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The Official Denali Commission Newsletter



A Message from Federal Co-Chair

George Cannelos

Dear Friends of the Denali Commission,

At any given time, the Denali Commission staff oversees hundreds of projects for basic community infrastructure, essential job training and economic development. Here's a few of the latest grants we've approved:



Energy Solutions - three grants provide funding to our partner, the Alaska Energy Authority:

- The Commission added \$850,000 to fully fund a \$3 million upgrade to electrical power systems for the village of Napakiak in western Alaska. Significantly, this project will connect the village with Bethel, a regional hub some 15 miles distant across the tundra with a new power line, and construct a standby capability in the village. Gradually connecting villages together into small grid systems is a great long-term solution to providing reliable electric power.
- The Commission provided \$2.2 million to upgrade and replace a 70 year old hydro power system in Pelican, in SE Alaska, which is beyond the end of its useful life and at risk of failure. The project includes the fiber optic interface between the switchgear in the hydro and a diesel plant, which allows the community to fully blend hydro and diesel power sources.
- The Commission awarded \$120,000 to prepare a preliminary design for a new 294,000-gallon, co-located, code-compliant bulk fuel tank farm and related facilities in Tuluksak in western Alaska. This is

January 2009

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 14, 2009 – The Denali Commission *Health Steering Committee* will meet in Anchorage. For more information on this meeting please contact [Ms. Adison Smith](#) at (907)271-1640.

January 15, 2009, 5:00 p.m. – The deadline for the public solicitation for the [Denali Training Fund](#). Contact [Ms. Karen Johnson](#) at (907)271-3036.

January 15, 2009 – The deadline for public comment on the [Draft FY09 Denali Commission Work Plan](#). Comments should be directed to [Ms. Tessa Rinner, Director of Programs](#) at the Commission.

January 19, 2009 - Denali Commission offices closed in observance of *Martin Luther King, Jr. birthday*.

January 29 – 30, 2009 – The [Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference](#) will hold their annual *Economic Summit and Membership Meeting* in Anchorage at the Hotel Captain Cook. Watch for the Denali Commission booth at this event.

February 2 – 6, 2009 – The [Alaska Forum on the Environment](#) will hold their *annual conference* in Anchorage. The Denali Commission 10 Years of Progress will be part of this year's theme. Watch for the Denali Commission booth at this event.

the first key step leading to construction of a basic tank farm, once funding is available.

Rural Transportation –

- Three grants blend State of Alaska approved general funds to previously awarded Denali Commission projects to the U. S. Army Engineer District, Alaska, for barge landing designs in Kongiganak, McGrath and throughout rural Alaska. This is significant since very few rural communities have even simple moorage systems for fuel barges and other watercraft.
- Another grant adds \$45,150 in State match to our previous grant of \$500,000 to the Western Federal Land Highway Division (WFLHD), to complete a Road Reconnaissance Engineering Study to connect Stevens Village with the Dalton Highway. This effort was requested by the Stevens Village IRA Council and, if successful, would connect the village to the state highway system for the first time.

Rural Public Health – Dental Care:

Finally, the Commission processed a State of Alaska grant for \$1.58 million to Yuut Elitnaurviat, the People's Learning Center of Bethel, to complete the Dental Health Training Facility. These are Legislative funds from the State of Alaska, and are part of an overall scope of work for \$5,580,000 to include funding from Denali Commission, the Economic Development Administration and the Rasmuson Foundation. Alaska Native children endure the worst dental health in the country, and this effort brings a new level of care to rural Alaska for the first time.

And for all the grants listed above, partner agencies will typically contract with the private sector for design and construction activities.

Leadership Changes at the Denali Commission

I'm very proud of the small, dedicated staff (less than 25!) that carries out the Denali Commission's mission. I'm pleased to announce the following changes:

- Energy Senior Program Manager – After vetting over 60 candidates, Denali Daniels is moving from leading the Health Facilities Program to Energy. Denali has been with the Commission for seven

February 9, 2009 – The Denali Commission *Energy Advisory Committee* will meet in Anchorage, Alaska. For more information on the meeting please contact [Ms. Jodi Fondy](#) at (907)271-3011.

February 16, 2009 – Denali Commission offices closed in observance of *Presidents Day*.

February 17, 2009 – The Denali Commission *Economic Development Advisory Committee* will meet in Anchorage. For more information on the meeting please contact [Ms. Adison Smith](#) at (907)271-1640.

March 16, 2009 – The application deadline for the 2009 Denali Commission [Summer Internship Program](#). For further information, please contact [Janet Hall](#) at 907-271-4990.

March 19, 2009 – Denali Commission *Quarterly Meeting*, Centennial Hall, Juneau. Watch our [website](#) for details on this event.

PROGRAM UPDATES

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

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 Policies are available. Please see the Commission's Policy Document on the [Announcements](#) page of our website.

The Denali Commission's [Draft Work Plan](#) is available for Public Comment and on the Announcements page of our website. Comments are due to [Tessa Rinner](#), Director of Programs by January 15th.

years, has a Masters Degree in Public Administration, and is ready to take charge of this key Denali Commission program.

Happy Birthday Denali Commission!

- Health Facilities Senior Program Manager – Nancy Merriman replaces Denali to lead our Health Facilities Program. She has a degree in nutrition, a Master's in Public Health, and a recent MBA. Nancy has worked in rural Alaska, and has served the Commission in a number of key financial and administrative roles for seven years.

- By combining other duties and by not replacing other outgoing personnel, we have also reduced the size of the federal staff by three in the past six months.

As we start 2009, the Commissioners and staff look forward to hearing your ideas and thoughts for continuing to provide solutions for the challenges and opportunities in rural Alaska!

Best Wishes,



George J. Cannelos,
Federal Co-Chair

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

In Focus: Alaska Forum on the Environment, February 2 - 6

The [Alaska Forum](#) is pleased to announce that the annual Alaska Forum on the Environment (AFE) will be held February 2-6, 2009 using both the Anchorage Egan Convention Center and the new

Dena'ina Civic and Convention Center for the event! This year, the Denali Commission (Commission) will be participating in the Forum.

What began in 1990 as a small roundtable discussion forum, AFE has grown into an annual statewide gathering of professionals from government agencies, non-profit and for-profit businesses, community leaders, Alaskan youth, conservationists, biologists and community elders. The diversity of attendees alone sets this conference apart from any other, and each year over 1,500 people attend AFE to learn more about the environment and meet other Alaskans that work in the environmental field.

The Commission will be facilitating several breakout sessions during the conference. One session in particular will deal with the environmental and safety issues caused by old bulk fuel tanks in rural communities, and the challenges and opportunities to remove these tanks. The Commission will also be hosting one of AFE's keynote speakers, Dr. Dan Arvizu, the Director of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory.

This year, AFE will offer over 90 technical breakout sessions and 8 sensational Keynote Events. AFE is one of the most widely attended conferences in the State, with 2009 promising record participation. Learn more at the AFE website, including details on registration for this event.

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