

## Denali Commission Planning Work Group

Next meeting: 4/22/09

Draft - Notes for the meeting held 3/25/09

Berney Richert, Economic Development Administration – Federal Co- Chair  
(presiding)

Tara Jollie, Division of Community & Regional Affairs (DCRA) – State Co-Chair

**In attendance:** Tara Jollie, Brigitta Windisch-Cole, Ruth St. Amour – Division of Community and Regional Affairs; Berney Richert, Shirley Kelly – U.S. Economic Development Administration; George Canelos, Bob Pawlowski, Tessa Rinner – Denali Commission; Janet Hall – RurAL CAP/Denali Commission; Christi Bell – UA Center for Economic Development; Stephanie Martin – Institute of Social and Economic Research; Deborah Vo – Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association; Liz Cheney, Coby Hanson – First Alaskans Institute; Amy Sparck Dobmeier – Municipality of Anchorage; Jimmy Smith – DCRA/Denali Commission; Mary Spellens – Coastal Villages Region Fund; Ivy Frye – AIDEA; Clarke Hemphill – Corps of Engineers; Deb Alston - HUD

**Via teleconference:** Charlene Stern – RurAL CAP; Ingrid Zaruba, Greg Williams, Jeff Hadland – Alaska Department of Labor; Patience Faulkner – Native Village of Eyak; Kim Carlo – Interior Regional Housing Authority; Wanetta Ayers – Western Alaska Community Development Association; Marge Larson – Municipality of Anchorage; Susan Bomalaski, Susie Delgado – Catholic Social Services; Stephanie Thompson – Alaska Federation of Natives

**Update on outreach to Emmonak and surrounding communities** – Tara Jollie, Division of Community and Regional Affairs

- A team representing several state agencies traveled to Emmonak and Kotlik in January to conduct a situation assessment, following requests from both communities for an economic disaster declaration.
- Team members noted a need for cash at the household level, to meet immediate needs for food and fuel, and for job training/job creation.
- A Resource/Job Fair is planned for April 20 in Emmonak.

**Update on the First Alaskans Institute’s Alaska Native Policy Center’s movement survey** – Liz Cheney and Coby Hanson, FAI Alaska Native Policy Center ([www.firstalaskans.org](http://www.firstalaskans.org))

- The Alaska Native Policy Center has released the first issue of “The Native Quarterly,” which focuses on the movement survey conducted during the Elders and Youth Conference and AFN Convention, as well as online.
- The survey received over 1000 responses, from residents of all areas of the state.
- 509 respondents had not moved during the past twelve months or longer, and 61% of Alaska Native respondents reported that they have no plans to move.

- Reasons for moving included employment, housing costs, energy costs, food costs, transportation, health & safety, and being close to family, with employment chosen as the most important reason by the largest number of respondents. Respondents were able to weigh the importance of each item, on its own not weighted against the other reasons, in their decision-making to move.
- There is interest in taking a closer look at those who have not moved, and their reasons for staying in their communities.
- First Alaskans and the Alaska Native Policy Center are using this study as a first step in the larger dialogue on the impacts of Alaska Native movement. Further study will be conducted along with interested partners.
- The Native Emerging Leaders Forum on April 3 will focus on this topic.

## News and Updates

- The February 2009 update of DCRA's report "Current Community Conditions: Fuel Prices Across Alaska" is available online at [http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca/researchanalysis/pub/Bulk\\_Fuel\\_Report\\_2009.pdf](http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca/researchanalysis/pub/Bulk_Fuel_Report_2009.pdf)
- The Department of Labor and Workforce Development has released new population estimates (see <http://laborstats.alaska.gov/?PAGEID=67&SUBID=171>). Findings include an increase in migration from rural to urban areas from 2000 to 2007, with the biggest changes occurring in Southeast Alaska.
- HUD will be receiving a significant increase in program funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, including \$510 million for Indian housing programs in Alaska (see <http://www.hud.gov/local/index.cfm?state=ak&topic=news>).

**The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 22, at 10 a.m., at the Denali Commission, and is to be chaired by Tara Jollie.**