

Adopted and Approved
April 30, 2015

NAPAIMUTE TRIBAL SAFETY PLAN

Tribal Transportation Program

Native Village of Napaimute
Napaimute Traditional Council



INTRODUCTION

The Native Village of Napaimute is a federally recognized tribe located in Napaimute, Alaska, respectively. Napaimute is located on the north bank of the upper Kuskokwim River 28 miles east of Aniak nestled in the Kilbuck-Kuskokwim Mountains. It lies 330 air miles west of Anchorage, and 158 miles northeast of Bethel.

The Kuskokwim River affords easy access to the village by skiff during the summer season and throughout the winter motor vehicles at times can be used for inter-village travel. River barges deliver cargo and bulk fuel during the summer. The tribally-owned 3,401' long by 60' wide gravel airstrip is located just west of the village. Air services intermittently are scheduled to deliver passengers, mail, and other cargo year-round. Unmaintained winter trails exist throughout the Kuskokwim watershed, connecting villages by ice via the river and over land via the tundra.

The Native Village of Napaimute Traditional Council is committed to reducing the number of deaths and serious injuries related to transportation, therefore, improving the overall safety of the tribal transportation system. As part of the ongoing effort to make safety improvements, this Tribal Safety Plan has been developed with input from our local community and tribal members. The plan identifies current issues and priorities which upon implementation, are intended to further improve transportation safety for the Native Village of Napaimute's residents and others visiting their traditional lands.

SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM BACKGROUND

In 2005, the Federal Highway Administration and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, with Tribal input developed a "Strategic Highway Safety Plan for Indian Lands". The Strategic Highway Safety Plan establishes direction and emphasis areas aimed at reducing crashes in Indian Country. In addition, in August 2008, the "Tribal Transportation Safety Management System Implementation Plan" was developed to improve safety and to meet emphasis areas identified in the "Strategic Highway Safety Plan for Indian Lands". The development of a Tribal Safety Plan is just one of eight implementation activities recommended in the Tribal Transportation Safety Management System Implementation Plan.

For the last 7 months the Director of Development and Operations, Mark Leary has presented to the public and Council, during its monthly meetings, an updated status report regarding winter trail safety conditions and concerns. Further the Tribe formed a Transportation Safety Committee to evaluate public input and prioritize concerns for tribal transportation safety. The committee took the collated information, drafted our Tribal Transportations Safety Plan, and posted the draft plan on the Tribes website: www.napaimute.org. Finally, the Council officially adopted this plan on April 30, 2015.

The plan includes some of the identified issues of concern and recommendations related to the following safety priorities: deaths or injuries attributed to traveling on the "Ice Road" during unsafe conditions, vehicle breakdowns in-between Villages (boats, trucks, autos, ATVs and Snowmobile), route engineering, safety enforcement, emergency response systems, and education.

The top priorities identified during the Safety Committee Meetings included:

- *The need to reduce death and injuries resulting from exposure of stranded passengers and motorist;
- *The essential continued assessment of current ice road conditions and communicating these conditions to the public in an effective way;
- *Basic lack of dust control;
- *The lack of law enforcement on the river and in the village;
- *No streetlights or the electricity available to provide streetlights;
- *Roadway incursion of predators (mainly bears);
- *No posted speed limits and warning signs; and,
- *The presence of brush and willows blocking sight lines at intersections, thus blocking off corners causing blind spots.

SAFETY PRIORITIES

Emergency Response Systems

Issues of Concern:

- ☐ Lack of winter trails marked (ice thickness and stability assessed) and all open water areas clearly marked greatly improving safe travel.
- ☐ Limited Search and Rescue funding
- ☐ Lack of emergency shelters on trails and roads connecting remote villages
- ☐ Lack of local Emergency Medical Services

Issue Champions: Napaimute Traditional Council, Napaimute Transportation Safety Committee

Implementation:

*Investigate and apply for funding opportunities to provide constant assessment of winter river road conditions.

*Investigate and apply for funding opportunities to maintain a season long passable route for emergency response vehicles to access both village and the tribe worksite.

*Investigate funding opportunities to construct and place emergency shelters.

*Identify partners that may assist with implementation of a Search and Rescue Program and identify ways to improve Emergency Medical Services.

Current Action:

- 1) Identify and contact potential partners and community members we need to have involved with developing the community emergency response plan.
- 2) Identify partner Tribes to support the application for additional funding in regards to the winter road safety.
- 3) Identify and compile our village emergency management policies, plan management and updates,
- 4) Identify and compile our response actions; warning and evacuation procedures; and disaster declaration and reporting procedures.
- 5) Identify and compile how we will be organizing for emergencies; sheltering; and post-incident actions with community members.
- 6) Identify and compile Napaimute resources; and a telephone directory listing all organizations that provide emergency services to our village.
- 7) Sign up list of who will be willing to help in case of a community emergency.
- 8) A community meetings will be held to present the Community Emergency Response Plan and all necessary handouts will be distributed in paper copy and/or electronic form.

Napaimute Tribal Council will also update our Long Range Transportation Plan that may include most of the concerns that were listed in this section, i.e. winter trail marking, and maintenance, search and rescue, EMS, etc.

Engineering

Issues of Concern:

- ☐ Dust in the spring, summer and fall.
- ☐ Sink holes and debris from spring flooding on trails and roads.
- ☐ Ice roads marked in the winter.
- ☐ Removal of ice berms which form during the freeze-up of the river. These berms can be solid 5 foot piece of pieces jutting up in the air as much as 2-6 feet and sandwiched together over several miles..
- ☐ Overgrowth of brush and willows along roadsides and corners.
- ☐ Lack of speed limit or stop signs.
- ☐ Lack of street lights all over the village.

Issue Champions: Napaimute Traditional Council

Implementation:

- * Identify funding sources for marking winter trail routes.
- * Identify potential funding source for the breaking up and removal of ice berms causing winter routes to be impassable.
- * Dust Palliative information, cost and training
- * Identify funding opportunities to purchase an Alaska sprayer
- * Identify and develop a budget to address sink holes on not “normally” maintained trails/roads.
- * Identify Training opportunities for transit information

Current Action: Napaimute is looking to possibly get funding to purchase signs such as: stop signs, yield signage, speed limit signs and caution signs, etc.

Napaimute would like to apply for and receive funding to:

- 1) Apply for funding to assess winter trail ice thickness, mark the trail, and remove any ice formations which may cause the route to be impassable.
- 2) Explore behavioral activities associated with increased road dust, as well as
- 3) Conduct air quality monitoring at times and in places most problematic given the high road use.
- 4) Identify and contact potential partners and community members we need to have involved with making the community emergency response plan.
- 5) Identify and compile our village organizations emergency management policies, plan management and updates, Napaimute Community Profile; and hazard analysis and mitigation strategies with partners and community members.
- 6) Identify and compile our response actions; warning and evacuation procedures; and disaster declaration and reporting procedures with partners and community members.
- 7) Identify and compile how we will be organizing for emergencies; sheltering; and post-incident actions with partners and community members
- 8) Identify and compile Napaimute’s resources; and a telephone directory listing all organizations that provide services within our village with partners and community members.
- 9) A community meeting will be held to present the Community Emergency Response Plan and all necessary handouts will be distributed in paper copy and/or electronic form.
- 10) Develop a budget to perform minor maintenance on village roads outside of the normally maintained roads which create a safety hazard.

Napaimute will also update our Long Range Transportation Plan that may include most of the concerns that were listed in this section, i.e. safety, street lights, brush removal, icy roads.

Enforcement

Issues of Concern:

- ☐ Driving without helmets
- ☐ Driving under the influence
- ☐ Reckless driving
- ☐ Driving without license
- ☐ Driving too fast around children or in residential areas
- ☐ Underage drivers

Issue Champions: Napaimute Traditional Council

Implementation:

- * Investigate funding opportunities or identify partners that may assist with implementation of a safety campaign to address Driver behavior issues.

- * Possibly getting materials regarding education and training for ATV safety and provide feedback to community members
- * The AKTTAP will contact the ANTHC Injury Prevention specialist to discuss possible safety campaign initiatives for Driver Behavior issues, also contact the Alaska State Safety Office to identify Driver Behavior Emphasis initiatives.
- * As a long-term implementation goal, our community will work with the Association of Village Council Presidents to find ways to improve services or reinstatement of a Public Safety Officer or law enforcement that can serve our village. The lack of available housing is a barrier to maintaining local law enforcement presence.
- * Possibly helping the younger generation get valid driver license and educating them on the risks of reckless driving as well as driving under the influence.

Current Action:

Possibly start discussing the possibility of getting people interested in a more formalized community patrol to report reckless driving and presence of predators.

Education

Issues of Concern:

- ☐ Impact of winter snow storms, ice conditions, lack of road maintenance on winter travel and mechanical failure of boaters.
- ☐ Cost of life jackets.
- ☐ Insufficient use of helmets for drivers of ATVs, snow machines, and bikes
- ☐ Insufficient use of reflectors on coats during the winter, trail marking, snow removal, awareness of ice thickness.

Issue Champions: Napaimute Transportation Planners

Kuspuk School District

Alaska Tribal Technical Assistance Program

Implementation:

- * Investigate funding opportunities to assess, mark and educate the public about winter traveling conditions.
- * Investigate funding opportunities for implementing some type of “shelter” for stranded passengers on the river and during the wintertime on the most used intra-village transportation corridors.
- * Host an ATV driver’s education. Creative incentives for kids to attend (example: free helmets).
- * Train winter travelers to use GPS equipment.
- * Encourage the use of reflectors on coats during the winter and provide them to the community.

Current Action:

Identify partners that may assist with implementation of an education campaign to inform community members of the rules and regulations for driving.

ADDITIONAL NEXT STEPS:

Annually, the Napaimute Traditional Council will review the Tribal Safety Plan and decide on further action.

Attachment A: Copy of Traffic State Crooked Creek to Lower Kalskag as of 2/15/2015

Attachment A:

Count of Incident Citation Number		Column Labels				Grand Total
Row Labels		2012	2013	2014	2015	
ANIAC		18	7	14	8	47
Driving Under the Influence		5	4	9	5	23
Driving with Suspended License		1		1	2	4
FTO STOP SIGN		1				1
INATT/DISTRCT DRVNG		2				2
Motor Vehicle Crash Non-Roadway		1				1
Motor Vehicle Crash Roadway		5	3	4	1	13
Other Traffic Infractions		3				3
LOWER KALSKAG		2		3		5
Driving Under the Influence		1				1
Driving with Suspended License				1		1
Motor Vehicle Crash Roadway		1		2		3
TULUKSAK		1				1
Driving Under the Influence		1				1
UPPER KALSKAG		4	3	1	2	10
Driving Under the Influence		2	2	1	1	6
Motor Vehicle Crash Roadway			1		1	2
Other Traffic Infractions		2				2
Grand Total		25	10	18	10	63