



Project Name:	<i>FEMA Region X Discovery</i>
Meeting:	<i>City of Kotzebue Discovery Meeting</i>
Date and Time:	<i>Wednesday, February 23, 2011, 9 am – 12 pm AKST</i>
Place:	<i>City of Kotzebue Public Works, 602 3rd Avenue, Kotzebue, AK 99752</i>

Discovery Meeting Notes

Attendees

Jim Balcerak, City of Kotzebue FPA/City Planner
 John Rae, City of Kotzebue Public Works Director
 Sandy Huss, City of Kotzebue Planning Commission, Chairman
 John Chase, Northwest Arctic Borough Community Planner/Coastal Area Specialist
 Taunnie Boothby, Alaska NFIP Coordinator
 Brett Holt, FEMA RX Discovery Mitigation Planner
 Tom Tufts, STARR Project Manager
 James Huffines, STARR GIS Analyst

Introductions

Tom Tufts opened the meeting and all attendees introduced themselves. A pre-populated sign-in sheet was distributed for attendees to initial their attendance and check and correct contact information. Mr. Tufts described the RiskMAP program and objectives.

Coastal Risk MAP and Discovery Products

Mr. Tufts provided an overview on the coastal updates and methodologies set forth in the draft FEMA guidelines. Discussion moved to Standard Risk MAP Products such as the Changes Since Last Map, Contributing Flood Hazard Factors map, and Depth Grids. For coastal areas, it was explained that typically only a 1-percent-annual-chance analysis for a Base Flood Elevation (BFE) is conducted in coastal studies. Mr. Tufts stated that these 1-percent-annual-chance events would most likely be seen as a storm surge rather than large wave events.

Sandy Huss and John Chase inquired about including sea level rise aspects in the coastal analysis. Mr. Tufts informed them both that sea level rise was not considered in FEMA Flood Insurance Studies, but the State and other Federal agencies may have information that the City may be able to use for mitigation planning purposes. Mr. Chase was particularly interested in where the residents of Kotzebue would go if sea level rise caused significant loss of usable land.

City of Kotzebue Flooding Areas of Concern Conversations

James Huffines displayed the GIS data, focusing first on the coastal areas of the City. Mr. Tufts inquired about concerns with the current maps and the flood hazards.

Jim Balcerak pointed out the DOT project along Shore Avenue that includes a seawall and areas of revetment and coastal armoring. He explained that the project has completed Phase I of construction and the City is looking into funding for Phase II which would extend the seawall to the north. The flooding in this area is caused by coastal surge. The area also sees damage in the spring when thawing and storms cause large ice sheets in Kotzebue Sound to break free and stack up along the



shoreline. The movement of the ice sheet can cause structure damage through abrasion. Mr. Balcerek stated that flooding can also be found in the Kotzebue Lagoon and Swan Lake when a storm surge event is taking place in the Kotzebue Sound.

John Rae discussed area within the City that see ponding of water during the spring thaw where the water has nowhere to go once it has melted. The City has pumps to move the water from areas but it ends up just moving the water to a different area and causing flooding issues there.

City of Kotzebue Conversations – Unincorporated Areas

Unincorporated Areas outside of Kotzebue

Mr. Chase inquired if the new studies would be looking at areas outside of Kotzebue in the Northwest Arctic Borough. Taunnie Boothby explained that the meeting is based solely on the City of Kotzebue.

Mr. Balcerek and Mr. Huss discussed the possible development of a deepwater port at Cape Blossom in the future. There have been geotechnical studies performed for the proposed road to the port from the existing city limits. There also exists orthoimagery, topographic data, and bathymetry for the area. Should this development be constructed and annexed by the City, it would need a coastal study.

Summary of Desired Mitigation Projects

- Seawall Extension – the City desires funding to extend the seawall along Shore Avenue to the northeast near the Crowley property.
- Water Removal – the City is interested in a method of removing water from areas of low elevation that see ponding of water during the spring thaw.

Summary of Mapping Needs

Some areas were identified as needing a detailed coastal, detailed riverine, or approximate study. These locations are generally described and are shown on the Final Discovery Map.

- Coastal Study - New VE study for 2.64 miles of shoreline within the city limits
- Kotzebue Lagoon – New limited detail study for **x** miles of shoreline
- Swan Lake – New limited detail study for **x** miles of shoreline
- Ponding Areas – Approximate (or possible 2-D modeling) of ponding areas within the city for a total of less than one mile

Next Steps

Meeting notes will be prepared, a draft Final Discovery Map showing the identified mapping needs, contact information, and outreach materials will be sent to the group. An example Project Charter will be sent to the communities. The final customized Project Charter will be developed once FEMA RX determines the final scope of work for a project and obtains funding.