

Napakiak Inter-Agency Meeting,

Wednesday, August 1, 2018

Meeting Notes

In Attendance:

NAPAKIAK COMMUNITY

Native Village of Napakiak: David Andrew (*Tribal Administrator*), Sallie Billy (*IGAP Coordinator*)

City of Napakiak/Napakiak Corporation: Walter Nelson (*City Council Member/Corporation Board Member*)

Napakiak Advisory School Board: Jacqueline Andrew

STATE, FEDERAL AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, Division of Community and Regional Affairs (DCRA): Sally Russell Cox (*Alaska Risk MAP Coordinator/Community Resilience and Climate Adaptation Program Manager*), Diane Sam (*Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act Planning and Land Management – via telephone*)

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Village Safe Water (VSW) Program: Donna A. Lee, Marty Brewer

Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys (DGGs): Jaci Overbeck (*Coastal Hazards Program Manager*)

Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM): Brent Nichols (*State Hazard Mitigation Officer*)

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium: Max Neal and Katie Lund (*Environmentally Threatened Communities Center*)

Bristol Engineering: Vanessa Wike

Bureau of Indian Affairs: Jolene John (*Tribal Operations Officer*), Dewayne Cooper (*Housing Improvement Program*), Aaron Tolen (*Intern*), Andrew White (*Transportation*), Thomas Llanos (*Transportation*), Sarah Walker (*Tribal Operations*), Kalani Tucker (*Intern*)

Denali Commission: Don Antrobus (*Village Infrastructure Protection Program Manager*), Jocelyn Fenton (*Project Manager*)

Economic Development Administration (EDA): Shirley Kelly,

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): Tami Fordham (*Deputy Director*), Santina Gay

FEMA: Cynthia McCoy (*Region 10 Risk Analyst*), Wendy Shaw (*Region 10 Engineer*)

KYUK Radio: Anna Rose McArthur

Lower Kuskokwim School District: Dan Walker (*Superintendent*), Ryan Butte (*Project Manager*), Ed Pekar (*Principal, Bethel Regional High School*)

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Weather Service: Scott Lindsay Francis/Cyrus

Two Bears Environmental Consulting: Ronni Wilcox, Jace Kovel

US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service: Ryan Maroney (*Alaska Native Technical Liaison*)

USDA Rural Development: Tash Deardorff (*Community Facilities & Sanitation Program*)

Director/West Area Director)

US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Alaska Field Office: Ann Gravier
(Senior Management Analyst)

HUD Office of Native American Programs: Andy Concepcion *(Grants Management Division Director)*

Message from the Community

Walter Nelson provided an overview of some of the issues Napakiak is dealing with. Referencing a map, he showed the area along the Kuskokwim River that has been lost to erosion. The community has lost approximately 200 feet of river bank since May. The community had to take matters in their own hands and move the multi-purpose building (formerly Army National Guard) building. The three leadership organizations that meet are the Native Village of Napakiak, the Napakiak Corporation and the City of Napakiak. The storms affecting the community the most include winds from the south and from the east. Walter showed a photo of a rapidly eroding area where the community had placed fabric to slow down erosion and fence off the area to keep people from the area.

There were studies done in the past with the Army Corps of Engineers. Building a seawall wouldn't be feasible. It won't be long before the airport is impacted by erosion. The community's vision is to move development away from the Kuskokwim River where erosion is occurring to the area where there is a housing subdivision.

Recent Activities Where Hazard Threats (Erosion, Permafrost Degradation) are occurring

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) Assistance: Max Neale is with ANTHC's Environmentally Threatened Communities Grant Writing Center which is a program created and funded by the Denali Commission to provide technical and financial assistance to environmentally threatened communities. Max travelled to Napakiak in mid-May to participate in meetings for the update of Napakiak's Hazard Mitigation Plan and community plan. He provided a summary of the site visit and his assistance to Napakiak:

- Max noted that erosion in Napakiak is occurring faster than U.S. Army Corps of Engineers estimates. Napakiak's critical infrastructure is threatened most. The people of Napakiak have a very strong track record for moving buildings on their own for decades. He referenced the maps developed by NRCS to illustrate this. The community has a lowboy trailer to move buildings, however the community needs additional assistance.
- During the site visit, Ryan Maroney (NRCS) used his depth-finder on a boat to look the bathymetry of the river and learned that the river drops off precipitously 40-50 feet right near village infrastructure. NOAA hydrologists suspect the increased erosion is due to some changes in the river upstream which has increased the water velocity hitting the river bank.
- ANTHC has supported Napakiak by applying for 6 funding opportunities, including:

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- One with a HUD Imminent Threat Grant to replace the boat and hovercraft landing area, a portion of which was approved;
- Another for the NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection Program, discussed next by Ryan Maroney
- A BIA Tribal Resilience grant application to do an environmental risk assessment by hiring a consultant (Two Bears Environmental Consulting) to look at what future environmental conditions will be at the site in 2025, 2050, 2075, 2100 and create maps to help the community and create an environmental atlas so that engineers can design infrastructure based on future conditions; currently everyone's designing based on past conditions.
- The community also made a technical assistance request to HUD for community-based monitoring and a risk assessment and funding for travel to kick-start this effort.

Natural Resources Conservation Service Assistance: Ryan Maroney is with NRCS, an agency of the Department of Agriculture which has the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program. Ryan is the tribal technical liaison. The EWP program is managed by Brett Nelson who is NRCS' state engineer.

- On May 17, 2018, NRCS received an official request for assistance from Napakiak through the EWP. Ryan happened to be in Bethel at the time, so he was able to boat over to Napakiak on May 22nd and an initial site visit was conducted with Fran Rich (also with NRCS). They met with Walter Nelson, saw the threatened buildings as well as the proposed site where the threatened building will be relocated. A trip report was prepared, which included reviewing historical imagery maps to show how much land has been lost to erosion over time.
- To be eligible for the EWP, there needs to be a designated disaster or natural event that is out of the ordinary. Accelerated erosion and general high water on the Kuskokwim satisfied this requirement. NRCS would like to support the relocation of structures and understood that the city fire station and the city garage were two buildings that were imminently threatened and identified for relocation with a site identified to move them to.
- NRCS' engineer prepared a cost estimate and on June 19th, Ryan and Fran Rich went back to Napakiak and held a meeting with the city and tribe to discuss a potential cooperative agreement and financial assistance through the EWP program for the relocation of those two structures. The total estimated cost to relocate the two buildings is approximately \$41,000. The EWP can provide up to 90% cost with a 10% match which can be met in-kind. Unlike typical grant programs, the EWP requires the participant to move the structures before they receive payment. The EWP participant (community) assumes liability and responsibility for site control, insurance, structural integrity, initial financing of the project. Napakiak accepted the terms of the cooperative agreement and NRCS subsequently submitted a request that has gone to NRCS national headquarters. Each EWP project is approved on a case-by-case basis. NRCS is hopeful that the funding will be in place in time for the structures to be moved

in the winter when the ground is frozen.

- One of the caveats to the relocation of buildings through NRCS is that buildings cannot be temporarily relocated; buildings must be moved several hundred feet back from the river bank to a permanent site already identified with site control, permitting and utilities. Fortunately for Napakiak, these issues have already been addressed.
- Ryan brought some copies of maps showing the structures to be moved and where they will be moved to. NRCS GIS staff was able to task a digital globe satellite to take another picture, so the image used for the map is very recent (as of June 14th).

Community Plan

Diane Sam with DCRA began working with Napakiak four years ago to go address issues the village corporation had with fulfilling their Alaska Native Claim Settlement Act (ANSCA) 14 (c)(3) conveyance. Section 14(c)(3) provides that the village corporation shall convey to a municipal corporation (city), or the state in trust, lands identified for present and future community needs. The community was also interested in updating their community plan. Diane assisted the community in developing a contingency plan. At the time, sites were identified away from the erosion where buildings could be moved. Diane and the contractor for Napakiak's Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) worked closely to make sure any information on natural hazards and mitigation actions in the community plan was consistent with information in the HMP. A draft of the community plan will be made available soon.

Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

Ecology and Environment was contracted to develop Napakiak's local HMP. Funding for the HMP came from the Denali Commission through the Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Brent Nichols noted that the HMP was currently being reviewed by FEMA for approval. *[Note: The Napakiak HMP was approved by FEMA on August 12, 2018. Sally uploaded the plan on DCRA's community Plans website and distributed the link to the Napakiak inter-agency work group on August 14, 2018.]*

DGGS Erosion Map

Jaci Overbeck explained that the Alaska Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys (DGGS) has been collecting some very broad datasets over the entire coastline and try to make them available so we can get an idea of the erosion impacting all Alaskan communities. Some of that data is available for Napakiak, although the erosion is occurring close to the edge of where DGGS does its studies, so they don't have any updates beyond what NRCS has provided on where the shoreline has moved over time. The dataset DGGS has from 2015 does show elevation throughout the community. For future planning, this data shows where high ground is and can inform local decisions about where structures can be moved over the long term. Anyone interested in this data should contact Jaci.

Efforts to address other Threatened Community Infrastructure

Hovercraft and Boat Landing (HUD Imminent Threat Funding)

Andy Concepcion is the Director of the Grants Management Division of HUD's Office of Native

American Programs. With ANTHC's assistance, the tribe is applying for an Imminent Threat Grant to replace the hovercraft and boat landing that was recently lost to catastrophic slope failure in May 2018. The application has been moved forward to HUD headquarters for review and approval. The application is for \$450,000 which will allow Napakiak to move the hovercraft barge landing to a much safer location. *[Note: on August 16, 2018, HUD announced that Napakiak had been awarded \$449,0000 for the project.]*

Multi-Purpose Buildings

Walter Nelson provided an overview of the relocation of the community multi-purpose buildings.

- The two buildings are on post and pad foundations and are connected by a small covered walkway that would require disassembly. Both old and new buildings have +1000-gallon fuel tanks as well as steel access ramps attached to them. The older building is reported to have asbestos but will be used as a cold storage unit. The new building is more modern and will be used as a multi-purpose building. The Army National Guard turned over ownership of the buildings to the community many years ago.
- After seeking funding through several state and federal agencies to move the buildings, the City of Napakiak hired a local team of workers to use existing equipment and move the new multi-purpose building themselves. The older building is less threatened. The community was able to successfully move the building to a safer location within a very short period.

School Marine Header, School Tank Farm, School Buildings (about 10 buildings)

Ryan Butte with the Lower Kuskokwim School District (LKSD) discussed the buildings and infrastructure owned and managed by the school district.

- The school fuel tank farm was about 150 feet from the river at the end of May.
- The marine header barge hose connection was about 85 feet at the end of May. Fortunately, that pipeline has a bolted flange connection so LKSD staff are going to move the fuel header connected back to the tank farm, so they might be able to fill the tanks one more time before they need to move or replace them.
- The fuel tanks will need to be moved due to the erosion threat, however it likely won't be economically feasible to just move them back. Ryan thinks it will be in the best interest of the school district to install new tanks, either at the new proposed school site, or adjacent to the village tanks to keep all the fuel tanks in one place if there's room there. They could then install temporary fuel pipes back to the school for the next few years until funding comes through to replace the school.
- The LKSD could look at moving the school utility building to a larger building however it may not fit on the trailer that is there.
- Moving any LKSD facility is a temporary fix and not a permanent solution.
- The school district process for procuring school construction funds is through the State of Alaska Department of Education Capital Improvements Grant application. Those

applications get turned in on September 1st of every year. Every school district can become eligible to apply for those funds. Those applications get scored in the fall and the following July, the school district will see a project agreement from the DOE if a project is prioritized and there's money to fund it.

- Over the past couple of years, LKSD has scored very high in that process and has been able to build several new schools.
- In the worse case scenario, if a new school wasn't built before the erosion encroached on the school property, and egress in and out of the building was impacted, classes could be held in other community buildings or portable buildings could be barged in. Most of the other LKSD facilities (fuel tanks, utility building) can be moved until permanent facilities can be built.
- A discussion was held about the possibility of dredging the river. Donna Lee (VSW) spoke briefly about building a jetty to change the direction and velocity of water to decrease the erosion of the river bank.
- Donna Lee said that VSW is doing a study to replace Napakiak's water treatment plant. She asked Ryan Butte if it could help Napakiak's score for getting a new school if the LKSD could make the case that they didn't need to build a new water treatment plant for the school because they could hook into the new city water system that VSW is planning to design and construct in 2-3 years (2020-2021).
- The existing watering point is close to the two buildings being moved. VSW is going to do upgrades to the washeteria so it can temporarily serve as a watering point.
- Ryan Butte met with Napakiak on May 29th and they measured 85 feet from the river bank to the school fuel marine headers and roughly any 70-80 feet to the tank farm. Walter Nelson said he measured the distance from the river bank to the marine header yesterday (July 31) and the distance was 72 feet, so an additional 13 feet of riverbank has been lost since the end of May (two months). The distance to the tank farm was 150 feet and to the school building was 180 feet. Ryan noted that the erosion near the marine headers was the slowest moving due to the vegetation there.

Four homes

There are four homes located in the area closest to the bank of the Kuskokwim River where erosion is the most severe. Brent Nichols provided an overview of two programs that could provide funding to address the relocation or replacement of homes. Walter Nelson showed on a map where the four go homes were that would need to be moved or replaced.

Funding through FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) is currently available through two open disaster declarations. The HMGP program is competitive within the State of Alaska. The nationally competitive Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program is open annually. The Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) will be coming out soon for the PDM Program. The due date for submitting HMGP applications under the first disaster is September 20th. The due date for applications submitted under the second disaster is March 2019. Homes can be relocated or bought out and demolished through the HMGP Program. This is voluntary on the

part of the property owner.

Andy Concepcion discussed some of the grants available through the Indian Community Development Block Grant Program for homes. Ryan Maroney discussed the requirements NRCS has for relocating homes: the community needs to know where the homes will be moved to, take care of any permitting and site control issues and handle any utility hook-ups required by the move.

Napakiak participates in AVCP Regional Housing Authority. Mark Charlie will be provided copies of the meeting notes and will be invited to our next meeting.

Dewayne Cooper discussed the BIA Housing Improvement Program (HIP), Although all 2018 HIP funds have been obligated, DeWayne will let Napakiak know when the 2019 funding cycle is available.

Acquisition of best available data on erosion, permafrost degradation and flooding to better understand risk and inform decision-making for long-term planning

Community Based Monitoring

Jaci Overbeck spoke about the value of community-based monitoring to help Napakiak better understand the erosion risk. Jaci's program, the Coastal Hazards Program, has been working with tribes around the state to implement coastal monitoring of erosion. DGGs provides quality control, technical assistance, community members learn how to take measurements more frequently than the scientists can, and more frequently than satellite or aerial images can be acquired. Community members can take measurements before and after a storm event to determine how much has changes because of that event. Napakiak has already been doing community-based monitoring. DGGs can provide additional technical assistance, keeping measurements in long-term storage. If Napakiak is interested in establishing a monitoring program, Jaci could help them expand their efforts to some places they are currently not taking measurements such as at the airport. The community has primarily been monitoring through the EPA IGAP program. Jaci can create a webpage just for Napakiak's data. If Napakiak would like to expand its monitoring program, Jaci would have to incorporate them into DGGs's quality insurance program for IGAP for other funding.

Sally discussed the potential for a project for Napakiak through the FEMA-funded Risk Mapping, Assessment and Planning (Risk MAP) Program which also provides funding for hazard assessment. Sally would pursue this on behalf of Napakiak. While FEMA won't fund the acquisition of data for a natural hazard that is within the authority of another federal agency, it will fund the assessment of those data. Jaci and Ryan Maroney discussed the possibility of working together to acquire data needed for hazard assessments.

Community expansion planning to migrate development from the bank of the Kuskokwim River to the western side of the community

Sally stated that she could provide planning assistance to Napakiak for relocation planning.

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Santina Gay with the EPA IGAP Program provided a handout on what entities in the Y-K Delta region are doing with IGAP funds. The Napakiak tribe has an IGAP grant that is coming to the end of the fiscal year. They do have some funding that can be reallocated so Santina has been speaking with AVCP and ANTHC to make sure that funding gets spent down before the end of the year to address the community's imminent need. The tribe has a new IGAP grant beginning October 1st with a new allocation of funding. The tribe has some priorities identified in its work plan. AVCP IGAP is looking at water quality monitoring on a regional basis. Discussion has begun with Napakiak to use IGAP funding to move the 40,000-gallon water storage tanks, leveraging Denali Commission funds. ANTHC is interested in using some of its IGAP funds to collaborate with the community camera effort where several communities across the state are posting their shoreline erosion. Santina also discussed an erosion guide that was developed by an EPA intern that is a helpful resource for Alaska tribes.

Dewayne Cooper talked about the need to change policy to address the needs of imminently-threatened communities.

The 202 agreements between states and tribes on transportation projects were discussed.

Don Antrobus with the Denali Commission stated that the Denali Commission had funding set aside that could be used to address some of the mitigation actions identified in a community's existing Hazard Mitigation Plan , so this is an additional potential funding source for Napakiak. Napakiak's new Hazard Mitigation Plan be downloaded from DCRA's community plans website at

https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/dcra/DCRARepoExt/RepoPubs/Plans/Napakiak%20HMP_2018%20Update_Final-for-State.pdf.pdf

Next Steps

It was agreed that we would try to meet again at the end of November during the BIA Provider's Conference to get an update on how Napakiak's priorities have been implemented.