

# The Interior Alaska Veterans Cemetery: A Multi-Stakeholder Success Story



National Association of Environmental Professionals  
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# Introductions



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NEPA Task Lead



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Environmental Specialist  
NEPA Task Support



# Presentation Overview

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- Project Overview
- Challenges Experienced
- Steps Taken: Multi-stakeholder approach
- Lessons Learned
- Next Steps
- Questions & Comments

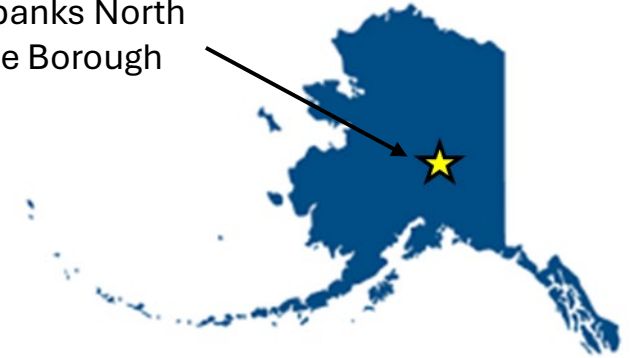


# Project Overview

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# Purpose and Need

Fairbanks North  
Slope Borough

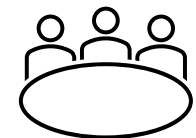


## Need:

11,000 Veterans reside within 75 miles of the Fairbanks North Star Borough representing the second densest population of Veterans in Alaska.

## Purpose:

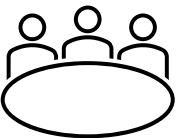
Meet the VA's goal to locate a cemetery within 75 miles of 95% of the country's Veterans. Provide an appropriate place of interment for Interior Alaskan Veterans and their eligible family members.

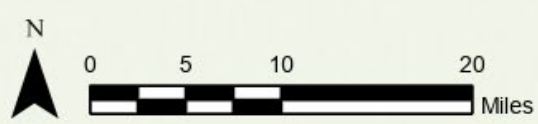
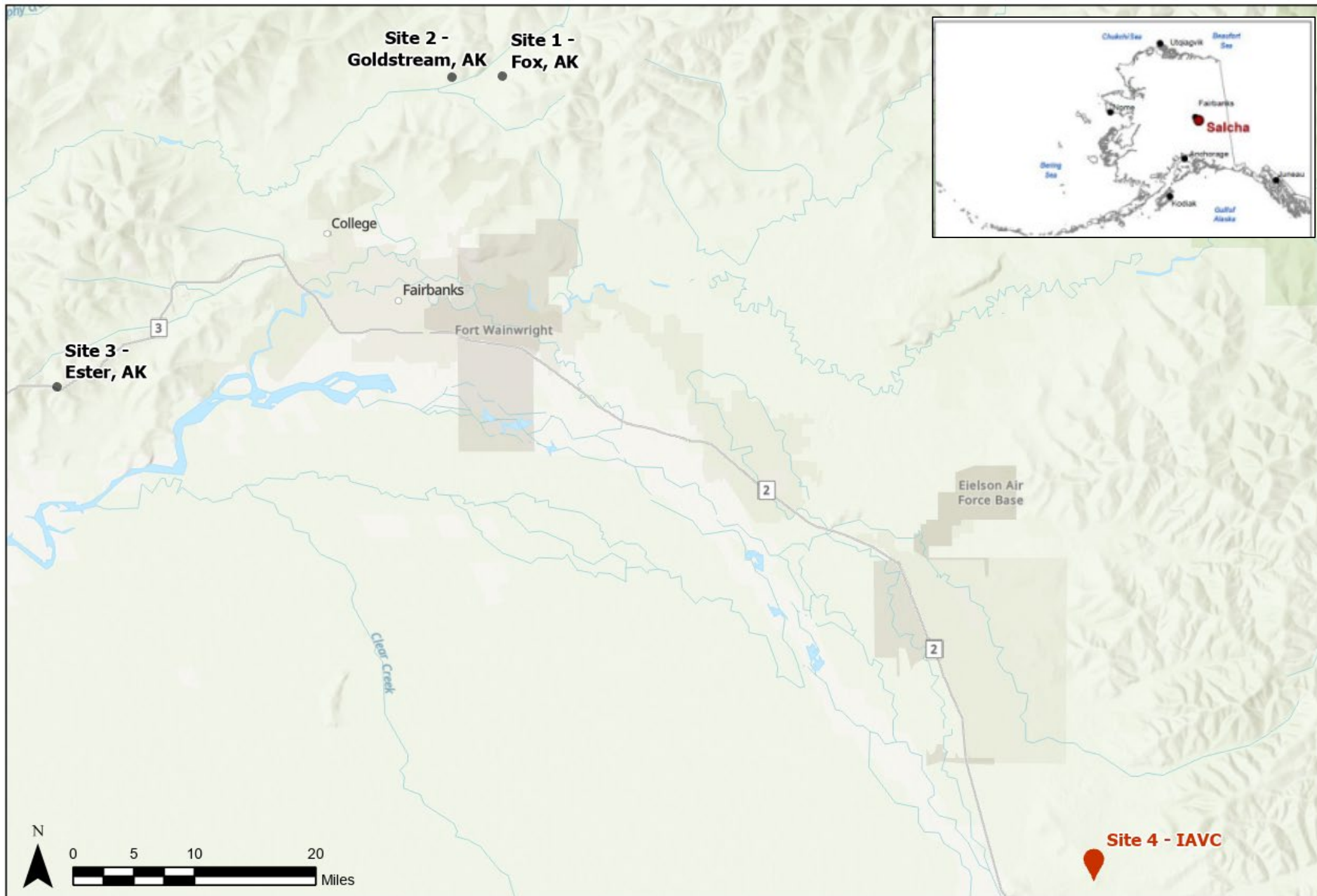


# Background

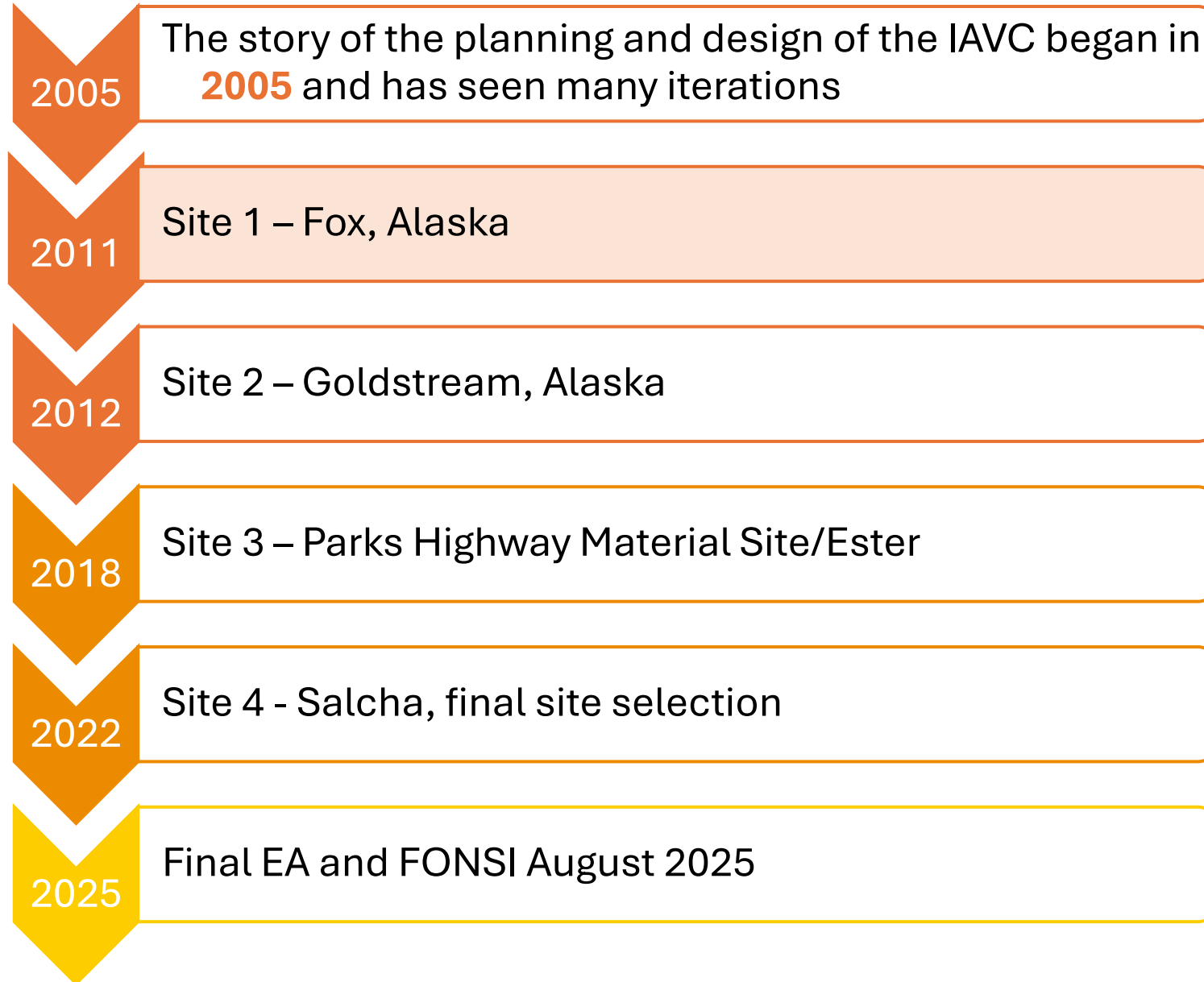


- Conceptually evaluated as a state sponsored project
- National Cemetery Administration, Veterans Cemetery Grants Program
- FY2025 establishment grant for Alaska's first state Veterans cemetery = federal nexus
- Different types of Veterans cemeteries



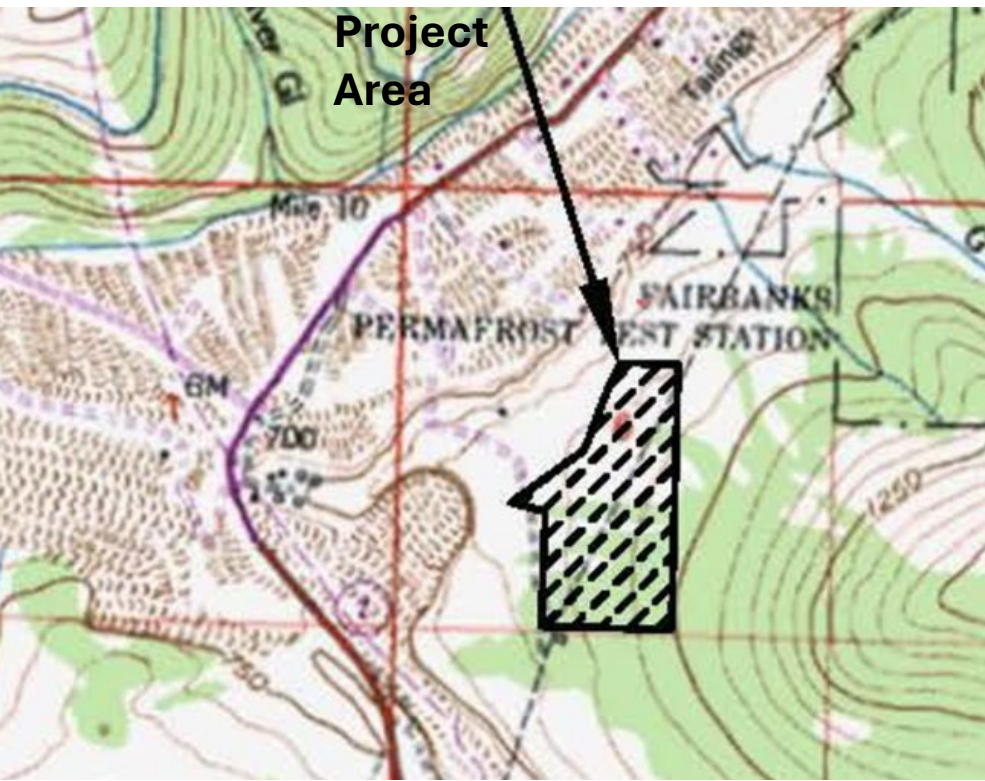


# SITING HISTORY

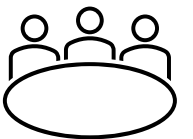




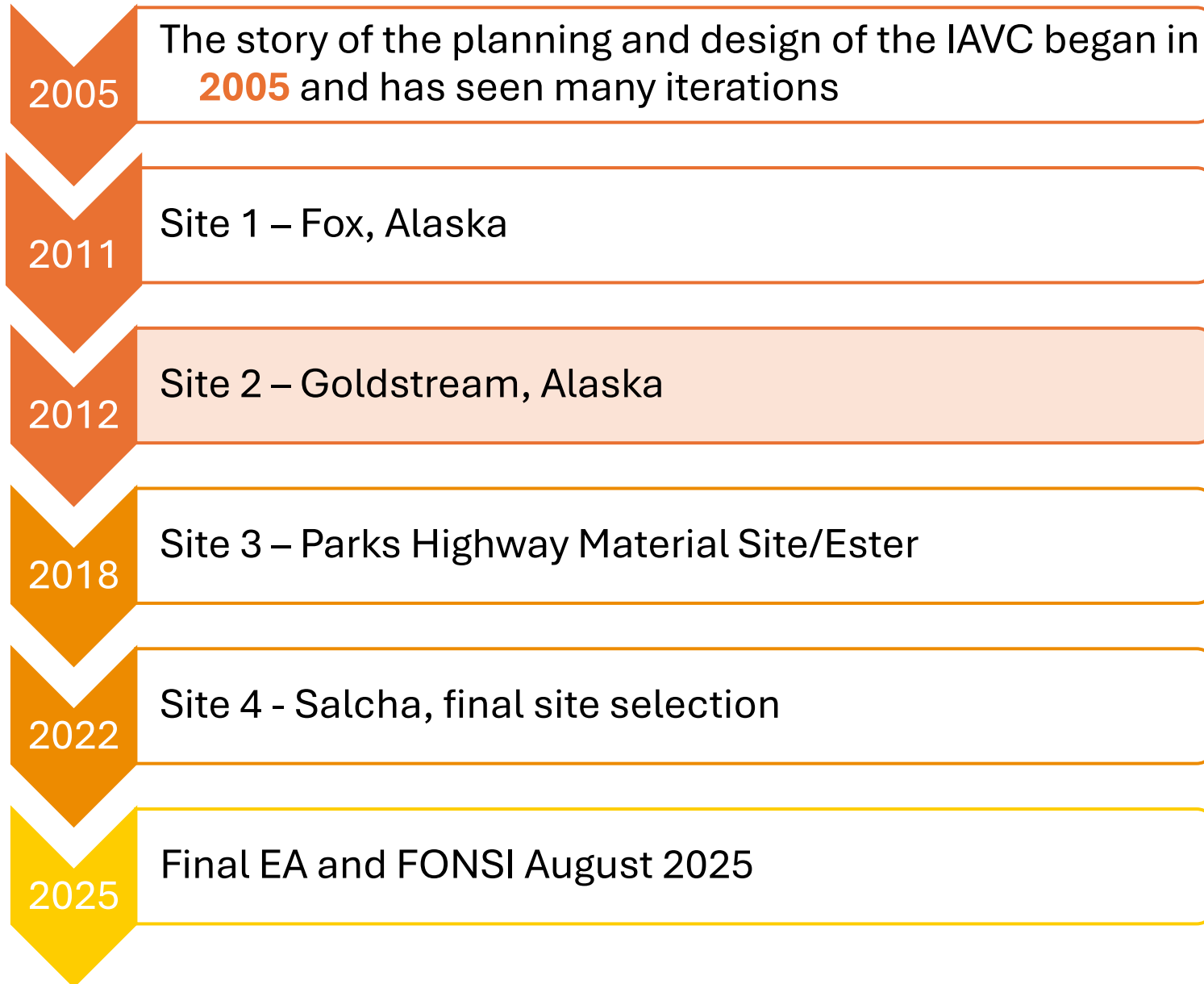
# Site 1 - Fox, AK

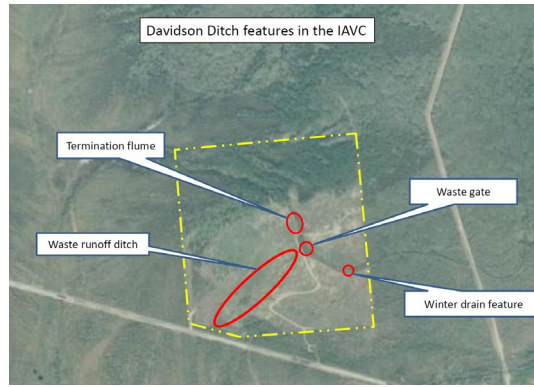
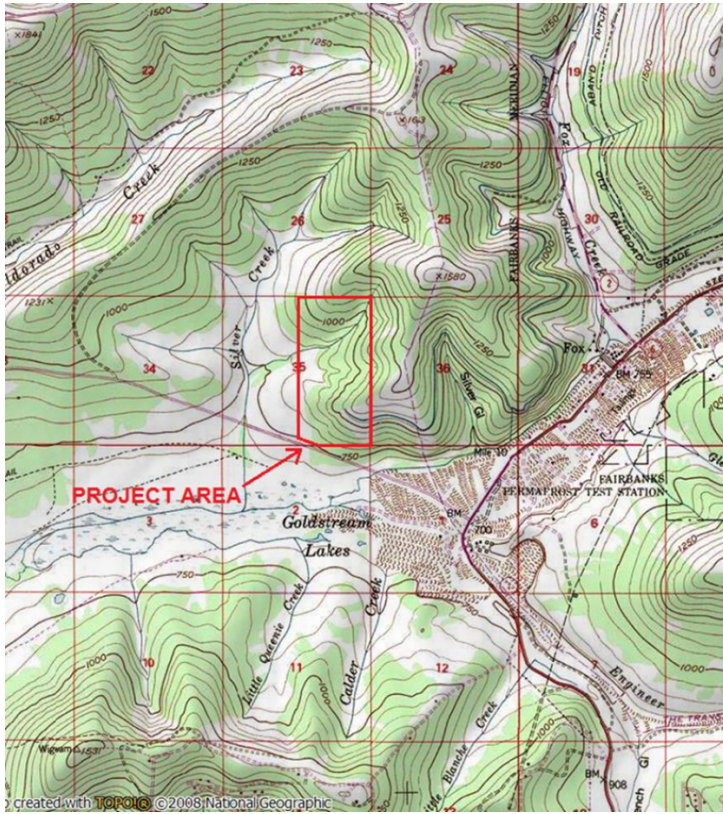


- Challenges
  - Permafrost prevalence throughout the site
  - In close proximity to the [USACE CRREL Permafrost Tunnel Research facility](#)
  - Drilling showed instability and voids in the existing subsurface soils
- Studies Completed: Geotechnical investigation and survey only
- State land
- Stakeholders



# SITING HISTORY

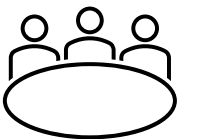
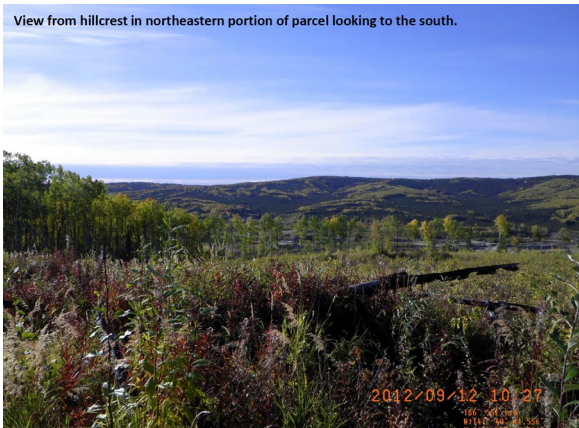




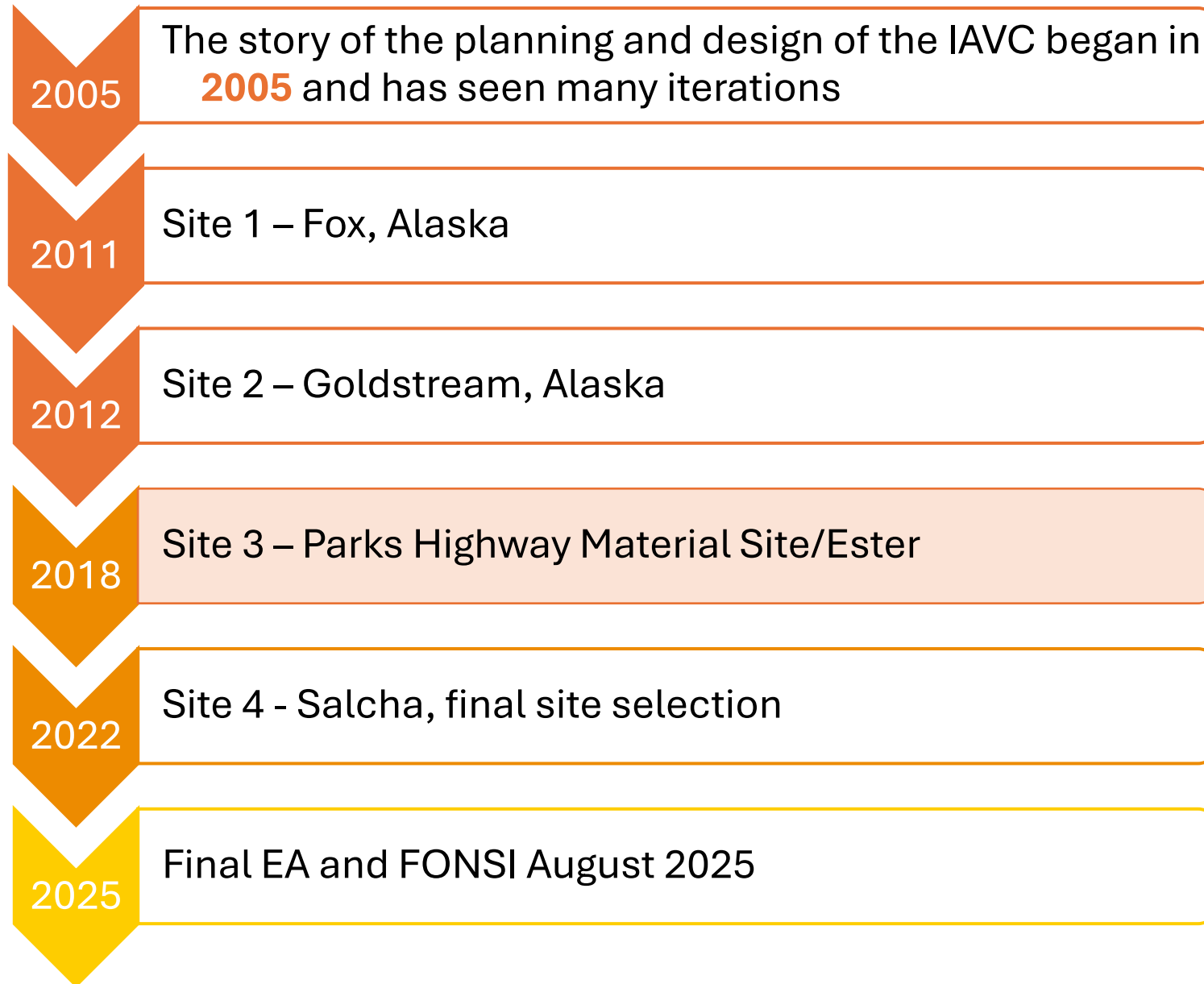
# Site 2 – Goldstream, AK

- Challenges
  - Davidson Ditch
  - Steep topography
  - Access road
- Studies Completed – geotech, survey, cultural resources
- State Land
- Stakeholders

View from hillcrest in northeastern portion of parcel looking to the south.



# SITING HISTORY

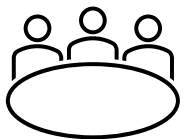




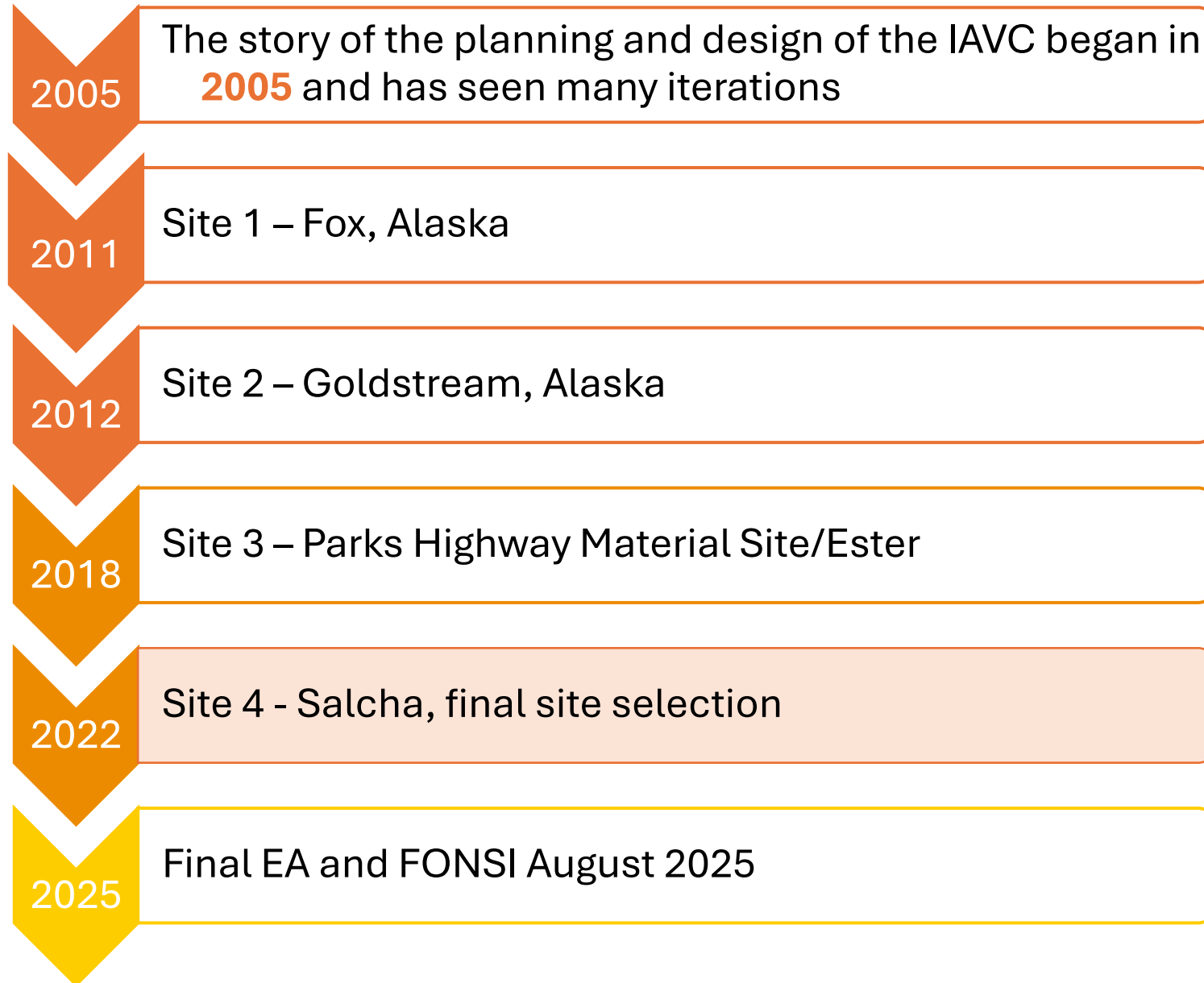
# Site 3 – Ester, AK

- Challenges

- Contamination from prior informal use as a shooting practice range
- Would require replatting
- Studies Completed – contamination investigation, geotech, schematic design.
- State Land
- Stakeholders



# SITING HISTORY

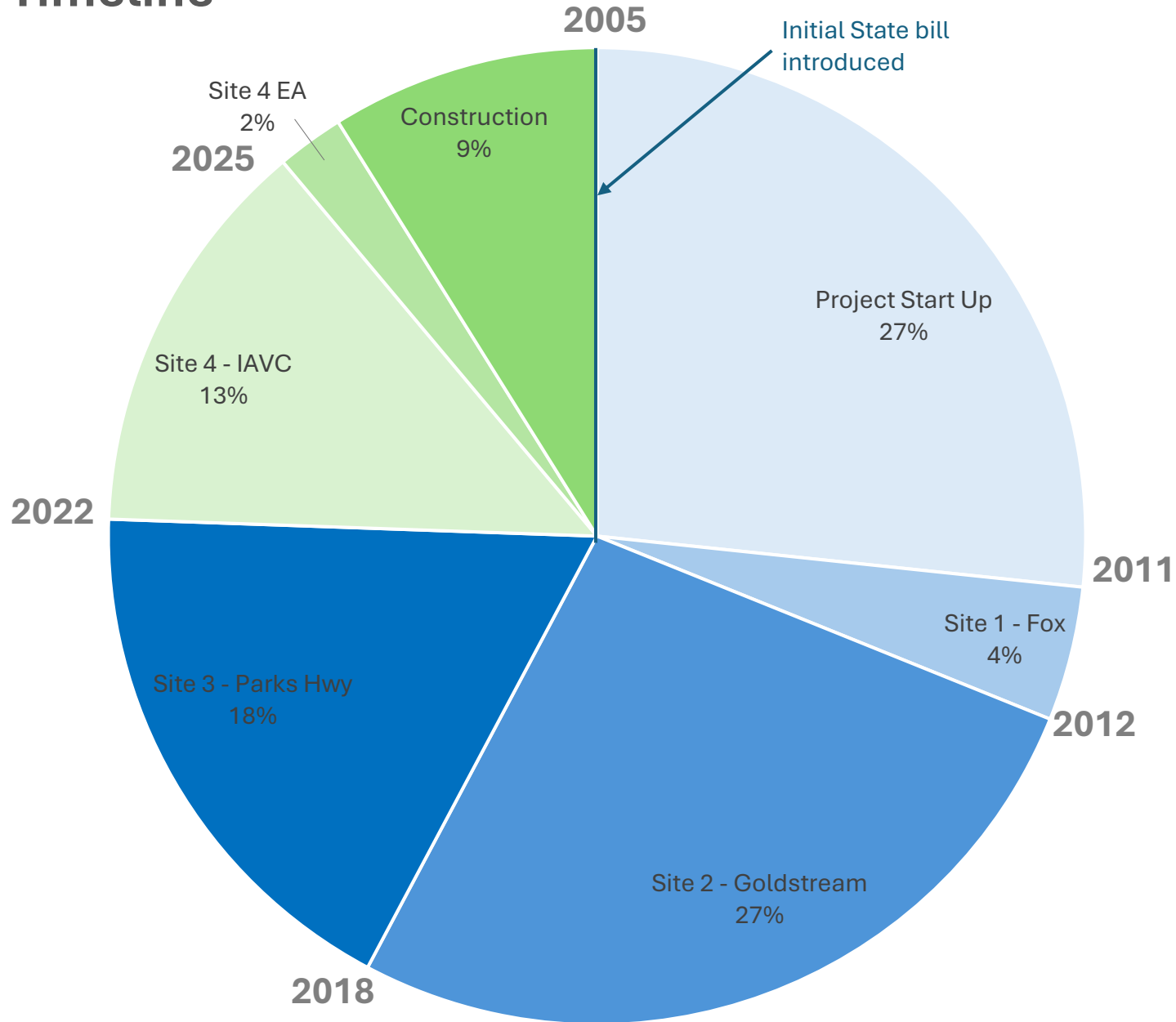


Site 4:  
Interior Alaska  
Veterans Cemetery  
(IAVC)

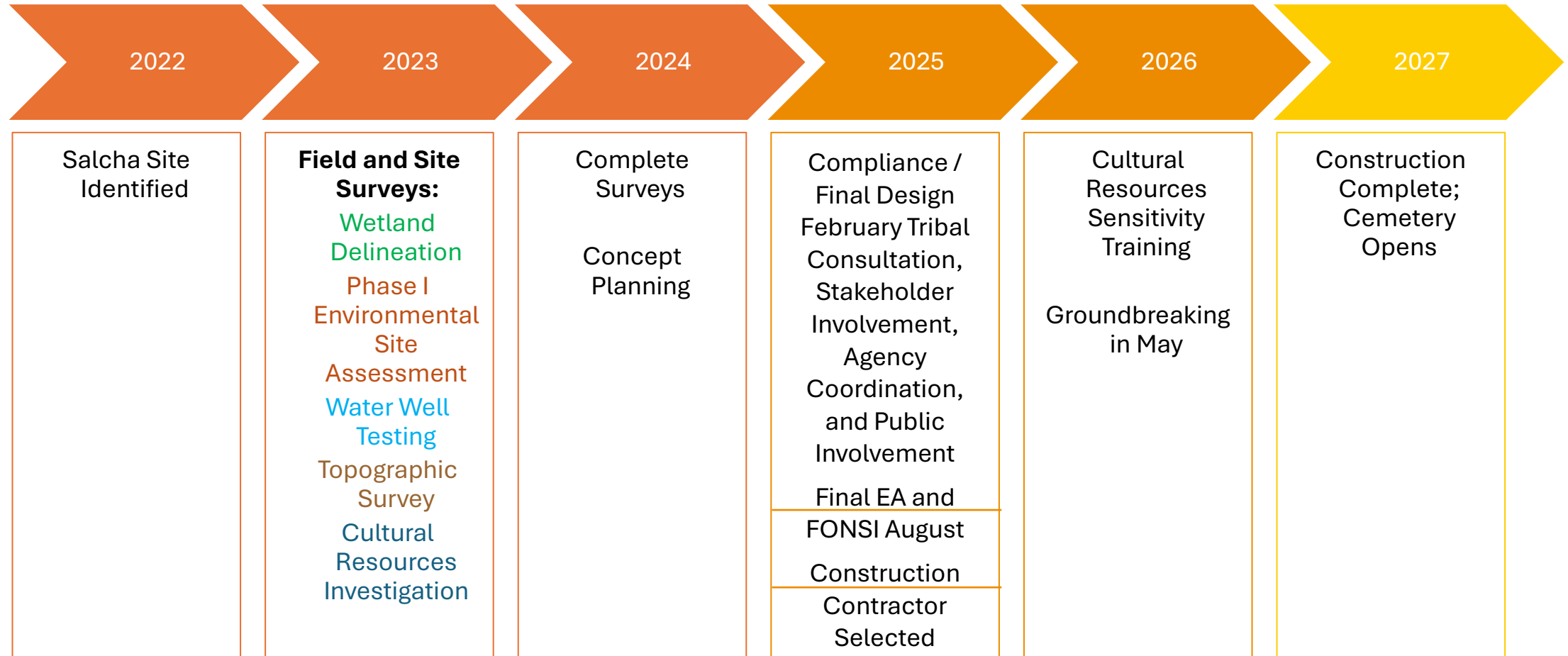
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# Project Timeline



# IAVC Environmental Review



# Agencies



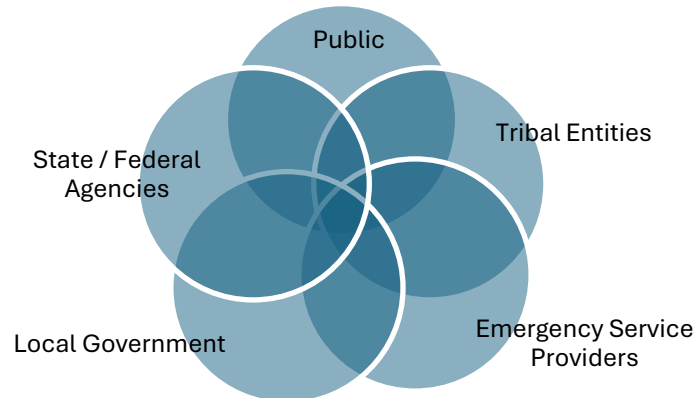
Department of Military and Veteran Affairs



Department of Transportation & Public Facilities



Department of Veterans Affairs



# Consulting Team



R&M Consultants, Inc



G Brown Design, Inc



Sustainable Design Group



RSA Engineering, Inc



Explore Design

MCG Explore Design



Reid Middleton



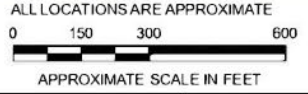
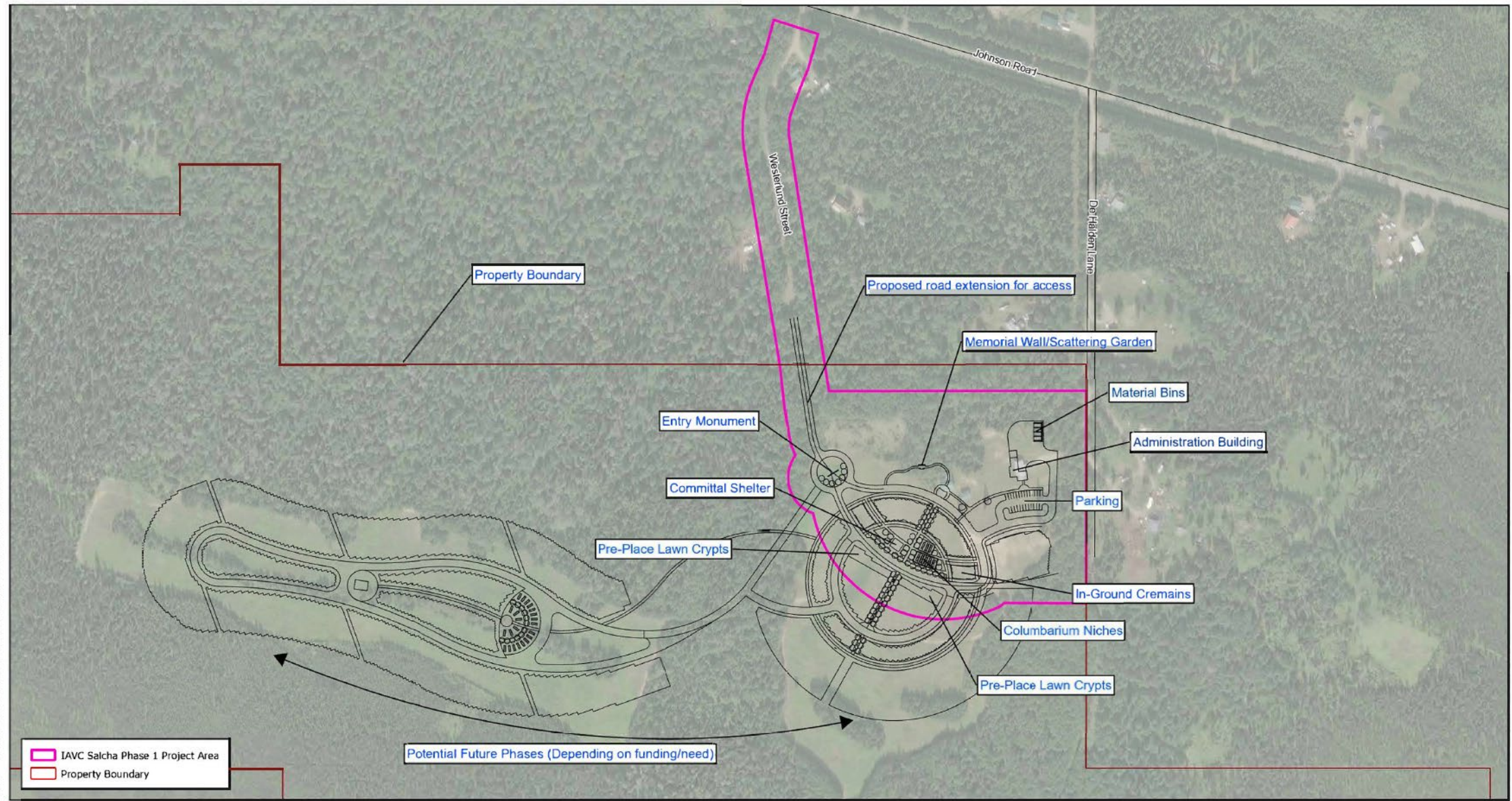
Whipple Consulting Engineers, Inc

# MASTER PLAN OF ALL CEMETERY PHASES

SYMBOL	DESCRIPTION
1	ENTRY MONUMENT
2	FLAG POLE / MONUMENTATION
3	PHASE ONE COMMITTAL SHELTER
4	PATH, TYP.
5	1,500 COLUMBARIUM NICHE (OVERALL 50 YEAR TOTAL)
6	1,500 IN GROUND CREMAINS (OVERALL 50 YEAR TOTAL)
7	PARKING
8	2,500 SINGLE DEPTH PRE PLACED LAWN CRYPTS (OVERALL 50 YEAR TOTAL) (DOUBLE DEPTH CRYPTS MAY BE AN OPTION DEPENDING ON GEO TECH REPORT)
9	EXISTING BARN (MAY BE REMOVED OR RE-LOCATED)
10	EXISTING GREENHOUSE (TO BE REMOVED OR RELOCATED)
11	EXISTING CABIN (MAY BE USED AS ADMIN. BUILDING)
12	MAINTENANCE YARD / MATERIAL BINS
13	STAFF ENTRANCE
14	PROPOSED VEGETATION/ TREE LINE (SOME AREA WILL REQUIRE RE-VEGETATION TO PROVIDE VISUAL BUFFER OR WHERE DISTURBED FROM EARTHWORK)
15	FUTURE PHASE COLUMBARIUM NICHE PLAZA
16	FUTURE PHASE COMMITTAL SHELTER



2: IAVC Project 1869.03.DWG - 300 DGNV Interior AK Veterans Cemetery Salcha 3 1869.03 Concept Drawing from G Brown Design, Inc. Base map from ESRI World Imagery. Salcha, Alaska.



Notes:  
 Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane Alaska 3 FIPS 5003 Feet  
 Concept drawing from G Brown Design, Inc.  
 Base map from ESRI World Imagery



PREPARED BY: R&M CONSULTANTS, INC.	INTERIOR ALASKA VETERANS CEMETERY SALCHA, ALASKA Z8003300		PROJ.NO: 1869.03
	MASTER PLAN LAYOUT - PHASE I		DATE: APRIL 2025
			REF: NEPA
			FIGURE: 2

# Challenges Experienced

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LONG PROJECT HISTORY



COMPLEX STAKEHOLDER  
RELATIONSHIPS



EXPEDITED FINAL  
SCHEDULE

# Steps Taken

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# Stakeholder Coordination

Early

Concise and Consistent

Flexible

Respectful

Well Documented

# Lessons Learned

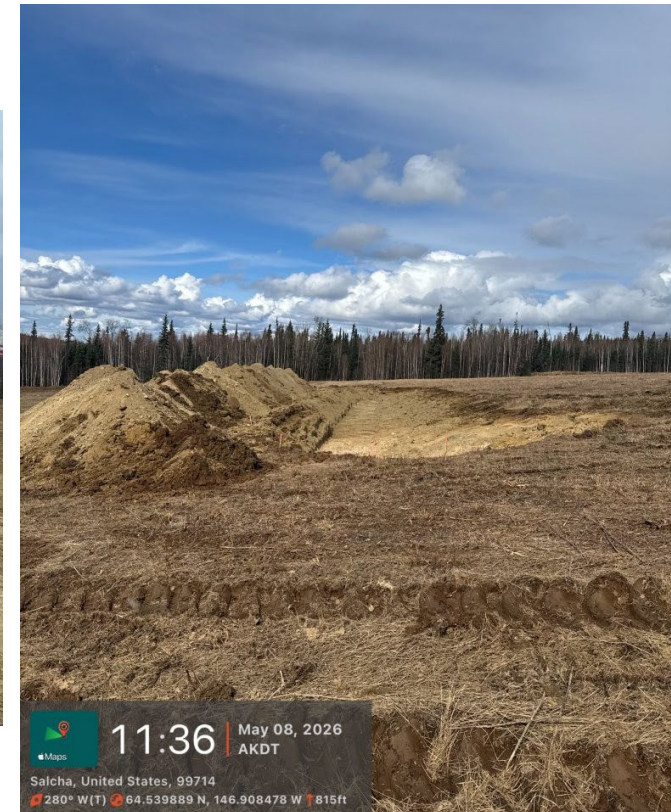
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# Effective Stakeholder Engagement

- Establish roles early
- Document, document, document
- Stay flexible
- Consistent and regular communication with all Team stakeholders
- Staying focused on project goals, timelines, and budget



# Next Step - Construction!



# Questions & Comments

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kmclean@rmconsult.com

Project website  
<https://publicinput.com/x63182>

