Denali Commission

Sustainable Rural Communities

A report by the Denali Commission in coordination with Federal Partners

July 2010

Denali Commission

Sustainable Rural Communities
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Denali Commission

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Letter from the Federal Co-Chair of the Denali Commission

July 20, 2010

Senator Lisa Murkowski
510 L Street, Suite 550
Anchorage, AK 99501

Senator Mark Begich
510 L Street, Suite 750
Anchorage, AK 99501

Congressman Don Young
510 L Street, Suite 580
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Senator Murkowski, Senator Begich and Congressman Young:

I am pleased to respond to your request for a report by Alaska's federal agencies identifying barriers to sustainable rural community development in Alaska. This partnership was formed following the January 2010 'Sustainable Rural Community Development Forum' hosted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, where key stakeholders met for a dialogue around sustainable rural development in Alaska. At that forum, Senator Begich asked the Denali Commission to convene this interagency working group under the framework of the existing Denali Commission Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – with federal agencies for improved governmental coordination - to do two things:

- first, follow up on the August 2009 Rural Cabinet Tour of Alaska. This tour provided cabinet members the opportunity to listen and learn about the broad set of challenges and opportunities facing Alaska's rural communities. This follow-up provides a forum for the Cabinet members to report back to the President about the status of Alaska's rural communities and provide input about what the Administration can do to strengthen them, and
- second, facilitate a working group of federal agencies and identify current barriers, whether legislative, regulatory, administrative, agency practices, or policy to sustainable rural community development in Alaska and provide ideas about how we can work together to nurture strong, robust and sustainable communities.

The compilation of this report has been a positive experience for all federal agencies involved. While we recognize the value and importance of all compiled responses in this briefing, we provided recommendations on areas that had broad appeal to the federal partners. The Denali Commission looks forward to following up on this effort for the delegation and update you as we all work to build sustainable rural communities in Alaska.

Sincerely,

Joel Neimeyer
Federal Co-Chair

Purpose and History of this Report

MOU Partners: Strengthening the State and Federal Partnership

As defined in the statute, Denali Commission Act of 1998 (PL 105-277 42 USC 3121), the Denali Commission is charged with the special role of increasing government effectiveness. The Denali Commission (Commission) does so by acting as a catalyst and strategic partner for many federal and state programs in Alaska. Over the years, the Commission's state partners have included agencies like: Alaska Energy Authority, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services and the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, to name a few.

A community meeting in Buckland.

Transparency and accountability in government requires that agencies strive to coordinate and collaborate together. Partnerships with state and federal agencies has become an integral component of the Commission's mission and values. Failure to do so may result in inefficiencies, duplication and an inability to effectively carry out our respective missions.

The Commission's agility, flexibility and track record of innovation is supported by our ability to partner and collaborate with a wide variety of federal and state agencies. The foundation for this collaboration has been a unique *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)* created by the Commission and signed by both *state and federal agencies* throughout Alaska in 2000, 2003 and 2008 (See Appendix A). These MOU's adopted a *federal-state collaborative workgroup* model focusing on interagency planning, utilities, housing and infrastructure for rural Alaska.

Today, government coordination has become a program mainstay at the Commission while efforts to improve rural Alaska continue in various capacities. Several efforts have produced effective workgroups throughout the years including some with Federal and State chaired groups like: the *Planning Workgroup*, the *Buckland Workgroup*, the *MOU Partners Workgroup,* the *Alaska Clearinghouse* project and now this *Sustainable Rural Communities Workgroup*.

Four wheelers, a common form of transportation. Tuntutuliak, AK.

A Visit by Cabinet Members in 2009

In August 2009, the Secretaries of the U.S. Department of Energy, Housing and Urban Development, Education, and Agriculture visited Alaska. This group received firsthand knowledge of the realities of village life and the unique challenges facing rural Alaska communities. As a result of this visit by these Cabinet members and by the Alaska Congressional Delegation, a new direction for government coordination between state and federal agencies and our respective program partners was discussed and formulated. The Denali Commission is charged with leading the effort on behalf of the federal partners.

Sustainable Rural Communities Workgroup: A New Effort

At the request of Senator Mark Begich, a *Sustainable Rural Community Development Interagency Meeting* was hosted by the *U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development* on January 14, 2010 in Anchorage to find solutions for sustainable rural community development. It was recognized early on that this effort of collaboration coincided with the Commission's existing mission in government coordination in the already well established Federal-State *MOU Partners Workgroup*.

This new group, *Sustainable Rural Communities*, committed to initially developing a *federal agency assessment* to evaluate and identify *barriers to sustainable rural community development specific to Alaska* among the federal family, and propose solutions. The results of the Sustainable Rural Community interagency workgroup efforts would be compiled into a report for and at the request of the Delegation, Cabinet members and major stakeholders for comment and input. This report is addressing the following goals for improving federal government efforts in rural Alaska communities:

- Identify statutory and regulatory conflicts that impede the ability of federal agencies to assist rural communities.
- Identify best practices that work to bring government costs down with a focus on innovative solutions.
- Identify the barriers that prevent implementation of best practices and recommend solutions to address those barriers.

Facing challenges through a public process.

Next steps to this process will include follow-up to this report and future collective reports on this effort. The Commission expects to share findings of this report with the partner agencies of the State of Alaska and other concerned stakeholders with a goal of developing and implementing sustainable community initiatives throughout the state. The Commission looks forward to leading that initiative under the existing MOU Partners Workgroup and involving all Federal and State agencies in this process.

Timeline of Activities

May 2008

Travel to rural Alaska involves flights on small air carriers. For many villages, this is the only link to the outside.

⇒ The Denali Commission *MOU Partners* reconvene in an ongoing effort of government coordination, the Denali Commission recommitted various federal and state agencies through the signing of a new *Memorandum of Understanding* in May 2008. This group has committed to meeting twice a year with a focus on strengthening state and federal partnerships for infrastructure, workforce and economic development in rural Alaska.

August 2009

⇒ Secretaries of the U.S. Department of Energy, Housing and Urban Development, Education, and Agriculture visit rural Alaska. This trip provides first hand knowledge to key cabinet members and is a successful educational experience showcasing the unique challenges faced by rural communities in Alaska. This visit had stops in both Bethel and Hooper Bay.

January 2010

⇒ At the request of Senator Mark Begich, a *Sustainable Rural Community Development Interagency Meeting* was hosted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Congressional direction at that meeting included ***group findings and discussion on the federal barriers to sustainable rural communities***. This group tasked the Denali Commission with leading an effort on behalf of federal partners within Alaska. This effort would focus on sustainable rural communities and the Commission, acting as a convener among partner federal agencies on this effort, would collaborate with partner agencies to develop findings.

February 2010

⇒ The Sustainable Rural Communities effort is brought into focus as the Denali Commission, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, works to develop a strategy for this important effort.

Most rural residents travel by snow machine in winter months.

April 2010

⇒ The Alaska federal partner agencies are sent a brief survey so that they can candidly discuss barriers to building sustainable rural communities. A deliberate strategy of allowing agencies to define the word *barrier* opens the door to a variety of responses.

May 2010

⇒ Two meetings are hosted by the Denali Commission and all federal partners are invited to attend and provide input on the compilation of the *Sustainable Rural Community* report. Examples of approaches to this effort are discussed and a review committee consisting of several federal partner agencies is established to oversee the Sustainable Rural Community Report. Membership on this committee include these federal agencies:

- Denali Commission
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Coast Guard
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Alaska Office
- U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration Western Region
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- U.S. Department of Interior Office of the Secretary
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

⇒ Later in May a lengthy discussion among the newly appointed review committee refocuses the Sustainable Rural Community Report. Refocusing will challenge agencies to provide barriers, offer possible solutions, and allow future review and input from outside entities.

July 2010

⇒ The first draft of the Sustainable Rural Communities report is presented to the delegation for their review and comment.

Preparing for winter. A barge in Bethel bringing supplies for the year.

Next Steps:

2010 and 2011

⇒ Non-federal entities, especially the State of Alaska, are asked to provide comment on the Sustainable Rural Communities report.

- Input from the State of Alaska will be facilitated by the Denali Commission through the already established MOU Partners Workgroup. (The MOU Partner Workgroup, comprised of Federal and State agencies, strives to meet twice a year, hosted by the Commission.)
- Input from other entities and the general public will be facilitated through the Denali Commission website and Commission public regional forums.

⇒ A new version of the *Sustainable Rural Communities* report will be drafted with input from non-federal entities, stakeholders, and the general public.

⇒ The Denali Commission provides an avenue for partner federal agencies to participate in a Tribal Consultation communication plan that is unique to Alaska and works to improve government-to-government relationships for the 229 federally recognized tribes and the federal government as per Executive Order 13175.

⇒ The Denali Commission facilitates work sessions with key rural stakeholders on developing and implementing sustainable community initiatives throughout the state.

Sustainable Rural Communities: A Federal Perspective

Sustainable Rural Communities in Alaska

People have lived throughout Alaska for ten thousand years. Alaskans are true innovators, adaptable, and epitomize the American spirit, living in the Last Frontier.

The size of Alaska is difficult to comprehend. Over 200 remote communities are spread across a state that is more than twice the size of Texas. Lay a map of Alaska on a map of the contiguous U.S. and it reaches from San Francisco, California to Jacksonville, Florida. For the many rural residents throughout the state, the lack of essential community infrastructure can make life challenging.

Most communities in Alaska cannot be reached by road, which means movement is not only difficult, but costly. Mountain ranges, waterways and sheer distance make a statewide electric system prohibitively expensive, as a result a majority of rural villages are not connected to a major power grid. Many communities still lack basic indoor plumbing. In some areas, homes do not have flushing toilets or showers, resulting in higher rates of childhood disease due to inadequate hygiene. As in any rural area, jobs are scarce and small population centers do not always have hospitals or advanced education facilities. In other states, a person can simply drive to a larger town for basic services. Driving outside of their village is not an option for many rural Alaskans.

There are fewer miles of paved road in Alaska than in any other state. For most communities, all the supplies of daily life must be transported by airplane or boat. An injury or illness can cost a resident of a rural village thousands of dollars and days of travel for treatment. A loaf of bread in Buckland, Alaska is three or four times more expensive than the same loaf of bread in the Lower 48 and electricity in some communities can cost five times what it costs in Anchorage.

Rural America—A common perspective of rural, a farm in the Lower 48.

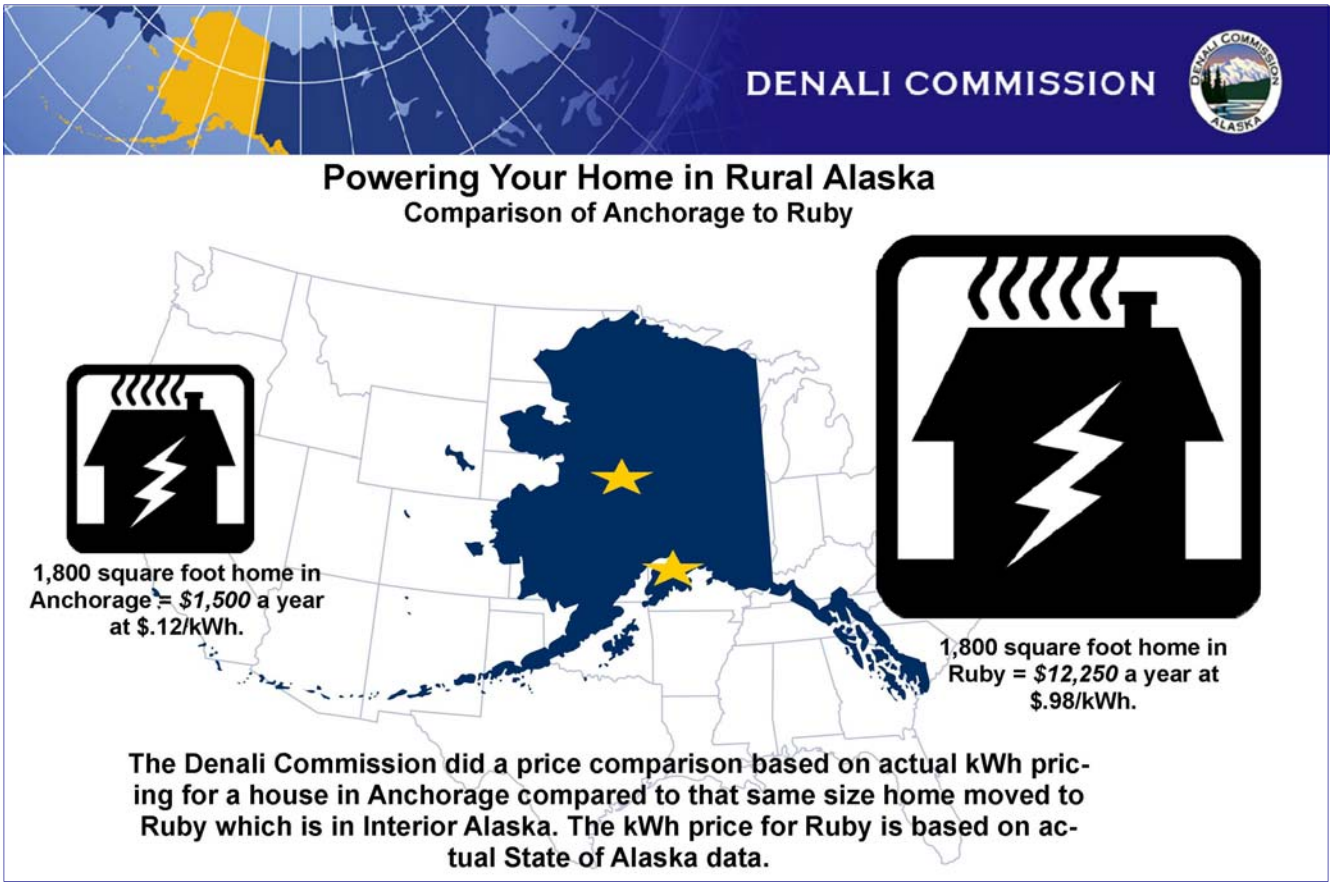
Federal agencies meeting the needs of America's most remote populations has proved challenging over the years. Innovative solutions have resulted in significant improvements to the lives of those living in the Last Frontier. Still, much work needs to be done in Alaska.

The Denali Commission, an independent federal agency, created in 1998, has a unique role among the Alaska federal agencies. The Denali Commission was

Rural America—an Alaskan perspective of rural, a rural village in Alaska.

created to address the immense infrastructure and economic challenges faced by rural Alaskan communities. The Commission has also been charged with a special role of increasing government effectiveness and does so by acting as a catalyst and strategic partner for many federal and state programs in Alaska. The Commission convened federal agencies under the auspices of a unique Memorandum of Understanding that promotes government coordination. This "think tank" of federal agencies has created this report highlighting some of the challenges faced in working toward *sustainable rural communities* in Alaska.

At the request of the Alaska Congressional delegation, the Denali Commission, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), has compiled responses from partner federal agencies highlighting the barriers to best practices in developing sustainable rural communities in Alaska. The goal of this effort is to look at federal barriers, be it internal or external. These barriers could be legislative, regulatory, administrative, or policy barriers.



Sixteen federal agencies within Alaska have responded to this inquiry and written responses from 15 of those agencies are documented and included in this report in their entirety. The agencies submitting written information to this report are:

- Denali Commission
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Coast Guard
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Region 10
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Alaska Office
- U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration Western Region
- U.S. Department of Commerce National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Weather Service
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Indian Health Service Alaska Region
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- U.S. Department of Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs
- U.S. Department of Interior Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Department of Interior Fish & Wildlife
- U.S. Department of Interior National Park Service
- U.S. Department of Interior Office of the Secretary
- U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The Denali Commission's role in this effort was to compile these responses and offer some possible joint solutions for the issues that had a broad affect on these federal agencies. The Commission's summary of these responses categorizes by subject matter. Despite our unique missions, strategies and program goals, one thing is clear: every federal agency in this project is committed to the development of sustainable rural communities throughout Alaska. This summary report focuses on solutions, please refer to the detailed responses found on page 25 from each agency for a more comprehensive overview of the barriers federal agencies face in promoting sustainable rural communities in Alaska.

Myron Lincoln dumps human waste from the family's "honey bucket" onto the frozen banks of the Ninglick river at the village of Newtok. A large percentage of homes in dozens of rural Alaska villages have never had flush toilets and must use honey buckets.

Photo by Alex DeMarban.

Barriers to Best Practices to Sustainable Rural Communities in Alaska

This section contains a summary of the proposed solutions to the barriers of sustainable rural communities in Alaska. Responses are categorized by focus areas that have a broad affect to all partner federal agencies. Full detailed responses can be reviewed in the full Agency Response section. The Commission has categorized some of the response solutions provided and developed some potential outcomes on behalf of the partner federal agencies. Next steps for this section includes input and involvement of state agencies, tribal groups, municipalities and the private sector at large.

A Lead Federal Agency

Many responses focused on the need for a Lead Agency in Alaska. This "Lead Agency" could bring federal partners in alignment and improve communication and rural collaboration. There are numerous tasks highlighted for a "Lead Agency" in this section. Responses and suggestions included:

Agency

- Designate a lead agency among federal partners for a region. Also designate a lead partner within that region. Meet quarterly to brief completed projects, projects in construction and planned projects for statewide collaboration.

- Capacity building programs shared among federal partners to help recipients plan for future projects. Could include a "clearinghouse" for technical assistance needs among recipients. Could also include an informational resource that would jointly broadcast notice for funding availability by agency, their various funding cycles, funding requirements and agency contact information.

- Congressionally empower the all ready standing state/federal Denali Commission to bring all state and federal agencies together on an annual basis to review programs and facilitate efforts by local and state government to develop community and regional master plans.

- Implement a coordinated Federal application process that at least uses some shared criteria would streamline the process for such applicants. Develop a shared set of selection/scoring criteria that can be incorporated into multiple programs. The overall weight of the shared vs. program specific criteria can vary. A more ambitions approach would create a shared pool of funds from each agency to which an applicant could make a single application for several kinds of Federal support.

Planning

- Even with the best of intentions, agency personnel and program specialists often institute a "top-down" approach. This is shown in research plan development and implementation all the way through policy formulation. Agencies tend to follow the past practice of internal plan/design preparation followed by a request for community input. Unless there is true collaboration at all stages of concept design through implementation and evaluation, there will not be buy-in at the community level.

- The Denali Commission effort now underway to identify barriers to best practices appears to be an ideal starting point for identification of key sustainability factors with subsequent definition of success for the various factors.

Policy

- Develop consistency on how federal agencies implement their individual government-to-government consultations (suggest that the project "lead" agency ... would be the lead for government-to-government). Improve the overall understanding that all significant stakeholders (tribe/city, as well as the implied role of regional and village Native corporations) need to be included in the coordination processes. Provide legal recognition for regional tribal entities that represent multiple tribal governments to facilitate working larger geographical issues more effectively.

- Need for a coordinated central "clearing house" for information on grant/loan/funding resources provided by the many Federal agencies in Alaska.

- Need for some kind of coordinated training program, inclusive of all the Agencies, with ability to travel to, and hold training in, small remote communities. Availability of expertise to help communities develop grant or loan proposals.

Regional Tribal Entities

The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) passed by Congress in 1971, was the largest land claims settlement in U.S. history, transferring land title to Alaska Native Corporations (40 million acres divided among 220 Alaska Native villages and 12 regions within the state.)

In some cases, the 12 regions in the state have designated non-profit corporations including health entities, education organizations and housing authorities. These designated Alaska Native regional tribal entities at times serve entire regions and numerous tribes and can include tribal membership of entire regions.

Federally recognized tribes became a reality in Alaska with the Federally Recognized Indian List Act of 1994 effectively endorsing the inclusion of Alaska Native tribes. Alaska had 226 tribes recognized at the time.

The development of regional tribal entities resulted in joint efforts among Alaska Native groups to address issues for entire regions. These groups were regionalized as dictated by ANCSA boundaries. Flexibility on Tribal participation and/or Regional Tribal Entity participation is at times required for successful rural development even though the Regional Tribal Entities may not hold Tribal status as defined by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Statutory

- Establish agency roles and responsibilities and designate a lead federal agency using Appalachian Commission or Everglades Restoration as models. Recommend statutory changes to allow federal agencies be permitted to cost share with each other to promote sustainable rural communities. Empower federal agencies to establish project design criteria appropriate to the region (roads, buildings and utilities.)

- Find ways to streamline NEPA and permitting processes. Involve the public collaboratively early in the process. Within authorities, once NEPA is completed, issue permits for longest term reasonably possible.

- At the outset of a project with multiple federal funding sources, identify a "lead federal agency" and "lead federal program" (by largest funder or some other method) for the project. This lead program/agency has the responsibility for completing a Part 50 or

Part 50 and Part 58 Review Under the HUD Code of Federal Regulations

Many projects in Alaska receive funding from multiple federal agencies and, in order to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) all federal agencies require an Environmental Review (ER) prior to taking any action that limits the choice of a project site. There are two types of ERs possible under the implementing 24 CFR regulations: Part 58 reviews, where the local governing body assumes responsibility for the completion of the ER Record, and Part 50 reviews, where the federal agency assumes responsibility.

Part 58 review, (as applicable for Environmental Reviews and National Environmental Policy Act) of all covered activities for the project. All other federal funding agencies agree to accept the Part 50 or Part 58 review as authorized by the "lead federal agency" for program compliance purposes.

Possible Outcomes:

Create a Lead Federal Agency model. The role of this "Lead Agency" would focus on coordination of interested federal agencies to address numerous issues and promote efforts that have the greatest impact. These Lead Agency tasks could be the role of one entity or the various tasks could be spread out among numerous federal partners in Alaska.

⇒ Convene *federal partner meetings* on a regular basis to discuss key issues in rural Alaska. While the Denali Commission's MOU Partners Workgroup has been productive and helpful in streamlining efforts, it was recognized by many federal partners that a need exists to convene just the *federal partners* of that group in Alaska on a regular basis to address issues that have unique federal consequences. The MOU Partners Workgroup convenes the State of Alaska and the federal agencies. A federal agenda to discuss federal statutes, regulations, internal policies and procedures was made apparent in process of developing this report.

⇒ Hold discussions among federal partners specific to regions in Alaska and facilitate discussion by partner federal agencies on that particular region. *(More on this topic is provided in the Regional Approach solution.)*

⇒ Strategically plan capacity building programs both internally and externally—end goal would be to help perspective recipients plan for receiving federal assistance. This could include a "clearinghouse" for technical assistance among federal partners.

⇒ Review and compile existing reports and research recently completed on rural development in Alaska.

⇒ Review 2010 Census data as a group when it comes available. Use data to guide partners on new funding allocations for the state that will affect future infrastructure investments.

⇒ Develop informational resource database of federal partner programs that would include funding availability and grant application processes.

⇒ Facilitate discussion among federal partners on community and regional master plans. *(More on this topic is provided in the Regional Approach solution.)*

⇒ Lead a discussion and strategic effort on improving and increasing federal government-to-government relations. Include in that discussion Tribal governments. Facilitate and develop a plan unique to Alaska addressing Tribal Consultation, Executive Order 13175.

⇒ Lead a discussion of federal regulations and strategize potential improvements in streamlining efforts of collaboration to address the numerous regulations that exist in implementing programs in a particular area. The end goal would be to streamline efforts on regulatory compliance with a concerted effort of federal partnering to address specific regulations that affect all federal agencies in a given region or in a specific program area. Priorities in this effort would be set by participating federal partners. Initial focus would be on statutory issues that may have unique circumstances when applied in Alaska.

A Regional Approach to Building Sustainable Communities

A regional approach to addressing barriers in developing sustainable rural communities was discussed by many agencies. This section goes hand-in-hand with the "Lead Agency" concept. Responses in this area are connected with the planning discussed in the Lead Agency model and Community focus section.

- A concerted effort by federal agencies to aid with a regional focus that consider all aspects of the regions future wants, needs and realistic solutions to those needs.
- Need for local, regional, or state-wide market development for entrepreneurial businesses.
- Education in the capacity building effort and interagency collaboration with a regional focus.

Possible Outcome:

Hold Regional Informational Forums throughout the state and involve partner federal agencies, State of Alaska agencies and the private and non-profit sector as applicable.

⇒ Hold a series of regional forums. Meetings could be held in conjunction with other regularly scheduled meetings and/or events with already well-established groups. Examples include Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP), Southeast Conference, Alaska Municipal League, etc.

⇒ Facilitate discussion of regional meeting with a focus on both current infrastructure projects in that region and entertain discussion on future potential projects.

⇒ Provide one-on-one technical assistance to perspective grantees in regional meetings.

⇒ Facilitate on-site visits by participating partners prior to Regional Forums to provide first-hand knowledge of current issues and challenges faced by the particular region.

⇒ Invite Delegation staff to Regional Meetings for educational and informational purposes.

Regional boundaries for the 12 Alaska Native Regional Corporations under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA).

Solutions in Partnerships

The need for strong, lasting partnerships was a repeated theme in the responses provided. Partnerships with state agencies, partner federal agencies and tribes were discussed and the need for partnerships to promote education, training and planning were often inferred in responses as part of the solution to the barrier.

Agency

- Agencies must prioritize communication, cooperation and collaboration.
- A robust training program aimed at "Working with Tribal Governments" should be developed and launched within the federal community as a starting point for developing a more differential approach to rural issues.

Education and Training

- In many areas of rural Alaska, communities are becoming increasingly comfortable with providing services to visitors interested in learning about their culture, community and surrounding environments. Most national parks in Alaska are located near rural communities rather than urban areas. These parklands are often the homelands of these rural communities. When local communities decide that sharing experiences that these homelands have to offer with outside visitors are appropriate, local people are often well suited to provide these services. Most small communities are concerned about large scale tourism that might intrude upon the privacy of their community. However, smaller scale operations that are involve some form of local control by the community are often more welcomed. Economic benefits that remain in the community can help support subsistence activities and help to further community sustainably.
- Advocate for local workforce development and job creation in respect to all federal and state projects. Advocate for lower cost of living, including energy efficiency, electricity and other basic needs.

Planning

- Many agencies attempt to incorporate communities into the review process but mostly present their finding to the community as an educational outreach effort. Communities are strategically located and vital to the assessment of causal agents that will potentially affect their sustainability and for monitoring these effects on a continual basis.
- Explore opportunities to maximize use of existing infrastructure. Strategies to encourage public involvement through new social media devices can also be encouraged. Increase use of virtual or video meetings and other electronic media such as websites to better inform the public of future projects, plans and opportunities.
- In partnership with the State of Alaska's Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, profile each communities infrastructure status and develop a location specific work plan federal agencies can use to build capacity.

Statutory

- Develop statewide interagency plans for available rock and material sources at reasonable cost to minimize transportation costs. For example, exclude mobilization and demobilizations for remote communities and then see if the benefit/cost ratios are affected. Seek Congressional and Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works (ASACW) clarifications to benefit/cost ratio formulas to leveling the playing field for remote Alaska locations by removing the mobilization costs from the benefit/cost ration. Increased interagency communication. Recommend developing a "clearinghouse" for projects.

Cost Ratio Benefit

Small populations, subsistence lifestyles, and remote regions partnered with the high cost of construction make reliance on benefit/cost ratios problematic. Low ratios make it difficult to compete nationally for funding. Additionally, the cost of mobilization and demobilization is a barrier to construct basic infrastructure in Alaska due to the remote nature of most projects.

Possible Outcome:

Develop a Partnership Plan that addresses critical issues affecting rural development by utilizing partner agency participation to address critical issues throughout the state of Alaska, including:

⇒ Discussions on joint funding of projects that involve federal partners, State of Alaska, and private entities.

⇒ Facilitate discussions on existing state, federal, non-profit and private programs that provide training for potential grantees with the end goal of educating participants on what is available and adding programs as necessary.

⇒ Develop and support partnerships with Alaska Native non-profit associations, ANCSA Corporations, Alaska Native health corporations. Recognize existing expertise and programs and utilize best practices to incorporate into federal programs or partner with federal programs.

A Focus on Community

Sustainable rural community development requires the involvement of the communities in all phases of planning, design and construction of any community infrastructure or program. Responses in this area addressed the critical need of that community involvement and methods for improving that involvement.

Agency

- Ensure that projects are really what community members want.
- Projects should have some local equity and financial commitment.

Land

- Better define the array of real estate issues and establish procedures and resources for communities to advance their public planning process. Develop a better data base for land value as the result of recent sales.

Local Ownership

Local ownership of proposed projects is an essential component of successful rural infrastructure development. Unless local residents understand and agree with the need for a project and actively participate in the project scoping, they are unlikely to maintain that project over the long term. Also, local residents have the best understanding of their needs and what works or does not work in their community.

Planning

- Human well-being is determined by the complex interaction of human, social, economic, and environmental resources. In order to sustain a healthy community, the community must meet the basic needs of its members. Basic services like housing, sewage, food, water, energy, and social order are critical. There has to be a balance allowing for the redistribution of impact when one segment of the social infrastructure is over/underwhelmed. A community must plan for the effects of rapid change on their physical location and cultural integrity.
- The distribution of power is a major factor in shaping the degree of tensions and negative effects. When local organizations and institutions lack power, local interests are likely to be neglected, so that costs are borne disproportionately by local residents while benefits accrue primarily at the regional and national levels. Social and economic effects are mitigated by the planning, regulatory, and allocation functions of community governments. An essential determinant is the ability of these governments to plan, act on these plans, and adapt based on subsequent experience.

Subsistence

- Subsistence and cash economies often are in conflict. The epistemology of traditional knowledge is poorly understood and frequently dismissed by western scientists and decision/policy makers.
- Continue to develop a regulatory structure that follows the intent of Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, which requires a rural priority for subsistence uses when shortages or allocation decisions between user groups require accommodation or a preference. Continue to work on ways to minimize confusion and overlap between State and Federal wildlife and fisheries management when differences between laws exist in the management of subsistence activities. There is a critical link between rural community sustainability and being able to successfully harvest

local natural resources near communities with minimal conflict from competing uses from around the state or the rest of the world. Federal law provides a priority for subsistence uses, however it can become complicated to implement a priority for subsistence when needed because of differing laws and jurisdictions between the state and the federal government. Use of local resources benefits rural sustainability in many ways. Cultural and social traditions are maintained so that people work together as a community helping each other when needed, promoting interdependence and minimizing the need for supplies and help from distant places. Economic benefits are realized when food and shelter needed become available with less cash than required if products are imported at greater expense. When less cash is needed to live in a rural community more time can be spent pursuing subsistence activities and less time on wage labor for cash generation. This helps maintain the systems of rural community interdependence rather than being heavily reliant on external support and the need for more money.

Subsistence

"Subsistence" is the term most often used to describe a way of life that Alaska's Native peoples have lived for thousands of years. Hunting, fishing and gathering allows Alaska Native families to feed an clothe their families and the subsistence lifestyle is oftentimes associated with the Alaska Native way of living.

The government definitions of subsistence involve the use of, and access to, sources of wild foods. The Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act (ANILCA) passed by Congress in 1980 includes federal recognition of a "rural preference" for subsistence hunting and fishing and provisions for rural priority to "subsistence resources in times of scarcity."

The State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game specifies both Alaska Natives and non-Natives may hunt and fish for subsistence if they live in rural areas.

While the language "rural preference" could be construed as an ethnic preference, challenges to this protection have failed thus far.

Tribal

- Within the agency, an individual review effort should occur to identify grant programs with Indian Country eligibility requirements. Each of those grant programs should be examined for flexibility that would allow Alaska Tribes to participate.

Possible Outcome:

⇒ As a group, strategize annual support of events and conferences that address rural needs such as: Energy, Health, Coastal Erosion, Transportation, Housing, Environmental. Collectively as a group develop ways to get rural community attendance and input at these events.

⇒ As a group, discuss current federal requirements for funds and strategize methods to ensure community inclusiveness in acquiring those funds. Small communities have greater difficulty acquiring federal funding due to lack of technical assistance or capacity. Involve community members in developing solutions to address this issue.

⇒ Research existing resources that deal with land, mapping, site control and natural resources and educate federal partners and communities of the resources available.

A Need for Policy Changes

Numerous policy changes were proposed in the initial survey on the barriers to sustainable rural communities. A few are highlighted in this section. For detailed information on these proposed changes, see the Agency Response section of this report.

Planning

- Mainstream "livability" in community planning, transportation planning, project development, and implementation.

- Develop measures for progress and require monitoring as a condition for any grant money invested under this partnership. There are many examples where the lack of monitoring and modeling to capture the health benefits of smart growth skews the cost-benefit analysis. As an example, the costs associated with type 2 diabetes in the US, which has a disproportionate impact on minority populations, was $159.5 billion in 2007. This includes medical costs of $105.7 billion and indirect costs of $53.8 billion. Indirect costs of diabetes include absenteeism, long-term disability, and early mortality. Smart growth practices related to transportation, urban design and environmental protection can help reduce the prevalence and incidence of chronic and acute diseases, such as diabetes, through physical activity and nutrition.

Statutory

- Modify regulations to recognize water and sewer systems in communities where there is no piped water and sewer consistent with the existing level of service in that community, so that they could qualify as *decent, safe and sanitary*. For example, if there is an appropriate sewage lagoon in the community or proper storage of sewage at the residential site prior to transport to the site and training of residents of proper disposal and its importance, then housing should meet the standards of decent, safe and sanitary. Certification or inspection of these systems could be implemented to meet decent, safe and sanitary standards. Such an alternative may be allowable for existing housing (rehabilitation or relocation) or may include new construction as well, with the best efforts to prepare housing for piped water and sewer in the future.

Decent, Safe and Sanitary

Several U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs reference a housing property standard called "decent, safe and sanitary." Decent, safe and sanitary, as per this regulation, has always carried with it the requirement that there be piped water and sewer. Uniform Relocation Act (URA) regulations require that in decent, safe and sanitary housing: "…There shall be a separate, well lighted and ventilated bathroom that provides privacy to the user and contains a sink, bathtub or shower stall, and a toilet, all in good working order and properly connected to appropriate sources of water and to a sewage drainage system.…"

There is no precedent for considering any form of a "honey bucket" system as qualifying as decent, safe and sanitary. (A honey bucket is literally a bucket used as a toilet in homes in rural Alaska without sewer or running water. Buckets are emptied manually into a community dump site.) This has been problematic when attempting to offer relocation housing to residents in villages that do not have piped water or sewer. It has also been problematic when considering housing rehabilitation or new construction in communities with no or limited piped water and sewer.

- Remove the impediment and additional administrative burden in the Indian Community Development Block Grant Program (ICDBG) program by amending the regulations at 24 CFR § 1003.204 to eliminate the requirements for a federally-recognized Indian tribe to create a Community Based Development Organization (CBDO) and allow Indian tribes to apply for ICDBG grants for new construction and allow the Indian tribe applicant to also be the developer. Alternatively, an exception could be made to the regulations at 24 CFR § 1003.204(c) recognizing Indian Housing Authorities (IHAs) and Regional Housing Authorities (RHAs) as CBDOs.

- Congress and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) should consider reinstituting Indian Health Service, (IHS) Appropriations for IHS sanitation facilities for HUD funded housing. This would require removing the IHS prohibition from serving HUD funded housing with IHS sanitation facilities to insure that Federal infrastructure and housing programs can work together to help create sustainable rural Alaska communities. Congress and OMB should also continue to support and provide the project funding that is allocated to Alaska by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development (USDA-RD) through the State of Alaska Village Safe Water (VSW) program and to IHS/Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) through the EPA Set-Aside programs. Funding has dropped over the last few years, particularly the EPA Alaska Native Village grant program, which is a major contributor. Restoring previous funding levels and close coordination between HUD, IHS, EPA, USDA-RD, Alaska federally-recognized Tribes and their Tribally-designated Housing Entities, ANTHC, and the VSW program would help to support the policy of the United States that all Indian communities and Indian homes, new and existing, be provided with safe and adequate water supply systems and sanitary sewage waste disposal systems as soon as possible.

Possible Outcomes:

⇒ Many policy changes are important to the federal partners, especially those that do not apply to unique Alaska circumstances. Assessment and prioritization of these potential changes need to be discussed and strategies to address them developed.

Other Solutions

A variety of solutions in a wide array of subjects were brought up through this survey process. Detailed back-up information on each of these solutions can be found in the Agency Response section. Follow-up on this effort includes the further involvement of state and private entities and will be part of this process in the coming months.

Energy

- Federal agencies should support the development of renewable energy alternatives such as hydropower, geothermal, solar, tidal, and biomass generated power sources, and the interties and infrastructure needed to transport the power, within their authorities. Prioritize for funding the most needed projects which will actually help local rural communities rather than focusing on projects where the energy produced will be shipped out of state.

Environmental Changes

- The most obvious and least acceptable to rural Alaskans is relocation of these villages as a whole or moving all or part to other more accessible locations where infrastructure exists. The only other alternative is admitting to ourselves and the village that due to location certain investments in infrastructure will not be forthcoming.

- Land and wildlife management regulatory systems need to recognize and attempt to accommodate rapid changes that are taking place with economic, social and environmental conditions. Timing of migrations, life cycles and distribution of fish and wildlife in many parts of the state are changing quickly perhaps due to climate change. Understanding these changes and affects on populations of wildlife are critical. When appropriate, adaptations need to be accommodated for traditional patterns of use to continue. Short and long term sustainability of a wild resource, as well as the communities that are dependent upon them, require being able to adjust quickly to changing situations. Wildlife and fisheries management strategies need to be able to respond to these changes quickly and allow for regulatory changes when appropriate.

Health

- Alaska has a very high rate of child neglect and abuse affecting Native children. Alaska Native children are removed from family systems and placed into state foster care and eventually adopted to non-Native families at a higher rate than other ethnicities. Children are exposed to excessive alcohol abuse, domestic violence, and increasing use of methamphetamine by adults. Children have suffered physical abuse, sexual abuse and severe neglect because of these problems. There are no BIA Law Enforcement Officers in Alaska because Alaska is a P.L. 280 state where jurisdiction is held with the state. It is not uncommon for the state Troopers or the State Children's Services to respond to a child abuse report in one or two weeks due to the vast, remote areas which increases the risk factor for these children. Thus, the Tribal Child Welfare Workers, who are funded by BIA Human Services, must assume responsibility to protect children until such time the law enforcement arrives to the villages. Alaska has a high rate of sex offenders who live in tribal villages. Many of these offenders have not received treatment which increases the risk to children. Again, the Tribal Child Welfare

Workers must take responsibility to protect children in these circumstances. The presence of law enforcement in tribal villages would help reduce the risk to children for abuse, neglect and sexual abuse.

- Treatment services should be increased at the village level for child abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, suicide attempts, alcohol, substance abuse, domestic violence. Many villages report having a Behavioral Health Counselor visit the village once a month to provide counseling to children, individuals. Once a month counseling is not adequate to treat these severe issues. Many villages have requested a Behavioral Health professional to provide services on a weekly basis.

Transportation

- Federal agencies should support the development of basic transportation infrastructure within their authorities. Subsidize local barge or air companies if needed to ensure continued service to small communities.

- New funding options are needed and coordination between modes of transportation (air, rail, highway, and ship) and the Federal agencies with oversight responsibilities for those modes. Strategies in Alaska could include other transportation options such as small aircraft services, passenger ferries, and other transportation funding options.

Barriers to Best Practices: Agency Responses:

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Coordination.	There is a lack of coordination by funders be it state, federal or private entities for work being done on the same projects. A lead agency, who takes on such planning and coordinating functions across all other agencies, can reduce duplicative efforts and result in efficiencies that will reduce time to complete a project and result in cost savings. *Possible Solution:* Designation of a lead agency among federal partners for a region. Also designate a lead partner within that region. Meet quarterly to brief completed projects, projects in construction and planned projects for statewide collaboration.
Capacity.	Capacity of recipients and communities to navigate the various funding cycles, applications, requirements and deliverables while at the same time ensuring project development occurs on a timely schedule. Inadequate planning during the early phases of a project can result in projects that are not sustainable in the long term. Additionally, capacity building enhances leadership and organizational development. *Possible Solution:* Capacity building programs shared among federal partners to help recipients plan for future projects. Could include a "clearinghouse" for technical assistance needs among recipients. Could also include an informational resource that would jointly broadcast notice for funding availability by agency, their various funding cycles, funding requirements and agency contact information.

Continued

Denali Commission (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Planning.	Lack of coordinated planning efforts that consider how each project will affect/impact the overall sustainability of a community or village, rather than just the sustainability of the given project and sponsor entity. Project planning must ensure the project meets a documented need, is consistent with strategic and community plans and realistic budgetarily. A good community plan also provides a current economic, social and infrastructure summary of a community. *Possible Solution:* A concerted effort by federal agencies to aid with a regional focus that consider all aspects of the regions future wants, needs and realistic solutions to those needs.
Turnover.	Significant, rapid turnover or transition in communities and villages or in regions which results in project delays and substantial loss of historic perspective and information by the recipient/applicant. *Possible Solutions:* Solutions could include education in the capacity building effort and inter-agency collaboration with a regional focus. This is an ongoing issue and needs further discussion.

Continued

Denali Commission (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Economic Development.	Lack of jobs/economies in communities and villages. Employment and quality of life are the essential foundation to any sustainable community. Collaboration and coordination are an essential component to that effort and a lead agency must act as a convener and work to that end on behalf of all federal agencies. *Possible Solution:* Advocate for local workforce development and job creation in respect to all federal and state projects. Advocate for lower cost of living, including energy efficiency, electricity and other basic needs.
Reauthorization.	Denali Commission reauthorization is critical for longevity and stability. The Commission is proceeding with assisting to draft language for the 2012 Farm Bill for reauthorization. Issues in drafting reauthorization language include State of Alaska cost share match and the future role of Commissioners. The Commission will work with the House Transportation and Infrastructure committee to develop a first draft of this authorizing language. The end goal is to ensure reauthorization occurs in conjunction with other like Regional Commissions and continues on an ongoing basis.

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Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Lack of Lead Agency Designation.	The June 2009 GAO Report (GAO-09-551), "ALASKA NATIVE VILLAGES, Limited Progress Has Been Made on Relocating Villages Threatened by Flooding and Erosion" identified the lack of lead federal agency designation for community relocation efforts. This presents problems with a programmatic approach to NEPA and other complex issues when coupled with the lack of funding for planning activities. This is compounded by the large Unorganized Borough which includes 210 communities many of which lack planning staff and resources. *Potential Solutions:* Establish agency rolls and responsibilities and designate a lead federal agency using Appalachian Commission or Everglades Restoration as models. Recommend statutory changes to allow federal agencies be permitted to cost share with each other to promote sustainable rural communities. Empower federal agencies to establish project design criteria appropriate to the region (roads, buildings and utilities.)
Reliance on benefit/cost ratios which is a statutory requirement.	Small populations, subsistence lifestyles, and remote regions partnered with the high cost of construction make reliance on benefit/cost ratios problematic. Low ratios make it difficult to compete nationally for funding. Additionally, the cost of mobilization and demobilization is a barrier to construct basic infrastructure in Alaska due to the remote nature of most projects. *(Continued)*

Continued

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers—Alaska District (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Reliance on benefit/cost ratios which is a statutory requirement. (Continued.)	*Potential Solutions:* Develop statewide inter-agency plans for available rock and material sources at reasonable cost to minimize transportation costs. For example exclude mobilization and demobilizations for remote communities and then see if the benefit/cost ratios are affected. Seek Congressional and Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works (ASACW) clarifications to benefit/cost ratio formulas to leveling the playing field for remote Alaska locations by removing the mobilization costs from the benefit/cost ration. Increased interagency communication. Recommend developing a "clearinghouse" for projects.
Real Estate and Right of Entry.	Much of rural Alaska is in the Unorganized Borough and most small rural communities do not have planning staff. Land ownership is encumbered by Native Allotment parcels (not all of which are recorded) and complicated BIA procedures for management and resolution of distribution through estates. The value of rural land may be low until there is a need for a key parcel of land for a public purpose resulting in delays associated with price agreement. *Potential Solutions:* Better define the array of real estate issues and establish procedures and resources for communities to advance their public planning process. Develop a better data base for land value as the result of recent sales.
Lack of interagency collaboration.	The unique authorities of each agency are often misunderstood outside their agency. There is wasted effort when projects and programs overlap causing cost growth and delays. *(Continued)*

Continued

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers—Alaska District (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Lack of interagency collaboration. (Continued.)	*Potential Solutions:* Congressionally empower the all ready standing state/federal Denali Commission to bring all state and federal agencies together on an annual basis to review programs and facilitate efforts by local and state government to develop community and regional master plans.
Complex layers of local government.	Federal agencies have a responsibility to work with federally recognized tribes on a government-to-government basis. Additionally there are city/borough governments as well as both village and regional Alaska Native Corporations. Alaska District currently conducts government-to-government consultations with 229 federally recognized tribes. The complexity of a project increases significantly as the number of tribal governments, local governments and Native corporations are involved zas stakeholders given the absence of inter-related organizational structure. *Potential Solutions:* Develop consistency on how federal agencies implement their individual government-to-government consultations (suggest that the project "lead" agency from suggestion #1 would be the lead for government-to-government). Improve the overall understanding that all significant stakeholders (tribe/city, as well as the implied role of regional and village Native corporations) need to be included in the coordination processes. Provide legal recognition for regional tribal entities that represent multiple tribal governments to facilitate working larger geographical issues more effectively.

Continued

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers—Alaska District (cont'd)

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U.S. Coast Guard

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Communications.	Understanding of key agencies and authorities needed for project approvals.
Travel.	Cost and time associated with travel to remote areas is a barrier which limits progress.
Resources.	Internal (USCG) Resources to undertake new projects are limited.
Weather/Seasons.	Safe access for many projects is limited to spring/summer months.
Enforcement Measures.	Enforcement of CG standards is difficult in rural communities where there is seldom a CG presence or interaction.

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Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Lack of basic transportation infrastructure; high cost of transportation and/or shipping, if even available on a regular basis in remote isolated island communities.	Many rural communities do not have basic transportation infrastructure such as roads or ferries, to connect them with other communities or population centers. Transportation and shipping of supplies and products is extremely expensive, and in some cases not available on a regular basis. *Potential solutions:* Federal agencies should support the development of basic transportation infrastructure within their authorities. Subsidize local barge or air companies if needed to ensure continued service to small communities.
High cost of power.	Many rural communities depend on diesel-generation for their power supply. This is extremely expensive and can become an insurmountable barrier to the development of any kind of sustainable business or economy. *Potential solutions:* Federal agencies should support the development of renewable energy alternatives such as hydropower, geothermal, solar, tidal, and biomass generated power sources, and the interties and infrastructure needed to transport the power, within their authorities. Prioritize for funding the most needed projects which will actually help local rural communities rather than focusing on projects where the energy produced will be shipped out of state.

Continued

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Lack of knowledge about what grants, loans, or other funding sources are available to rural communities. *Lack of skill by, and training for, community members relative to grant writing and positioning themselves for competitive advantage.*	Many small communities don't have knowledge of what funding sources are available to them. There are lots of federal agencies with a variety of programs, which most people are either not aware of, or don't know what they are for. There may be overlap between agencies, or several agencies that have opportunities or funding resources for similar types of projects. Many small communities do not have people who have skills in writing grant or loan applications or project proposals. They also don't have ready access to training for such skills, and often don't have funds to send anyone to such training. *Potential solutions*: Need for a coordinated central "clearing house" for information on grant/loan/funding resources provided by the many Federal agencies in Alaska. Need for some kind of coordinated training program, inclusive of all the Agencies, with ability to travel to, and hold training in, small remote communities. Availability of expertise to help communities develop grant or loan proposals.
Lack of markets for products of new entrepreneurial businesses.	In some cases, markets for products that might come from new businesses don't exist. In other cases, the markets do exist elsewhere, but not locally, and often not in Alaska. This leads to extremely high cost to ship products out of the region or state to existing markets (tied to Barrier #1), which makes it difficult to compete with similar products being produced closer to the existing market. *Potential solutions:* Need for local, regional, or state-wide market development for entrepreneurial businesses.

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U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Private investment in publicly –owned resources.	Many opportunities for rural community development require private investment, but the challenge is that they often need to have access to publicly-owned natural resources. This often results in intense public controversy, and manifests in an uncertainty of supply. Environmental analysis and permitting processes can take a very long time. Many lending institutions are unwilling to provide loans unless a long-term supply of resources can be guaranteed. *Potential solutions*: Federal agencies constantly struggle with this. Find ways to streamline NEPA and permitting processes. Involve the public collaboratively early in the process. Within authorities, once NEPA is completed, issue permits for longest term reasonably possible.

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U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Alaska Office

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Lack of communication.	Agencies must prioritize communication, cooperation and collaboration.
Agency inflexibility.	Flexibility must be emphasized in program design.
Insufficient community involvement.	Ensure that projects are really what community members want.
Design deficiencies.	Often designs are too expensive or inappropriate for the application.
Insufficient ownership responsibility.	Projects should have some local equity and financial commitment.

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U.S. Department of Commerce National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Weather Service

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Lack of an All-Hazards Emergency Action Plan.	Prevents proper planning and response to environmental hazards.
Improper application of "corporate knowledge" regarding weather and climate.	Old paradigms regarding response to seasonal weather issues need to be updated in the light of Climate Change (e.g. later freeze-up and earlier break-up of coastal ice leads to changes that must be planned for, such as when to begin preparations for protecting shorelines from coastal erosion).
Lack of training & education regarding climate change influences on decision thresholds.	Many consequences of climate change require different decisions regarding safety (e.g. more frequent coastal storms with higher waves requires changes in decisions on when and where to hunt for seals and whales).
Villages lack plans for becoming StormReady and TsunamiReady.	These two NWS programs provide villages with the knowledge and resources to prepare for storms and tsunamis. *(http://www.weather.gov/pa/files/storm%20ready.pdf)*

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Indian Health Service Alaska Region

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Affordable Energy.	Heating, electricity, oil, wind power.
Employment.	Lack of economic opportunity and decreased hope.
Access to quality K-12 education.	Inadequate education leads to lack of progress/ purpose.
Adequate sanitation facilities.	Relationships demonstrated to health.
Public Safety/Law Enforcement.	
Historical/Trans-generational Trauma.	Breech of taboo; loss of soul; cultural intrusion.
Community Apathy/Acceptance.	Of practices that harm the public health, e.g., non-reporting/non-recognition of sexual assault and domestic violence.

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Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Requirement for Multi-Agency Environmental Review Records for Leveraged Projects.	When multiple Federal sources are contemplated for the same project, there is no streamlined process in place to allow completion of a single Environmental Review (ER) record to satisfy the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Rather, each federal agency, and sometimes each program within a single federal agency, requires a separate ER record. To further complicate matters, some federal agencies only recognize Part 50 reviews, and others require Part 58 reviews conducted by specific local governing bodies for certain programs. In a worst case (but realistic) scenario, a project could be required to have three ER Records – one Part 58 conducted by the local government, one Part 58 review conducted by the State, and one Part 50 review completed by a federal agency. Because the completion of ER records can be both costly and time-consuming, this application of NEPA regulations adversely impacts multi-agency and multi-program funded projects. *Possible Solution:* At the outset of a project with multiple federal funding sources, identify a "lead federal agency" and "lead federal program" (by largest funder or some other method) for the project. This lead program/agency has the responsibility for completing a Part 50 or Part 58 review, as applicable, of all covered activities for the project. All other federal funding agencies agree to accept the Part 50 or Part 58 review as authorized by the "lead federal agency" for program compliance purposes.

Continued

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Barriers to Funding in Alaska's Unorganized Borough.	According to the State of Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development community database, there are approximately 210 communities in Alaska that are located in the state's "unorganized borough." Approximately 48 of these communities, 22.8 percent of the communities in the unorganized borough, do not have a local government or a tribal government. Approximately 66 of the 210 communities have a tribal government but do not have a state-defined unit of local government other than the State of Alaska itself. An estimated 10,485 people live in these 66 communities, which is approximately 1.5 percent of Alaska's population and 13.6 percent of all those living in the "unorganized borough" (based on Department of Labor 2009 population estimates). An unorganized borough has no borough or local government within its limits and all government services in the unorganized borough are provided by the state, except that some services may be provided by an incorporated city, if established. For those approximately 114 communities that lack local government, there is no option to provide certain grants such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) that would otherwise be available to local governments, i.e. there is no eligible grantee in these areas. There are few, if any, parts of the country that face the same barrier. *(Continued)*

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U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Barriers to Funding in Alaska's Unorganized Borough (Continued).	*Possible Solution:* One solution previously explored to address this issue in 2002 and 2003 was to allow a department of the State of Alaska to act as the unit of general local government for purposes of CDBG. This option was found not to meet the requirements of the federal statute and statutory changes to remedy the deficiencies should be further pursued. A second solution was offered by a 2009 GAO report that suggested a statutory change expand the definition of Unit of General Local Government to include federally-recognized Alaska Native Tribes/villages. However, this solution, would exclude approximately 48 communities in Alaska that do not have a tribal government or federally-recognized tribe in that community. Therefore, these two solutions should be combined to provide access to this additional critical source of funding and to provide a viable solution for all communities in Alaska.
"Decent, Safe and Sanitary" in Communities without Residential Piped Water and Sewer.	There is no precedent for considering any form of "honey bucket" system as qualifying as decent, safe and sanitary. This has been problematic when attempting to offer relocation housing to residents in villages that do not have piped water or sewer. It has also been problematic when considering housing rehabilitation or new construction in communities with no or limited piped water and sewer. *(Continued)*

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U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
"Decent, Safe and Sanitary" in Communities without Residential Piped Water and Sewer (Possible Solutions Continued).	*Possible Solutions:* Modify regulations to recognize water and sewer systems in communities where there is no piped water and sewer consistent with the existing level of service in that community, so that they could qualify as decent, safe and sanitary. For example, if there is an appropriate dump lagoon in the community or proper storage of sewage at the residential site prior to transport to the site and training of residents of proper disposal and its importance, then housing should meet the standards of decent, safe and sanitary. Certification or inspection of these systems could be implemented to meet decent, safe and sanitary standards. Such an alternative may be allowable for existing housing (rehabilitation or relocation) or may include new construction as well, with the best efforts to prepare housing for piped water and sewer in the future.
Indian Community Development Block Grant limitations on Eligible Applicants for New Construction Activities.	Although the requirements to qualify as a Community-Based Development Organization (CBDO) for an Indian Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG) application specified at 24 C.F.R. § 1003.204(c)(1), (2), or (3) appear to be flexible, the requirements for a CBDO are an impediment for housing development. Requiring creation of a separate body or entity complicates the ICDBG program, adds an additional administrative burden, and is costly. Under most Indian grant programs with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), an Indian tribe can be the applicant and the developer, but under the ICDBG program, an Indian tribe cannot be the applicant and the developer. *(Continued)*

Continued

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Indian Community Development Block Grant limitations on Eligible Applicants for New Construction Activities (Continued).	Although an Indian Housing Authority (IHA) or Regional Housing Authority (RHA) may not be a "tribal-based nonprofit organization," under 24 C.F.R. § 1003.204(c)(2)(iv), because the Alaska Native association that created it is not a recognized tribe, does not mean it cannot be a CBDO under 24 CFR § 1003.204(c)(3) because they are substantially similar to a "tribal-based nonprofit organization" in that IHAs and RHAs are primarily made up of Alaska Native Villages related by a common heritage and common interest and, though somewhat distinct by geography, the villages within the region or any region represented by an IHA or RHA and the Alaska Native Association creating it, like the various bands within a "Lower-48" tribe's reservation, could be considered a tribe as a whole. Therefore, IHAs and RHAs should qualify as a CBDO under 24 CFR § 1003.204(c)(3). However, if the IHAs or RHAs do not provide any justification or documentation to demonstrate that they are sufficiently similar to a tribal-based nonprofit organization under 24 CFR § 1003.204(c)(2)(iv), then their application will likely be denied. This frustrates the purpose of the regulations at 24 CFR § 1003.204 and the government-to-government relationship with Indian tribes. This also creates a much larger burden than necessary, especially when one considers that IHAs and RHAs should qualify, as a matter of law, as substantially similar in purpose, function, and scope to those entities qualifying under 24 CFR § 1003.204 (c)(1) or (2). *(Continued)*

Continued

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Indian Community Development Block Grant limitations on Eligible Applicants for New Construction Activities (Continued).	*Possible Solutions:* Remove the impediment and additional administrative burden in the ICDBG program by amending the regulations at 24 CFR § 1003.204 to eliminate the requirements for a federally-recognized Indian tribe to create a CBDO and allow Indian tribes to apply for ICDBG grants for new construction and allow the Indian tribe applicant to also be the developer. Alternatively, an exception could be made to the regulations at 24 CFR § 1003.204(c) recognizing IHAs and RHAs as CBDOs.
Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly.	The prohibition of most Indian Housing Authorities (IHAs) and Regional Housing Authorities (RHAs) from being eligible applicants for Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly is primarily contained in the regulations, the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), and the interpretation of the regulations and the NOFA by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This prohibition is an impediment in that it makes the process more complex, a duplication of efforts, and more costly for the villages and Indian tribes that wish to have and support a Section 202 project. Additionally, this prohibition does not support the tribal and government-to-government consultation process. (*Continued)*

Continued

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly (Continued).	The IHAs and RHAs in Alaska are in the best position to apply for and support Section 202 projects for their elders. However, the IHAs and RHAs have to be legally removed from the process, usually through formation of a single-asset entity, and are not allowed to control the development or have site control for the Section 202 project. When Section 202 projects are created, the IHAs and RHAs in Alaska are invariably involved, but usually through a complicated web of other organizations and corporations. This is not an efficient use of the Indian tribe's, IHAs', or RHAs' resources. In Alaska, many times a 5-unit complex is all that is, or can be, approved and funded, especially outside of Anchorage and Fairbanks, so the IHAs and RHAs that have the administrative capacity to do so should be the ones sponsoring and managing a Section 202 project. Plus, it is the IHAs and RHAs that are in the best position to ensure that HUD's requirements are complied with and that the housing meets the needs of the elderly in the village. *Possible Solution:* IHAs and RHAs should be allowed to apply for and sponsor Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly projects in Alaska. The General Authority under Section 202 of the Housing Act of 1959 provides as follows: "The Secretary is authorized to provide assistance to private nonprofit organizations and consumer cooperatives to expand the supply of supportive housing for the elderly." *(Continued)*

Continued

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly (Possible Solutions Continued).	The definition of consumer cooperative under 7 CFR § 3560.11 is as follows: "Consumer Cooperative. A corporation organized under the cooperative laws of a state or Federally recognized Indian tribe that will own and operate the housing on a cooperative basis solely for the benefit of its members." The definition for consumer cooperative should include IHAs and RHAs and follow more closely the original intent of Section 202. Section 202 of the Housing Act of 1959's original purpose was "to assist private nonprofit corporations, limited profit sponsors, consumer cooperatives or public bodies or agencies to provide housing and related facilities for elderly or handicapped families." Although this portion has been repealed, it illustrates that the intent was to include IHAs and RHAs as consumer cooperatives or public bodies and allow them to provide Supportive Housing for the Elderly. Although the Secretary may have authority to define consumer cooperatives, IHAs and RHAs should be included in the definition of consumer cooperatives and IHAs and RHAs should not be prohibited from applying for funding for, sponsoring, and managing Section 202 Housing for the Elderly. In Alaska, the IHAs and RHAs are in the best position to own, manage, and apply for funding for Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly. Therefore, HUD should define consumer cooperative in the regulations and the NOFA so that the Section 202 program would permit IHAs and RHAs that have the administrative capacity to do so to apply for, sponsor, and manage Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly. *Continued*

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Indian Preference Requirement in Procurement for Leveraged Projects under the Indian Housing Block Grant.	The Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act of 1996 (NAHASDA) Indian Preference provision has been consistently identified as a "major barrier" to the leveraging of NAHASDA funds with other U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding programs that require compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) and Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, as amended (Fair Housing Act). There is an inherent conflict in commingling funds from different HUD funding sources that must apply Indian Preference with some sources of funding and then must also apply Title VI and the Fair Housing Act to other sources of funding. There is no clear guidance on how to comply with Indian Preference on one hand and Title VI and the Fair Housing Act on the other. Some that have leveraged multiple HUD funding sources have separated a single project into multiple projects to satisfy Indian Preference and Title VI and Fair Housing Act requirements, which has frustrated the purpose of leveraging funds and added to the overall expense of the project. *Possible Solutions:* One solution to address this leveraging issue, internal to HUD, may lie in the unique government-to-government relationship that exists between the Federal Government and federally-recognized Indian Tribes and the policies established by HUD to codify this relationship. *(Continued)*

Continued

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Indian Preference Requirement in Procurement for Leveraged Projects under the Indian Housing Block Grant (Possible Solutions Continued).	Executive Order 13175 – Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, was implemented November 6, 2000, with its primary purpose to: "…establish regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with tribal officials in the development of Federal policies that have tribal implications, to strengthen the United States government-to-government relationships with Indian tribes, and to reduce the imposition of unfunded mandates upon Indian tribes…" In response to Executive Order 13175, HUD issued its Government-to-Government Tribal Consultation Policy on June 28, 2001. This policy codifies the United States Governments unique relationship with American Indian governments as set forth in the Constitution of the United States, treaties, statutes, court decisions, and executive orders and memoranda. The following provisions in this policy establish HUD's commitment to a government-to-government relationship with tribes and establish the basis for one proposed internal fix to the Tribal Preference "barrier": • Section I (C) states: "This consultation policy applies to all HUD program that have substantial direct effect on federally recognized Indian Tribal governments." • Section III (B) states: "HUD recognizes and commits to a government-to-government relationship with Federally-recognized tribes." (*Continued)*

Continued

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Indian Preference Requirement in Procurement for Leveraged Projects under the Indian Housing Block Grant (Possible Solutions Continued).	• Section III (D) states: "HUD shall take appropriate steps to remove existing legal and programmatic impediments to working directly and effectively with tribes on housing and community development programs administered by HUD." • Section III (F) states: " HUD shall be guided by these policy principles in its planning and management activities, including its budget, operating guidance, legislative initiatives, management accountability system and ongoing policy and regulation development process for all programs affecting tribes." Therefore, a resolution to this very difficult issue may be approached in one of two ways: 1. HUD could recognize and acknowledge its government-to-government relationship with federally-recognized Indian Tribes and establish regulations that require all HUD programs to adhere to Indian Preference requirements in procurement and contracting, when a federally-recognized Indian Tribe is leveraging multiple HUD funding programs for a project; or 2. HUD could establish a policy that supports the determination that Indian Tribes have: "… ensured, to the greatest extent feasible.." the use of Indian Preference in procurement and contracting, if they forego the use of Indian Preference because it negates their ability to successfully leverage funding from other HUD funding programs that require adherence to Fair Housing Act and Title VI requirements.

Continued

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
U.S. Indian Health Service prohibition from providing sanitation facilities for new homes funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.	The Indian Health Service (IHS) is prohibited from providing sanitation facilities for new homes funded by the housing programs of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). As a result, in order to provide sanitation facilities for new homes funded by HUD, housing funds must be utilized to provide sanitation facilities or the new housing will lack sanitation facilities. It is the policy of the United States that all Indian communities and Indian homes, new and existing, be provided with safe and adequate water supply systems and sanitary sewage waste disposal systems as soon as possible. Although IHS has the primary responsibility to address the sanitation needs of these communities, it is prohibited from coordinating its funding with HUD to develop safe, sanitary and sustainable housing. HUD funding is the primary source of new housing development in Alaska Native Villages. Both housing and sanitation are severely needed in rural Alaska communities. The 2009 Alaska Housing Needs Assessment reported that more than 9000 housing units are needed to address housing needs in rural Alaska. Currently, one-third of rural Alaska households lack adequate sanitation and safe drinking water. It is essential for the primary Federal program for sanitation (IHS) and the primary Federal program for housing (HUD) to work together to benefit rural Alaska communities with safe and adequate water supply systems and sanitary sewage waste disposal systems. *(Continued)*

Continued

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
U.S. Indian Health Service prohibition from providing sanitation facilities for new homes funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (Continued).	It appears that the origin of the prohibition extends back to the Housing Act of 1937 when HUD funded housing development was supplemented with an additional allocation for water and sewer development. IHS implemented a prohibition from serving HUD funded housing with IHS sanitation facilities. However, in 1996 when the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act Indian Housing Block Grant program was implemented for Indian tribes by setting up a formula-funded housing program, it no longer included supplemental funding for sanitation facilities. Yet, IHS continued to prohibit serving HUD funded housing with IHS sanitation facilities, which means that neither HUD funds nor IHS funds are allocated for sanitation facilities in rural Alaska. The IHS prohibition of providing sanitation facilities for new homes funded by HUD is a barrier to creating sustainable rural Alaska communities because neither IHS nor HUD programs can be coordinated in an efficient and effective manner to supply safe and adequate water supply systems and sanitary sewage waste disposal systems. *Possible Solutions:* Congress should consider reinstituting IHS Appropriations for IHS sanitation facilities for HUD funded housing. This would require removing the IHS prohibition from serving HUD funded housing with IHS sanitation facilities to insure that Federal infrastructure and housing programs can work together to help create sustainable rural Alaska communities. *(Continued)*

Continued

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
U.S. Indian Health Service prohibition from providing sanitation facilities for new homes funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (Possible Solutions Continued).	Congress should also continue to support and provide the project funding that is allocated to Alaska by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development (USDA-RD) through the State of Alaska Village Safe Water (VSW) program and to IHS/Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) through the EPA Set-Aside programs. Funding has dropped over the last few years, particularly the EPA Alaska Native Village grant program, which is a major contributor. Restoring previous funding levels and close coordination between HUD, IHS, EPA, USDA-RD, Alaska federally-recognized Tribes and their Tribally-designated Housing Entities, ANTHC, and the VSW program would help to support the policy of the United States that all Indian communities and Indian homes, new and existing, be provided with safe and adequate water supply systems and sanitary sewage waste disposal systems as soon as possible.

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U.S. Department of Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Uniqueness of the Alaska Native Lifestyle	Subsistence may not be an economic opportunity in reference to Indian lands and restricted Native allotments in Alaska, but managing those lands for subsistence values constitutes a choice to forgo associated economic opportunities (e.g., mineral development) that may exist. Thus, the connection between subsistence (on Indian lands) and the maximization of economic benefits to Native landowners involves decisions regarding monetary dividends that may be relinquished. The choice belongs to the landowners'— but BIA-Alaska is responsible for providing landowners with the information necessary to make informed choices. Moreover, if a land-owner chooses a subsistence management alternative, BIA-Alaska is still obligated to provide land and natural resources management that maximizes the return from these assets (in this case, subsistence opportunities), while meeting the beneficiary's desires.
Indian Lands, Natural Resource and Cultural Resource Assets	In Alaska, Tribes do not own Indian lands. The approximately 1.5 million acres of federally restricted Indian land and resource assets in Alaska belong to individual Native allotment and restricted Townsite lot owners. Consequently, the Department of the Interior's "community- focus," as a context for Indian land and trust re-source assets management, is ill-founded and contrary to the effective discharge of the Secre-tary's Trust Principles—especially in regard to specific Indian trust assets owned by individual Alaska Native beneficiaries. *(Continued)*

Continued

U.S. Department of Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Indian Lands, Natural Resource and Cultural Resource Assets. (Continued.)	Since the "Indian land" in Alaska is not Tribally-owned, this has limited or excluded Alaska Tribes from participating in most of the options available to reservation Tribes for the protection and restoration of natural resources such as options governed by the Clean Water Act and the Oil Pollution Act (Natural Resource Damage Assessments and Restorations). While not "Indian lands" as such, ANCSA resulted in the conveyance of 44 million acres of land to Native regional and village corporations, which are owned by shareholders who are beneficiaries of BIA services. Traditional hunting, fishing and gathering is an important use of ANCSA lands.
Geographic Challenges.	One unique feature of Alaska geography is the predominant tundra environment. This environment has created extremely complex and costly challenges in the placement of State-permitted landfills, and water and sewer infrastructure in rural villages; deficiencies in these basic public services contribute to numerous health issues for Alaska Na-tives. Seasonal flood -ing spreads leaching chemicals and bacteria from open dumps into nearby water and land. Water for cooking and drinking is hauled into homes in buckets from nearby rivers and streams, or filled at a "washeteria"—a local building for dispensing drinking water, washing clothes and bathing. In several Alaska villages, human waste is hauled out of homes in "honeybuckets" and dumped into sewage lagoons. Local health practitioners of-ten attribute the annual reoccurrence of com-municable diseases like hepatitis to the lack of safe sewage and solid waste infrastructure.

Continued

U.S. Department of Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Land Status Effects on Service Delivery	The status of Indian Lands is at the core of the relationship between Trust Services and Native Services in this Region. A key difference between BIA-Alaska and other BIA regions is the lack of reservations or of an "Indian Country" land base within which Tribes clearly have governing jurisdiction. This effects the provision of both Trust Services and of Na-tive Services.
Lack of Law Enforcement in Tribal Villages.	Alaska has a very high rate of child neglect, abuse affecting Native children. Alaska Native children are removed from family systems and placed into state foster care and eventually adopted to non-Native families at a higher rate than other ethnicities. Children are exposed to excessive alcohol abuse, domestic violence, and increasing use of methamphetamine by adults. Children have suffered physical abuse, sexual abuse and severe neglect because of these problems. There are no BIA Law Enforcement Officers in Alaska because Alaska is a P.L. 280 state where jurisdiction is held with the state. It is not uncommon for the state Troopers or the State Children's Services to respond to a child abuse report in one or two weeks due to the vast, remote areas which increases the risk factor for these children. Thus, the Tribal Child Welfare Workers, who are funded by BIA Human Services, must assume responsibility to protect children until such time the law enforcement arrives to the villages. *(Continued)*

Continued

U.S. Department of Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Lack of Law Enforcement in Tribal Villages. (Continued.)	Alaska has a high rate of sex offenders who live in tribal villages. Many of these offenders have not received treatment which increases the risk to children. Again, the Tribal Child Welfare Workers must take responsibility to protect children in these circumstances. The presence of law enforcement in tribal villages would help reduce the risk to children for abuse, neglect and sexual abuse.
Lack of Employment.	Due to the lack of economic development in rural Alaska expectations for employment are not optimistic for individuals who will be forced to enter the job market over the next few years. The lack of jobs in tribal villages contributes to the helplessness families experience and many families are on the welfare rolls, both State and Bureau of Indian Affairs. Many families may migrate to rural hub or urban hubs to seek jobs which diminish cultural ways, subsistence lifestyle and tribal culture. National studies indicate that families at or below national poverty levels are at high risk of separation. The children in these families are at risk of removal from their homes and often become the victims of abuse and neglect. If unemployment rises and public assistance services are reduced, we may expect increased referrals concerning neglect of children.

Continued

U.S. Department of Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Increase Behavioral Health Services.	Treatment services should be increased at the village level for child abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, suicide attempts, alcohol, substance abuse, domestic violence. Many villages report having a Behavioral Health Counselor visit the village once a month to provide counseling to children, individuals. Once month counseling is not adequate to treat these severe issues. Many villages have requested a Behavioral Health professional to provide services on a weekly basis.

Agency Representatives:

Pat Petrivelli, Anthropologist and

Gloria Gorman, BIA Human Services Director

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U.S. Department of Interior Bureau of Land Management

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Lack of jobs/employment opportunities in villages & small towns.	Over the decades the Federal government, including the military, has had to close or reduce employment outside of regional centers and established cities.
Lack of roads to most Alaskan villages.	Increases the costs of goods and travel.
Lack of economical energy and power.	Increases cost of electricity and heating.

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U.S. Department of Interior Fish and Wildlife Service—Alaska Region

Top Areas Toward Village Sustainability:	Brief Detail:
Education.	Youth - summer science/culture camps. Professional - support of ANSEP.
Employment.	Youth - YCC. Local hire. RITs. AFAs under the ISDEAA. Native preference for revenue producing visitor services.
Subsistence - provide for continued subsistence opportunity on refuge lands.	Manage subsistence hunting/fishing programs. Conduct wildlife/fish inventories to ensure hunting/fishing sustainability. Hunter education (e.g. steel shot clinics, trapping seminars).
Land exchanges.	To allow move of threatened villages (e.g. Newtok). To consolidate native and refuge land holdings (e.g. NIMA). To give villages economically valuable subsurface (e.g. Chefornak, sand/gravel).
Land acquisition.	Purchase of conservation easements to help villages ensure habitat protection (e.g. Koniag, Paimiut, Old Harbor). Purchase of native allotments when initiated by owners that need cash AND prefer allotments go into Refuge ownership.

Agency Representative: Todd Logan

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U.S. Department of Interior National Park Service—Alaska Region

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Maintaining opportunities that allow rural residents to continue traditional activities (Subsistence hunting, fishing and gathering).	Subsistence activities have provided cultural, economic and social sustainability to many rural communities for thousands of years and can continue to do so even in times of rapid changes, if we continue to work on finding ways to minimize impediments to this way of life in the modern context of mixed cash/subsistence economies. Continue to develop a regulatory structure that follows the intent of Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, which requires a rural priority for subsistence uses when shortages or allocation decisions between user groups require accommodation or a preference. Continue to work on ways to minimize confusion and overlap between State and Federal wildlife and fisheries management when differences between laws exist in the management of subsistence activities. There is a critical link between rural community sustainability and being able to successfully harvest local natural resources near communities with minimal conflict from competing uses from around the state or the rest of the world. Federal law provides a priority for subsistence uses, however it can become complicated to implement a priority for subsistence when needed because of differing laws and jurisdictions between the state and the federal government. *(Continued)*

Continued

U.S. Department of Interior National Park Service—Alaska Region (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Maintaining opportunities that allow rural residents to continue traditional activities (Subsistence hunting, fishing and gathering). (Continued.)	Use of local resources benefits rural sustainability in many ways. Cultural and social traditions are maintained so that people work together as a community helping each other when needed, promoting interdependence and minimizing the need for supplies and help from distant places. Economic benefits are realized when food and shelter needed become available with less cash than required if products are imported at greater expense. When less cash is needed to live in a rural community more time can be spent pursuing subsistence activities and less time on wage labor for cash generation. This helps maintain the systems of rural community interdependence rather than being heavily reliant on external support and the need for more money.
Allow for and help to facilitate flexibility and adaptation needed in rural economies.	Land and wildlife management regulatory systems need to recognize and attempt to accommodate rapid changes that are taking place with economic, social and environmental conditions. Timing of migrations, life cycles and distribution of fish and wildlife in many parts of the state are changing quickly perhaps due to climate change. Understanding these changes and affects on populations of wildlife are critical. When appropriate, adaptations need to be accommodated for traditional patterns of use to continue. Short and long term sustainability of a wild resource, as well as the communities that dependent upon them, require being able to adjust quickly to changing situations. Wildlife and fisheries management strategies need to be able to respond to these changes quickly and allow for regulatory changes when appropriate.

Continued

U.S. Department of Interior National Park Service—Alaska Region (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Support Cultural, Educational and Conservation related tourism when appropriate.	In many areas of rural Alaska communities are becoming increasing comfortable with providing services to visitors interested in learning about their culture, community and surrounding environments. Most national parks in Alaska are located near rural communities rather than urban areas. These parklands are often the homelands of these rural communities. When local communities decide that sharing experiences that these homelands have to offer with outside visitors are appropriate, local people are often well suited to provide these services. Most small communities are concerned about large scale tourism that might intrude upon the privacy of their community. However, smaller scale operations that are involve some form of local control by the community are often more welcomed. Economic benefits that remain in the community can help support subsistence activities and help to further community sustainably.

Agency Representative: David Mills

Title:

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Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Lack of Cultural Awareness.	Subsistence and cash economies often are in conflict. The epistemology of traditional knowledge is poorly understood and frequently dismissed by western scientists and decision/ policy makers.
Lack of Collaboration.	Even with the best of intentions, agency personnel and program specialists often institute a "top-down" approach. This is shown in research plan development and implementation all the way through policy formulation. Agencies tend to follow the past practice of internal plan/design preparation followed by a request for community input. Unless there are true collaboration at all stages of concept design through implementation and evaluation, there will not be buy-in at the community level.
Lack of Community-Based Research and Monitoring.	Many agencies attempt to incorporate communities into the review process but mostly present their finding to the community as an educational outreach effort. Communities are strategically located and vital to the assessment of causal agents that will potentially affect their sustainability and for monitoring these effects on a continual basis.
Social Infrastructure—Sense of Place.	Human well-being is determined by the complex interaction of human, social, economic, and environmental resources. In order to sustain a healthy community, the community must meet the basic needs of its members. Basic services like housing, sewage, food, water, energy, social order are critical. There has to be a balance allowing for the redistribution of impact when one segment of the social infrastructure is over/ underwhelmed. A community must plan for the effects of rapid change on their physical location and cultural integrity.

Continued

U.S. Department of Interior Office of the Secretary (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Governance.	This is critical to community sustainability. The distribution of power is a major factor in shaping the degree of tensions and negative effects. When local organizations and institutions lack power, local interests are likely to be neglected, so that costs are borne disproportionately by local residents while benefits accrue primarily at the regional and national levels. Social and economic effects are mitigated by the planning, regulatory, and allocation functions of community governments. An essential determinant is the ability of these governments to plan, act on these plans, and adapt based on subsequent experience.

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Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
There is a lack of data showing the impacts of the sustainability principles on air and water quality, climate, land revitalization, public health, transportation options, housing affordability, and access to jobs, education, health care and other services.	Quantification of the benefits of projects that claim to be "smart" or "sustainable" during the approval process is difficult or impossible. We never really know based on good data what the outcomes are from a variety of standpoints. *Possible Actions for discussion:* Develop measures for progress and require monitoring as a condition for any grant money invested under this partnership. There are many examples where the lack of monitoring and modeling to capture the health benefits of smart growth skews the cost-benefit analysis. In example, the costs associated with type 2 diabetes in the US, which has a disproportionate impact on minority populations, was $159.5 billion in 2007. This includes medical costs of $105.7 billion and indirect costs of $53.8 billion. Indirect costs of diabetes include absenteeism, long-term disability, and early mortality. Smart growth practices related to transportation, urban design and environmental protection can help reduce the prevalence and incidence of chronic and acute diseases, such as diabetes, through physical activity and nutrition.
Livability initiatives are currently fragmented with separate programs for air quality, brownfields, context sensitive solutions, bike/ped, trails, ecological, transit, and enhancements.	These separate programs are small in scale, generally disconnected, and not tied or only weakly tied to overall community transportation and land use goals and objectives. They are generally not part of a regions transportation plan. Selection of projects may be the responsibility of the State with little Federal control. *Possible Actions:* Mainstream "livability" in community planning, transportation planning, project development, and implementation.

Continued

U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Uncoordinated discretionary grant programs that each support activities related to building more sustainable communities.	Many successful redevelopment projects meet multiple objectives related to this partnership. Communities have worked hard to apply for assistance from several Federal programs (Brownfield Cleanup grants, HUD Community Development funds, etc.) *Possible Actions:* Implement a coordinated Federal application process that at least uses some shared criteria would streamline the process for such applicants. Develop a shared set of selection/scoring criteria that can be incorporated into multiple programs. The overall weight of the shared vs. program specific criteria can vary. A more ambitions approach would create a shared pool of funds from each agency to which an applicant could make a single application for several kinds of Federal support.
In rural settings, available transportation options may be limited and most Alaskan communities are not accessible by highways. This is especially problematic for elderly or disabled persons.	A need exists to take into consideration emergency response times and the ability to transport accident/sick victims to hospitals. *Possible Actions:* New funding options are needed and coordination between modes of transportation (air, rail, highway, and ship) and the Federal agencies with oversight responsibilities for those modes. Strategies in Alaska could include other transportation options such as small aircraft services, passenger ferries, and other transportation funding options.

Continued

U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Limited opportunity to maximize on infrastructure investments.	Sprawl may not be a problem in Alaska, however, funding new development and providing multiple transportation options are. Rural communities do not have a "single point of contact" at the State and Federal level to coordinate programs and funding opportunities. *Possible Actions:* Explore opportunities to maximize use of existing infrastructure. Strategies to encourage public involvement through new social media devices can also be encouraged. Increase use of virtual or video meetings and other electronic media such as websites to better inform the public of future projects, plans and opportunities.

Agency Representative: David Miller

Title: Division Administrator

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Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Defining Sustainability.	Subsequent to the enactment of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), there has been no effort to describe the federal government's vision of what "sustainability" means for Alaska "Native Villages" as defined in ANCSA. Individual federal agencies have followed their own legislative mandates with the presumption that in tandem with support from Native Corporations, federal programs will create and maintain homeostatic rural environments. *Potential Solutions:* The Denali Commission effort now underway to identify barriers to best practices appears to be an ideal starting point for identification of key sustainability factors with subsequent definition of success for the various factors.
Core Administrative Competencies.	Alaska Native Villages lack the core competencies expected of local government. There often is very little local financial and administrative infrastructure which is aggravated by high staff turnover rates in most villages. Federal efforts aimed at building sustainable environments are weakened and diluted by the need to first build local fiscal and management systems which are often temporary. *Potential Solutions:* In partnership with the State of Alaska's Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, profile each communities infrastructure status and develop a location specific work plan federal agencies use to build capacity.

Continued

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Physical Location of Village.	There are several Villages that are clearly in need of either immediate relocation or require drastic actions in the near term to avoid catastrophe. Some of these villages are in both categories. Two common reasons are either coastal erosion or meandering rivers. In addition there are also villages where flooding occurs on an almost annual basis. Another category that presents a level of difficulty from a sustainability standpoint is "remoteness". Granted, almost all villages off the road system can be considered remote; however there are some like those on St. Lawrence Island or the Aleutian chain that can be unreachable for lengthy periods of time due to weather. *Possible Solutions:* The most obvious and least acceptable to rural Alaskans is relocation of these villages as a whole or moving all or part to other more accessible locations where infrastructure exists. The only other alternative is admitting to our selves and the village that due to location certain investments in infrastructure will not be forthcoming.
Communication and Cultural Differences.	The introduction of western culture and language in rural Alaska is still very new in historical terms. There are wide cultural gaps between federal service providers and tribes that negatively affect the quality of communication. One symptom of these different perspectives evidences in the various deadlines and timelines set by federal agencies which often are not observed by tribes. *Potential Solutions:* A robust training program aimed at "Working with Tribal Governments" should be developed and launched within the federal community as a starting point for developing a more differential approach to rural issues. *Continued*

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (cont'd)

Top Five Barriers to Best Practices:	Brief Detail:
Grant requirement for "Indian Country" excludes Alaska Tribes.	EPA has both statutory and regulatory requirements that exclude certain grants from Tribes that do not have a land base (reservation) and thus are ineligible for "Treatment as a State" status. These grants are normally designed to build internal capacity to administer federal programs when delegated. There are aspects of these various programs that clearly would assist Alaska tribes. *Possible Solutions:* Within the agency, an individual review effort should occur to identify grant programs with Indian Country eligibility requirements. Each of those grant programs should be examined for flexibility that would allow Alaska Tribes to participate.

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Title: Deputy Director

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Appendix A: Memorandum of Understanding

Denali Commission
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Memorandum of Understanding

Strengthening the state and federal partnership

An understanding between the Denali Commission:

And the State of Alaska:

- Office of the Governor
- Department of Administration
- Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
    - Alaska Energy Authority
- Department of Corrections
- Department of Education and Early Development
- Department of Environmental Conservation
- Department of Fish & Game
- Department of Health and Social Services
- Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- Department of Law
- Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
- Department of Natural Resources
- Department of Public Safety
- Department of Revenue
    - Alaska Housing Finance Corporation
    - Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
- Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
- University of Alaska

And the following federal agencies:

- Office of the Federal Coordinator, Alaska Natural Gas Transportation Projects
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Department of Agriculture:
    - Rural Development, Alaska Office;
    - Forest Service, Region 10;
    - Farm Service Agency;
    - Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Department of Commerce:
    - Economic Development Administration, Western Region;
    - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;
    - U.S. Commercial Service, Alaska Export Assistance Center
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Alaska Operations Office

· U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Indian Health Service, Alaska Region
· U.S. Department of Homeland Security: Coast Guard, Alaska Region
· U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
· U.S. Department of Interior:
  - Office of the Secretary
  - Bureau of Indian Affairs, Alaska Office;
  - Bureau of Land Management; National Park Service; Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S Geological Survey and Minerals Management Service
· U.S. Social Security Administration:
· U.S. Department of Transportation:
  - Federal Aviation Administration;
  - Federal Highway Administration;
  - Federal Highway Administration Western Federal Lands Highway Division
· U.S. Department of Treasury: Internal Revenue Service

Background:

Transparency and accountability in government requires that agencies strive to coordinate and collaborate together. Failure to do so results in inefficiencies, duplication and an inability to effectively carry out our respective missions.

The Denali Commission's agility, flexibility and track record of innovation depends on our ability to partner, support and collaborate with a wide variety of federal and state agencies. The foundation for this collaboration is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This is the third version of the MOU which seeks to improve ongoing collaboration and partnership essential for improving life in rural Alaska.

In 2000, Denali Commission and 16 other state and federal agencies came together in a pledge of coordination through the first MOU document. They were joined by additional agencies in 2003 when 33 agencies signed a revised MOU. These MOU's adopted a work group model focusing on planning, utilities, housing and infrastructure.

Guiding Principles:

- **Sustainable Infrastructure**. Participants of the MOU recognize the importance of funding and developing infrastructure programs and projects that will have a positive, lasting affect in rural Alaska. Parties agree to communicate and coordinate project planning, pre-development, site planning, design and construction processes.

- **Economic Development.** Parties recognize that government can provide opportunities for meaningful private sector development. Parties agree to coordinate activities which can stimulate economic growth.

- **Workforce Development.** Workforce development and having a job is critical to family and community wellbeing. Parties agree to coordinate on programs and policies that promote a skilled rural workforce.

- **Planning and Coordination.** Local participation, to include local funding is essential for successful infrastructure projects. Parties affirm the importance of local planning to identify and prioritize proposed projects, and the need to understand the overall impacts of multiple projects on a community.

- **Communication.** Active communications and sharing of information increases efficiencies and decreases the duplication of services. To the extent allowed by each agencies guidelines, MOU participants will share information as needed for the successful implementation of projects.

- **Involving other partners**. Participants recognize that many other non-profit and community organizations in Alaska are valuable resources for furthering the goals of this MOU. Parties will collaborate and communicate to provide regional planning, program support and partnering opportunities where practicable.

MOU Mechanics:

1. This MOU is effective as each agency signs. This MOU expires September 30, 2011 unless the parties agree to extend the date.
2. Any party to this MOU may withdraw upon 30-day notice to all other participants.
3. Nothing in this MOU shall be construed to limit or modify the authority or legal responsibility of any participating agency.
4. This MOU is neither a fiscal nor a funds obligating document. Any proposed funding endeavor will be outlined in separate agreements that shall be made in writing by representatives of the parties and shall be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority.

Implementation:

The parties agree to form a new, high-level forum to discuss the most difficult issues that face rural Alaska today, which often prevent federal and state government from working together effectively. This forum will be led by the Federal and State Co-Chairs of the Denali Commission and will be composed of federal agency heads, state commissioners and the Governor's office. The forum will meet twice yearly.

Topics for discussion will emerge from the parties, but can include:

- Discussions of state and federal policies which may compliment or hinder collaboration;
- Understanding the requirements and differences of federal and state funding streams, and budget development processes, and finding opportunities for linkage and synergies;
- Case studies of both successes and failures of coordination impacting rural Alaskan communities;
- How agencies can focus on regional approaches to rural Alaska;
- Presentations by agencies on their priorities, programs, progress, perspectives and ideas for greater coordination, communication and cooperation;
- The need to establish working groups on specific topics that may not be covered by existing state or federal groups;

- Issues threatening the viability of rural Alaska – these are many, and can include adaptations to climate change, unaffordable energy costs, healthcare delivery, public safety, education and rural schools, housing, transportation, regional and local governance, demographic shifts, etc.;
- The affect of school closures on a community, and strategies to promote public education in rural Alaska;
- Strategies for planning and delivering infrastructure in very small communities;
- Learning about best practices and innovative breakthroughs from experts in Alaska, elsewhere in the United States and overseas;
- Topics desired by any member of the forum.

There is no other high-level group in Alaska encompassing the breadth and scope of both federal and state agencies. Through these discussions, we believe leaders will:

- Form important professional relationships that will help cut through bureaucracy;
- Understand the magnitude, impacts and types of other state and federal programs;
- Find opportunities for synergy, reducing or avoiding duplication of effort which will save money and increase the efficiency of service delivery;
- Break down barriers that prevent agencies from working together;
- Create immediate positive changes.

STATE AGENCIES

STATE OF ALASKA, OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR	Karen J. Rehfeld Co-Chair PRINTED NAME & TITLE
STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION	Annette Kreitzer, Commissioner PRINTED NAME & TITLE
STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	Michael Black, Deputy Commissioner PRINTED NAME & TITLE
STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, ALASKA ENERGY AUTHORITY	STEIJAN MAGENSON, Executive Director PRINTED NAME & TITLE
STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS	GARLAND ARMSTRONG DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTION, DOC PRINTED NAME & TITLE
STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT	Barbara Thompson, Interim Commissioner PRINTED NAME & TITLE
STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF **ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION**	Larry Hartig Commissioner, Alaska Dept. of Env. Cons. PRINTED NAME & TITLE
TW STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME	Denby S. Lloyd, Commissioner PRINTED NAME & TITLE
STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES	WILLIAM H HOGAN, ACTING COMMISSIONER PRINTED NAME & TITLE
STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	Clark Bishop Commissioner Labor + Workforce Development PRINTED NAME & TITLE
STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LAW	TALIS J. COLBERG, AG PRINTED NAME & TITLE

Memorandum of Understanding April 2008

STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS	PRINTED NAME & TITLE
STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES	PRINTED NAME & TITLE
STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY	WALT MONEGAN, Commissioner PRINTED NAME & TITLE
STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE	Brian C. Anderson Deputy Commissioner PRINTED NAME & TITLE
STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE ALASKA HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION	DANIEL R. Fauske - CEO PRINTED NAME & TITLE
STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AUTHORITY	PRINTED NAME & TITLE
STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES	Leo von Scheben, Commissioner PRINTED NAME & TITLE
UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA	PRINTED NAME & TITLE

AGENCY *ADDRESS*	*PRINTED NAME & TITLE*
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AGENCY *ADDRESS*	*PRINTED NAME & TITLE*

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FEDERAL AGENCIES

DENALI COMMISSION	George J Cannelos Federal Co-Chair PRINTED NAME & TITLE
OFFICE OF THE FEDERAL COORDINATOR ALASKA NATURAL GAS TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS	PRINTED NAME & TITLE
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS	Patricia Otheen Ch, Engineering Div PRINTED NAME & TITLE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE RURAL DEVELOPMENT, ALASKA OFFICE	Chad B. Padgett, Acting State Director PRINTED NAME & TITLE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOREST SERVICE, REGION 10	PRINTED NAME & TITLE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FARM SERVICE AGENCY	Chad B. Padgett, State Executive Director PRINTED NAME & TITLE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE	PRINTED NAME & TITLE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION, WESTERN REGION	Bernhard Richert, Director, PRINTED NAME & TITLE Alaska Field Office
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION	Carven A. Scott Chief, Environmental + Scientific Services Division PRINTED NAME & TITLE NOAA/NWS Alaska Region Headquarters
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE U.S. COMMERCIAL SERVICE, ALASKA EXPORT ASSISTANCE CENTER	PRINTED NAME & TITLE

Marcia L. Combes U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, ALASKA OPERATIONS OFFICE	MARCIA COMBES DIRECTOR REGION 10 ALASKA OPERATIONS PRINTED NAME & TITLE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES: INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE, ALASKA REGION	PRINTED NAME & TITLE
A E Brooks U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY COAST GUARD, ALASKA REGION	Authur E. Brooks, RADM Commander, 17th District PRINTED NAME & TITLE
Colleen K Bickford U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT	Colleen Bickford, State Director PRINTED NAME & TITLE
Hans Neidig U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY	HANS NEIDIG, Special Assistant to the Secretary for AK PRINTED NAME & TITLE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, ALASKA OFFICE	PRINTED NAME & TITLE
T.C. Lowrie U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT	Thomas P. Lowrie STATE DIRECTOR PRINTED NAME & TITLE
Diane A. Jung for Sue Masica U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE	DIANE A. JUNG, PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM MGR. PRINTED NAME & TITLE
Thomas O. Melius U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE	Thomas O. Melius, Regional Director PRINTED NAME & TITLE
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY	PRINTED NAME & TITLE

MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE ALASKA REGION	PRINTED NAME & TITLE
U.S. SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION	PRINTED NAME & TITLE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION	Michael A. Cirillo Alaskan Regional Administrator PRINTED NAME & TITLE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION	PRINTED NAME & TITLE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION WESTERN FEDERAL LANDS HIGHWAY DIVISION	PRINTED NAME & TITLE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE	PRINTED NAME & TITLE

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Appendix B: Common Alaska Terms

ANCSA
The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act passed in 1971 and was the largest land claims settlement in U.S. history, transferring land title to Alaska Native Corporations.

ATV
All terrain vehicle or four-wheeler, a common form of transportation in rural Alaska.

Break Up
The spring melting season when rivers thaw and begin to flow again, carrying huge chunks of ice downriver.

Bulk Fuel Storage Facility
Facilities used to store 6-to-13 months supply of diesel fuel required to meet the power generation and home heating needs for rural Alaska communities.

The Bush
Rural Alaska communities, typically not on the road system.

Bush Pilot
Pilots of aircraft who provide transportation to bush communities and isolated destinations.

Four Wheeler
An all-terrain vehicle used as a primary mode of transportation in rural Alaska.

Honey Bucket
A bucket used as a toilet in homes without sewer or running water. Buckets are emptied manually.

The Last Frontier
Because of its rugged splendor, Alaska is commonly referred to as The Last Frontier.

Lower 48
Alaskans refer to the contiguous 48 states as the Lower 48.

Multi-Use Facility
A facility that consolidates essential community services such as health clinics, fire departments, washeterias, and jails.

Northern Lights
Magnetic particles from the sun hitting the earth's atmosphere which are visible for more than half the year. Also called Aurora Borealis.

Permafrost
Ground that is permanently frozen year round in Arctic regions.

Snowmachine
A small vehicle with ski-like runners in front and tank-like treads, ridden by straddling a seat and used for driving in or traveling on snow. Also called a snowmobile.

Subsistence
The hunting, fishing, and gathering activities which traditionally constitute the economic base of life for rural Alaska.

Termination Dust
The first snowfall on the mountains signaling the end of the summer season.

Tundra
An area where tree growth is hindered by permafrost, low temperatures and short growing seasons. Typically the surface is boggy due to a high water table.

Washeteria
A small, public facility serving as the local watering point where people can obtain treated drinking water. Washeterias are also locations for laundry, showers and flushable toilets.