

NOTICE OF INTENT TO PREPARE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and U.S. Department of Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) propose funding the Newtok Village Council (NVC) for road construction and residential relocations. FEMA funding would be provided by the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program as authorized by Robert T. Stafford Disaster Assistance and Emergency Relief Act, Public Law 93-288 as amended through the Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM). BIA funding would be provided through the Tribal Transportation Program. The NVC has been working towards relocating the community to Mertarvik as outlined in its *Newtok to Mertarvik Strategic Management Plan (Plan)*.

FEMA and BIA intend to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Project, in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); Executive Order (EO) 11988, Floodplain Management; EO 11990, Wetlands Protection; and EO 12898, Environmental Justice.

The NVC has BIA funding available to design and build select roads in Mertarvik, and has applied for FEMA funds to help relocate 12 residential structures from Newtok to Mertarvik (Project and Proposed Alternative). The purpose of the Project is to mitigate damage to property and reduce life safety risks from riverine erosion and flooding in Newtok. The Project is needed because of Newtok's increasing vulnerability to erosion from the Ninglick River and flooding from storm surge, as evidenced from past repetitive damages and erosion forecasts. Unmitigated, these hazards will continue to impact infrastructure, utilities, residential and other structures in Newtok, as well as public health.

The Project, to implement elements of the *Plan* pioneering phase; includes road construction, relocation of residential structures, and installation of utilities and services necessary to support the relocated residents' safe and sanitary occupancy at Mertarvik. In the EA, the No Action Alternative, continued occupancy of Newtok, will also be considered. Other potential alternatives identified for evaluation in the EA include: acquisition and demolition of the 12 residences and building flood and erosion protection at Newtok. Environmental and social issues identified for particular evaluation in the EA so far include: the limited infrastructure and available community and social services in Mertarvik; and the potential presence of and impacts to wetlands and wildlife in the proposed project area.

Comments concerning the Project, potential alternatives, and preliminary identification of environmental issues will be accepted from the affected public; local, state and federal agencies; Tribes; and other interested parties in order to scope the EA and inform decision-making. Comments should be made in writing; sent to the FEMA contact below, by mail, fax or email; and must be received by April 25, 2016 to be considered. A public meeting will be held to take comment on April 5, 2016 from 6 to 8pm at in the school gymnasium in Newtok. Additional information about Newtok's relocation plans and the Project can be found at: <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/dcra/PlanningLandManagement/NewtokPlanningGroup>.

[aspx](#) or obtained by contacting the applicant contact below. Once complete, the draft EA will be made available for public comment, anticipated Summer 2016.

FEMA Contact:	BIA Contact:	Applicant Contact:
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