

# Community Coastal Impact Assistance Program

## Outreach and Education to Protect Coastal Areas

### Award Amount

\$ 111,493

### Grantee

Bering Straits Coastal Association

### Project Contact

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### Location

This project will be located in the Bering Straits Coastal Association (BSCA) region which includes the area of the former Bering Straits Coastal Resource Service Area, generally the Norton Bay and Seward Peninsula area in Northwest Alaska. All 15 communities within the coastal zone of the area will be serviced by the Bering Straits Coastal Association: Brevig Mission (65.334720° North Latitude and -166.489170° West Longitude), Diomede (65.758611° North Latitude and -168.953056° West Longitude), Elim (64.617500° North Latitude and -162.260560° West Longitude), Gambell (63.779720° North Latitude and -171.741110° West Longitude), Golovin (64.543330° North Latitude and -163.029170° West Longitude), Koyuk (64.931940° North Latitude and -161.156940° West Longitude), Savoonga (63.694170° North Latitude and -170.478890° West Longitude), Shaktoolik (64.333890° North Latitude and -161.153890° West Longitude), Shishmaref (66.256670° North Latitude and -166.071940° West Longitude), St. Michael (63.478060° North Latitude and -162.039170° West Longitude), Stebbins (63.522220° North Latitude and -162.288060° West Longitude), Teller (65.263610° North Latitude and -166.360830° West Longitude), Unalakleet (.873060° North Latitude and -160.788060° West Longitude), Wales (65.609170° North Latitude and -168.087500° West Longitude), and White Mountain (64.681390° North Latitude and -163.405560° West Longitude). The other communities that are not currently occupied or occupied on a seasonal basis may be involved in this project as appropriate: Tin City, Council, King Island, Mary's Igloo, Port Clarence, and Solomon. The project will be managed from Unalakleet located at 63.8816 North Latitude and 160.798 West Longitude.

### Project Duration

Project Start date: October 1, 2012

Project End Date: October 1, 2016

Project Duration: 4 years

### Project Description

The purpose of this project is to increase awareness in the BSCA region about coastal issues

and practices that will lead to conservation, protection and restoration of the coastal environment. The intent of the project is to accomplish two major objectives: Increased knowledge about how individual efforts can protect coastal areas and increased involvement in coastal issues through education and outreach. The direct benefits to the coastal environment include implementation of educational programs in all 15 high schools and implementation of environmentally beneficial community service projects by students in at least 3 high schools. The indirect benefits will be improved local stewardship, a reduction in coastal environmental impacts, and more involvement in local coastal issues.

**Environmental Education Component:** This project component involves a cooperative effort with the Bering Straits School District to develop an environmental education curriculum throughout the district and class environmental projects conducted by 3 BSCA high schools. Initial discussions have been held with the School District, and a final commitment to the project will be made before issuance of the request for proposals in Task I. The environmental projects will involve student research about current environmental issues facing their community, identify potential impacts from climate change or development projects, and develop and implement local solutions to reduce environmental impacts. The projects will also include training about how students can prepare for careers in coastal and environmental management. (See Measurable Goals and Objectives for specific educational objectives).

**Coastal Issues Outreach Component:** The purpose of this project component is to educate and involve residents and organizations of the region in coastal issues, including tribes, city governments and local residents. This outreach will involve a variety of media to inform people about the coastal issues. (See Measurable Goals and Objectives for specific Outreach objectives)

## Measurable Goals and Objectives

### Environmental Education Component:

- **Curriculum:** The consultant will develop a curriculum for a set of 5 modules for environmental education training that will be conducted in 3 BSCA high schools. The modules will address the following topics: (1) Ocean ecosystems, (2) Coastal habitats, (3) Impacts from a changing climate, (4) Land management agency roles in protecting the coastal environment, and (5) Careers in an environmental field. The curriculum will be designed to be expanded to other high schools in each of the 15 communities in future years. (Year 1)
- **Essay Contest:** An essay contest will be open to all 15 schools about how local actions can help resolve a coastal environmental issue. The winning essay will be submitted for publication in the *Nome Nugget*, the regional newspaper. (Year 1)
- **School Visits:** Visits to each of the 3 schools by Program Director and consultant to initiate class projects. (Year 1)
- **Class Projects:** Classes will be selected in at least 3 high schools to design and conduct an environmentally beneficial public service project. It is important to allow each class to choose the specific project they will work on to ensure it will be relevant to their community and that they will have the ownership in the results of the project. Projects will be required to have measurable outcomes (e.g., beach re-vegetation, restoration of

damage from off-road vehicles, trail hardening, invasive species eradication, or responses to environmental damage from climate change). (Years 1 & 2)

- **Project Summaries:** Classes will prepare materials to publicize their projects which will be distributed to other schools in the BSCA region (e.g., posters, videos, brochures, or project summaries). (Year 2)
- **Environmental Professionals:** An Environmental Professionals Program will be implemented in BSCA high schools. The program will involve presentations about coastal environmental issues, class room discussions and how students can prepare for a career in an environmental field. A guide will be developed to help teachers and speakers implement the program. Environmental professionals will be sought from the private and public sector who work in the in the BSCA region to present in the classrooms. (Years 1 & 2)
- **Final Report:** A final report will be prepared for this component of the overall project. It will summarize the project accomplishments, evaluate outcomes and include recommendations for replicating the project elsewhere. (Year 2)

### Coastal Issues Outreach Component:

- **Contact Agencies:** The BSCA will contact state and federal agencies that manage land or resources within the coastal zone to discuss opportunities to cooperate with the BSCA to benefit the natural coastal environment. (Years 1-4)
- **Press Releases and News Articles:** The project will include outreach to local media and development of a series of press releases and articles about the BSCA and their involvement in local coastal issues. (Years 1–4)
- **Brochure:** A brochure will be created to explain the BSCA programs. (Year 2)
- **Newsletter:** Newsletters will provide information about BSCA activities and programs. (Years 1-4)
- **Webpage:** A webpage will be developed for the BSCA that includes information about coastal issues of importance to the region. The web page will include a counter that will track number of times the site is viewed. (Year 2)
- **Village and School Visits:** The project will involve outreach visits to villages which will include presentations to schools about regional coastal issues. These visits will be coordinated with other travel by the BSCA Program Director. (Years 1-4)
- **Meetings:** Teleconferenced meetings will be set up with state and federal agencies that manage coastal areas or resources, tribes and communities to participate in planning and resource management issues of importance to residents of the region. (Years 1-4)

**Final Report:** A final report will be prepared for this component of the project. It will summarize the project accomplishments, evaluate outcomes, including how many times the website is viewed, and include recommendations for future education and outreach. (Year 4)

### CIAP Authorized Use

This project is consistent with Authorized Use #1 – Conservation, protection or restoration of coastal areas, including wetlands. The project is consistent with this authorized use because it will increase local efforts to conserve, protect and restore the natural coastal environment.

Direct benefits to the coastal environment will result from implementation of class environmental projects in at least 3 high schools, including projects such as beach re-vegetation, restoration of damage from off-road vehicles, trail hardening, or invasive species eradication. Indirect benefits include education in all 15 high schools from the environmental education program. The environmental education and coastal issues outreach efforts will likely lead to immediate results during the project as well as in future years. For example, an understanding of how off-road vehicle use is damaging coastal habitat or aggravating beach erosion will lead some residents to avoid sensitive areas. Likewise, a greater understanding of environmental risks from improper disposal of hazardous materials will lead to changed disposal practices that will result in an immediate reduction in the amount of contaminants entering the coastal environment.

The future results from the environmental education and outreach are expected to directly or indirectly benefit the coastal environment. Specifically, this project will increase local awareness and stewardship that will lead to local actions to reduce environmental impacts, greater local participation in state and federal reviews for projects and agency proposals,. Improved participation in state and federal agency reviews will result in more relevant public comments that propose alternative measures that will protect, conserve and restore the natural coastal environment.