

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION
for
Mertarvik Programmatic National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Review
and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

February 7, 2017

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed action is to construct infrastructure at the new village townsite of Mertarvik. The development of Mertarvik is necessary to facilitate the relocation of Newtok residents from an existing village site that it is imminently threatened by storm-driven and permafrost degradation related erosion events that are progressively driving the Ninglik River through the community. The proposed action is needed without delay to avoid the potential loss of life and/or indefinite dislocation of Newtok residents associated with the relentless migration of the river. Based upon an average annual riverbank loss of 65 feet, the community has approximately 4 years before the community becomes non-viable.

Proposed Action:

In collaboration with the Newtok Village Council (NVC), the agency is completing comprehensive townsite planning for the new village site that encompasses all infrastructure necessary to support the entire Newtok population. The town site plan will include the following: airport; solid waste landfill; wastewater collection system and wastewater treatment lagoon; bulk fuel farm and fuel dispensing facility; power house and power distribution system; water treatment plant, water storage tank, and water distribution lines; barge landing; the town center consisting of housing, school, public buildings, and subdivision roads; and all associated connecting roads. The final siting of these proposed facilities will be determined in the townsite planning effort through a community engagement process. The proposed federal actions to be covered by the EIS will include all the infrastructure referenced above.