

Draft - Notes for the meeting held 2/18/09

Tara Jollie, Division of Community & Regional Affairs (DCRA) – State Co-Chair
(presiding)

Berney Richert, Economic Development Administration – Federal Co- Chair

In attendance: Tara Jollie, Erik O'Brien, Ruth St. Amour – Division of Community and Regional Affairs; Berney Richert – U.S. Economic Development Administration; Chris Rose – Renewable Energy Alaska Project; George Canelos, Bob Pawlowski, Mark Allred, Jodi Fondy – Denali Commission; Janet Hall – RurAL CAP/Denali Commission; Gene Kane – USDA Rural Development; Christi Bell – UA Center for Economic Development; Bruce Tiedeman – Alaska Energy Authority; Stephanie Martin – Institute of Social and Economic Research; Deborah Vo – Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association; Sue Cogswell – Prince William Sound EDD; Liz Cheney, Gary Hanson – First Alaskans Institute

Via teleconference: Doreen Lampe – North Slope Borough; Charlene Stern – RurAL CAP; Mary Spellens – Coastal Villages Region Fund; Tom Okleasik – Northwest Arctic Borough

Renewable Energy Alaska Project – Chris Rose, Executive Director

(See “Renewable Energy for Rural Alaska” at

http://www.denali.gov/Program_Documents.cfm?Section=Planning)

- Renewable Energy Alaska Project (www.realaska.org) is a statewide coalition of approximately 60 organizations, including power companies, conservation organizations, businesses, and Native organizations, and is focused on renewable energy advocacy and education.
- Renewable energy is important, as reliance on fossil fuels becomes increasingly risky. Over 60% of the world's proven conventional oil reserves are in the Middle East.
- The worldwide clean energy market is expected to quadruple by 2015.
- The advantages of renewable energy are that it is stably priced (no fuel costs), clean, inexhaustible, and local.
- Much of coastal Alaska has good potential for wind energy, and also for ocean energy (tidal and wave power). Alaska has over 50% of the nation's tidal power potential, and more than 75% of the nation's wave energy potential.
- Wood energy projects are considered feasible in as many as 35 communities.
- Energy efficiency is an important consideration: over a forty-year time span, 50% of the cost of a building is operations and maintenance, as opposed to only 11% for the original construction.
- Statewide building codes could be developed to improve energy efficiency.
- The Alaska Legislature has approved funding for 77 projects in the first round of the Alaska Renewable Energy Fund, totaling \$100 million (see <http://www.akenergyauthority.org/RenewableEnergyFund/RE%20Fund%20Round%201%20Recommendation%20webpost.pdf>)

- REAP advocates funding for emerging technologies, and coordination for workforce training. Currently there are various energy planning efforts, but no statewide energy policy.
- Why Renewables Now?
 - o All economies need affordable energy to prosper
 - o The price of fossil fuel will likely continue to trend upward
 - o Coal, natural gas and diesel will all likely face carbon regulation/tax
 - o Power plants are 20-100 year decisions
 - o Major decisions for Alaska's long term future will be made in the next 5 years

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 18, at 10 a.m., at the Denali Commission, and is to be chaired by Berney Richert.