identified by the CSSC are as follows:

Wildlife

Alaska's wildlife heritage is an important, social, recreational, and economic resource. Areas where one or more wildlife species show a marked intolerance to intrusion or alteration of habitat, such as denning and calving grounds, and habitats of rare or endangered species, were designated as "no-build" areas. For other species, ranges and migratory patterns are continually being refined on the basis of field investigation, and suitable limits established for capital development.

Climate

Winters are cold in Alaska. Comfort and safety decrease as the temperature drops. For an entire city, heating costs can be enormous. Wintertime construction, utility service, and vehicle use become more difficult. Heavy snow build-up would present snow removal problems and would limit construction.

Climatic suitability has been examined in terms of comfort and construction limitations. These limitations also infer ease or difficulty of maintenance. Areas of Alaska being considered for a new capital have varying suitability with respect to climate. Some areas have more sunny days than others; some areas have more rain and snow, while some areas have colder temperatures and, consequently more heating degree days. These factors relate to the comfort of people who will live and work in the new capital, and to the ease or difficulty of building and maintaining the new capital.