



NATIVE VILLAGE OF EKLUTNA

1/13/2010

Native Village Eklutna Comments on:

**Department of Defense Plan of Action to
Implement the Policies and Directives of
Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with
Indian Tribal Governments
December 15, 2009
DRAFT**

Native Village of Eklutna (NVE) extends our sincere appreciation for the generally superior consultation by DoD working with our federally recognized tribe. We represent the only remaining original Dena'ina village left in the Anchorage area and have over 308 citizens. USAGAK, Fort Richardson, and USACE have been particularly attentive to NVE tribal concerns. It is a combination of the DoD American Indian and Alaska Native Policy (Policy) and the individuals implementing them, which make them effective. (Although I have had difficulty accessing this Policy at the internet portal address provided) It will be good if the Policy continues to institutionalize this effectiveness.

David Sanborn, DoD Senior Tribal Liaison, has initiated regular consultation calls and meetings, particularly with NALEMP tribes. Dr. Montague, Native Liaison with the Alaska Command has also been responsive and helpful. Of note in my experience, both Amanda Shearer and Elizabeth Cook, as Native Liaisons for USAGAK and USACE have been accessible and informative, and have done a good job of initiating and coordinating consultation with the tribe when indicated.

Tad Davis, Deputy Assistance Secretary of the Army met with the Upper Inlet Tribes and was attentive to our concerns. Former USAGAK Commander Donna Boltz visited Eklutna several times and facilitated the MOA between USAGAK and NVE, which Kirsten Andersen helped evolve. Gary Larsen, formerly Fort Richardson Conservation Manager was very interactive in implementing the MOA and working with us on the staff level. USACE NALEMP Project Officers Patrick Roth and Robert Glascott have been very helpful with this program, greatly facilitating NVE participation. USACE Project Manager David Martinson and others have also coordinated well with the Tribe at the staff level on the Eklutna River Watershed Study and planning process, and other projects.

Fort Richardson's implementation of Tribal Consultation requirements actively involved our leadership and staff participation beginning in 2004 with Army Alternative Procedures (AAP) for the National Historic Properties Act (NHPA) Section 106 process, Historical Properties

Component (HPC) of the Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP), Stryker Brigade EIS, and the Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan (INRMP) projects. And more recently, consulted our tribal Cultural Committee for the historical writing and resource concerns on the upcoming Eagle River Flats shelling season expansion EIS. We are very thankful to have had input in the development of those work products.

The August 2004 Memorandum of Agreement (AK-MOA-187) and Contract No. W912CZ-05-C-0018, which essentially began in 2006, were designed for the U.S. Army Garrison-Alaska (USAG-AK) and Native Village of Eklutna (NVE) to participate in cooperative historical, ethnographic, and archaeological research in traditional cultural land use as necessary for the sound management of Fort Richardson lands.

These agreements are in themselves unprecedented historical markers for Eklutna. We consider our participation a very significant and uplifting journey in the relationship between us, in the supporting scientific evidence found, and in collecting the story according to Dena'ina Elders. None of the work would have been possible without the vision and confidence shown by the military leadership and evidenced by key personnel.

We hope to develop a working relationship with the Elmendorf Air Force Base, although a few consultations did occur when EAFB staff was amenable to our involvement. We attempted to initiate an MOA with EAFB similar to that with USAGAK, but we felt that EAFB's proposed version needed more work. The Policy's emphasis on government-to-government consultation between installation commanders and the head of tribal nations is appropriate, but only effective if the individuals in those positions initiate and follow through with consultation. The process is more productive if the development of consultation topics and activities continues involving delegates, and other working interactions follow between authorized staff, as exemplified by USAGAK and USACE.

We commend DoD for the Native American webpage and would appreciate continuance of such a resource. Small tribes are often short on knowledgeable personnel and such a resource would cut down on search time regarding topics of interest in particular regions. We request that the DoD policy include consultations at the staff levels as well as education of contract and military personnel who would work with tribal staff in order to follow through with day-to-day activities on potential projects and consultations. We request time extensions be allowed due to the natural limits characterizing small tribes with few personnel working in many directions. We also request that the DoD work to be able to acknowledge the presence of tribal resources and work for their protection on lands under military control or use in spite of typical negative responses from the SHPO.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and share our valued successes as well as to hear ideas that may prove beneficial in our ongoing work efforts with the military.

Chin'an
Native Village of Eklutna


President Dorothy Cook