



ALASKA INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT & EXPORT AUTHORITY

AMBLER ACCESS PROJECT NEWSLETTER



Kathy Mayo presenting in Kobuk.

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.

Fourth Quarter 2022 | January 2023

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WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP KICKS OFF NEW YEAR

The Workforce Development Working Group (WDWG) met in Fairbanks on January 6, 2023 for the Q4 meeting.

“Jobs are needed in the villages,” stated Fred Bifelt, Co-Chair of the working group, “it is critical for our people to get the right training now, before construction of this road.”

Wilmer Beetus, Chief, Hughes Tribal Council, shared his thoughts on a road project in his village that he believes will provide good training for his community, and those in surrounding areas. “Hughes will be building a 2 ½-mile road in the village. We are going to use this project to provide training in equipment operation, surveying, and overall construction. This is part of the training plan to get our people ready for projects, such as the Ambler Road.”

Other topics discussed during the Q4 WDWG meeting included employment and contracting for residents of the regions most impacted. There are 10 villages identified as directly impacted within the NANA and Doyon regions, including Kobuk, Ambler, Shungnak,

Kiana, Noorvik, Alatna, Allakaket, Hughes, Huslia, and Evansville.

The next WDWG meeting is being scheduled for late February in Anchorage.



WDWG member, Stanley Ned.

SUCCESSFUL KOBUK MEETING



The Ambler Access Project (AAP) Stakeholder Outreach team traveled to Kobuk and met with community members in mid-January. “After numerous efforts to get to Kobuk, I’m glad the weather cooperated,” stated Kathy Mayo, Stakeholder Outreach Coordinator. “We had a great turn out of the community.”

Over 20 people turned out to the meeting with questions and to hear updates on the project. “When you come back, please talk to the students at the school,” suggested Johnetta Horner, President of the IRA Council, “and we want you to come meet with us quarterly.”

The next visit is planned within two months and the team intends to discuss training opportunities.

INDUSTRIAL ACCESS ROAD IS NOT FOR OPEN USE

The permitting process determines what a facility may be used for. In the case of the Ambler Access Road, it was permitted through the EIS process, as a private, controlled access, industrial road.

This means that even years from now, if the landowners or users decide they want to open the road to other traffic, they can not. To change the current permitted access would require them to start again with studies of the impacts and a full public involvement process.

This road will not be used to bring in hunters or tourists from outside. Its purpose is to move ore from the minesite to its destination, to bring critical minerals to market, safely and responsibly, and create jobs for the region.



SAC MEETS IN FAIRBANKS FOR Q4 MEETINGS

The Subsistence Advisory Committee (SAC) kicked off the new year by meeting in Fairbanks on January 5, 2023. The SAC, Co-Chaired by Larry Westlake (Kiana) and Fred Bifelt (Huslia), led the discussion on hunting, fishing, and berry-picking experiences during the 2022 season. The meeting started with introductory comments by each of the 14 members which included their concerns over the lack of moose and caribou in their areas and questions about fish populations. The SAC intends to dig deeper into studies conducted and analyze the environmental impact statement (EIS) to understand the studies that are planned that can reveal changes underway in the region of the project.

Larry Westlake noted dramatic changes in the Kobuk river, with natural erosion making the river inaccessible by barge. He stated that a road is needed in the region. Questions about subsistence studies on the region of the Alatna River, overall caribou migration patterns, increased predators, and invasive populations of beaver were discussed. Continuation of this discussion will take place at the next meeting scheduled in for February 23, 2023 in Anchorage. Alaska Department of Fish and Game will attend this meeting and provide expertise, and to gain a better understanding of the status of the region.

Subsistence and maintaining many of the traditions

of village-life are key values, voiced by members of the SAC. Members of the Ambler Access Project management team, including members of the design team, attend these meetings to listen and better understand concerns. The concerns voiced by members of the communities near the project area will help guide the project design and help eliminate or mitigate potential impacts of the road.

Studies used in the EIS can be found here: <https://ambleraccess.org/Resources-Publications/Permitting-SF299>. These studies are used and referenced by the SAC.



SAC members and NANA leaders Morgan Johnson, Henry Horner Sr., and Nellie Griest.

HYDRAULICS AND HYDROLOGY: FUNDAMENTAL IN DESIGN OF ROAD

At the SAC quarterly meeting, representatives from the Ambler Access Project Design team presented on hydraulics and hydrology (H&H) engineering and field data collection along the proposed road corridor. The design team emphasized how gathering field data is key to understanding the regional hydrology and progressing the best design possible.

Kieran Braun, one of the project's water resources engineers, stated that "for hydraulics, field data collection is extremely important, because a low-impact and environmentally sensitive design requires high-quality, precise, and accurate field measurements." Kieran elaborated how these field measurements are integrated into the desktop design process. "When we have field measurements that represent known real-world conditions, we are able to compare and validate results produced by engineering models," Kieran said. "This brings a

degree of confidence into our desktop analysis that is otherwise impossible."

The design team also stressed that maintaining habitat suitable for fish movement is critical. The concept of fish passage structures, which are oversized drainage features that span a channel and are embedded in natural stream bed material, was introduced to the SAC. Kieran stated, "the idea of fish passage structures is to span the stream and recreate the natural features within the structure so that, at least from the fish's perspective, there might not be a structure there at all."

More information about H&H along the Ambler Access Project corridor, including the presentation offered at the SAC quarterly meeting, can be found at this link: https://ambleraccess.org/Portals/ambler/Content/SAC/01_05_23_Hydrology.pdf.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES & TIPS FOR WORKING ON THE AAP

The Ambler Access Project is always accepting job applications. There are year-round and seasonal opportunities. For a current list of opportunities, visit <https://ambleraccess.org/Employment-Info>.

Potential jobs include:

- Geotechnical Intern & Borehole Logger
- Summer Probing Field Personnel
- Driller Helper / Laborer
- Bear Guard / Wilderness Guide
- Field Observer
- Tribal Liaisons
- Archaeological / Cultural Tech Intern
- Survey Field Technician

The position requirements vary depending on the role.

Doug Isaacson of Minto Development Corporation shared preparation tips for prospective bear guard applicants:

Clean and Sober – Employees must pass a pre-employment drug test and background check. Background check includes not having any felonies.

Meet Identification Requirements – Provide two forms of ID e.g., Tribal ID, State ID or driver's license, School ID with photo (form I-9).

Be Fit for Duty – Be physically fit, able to work long hours and carry heavy loads. Applicants should show a keen knowledge of the outdoors, wildlife and survival skills and have experience working in remote conditions for extended periods of time.

Be Available for Training – Bear guards need to travel for training prior to final employment. Applicants need to demonstrate knowledge of firearm safety and have a current firearms safety certificate (with annual recertification). Safety training includes wilderness first aid, CPR, blood-borne pathogens, etc.



Doug Isaacson, CEO, Minto Development Corporation

Contact us at (907) 519-7782 if you would like to learn more about job opportunities.

A LETTER FROM AIDEA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On January 3, 2023, I started my tenure as the Executive Director (ED) of AIDEA. One of my first actions as ED was to commit to the success of the Ambler Access Project (AAP) and reiterate my commitment to this project during the Subsistence Advisory Committee on January 5, 2023. Almost every day since I started, I've been in meetings with stakeholders, commissioners, landowners, native corporations, state government departments, and many individuals to support the great work already accomplished and to progress the project to the next step. In the weeks ahead, I intend to visit as many communities and villages as possible to meet local folks and hear their concerns. I believe that working together we can be responsible stewards while advancing the project for economic opportunities in the region. The AAP team and my office are available to schedule meetings or visits. Please feel free to contact us at (907) 519-7782 anytime and I look forward to meeting you in person in the near future.

- Randy Ruaro, AIDEA Executive Director



AIDEA Executive Director, Randy Ruaro

Q1 2023 IMPORTANT DATES

January 5 & 6:

Q4 Rescheduled Subsistence Advisory Committee and Workforce Development Working Group meetings

January 18-20:

NANA region meetings, Kobuk & Ambler

February 7:

Allakaket and Alatna community meetings

February 15:

Huslia community meeting

February 23 & 24:

CY23 Quarter 1 Subsistence Advisory Committee and Workforce Development Working Group meetings

Mid-February through April:

Job fairs

March 1:

Annual Work Plan to BLM

March-August:

Spring break-up studies at potential bridge crossings.
Helicopter landing zone preparation for 2023 field season

**Dates subject to change*



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