



U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers
Alaska District

ALASKA BASELINE EROSION ASSESSMENT

Erosion Information Paper - Kaltag, Alaska

Current as of March 5, 2008

Community Information

Kaltag (KAL-tag), population 184, is on the west bank of the Yukon River, 75 miles west of Galena and 335 miles west of Fairbanks. It is on a 35-foot bluff at the base of the Nulato Hills, west of the Innoko National Wildlife Refuge. The community is incorporated as a 2nd class city in the unorganized borough. The riverbank in Kaltag is used for boat access, snowmachine access, ATV access, barge access, and driftwood collecting.

Description of Erosion Problem

Kaltag has bank and other erosion associated with the Yukon and Kaltag Rivers. Fluctuations in river flows and water levels, and ice and flooding associated with spring break up reportedly cause and contribute to erosion. The banks of the Kaltag River at the community have been eroding at a rate of 1 foot per year. The average rate of erosion along the Yukon River has not been estimated. The bank height along the Yukon River is estimated at about 20 feet at Kaltag.

According to the 1984 Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT/PF) *Task Force on Erosion Control Final Report*, a large island in the Yukon River upstream from Kaltag could cause the channel to move east, which might slow the rate of erosion along the community. DOT/PF suggested that erosion rates be monitored at Kaltag. According to community history in the *Online Division of Community and Regional Affairs (DCRA) Community Database*, surrounding communities used the Kaltag cemetery, which was on Front Street, reportedly eroded into the river around 1937.

Potential Damages

A number of houses, outbuildings, sheds, portions of Front Street, the present-day cemetery 2 miles upriver of the community, and some houses upriver on the east bank of the Yukon River are threatened by riverbank erosion. Those structures and facilities are reportedly less than 100 feet from the eroding river banks. Riprap was placed in some areas along the Yukon River for erosion protection about 30 years ago. According to the survey, there has been no maintenance and the riprap has failed. According to the survey respondent, although a rock source is close to the community, the erosion on the Kaltag River banks has made establishing a barge landing area difficult, and tests of the bank indicate it is too soft to support rip rapping over the long term.

Photos and Diagrams

No photos of erosion have been provided by the community or other sources. The attached diagram depicts the linear extent of erosion.

References

Alaska DCRA. 2008. *Community Data Base History of Kaltag*. State of Alaska, Division of Community and Regional Affairs, http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca/commdb/CF_BLOCK.cfm

Alaska DOT/PF. 1984. *Task Force on Erosion Control Final Report*. State of Alaska, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.

USACE. 2008. *Alaska Community Erosion Survey, OMB approved number 07100001*, expires September 30, 2009 completed by Jackie Nicholas, Kaltag city clerk, and submitted via facsimile on February 28, 2008.

YRITWC. 2002. *Yukon River Unified Watershed Assessment*. Yukon River Intertribal Watershed Council.

Additional Information

This information paper, as well as those for other communities, can be accessed on the internet at www.alaskaerosion.com. For more information please contact the Corps of Engineers, project manager at (907) 753-5694 or email Alaska.Erosion.POA@usace.army.mil



NUSHAGAK RIVER

Flow

Ekwok airstrip

KLUTUK CREEK

Date of Aerial Photo: 16 June 96

NOTE: The extent of erosion shown on this figure is based on interviews with the community. This data has not been field verified. This figure is only intended to show areas of erosion, not rates or severity of erosion



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- - - - Extent of Linear Erosion



Alaska Baseline Erosion
Ekwok, Alaska