
Kotzebue Harbor Feasibility Study
Navigation Improvements at Cape Blossom
Kotzebue, Alaska

Appendix G: Correspondence



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**

Alaska District



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALASKA DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 6898
JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, ALASKA 99506-0898

Ms. Judith Bittner
State Historic Preservation Officer
Office of History and Archaeology
550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1310
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3565

15 Mar 2017

Dear Ms. Bittner:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District (USACE) is planning to conduct dredging and subsequent nearshore disposal of dredged material for the purpose of beach nourishment in the vicinity of Cape Blossom, on the Baldwin Peninsula, Kotzebue Sound (Section 1, T15N, R17W, Kotzebue Quad C-1 NW, Kateel River Meridian; Figure 1). In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 [36 CFR § 800.2(a)(1)], the purpose of this letter is to notify you of a Federal undertaking and to seek your concurrence on an assessment of effect.

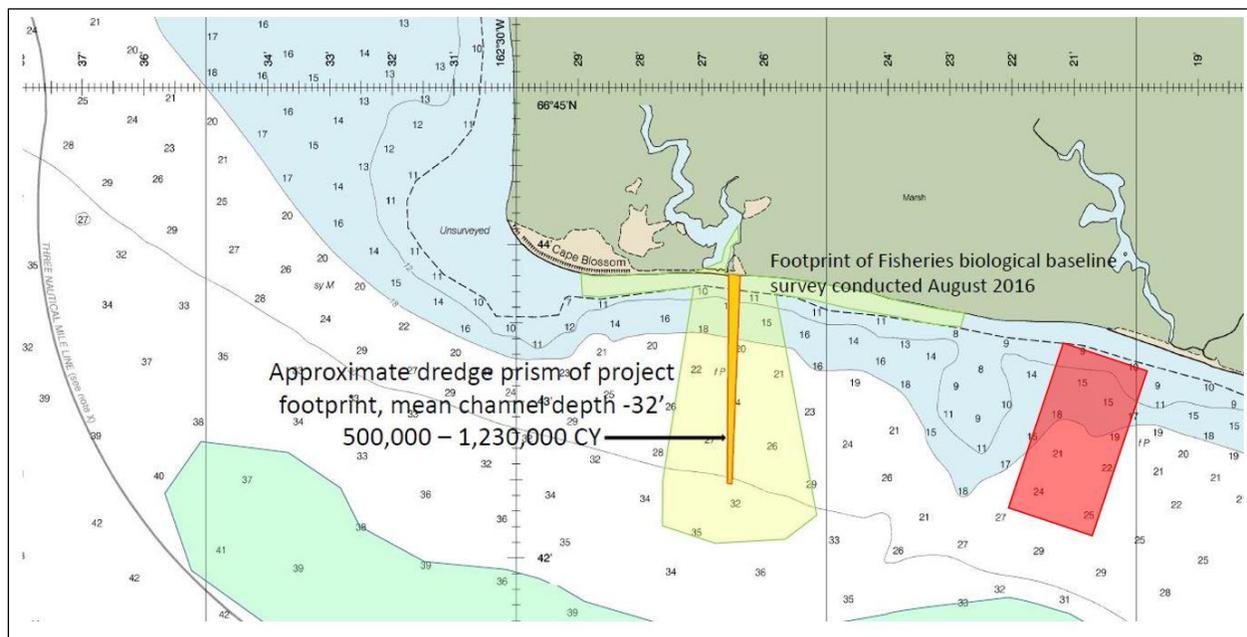


Figure 1. Proposed dredging area in orange; proposed offshore disposal area in red.

Context

Occupation of Kotzebue Sound dates to approximately 3,200 B.C. (Friesen and Mason 2016). Before contact with Euroamericans in the early nineteenth century, the *Qikiqtagruṃmiut* people occupied a territory that includes the Baldwin Peninsula, the northern shores of Hotham Inlet and Kotzebue Sound, and the lower reaches of the Noatak River. The main *Qikiqtagruṃmiut* settlement, known as *Qikiqtagruq*, was composed of two villages near the present-day location of Kotzebue: *Taksruq saṅa* and *Kaṅiraaluk*. *Taksruq saṅa* was one of the major settlements of

Qikiqtaġruṃmiut, as it was a good place for hunting ptarmigan, caribou, muskrat, spotted seal, young bearded seal, and fishing. *Kaṇiraaluk* consisted of three houses and was located near the northern end of Kotzebue Peninsula; it was a good place for hunting and fishing but not for building houses due to its marshy nature. *Igluġruat*, the only known village at Cape Blossom, was reported in 1800 as a fall and winter settlement having between 1 and 2 houses occupied by 8 to 16 people. A second settlement, *Kaṇilik*, was located east of the second slough, approximately 6 miles southeast of Cape Blossom, and was estimated to have 2 houses and approximately 16 people. *Kaṇilik* is now known locally as the “Riley Wreck” (Burch 1998).

Captain Beechey of the *H.M.S. Blossom* visited the Baldwin Peninsula area in 1827, where he found several settlements (DePew and Buzzell 2002). Visitors to the region throughout the second half of the nineteenth century reported several small settlements of two or three occupied houses on the Baldwin Peninsula (Burch 1998). In 1880, the annual indigenous summer trade fair in Kotzebue Sound, usually held at Sisualik just west of the outlet of the Noatak River, was instead held at Cape Blossom (Gal 1986). That same year, the U.S. Revenue cutter *Corwin* temporarily used Cape Blossom as an inspection station, checking European vessels for contraband. The *Corwin* reported that the Cape Blossom trade fair had a population of 1,200, which was likely composed of people from as far north as Point Hope and as far south as the Yukon River Delta (Burch 1998; DePew and Buzzel 2002; Gal 1986). The trade fair was moved to the *Qikiqtaġruq* area around 1883 (Burch 1998).

According to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and Alaska Shipwrecks databases, there are potentially three shipwrecks in the Cape Blossom area of Kotzebue Sound. One of these is the *John Reilly*, a sidewheel steamer built in 1898 on St. Lawrence Island and registered at St. Michael as Hull Number 77391. The *John Reilly* sank on October 13, 1905, after being blown into the rocks 4 miles east of Cape Blossom while on its way from Kiwalik to Kotzebue. Another two vessels sank somewhere off of Cape Blossom on October 15, 1930. The *Defiance*, which had been attempting to rescue a lighter that had broken away from the steamer *Arthur J. Baldwin*, foundered in heavy weather. Both the lighter and *Defiance* iced up and sank (BOEM 2011; Alaska Shipwrecks 2017).

Description of Undertaking and Area of Potential Effect (APE)

The proposed dredging will be completed in support of navigation improvements in Kotzebue Sound. The dredging will remove between 500,000 and 1,230,000 cubic yards of material from the seafloor. The proposed nearshore disposal site is located east of the dredging site (Figure 1).

On August 12, 2016, USACE personnel conducted a pedestrian survey of the uplands associated with the proposed dredging APE; no cultural resources were identified. USACE personnel also attempted to find the remnants of the *John Reilly* based on information from local informants, who placed the wreck on the eastern edge of the second slough approximately 6 miles east of Cape Blossom near an abandoned reindeer corral. Although the corral and an associated building were located, no ship remnants were positively identified.

Examination of the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey (AHRS) database shows one historic property near the APE: a burial on a bluff overlooking Cape Blossom (KTZ-312) to the west of the first slough. Although the BOEM Shipwreck Database identifies three possible shipwrecks in the nearby area, the Wrecks and Obstructions database maintained by the State Office of Coast Survey of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shows no known shipwrecks or obstacles within the APE (BOEM 2011; NOAA 2017).

Assessment of Effect

This undertaking will dredge material from the sea floor east of Cape Blossom and deposit it at a nearshore disposal site in order to improve navigational activities in Kotzebue Sound. The USACE finds that this proposed undertaking will have no effect on any known cultural resources. Therefore, following 36 CFR § 800.4(d)(1), the USACE seeks your concurrence on the determination that the proposed undertaking will result in **no historic properties affected**. If you have any questions about the project, please contact Forrest Kranda by phone at (907) 753-2736 or email at forrest.j.kranda@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,



Kelly A. Eldridge
Archaeologist
Environmental Resources Section

Cc:

Linda Greene, City Clerk, City of Kotzebue
Kayla Martinez, Executive Assistant, Native Village of Kotzebue
William Anderson, Lands Department, Kikiktagruk Inupiat Corporation
Jeff Nelson, Lands Manager, NANA Regional Corporation, Incorporated
Charlie Nelson, Vice President/Tribal Government Services Administrator, Maniilaq Association

References Cited

Alaska Shipwreck Database

2017. Alaska Shipwrecks. Electronic Document, <http://alaskashipwreck.com/shipwrecks-a-z/alaska-shipwrecks-j/>, accessed 2 February 2017.

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM)

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1998. *The Inupiaq Eskimo Nations of Northwest Alaska*. University of Alaska Press, Fairbanks AK.

DePew, Alan D. and Rolfe G. Buzzell

2002. *Preliminary Report of Investigations along Kotzebue's Shore Avenue, Kotzebue, Alaska (ADOT&PF Project No. 60788)*. Office of History and Archaeology, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Anchorage AK.

Friesen, Max T and Owen K. Mason

2016. *The Oxford Handbook on The Prehistoric Arctic*. Oxford University Press, NY.

Gal, Robert

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National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

2017. Wrecks and Obstructions Database. Electronic Document, https://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/hsd/wrecks_and_obstructions.html, accessed 19 January 2017.

4.26.2017

3130-1R COE



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALASKA DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 6898
JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, ALASKA 99506-0898

RECEIVED

MAR 21 2017

OHA

MAR 17 2017

Ms. Judith Bittner
State Historic Preservation Officer
Office of History and Archaeology
550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1310
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3565

No Historic Properties Affected SHB
Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer
Date: 4.26.2017 File No.: 3130-1R COE
Please review: 36 CFR 800.13 / A.S. 41.35.070(d)

Dear Ms. Bittner:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District (USACE) is planning to conduct dredging and subsequent nearshore disposal of dredged material for the purpose of beach nourishment in the vicinity of Cape Blossom, on the Baldwin Peninsula, Kotzebue Sound (Section 1, T15N, R17W, Kotzebue Quad C-1 NW, Kateel River Meridian; Figure 1). In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 [36 CFR § 800.2(a)(1)], the purpose of this letter is to notify you of a Federal undertaking and to seek your concurrence on an assessment of effect.

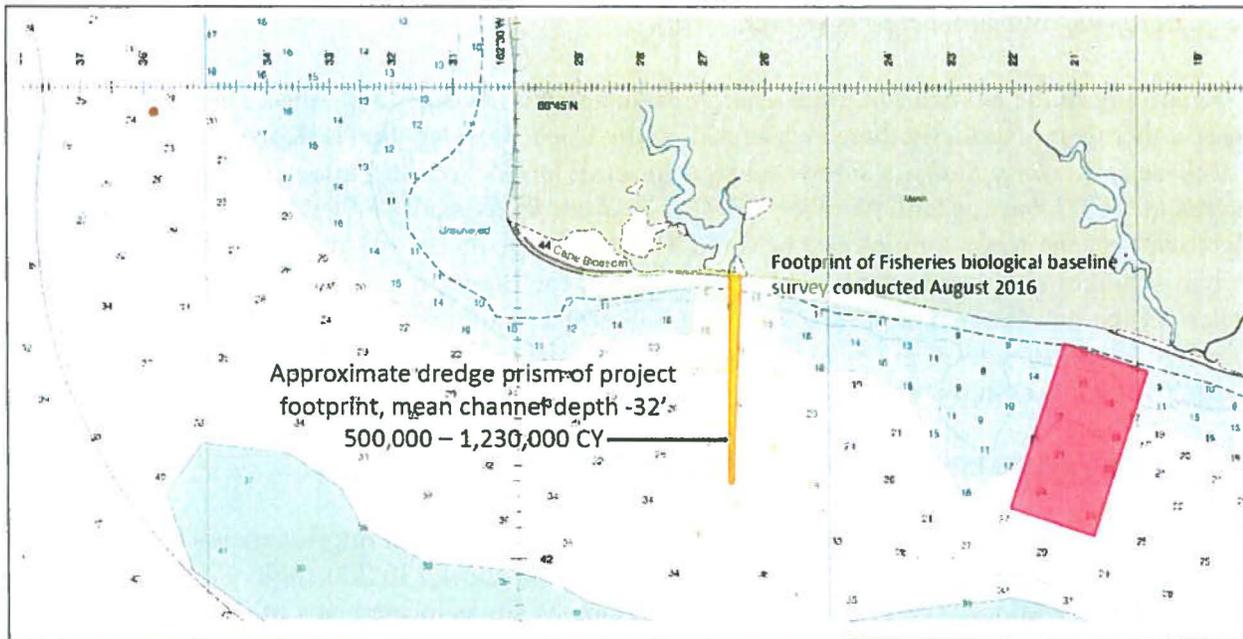


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2017-00374



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALASKA DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 6898
JBER, AK 99506-0898
APR 13 2016

Katherine Cleaveland, First Chief
Native Village of Ambler
P.O. Box 86047
Ambler, Alaska 99786

Dear First Chief Cleaveland:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Alaska District is conducting a study to determine the feasibility of constructing navigation improvements near Cape Blossom outside of Kotzebue. The goal of the proposed project is to improve the delivery of fuel and cargo to Kotzebue and the surrounding region. This study was initiated at the request of the Native Village of Kotzebue, which is also acting as the non-Federal cost sharing partner for the study. We have begun gathering publicly available information and conducting preliminary plan formulation. Our feasibility study efforts are expected to be completed before November 2018.

Please consider this letter our notification of proposed activity under the USACE Tribal Consultation Policy. If you believe this activity may significantly affect tribal rights and/or protected resources, and you wish to enter into government-to-government consultation, please advise me or the Project Manager, Mr. David Williams, in writing as to which tribal rights and/or protected resources you wish to consult about. A copy of this letter is also being sent to Virginia Commack, Tribal Administrator.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact David Williams at (907) 753-5621 or email at David.P.Williams@usace.army.mil. You may also contact the Tribal Liaison, Amanda Andraschko, at (907) 753-5674 or email Amanda.M.Andraschko@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,



Michael S. Brooks
Colonel, U.S. Army
Commanding



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALASKA DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 6898
JBER, AK 99506-0898

APR 13 2016

Gary Hadley, President
Native Village of Buckland
P.O. Box 67
Buckland, Alaska 99727

Dear President Hadley:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Alaska District is conducting a study to determine the feasibility of constructing navigation improvements near Cape Blossom outside of Kotzebue. The goal of the proposed project is to improve the delivery of fuel and cargo to Kotzebue and the surrounding region. This study was initiated at the request of the Native Village of Kotzebue, which is also acting as the non-Federal cost sharing partner for the study. We have begun gathering publicly available information and conducting preliminary plan formulation. Our feasibility study efforts are expected to be completed before November 2018.

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If you have any questions, please feel free to contact David Williams at (907) 753-5621 or email at David.P.Williams@usace.army.mil. You may also contact the Tribal Liaison, Amanda Andraschko, at (907) 753-5674 or email Amanda.M.Andraschko@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,



Michael S. Brooks
Colonel, U.S. Army
Commanding



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALASKA DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 6898
JBER, AK 99506-0898
APR 13 2016

Kevin Moro, President
Native Village of Deering
P.O. Box 89
Deering, Alaska 99736

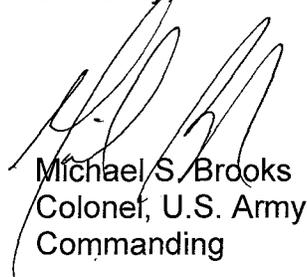
Dear President Moro:

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If you have any questions, please feel free to contact David Williams at (907) 753-5621 or email at David.P.Williams@usace.army.mil. You may also contact the Tribal Liaison, Amanda Andraschko, at (907) 753-5674 or email Amanda.M.Andraschko@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,



Michael S. Brooks
Colonel, U.S. Army
Commanding



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALASKA DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 6898
JBER, AK 99506-0898

APR 13 2016

Ben Atoruk, President
Native Village of Kiana
P.O. Box 69
Kiana, Alaska 99749

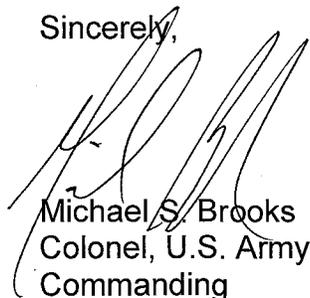
Dear President Atoruk:

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If you have any questions, please feel free to contact David Williams at (907) 753-5621 or email at David.P.Williams@usace.army.mil. You may also contact the Tribal Liaison, Amanda Andraschko, at (907) 753-5674 or email Amanda.M.Andraschko@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,



Michael S. Brooks
Colonel, U.S. Army
Commanding



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALASKA DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 6898
JBER, AK 99506-0898
APR 13 2016

Millie Hawley, President
Native Village of Kivalina
P.O. Box 51
Kivalina, Alaska 99750

Dear President Hawley:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Alaska District is conducting a study to determine the feasibility of constructing navigation improvements near Cape Blossom outside of Kotzebue. The goal of the proposed project is to improve the delivery of fuel and cargo to Kotzebue and the surrounding region. This study was initiated at the request of the Native Village of Kotzebue, which is also acting as the non-Federal cost sharing partner for the study. We have begun gathering publicly available information and conducting preliminary plan formulation. Our feasibility study efforts are expected to be completed before November 2018.

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If you have any questions, please feel free to contact David Williams at (907) 753-5621 or email at David.P.Williams@usace.army.mil. You may also contact the Tribal Liaison, Amanda Andraschko, at (907) 753-5674 or email Amanda.M.Andraschko@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Brooks", is written over the typed name.

Michael S. Brooks
Colonel, U.S. Army
Commanding



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALASKA DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 6898
JBER, AK 99506-0898

APR 13 2016

Johnetta Horner, President
Native Village of Kobuk
P.O. Box 51039
Kobuk, Alaska 99751

Dear President Horner:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Alaska District is conducting a study to determine the feasibility of constructing navigation improvements near Cape Blossom outside of Kotzebue. The goal of the proposed project is to improve the delivery of fuel and cargo to Kotzebue and the surrounding region. This study was initiated at the request of the Native Village of Kotzebue, which is also acting as the non-Federal cost sharing partner for the study. We have begun gathering publicly available information and conducting preliminary plan formulation. Our feasibility study efforts are expected to be completed before November 2018.

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If you have any questions, please feel free to contact David Williams at (907) 753-5621 or email at David.P.Williams@usace.army.mil. You may also contact the Tribal Liaison, Amanda Andraschko, at (907) 753-5674 or email Amanda.M.Andraschko@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,



Michael S. Brooks
Colonel, U.S. Army
Commanding



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALASKA DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 6898
JBER, AK 99506-0898

APR 13 2016

Chester L. Ballot, Chairman
Native Village of Kotzebue
P.O. Box 296
Kotzebue, Alaska 99752

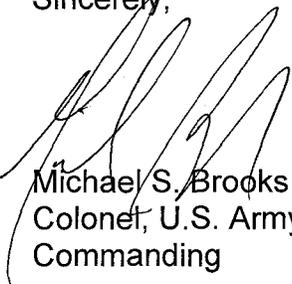
Dear Chairman Ballot:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Alaska District is conducting a study to determine the feasibility of constructing navigation improvements near Cape Blossom outside of Kotzebue. The goal of the proposed project is to improve the delivery of fuel and cargo to Kotzebue and the surrounding region. This study was initiated at the request of the Native Village of Kotzebue, which is also acting as the non-Federal cost sharing partner for the study. We have begun gathering publicly available information and conducting preliminary plan formulation. Our feasibility study efforts are expected to be completed before November 2018.

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If you have any questions, please feel free to contact David Williams at (907) 753-5621 or email at David.P.Williams@usace.army.mil. You may also contact the Tribal Liaison, Amanda Andraschko, at (907) 753-5674 or email Amanda.M.Andraschko@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,



Michael S. Brooks
Colonel, U.S. Army
Commanding



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALASKA DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 6898
JBER, AK 99506-0898

APR 13 2016

Vernon Adams, President
Native Village of Noatak
P.O. Box 89
Noatak, Alaska 99761

Dear President Adams:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Alaska District is conducting a study to determine the feasibility of constructing navigation improvements near Cape Blossom outside of Kotzebue. The goal of the proposed project is to improve the delivery of fuel and cargo to Kotzebue and the surrounding region. This study was initiated at the request of the Native Village of Kotzebue, which is also acting as the non-Federal cost sharing partner for the study. We have begun gathering publicly available information and conducting preliminary plan formulation. Our feasibility study efforts are expected to be completed before November 2018.

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If you have any questions, please feel free to contact David Williams at (907) 753-5621 or email at David.P.Williams@usace.army.mil. You may also contact the Tribal Liaison, Amanda Andraschko, at (907) 753-5674 or email Amanda.M.Andraschko@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael S. Brooks".

Michael S. Brooks
Colonel, U.S. Army
Commanding



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALASKA DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 6898
JBER, AK 99506-0898

APR 13 2016

Joshua Melton, President
Noorvik Native Community
P.O. Box 209
Noorvik, Alaska 99763

Dear President Melton:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Alaska District is conducting a study to determine the feasibility of constructing navigation improvements near Cape Blossom outside of Kotzebue. The goal of the proposed project is to improve the delivery of fuel and cargo to Kotzebue and the surrounding region. This study was initiated at the request of the Native Village of Kotzebue, which is also acting as the non-Federal cost sharing partner for the study. We have begun gathering publicly available information and conducting preliminary plan formulation. Our feasibility study efforts are expected to be completed before November 2018.

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If you have any questions, please feel free to contact David Williams at (907) 753-5621 or email at David.P.Williams@usace.army.mil. You may also contact the Tribal Liaison, Amanda Andraschko, at (907) 753-5674 or email Amanda.M.Andraschko@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael S. Brooks".

Michael S. Brooks
Colonel, U.S. Army
Commanding



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALASKA DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 6898
JBER, AK 99506-0898

APR 13 2016

Diana Ramoth, President
Native Village of Selawik
P.O. Box 59
Selawik, Alaska 99770

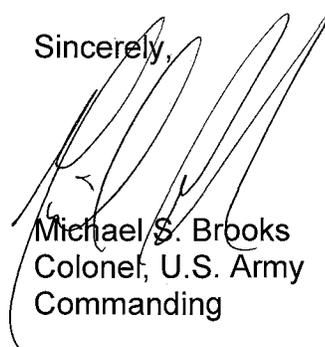
Dear President Ramoth:

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If you have any questions, please feel free to contact David Williams at (907) 753-5621 or email at David.P.Williams@usace.army.mil. You may also contact the Tribal Liaison, Amanda Andraschko, at (907) 753-5674 or email Amanda.M.Andraschko@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael S. Brooks", is written over the typed name and title.

Michael S. Brooks
Colonel, U.S. Army
Commanding



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALASKA DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 6898
JBER, AK 99506-0898

APR 13 2016

Billy Lee, President
Native Village of Shungnak
P.O. Box 64
Shungnak, Alaska 99773

Dear President Lee:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Alaska District is conducting a study to determine the feasibility of constructing navigation improvements near Cape Blossom outside of Kotzebue. The goal of the proposed project is to improve the delivery of fuel and cargo to Kotzebue and the surrounding region. This study was initiated at the request of the Native Village of Kotzebue, which is also acting as the non-Federal cost sharing partner for the study. We have begun gathering publicly available information and conducting preliminary plan formulation. Our feasibility study efforts are expected to be completed before November 2018.

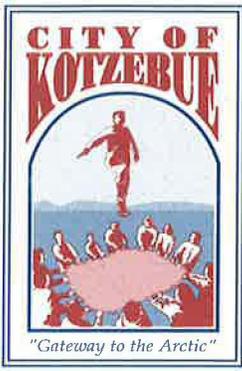
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael S. Brooks".

Michael S. Brooks
Colonel, U.S. Army
Commanding



P.O. Box 46
Kotzebue, Alaska 99752

City Hall
(907) 442-3401

Police Dept.
(907) 442-3351

Fire Dept.
(907) 442-3404

Public Works
(907) 442-3401

January 4, 2019

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District
ATTN: CEPOA-PM-C
P. O. Box 6898
Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska 99506-0898

Subject: Kotzebue Harbor Feasibility Study P2#-102737

Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of the City of Kotzebue please accept this letter of support for the Kotzebue Harbor Feasibility Study.

First studied in the early 80's it has been forefront on long range planning for decades. The Tentatively Selected Plan Milestone meeting was a positive step in the right direction. The City of Kotzebue is pleased with the direction taken to bring this vital project to completion.

Navigation Improvements in the Arctic are a necessity for continued economic sustainability which plays an integral part of our region's success. The impact of completing this project has lasting positive benefits that would affect each and every person in the region. As a co-sponsor for this study, the City of Kotzebue administration, as well as Native Village of Kotzebue representatives, met with US Army Corps of Engineers HQ staff in Washington DC numerous times in 2018. Our effort to show our continued support, as well as to put a face to the people of the Northwest Arctic, was very well received. It resulted in mutually beneficial relations.

We look toward a bright future for our beloved Arctic and thank the USACE for all of its efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dr. Lewis Pagel", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Dr. Lewis Pagel
Mayor



PO Box 296
Kotzebue, AK 99752
ph (907) 442-3467
fax (907) 442-2162
www.kotzebueira.org

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ATIN: CEPOA-PM-C
P.O. Box 6898
Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska 99506-0898

RE: Kotzebue Harbor Feasibility Study (P2 # - 102737)

Dear U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District:

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Native Village of Kotzebue in support of the Kotzebue Harbor Feasibility Study.

The people of Kotzebue have been pursuing this project of navigational improvements for over 30 years. The Native Village of Kotzebue has teamed up with the City of Kotzebue on the feasibility study as local non-federal sponsors. This has been a community-wide effort.

The City of Kotzebue has begun the Cape Blossom Road development project, which is an integral part of the Kotzebue Harbor. This harbor has the potential as a hub of tourism, fishing, and business development.

The benefits of this project are significant, including the lowered cost of living for our people in the northwest region, as gas and oil prices are extremely expensive. We currently have to lighter our fuel onto a smaller barge to be able to deliver the stove oil and gas to Kotzebue. With this harbor, the lightering wouldn't be necessary.

This project is of vital importance to the people of Kotzebue and our region, and we are looking forward to its successful completion.

Sincerely,

Nicole N. Stoops
Executive Director