



Subsistence Advisory Committee Working Group

Meeting Minutes and Action items

June 27, 2022

Roll Call, Members

Fred Bifelt (Huslia)	Co-chair present
Larry Westlake (Kiana)	Co-chair present
Wilmer Beetus (Hughes)	present
Harding Sam (Alatna)	
Vincent Simon (Allakaket)	present
Vacant (Evansville)	
Nellie Griest (Shungnak)	
Henry Horner (Kobuk)	present
Morgan Johnson (Ambler)	present (by phone)
Wilbur Howarth (Noorvik)	present

Ex Officio Members

Jamie Marunde (Doyon)	present
Liz Carvalho (NANA)	present

Other Attendees, Invited Guests:

Alan Weitzner (AIDEA)	present
Kevin Torpy (Ambler Metals LLC)	present
Ely Cyrus (NANA Chair)	present
Mayor Dickie Moto (Mayor, Northwest Arctic Borough)	present
Ashley Madison (Kikiktagruk Inupiat Corporation)	present
Alex Sonnabend (HDR)	present
Audra Brase (Alaska Dept of Fish and Game, by phone)	present

Action items

Action	Responsible	Completion Date
1. Bring in Hydrology team on water quality and temperature	Staff	
2. Work with Co-Chairs on how to identify and present technical	Staff	

information on fish migration and caribou		
3. Changes to land from climate change affects	Staff	
4. Consideration and selection of alternates for members	Staff	
5. Provide latest version of Policies and Procedures	Staff	
6. Issue letter to GAAR and TCC regarding SAC seat.	Staff	
7. Reissue Policies and Procedures incorporating edits and refining per Liz Cravalhoe	Staff	

Advice provided:

- Gauging stations/temperature recordings: temperature of water should be recorded to set a baseline on the Koyukuk

Preliminary Discussion

- How many seats should be filled with alternates? Additional ex-officio seats (TCC and GAAR) would person be selected—do they know WHO yet?
- Jeff Rasic, GAAR. Background on NPS seat, this is provided in permit, and JROD, that there will be a member.
- How important are all these things for our meeting next time? Talk about our subsist. Life, a grassroots discussion. (this may lead us to HOW we seek the information and solutions.
- Coverage of topic is so important so that the project can't be blames for what might happen.
- Have this discussion first, then consider inviting other groups for information

Meeting was called to order by Co-Chairmen Larry Westlake and Fred Bifelt. SAC members Henry Horner provided opening prayer and Charlene Ostbloom provided the safety moment.

Roll Call—eight were present (six regular members, two ex officio). Morgan joined by phone later at 10:30am.

Agenda moved to adopt, second. Adopted.

Minutes moved to approve, seconded. Approved.

Recognized new Allakaket representative Vincent Simon, Second Chief. Motion to seat AK Vincent Simon. Moved, seconded. Unanimous.

TCC, Ex-Officio seat on SAC.

Moved by Wilmer Beetus,. Second by Wilbur Howarth.

Discussion

- E-Board and Brian will identify the individual to fill this seat.
- Fred Bifelt: Glad Amber Vaska (TCC) is here. Need everyone at table for discussion. We know this is life changing and don't take it lightly. We are open and want to work in transparency.”
- Liz Cravalhoe:- every effort made to work with TCC in the past, for inclusion on SAC. This needs to be on the record and want this known.
- Alan Weizner: We delayed this SAC meeting to try and have a discussion with TCC in advance. The meeting did not take place.

SAC Vote: unanimous for seating TCC.

Gates of the Arctic National Park (GAAR), Ex Officio seat on SAC

Motion to seat GAAR Jack Reakoff. Moved by Vincent Simon, seconded by Henry Horner.

Fred Bifelt: Let us seat Jack Reakoff and GAAR can provide an alternate.

SAC VOTE: Unanimous for seating GAAR Jack Reakoff.

Introductions of Members and Guests and their comments

- Alan Weizner– this is your committee, and AIDEA is here to listen. This is the start. Make sure this is done responsibly.
- Wilbur Howarth–Noorvik engaged in water quality monitoring. Also invite Ambler Metals to the villages.
- Liz Cravalhoe–want to be clear that NANA has not provided a ROW permit on the 21.5 mi of land to be crossed. There is an Upper Kobuk Ambler group working on mining. Remember, it is separate from the road project.
- Jamie Marunde – Doyon has not agreed to permitting the project, either.

BREAK.

Kotzebue leadership addresses the SAC.

- Ashley Madison KIC.
- Dickie Moto
- Ely Cyrus

Project Update-Alan Weizner, AIDEA Executive Director

- Introduced Jeff San Juan, Interim Project Manager, Craig Jones, Assistant Project Manager and Alex Sonnabend, and Trent Parks with the project Design Team.
- Two suits pending on JROD and this directly impacts planned work.
- Nothing has changed in project support and it is abroad effort.
- This project provides road access to a mineral district. That is what ANILCA provided, recognizing development of broader district.

- Prepared to present on Annual WP draft, and pre-construction activities. SAC critical, to ensure feedback early in process. This is only the second meeting of the SAC, the first in was in Jan. The April scheduled meeting was deferred.
- The Annual Work Plan is being updated with a draft response to feedback received. The SAC will be updated.
- This is late start to season. This current engagement and process will lead to a much better project.

Alex Sonnabend– SAC / Design interface

- This is a project of the road with bridges, culverts, and runways. It is our intention to provide latest information to the SAC so we can receive your comments, thoughts and feedback. This project will undergo revisions and finetuning of the design. Ask for feedback.
- Fred Bifelt: We hear about the shee fish and caribou of the region. Let us hear about studies on these resources that have been done. We need to base in fact and get to more certainty so that scare tactics can be put aside. Understanding natural contaminations may be a part of this. Let's get the data.
- Jeff San Juan: The BLM delays pushes the work season out, and it comes up against caribou season. This is disappointing.
- Amber Vaska: who is responsible for sharing this information on alignment design and revisions? Response: Information updates will be provided through multiple channels, including Tribal Liaisons, Stakeholder Outreach and the SAC.

LUNCH BREAK

Project design and process for updating refinement

- Presentation by Jeff San Juan, powerpoint on 2022 work. Elements that will potentially impact route or design.
- Fred- How many contractors for cultural work? Response: Kuna, and K-Corp employ the Tribal Liaisons. Northern Land Use is the lead on Cultural Resources.
- Minto Development Corporation, a subcontractor of Recon, hires the bear guards that accompany these crews. Each crew has one as part of safety protocol. AIDEA has asked Recon to hire bear guards from the communities of impact.
- Geotechnical. More information will be gathered in the winter.
- Amber Vaska: If the project did not do ethnographic work last year, how do you know your bridge crossings are not disturbing important resources?
- Amber Vaska: Some drilling to be done in the winter, through the frozen river. How do you know when fish are in river, do you know when fish are present so as not to disturb?
- Hydro and Hydraulics study how water is moving and how ice is moving. This information was sent out in the spring.

- Larry Westlake: Riverbank stability study and understanding. We know the stability is undergoing changes. This changes so much within the rivers.
- Alan Weizner: Next meeting, do we need hydrology team?
- Fred Bifelt: Seems major concern water quality and temperature, so studies or understanding is needed. Expertise should be included.
- Liz Cravalhoe: UAA has background history on work to date. Bobby Schaeffer has background, too.

Understand context, from studies

(road vs mining projects OR begin a compilation of)

- Hydro and Hydraulics group & water quality
- Land Survey
- Fish Habitat Studies
- Caribou

Audra Brase, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, 2021 Fish Study

- Sampling conducted last summer. Hope to continue this summer, depending upon permits.
- Regarding questions about the specific road corridor. Previous studies were in a very general corridor area. Moving forward studies will focus on culverts, bridges and by species, migration, spawning, and juvenile rearing.
- 2021 study was conducted late Aug. 23-28. Twenty-three sites in first 55 miles of the corridor. All sites need to be helicopter supported. The remaining corridor is yet to be studied, and the plan is to do this next.
- Seven of the sites had no fish; all others had presence of fish.
- Wilmer- what is happening to moose? Our moose population numbers have declined. What about caribou migration?
- Alan Weizner: what is the Upper Kobuk Advisory Committee looking at regarding subsistence resources? What information is being sought and what can be shared?
- Liz Cravalhoe: The committee has a framework. Much of the information they get from the NPS, and Fish and Game data. Roland, who chairs this committee, can share what has been helpful including what studies were helpful and the approach.
- Fred Bifelt: I do not want to put words in the mouth of the SAC by going to them after for best practices. What wishes are of the group in seeking their perspective and experience?
- Larry Westlake: Real hard to understand the caribou herd this year. They are scattered all over. We are always looking into the migration pattern to understand.
- Alan Weizner- would it be beneficial to organize with F&G to understand what your group has done?
- Liz Cravalhoe: Makes sense so traditional knowledge can be heard and understood. They have experience in these topics. It comes down to what questions do the committee members have and protections that may be sought?
- Wilmer Beetus: Moose is our main food. Population down since the 80's and the counts are done by Fish and Game. We should get information from them on counts and decline.

- Larry Westlake: National Park Service has lots of information available. We should tap them for information.
- Fred: who do we add? Response: State advisory council; upper Kobuk; red dog; Roland (NANA elder).
- Wilmer Beetus: Good idea. Understand what is already going on before we make decision on what we do next.
- Larry Westlake: We can seek to better understand migration and still move forward.
- Alan Weizner: The premise in this is exercise of moving forward is the process of better understanding and continually moving forward. It is an important part of the process.
- Jamie- what are some of the design processes that were incorporated into the project to address caribou crossings?

Policy and Procedures

- Liz Cravalhoe: Not all of the perspective I shared on the section of incorporating SAC input was documented. Please review and come back with new version.
- Incorporate the input and present a clean copy for next meeting.