

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Looking Beyond The Windshield:

The Importance of Local Consultation in Cultural Resource Studies

Douglas Kelleher, Elaine Stiles

Introduction: If there's anyone in the hall, if you could please come in... I hope you all had a great time, last night.

Audience: [applause]

Speaker: You were probably pretty exhausted by the time you got back here. At least all of you that were in the conga line. I just want to remind everybody to shut your cell phones off so that there's no interference at all. If you have a cell phone, please make sure they're off, on "vibrate," or whatever so they don't interfere. If you have to answer, please go out this way. That way is the kitchen. Then go right outside, so it doesn't interfere with anybody's sound system.

This morning, Don has been really nice. He's going to moderate all of the sessions 'til lunchtime. Please welcome Don Cody. He has been introduced, already. Thank you. There are some really great speakers.

Speaker: Thank you, Judy. You're probably really disappointed if you saw the original program. It's supposed to be Kay Lynn Bailey who's moderating this session. Kay Lynn is part of my environment team in the Resource Center with Federal Highway Administration. For those of you who know her but don't know yet -- she's been selected to be part of the academic study program that FHWA supports. She's off at Georgia Tech doing a master's degree for a year. That's why she's not here, this morning.

As Judy said, we're going to be here all morning in this room. We've got two sessions before the break, and one after it. The first session this morning is entitled, "Looking Beyond the Windshield. The Importance of Local Consultation and Cultural Resource Studies." It will be presented by two people from VHB Consultants -- Doug Kelleher and Elaine Stiles.

Doug is a senior preservation planner with VHB. He's located in Watertown, Massachusetts. His preservation planning and cultural resource compliance practice area provides services to a variety of public and private sector clients, including state departments of transportation, public and private colleges and universities, and private developers.

Prior to joining VHB, he worked in the planning and environmental divisions of the Massachusetts Highway Department. Doug is a graduate of Roger Williams University Historic Preservation Planning Program, and currently serves on the board of directors for the preservation of Massachusetts -- the state preservation advocacy organization in Massachusetts.

He'll be assisted in the presentation by Elaine Stiles, also from VHB in Watertown. She is a preservation planner and architectural historian with the company. Before joining VHB, she worked as a senior historian at Preservation Company, a consulting firm in Kensington, New Hampshire. She earned her MA in preservation studies from Boston University, and holds a BA in art history from Smith College.

Doug?

Douglas Kelleher: Thank you, Don.

Good morning, everyone. To start with, I think it would be beneficial at least for Elaine and myself to know how many of you folks -- whether you're Federal Highway officials, DOT officials or consultants, deal with cultural resources on a regular basis, with transportation projects? Okay. More than half, I'd say. How many of you wish you didn't have to deal with cultural resources on a regular basis? That's good. Okay, Ray. Ray's given an exception, I guess.

This morning, Elaine and I would like to talk to you a little bit about our experience on the Aroostook study, which is a large project that VHB has been involved in for several years. It's one that really highlights how local consultation really makes a difference in identifying and evaluating cultural resources with transportation projects.

Just to orientate you folks, for those of you who are not familiar with Aroostook County -- though I don't know why any of you would not be familiar with Aroostook County -- but Aroostook County is in the northernmost part of the State of Maine. It's the largest county within the state. Also, as you'll hear a little bit more from Elaine, the largest county east of the Mississippi.

In 1999, Federal Highway and Maine DOT initiated the Aroostook County Transportation study to establish a long-range plan to improve transportation mobility and efficiency in the county, and to support regional economic growth. In the last several decades, Aroostook County has suffered from a long-term loss of population, higher than average unemployment rates, and lower than average rates of growth. And a lack of diverse job opportunities that would retain and attract a workforce.

Many believe the current transportation infrastructure in the county is a hindrance to improving the situation, and see they need to expand access to and from, as well as within the region. This is what's known as the [McComb Harbor Stork], and it's something you don't want to get stuck behind when you're in the county. This is one that's got its wings closed. But when it's fully expanded, it's about 25-feet wide, 35-feet long, and stands 14-feet high. Like I said -- if you're stuck behind this, it can considerably slow you down in your travels throughout the county.

Particular areas of concern are maintaining and expanding the economy within the county, enhancing the marketability of the county, reducing long distance an travel times for goods-to-market, enhancing the transportation system reliability, and improving safety throughout the county. VHB was contracted by Maine DOT to provide data collection, transportation design, and environmental services for this study. Including the preparation of an environmental impact statement to evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposed transportation infrastructure improvements. Last year, VHB conducted a large-scale cultural resource survey on behalf of Maine DOT, as part of the environmental review process for the study. That will be the basis for our talk, today.

The study area within the county is quite large. It is about a 100-mile north-south corridor that begins in the southern part of the county, near the intersection of Route 95 down here in Holten, extending all the way north to Madawaska, way up here. It includes the most-densely developed portions of the county, as well as the most-highly traveled corridor throughout the county.

The original study began with a lengthy, tiered screening process. That had 40 potential new and upgraded travel corridors that were studied throughout the region. These 40 were refined down to 5 corridors studied in the draft environmental impact statement. Those 5 were then refined to the final that's being studied in the final EAS that we're currently preparing. To help manage this massive corridor, the 100 miles was divided up into 11 segments. Those, you see here. They include Route 1 between Holten down here to the South, up to Caribou. Then Route 161 which extends from Caribou up to the Fort Kent area. Then a new bypass or a new alignment from the Fort Kent area over to Madawaska.

The different treatments that are currently being studied include a range of alternatives such as a divided 4-lane limited-access highway, to upgrading a two-lane roadway and improvements such as paved shoulders, truck-climbing lanes and improved clear zones. In this whole study area, cultural resources were of particular concern in the environmental review of the study. The county really had no comprehensive surveys completed in the past of historic resources. The data collection for this effort was a major undertaking, given the fact that it is 100 miles long. Elaine will talk a little bit more about the results of what we found. But basically, last summer we conducted the survey where we documented over 700 properties, which included over 1,000 resources that are greater than 50 years old. They had to be evaluated for their National Register eligibility. This effort was the largest cultural resource survey effort ever taken within the county, and certainly one of the largest undertaken in the State of Maine.

With that, I'll introduce Elaine, to give us a little bit more detail of what we found.

Elaine Stiles: Good morning. As Doug said, this survey effort took about six weeks. We actually had some field staff that we hired for the summer who lived in the county for that period of time. Basically, they drove around and surveyed all these buildings. Because of the large size of the study area and because of the extremely high number of properties that we needed to have recorded, VHB's GIS department made us this great database where we took a laptop into the field with an aerial photo base and just plotted each property on the aerial photo. We had a great little datasheet pop up, where we entered address information and property description information. Then this database was used to generate the survey forms for the project. But that subject's for an entirely other time.

After six weeks in the field, the cultural resource staff of VHB had a catalogue of about 1,000 properties that we needed to evaluate for National Register eligibility. These were scattered over about 2 dozen communities that had very different histories and cultural heritages. It was quite a task.

The usual professional standard for doing a cultural resource survey with a project of this size is generally what's known as a "windshield survey." As the name suggests, a windshield survey is a basic level examination of cultural resources that's pretty heavily-reliant on visual observation. It's typically done from a very, very messy car by the time you're finished. Basically, the visual observation is supported by documentary research.

The methods commonly used in projects of this size -- simply because the budgets wouldn't support detailed research into every property. Usually, a transcultural historian can kind of sift the chaff out of the pile of property. It's suited for many settings and resource types, but it does require several parameters to be successful. These include a region with a well-documented social, political and cultural history, and also well-documented building traditions. New England's really fortunate in that it's a region that's been heavily studied in these areas, typically. It has a lot of historical information available about most communities.

But that was not the case in the county, unfortunately. These parameters were really not there for most of the communities. As we started to sort of collect documentary research, we realized that a lot of the towns had no more documented history than a small booklet, maybe produced for the bicentennial of the country. It's also a region where buildings are heavily used. They're changed a lot over time. You can't really look at something and rely on your first impression of it, to assess significance.

In these cases, the only thing you can really do is consult with local historians. We actually found that to be quite successful. Consulting with knowledgeable, local [inaudible] it's really essential to fill in the missing parts of the puzzle. At times, it can be difficult to justify to project managers, because it's often seen as being really time-consuming and probably a budget-breaker. However, we learned through our work on the Aroostook County Transportation Study that the rewards for taking the time to do this local consultation was really an incredible proof of the process value, overall.

In order to understand the environment in which we were working to collect data for this project, it's helpful to tell a bit about the cultural history of Aroostook County. As you saw in previous slides, the County -- as it's simply called in the State of Maine -- is located at the crown of the state. It's surrounded on three sides by the Canadian provinces of Quebec and New Brunswick. Aroostook is the largest county in the State of Maine, and of course the largest single county east of the Mississippi River. It encompasses about 6,800 square miles of land, but has a population of only 74,000 people, which are mostly concentrated in the Route 1 corridor in the St. John River Valley, which is our study area. Most of the rest of the county is actually undeveloped land that's held under private ownership of large paper companies.

The economy of Aroostook County has historically been based on timber and agriculture. The timber and paper-making industry probably flourished the most during the 19th and early 20th centuries, when they centered logging operations in the timber-rich western parts of the county, and hauled the logs to paper and pulp mills that were in the river valleys.

Most of the agricultural end of the county is actually in our study areas, as well as in the St. John River Valley and along Route 1 and Route 161. It's actually pretty amazing. It's sort of like going to the Midwest, but it's in the State of Maine. The landscapes, really similar. The single-largest agricultural resource in the county has long been the potato, which thrives in the cool climate and is well-suited for the short growing season in the region.

The arrival of the first railroads in the 1890s accelerated the regional economy to a level of prosperity that really hasn't been seen since. The ability to transport their crops outside of the region coincided with the rise in national popularity for the potato. Then the two world wars and the need to feed troops overseas really led to what they called in the county, "The potato boom." That lasted well into the 20th century.

In the mid-20th century, the invention of techniques to flash freeze fresh produce and food products also resulted in a large number of frozen food plants in the agricultural-rich county, which included the Birdseye plants in Caribou and Holten, and the Cain's food plants in Presque Island, Easton.

International politics have also had a strong influence in history and development of the county. For most of its history, it's been a sort of frontier -- being at the outermost edges of the United States. In the early 18th and 19th centuries, it was sort of a borderland between French and British North American colonies. After the end of the Revolutionary War, the north part of our study area up here actually remained part of Canada, while the southern part of what's now the State of Maine was part of the State of Massachusetts.

Maine became a State in 1820, but the Madawaska region -- which is, again, this St. John River Valley area -- still remained part of Canada until 1842, when the Webster- Ashburton treaty ended what they called, "The Bloodless Aroostook War," which was fought between Maine and New Brunswick governments, over land claims in the disputed region. That treaty finally established the St. John River as the official boundary between the US and Canada in that region.

The county's location as the most extreme northeastern point in the US also made it strategically important to the military. The military established air bases at [Prescott and Limestone], to supply troops to the European theatre during World War II, and as an air and missile base during the Cold War.

Aroostook County was settled by a range of European ethnicities over the course of the late 18th and 19th centuries, giving it a very diverse ethnic makeup. The settlement patterns typically went from the northern and southern parts of the counties toward the less-densely settled center. But mostly, they were concentrated along Route 1, which was known as the Holten Road at the time, in the 19th century.

The earliest settlers to the region were French Acadians immigrants, who were expelled from the maritime provinces of Canada. They settled in the St. John River Valley in the mid-to-late 18th century. This region actually still has strong ties to that cultural heritage, including a strong community of French speakers, and a lot of cultural festivals and events promoting Acadian history and cultural traditions. The south and central portions of the county were largely settled after 1830, by people of English ancestry from further south in Maine, other New England states and New Brunswick.

One of the last groups to settle in the county before the 20th century were Swedish immigrants, who were actually recruited by the State of Maine in the early 1870s, to settle in some of the last vacant townships in the north-central portion of the region. Known as the "Swedish Colony," this settlement was kind of a social experiment to combat massive depopulation in the northern reaches of Maine, brought on by the Civil War and the opening of the American West.

William Widgery Thomas, who's the heavily-bearded fellow here, was a Maine Senator and former diplomat to Sweden. He kind of instituted this plan for encouraging permanent settlement by Swedes in northwest Aroostook County. In his visits to Sweden, he noted the similarities between the landscape and the climate in Sweden and Northern Maine. He thought that Swedes would be "perfect transplants."

He proposed a plan to the state government to go to Sweden and recruit an initial group of settlers to come to Maine. Basically, the state legislature passed an Act. The governor approved it, and in 1870 he went to Sweden and conducted a massive recruitment campaign, complete with an interview process for perspective settlers. He returned that summer with 51 people.

The state provided each household in the colony with 100 acres of land -- 5 of it which were to be cleared -- a state-constructed log cabin, complete with a cooking stove, and several months' rations to start their new lives in Maine. In return, settlers promised to stay at least 5 years, work building a road through the colony, which is now Route 161, in return for credit at the Colony Storehouse.

Thomas' plan to settle the region actually proved to be pretty successful. By the fall of 1870, the colony had 114 residents, and grew over the next 4 years to a population of 717. The Township of New Sweden was the first area of settlement. But as population increased, settlers spread to abandoned farmsteads in surrounding areas.

Our cultural resource survey found many buildings and building types that were evocative of the historical development of Aroostook County. The bulk of these were specialized agricultural buildings, which were widespread in the region -- such as Banks Potato Barns, which are actually heated in order to keep the potatoes from freezing during the winter. Acadian barns, which were a special form of dairy barn that has side aisles that warp around the central structure of the building. And the Madawaska twin barn, which is a very specialized regional barn formed for housing animals.

More recent examples of agriculturally-related buildings included the mid-20th century frozen food plants, such as the former Birdseye plant in Caribou, which contracted with hundreds of local farmers to grow peas and strawberries. It would actually have inspectors that would go out into the field and tell you the exact day to pick the produce in order to ship it to the plant.

The region also has a strong local collection of grange halls, Catholic churches, early 20th century tourist camps, and a strong collection of high-style late-19th and early-20th century homes constructed during the wealth of the potato boom.

While VHB was in the midst of sifting through this large group of surveyed properties, to identify potentially significant properties, representatives from the communities that comprised the main Swedish colonies-- which,

in the study, were New Sweden, Woodland and Stockholm and [T60 in the referral], which is known as Madawaska Lake -- and small parts of Westland and Paarhammer outside the project area. Residents from these communities started voicing their concerns about the project's potential impact on cultural resources in their communities.

Over the 134 years since the founding of the Swedish colony, the residents and descendants of the early settlers have carried on the traditions and cultural practices of their ancestors. Many residents still speak Swedish, and the colony continues to hold important cultural events, such as the annual Swedish Midsummer Festival, which is a celebration of the Summer Solstice, held in late June.

Many of the towns that comprise the Swedish colony are keenly aware of the unique place they hold in Maine and Aroostook County history. They're eager to promote it as a key factor in their economic development. The recently-completed comprehensive plan for the Town of New Sweden, for example, put cultural tourism at the core of their economic development plan.

The proposed plan in the DEIS, which was the only document the group had seen to that date, to construct what could be a limited-access four-lane highway along 161 and through the center of many of their communities, caused grave concern about potential direct and indirect impacts that that would create.

By the time representatives from New Sweden and other Swedish colony communities began voicing their concerns, VHB's cultural resource staff had already reviewed survey properties in the Route 161 area. They had identified National Register listed and potentially-eligible buildings -- at least the first cut. National Register listed properties in the area include an early 1870's restored log home called Timmerhuset, which literally translates to "Wood House," and the Larsen [Aaslen] House, which is an uncommon 2-story log home.

Several resources that also stood out as being architecturally or historically significant included the reconstructed colony capital [Leon] or Town Hall, the 1920 Capital School, the 1905 New Sweden Cemetery and Chapel, the 1892 New Sweden Baptist Church, and the early 20th century [Jebsen] Farm. These resources were typically beyond areas of potential effect for the project, however, or could be easily avoided. We had not, at that point, viewed the 161 corridor as having significant environmental constraints.

In response to the concerns put forth by the Swedish colony communities, VHB cultural resource staff met with representatives from its two primary historic groups in the area. Those were the New Sweden Historical Society and the Maine Swedish Colony, Inc -- which is a tourism promotion group.

The goals of the meeting were to share information with the organizations about the project and about cultural resource review policy and law, and to learn more about the groups' concerns, as well as get information from them on properties we'd already surveyed. This meeting proved to be a pivotal point in the story of the Swedish colony in the Aroostook County Transportation Study. Over the course of the meeting and several subsequent meetings, we learned that log homes such as Timmerhuset and the Larsen [Aaslen] House were not stoic survivors of a bygone era, but rather outstanding representative examples of a cultural tradition of log buildings that the Swedish settlers in the area brought with them from Europe.

Those of us with a cynical streak may not be surprised to learn that the government contractors who were constructing cabins for settlers upon their arrival in 1870 were running very behind -- having only 6 of the 25 cabins ready for occupancy when the first wave of settlers arrived.

Swedes have a strong tradition of building substantial, highly-finished log dwellings. Most found their rough-hewn state cabins less than adequate for long-term occupation. The settlers replaced most of the cabins within the first decade of settlement with more-substantial dwellings.

Unlike the quintessential American log cabin that we sort of associate with pioneer settlements, the Swedes construct squarehewn log buildings, which are not fitted. The cover them in colder climates with clapboard and shingles, which obviously make them very, very difficult to determine from visual observation -- unless you can actually go inside the building. Although sometimes, they have very, very wide door and window openings, and that can kind of be a clue.

Although the early history of the Swedish colony was actually pretty well-documented, the building traditions of the community are not well-documented in resources that are easily available. We really didn't realize the extent of the log building in the colony area at that time. For example, every log building in the town had been somewhat documented, but the only place it was written down was in a community fund-raising calendar, which was not in a library. It was just something people had in their homes.

The local informants from the New Sweden Historical Society and the Maine Swedish Colony assisted us in identifying eight additional log homes within the study area -- most of which would be impossible to discern without prior knowledge -- homes that barely warranted a second look on the exterior had some pretty fascinating interiors. The [Jacobsen] House in New Sweden, for example, was constructed in the early 1870s, but was updated a number of times on the exterior -- mostly recently probably in the late 70s or early 80s. On the outside is a rather unremarkable sort of brown shingles affair. But the interior reveals the extraordinary log construction of the building -- including the unique Swedish convention of using log partition walls, as well as log exterior walls. This is a part of the living room, here, showing the logs. They're actually quite large.

This is the former kitchen space. You can see it still has a tin ceiling. Then a log partition wall here between the living room, which is here... And this is a later addition. This particular house was actually pretty cool. They would chink between the logs with moss, to kind of regulate moisture levels. You can still see a little bit of the moss peeking out from between the logs, here. Then also, because all the logs were hand-fitted as they were notching them to put together, they would mark each one with pencil outlines. In some cases, they're actually carved into the logs, as well. This one says F5, F6 -- so that they would know in what order to stack them, so they would fit properly.

Outside the [Jacobsen] House. This stand of apple trees dating from the late 19th century lines the roadway. These trees were purchased by the [Jacobsen] family from a dealer in New Brunswick who specialized in very hardy apple varieties that could withstand the really harsh winters in the county. They were also known for their longevity. These are actually old Russian varieties that had been brought over to the United States -- such as Red [Astercan]. That's probably one of the more popular ones that you'll find in New Sweden. These are now basically heirloom varieties that aren't really commercially available, any more.

Other examples of log homes that we found throughout the Swedish colony include the [Laangstrom] Farmhouse in Woodland, which was constructed about 1874. The [Albert Johnson] House in Woodland, which contains an intact 1874 log dwelling with some frame additions. This is actually the log portion of the house, and this is the frame jut-out that they added to it for extra space. Perhaps actually the most well-preserved example, which is the [John J. Certibred] House in Stockholm -- the family actually lived in the house until the 60s or 70s, when they moved into another building behind it.

We also discovered through local constitution perhaps one of the oldest-surviving log structures in the county outside the St. John River Valley -- which is the [A J Filbreck] House in Woodland. [Filbreck] was one of the earliest settlers in what's now Woodland -- arriving in the unorganized territory in 1861, which was about 15 years before the Swedes, from Buckfield in Oxford County, Maine. The family actually had a pretty rough time. An early frost the second year they were there basically killed all their crops. They had to retreat back to Buckfield to survive. But they returned in 1863, determined to make a go of it. They built this house probably at that time. There obviously would be no real way to know this house was log construction, looking at it from

the outside. It was only basically through the local information we collected that we were able to document the history of the property.

Upon submission of the survey for the Swedish colony portion of the study, the Maine Historic Preservation Commission found these properties eligible for the National Register, as well-preserved examples of Swedish and English methods of log construction in the region, and for their ability to provide important information about regional log techniques. All told, local consultation and the windshield survey revealed 16 National Register eligible properties within the 14-mile stretch of Route 161 through the Swedish colony. That's a pretty dense number.

The presence of so many eligible resources in the area -- and also the desire of the Swedish colony to promote cultural tourism in their area -- because remember, this project is to develop economic development -- really necessitated a re-evaluation of the design options for the Route 161 corridor. If the treatment plan proposed in the DEIS were to go forward, which is a very broad treatment plan, but nonetheless, many of the communities' cultural resources would have been impacted by varying degrees.

The difficulty in obtaining Section 106 and Section 4F clearances in the area was one of several factors that led Maine DOT to put forth a 2-lane upgrade option for Route 161, rather than construction of a divided 4-lane highway. The 2-lane upgrade would include improvements such as paved shoulders, expanded clear zones and high cross locations and truck-climbing lanes in deficient grades.

After clarifying the treatment plan for the Route 161 in a series of public meetings with area representatives, tensions were eased regarding the impacts of the project. But many challenges remain. The high density of National Register eligible resources along Route 161 continues to be a challenge, because of certain locations. For instance, truck-climbing lanes were proposed that have eligible or listed resources on both sides of the road.

One of these locations is between the [Jacobsen] House that you saw earlier, and the National Register listed Timmerhuset, which are actually very strikingly sited on a very steep hill.

In these locations, VHB's transportation designers are working to reduce the roadway width as much as possible by assessing passing opportunities before approaches to the hill, for instance -- and various widening techniques to minimize [inaudible].

As with many projects of this size, there's still a staunch and vocal group of residents opposed to any change in the area. Individual homeowners remain concerned about potential impacts to their properties. They make matters by no means resolved, but the consultation with local historians, town officials and homeowners has made significant progress in building productive relationships, and made clear to residents that project proponents care about the needs of the community and their cultural history.

Based on our experience in the Swedish colony, VHB extended their efforts to consult with knowledgeable local parties on survey cultural resources in other communities along the project corridor, which were only minimally documented. Other discoveries made through local consultation have less substantial impacts on the transportation design for the project, but are equally striking demonstrations of the importance of local consultation in the survey process.

One such discovery was the popularity of early manufactured homes in that county. Particularly those made by the Sears Roebuck & Company. Between 1908 and 1940, Sears sold approximately 100,000 manufactured homes across the United States, in a variety of styles and forms. They are thankfully well-documented, in their catalogue. Sears homes were particularly well-suited for the county, where similar building supplies could be very expensive and difficult to assemble. And the construction season was very, very short. Homes from Sears could be easily shipped almost anywhere in the county on rail lines, and private [sitings] that served the

community across the region. Verified Sears homes include this single-story bungalow and the Hutchinson House, both on Route 1 in Monticello. Not Montichello, but Monticello. Local consultation in the Swedish colony also identified another Sears home in Stockholm, owned by the [Matson] family. This house was shipped in 30,000 pieces to the California Rail Siding in Stockholm, after the previous [Matson] House on the same site burnt down. This house was built in just under six weeks.

Several other homes are what we have termed, "Sears suspects." We haven't really been able to verify that they're Sears homes or not -- including this little craftsman bungalow on Route 1 in Caribou, and the Clifford and Jenny [Sharpe] House in Bridgewater.

Certainly, I think if the Aroostook County Transportation Study can teach us anything, it's that looks are really deceiving. Some of the properties that Maine Historic Preservation Commission found eligible for the Register are certainly not much to look at. But they really had some historical significance beyond their outward appearance.

This is [Stan]'s Store in T16R4, which is Madawaska Lake. It's the only commercial establishment in Madawaska Lake. You can get coffee here for \$0.10. He has a big sign out front. It's a big draw.

This store, however, as you can see in this picture, looked a little different back when. But this was the first tourist-oriented development on Madawaska Lake, which is now quite a draw in the county for summer recreation. This was actually built by John [Sodegran], whose log house survives nearby. At the height of its popularity, you could get a steamboat ride on Madawaska Lake from the store. There were concerts held, at a bandstand that was next to the store. He also had cabin and canoe rentals.

Similarly, this railroad potato house of the former Bangor & Aroostook Railroad in Caribou has become a hodgepodge of commercial interests, in what I like to call the synthetic siding museum. It's actually quite significant in that it's the sole survivor of probably dozens of similar structures that once lined the railroad yard in Caribou -- most of which were lost to fire and demolition after the shipping economy went toward trucking rather than rail.

Doug's going to come up and talk to you a little bit more about our lessons learned from all of this great cultural resource survey. Thanks.

Douglas Kelleher: Thanks, Elaine. Clearly, we learned a lot working on the Aroostook County Transportation Study. Not only about "The County," as it's affectingly referred to by many of us, but also about the power of consulting with local historians and residents in evaluating the significance of cultural resources. For the purposes of the Aroostook County Transportation Study, being able to consult with local historians and residents proved really to be essential, given the size of the study area, the number of properties that we were having to evaluate, and the fact that so little documentation had existed, previously, of historic resources throughout the county.

It also proved to be really the most efficient and effective way to collect additional information about properties. Typically, we're able to have 20-minute or half-hour telephone conversations with local historians that were able to gain incredible amounts of information about the historic resources. This type of information that we were able to gather from them typically would require additional research, secondary and primary research that would obviously prove to be way too costly for a project of this magnitude.

It also proved to have less quantifiable benefits in the area of public outreach. Many communities clearly relate very closely, as we saw in the New Sweden colony, to their historic resources, and are very emotionally attached to them. Sitting down with residents and local historians proved to not only demonstrate an interest in

the resources, but also went a long way in boosting local confidence in the environmental review process, so they had a name and contact that they could really turn to with questions or concerns about the project.

Clearly, the cultural resource survey effort for the Aroostook project was... even though Elaine had mentioned, there still are a number of people with issues that need to get resolved within the county, as far as potential impacts to historic resources. But it's certainly gone a long way in boosting a lot of confidence in the project, as well as in the process of documenting, evaluating and assessing impacts to historic resources. I think this is something that can certainly be applied to similar projects of this magnitude, as an effective, efficient and essential way of gathering information about historic resources.

If you have any questions...

Speaker: We have about four or five minutes for questions, if anybody has any.

Speaker: [inaudible] a Maine DOT question. That is, I believe you talked about the fact that the improvements originally had been thought of in terms of a 5-lane roadway. Now you're looking at it in terms of a 2-lane with improvements. What kind of traffic analysis did y'all undergo? Was it a capacity problem? Was it a safety problem? I mean it almost sounds like somebody defaulted to a 5-lane because we always do 5-lanes, as opposed to looking at what really was necessary.

Speaker: [inaudible]

Speaker: I'm Ray [Fosher], Maine DOT. I'm the project manager for the Aroostook Study. That study is unique in that it's not being done for what we would typically undertake a study for, for congestion or safety. It's being done for economic development reasons. There's been an ongoing effort by many individuals and some organizations in Aroostook County for improving transportation. As the graphics show, the interstate ends at Holten. Once you get off the interstate at Holten, you haven't reached the northern part of the State of Maine. You get off, hang a left on Route 1 and you travel another 100 miles to get to Madawaska. So the remaining individuals who live in Presque Isle, Caribou -- in the St. John Valley. Madawaska, Fort Kent, Van Buren region -- who feel that their road -- a 4-lane highway -- the interstate stopped at Holten. It stopped short. You need to be building that highway to Aroostook County. We need something to help improve and develop our economy.

The mentioned the [Luring] Air Force Base. That air force base was closed back in the early-to-mid 1990s as part of the base closures. That really took a lot of people and a lot of money. It really hurt the economy of Aroostook County, as well as their being challenged in the potato harvesting area. They're trying to find other ways for helping improve or boost their economy. They feel the best way they can compete on the market is to try to improve their transportation system.

Speaker: Any other questions?

Speaker: [inaudible] Is this for agriculture that they need it? To improve their economy for tourism? For recreational vehicles? What kind of service are you intending to provide?

Speaker: [inaudible]

Speaker: They feel that anything that can be done to help any of the industry. Their primary industry is agriculture and forest product. In the wintertime... They have a lot of activities in the summertime, but a big wintertime activity up in Aroostook County is snowmobiling. They really depend on that industry to bring a lot of people in. People come in from hundreds of miles on snow machines. You can drive right into the parking

lots in the motel areas. That's a huge industry up there. Whatever they can do to help improve their economy. They feel transportation is the key for improving their economy to get goods to and from the market area.

Another thing. A few years ago there was another fuel crisis. There was a spike in fuel costs. Many of the truckers were refusing to go to Aroostook County, because many of them have to go up there empty. They're not bringing products up. There's not an ability where they can bring something up, drop something off and pick another load up. Many of them are dropping loads off down in the Massachusetts area and then they'll drive up there to pick up a load. Many of them, because of the cost of fuel, were refusing to drive that far north empty to pick up a load.

[tape turn]

Douglas Kelleher ...Thank you.

Audience: [applause]

[session ends]