

Voices Gathered from EJ Summit II

The second **Alaska Tribal Environmental Justice Summit on Solid Waste** was conducted at the Alaska Forum on the Environment in Anchorage Alaska (February 9, 2012). The summit had 28 participants, representing 10 Tribes and 7 other stakeholder entities from all regions across the state. During the summit the participants engaged in a EJ Community Problem-Solving Model exercise. There were 5 groups, each group was given specific ej issue (top 5 ej issues identified from summit I) and three (3) questions:

"Who (agency, entity, etc.) do you want to tell?"

"What do you want to them?" and

"What results would you like to see?"

The following documents the recommendations on communication, coordination and collaboration direction for ej issues identified in Alaska's tribal communities. This document, along with the first "voices gathered" from *Summit I* will be utilized as a foundation for the development for the framework of change towards Environmental Justice for Alaska Tribal communities.

Tribes and Other stakeholders represented:

Tribe:

Northway Village Council

Native Village of Kluti Kaah

Kiana Traditional Council

Native Village of St. Michael

Native Village of Deering

Ekuk Village Council

Native Village of Shishmeraf

St. George Traditional Council

Native Village of Eek

Traditional Council of Togiak

Other Stakeholders:

Alaska Pacific University

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

Norton Sound Health Corporation

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

Hydaburg Cooperative Association

National Environmental Justice

Conference

US Department of Energy (DOE)

Issue: **Community Landfill or Open Dumps**

Your Community's solution and strategy recommendations:

1. Commercial and industry aware of waste in the communities
2. Alaska Tribes invited to be a strong voice at state and national levels

3. Tribes need to be recognized as sovereign government entities by state of Alaska.

Question #1: Who are you going to tell about your ej issue:

1. School boards and districts, commercial businesses
2. Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN)
3. Non-profit Tribal groups (i.e. Kawerak, AVCP, etc.) and housing agencies (HUD)

Question #2: What are you going to tell them?

1. If you build, take your trash out, or pay to maintain and improve landfill or dump site.
2. Recognize tribal governments. (to state of Alaska)
3. Encourage and recognize interaction of local governance: tribe, city, tribal corporation, make commercial entities responsive.

Question #3: What results do you want?

1. State of Alaska and federal MOA on Solid Waste.
2. State to notify all contractors of responsibilities to better manage waste.
3. Commercial companies to promote and barge better products i.e. more biodegradable packaging.

Issue: Lack of Water and Sewer

Your Community's solution and strategy recommendations:

1. We need funding!
2. Explore a variety of solutions; identify village champions to keep on progress and keep momentum going.
3. Documentaries on local situation (1 video per season)
4. Get D.C. policy and decision makers to stay in village for 2 weeks, not 2 hours.

Question #1: Who are you going to tell about your ej issue:

1. The World!

2. We've tried the politicians already and they've seen first-hand; which have resulted in false and empty promises.
3. Media, lobbyists, and technical support organizations.

Question #2: What are you going to tell them?

1. No water or sewer. There's a community water well. People self-haul with buckets.
2. For drinking water people have to get ice from 7 miles out of town during winter. People w/out snow machines pay high prices for a sled of ice. In summer, people hope for rain. Many villages with large population (650+) still have honey buckets for human waste toilets and disposal.
3. We have no equipment or it's broken for utility services for human waste.

Question #3: What results do you want?

1. A flushing toilets in homes.
2. Running water.
3. Village representation at the table at all times.

Issue: Contaminated sites (construction and old military sites)

Your Community's solution and strategy recommendations:

1. Gather historical information: who, what, where, when, why: Which agency, location, types of waste or material, ownership, dates, pictures, documents, maps, and oral history.
2. Use available resources of responsible agencies.
3. Develop project timelines with real expectations.

Question #1: Who are you going to tell about your ej issue:

1. Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC).
2. US Military.
3. USEPA Brownsfield program.

Question #2: What are you going to tell them?

1. How we're effected, what the issues are and possible solutions.
2. Positive benefits of assistance.

Question #3: What results do you want?

1. Improved health and safety of residents.
2. Restoration of land.
3. Improvement of subsistence resources.
4. Successful template for other villages and communities to adopt.

Issue: Loss of Subsistence lifeways

Your Community's solution and strategy recommendations:

1. Community meetings.
2. Provide education awareness and seek funding.
3. Community surveys.

Question #1: Who are you going to tell about your ej issue:

1. Local governance: city, tribe and native corporation.
2. Schools.
3. Appropriate state agencies.

Question #2: What are you going to tell them?

1. Explain exactly what the issue is.
2. What is really happening, what scientific research is showing.
3. History- demographics and geography.

Question #3: What results do you want?

1. Clean, healthy environment for our subsistence lifestyle- right now.
2. Polices set in place that will protect the future of our subsistence lifestyle - right now.

3. Funding to enforce the policies - right now.

Issue: Natural Resource Exploitation

Your Community's solution and strategy recommendations:

1. Work very closely with local governances.
2. Implementation of cultural sensitivity to be part of training and regulations before partnerships are considered.
3. Setting limits and caps before permitting. Have a complete plan in place.

Question #1: Who are you going to tell about your ej issue:

1. All natural resource agencies.

(This focus group did not finish all questions)

Question #2: What are you going to tell them?

Question #3: What results do you want?