

## **DISTRICT TRIP REPORT**

**DATE REPORT SUBMITTED:** June 15, 2010

**NAME:** Patrick Fitzgerald/Lorraine Cordova (US Army Corps of Engineers)  
Jimmie Smith (Denali Commission)

**LOCATION OF TDY:** Quinhagak, Alaska

**DATE OF TRAVEL:** June 3, 2010

**PURPOSE:** To meet with the Quinhagak Village Council and report findings from study conducted for Denali Commission. Present from the village were the Village Coordinator Felipe Hernandez, Mayor Willard Church, Village of Quinhagak President Frank Fox, and Vice Mayor John Sharp.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** It was reported that NOAA installed tide gauges at Quinhagak since there is very little data in this area. The Coastal Villages Seafood (CVS) plant is shutting down and moving their operation to Platinum. CVS will still be buying fish at the dock and from the tender. Willing workers at the plant will be sent to Platinum.

US Census workers just finished in the Village. The new population number is 757, which is 130 from the 2000 census.

We presented and discussed the array of alternatives in the Denali Commission (DC) report and indicated that the scope of alternatives ranged from grand (very expensive) to what we termed implementable (of reasonable cost and supported by DC or other interests). We stated the alternative of upgrading and maintaining the buoys via local labor funded through CVS and supported by DC and CVS.

Quinhagak was less interested in beefing up the buoys as CVS already does this and they thought there would be minimal benefit of an upgraded buoy system. Their preferences were either to extend the existing seawall and construct a new dock facility closer to the river mouth; construct the causeway alternative; or construct a new dock facility at the Arolik River site.

The Village indicated they were not interested in doing the small project, a “Band-Aid fix”, and that they were going to push for what they wanted. They also had concerns about accepting a small fix and then being ineligible for further project funding.

We discussed the Corps implementation process and stated that it was unlikely that there would be sufficient benefits to justify a large scale project such as the causeway or new dock facility.

We discussed that the higher costs of the dredging and jetty alternatives are beyond the scope of DC. State funding these higher cost projects also seems unlikely.

We were asked why the Arolik River site was not included in the report. We explained that this was earlier ruled out because it is a long distance (3.5 miles one way) from town and there was some question about the land ownership. Apparently, the Native allotment owner is now willing to consider a dock at this location. Site development would have the high cost to install utilities to the site, upgrade the existing road, and many of the navigation issues would remain a hindrance to vessels.

John Mark, a Quinhagak resident, is now on the Board for Coastal Villages. The Village has had discussions with the Board of purchasing a dredge that could be used in the region. The discussion then turned to a joint application to the DC from the Villages of Quinhagak, Eek, Goodnews Bay, and Platinum for a dredge that would serve the region.

The Village would like to see the report revised to include the Arolik River location and to offer another alternative of doing hot spot dredging annually. The hot spots would be identified with local input to the dredging operation.

**ACTION ITEMS:** Patrick to check with Regulatory on the permitting process for dredging and inform the Village of the process and timeframes to attain a permit and how long can be in effect. Patrick will also send copies of the Denali Commission grant application to the Village. Jimmie will check with Mike McKinnon at the Denali Commission on revising the report.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

Clarke Hemphill

Bruce Sexauer

Melanie Harrop

Jimmie Smith (Denali Commission)