

# **TRIBAL SAFETY PLAN**

**Tribal Transportation Program**

**Native Village of Kalskag & Village of Lower Kalskag**

**Tribal Councils**



## **INTRODUCTION**

The Native Village of Kalskag and Village of Lower Kalskag are federally recognized tribes located in Kalskag, Alaska and Lower Kalskag, Alaska, respectively. The Native Village of Kalskag is located on the north bank of the Kuskokwim River, 2 miles upriver from the Village of Lower Kalskag. It lies 30 miles west of Aniak, 99 miles northeast of Bethel, and 348 miles west of Anchorage.

A state-maintained 4.2-mile gravel road connects the two Tribes. The Kuskokwim River affords easy access by skiff in summer and snow machine in winter. Barges deliver cargo and bulk fuel during the summer. The state-owned 3,200' long by 75' wide gravel airstrip is shared by Kalskag and Lower Kalskag. Daily scheduled air services deliver passengers, mail, and other cargo year-round. Winter trails exist to Russian Mission and Aniak. According to the Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, the 2011 populations of Upper Kalskag were 219 and Lower Kalskag 287.

The Native Village of Kalskag and Village of Lower Kalskag Tribal Councils are committed to reducing the number of deaths and serious injuries and improving the overall safety of the transportation system. As part of the ongoing effort to make safety improvements, this joint Tribal Safety Plan has been developed with input from the local communities. The plan identifies current issues and priorities which upon implementation, is intended to further improve transportation safety for the Native Village of Kalskag and the Village of Lower Kalskag 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.

This Tribal Safety Plan was developed in partnership with the Native Village of Kalskag and the Village of Lower Kalskag transportation staff and the Alaska Tribal Technical Assistance Program Center (AKTTAP), which is located with the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Interior Aleutians Campus.

A public meeting was held in Upper Kalskag on May 8, 2012, which was attended by both communities to gather input on current safety priorities. Residents identified issues of concern and recommendations related to the following safety priorities: engineering, enforcement, emergency response systems, and education.

The top priorities identified during the Safety Meeting included the need to address dust control, the lack of law enforcement, streetlights, posted speed limits and signs, and brush and willows blocking intersections.

## **SAFETY PRIORITIES**

### **Engineering**

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#### **Issues of Concern:**

- Dust in the spring, summer and fall
- During spring break up, the main road floods, thereby cutting off access to the Village of Lower Kalskag. During these occasions, the Village of Lower Kalskag residents are forced to use boats to navigate across flooded areas in order to access the airport and high ground
- Abandoned power lines along the roadsides are beginning to surface due to grading (See attachments for location)
- Icy roads in the winter
- Overgrowth of brush and willows along roadsides
- Lack of speed limit or stop signs. (See attachment for community recommendation)
- Lack of streetlights, mostly in the Village of Lower Kalskag
- Lack of a transit system that connects both communities that provides access to the stores, clinics, airport, post offices, and can also be used for evacuation if necessary

#### **Issue Champions:**

- Village of Lower Kalskag Transportation Planner
- Native Village of Kalskag Transportation Planner

#### **Implementation:**

- The AKTTAP will contact M&O-Admin., Maintenance Engineer, Northern Region (Clark Milne for dust palliative information, cost and training).
- Identify funding opportunities to jointly purchase an Alaska sprayer
- Identify training opportunities for transit and informational material

#### **Current Action:**

- Native Village of Kalskag is looking to purchase signs.
- Village of Lower Kalskag submitted a proposal to ANTHC Tribal Air Quality Cooperative Agreement to receive a mini grant for air quality monitoring and was successfully funded for the summer and fall of 2013. Village of Lower Kalskag was selected and proposed to assess its road dust, by:
  - 1) Exploring behavioral activities associated with increased road dust, and
  - 2) Conducting air quality monitoring at times and in places most problematic given the high road use.
- Village of Lower Kalskag 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, transit system.

## **Enforcement**

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### **Issues of Concern:**

- Some drivers use D-street to race ATV's which endangers kids at play
- Increasing incidences of texting while driving
- Reckless driving
- Driving without license
- Driving too fast around children or in residential areas
- Driving under the influence
- Underage drivers

### **Issue Champions:**

- Village of Lower Kalskag
- Native Village of Kalskag
- Mayors of Lower and Upper Kalskag (Nominated)
- Alaska Tribal Technical Assistance Program Center

### **Implementation:**

- Investigate funding opportunities or identify partners that may assist with implementation of a safety campaign to address Driver behavior issues
- The AKTTAP will investigate materials regarding education and training for ATV safety and provide feedback to each planner
- 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, both communities 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 serves both villages.
  - The lack of available housing is a barrier to maintaining local law enforcement presence.
- Follow up with nominations to include Mayors of Lower Kalskag and Upper Kalskag

### **Current Action:**

- Discussions are taking place between both tribal governments and city officials to bring a VPSO to the area.
- Village of Lower Kalskag will also update their Long Range Transportation Plan that may include most of the concerns that were listed in this section, i.e. using roads as a place to race, driving too fast around children and in residential areas, etc.

## Emergency Response Systems

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### Issues of Concern:

- During periods of flooding, Lower Kalskag is cut off from access to the airport, which poses a significant threat in the case of an emergency
- Limited Search and Rescue funding
- Lack of local Emergency Medical Services

### Issue Champions:

- Village of Lower Kalskag Transportation Planner
- Native Village of Kalskag Transportation Planner
- Alaska Tribal Technical Assistance Program Center

### Implementation:

- Investigate funding opportunities or identify partners that may assist with implementation of a Search and Rescue Program and identify ways to improve Emergency Medical Services.
- Meet with potential champions on this Emergency Response Systems Topic
  - Cities of Lower and Upper Kalskag
  - Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation
  - Kalskag school principal

### Current Action:

- Village of Lower Kalskag's Indian Environmental General Assistance Program department has specified several components within their work plan to research and complete a Community Emergency Response Plan. To do the following:
  - 1) Identify and contact potential partners and community members to develop the Community Emergency Response Plan.
  - 2) Identify and compile our emergency management policies, plan management and updates, Lower Kalskag's Community Profile; and hazard analysis and mitigation strategies with partners and community members.
  - 3) Identify and compile our response actions; warning and evacuation procedures; and disaster declaration and reporting procedures with partners and community members.
  - 4) Identify and compile how we will be organizing for emergencies; sheltering; and post-incident actions with partners and community members.
  - 5) Identify and compile Lower Kalskag's resources; and a telephone directory listing all organizations that provide services within our village with partners and community members.
  - 6) 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.
- Upper Kalskag is currently working on a similar project using Environmental Protection Agency's Indian Environmental General Assistance Program
- Village of Lower Kalskag will also update our Long Range Transportation Plan that may include most of the concerns that were listed in this section, i.e. search and rescue, EMS, etc.

## **Education**

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### **Issues of Concern:**

- Impact of winter snow storms on snow machine drivers
- 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

### **Issue Champions:**

- Village of Lower Kalskag Transportation Planner
- Native Village of Kalskag Transportation Planner
- Kuspuk School and Headstart Program
- Alaska Tribal Technical Assistance Program Center

### **Implementation:**

- Investigate funding opportunities or identify partners that may assist with implementation of an education campaign to inform community members of the rules and regulations for driving, i.e. with the school, etc.
- Host an ATV driver's education. Creative incentives for kids to attend (example: free helmets). As an example, educate residents on when helmets need to be replaced.
- Train snow machine drivers to use GPS equipment.
- The AKTTAP will contact the Alaska Boating Safety Office about securing life jackets under the Kids Don't Float Program and holding a boating safety course in the community.
- Encourage the use of reflectors on coats during the winter (the school makes reflectors available annually). The AKTTAP will contact the State Safe Routes to School Coordinator to see about funding a plan.

### **ADDITIONAL NEXT STEPS:**

- ☐ Each Tribal Council will review the Tribal Safety Plan and decide on further action.

## Attachments

- Participant List
- Agenda
- Maps: The following maps were used to identify safety issues. Community members placed labels where they knew of safety concerns, the issue are listed below. (Issues are not a in order of priority)
  - Attachment 1: Village of Lower Kalskag
    1. Potential for ATV accident at high speeds
    2. Recommend speed limit
    3. Abandon electrical wire
    4. Recommend sign for curve
    5. Potential for snow machine accident with pedestrians
    6. Recommend sign for curve
    7. Abandon electrical wire
  - Attachment 2: Native Village of Kalskag
    1. Sight of past traffic accident
    2. Right of Way unknown



# ALASKA TRIBAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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# **Lower & Upper Kalskag Joint Tribal Safety Plan**

## **AGENDA**

**May 8, 2012**

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| 5:30 p.m.  | Introductions   |
| 5:40 p.m.  | Background and Overview<br>Defining a Safety Management System<br>FHWA SMS Implementation Plan<br>Discussion of Tribal Safety Plans<br>Q&A  |
| 6:00 p.m.  | Development of a Tribal Safety Plan<br>Identification/Discussion of Safety issues and concerns<br>Safety approaches to include<br>Safety approaches to develop<br>Integration with other safety plans |
| 6:30       | Break   |
| 7:00 p.m.  | Identification of implementation steps<br>Identification of responsible parties/champions for specific elements<br>Questions/Discussion of process and continued efforts                              |
| 10:00 p.m. | Wrap Up   |



# Community Map LOWER KALISKAG

Map of Kaliskag, Alaska, showing the location of the community. The map is oriented with North at the top. The community is located in the lower right corner of the map. The map is titled "Community Map LOWER KALISKAG".

## LEGEND

- Water
- Forest
- Grassland
- Barren
- Shrubland
- Wetland
- Highway
- Railroad
- Power Line
- Water Line
- Gas Line
- Telephone Line
- Other

Scale: 1 inch = 1 mile

Map of Kaliskag, Alaska, showing the location of the community. The map is oriented with North at the top. The community is located in the lower right corner of the map. The map is titled "Community Map LOWER KALISKAG".

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Attachement 1



# Attachment 2

