

TASK FORCE
Regional Government Study with Tribes Project
c/o Program Development
PO Box 310
Dillingham, AK 99576

June 15, 2016

LBC Staff
550 W. 7th Avenue, Suite 1640
Anchorage, AK 99501

RE: Comments to the Preliminary Report to the Local Boundary Commission

Dear Sirs or Madams:

These comments are in response to the above named report that came out on June 3, 2016 with a comment period that ends July 15, 2016.

The Interim Task Force of the *Regional Government Study with Tribes* project is conducting a borough feasibility study with the Tribes, cities, school districts, and regional organizations in the Dillingham Census Area that will be used for decision making in an intergovernmental consultation at the end of the project. There are eleven communities within the Dillingham Census Area (unorganized borough) that are covered by this project, including Aleknagik, Clarks Point, Dillingham, Ekuk, Ekwok, Manokotak, New Koliganek, New Stuyahok, Portage Creek, Togiak, and Twin Hills. The total population in the Dillingham Census Area is about 5,028 with 3,877 (77%) Alaska Natives. The *Regional Government Study with Tribes* project will provide the information needed for the tribes and cities to make informed decisions regarding borough formation.

The Interim Task Force was formed in October 2014 and BBNA volunteered to raise funds for the project. A Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children & Families, Administration for Native Americans, Social and Economic Development Strategies for Alaska (ANA-SEDS-AK) application was submitted March 25, 2015. The City of Dillingham and City of Aleknagik committed to providing \$10,000 and \$4,972.20 respectively to assure the required match for the grant. A grant award was received October 2, 2015. A consulting team was hired and a Task Force was formed. The Task Force had its first meeting on May 25, 2016.

When the project began it was anticipated that the borough feasibility study would be completed by September 30, 2016, so that the information would be available before the Dillingham and Manokotak Petitions moved forward. The Interim Task Force recognized that the potential revenue from a fish tax could help a borough with fiscal needs to maintain and increase services as State and Federal funding declines. Due to project delays, the borough study is now expected to be completed by December 31, 2016.

Over the past 29 years, there have been numerous attempts to form a borough or to annex the Nushagak Bay fishing waters and the result was almost always that some communities felt disenfranchised so no consensus was reached. -The Interim Task Force came together from the need to improve relationships between the communities by building trust and confidence through a borough study process. The smaller communities in the Dillingham Census Area want to engage in the process, but have few resources to draw upon, since there is no road system, and travel between communities is extremely expensive. The ANA-SEDS grant provides for a consulting team, travel, and staff support.

The *Regional Government Study with Tribes* provides a process that includes all the Tribes, cities, school districts, and regional organizations throughout the borough study project to achieve the best outcome with greatest amount of buy-in to support the outcome. The Tribes' participation and being included in the discussion is key to being all inclusive. The challenge is to design a borough that includes and meets the needs of all the communities while remaining feasible, in a timely manner, and in a way that will benefit the City of Dillingham without the further need to annex.

Currently, there are 21 members of the Task Force with three vacant seats. In addition, seven entities have named alternates to the Task Force.

Vacant	Aleknagik Traditional Council
Bryan Reed	Aleknagik, City of
Helen Smeaton	Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation
Kevin Tennyson	Bristol Bay Housing Authority
Ralph Andersen/Patty Heyano, Alternate	Bristol Bay Native Association
Chris Napoli/Danny Frazier, Alternate	Dillingham School District
Kay Andrews/David Piazza, Alternate	Southwest Region School District
Joseph Wassily/Harry Wassily, Alternate	Clarks Point, City of
Betty Gardiner	Clarks Point Village Council
Thomas Tilden	Curyung Tribal Council
Alice Ruby/Curt Armstrong, Alternate	Dillingham, City of
Robert Heyano	Ekuk Village Council
Luki Akelkok	Ekwok, City of
Richard King	Ekwok Village Council
Diane Mochin	Manokotak Village Council
Melvin Andrew/Moses Toyukuk, Alternate	Manokotak, City of
Peter Christopher, Sr.	New Stuyahok Traditional Council
Vacant	New Stuyahok, City of
Mary Ann Johnson	Portage Creek Village Council
Francesco Kamkampak	Traditional Council of Togiak
Teodora Pauk/Darryl Thompson, Alternate	Togiak, City of
Arthur W. Sharp	Twin Hills Village Council

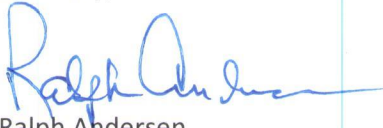
The *Regional Government Study with Tribes* project will provide the information needed for the tribes and cities to make informed decisions regarding borough formation. The Task Force respectfully

June 15, 2016

Page 3 of 3

requests that the Local Boundary Commission does not impose a borough. Instead please respect and support this local process regardless of what the outcome is.

Sincerely,



Ralph Andersen
Chairman

cc:

City of Dillingham
Attn: Janice Williams, City Clerk
Box 889
Dillingham, AK 99576

City of Manokotak
Attn: Nancy George, City Administrator
Box 170
Manokotak, AK 99628