

Alaska Solid Waste News

Late Summer Issue

Final preparation hastens as summer activities draw to an end and colder months approach



The spring and summer have flown by, packed full of berry picking, fishing, whaling, camping, and lots of warm sunshine. But summer is ending. In Anchorage, we know that before the first leaf turns because geese start flying overhead. As the tourists in their windbreakers head south too, and downtown’s reindeer sausage stands start to close, hillsides outside the city become dotted with berry pickers and their white buckets. Construction becomes a bit more frenzied. Each village and city in Alaska has its own telltale signs. For solid waste, summer season’s end means barge supplies & backhaul must wait till next year for most of Alaska. But in villages where commercial fishing and firefighting are a primary income source, it becomes easier to find workers for some of those planned IGAP projects. It’s still before freeze-up, so a lot is accomplishable. That unheated and unlit storage shed/connex can still be cleaned out and wastes organized without the project becoming a major “survival expedition”. And you still have time to comb through your salvage area and town to separate and stage wastes before snow covers them. We at Zender hope you all have a good and productive end of season and we look forward to seeing you at the Fall conferences and workshops!

LATE SUMMER 2015

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Culture Corner



Oomingmak, The Bearded One

By Evelyn Agnus, Environmental Scientist

What is a muskox? It is a large heavily built goat-antelope with a thick shaggy brown and black coat and large curved horns, native to the tundra of North America and Greenland. Both musk ox sexes have horns, but the bulls, weighing 400-900 pounds are larger and heavier than the cows. They eat plants, including grass, and woody plants.

The history of musk ox in Alaska is quite interesting, starting in the 1930's. Thirty-four muskox were captured in East Greenland and brought to Fairbanks (adfg.alaska.gov, fws.gov, 2015) This group was then transferred to Nunivak Island, a large island in the Bering Sea near Bethel. The musk ox population grew, and was later translocated to establish herds in other parts of Alaska. Today, there are a lot of individual muskox herds on Nelson Island, and in other parts of Alaska.

People who hunt musk ox for subsistence-use need to buy a permit for \$25.00. These permits are sold sometime in January, and hunting for musk ox is in either February or March. There are rules on how many musk ox can be killed for a household or permit holder, which is one musk ox per year. Families who harvest musk ox carefully store their foods to use through the winter and summer.

The musk ox undercoat hair is the warmest, lightest wool in the world, and is used to knit hats, gloves, shirts, and scarves. People comb through the hair to clean it, and store the cleaned harvest in bags to keep it dry from moisture. The meat of the musk ox is cut and cleaned to store for family meals. The meat can be fried, boiled or baked at a high temperature. It is a delicious home cooked meal, and resembles that of a bison. A musk ox is a beautiful huge animal, and is a great meal for people who do subsistence.



Resource Corner



With summer wrapping up, many have gathered fish, whale, berries, and greens for winter foods, and have turned their focus to hunting for moose, caribou, deer, and even musk ox. Those in Dillingham, Kotzebue, Seward, and Anchorage may have taken a break to follow news of President Obama's visit to Alaska. With his visit and the international GLACIER conference, he brought climate change impacts in Alaska villages to the world's attention like never before. We were thrilled to see Kivalina Tribal President, Millie Hawley, introduce him in Kotzebue!

If you haven't seen this Climate Change resource, check out the "Climate Change Adaptation Planning Manual for Coastal Alaskans and Marine Dependent Communities."

www.marineadvisory.org/climate/docs/Climate-change-adaptation-manual.pdf

In preparing for winter, what else needs to be prepared and put away besides food? How about hazardous wastes? Check out our webpage for helpful info on storing hazmat and examples of common household hazardous wastes and ideas for a reuse shed and backhaul info.

www.zendergroup.org/reuse_shed.html

Looking to fund solid or hazardous waste projects? Check out our updated funding document

www.zendergroup.org/docs/ISWMPFundingOpps.pdf

Congratulations RACEJT 2015 Graduates!

The Rural Alaska Community Environmental Job Training program just celebrated its fourth year of training. Congratulations to this year's graduates! Each received the Occupational Endorsement degree from UAF Bristol Bay Campus. The RACEJT program offers a four-week, intensive training, in Anchorage. RACEJT offers a challenging schedule. A competitive application process ensures committed students. Once accepted expectations are to be professional, punctual and engaged. Of the 14 graduating students, ten have secured work for the summer and/or longer.

Thanks to Alaska Department of Labor and the STEP program, we were able to offer an additional four-day training, whereby we offered four more courses to add to their resume and skill set.

Special Thank You to Senator Murkowski for continued support of the program and speaking with our graduates, via video. Thanks also to Moose's Tooth for their generous donations of amazing food and to Bears Tooth for donations of free admission to the Alaska Oceans Film Festival.



**Llarion Merculieff,
Keynote Speaker**



RACEJT 2016: We are excited to announce that the RACEJT program was funded for another two years of job training opportunities to rural Alaska residents and communities. Applications will become available in September or October 2015 for the 2016 program. Keep an eye on the RACEJT page of the Zender Group website for updates and info regarding the application process.

<http://www.zendergroup.org/racejt.html>

RACEJT Highlight: Casey Thompson, Kwethluk, AK

Casey came into the RACEJT program with the intent to work with Kwethluk's IGAP, environmental department. Casey, immediately upon graduation, began working with IGAP as the Foreman, making \$18 per hour. He swiftly identified a serious oil spill and reported it to the state Spill Prevention and Response Team under whose instruction he had just finished in the RACEJT training. He began the task of documenting the situation and continues to work on this issue with his community.

Casey's desire is to start his own business within his region to assist with refrigerant recovery and Toyo stove burner maintenance and repair. He is already receiving requests for assistance to work within nearby communities to remove refrigerant chemicals from unused appliances.

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****All RACEJT graduates received the following certifications: 40 HAZWOPER, Emergency Spill Response, RALO, Solid Waste Management, Advanced Job Readiness, Combined Space, Above Ground Home Fuel Tank Inspection, CPR/First Aid, Freon Recovery, OSHA 10 hour Construction Safety, Water Quality and Soil Sampling. Additional training includes; AK-CESCL, GPS/GIS Arc Mapping/basic short course and Burner Maintenance & Repair**

We are grateful for all of our continuing partnerships!

Thank you to USEPA, AKDOL and all our partners for continued support and funding of the RACEJT program.



Casey inspecting riverbank erosion.



Riverbank erosion at Kwethluk.



With a college credit in Burner Repair & Maintenance, Casey has the opportunity and desire to begin his own business while helping his community.

Of the training, Casey states,

“[RACEJT] will help my community because we will not have to hire out contractors because I was trained to assist! It’s helped me with re-employment and the training will pay off in the long run as well. That is very important when I live in the middle of nowhere. I would recommend this to any rural Alaska resident; the knowledge you will gain is priceless!”

Additionally, Kwethluk, with Casey’s knowledge, is working on completing the following; three old tank farms - we will dismantle them - Casey recommends soil sampling, a course also offered in the RACEJT program. They plan on backhauling three earth bags out of their community this season. Casey planted 800 willows along the riverbank for erosion control and continues to address a retaining wall issue that is a cyclic and ongoing challenge as the river continues to change course, encroaching the community’s boundaries.

“My designated field foreman Casey Thompson has informed me of reinforcing the previous wall we’ve built. We followed his recommendations that he had learned from his training with RACEJT sponsored by Zender Environmental.”

Elia Epchook, Jr - Kwethluk, IGAP Assistant



Nulato

Village Spotlight: Nulato, working together for better environmental health for all

With a population just under 300, Nulato is taking on global environmental health issues in a cooperative and unified manner. We highlighted Nulato's environmental program previously in our newsletters and some of the successful programs they have initiated within their community. In this issue, we spoke with Martha Turner, Nulato's Environmental Coordinator for the past two years, and asked her about the working relationship between the Tribe and the City. A working relationship between the Tribal Council and the City is integral to successful programs that result in a healthier environment for an optimal, healthy community.

Martha let us know that they have an excellent relationship now but it took persistence to build a successful working relationship. "When I first started, I looked at our weaknesses in our community and thought, how can we improve these situations so we could all benefit & make our community a cleaner & healthier place to live? It took educating the City Council & City Maintenance. They weren't aware of how the services we provide from our Environmental Department can benefit the City at all. After many "sit down" meetings with the City Maintenance staff, they realized how much easier their job is now that we began working together & tackling problems together."

She goes on to say, "We started attending the City Council meetings and working more one on one with the Mayor, and City Staff & looked at updating or enforcing City Ordinances. Also, we do a lot of environmental education at our general meetings that we hold quarterly & started environmental education at the school; the youth & kids are like sponges! We got a lot of good feedback from parents after we started going to the school, the kids got their parents to start recycling and we've seen a huge difference in the amount of recyclables we send out to the ALPAR Flying Can's program. By attending monthly meetings at the City it will show your willingness to be helpful."

Some of the successes they were able to realize together include, "we got our landfill permitted, cleaned the landfill, got the city to hire two part

time landfill technicians. We are now a host community for the RAVEN AmeriCorps program & hired Leslie Pitka as the RAVEN AmeriCorps worker. Everyone's happier with these three new positions in town. We broadened our networking resources and have good relationships with everyone. We keep in touch on a regular basis and let them know our plans/goals we have set and they in return help us or send us to someone else that can help. We've learned the correct way to ship out backhaul. This year we staged, wrapped & shipped out 28 pallets of white goods & E-waste.

We made the proper arrangements before sending it out and the Barge lines really appreciate that, because before we were sending out backhaul and not contacting anyone [ahead of time] to pick it up in Nenana, therefore the Barge Lines were getting stuck with a yard full of backhaul."

Martha says that overall, educating everyone has been the biggest success for Nulato. Residents are more aware of the Environmental Hazards imposed on ourselves and they've been educated. Now they want the change and its happening. Nulato also applied and were awarded a Summer Intern through the ITEP program.

In November 2014, Nulato voted to ban burning waste, and then wrote an ordinance to carry out and initiate a daily collection service in February 2015. They ask \$10 per month for elders and \$20 for non-elders.

When Martha started working as the coordinator, there was no backhaul anymore. Nothing was being shipped out, so there has been tremendous increases in what is being removed from the village. In the past, there was some backhaul of e-waste through Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council but that program had ended by the time she started. "By attending the Zender & TCC Solid Waste trainings, we learned the proper way to ship backhaul out. It was the best feeling to know we did it right. With flyers to notify the residents, white goods are collected to ship out. YRITWC flies in to help remove the Freon. Now we keep track of what we sent out and by using the Zender backhaul inventory form, we got a pretty accurate weight estimate. This year alone we sent over 10,000 pounds or 22 pallets of white goods & 6 pallets of E-Waste out of Nulato."

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Calendar of Events and Deadlines

| DATE | EVENT/TRAINING | LOCATION | MORE INFO |
|--------------------------------|--|---|-----------|
| October 1-3 | Arctic Science Conference | Anchorage, AK http://arctic.aas.org/ | |
| October 14 | DUE: FY 2015 Indian Community Development Block Grant | See sidebar → | |
| October 12-14 October 15-17 | FAI Elders & Youth Conference AFN Annual Convention | Dena'ina Center, Anchorage, AK www.firstalaskans.org and www.nativefederation.org | |
| October 26-30 | ATCEM | Anchorage, AK http://atcemak.com/ | |
| November 16-20 | AK Municipal League Annual Local Government Conference | Anchorage, AK www.akml.org/conferences | |
| December 1-4 | BIA Providers Conference | Dena'ina Center, Anchorage, AK www.biaprovidersconference.com | |
| | | | |

FUNDING, TRAINING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPETITION ANNOUNCEMENTS & DEADLINES

HUD, FY 2015 Indian Community Development Block Grant

Deadline: *October 14.*

http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/ih/grants/icdbq

Rasmussen Foundation

Deadline: *Accepted throughout the year.*

<http://www.rasmuson.org/index.php>

Alaska Community Foundation Capacity Building for Community Organizations Grant Program

Deadline: *Accepted throughout the year.*

<http://alaskacf.org/blog/grants/strengthening-orgs>

USFWS/Tribal Wildlife Grant (TWG)

Deadline: Fall

<http://www.fws.gov/grants/tribal.html>

ANA hold FREE grant writing workshops in regional hubs

www.anaalaska.org/home/training/training

Partners for Fish and Wildlife (PFW) Program

Deadline: Sep 30, 2015

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=268198>

Summer Elder Wisdom: In anticipation of ATCEM 2015 Keynote Speaker Winona LaDuke, we are sharing a few of her quotes as an Elder role model of Indigenous environmental activism. She is Anishinaabekwe (Ojibwe) enrolled member of the Mississippi Band Anishinaabeg, co-founder and co-chair of Indigenous Women's Network, co-founder of Honor the Earth, celebrated author, and prior speaker at the AK Forum on the Environment.

"We are launching a campaign called Wind, Not War, which is about the alternatives to a fossil-fuels-based economy and looking at wind, an alternative energy, as key to that in terms of issues of global climate change as well as issues of democracy."

"Tribes have the potential to provide almost 15 percent of the country's electricity with wind power, and have 4.5 times the solar resources to power the entire U.S."

"What we all need to do is find the wellspring that keeps us going, that gives us the strength and patience to keep up this struggle for a long time."

We hope this issue of AK Solid Waste News was a bit of a wellspring to keep you going!

Read more at Winona LaDuke. (n.d.). BrainyQuote.com.
site:<http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/w/winonaladuke>

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With the good working relationship they fostered with the City of Nulato, in June 2014 they applied for their landfill to be permitted for the first time since it started being used in 1979.

The money they collect from the garbage collection service pays for the gas for their AmeriCorps member to pick up the garbage, a free service for the City of Nulato. After the Environmental Program's request, the City hired a landfill technician to sort the garbage at the landfill and built a storage shed for the garbage. The City purchased an incinerator, and the Environmental Department educated the community on the importance of using the garbage pickup service & why it's important to use the incinerator at the landfill. Since they were on a roll, they proposed to the City to get rid of the burn barrels by each home.

"But education is the key to success, now a majority of the community uses the garbage collection services. The landfill is a lot cleaner & we don't have anyone using the burn barrels anymore."

Their AmeriCorps member built small crates with chicken wire so they'll have a place to store their garbage in place of the burn barrels. Martha says "the elders are the ones that are so set in their "old ways" and we were actually worried about them getting mad at us for taking their burn barrels, but after we did some environmental education at our tribal general meeting, they were the first ones to ask for their burn barrels to be picked up."

**Contact: Martha Turner,
Environmental Coordinator
Nulato Tribe Council: 907-898-2339**



Left: Martha and Alice, Nulato IGAP, with RAVN Air, sending out aluminum to the Flying Cans program; via ALPAR.



Mayor, Maurice McGinty, demonstrating how to stage backhaul e-waste

The mission of Zender Environmental Health and Research Group, a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, is to assist underserved communities in developing programmatic capacity and community resiliency in environmental health issues. Visit us on the web at www.zendergroup.org, Zender Environmental Health and Research Group

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