

SECTION L SUPPORT VESSELS AND AIRCRAFT INFORMATION

(a) General

Transportation of Freight

Equipment and materials are generally transported via the road system to Nikaitchuq.

Shipment of large equipment and significant resupply of materials between OPP and SID occurs either during the open water season via barge or during the winter season using the ice road. A 200-ton shallow draft (3-foot) tug and barge is used to transport heavy freight between OPP and SID during the open water season (typically available from July through early October).

During most winters, an ice road between OPP and SID is constructed allowing access by highway vehicles. When an ice road is constructed, it is typically available from early to mid-February to mid to late May. Start and end dates of ice road availability vary from year to year and are dependent on weather and other factors. The driving surface of the ice road is typically 4.25 miles long and 60 feet wide. The ice road is approximately 72 inches (6 feet) thick on floating ice, with a capacity of 250,000 pounds. The ice road is used for crew changes and material transports, when available, during the winter.

In years when an ice road is constructed between OPP and SID, three sea ice pads (one at OPP and two at SID) are typically constructed. The three ice pads total approximately 6 acres in area. The ice pad at OPP is located next to the shoreline, near the onshore ramp, and is used as a pullout to allow personnel traveling to SID to remove dirt from their vehicles before entering the ice road. The two SID ice pads are used as staging areas for equipment and dry materials, and for extra parking.

Transportation will align with the current practice. Equipment and materials will be transported predominately over the existing gravel road system to Oliktok Point for Nikaitchuq operations. Drill pipe will most likely be transported via rail to Fairbanks, then via truck to OPP. From OPP, materials will be transported to SID via barge and/or ice road, depending on the season. Most materials, including pipe, are expected to be mobilized to SID during summer 2017; however, additional materials can be transported via barge during the 2018 open water season or via the ice road when it is open. Demobilization of equipment and materials not necessary for the Nikaitchuq North Project is not anticipated.

Logistics and transportation support activities at SID, including the Nikaitchuq North Project, is provided in Table L-1. Although some equipment and materials may be transported to SID during the 2018 open water season, the amount will not be sufficient to require additional hovercraft or barge trips.

Transportation of Personnel

Personnel typically transit from areas in Alaska and the Lower-48 via commercial aircraft to the Prudhoe Bay/Deadhorse airport, then via ground transportation (bus or truck) to OPP over existing gravel roads. Personnel travel to SID via crew boats (open water season), hovercraft (shoulder season), or vehicle on the ice road (winter season).

A 24-passenger boat with 5,000 pounds of freight capacity is available to provide crew changes and light freight support during the summer open water season. The crew-change boat typically provides trips twice daily.