

# Stebbins Activity Report

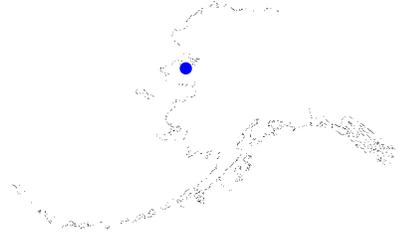
## Community Overview

Lead RUBA Staff: Leroy Seppilu, Nome Office

2001 Population: 547

Region: Bering Straits

Local Governments: Second Class City



The City of Stebbins operates the washeteria and a central watering point where residents can come and haul their own water. The City also provides a honeybucket haul service. The City Council is the policy making board for the utility.

Major improvements are under construction to enable a piped water and vacuum sewer system, with household plumbing. Residents currently haul water and deposit honeybuckets in bunkers. Water is derived during the summer from Big Clear Creek, is treated and stored in a 1,000,000-gallon steel water tank. In the summer there are several watering points in the village, distributed from the tank via plastic pipelines. A reservoir at Clear Lake and a new water storage tank are under construction to alleviate winter water shortages. DEC has approved the landfill for use, although it is not permitted. Refuse is collected by the City from central bins.

## General Information

A trip was made to the community to make a RUBA assessment on Nov. 27, 2001. The Mayor, Bob Ferris, was interviewed. The City has been very reliant on itself for a while. The Mayor drafted a water utility ordinance so that it could sell treated water to the school and public. The City sells piped water to the school at \$0.10 a gallon and \$0.07 a gallon to teachers' quarters. The City does reasonably well with the sales.

## Observations and Recommendations

Finances — There are no other major debts to vendors by the City. The City has two small store accounts totaling a couple of hundred dollars. The City pays those up within a month.

Accounting Systems — The finances are done manually and the City hopes to have the Administrator trained with QuickBooks Pro.

Tax Problems — The City owes IRS about \$47,000 in back taxes. The Council signed an agreement a couple of years ago to pay \$2,000 a month or more if it can afford to. IRS is

not worried about the City since it has been faithfully keeping up with payments. Leroy encouraged the Mayor to make payments more than the minimum when it can.

Personnel System — The City Administrator does well with her job. She is the wife of the Mayor. They make sure to keep away from controversial issues between them. She is very experienced and Leroy doesn't expect any problems from her. The City has a part-time City Clerk.

Organizational Management — Mayor Ferris has been the Mayor for a long time and has kept the City spending money within its means except for the IRS debt which was brought on by previous administrations.

Operation of Utility — The Mayor said he had a difficult time with Bering Strait School District on negotiating on the water sales to the teachers' quarters. The school district cried discrimination when the City decided to sell water at \$0.10 a gallon to the quarters. It demanded to know why water was being sold to the public at \$0.05 a gallon at the watering point. He told them that it is obvious that water to the quarters is piped and costs more to do that than having it carried in buckets. The school district relented and the Council compromised by lowering to \$0.07 a gallon. He has not heard back from them yet.

Category	Inadequate	Meets Minimum Requirements	Exceeds Minimum Requirements
Finances			X
Accounting Systems		X	
Payroll Taxes		X	
Personnel System			X
Organizational Management			X
Operation of Utility			X

### Anticipated Activity

There are no anticipated activities other than that the City hopes to be selected as one of the communities that will be trained on QuickBooks Pro by RUBA Program.