



U.S. Army Corps  
of Engineers  
Alaska District

## **ALASKA BASELINE EROSION ASSESSMENT**

# **Erosion Information Paper – Port Alsworth, Alaska**

Current as of October 25, 2007

### **Community Information**

Port Alsworth (a.k.a. Tanalian), population 112, is on the east shore of Lake Clark, 22 miles northeast of Nondalton. It is in the Lake Clark National Park and Preserve. The community is unincorporated in the Lake and Peninsula Borough. Lake Clark, the 6th largest lake in Alaska, is 42-miles long and covers 110 square miles.

### **Description of Erosion Problem**

Erosion problems in Port Alsworth are associated primarily with the Tanalian River along the southwest side of the community and to a lesser extent with Lake Clark on the west side of the community. Along a few miles of the river bank of the Tanalian River there is a significant vertical drop and a large amount of water flows down the river during the rainy season. The headwaters are the Kontrashibuna Lake, and the river empties into Lake Clark.

The river bank seasonally erodes, and the channel moves after significant rainy seasons. The community survey respondent stated: “what you lose in one place you gain in another”. A few years ago the river eroded about 20 feet inland during the rainy season, causing damage. To some residents, this type of erosion is not considered to be a significant problem.

The Lake Clark beach front is currently stable. The lake water level seasonally fluctuates approximately 10 feet, which in the past has caused flooding of some residents’ basements and erosion. The most recent floods occurred several years ago in 1970 and 1959.

### **Potential Damages**

A 20-foot-loss of river bank a few years ago resulted in downed utility poles, and the loss of power to parts of the community. The community had a cache of extra utility poles and was able to restore the system. The community survey respondent noted residents of Port Alsworth have built their homes with the local lake and river conditions in mind. There are no facilities or structures reported to be threatened by erosion. The residence closest to the lakeshore and the river is about 200 feet from these water bodies. Residents presently have to cross the Tanalian River to reach the post office. The respondent believes that a bridge across the Tanalian River is needed, and will eventually be installed.

## **Photos and Diagrams**

Photos obtained from the Lake and Peninsula Borough website <http://www.lakeandpen.com/> and the National Park Service, Lake Clark National Park and Preserve website <http://www.nps.gov/lac/planyourvisit/day-hikes.htm> are attached. Also, attached is a diagram depicting the linear extent of erosion in the community.

## **References**

**Lake & Peninsula Borough. 2007.** Lake & Peninsula Borough website: <http://www.lakeandpen.com/>  
**USACE. 2007.** *Alaska Community Erosion Survey*, OMB approved number 07100001, expires September 30, 2009 administered to Glen Alsworth Sr., Lake & Peninsula Borough Mayor, on October 22, 2007.

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## **Additional Information**

This information paper, as well as those for other communities, can be accessed on the internet at [www.alaskaerosion.com](http://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](mailto:Alaska.Erosion.POA@usace.army.mil)



**Photo 1: Tanalian Falls, about 2.5 miles from Port Alsworth on the Tanalian River; photo by Mark Emery, date of photo not available.**



LAKE CLARK

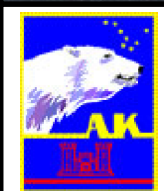
TANALLANA RIVER

DRY CREEK

HARDENBURG BAY

Date of Aerial Photo: 17 August 02

**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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- - - - Linear Extent of Erosion



Alaska Baseline Erosion  
Port Alsworth, Alaska