Suqitughneq River

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

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DIVISION OF AIR AND WATER QUALITY
AIR AND WATER DATA & MONITORING

February 15, 2002

Mr. Fritz Waghiyi, President
Native Village of Savoonga
P.O. Box 120
Savoonga, Alaska 99769

Dear Mr. Waghiyi:

Thank you very much for your invitation to attend the Savoonga Annual Membership meeting scheduled for this Sunday, February 17, 2002 in Savoonga at 1:00 p.m.

I am grateful for the personal invitation. Although you did give me ample time to attend, I regret to tell you that I am unable to do so at this time. Although I am not sure how long the membership meeting would be going on for, it would be a very long and costly way to travel for me from Juneau for an afternoon meeting. I did check with other divisions and sections within my department for others who could attend and Jeff Brownlee of Contaminated Sites, who has attended in the past, informed me that he would not be making the meeting either.

Is there a conference call phone number by which I could participate? If so, please let me know.

We are very pleased to see Savoonga's expression of participation in the Alaska Clean Water Actions process and your desire to see some of your waterbodies included in the Clean Water Actions priorities. I can tell you that two waters on St. Lawrence Island were brought to our attention by the Alaska Community Action on Toxics and were entered into our database for prioritization. These two waters are the Suqitughneq River and associated wetlands at Northeast Cape and Troutman Lake near Gambell with reported hazardous and toxic waste from landfills, and fuel spills. I am also told that the Suqi River was once one of the most important areas for traditional subsistence, hunting, fishing, and food gathering.

I had the pleasure to talk with Savoonga's IGAP contact, Jeannette Iya, for quite a while on the phone and she was very helpful in sharing with me contact names and information. I will be gathering as much information as I can for my file. For instance, it is my understanding the there will be a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Remedial Assessment and Feasibility study completed very soon.

The State will be conducting another Alaska Clean Water Actions solicitation for water resources information in April 2002 and we look forward to our continued dialog and gathering any additional information on these waters as we move ahead. It is our hope that soon the uses of these waters will be restored.

Sincerely,

J. Andrew Grant
Waterbody Assessment & Reporting

cc: Beth Potter, Office of the Governor, Division of Governmental Coordination, Juneau
Jeff Brownlee, ADEC, Contaminated Sites, Anchorage

→ Jeanette Iya -
IGap 984-6017 \ 984-6027 fax.
Indian - Grant
IRA & EPA poa02.usace.army.mil/
Cary.N.Cassaboom@

US ARMY COE → contractor Montgomery-Watson
Cary Cassaboom 753-2689.
→ (Rick Jackson Anchg. 753-5606)
Project Mgr.

- Trustees for AK - Becca Bernard.
- Jeff Brownlee - DEC
- Pam Miller greenpeace
- Kevin Oat - Superfund \ EPA
  review \ report in Feb.

Joann LaBeau - EPA \ R-10

→ removal of old tanks, hope DEC would do some soil sampling

SUNY - Blood samples - will be at annual mtg.

Remedial investigation
Village 45 miles away from site
PCB & DRO - risk assmt -
— there's a fish camp.
Requested as NPL via EPA
funded Hipe via.

GW contaminat

PCBS in sediment and fish.

Jeff usually goes - has for last 3 years - but not this

Restor Advisory Board - 3 - or more

→ Phase II RI - water quality

called

→ Rich Jackson 753-5606

Kerry Cossaboom (PM) 753-2689

→ Doing a RA/FS \ Montgomery

remedial action \ feasibility studies

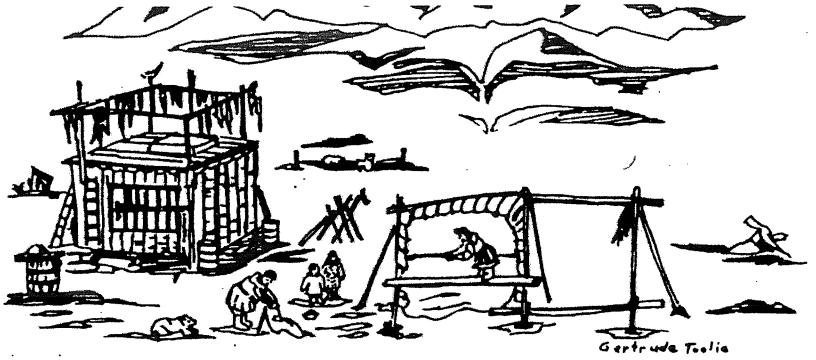
Water resources - not much going on.

- Bugi R was tested for

Nugget Construction 344-[illegible]

Sandy Billingsley ♀

Grambell Village DW - real prob.



ATIVE VILLAGE OF SAVOONGA • P.O. BOX 120, SAVOONGA, AK 99769 • PHONE 984-6414 • FAX 984-6027
IGAP-984-6017

Mr. Drew Grant
Department of Conservation
P. O. Box 110030
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0030

Dear Mr. Grant::

The Native Village of Savoonga is having their Annual Membership meeting for February 17, 2002 in Savoonga at 1:00 p.m.

This letter is an invitation for you to attend our Annual Meeting. This would give ample time for you to attend our Annual Membership Meeting and answer any questions about Alaska Clean Water Actions and our participation to declare some of our water bodies to be considered on the Clean Water list for 2002.

We anticipate your participation and let us know if this date would meet your schedule. Hope to see you at our meeting.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Fritz Waghiyi

Fritz Waghiyi
President

Site Summary Update
August 2000

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
Division of Spill Prevention and Response

Saint Lawrence Island

Site Description
Two Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) are located on Saint Lawrence Island. An Aircraft Control and Warning Station was operated by the Airforce in Gambell from 1948 to 1956. The site was abandoned after a similar facility was constructed at Northeast Cape on the island. The Northeast Cape site included a White Alice Communication Site and is located about 50 miles from Savoonga, the nearest village. The landowners are the Sivuqaq Native Corporation (Gambell) and the Savoonga Native Corporation.

The Gambell site is subdivided into 18 separate areas. The majority of contamination is petroleum-impacted soil and groundwater. There are also areas of low concentrations of PCBs, dioxin (below cleanup standards) and reported unexploded ordinance (UXO) in Troutman Lake. Allegedly, large quantities of buried waste including construction debris, military equipment and possibly hazardous substances are present in and around the village. An investigation of the groundwater near the village water supply (Site 5) detected a low-level concentration of diesel range organics (DRO) in one monitoring well in 1998. Subsequent sampling has not found DRO in the well and testing of the water supply well shows no detectable contamination.

Northeast Cape is subdivided into 27 separate areas and the White Alice site. Large areas at Northeast Cape are contaminated by petroleum in the soil and groundwater. An estimated 180,000 gallon diesel fuel spill in 1969 impacted a nearby river drainage. Some sediment in this drainage basin is also impacted with PCBs. Fish (Dolly Varden) sampled from the drainage have been found to contain PCBs at concentrations above the ingestion levels recommended by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Threats and Contaminants
At Gambell, 4-wheeler accidents have reportedly occurred due to exposed surface debris. UXO screening is being performed in the summer of 2000. At Northeast Cape there is limited human presence. A nearby fish camp has intermittent summer residents. Potential risks to humans and environment resulting from petroleum and PCB contamination in the fish, soil and sediment and from petroleum contamination in the groundwater are currently being evaluated.

Public Health and Environmental Concerns The community has expressed concern over a perceived increase in cancer rates and a possible link to individuals that had worked at the Northeast Cape facility. There is also concern over possible impacts to subsistence foods such as reindeer and fish from the area. In Gambell community concern has focused on buried debris. Debris has been encountering during construction projects and from erosion processes. DEC is continuing to work with the community and the Corps on the debris and solid waste concerns.

Response Actions
Gambell:
- Remedial Investigation, 1996.
- An investigation was performed at the village water supply area in 1998.
- A debris and contaminants removal action was performed in 1999.

Northeast Cape:
- Preliminary Assessment, 1992.
- Phase I Remedial Investigation, 1995.
- Phase II Remedial Investigation, 1998.

Current Status
- An $8.5 million cleanup (building demolition and debris removal, and contaminants cleanup) has begun this summer (2000) at Northeast Cape.
- The Public Health Service is currently producing a Health Consultation for both sites on the island to evaluate the possible impacts to human health from contaminants at both of the sites.
- Native American Lands Mitigation Program funded debris investigation is being performed at Gambell this summer.

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Site Summary Update **December 1999**

Saint Lawrence Island

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation • Division of Spill Prevention and Response

Site Description

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The Gambell site is subdivided into 18 separate areas. The majority of contamination is petroleum-impacted soil and groundwater. There are also areas with low concentrations of PCBs, dioxin and reported unexploded ordnance (UXO) in Troutman Lake. Allegedly, large quantities of buried waste including construction debris, military equipment and possibly hazardous substances are present in and around the village. Groundwater samples collected in 1998 from one monitoring well near the village water supply contained a low level of diesel range organics (DRO). Subsequent samples have not contained detectable levels of DRO and the water supply well has tested clean.

Northeast Cape is divided into 27 separate areas and the White Alice site. Large areas at Northeast Cape are contaminated by petroleum in the soil and groundwater. A diesel spill in 1969 of approximately 180,000 gallons impacted a nearby river drainage. Some of the sediments in this drainage basin are also contaminated with PCBs.

Threats and Contaminants

At Gambell, 4-wheeler accidents have reportedly occurred due to exposed surface debris. UXO, if still present, would pose an immediate risk to anyone that encounters it. At Northeast Cape, fish camps are used seasonally. People using the camps could be exposed to contaminants. The potential risks to human health and environment from contaminants at these sites are still being evaluated.

Public Health and Environmental Concerns

Savoonga residents have expressed concern over cancer rates and a possible link to individuals that worked at the Northeast Cape facility. There is also concern over possible impacts to subsistence foods such as reindeer and fish from the area. In Gambell community concern has focused mainly on buried debris. Military debris has complicated construction projects and is continually exposed due to erosion. The Corps of Engineers FUDS cleanup program does not fund the cleanup of buried inert debris.

Response Actions

Gambell:

- Remedial Investigation, 1996.
- An investigation was performed at the village water supply area in 1998.
- A debris cleanup and hazardous substance removal action was performed in 1999.

Northeast Cape:

- Preliminary Assessment, 1992.
- Phase I Remedial Investigation, 1995.
- Phase II Remedial Investigation, 1998.

Current Status

- A $10 million cleanup (Building Demolition and Debris Removal, plus hazardous substance) is scheduled for 2000 - 2001 at Northeast Cape.
- The Public Health Service is conducting a Health Consultation for both sites to evaluate possible human health impacts.

- Investigation into UXO is scheduled for the year 2000.
- Native American Lands Mitigation Program funding is possible to assist with debris cleanup at Gambell.