

DISTRICT TRIP REPORT

Project: Denali Commission Moorings Points Phase 3 – Kuskokwim River

Description: Kongiganak Trip Report

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George Kalli and Coleman Chalup traveled to Kongiganak, Alaska on September 24th to conduct a site visit and scoping meeting related to potential installation of barge mooring points in the community. While in Kongiganak we were escorted by Wayne Phillip, Tribal Administrator of the Kongiganak Tribe. A total of three barge landing sites were investigated during the site visit. A public meeting was conducted at 13:00. A total of nine residents participated in the meeting.

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

GENERAL

All the barge landing sites in Kongiganak are tidally influenced and are only accessible at higher tides for deliveries. During our visit tidal stages were low and the landings were inaccessible.

There is active erosion occurring at, or in the vicinity of, all three barge landings investigated. A Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) erosion protection project was recently completed just downstream of the freight barge landing site. The desire of the community to have this protection extended to the freight barge landing area was expressed. This is outside the scope of our current effort.

No potential cultural or archaeological conflicts with the potential mooring points were identified.

Wayne Phillip believed that the landing sites were all on 'townsite' land but this needs to be confirmed with the land committee of the local corporation.

Crowley delivers fuel to the community while Northland delivers freight.

There have been a lot of freight shipments recently due to ongoing construction projects including the airstrip, school, and wind turbines. The community expects one more freight barge this season.

Village Safe Water has been constructing a water and sewer project in the village. Construction will resume in the spring. Summit is the contractor for this project.

Alaska Village Council Presidents (AVCP) commonly does housing projects in the village that would likely utilize pile drivers during construction.

Barge landing sites in addition to those investigated were identified during the public meeting. With input from John Phillip, who guides barges into the village, it was determined that these sites are not used on a regular basis or were used for one particular project. Inspections of these sites were not performed.

Some residents did express their preference that a landing site and accompanying road be developed outside of the village near the mouth of the Kongiganak River. This would reduce the barge traffic and related impacts in the community. This is outside the scope of our current effort.

We were told that Tom Gould, regional conservationist for the NRCS in Aniak, has a real estate ownership map for Kongiganak. His phone number is (907) 557-5223.

FREIGHT LANDING SITE

This is an improved landing site consisting of a rectangular, sheet pile, backfilled landing area running approximately 100 feet along the Kongiganak River (Photos 1 - 4). A gravel road leads away from the gravel staging area toward the airstrip where a school was being constructed.

According to Craig Dudley of Quality Asphalt Paving (QAP) (personal communication, 10/6/2010), the landing area was constructed by QAP on behalf of the Denali Commission and is a permanent structure owned by the village. It is not to be removed following the completion of any particular construction project.

There are currently two cables protruding from the fill adjacent to the two corners of the structure that appear to serve as mooring points (Photos 2 – 3). The coordinates of the existing downstream mooring cable site are 59 57'41.71861" N, 162 53'17.09894" W while the coordinates of the existing upstream mooring cable site are 59 57'42.56531" N, 162 53'17.22383" W. Ascertaining the effectiveness of these mooring cables requires follow up with barge companies using this landing site.

There is a recently completed NRCS erosion protection structure located downstream of the landing area along the outside bend of the river.

During interviews conducted for the statewide barge assessment report, boardwalks and power lines were indicated as potential conflicts at this site. The boardwalks near the site seem to be far enough back from the river to not pose a conflict with mooring point construction. There is a buried power line along the site that will need to be avoided.

If new mooring points were to be installed at this landing site they could be placed 50 feet upstream and downstream of the corresponding edges of the landing area and each 50 feet inland

from the river bank (Photos 5 – 6). The coordinates of the proposed downstream mooring point site are 59 57'41.21847" N, 162 53'15.61110" W while the coordinates of the proposed upstream mooring point site are 59 57'43.13831" N, 162 53'15.99739" W. The upstream mooring point should be an above grade installation to avoid the chain getting lost or frozen in the prevalent mud and standing water. The downstream mooring point should be a below grade installation to avoid conflicts with local staging and travel.



Photo 1: Existing Barge Landing Site Looking Upstream



Photo 2: Existing Downstream Mooring Cable



Photo 3: Existing Upstream Mooring Cable



Photo 4: Panoramic View of Existing Freight Barge Landing Looking Upstream to Downstream Left to Right



Photo 5: Coleman at Potential Downstream Mooring Point



Photo 6: George at Potential Upstream Mooring Point.

VILLAGE SAFE WATER FREIGHT LANDING SITE

This freight landing site is located to the west of the community sewage lagoon. It is downstream of the freight barge landing site described above and upstream of the fuel barge landing site. There is a good, gravel access road to the site and a small staging area (Photos 7 – 8). It is referred to as the Village Safe Water Freight Landing Site since it apparently was built specifically in support of the ongoing water and sewer installation project in the village. There is a fair bit of equipment and supplies stored about the site.

Residents who participated in the public meeting felt that this landing site would be continued to be utilized following the completion of the water and sewer project.

Although this landing site is located along a straight stretch of river, active erosion is still evident (Photo 9). Some small diameter pipes are daylighting out of the eroding bank downstream of the landing area.

Although this landing site does have the benefits of being closer (downstream) and may provide better accessibility, it is unclear, given a choice, which barge landing site would be utilized by barges calling on the community. It was mentioned during the public meeting that barges have been unable to access the upstream freight landing site and utilized this site instead.

If mooring points were to be installed here they could be placed one each 100 feet upstream and downstream from the centerline of the barge landing access road and 50 feet in from the river (Photos 10 – 11). Coordinates for the upstream mooring point at this location is 59 57'20.55551" N, 162 53'47.12396" W and for the downstream mooring point 59 57'18.62142" N, 162 53'47.03579"W. Both mooring points should be below grade installations since the area is wide open and likely an area of rapid snow machine travel in the winter.



Photo 7: Village Safe Water Freight Landing Site Looking Inland



Photo 8: Village Safe Water Freight Landing Site



Photo 9: Active Erosion Along Village Safe Water Landing Site



Photo 10: George at Potential Upstream Mooring Point for Village Safe Water Freight Barge Landing Site



Photo 11: George at Potential Downstream Mooring Point for Village Safe Water Freight Barge Landing Site

FUEL LANDING SITE

The tank farm is jointly owned among four entities including the power plant, Native Corporation, and school. A single fuel header for this tank farm is located at a site located to the south of the village and downstream from the two barge landing sites.

There did not appear to be any additional fuel delivery sites in the community despite the fact that the Statewide Alaska Barge Landing System report mentions multiple fuel headers.

This river bank along the landing site is actively eroding (Photo 12). We were told during the public meeting that the fuel header has required relocation approximately 20 feet inland due to the erosion threat.

This fuel barging landing site has existing deadman anchors with chains protruding from the tundra. We were told during the public meeting that the anchors consist of 8 foot lengths of telephone pole buried 2 feet deep and were not intended to be permanent. There was evidence that the downstream anchor was beginning to become unburied and may not be capable of serving as an effective mooring point.

The existing upstream anchor was located 30 feet from the eroding top of bank and had the coordinates 59 57'11.17634" N, 162 53'18.60755" W (Photo 13). The existing downstream anchor was located 37 feet from the eroding top of bank and had the coordinates 59 57'10.48740" N, 162 53'14.24143" W (Photo 14). The coordinates of the fuel header are 59 57'11.82210" N, 162 53'17.44594" W.

Due to the erosion occurring at this site and the apparent instability of the existing deadman anchors, if new mooring points were installed they should be placed inland from the existing deadman anchors. The downstream mooring point should be placed 40 feet inland from the existing anchor across a small pond and adjacent to a faint 4-wheeler trail. The upstream mooring point should be installed 30 feet inland of the existing anchor just before a small rivulet. Both mooring points should be subgrade installations.



Photo 12: Active Erosion at the Fuel Barge Landing Site



Photo 13: Upstream Existing Fuel Barge Landing Mooring Point



Photo 14: Downstream Existing Fuel Barge Landing Mooring Point