



ALASKA INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT & EXPORT AUTHORITY

# AMBLER ACCESS PROJECT NEWSLETTER

First Quarter 2023 | April 2023

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Eva Sheldon and Christina Fields pose at Selawik's Job Fair

## Working Together to Find Opportunity

The Ambler Access Project is being developed collaboratively, in close consultation with the tribes and communities throughout the NANA and Doyon Regions.

# LONG-TERM OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH DEVELOPMENT OF THE AMBLER MINING DISTRICT

Did you know that the Ambler Access Project (AAP) road is expected to create about 350 jobs during construction? And that number is just the beginning. The Ambler Mining District, which can only be developed once the road is in place, is estimated to provide about 1,800 jobs during ongoing operations. That's a lot of opportunity!

There's a long way to go before these jobs and other economic benefits are realized, but now is the time to plan, prepare, and train for the future!

## Workforce Needs

There are many workforce needs anticipated for the project, including skilled labor, certified operators and drivers, support roles, and engineering.

There will be limited nearer-term opportunities as AAP progresses through the advance field work, planning, and design processes. Current job openings include:

- Bear Guard / Wilderness Guide (8-10 positions available)
- Tribal Liaison (6 positions available)

## Planning Ahead: Preparing for Careers in the Ambler Mining District

Pursuing necessary training and qualifications will be your number one avenue for taking advantage of the career opportunities in the Ambler Mining District. Certifications and on-the-job training are requirements of many of the anticipated opportunities.

The time to start planning is now. The requirements for anticipated roles vary, but most will involve some combination of training, experience, and preparation. For roles that need a certification, getting qualified could take one to four years.

There are many training and scholarship resources available in Alaska. Check out these examples and consider starting your career journey now:

- Trade School Future
- Doyon Foundation

- Ambler Metals/NANA Kuuvangmiut Scholarship Fund
- Vocational Fund for Alaska's Future
- Alaska Technical Vocational Education Program
- Northern Industrial Training
- Ilisagvik College
- University of Alaska

## What is the Ambler Access Project?

The AAP is a proposed 211-mile, private and controlled industrial access road that would provide access to the Ambler Mining District in northwestern Alaska. The area currently lacks the transportation infrastructure necessary for the development, construction, exploration, and operations of potential mines in the district. The road would not be open to the public.



Christina Fields in the field last season.



## MARY BLACK - TRIBAL LIAISON



Mary Black worked as a Tribal Liaison (TL) in the 2022 AAP Field Season. She felt that there were many things she could contribute to the project.

“First and foremost, the ways of our people, past and present, should be known to all people/organizations working this project. The oral history must continue, our lands and way of life must be protected otherwise a lot of our culture will be lost. The Inupiat have been here for 10,000 years and we must continue our traditions and way of life to ensure our culture stays afloat from the outside/mainstream world,” Mary said.

As a child, Mary listened to the stories told about the land and the way they lived year-round. Her Inupiaq teachers stressed that who the people were came from the inside. The children were to remember that they came from a long line of strong people who conquered anything and everything in their path.

When she saw the TL job opportunity posted on the NANA website, she was interested because it would be a new opportunity for her. Previously, Mary worked in the school system for 13 years and as a carpenter at Red Dog Mine for one year. She wanted to try something new and to walk in places her grandpa, his siblings, and their parents walked nearly 100 years ago.

Mary spoke about her heritage, “My grandpa, Harding Black, Sr., his siblings and their parents, David and May Black, walked from Athabaskan country to the Upper Kobuk. This position allowed me to learn more about the Athabaskan side of me and my family.”

To prepare for fieldwork, Mary attended training in Fairbanks—first Bear Awareness, then First Aid and CPR. After that, she was trained in what the archaeologists were looking for and the paperwork that must be completed to document the process.

Mary said that anyone considering work as a TL should be prepared to walk many miles through thick brush, lumpy tundra, and steep hills. She stressed the importance of being open minded and willing to learn from different people, their cultures, and traditions.

“Prepare yourself [for] awesome findings of artifacts, big and small. Don’t be scared of flying in helicopters,” she went on.

“I learned that both the Inupiat and Athabaskan are very similar in culture and traditions. I learned more of my Upper Kobuk family and met relatives on the Athabaskan side. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity for a once-in-a-lifetime job, especially the beautiful country we walked and flew over every day. I felt at home and at peace as we walked and flew over the area. I saw with my own eyes how lucky and blessed our people are to have such beautiful country and traditions.”

## SAC MEETS IN ANCHORAGE FOR Q1 MEETINGS

The Subsistence Advisory Committee (SAC) held its first quarterly meeting of 2023 in Anchorage on February 23. Members of the SAC committed their time to discussing issues and topics of importance to them—subsistence resources, jobs, and keeping the AAP road private for industrial use only—as specified by all permits and authorizations.

The Alaska Department of Fish & Game presented on fish studies, including information about species in the lakes and rivers, habitat features, and tracking tools such as radio tagging and sonar that are used to understand movement and seasonal habitats. A valuable discussion followed, including identifying potential information gaps. A request was made to study and document subsistence resources on the Alatna River system. Additionally, concerns were expressed about reduced salmon runs in many parts of the state.

The next meeting of the Subsistence Advisory Committee will be held in Kotzebue in June. You can find information about past meetings on the Ambler Access website, [ambleraccess.org](https://ambleraccess.org).



## AMBLER ACCESS PROJECT FIELD SEASON TO LAUNCH IN APRIL

Field work for the AAP is slated to begin in mid- late April. Required notifications were made by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on March 23, and additional communications to communities adjacent to field activities are planned as the field season progresses. Be on the lookout for updates.

April activities will focus on hydrology and hydraulic investigations, with aerial and ground observations of spring breakup and ice jamming at potential bridge crossing locations. Related activities will be ongoing through late September.

The season will also include cultural resources survey and inventory activities, fish habitat studies, and helicopter landing zone preparations at targeted work sites where vegetation prohibits safe helicopter landing. Surveys will be done in advance of landing zone preparations to determine the presence of eagle, raptor, and/or migratory bird nests; avoidance buffers will be applied if nests are identified. Landing

zones will not be cleared within the Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve.

All field teams will have bear guards present. A Doyon shareholder will accompany field teams working on Doyon lands to observe and document crews' activities. You can find information about these job opportunities on the AAP website. Prior to mobilization, all field personnel will participate in a training session that includes history of the area, cultural resources components, and permit conditions and stipulations.

If you have questions about the field season activities or the AAP in general, you can email [info@ambleraccess.org](mailto:info@ambleraccess.org), and a member of the project team will get back to you.

For more information, visit [ambleraccess.org](https://ambleraccess.org).



## JOB FAIRS SCHEDULED

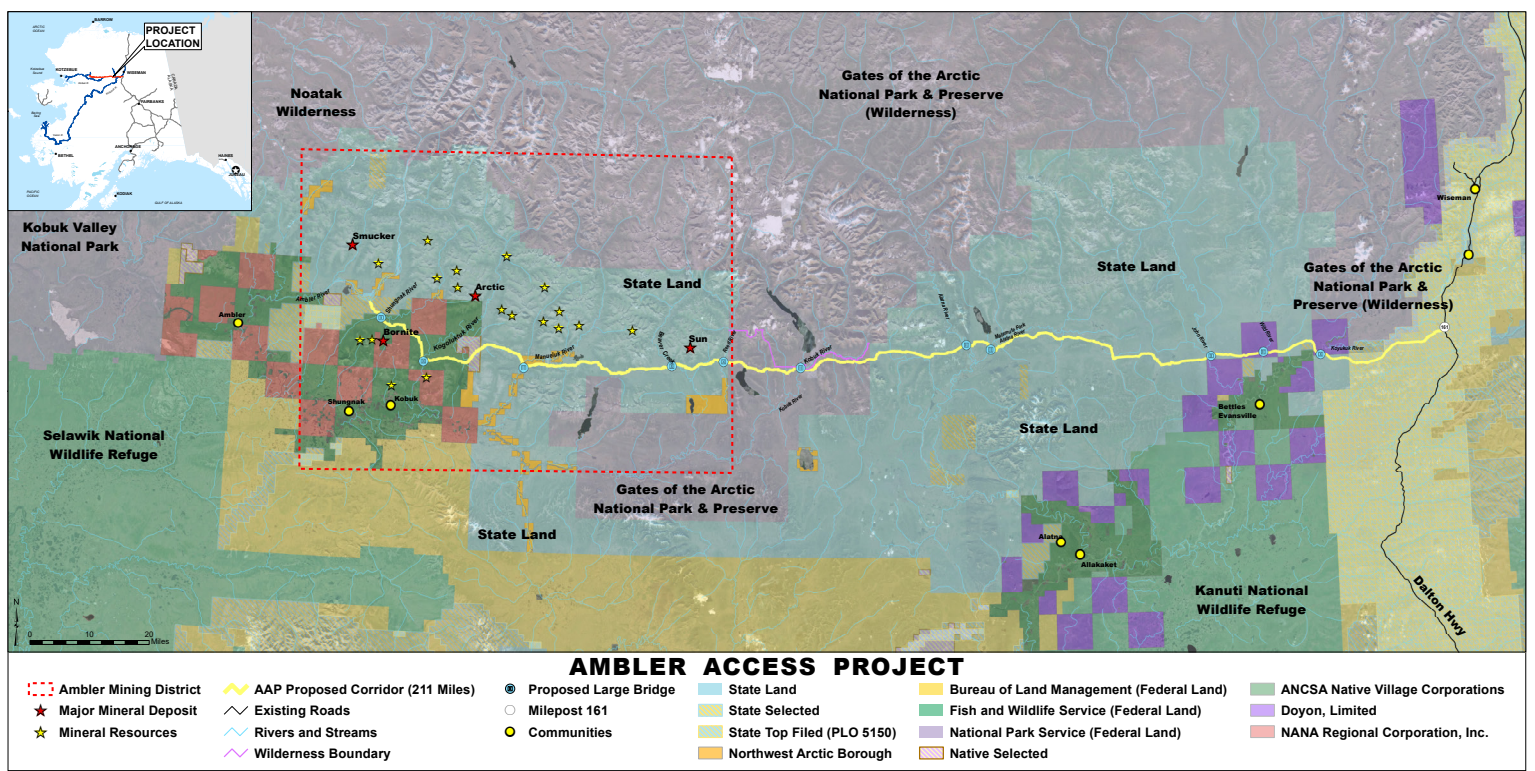
The Ambler Access Project will be hosting job fairs for villages in the Doyon/Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) and NANA regions. The events will showcase the jobs available for the 2023 field season and offer guidance on how to prepare for long-term career opportunities in the Ambler Mining District. Representatives from AIDEA, Kuna Engineering, Ambler Metals, Recon, South32, and others will be in attendance. All will be prepared with job listings, position descriptions, and job applications. Assistance will be provided on site and as follow-up after the job fairs. For more information, contact Kathy Mayo at [kmayo@ambleraccess.org](mailto:kmayo@ambleraccess.org) or 907-347-3279.

April 15:	Selawik
April 19:	Allakaket
April 20:	Hughes
April 24:	Noorvik
April 25:	Kiana
April 26:	Kobuk
April 26:	Shungnak
April 27:	Ambler



Craig Jones, Deputy Program Manager, speaks in Allakaket.

## PROJECT AREA





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