

**Alaska Arctic Policy Plenary Meeting
Nome, August 26, 2014**



Opening Remarks

Melanie Bankhe, Kawerak President: Welcome to Nome. On behalf of Kawerak I welcome you to the Bering Straits region. Thank you for including Alaska's first people and making sure our voices are heard. It is important for our voices to be front and center as we discuss the Arctic. Thank you for allowing me to again address you. I'm glad to see Senator Olson has joined us; Senator, congratulations on your newest addition to your family. I was glad to hear about the discussion by this group about the need to ensure that there is a group that continues to focus on arctic policy deliberations, even long after your report is finalized. Arctic policy deliberations will not come to an end when your report is finalized; it is going to be on-going. I ask that you establish an on-going body to advise and guide the legislature and administration on arctic policy issues. Along those lines, I also ask that you support the need for a 3rd member of the "A-Team" that consists of Admiral Papp and Fran Ulmer. A few weeks ago, Gail Schubert and I sent a letter to Admiral Papp asking for this, and we would appreciate your support. There is a need to add someone who lives in the arctic, who is from the arctic, and who is Alaska Native, to be a liaison for Alaska Natives. I also ask that the State of Alaska form an arctic "A Team" that includes Alaska Natives so that there is representation by people who live in the arctic. Regarding your draft bill – it sounds great, but there is no funding attached to it. Many of you are in a position to ensure that the AAPC's recommendations are funded. Fund them.

Also, as you deliberate arctic policy strategies, ensure that Alaska Native people benefit economically. We bear the most risk; if anything happens in the arctic, we will be affected the most. We should be included in economic benefits. We rise to the top when we are provided with opportunities. What is the next 8(a) or CDQ-like opportunity? Until 8(a) contracting, our Alaska Native Corporations were sitting on the sidelines of economic development. Until the CDQ program, our own people were sitting on the beaches watching the Seattle fishermen benefit; now we are active participants in this economy. We are playing catch-up, but when given an opportunity, we go from having a seat at the back of the bus, to driving the bus, to being the owner of a fleet of buses. We open doors when they are in place. We need to figure out what the opportunities are for our arctic communities. As you do your work, please keep in mind that we have some immediate priorities that cannot wait until your report is complete. St. Lawrence Island was declared an economic disaster by the Governor last year, because of low walrus harvest, due to the ice conditions, most likely resulting from climate change. There was no tangible economic relief provided directly by the State that I'm aware of. The Governor also declared several of our coastal communities a natural disaster because of the damage from severe fall storms that resulted from the lack of shore fast sea ice to protect them. It's good to plan for the future, but we also need to be able to act now, especially when it comes to mitigation. There are many different arctic strategies out there, and there is a need to synchronize them. In one circle you have the federal government, in another, the State of Alaska, and in another, you have the tribes. The circles need to come together. Anything that happens in the arctic will require a combination of federal and state investments, and will affect tribes and people in the arctic. We must be willing to work together from the beginning. I ask you to push for Alaska Native engagement when the US assumes chairmanship of the Arctic Council next year. Canada and Greenland set the bar very high regarding involving indigenous people. Last but not least, protection of arctic people and sustainable communities cannot be ensured without protecting our natural resources and also investing in infrastructure to get us out of the 3rd world. We live in the wealthiest nation in the world, and in the greatest state in the union, in my mind. Subsisting on our natural resources goes beyond food security; it's the cornerstone of the Alaska Native society. We need to ensure that whatever happens in the arctic doesn't compromise our natural resources. Thank you for your very thoughtful, deliberate, and inclusive process. The State of Alaska's history with Alaska Natives has not always been a positive one. The eyes of the world are on us as we write the second chapter in the history books; let's ensure we are on the right side of the history books when our future generations look back on how arctic policies were handled.

Mayor Denise Michels: Welcome everyone to Nome. Our port is busy with Arctic activity and shipping. There is a short amount of time during which this activity takes place. Every action from the state and federal government affects our daily lives.

Chuck Fagerstrom: Sitnasauk is a village corporation created under ANCSA. We are 41 years old and have 2,800 shareholders. Sitnasauk is a strong company financially and Nome is at the center of

the Arctic. Sitnasuak needs to be proactive as we promote the economic and social well-being of our shareholders. Our citizens need to be heard and should play a heavy role in the direction of Arctic policy. We live in a region that most people do not really understand or know much about. I hope this group will have the opportunity to visit some of our outlying villages. It's very hard to understand these villages without having visited and experiencing the needs of subsistence communities.

Gail Shubert, President & CEO, Bering Straits Native Corporation: I would like to congratulate the state legislature for having the foresight to create this commission. In Bering Straits Native Corporation we have over 7,000 shareholders and 7 villages lie directly on the Bering Sea. It is clear the Arctic is changing and there is a need to change with it. We need to protect our communities and benefit from growth that occurs.

Executive Director Report - Nikoosh Carlo

We have had two work sessions and a listening session since last May. We will be making changes through November using input from these most recent meetings. We will also be participating during the week of the Arctic to gather additional input and public comment. Comments are welcome at any time and can be submitted via email or by calling into meetings.

Work Session Readouts

- Arctic Climate Change Work Session: The general perception is that climate change is happening now and more quickly than people anticipate. There are a number of ongoing research and strategic efforts across sectors, but it lacks a coordinated effort. Alaska is not present in the national and international climate change discussion. The Alaskan Arctic is particularly in tune with changes from climate change, notable sea ice loss and permafrost melt. Some communities are more at risk than others, and there needs to be a way to prioritize the most vulnerable areas. There is a lack of funding and in many instances preventive efforts do not make the cost-benefit analysis. Indigenous people need to be included in a meaningful way.
 - Representative Bob Herron: People feel overwhelmed with the problems. In our region we have major erosion issues, but cannot find funding to prevent erosion. Changing ice pack and migration routes of animals affects our subsistence and creates a sense of anxiety.
 - Senator Hoffman: How does the summary discuss adaptation? Is there an implementation plan of what needs to be done? How do these documents on Arctic Climate change interface with specific experiences like Newtok?
 - Specific examples--Newtok, Kivalina, Shishmaref--could be helpful in showing problems from climate change right now. Coastal communities have been living with these issues for a long time and the documents need to acknowledge that fact.
 - Rep. Nageak: Moving coastal villages needs to be a priority.

- On the federal level there is not an agency that deals with the complete relocation of a community, nor does the funding exist. In Shishmaref, there is a need for an \$8 million match for immediate investments, but the funding has yet to materialize.
- Alaska Native Listening Session (Liz Moore): There was a July 2nd listening session. Our key findings included that subsidence is inherently linked to the Arctic environment and communities. Inupiat language is tied to traditional knowledge. Local residents need to be able to respond to S&R operations and spill response. Infrastructure, training and an active seat at the table are needed. Communities want to be at the table when we discuss how to balance subsistence, environment, and development. Everything overlaps and all issues need to be addressed, including serious social issues.
 - Lawson Brigham: The university has some world class projections tools on climate change. We can integrate the tools of university into state and federal government efforts. Better coordination needs to be done on both the state's part and university's part to integrate efforts. The university has many useful resources.
- Arctic Health and Well-being: There is so much overlap between Native issues, Climate change and health. They are all connected and most issues come up during multiple work sessions. We found the biggest impact you can have on a community's health and well-being are linked to socioeconomic factors. Addressing these issues are the root at improving overall well-being efforts. There are issues that are not connected to health and wellness like they should be, such as language revitalization and fiscal budgets. Local governments are strapped when delivering services. Alaska native health organizations provide fundamental services. There needs to be more integration to connect existing program and infrastructure to meet needs, so we don't duplicate efforts and use resources effectively.
 - Energy and mineral extraction are the big economic drivers historically. There are other ways to bring in baseline sustainability, such as Arctic tourism.
 - There is high risk in the transition and exploration phase, but once development actually occurs resources like the Coast Guard come for free.

AAPC Deliverables

- There will be three deliverables
 - Implementation Plan
 - Alaska's Arctic Policy Bill
 - Executive Report/Summary - Would like to see this with more substance that looks more like Canada's Arctic vision statement.
- The Implementation plan is an "a la carte" document that can be viewed in pieces. Not everything will appeal to everyone – particular legislators can choose which issues to champion. This represents a series of values that resonates with Alaskans. We are looking for glaring errors and areas that haven't been covered.
- Proposed Arctic Policy Bill: Alaskans are experts in the Arctic. This should be a guide for federal and international policy that works to better the state and its people. The Strategic

plan will be more specific but a la carte – individuals can champion pieces on their own. The bill represents a legislative directive with a strategic recommendation. Keeping broad policy statements that articulate our values are more digestible than voting on a specific implementation package.

- Is there a sense of urgency without an action plan?
- Should there be a statement earlier in the Arctic bill that federal and international policies and agreements already exist? How can Alaska influence these decisions?
- Senator Hoffman: This document is very broad and general. It's hard to disagree with, but there is no timeline. Many parts of Alaska are already on a timeline and are at the forefront of rapid change. It is a state policy impacting Arctic regions. When we need to keep in mind that these policies affect Arctic peoples, necessitating action plans and timelines. Possibly need a long-term Arctic policy advisory board in Alaska.
- Mayor Denise Michels: The commission was created to make Arctic policy for the state and implement it. The main purpose of this body was to advise the state on what the Arctic policy should be. This commission is meant to come up with Arctic policy for the state and not state policy for the Arctic.
- Senator Giessel: In Section 1, there is nothing about resource extraction.

Public Testimony (Nome):

- Jim Stimpfle: 25 years ago there wasn't any Arctic policy. Who makes Arctic policy? Governor, Lt Governor, or the legislature. Many of the drivers in the past were grassroots and the private sector. The National Parks Service in the Bering Sea region was pivotal in keeping the border open between Alaska and the Russian Far East. Who is in charge of the Arctic, because historically the feds have had a major role.
- Matt Ganley (BSNC): I recommend 1(d) be clarified and not be politicized. We need a maritime special assistant in the Arctic and the commission should play a role in determining who that is. Communities on the Arctic Coast are facing the greatest threat from development and revenue sharing needs to be on the table. Energy is key in this region, part of this plays into establishing regional grids. We are incredibly rich in renewable resources in rural AK, but we don't have the capacity to bring it on fully.
- Tim Smith (Nome resident): Bush living has become increasingly hard. Our middle class is disappearing and there remain no viable options to maintain a middle class. I believe in locally produced food. At one time we had 600,000 reindeer. Our subsistence resources are not in great condition. We need an active management policy for local food resources. We could benefit from a hatchery program in the region. There hasn't been a great study on how economics work in the bush.
- Chuck Wheeler (Resident): Arctic policy is not state policy. The state only makes recommendations to the real power brokers--the federal agencies. ICC developed a comprehensive policy of the Arctic. The ICC is the only group recognized at the UN and holding a seat at the table, allowing them to be recognized under international law. Cooperative management between tribes, the state and feds needs to happen to solve our

serious resource problems. We need groups like the Alaska Coastal Zone Management to incorporate all stakeholders into decision-making, so we don't operate in silos.

- Mike Sfraga (UAF): UAF has a strong Arctic program and is the number one leader in Arctic research publication. We are the number 1 institution on the planet for citations, but the University doesn't do a good job communicating the resources and tools available for the state.
 - Each vice chancellor at UAF has an explicit directive for Arctic policy
 - When we brief NATO and their parliamentarians, it should be available to Alaska and Alaskans
 - We should have an Arctic imperative for the state and have it based in Alaska
 - In 2016 the Arctic Science Summit will take place. It is a gathering of all Arctic leaders. We have an opportunity to showcase what we do and influence federal policy.
 - Creation of graduate fellows to conduct Arctic recommendations and policy
 - UAF and Alaska are looked to by other countries looking to create their own Arctic policy
- Melanie Bahnke (Kawerak): I appreciated the comments that policy deliberations will not stop after the commission publishes a final report. I recommend you establish an ongoing body to advise the Legislature on Arctic policy issues. There is a need for the Arctic Special Assistant to include an actual Arctic resident. The state should also establish an Alaska Arctic "A team", including native representation. There is no funding attached to this bill and I hope to see these initiatives come to fruition. We need more coordination between regional, state, federal and international bodies in order to have a fully functional Arctic policy.
- Drue Pearce, Crowell & Moring: We as Alaskans need to demand a seat at the table. As federal decisions occur they need to be reminded that Alaska is the only reason the US is an Arctic nation. Science-based, ecosystem-based management should not be the sole decision making determiner, because no science will be 100%.
- Also giving testimony were Vera Metcalf (Eskimo Walrus Commission), Gail Schubert (BSNC) and Kate Blair (AOGA)

Recommendations in the Draft Implementation Policy

The Commission continued talking through each of the recommendations in draft Implementation Plan in the afternoon.

**Draft Notes on
Alaska Arctic Policy Plenary Meeting
Kotzebue, August 27, 2014**



Opening Remarks

Marie Green: Welcome to the NANA region. Thank you for coming here and learning more about us and who we are as indigenous people. We are proud of our region and we are committed to the needs of our people. We look towards a sustainable future and we are proud of our accomplishments thus far. We have a strong history of working together. When Shell first started exploring in the Beaufort Sea, NANA went to all villages in the region to discuss the threats and possibilities before making a NANA policy.

Clement Richards, Mayor of Kotzebue: Thank you for coming to our area. I'm pleased by how inclusive this process has been. It's important to come to the Arctic and see the people and region that is directly affected. In the last 10 years we have had lots of trouble regarding the high cost of living. People on the ground in our communities, people are embracing changes and development that is done responsibly and brings benefits back to the community. Long term jobs and infrastructure is the most important thing we can be working on.

Full Commission Discussion on Recommendations for Continuing State Support:

National and International Recommendations: Reword to “recommend to the State Legislature.” Make sure this is for the commission to recommend to the state and not to the feds. There is a great amount of overlap with the strategic plan. [Note: Use this document to cross reference Continuing Support Recs: <http://www.akarctic.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Implementation-Plan-List-of-Continue-State-Support-Recs-V03.pdf>]

- Continuing Support 1: The Governor has a food task force that addresses issues outside the scope of fish and game.
- CS 2: Integrate with strategic rec
- CS 3: No change. There are several initiatives in DC about integrating cultural and language into classrooms.
- CS 4: No change.
- CS 5: No change.
- CS 6: Emphasize new technology and building techniques. How do we make the good work at cold climate housing and the university applicable in our communities.
- CS 7: No change
- CS 9: This is all a given... seems redundant. Could be integrated into 2(d)
- CS 10: Move into a strategic rec on energy
- CS 11: Integrate into 1(g)
- CS 12: Expand to land, the capacity is relevant. 3(c)
- CS 13: Make as a strategic recommendation or incorporate into 4(a)

Commission supports the state’s activities that:

- 1: In October there will be a US agenda and our role as a state will be pretty set. Can we meaningfully influence the Arctic Council? Recognize active involvement at the table. The legislature can make the decisions about the level of participation.
- 2: Same as 1. Let leg determine participation.

National/International Recommendations

[This Document relates to next two sections: <http://www.akarctic.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Implementation-Plan-List-of-National-International-RecsV03.pdf>]

Recommends the US Government and federal agencies consider:

- 1: redundant
- 2: Define regulatory issues. Make sure there is more detail
- 3: This feels like a university effort, could incorporate with strat rec. Exceedingly vague
- 4: Make sure the USCG’s role doesn’t get compromised as move towards a new Arctic mission. This also relates to NOAA. Money should not be diverted from current efforts so agencies can make their Arctic mission. Don’t fund Arctic missions at the expense of Alaska regional operations and services
- 5: Does the state have a role or is this a federal responsibility. Governor has called for more creative thinking to establish whether the state has a role

- 6: Unneeded because Alaska already participates heavily in the both domestic and international fisheries policy. Alaska is the leader in fisheries management. Could this be combined with 9? Maybe move into 4(a) to ensure local users are aware of issues.
- 7: Senator Giessel opposed. Commissioners need more information.
- 9: 4(a) and combine with 6
- 10: Should be an issue continually repeated to the federal government.

Work with Federal Partners: The state of Alaska should encourage the federal government to do these things.

- 1: Homeland security, safety aspect. This is an ongoing continuing effort and is not something that needs to be reiterated.
- 3: The university is also doing this. This also fits in with rec 1(e). The Coast Pilot is a tool that uses this information and fits into the strategic rec.
- 4: Same end result but through the use of different working groups. Efforts towards a stage two polar code. Keep this rec where it is.
- 5: 1(g). Address multiple systems
- 6: There is an idea there is an international component particularly with trade, but here is lots of pre-existing relationships before boards. This has been echoed by the ICC.

Public Testimony:

- Tim Schuerch (Maniilaq): We are the largest employer in the region with over 500 employees. Our board is represented by 10 federally recognized tribes. Cost of living and energy costs are creating high levels of poverty and social anxiety. We focus on health and social services. Health is tied to economic development and community health. We need infrastructure and economic opportunity. Our region is deeply committed to tribal consultation. We have a right to know when ships are going to be moving through our waters.
- Mayor Richards of Kotzebue: As the state moves forward with resource development, we support multiple deep water ports. We support the Cape Blossom Port as well as additional infrastructure.
- Brad Reeve (Kotzebue Electric Association): We need to think differently about engineering. We were able to put in a self-composting sewer and water system quite cheaply that lasted 10 years. The villages are adding millions in infrastructure that does not necessarily work in Arctic areas. We need to truly focus on energy efficient buildings and sound engineering techniques. We need to find ways to lower costs of energy and one of the best ways to do that is not to waste energy through better design and efficiency. Wind has displaced 250,000 gallons of fuel. We are looking towards many options to diversify our energy. We reduce energy costs where we can with technology, but there is no one size fits all solution.
- Lance Kramer (NWAB): As we look towards balancing development and food security, we need healthy subsistence stocks. We are just as worried about noise pollution on marine

mammals as we are about actual spill pollution. We need to have more consultation of our tribes and include Arctic people in decision making.

- Ernst Barger (Vice President Buckland IRA Council): Who is the first response team if oil and gas is developed in the NANA region? Communication between the State and rural Alaska is a concern. Traditional knowledge in rural areas is very valuable, and must be taken into consideration. Housing shortage is the other main concern; many families are crowding together – this has an effect on education and health.
- Fred Smith (Asst. to Mayor at Northwest Arctic Borough): State’s continued reluctance to acknowledge tribes is to the detriment of the state, especially as we move into a new frontier in the Arctic. Funds are needed to facilitate port development to address high energy costs and the cost of living. Training search and response also provides economic opportunity.

Recommendations in the Draft Implementation Policy

The Commission continued talking through each of the recommendations in draft Implementation Plan in the afternoon.

Next Steps

Public Comment on the Implementation Plan is being accepted September 15-November 15 – please see: <http://www.akarctic.com/public-comment-invited-and-listening-session-schedule/>

An AAPC subcommittee is tasked with working on a new draft of the Arctic policy bill.

At the next meeting, November 17-18, the Commission will work on reviewing final recommendations and finalizing the report due January 30, 2015. Please see www.akarctic.com for agenda.