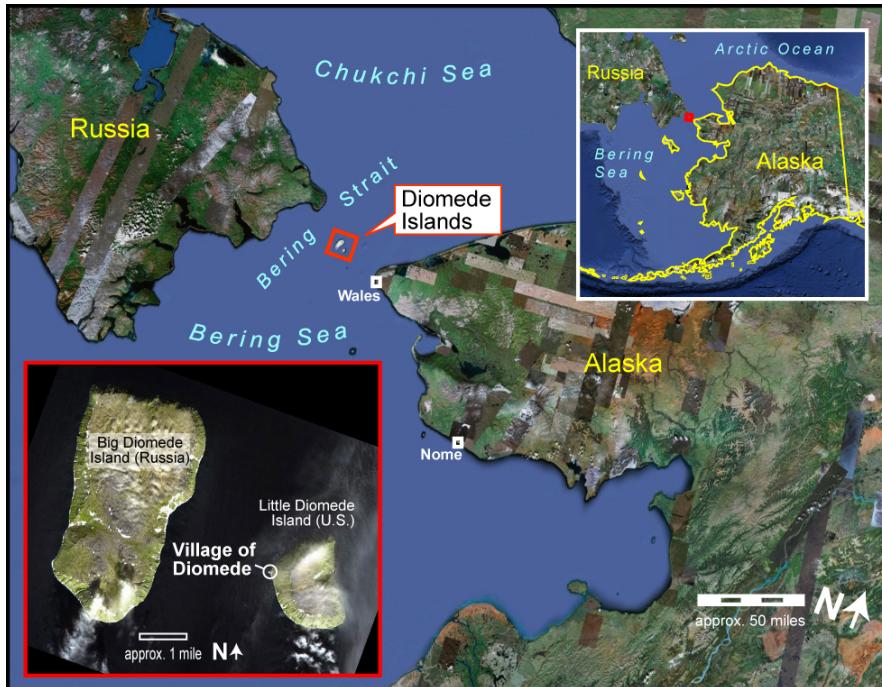


Navigation Improvements, Diomedes, Alaska

16 May 2014



Abstract: The community of Inalik, commonly known as Diomedes or Little Diomedes, is a traditional Eskimo village located on the western shore of Little Diomedes (locally known as Ignaluk) Island, Alaska. Little Diomedes Island is at the center of the Bering Strait, an extremely remote community of 115 people who rely almost entirely upon a subsistence way of life. Little Diomedes and its companion island, Big Diomedes, lie at the center of the Bering Strait separating the Bering Sea from the Chukchi Sea, and Russia from the United States. Diomedes is an extremely remote community and perhaps the least accessible in the United

States, based on its location, the time, cost, and difficulty/uncertainty associated with travel to and from the island, and the severe physical attributes of Little Diomedes Island.

The problem of concern at Little Diomedes is critically restricted navigation and aviation access related to harsh physical and environmental conditions which result in a reduced quality of life and life/safety issues. Lack of safe and reliable access have resulted in a life threatening shortage of emergency and routine medical care, significant restrictions on travel both to and from the community, shortages of basic commodities, and lack of materials to repair deteriorating infrastructure. The report recommends construction of breakwaters that would provide protection from predominantly northerly waves to make launching and retrieval of subsistence vessels safer and help improve the overall quality of life.

The non-Federal sponsor for the project includes the City of Diomedes and the Native Village of Diomedes, with financial assistance from Kawerak, Inc.

The report proposes a project recommendation utilizing the authority of Remote and Subsistence Harbors as defined in the Water Resources Development Act of 2007, Section 2006. This authority requires a project to be in a remote location, defined as at least 70 miles from any surface accessible commercial port; economically critical, in that more than 80 percent of the goods would be consumed within the community; and the long-term viability of the community would be threatened without the improvement. Project recommendation can be made without the need to demonstrate justification solely by National Economic Development (NED) benefits.



Although the recommended project has an NED benefit-cost ratio of 0.20 to 1, benefits of the project to public health and safety, access for subsistence purposes, local economic opportunity, public welfare, and social and cultural value were considered in accordance with Section 2006 implementation guidance. Using cost effectiveness and incremental cost analyses, the recommended project was found to provide substantial increase of opportunities to launch and retrieve vessels. The Corps' Tribal Trust responsibility and Tribal policy are central to why this project should be recommended for authorization. Tribal policy states "The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will search for ways to involve Tribes in programs, projects and other activities that build economic capacity and foster abilities to manage Tribal resources while preserving cultural identities."



Based on October 2014 price levels and a 3.5 percent interest rate, the estimated total first cost of the recommended plan is about \$30,366,000. All project costs are allocated to the authorized purpose of navigation with depths less than 20 feet; therefore the General Navigation Features (GNF) would be cost shared at 90 percent Federal and 10 percent Non-Federal with an additional 10 percent that could be payable up to 30 years. The project also has identified \$1,406,000 of the total first costs as Local Service Facilities (LSF), which are a 100 percent Non-Federal responsibility. Applying cost-sharing in accordance with Section

103 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986, as amended, the Federal share of the ultimate cost of construction would be about \$23,179,000 (76 percent), and the non-Federal share would be about \$7,187,000 (24 percent). Included in that amount, the cost of lands, easements, rights-of-way, relocations, and dredged or excavated material disposal areas (LERRD) is estimated at \$54,000, all of which is eligible for LERRD credit as part of the non-Federal sponsor's 10 percent additional cost of GNF. The operation, maintenance, repair, replacement, and rehabilitation (OMRR&R) of the project after construction would be 100 percent Federal for the GNF. OMRR&R costs includes 5 percent repair and maintenance of the armor stone every 10 years for the 50-year period of analysis, a cost currently estimated at about \$402,000 average annual. OMRR&R requirements for the LSF would be a non-Federal responsibility.

Report Documentation: Pertinent documentation on the project, the results of the CWRB and subsequent Washington-Level Review Actions are linked below:

- CWRB Agenda
- Project Map/Placemat
- Project Summary
- CWRB Briefing Slides
- CWRB Lessons Learned
- CWRB Meeting Record
- State & Agency Review Comment Letters
- Documentation of Review Findings
- Signed Chief of Engineers Report
- Advanced Copy to Congressional Committees
- ASA (CW) Memo to OMB
- OMB Response
- ASA (CW) Transmittal to Congress
- Authorization

Additional Information: [Pacific Ocean Division](#)

[Alaska District](#)