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# Akiak Hazard Mitigation Plan and Organized Retreat Meeting

## July 23, 2019

### Meeting Summary

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#### **In Attendance**

##### **COMMUNITY OF AKIAK**

**Akiak Native Community:** Sheila Carl. *On phone:* Ivan Ivan, James Nicolai, Mike Williams, Moses Owen, Sammy Jackson II

**City of Akiak:** David Gilila, Sr. *On phone:* Robert Williams

**Kokarmiut Corporation:** Amelia Nikolai

##### **AGENCY AND ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVES**

**Akiak Consultant:** Joel Neimeyer

**Alaska Climate Adaptation Science Center/Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association:** *On phone:* Malinda Chase

**Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, Division of Community and Regional Affairs:** Sandra Moller, Division Director; Sally Russell Cox; Diane Sam. *On phone:* CeCe Franko

**Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation:** Melinna Faw, Solid Waste Program; Marty Brewer, Village Safe Water Program. *On phone:* Carrie Bohan, Facilities Programs Manager; Stephen Price, Solid Waste Program

**Alaska Department of Military and Veteran's Affairs, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management:** Brent Nichols, Mike Johnson, Richard Hildreth, Rick Dembroski

**Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys:** *On phone:* Jaci Overbeck

**Alaska Energy Authority:** David Lockard

**Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium:** Max Neale, Center for Environmentally Threatened Communities. *On phone:* Ed Smith, Emergency Preparedness

**Association of Village Council Presidents Regional Housing Authority:** *On phone:* Abraham Palacios, Jason Smith, Mark Charlie

**Alaska Institute for Justice:** *On phone:* Kate Glover

**KYUK Radio, Bethel:** *On phone:* Greg Kim

**LeMay Engineering:** Patrick LeMay

**Office of Alaska Representative Tiffany Zulkosky:** Logan Basner

**Office of Alaska Senator Lyman Hoffman:** Sam Greely

**Office of US Senator Dan Sullivan:** Kate Wolgemuth

**Office of US Senator Lisa Murkowski:** Deborah Vo

**Rural Community Assistance Corporation:** *On phone:* Kristen K'eit

**ThinkProgress:** *On phone:* Kyla Mandel

**US Department of Agriculture:** Jeff Oatley, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Misty Hull, Rural Development

**US Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration:** Amy Holman, Nicole Fernandez

**US Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Region 10:** *On phone:* Cynthia McCoy

**US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Native American Programs:** *On phone:* Deb Alston

**US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs:** Andrew White, Transportation; Gary Hanson. *On phone:* DeWayne Cooper, Housing; Stu Hartford, Director of Transportation

**Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation:** *On phone:* Bob White, Brian Leffert, Mike Vicente

**Yupiiit School District:** *On phone:* Judy Anderson

**Meeting called to order, approval of agenda, introductions**

Sally Russell Cox (Alaska Division of Community and Regional Affairs) called the meeting to order, reviewed the agenda and housekeeping, led introductions and served as meeting facilitator.

**Community presentation**

Ms. Sheila Carl (Tribal Administrator for the Akiak Native Community [ANC]), Ms. Amelia Nicholai (Business Manager for the Kokarmiut Corporation), and Mr. David Gilila, Sr, (City Administrator for the City of Akiak) were present at the meeting and lead the following discussion points.

1. The three community representatives spoke to the recent high water / spring melt event of May 18/19 in which 50 to 75 feet of riverbank was claimed along 1200 feet of river front. This is atypical as erosion is generally driven by fall storms with strong southerly winds. In response, the community executed a tri-party agreement (executed on May 18) to work together in responding to this new environmental threat.
2. The community's current Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) lapsed last year. In response, the City, ANC, and the Corporation pooled their resources and hired a consultant (LeMay Engineering) well-versed in development HMP documents for rural Alaska communities to draft a new tribal HMP.
3. In the process of drafting the new HMP, the community in June 2019 decided for a strategy of a managed retreat from the river instead of seeking funding for a \$80 million rock revetment project. Mr. Jeff Oatley, an engineer with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), shared his agency's findings with respect to recent river morphology changes; the channel geometry is beyond the scope of an NRCS project. Mr. Oatley provided further insight to extensive effort required to constrain the Kuskokwim River from claiming additional riverbank.
4. In addition, the community has been in close contact with seven homeowners who are near the river's edge. At least one home must be relocated this year and five more by next year. Unfortunately, the seventh home is not structurally sound for relocation. The Corporation recently took action to make available lots for the six homes to be relocated. All of the Corporation lots are near the electrical power distribution system, and some of the lots are near water and sewer mains. However, this leaves no lots for future housing expansion whether from new housing or relocated homes (beyond the six, noted above).
5. The riverbank is not stable as in many areas it is at a 90-degree angle and easily sloughs into the river. Walking near the river's edge is not safe, and the City has undertaken efforts to pare back the river bank, but due to limited City funds and existing homes and other structures, City crews were limited in this effort. The City would like to pare back the river's edge to a more stable 30 % slope once homes are relocated.
6. The community as part of its managed retreat intends to develop a new housing subdivision in anticipation that their managed retreat will include homes beyond the seven discussed above. Key to this effort will be closing out of the 30-year old solid waste site and honey bucket lagoon which would be a public health risk for the expansion of homes. The community wants to develop a new solid waste site and access road concurrent with closing out the existing solid waste site. This will allow for development of the new housing subdivision.

**LeMay Engineering Presentation on Draft Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) and HMP Approval Process**

Mr. Patrick LeMay (ANC consultant for the draft HMP) lead the discussion on the following points.

1. Overall discussion of the HMP timeline and pending ANC submittal to FEMA for approval of a tribal HMP.
2. Types of homes that are imperiled: those that cannot be moved, those that can be relocated, and those that are not facing erosion threats but flooding threats and must be elevated.

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3. Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management staff discussed the various disaster mitigation funding grants that the community can compete for once the draft Akiak HMP is approved by FEMA. Furthermore, they would be supportive of working on a task force to address how the community can carry out its managed retreat including closing out the existing solid waste site and developing a new site.

### **Community Dialogue with Funders**

Mr. Joel Neimeyer, ANC Consultant, lead the discussion on the following points.

1. The community, in the interest of reducing project development timelines, intends to solicit for an indefinite delivery / indefinite quantity (IDIQ) architectural & engineering (A&E) consultant. Agency representatives were asked to consider review and approval of the community's solicitation process, in advance of any future agency grant, so that pre-construction task orders can be issued quickly to the A&E firm upon receipt of grant funding. In general, agency staff stated an understanding for this request, but could not commit their agencies at this time.
2. Likewise, the community intends to carry out a programmatic environmental assessment in accordance to National Environmental Policy Act statutes in order to shorten Federal agency environmental reviews. A lead Federal agency is necessary, and the community will ask likely Federal agencies to serve in this capacity.
3. Agencies provided thoughts on how they may be able to assist Akiak. Brent Nichols with the Alaska Division of Homeland security and Emergency Management recommended that Akiak contact Ramona Van Cleve, FEMA's tribal liaison in Alaska. Donna Lee with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) discussed DEC's Infrastructure Protection Funding which is a state-funded program intended to protect and prolong the life of existing infrastructure. Brian Lefferts with the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKHC) discussed YKHC's resources.

# Akiak Draft Hazard Mitigation Plan Meeting

## Tuesday, July 23, 2019

NAME	AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	Do you want to be notified of future Akiak meetings?	PHONE	EMAIL
RICK DEMBROSKI	SOA DHS&EM	YES	907 428-7015	RICK.DEMBROSKI@ALASKA.GOV
MIKE JOHNSON	" "	"	907 428 7055	MIKE.JOHNSON@ALASKA.GOV
Brent A. Nichols	" "	"	907-428-7085	Brent.Nichols@alaska.gov
RICHARD K HILDRETH	SOA DHSTEM	YES	907 428-7047	RICHARD.HILDRETH@ALASKA.GOV
Judy Anderson	YSD	YES	907.825.2035	janderson@yupitit.org
Marty Brewer	ADEC USW	Yes	269-7613 907- <del>870-8</del>	martin.brewer@alaska.gov
JEFF OATLEY	USDA/NRCS	YES	907-479-3159 x105	JEFF.OATLEY@USDA.GOV
Sheila Carl	Akiak Native Community	Yes	907 765-7112	akiarmiia@yahoo.com
Amelia Nicolai	Kokamiut Corporation	yes	907-765-7919	
David Gilulas	City of Akiak	yes	907-765-7411	coa.ivan@yahoo.com
Patrick Lemay	Lemay Engineering	Yes	907-250-9038	Patrick.Lemay@lemayengineering.com
ANDREW WHITE	BJA TRAFUS	YES	907-2764565	ANDREW.WHITE@BJA.GOV



NAME	AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	Do you want to be notified of future Alak meetings?	PHONE	EMAIL
Misty Hull	USDA Rural Development	yes	907-761-7133	misty.hull@usda.gov
Max Neale	ANTHC	Yes	729-4521	Mjneale@anthc.org
Sam Greely	Staff to Sen. Hoffman	Yes	723-1285	Samgreely@alaska.gov
Legan Bessner	Staff to Rep Ziskosky	Yes	982-8617	Legan.Bessner@Alaska.gov
Diane Sam	DCRA - ANC	optional	328-9541	diane.sam@alaska.gov
MELINNA FAW	DEC - SOLID WASTE	YES, PLEASE	269-7642	melinna.faw@alaska.gov
SANDRA MOLLER	DCRA -		269-4569	sandra.moller@alaska.gov
Kate Wolgemuth	US Senator Sullivan	yes	907 271-5915	kate_wolgemuth@ sullivan.senate.gov

## Agency/Organization Representatives Who Called In

NAME	AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	Do you want to be notified of future Akiak meetings?	PHONE	EMAIL
Ivan Ivan	Akiak Native Community			
James Nicolai	Akiak Native Community			
Mike Williams	Akiak Native Community			
Moses Owen	Akiak Native Community			
Sammy Jackson II	Akiak Native Community			
Malinda Chase	Alaska Climate Adaptation Science Center (AK CASC) / APIA			
CeCe Franko	AK Dept. of Commerce, Community & Economic Development, Division of Community & Regional Affairs			
Stephen Price	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Solid Waste Program			
Jaci Overbeck	Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys			
Carrie Bohan	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Water			
Ed Smith	Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium			
Abraham Palacios	Association of Village Council Presidents Regional Housing Authority (AVCP RHA)			
Jason Smith	Association of Village Council Presidents Regional Housing Authority (AVCP RHA)			

NAME	AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	Do you want to be notified of future Akiak meetings?	PHONE	EMAIL
Mark Charlie	Association of Village Council Presidents Regional Housing Authority (AVCP RHA)			
Robert Williams	City of Akiak			
Kyla Mandel	ThinkProgress			
Greg Kim	KYUK Radio, Bethel			
Kristen K'eit, RCAC	Rural Community Assistance Corporation			
Cynthia McCoy	US Dept of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Region 10			
Deb Alston	US Dept of Housing and Urban Development , Office of Native American Programs			
DeWayne Cooper, BIA Housing	US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs			
Stu Hartford	US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs			
Bob White, YKHC	Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation			
Brian Lefferts, YKHC	Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation			
Mike Vicente, YKHC	Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation			
Kate Glover	Alaska Institute for Justice			