



Kivalina Evacuation and School Site Access Road Project

NEWSLETTER

MAY 2017

What's New

Remote Solutions awarded competitive contract to conduct project outreach.

In April 2017 Remote Solutions LLC was selected through a competitive process by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) to provide community support, public outreach, and logistics coordination for DOT&PF Northern Region projects as needed, including the current Kivalina Evacuation and School Site Access Road Project. Remote Solutions will focus on facilitating community engagement and outreach with the community of Kivalina, surrounding communities, and both private and agency project partners.

John Baker, company President and CEO, is the primary Remote Solutions contact for these efforts. John can be contacted at John@akremotesolutions.com or by phone 412-0910.

NEPA and the Project

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) establishes the broad national framework designed to ensure that proper consideration is given to the environment before undertaking any major federal action that may significantly affect the environment.

The Kivalina Evacuation and School Site Access Road Project invokes NEPA due to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funding and required federal permitting.

This spring, the DOT&PF reported that the FHWA determined that the project scope and potential environmental impacts fit the Class of Action criteria for an Environmental Assessment (EA). This is currently being prepared as the necessary NEPA document.

The purpose of an EA is to determine if the Kivalina Road Project, including its efforts to avoid, minimize and/or mitigate impacts, would cause potentially significant environmental effects. The EA will provide a detailed analysis of the project scope and construction methodology, develop draft project

alternatives for agency and public review, and provide a comment period during which the public and agencies can potentially modify alternatives to further minimize environmental effects.

The Draft EA is expected to be ready for review by the Federal Highways Administration in the early fall. The Final EA is expected to be completed by December 31, 2017. Based on the EA, the Kivalina Road Project will either be approved through a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and final design work will be approved and able to commence; or it will reveal that significant impacts may occur and further studies and analyses will be required through the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Stantec hired to lead NEPA efforts

In April 2017, a competitive proposal by the engineering and environmental consultant Stantec received the highest score for contract work to complete the NEPA work for the Kivalina Road Project. Stantec is expected to begin June 1, 2017. Stantec's involvement will include collecting additional baseline data, conducting biological field studies, assessing cultural and social resources, reviewing construction material sites, and determining the potential cumulative environmental and social impacts of the project. They will be the primary authors of the EA. Kivalina residents and agency offices, as well as other communities in the Northwest Arctic Borough, may be contacted by Stantec as they seek local input on environmental issues and Traditional Knowledge.

Public Involvement

One of the most critical steps in the NEPA process is engaging with the potentially affected public. Remote Solutions will collaborate with Stantec to further build on previous project efforts and to provide additional opportunities for public input and involvement.

Public involvement will occur in the form of community meetings in Kivalina, Noatak, and Kotzebue. Additionally, the project team will maintain close communication with communities

using newsletters, social media, and email. Please visit the project website to stay involved.

PROJECT PARTNERS

- Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, Northern Region
- Native Village of Kivalina
- City of Kivalina
- Northwest Arctic Borough
- Remote Solutions, LLC
- Stantec

UPCOMING EVENTS

For more information, please visit:

<http://dot.alaska.gov/nreg/KivalinaEvacRd/>

www.kivalinaroad.org

Upcoming Work

Project area site visits for required fieldwork and data gathering will begin soon and are expected to continue into the fall. Land access permissions, scheduling to avoid conflict with area subsistence activities, and issues regarding culturally sensitive locations will be coordinated with community and corporation leadership.

Route Alignments Map

Below is the map showing the primary Project Area being currently evaluated by federal and state agencies. The map includes the alignments originally selected by the community for reference. This and other maps can be found at the project websites.

Final Thoughts

It will be critical at all times to remember that while the potential for construction of a new Kivalina school and long-term relocation strategies may benefit from the construction of a road, the sole, core purpose and need for this project is to provide Kivalina residents with the critical, life-saving, direct access to higher ground during increasingly likely catastrophic storm events.

Your thoughts and feedback are crucial to the success of the Kivalina Evacuation and School Site Access Road Project.
 We want to hear from you!

TOGETHER WE WILL GET TO THE HILL!

For more information please visit:

www.kivalinaroad.org
<http://dot.alaska.gov/nreg/KivalinaEvacRd/>

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