

## **DISTRICT TRIP REPORT**

**Project:** Denali Commission Moorings Points Phase 3 – Kuskokwim River

**Description:** Crooked Creek Trip Report

**Prepared by:** George Kalli and Merlin Peterson

**Date:** 8-9 September 2010

### **Community Meeting**

George Kalli and Merlin Peterson traveled to Crooked Creek, Alaska on September 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> to conduct a site visit and scoping meeting related to potential installation of barge mooring points in the community. The community is divided into an upper and lower portion by Crooked Creek. We were told that the bridge connecting the two portions of the village has a 50-ton capacity. A barge landing site in each of the upper and lower portion of the village was investigated during the site visit. Water levels in the Kuskokwim River at Crooked Creek were high during our site visit. Our main sources of information during the site visit were Evelyn Thomas, president of the Tribal Council, and Dan Felker, her husband.

On the morning of September 9<sup>th</sup>, a Crowley fuel barge was servicing the main tank farm in the community. We interviewed Tom Teason and Steve Hoffman, both of Crowley, regarding their input concerning the placement of mooring points in Crooked Creek.

In lieu of a public meeting, the mooring points are to be discussed at the next tribal meeting.

Following is a summary of the information learned during the site visit.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

RP Kinney is hoping to begin water and sewer construction in Crooked Creek next year.

There appear to be no major erosion issues along the Kuskokwim River in Crooked Creek.

Evelyn and Dan were not aware of any conflicts with allotments, easements, rights-of-way, etc. at either of the landing sites.

Crooked Creek is close to the proposed Donlin Creek mine but no road connects the two now. Crooked Creek is hopeful of a road from the village to the mine someday and an improved landing area and staging area to service the mine.

Freight shipments to Crooked Creek are generally three or more per year depending upon construction ongoing in the village.

There is a quarry located in the village. Material from it appears to be angular and shaley. Calista owns the quarry. The village buys the gravel and then resells it to contractors.

Evelyn Thomas expressed safety concerns related to the above ground mooring points. She would be less concerned if they could be placed back in the willows. This topic shall be discussed during the upcoming tribal meeting.

The local village corporation is the Kuskokwim Corporation. The Kuskokwim Corporation is the corporation for 10 villages on the Kuskokwim. Calista is the regional corporation.

Archaeological and cultural surveys have been conducted for the water and sewer project by RP Kinney and Associates who is doing the design for Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium. One 500-year old cache pit located upland from the fuel landing has been identified.

No pile drivers are in town now nor expected in the near future.

### **UPPER VILLAGE FUEL BARGE LANDING SITE**

The landing area is muddy with a shallow slope extending into the water, which was high during our visit (Photo 1). According to Dan Felker, this site has been stable the 37 years he has lived in the village.

The main fuel tank farm for the village is located in the upper portion of the village (Photo 2). The land the tank farm is located on, the tank farm itself, and the landing area are privately owned by the daughter of Evelyn Thomas. There are also Native allotments and village property recently conveyed by the BLM in the vicinity of this landing area.

Fuel deliveries occur 3 – 4 times a year (Photo 3). Currently only Crowley delivers fuel to the community. Kuskokwim Leighterage does freight shipments to the village. Delta Western hasn't serviced Crooked Creek for years.

Tom Teason (Crowley) informed us that at lower water levels, shoals force the barge to go a bit upstream (near the location of a log raft during our site visit) and stop 50 feet offshore in order to come in with the fuel lines. Due to this, he recommended the mooring points be located upstream of the access road to the landing site, as opposed to one on each side. Steve Hoffman (Crowley) recommended the installation of one mooring point upstream of the landing area in the vicinity of a lone tree atop the bank (Photo 4). He also suggested that if a second mooring point is constructed, it should be installed downstream from the first in the vicinity of the access road (Photo 5). Crowley felt that above grade mooring points should be placed atop the bank in order to avoid ice damage while below grade mooring points are suitable to use at the toe of the bank.



Photo 1: Fuel Barge Landing Area in upper Crooked Creek (looking upstream)



Photo 2: Crooked Creek tank farm



Photo 3: Crowley Delivering Fuel to Crooked Creek Tank Farm



Photo 4: Merlin at Approximate Location of Potential Upstream Mooring Point at Fuel Barge Landing Site (looking downstream)



Photo 5: Merlin at Approximate Location of Potential Downstream Mooring Point at Fuel Barge Landing Site (looking downstream)

### **LOWER VILLAGE FRIEGHT BARGE LANDING SITE**

This site consists of 300 – 400’ of shallow, gravel and mud shoreline usable by the barges with an access road to an adjacent upland staging area (Photos 6 – 7). The landing area is bound by an approximate 10H:1V slope. The staging area is adjacent to the barge landing area and roughly 100ft x 200ft. The real estate here is apparently village owned.

Mooring points placed 200’ apart centered at the access road to the staging area placed at the toe of the slope to uplands seems appropriate at this site. This would place the downstream mooring point in the vicinity of a Crowley conex placed on the beach (Photo 8) and the upstream mooring point adjacent to the staging area and approximately 75’ downstream of a work shed located in the staging area (Photo 9). A third potential mooring point could be placed 175’ upstream of the access road adjacent to the staging area in front of the work shed (Photo 10). All three moorings would be located at the base of the staging area fill slope. Based upon follow up conversations with barging company representatives, a third mooring point was deemed unwarranted at this site.

There is a fuel header for the washeteria, power plant (Middle Kuskokwim Electrical Cooperative), and school at the inland edge of the staging area.



Photo 6: Freight Barge Landing Site (looking downstream)



Photo 7: Freight Barge Landing Site (looking upstream)



Photo 8: Approximate Location of Potential Downstream Mooring Point at Freight Barge Landing Site



Photo 9: Approximate Location of Potential Upstream Mooring Point at Freight Barge Landing Site



Photo 10: Approximate Location of Potential Optional Third Mooring Point at Freight Barge Landing Site (looking downstream)