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A Message from Federal Co-Chair

George Canelos

Dear Friends of the Denali Commission,

Ten years ago this October, the Denali Commission Act was signed into law. Our creation involved the support of Congress and many others who had the vision to create something unique in American government. The Denali Commission model does not simply provide assistance for the development of rural infrastructure; the Commission model requires involvement from community leadership in which it serves, promoting self-governance, sustainability and requiring a vested interest in every project conceived.



It was our goal ten years ago, to work ourselves out of a job. That is still our goal today; and someday, I hope to report to Congress: **The Job is Done!** But unfortunately, we are not there yet – in fact, we have huge challenges before us.

To date, the Commission has completed 96 bulk fuel projects and 45 new tank farms are in progress. These tanks represent the cornerstone of our rural communities and their replacement was the initial purpose of our creation. Rural power system upgrades have improved efficiencies in 43 different communities and 23 are currently in progress. And finally, the energy program has had 76 “other” projects completed. These *other* projects are probably some of the most important as they hold the key to rural Alaska’s future. Other projects include wind turbines, intertie’s, and alternative-renewable energy projects – a solution that will supplement existing

November 2008

UPCOMING EVENTS

Happy Birthday Denali Commission!

November 6, 2008 – The Denali Commission *Economic Development Advisory Committee* will meet in Anchorage, Alaska. For more information on the meeting, planned activities or committee, please contact [Ms. Adison Smith](#) at (907)271-1640.

November 10–14, 2008 – [Alaska Municipal League Conference](#) to be held in Ketchikan, Alaska. See detailed agenda on AML’s website. Watch for our booth at this event.

November 11, 2008 – The Denali Commission offices will be closed in observance of *Veteran’s Day*.

November 17, 2008 – The Denali Commission *Energy Advisory Committee* will meet in Anchorage, Alaska. For more information on the meeting, planned activities or committee, please contact [Ms. Jodi Fondy](#) at (907)271-3011.

November 18, 2008 – The Denali Commission *Quarterly Meeting* to be held at the Dena’ina Civic and Convention Center in the K’enakatnu Executive Board Room. Please contact [Ms. Adison Smith](#) at (907)271-1640 with any questions on this meeting.

November 24, 2008 – The Denali Commission *Training Advisory Committee* will meet in Anchorage, Alaska. For more

diesel fuel reliance by significantly alleviating the burden of cost.

Our second “legacy program” – health – began its work in 2001 and focuses on primary care facilities across the state of which roughly 300 communities were identified initially as having some level of infrastructure need. Our focus now includes a “mix of other health and social service related facilities”. The Commission has funded 111 primary care clinics with another 40 or so projects in design. Elder housing/assisted living and domestic violence shelters have been part of this plan and across the state, we are seeing access to state of the art healthcare facilities.

Congress passed the SAFETEA-LU law in 2005 creating the Denali Commission’s Transportation Program. To date, we have funded 115 projects that include road improvements, barge mooring, boardwalks (the lifeline in many rural communities) and even dust control projects.

Our training program has reached over 6,000 individuals in various types of training, and our Economic Development program has had over 130 projects over the years. Solid waste and teacher housing are two examples of smaller program areas, but they represent the diversified need that exists in rural Alaska; basic needs, that for many in the lower 48 states, are met without question. Not so for rural Alaska.

Looking back over the past ten years the Denali Commission has maintained a small staff and kept costs down, always adhering to the spirit and intent of our legislation which requires us to keep administrative costs below 5%. We could not accomplish our mission without the close support, hard work and dedication of partner organizations to meet the needs of rural Alaska. They include state, private, Native, and other federal agencies. These partnerships continue to be a vital component of our success and our program delivery. I extend my sincere appreciation and thanks on behalf of our Commissioners and staff to our wonderful partners who help us make this all happen day in and day out.

In closing I would ask you to mark your calendars [February 2 – 6, 2009](#) for the next [Alaska Forum on the Environment](#) in Anchorage. We’ll look back at the

information on the meeting, planned activities or committee, please contact [Ms. Adison Smith](#) (907)271-1640.

November 27, 2008 – The Denali Commission offices will be closed in observance of *Thanksgiving*.

December 1–3, 2008 – *Alaska’s Health: Bridging the Gap 26th Alaska Health Summit* sponsored by the [Alaska Public Health Association](#) will be held in Anchorage at the Hotel Sheraton.

December 16–17, 2008 – The Denali Commission *Transportation Advisory Committee* will meet in Anchorage, Alaska. For more information on the meeting, planned activities or committee, please contact [Ms. Automme Circosta](#) (907)271-1426.

December 25, 2008 – The Denali Commission offices will be closed in observance of *Christmas*.

PROGRAM UPDATES

View [Monthly Program Updates](#) to get the latest program activities.

See the Denali Commission Training Program – [2008 NADO Award Recipient - Alaska Works Partnership](#).

See the Denali Commission Economic Development Program – [2008 NADO Award Recipient - Alaska Marketplace](#).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are pleased to share with you information from USDA Rural Development. See [USDA Rural Development's Fiscal Year 2008 Progress Report](#) on our website.

The Denali Commission’s Draft Policies are available for Public Comment. Please see the Commission’s draft on the [Announcements](#) page of our website.

last ten years of progress in rural Alaska, consider the present role of the Commission, and strategize on the next ten years. What will the next 10 years bring? I hope you can join us for this event. And instead of hosting our usual open house this December, we hope to see you in February at the Alaska Forum on the Environment 2009 conference.

Best Wishes,



George J. Canelos,
Federal Co-Chair

The Inspector General of the Denali Commission has issued a [report](#) on a Commission funded project at Nikiski. Find that report under the [Inspector General](#) page of our website.

Happy Birthday Denali Commission!

Procurement at Denali Commission

In our continuing efforts for efficiency at the Commission, we use the Procurement Team at the US Treasury Bureau of Public Debt (BPD) to conduct our major purchasing initiatives. This team of professional acquisition specialists assists us with contract solicitations, awards and administration. Open market requests for quotes or proposals valued over \$25,000 are advertised on the national federal website FedBizOpps at www.fedbizopps.gov

Upcoming solicitations include:

- None at this time.

To give all potential contractors the same information, all questions about these or other procurement opportunities for the Commission should be directed to: Lisa Gossett or Gina Hanna at psb3@bpd.treas.gov

A message from Kathy Prentki: So long...

This month's Community Profile is a farewell message from Kathy Prentki. Kathy has been with the Denali Commission since 2001. She departs from the Commission as the Senior Program Manager for the Energy Program. Kathy, the Commissioners and staff at the Denali Commission thank you for your service and passionate commitment to meeting the critical needs of Alaskan communities.

Photo Inset: Kathy Prentki on a site visit to Hoonah, Alaska.



I have recently reached a bittersweet moment in my life - my pending retirement. When Jeff Staser borrowed me from the Corps of Engineers in 2001, and later when he hired me as Commission staff in December 2003, he always spoke about the Commission working itself out of a job and shutting down. Of course the bulk fuel upgrades were expected to be the first program completed, so I figured that fit in pretty well with my career plans.

Who was it that said change is the only constant you can rely on? This fall marks the 10th anniversary of the Commission's birth! The bulk fuel upgrade program still has quite a ways to go,

but funding has slowed and costs have grown. The Commission's role has broadened, and it seems it will not run out of work for a long time.

So I leave with my work uncompleted and with many exciting changes in energy planning and applications taking place across Alaska. I wish all the tank farms were completed, the power plants upgraded, and that every community had access to a renewable energy source. I hope those days are not too far off.

Thank you to the many people who helped me throughout the years - partners, engineers, community leaders, project managers, clerks, and accountants, and friends! I have learned a lot from you, and I will miss our interactions. I am staying in Alaska, so we may meet again around the bend one day.

Good Luck,

Kathy Prentki, P.E.

Senior Program Manager, Retired

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Denali Commission

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