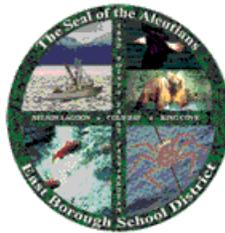
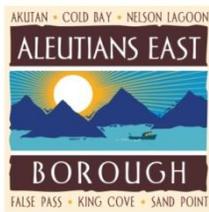


## In the Loop



Bringing the Aleutians East Borough, the AEB School District and Eastern Aleutian Tribes together by sharing common goals.

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## Significant Progress Made on Contamination Cleanup Efforts of Cold Bay's Fort Randall



Drilling at East West Runway Site. Courtesy: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

From its dramatic military history to its modern-day role as the third largest public runway in Alaska, Cold Bay has always had strategic significance in the Alaska Peninsula – Aleutian Islands region. The community's fascinating roots first took shape in 1941 when a covert U.S. military air base, known as Fort Randall, and an airstrip were constructed. The goal was to defend the Aleutian Islands and mount offensives against the Japanese during

World War II. The military installation encompassed aircraft runways, docking facilities, fuel storage tanks, fuel piping system, Yakutat huts and Quonset huts. Fort Randall was later transformed into a secret Russian training camp when the U.S. government entered into a secret alliance with Russia called Hula Two. The base was officially closed in 1945, after World War II had ended.



High-vacuum extraction system building. Courtesy: USACE.

Cleaning up contamination from war activities has been a big job that continues today and is expected to last several years into the future. So far, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has removed approximately 8,000 gallons of diesel fuel and has extracted and treated more than five million gallons of contaminated groundwater near the east end of the East-West runway. Now known as the Drum Disposal Area and the Beach Seep Area, these two areas were once the

fuel storage area during World War II.



Beth Asley, USACE Project Manager. Photo by Monty Martin.

Just last week, Cold Bay residents gathered at the Community Center to hear a status report from the Corps on cleanup efforts.

“The Beach Seep and Drum Burial Areas are contaminated with diesel fuel”, said USACE Project Manager Beth Asley. “We have a high vapor extraction (HVE) system as well as a bio-venting system to remove the diesel contamination from the soil and groundwater. The HVE system pulls groundwater out of

the ground and separates the diesel fuel from the groundwater. As the fuel is collected, the local power company (G&K Inc./Cold Bay Electric) recycles that fuel and burns it at the power plant. The bio-venting system has a blower that blows air into the ground through a series of bioventing wells. The air helps naturally occurring microbes in the soil to break down the diesel fuel in the soil and bio-remediate the area. Approximately 33,000 gallons of contamination have been



Beach Seep Area. Courtesy: USACE.

degraded by the bio-venting system since the system started in 2007, with 1,400 gallons degraded in 2013.”

In addition to the Drum Disposal Area and the Beach Seep Area, the Corps has also concentrated its efforts on the East-West Runway Area. Since 1984, several removal actions have taken place, including the disposal and treatment of contaminated soil and the removal of underground storage tanks. Last year, drilling was conducted to expand the monitoring well network. The placement of these wells will enable long-term groundwater monitoring at the site and will allow monitoring results to serve as an indicator for site closure.

Astley said during the community meeting, Cold Bay residents wanted to know how much longer the cleanup projects would continue.

“We thought we would be basically be done by now, but it’s proving to take longer than we anticipated. So we will continue to operate the treatment systems into the future until the groundwater concentrations are below cleanup levels per the state of Alaska’s regulations.”

In 1998, an area containing buried drums was discovered at what is now called the Drum Burial Area. Additional investigations were performed in 2002, 2012 and 2013. Last year, groundwater wells were installed to determine groundwater flow direction and assess whether contaminants are present in groundwater at the Drum Burial area and the East-West Runway. This summer, the crews will dig up and remove drums filled with asphalt in the Drum Burial Area, located north of Lake Burns.



Drilling at Drum Burial Area in 2013. Courtesy: USACE.

The Corps is also in the process of gathering information about three other areas (to the south of the runway) that are potentially contaminated and were identified by aerial photographs. Those areas are the Small Arms Range 1, the 53<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Encampment and the 53<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Fuel Storage East.

“We’ll be investigating these in the coming years to see if there are any environmental impacts,” said Astley. “We’re gathering any information that people might have about environmental hazards in these areas.”

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## **Elderly Man Medevaced Yesterday from King Cove**

An elderly King Cove resident suffering from possible internal bleeding was medevaced out of King Cove yesterday. Because the local scheduled commuter airline cannot transport emergency medical patients, the clinic called Guardian Flight. However, Guardian only had a jet available at the time, and the community's airstrip is only suitable for small planes. Time was of the essence.

"We don't have the ability to give blood or blood products if the patient should become unstable and need it," said clinic physician's assistant Vince Perrino.

The Coast Guard, based in Kodiak, was four hours away. So the clinic secured a charter flight with a local airline service. Fortunately, the weather cooperated yesterday, allowing the small plane to land and depart from King Cove safely. The patient was then transferred to a Guardian flight in Cold Bay and transported to a hospital in Anchorage.

While yesterday's medevac wasn't problematic as far as the weather was concerned, the King Cove Clinic is often faced with the dilemma of how to safely medevac patients out of the community during frequent harsh weather, such as high winds and dense fog.

"Having only been in King Cove for four months, I now understand how vital a road from the community to the Cold Bay Airport would be for the people of King Cove," said Perrino. "There is so much wasted time and money spent on trying to figure out how to get out of King Cove. There's so much at risk, and the one who suffers the most is the patient. Having a road for such a short distance would have a profound impact on patient care."

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## **Alaska Man Medevaced aboard Coastal Freight Boat**

An Alaska man suffering from an apparent heart attack was medevaced aboard a Coastal freight boat from King Cove during high winds and stormy seas. The King Cove Clinic received a call at about 9 a.m. on April 11<sup>th</sup> regarding a contractor in his 50s with Peter Pan Seafoods who was experiencing chest pain.

"We suspected a heart attack, and could not safely rule it out," said clinic physician's assistant Katie Eby. "After consulting with an Anchorage emergency room doctor, it was recommended

that the patient should be medevaced right away. However, the weather was very bad that day with gusts in the 40s and sideways rain.”

Because of the weather, commercial planes could not land on the King Cove airstrip. The Coast Guard helicopter that was temporarily based in Cold Bay during the crabbing season had returned to Kodiak. In addition, none of the local boats were willing to try because of the high winds and waves.

Seven hours later, the clinic found out that a Coastal freight boat was headed to Cold Bay, and was willing to transport Eby and the patient.

“I was very worried about transporting this patient onto the boat,” said Eby. Typically, you have to climb down a treacherous ladder. Thankfully, they had this platform with netting on two sides that we stood on and were lifted onto the boat. But it was one of the longest boat rides I’ve ever had while sitting in a bunk with the patient, an automated external defibrillator and limited supplies.”

Eby then escorted the patient along the length of the boat and down several flights of stairs. The patient was transported from the dock to the Cold Bay Clinic while waiting for a Guardian medical flight to take him to Anchorage.

“Transporting a patient by boat is far from ideal,” Eby said. “If King Cove had a road to Cold Bay, I would have had a lot of equipment stocked with me in case of an in-transport emergency. In addition, we probably could have shaved ten hours off of his wait time to get him to the cardiologists he needed to see in Anchorage.”

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## **Coast Guard Medevacs Injured Seattle Fisherman from King Cove**

The U.S. Coast Guard medevaced a 58-year old fisherman from King Cove (March 31, 2014) during stormy conditions after he was injured on board a Seattle-based processor near Unimak Island in the North Pacific Ocean. The Seattle fisherman severely injured his eye after he was accidentally sprayed with a high-pressure hose at about 1 a.m. yesterday. The 305-foot vessel, *M/V Golden Alaska*, was heading from Dutch Harbor to Seattle when the accident happened. The closest deep-water port to the Cold Bay Airport was King Cove.

**Click here to read the rest of the [story](#) .**

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## Akutan's Airport is IFR-ready

*By Mary Tesche, Assistant Administrator, City of Akutan*

The Akutan Airport has completed the installation of its Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS) and is now clear for IFR (Instrument Flight Rules) operations. The airport's AWOS is one of 64 in the state and is operated by Alaska Department of Transportation.

The weather is read and analyzed via computer, and reported by electronic voice recording on a VHF frequency that can be received by an aircraft within an approximate 25 nautical mile range. The system broadcasts a standard loop of a



The Akutan Airport's Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS) is one of 64 in the state and is operated by DOT.



IFR operations will allow larger aircraft to use the Akutan Airport and increase dependability of scheduled air service.

recorded report updated at 20-minute intervals. The number for the Akutan Airport AWOS is (907) 273-0055.

The AWOS commissioning allowed the airport to begin IFR operations. IFR is a set rule that allows pilots to operate an aircraft primarily by reference to instruments rather than outside visual cues. This allows the pilot to fly safely in bad weather or low visibility. IFR operations at the Akutan Airport will allow larger aircraft to use the airport and increase dependability of scheduled air service.

## Youth Get Involved in Recent Reclaim Alaska Meeting

As the Reclaim Alaska movement in Sand Point gains momentum throughout the region and the state, it's also moving forward generationally. During the first meeting, community leaders formed a leadership panel, which included the Sand Point Mayor, the Aleutians East Borough Mayor, tribal leaders and the police chief. The community leaders provided presentations and discussed the substance abuse issue in Sand Point. Last month, on March 27<sup>th</sup>, the community's youth took the issue to a whole new level.

"I think everybody responded much more to the youth," said Tiffany Jackson, Executive Director of the Qagan Tayagungin Tribe (QTT) of Sand Point. "They commented on how they see the community and what they would like to see change."

Representatives from the senior class, juniors, sophomores, freshmen, and 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders provided information about what would keep them in school.

"We asked, how we can better support the youth in our community," said Jackson. "Overwhelmingly, they told us they would like to see harsher penalties. They said, if we mess up, hold us accountable. I think that surprised a lot of people."

Currently, if students violate the tobacco, alcohol and drug policy, they're given three chances so they can still come back and participate in school activities.

"These students were saying, that's too much," Jackson said. "We don't want this. If we mess up, we need to be held accountable for a year, not just for a number of days."

The meeting also included "human videos" – teachers and students acting out scenarios that appealed to various age groups.

"For the younger kids, it was about kids choosing kindness. Other skits portrayed the consequences of making bad choices," Jackson said.

**Another Reclaim Alaska meeting is scheduled for tonight at 7 p.m. at the QTT Community Center.** Jackson said the group hopes to hold meetings at least once every quarter to keep the momentum going.

## Jennifer Harrison Oversees EAT as the New Executive Director



Jennifer Harrison, Executive Director of  
Eastern Aleutian Tribes

It's been 4 ½ months since Jennifer Harrison has taken the helm for Eastern Aleutian Tribes (EAT), and she has found the position to be challenging and enjoyable. The new executive director is certainly no stranger to working with rural Alaskan communities and Native health organizations. Before accepting this position, Harrison served as executive director for the Chickaloon Village Traditional Council (from 2003 – 2013). Prior to that, Harrison served as the tribal grants administrator for Chugachmiut, a regional health organization.

“So I helped build clinics, roads and brought in water and sewer,” she said. “I traveled to the communities quite a bit and was able to spend time there.”

From 1996 to 1999, Harrison worked for the Chickaloon Village Council as the health director and also as the planner/grant writer.

“I wore several different hats,” she said.

Harrison said before taking the position with EAT, she was impressed by Eastern Aleutian Tribes because of the teamwork and the organization's focus on each of the communities.

“Not all regional health organizations concentrate as much on the communities. Some focus more on their hubs and on their larger clinics,” she added. “I like the fact that EAT focuses on all their communities, no matter how small. That's important to me.”

Taking on new challenges is also important to Harrison. Those include expanding the usage of EAT's upgraded telemedicine carts, which allow clinic staff to collaborate with specialists in Anchorage using that technology.

“I know it can be very frustrating to have a 30-minute appointment in Anchorage, when it takes days because of the weather to get in and back out. I also want to work to improve the system so it's easier to set up and reschedule appointments. So this would allow people to travel less often.”

Harrison said this means more training for staff and willingness from the community to participate and feel comfortable with the telemedicine technology.

“We need to build up the community member’s confidence that the technology can work and reinforce the provider’s confidence that they know how to use that technology.”

Another challenge includes raising money for the new Cold Bay clinic. Borough Community Development Coordinator Anne Bailey has been working with the City of Cold Bay and EAT on this project.

“In this environment of funding cuts, I think it’s a challenge for us as a region,” said Harrison. “So it’s going to take all of us working together to raise the money.”

A tremendous need in the region that Harrison plans to address is recruitment and retention of behavioral health staff in the communities. She said the issue isn’t a funding need because there are plenty of grants and funding available. The problem has been recruiting.

“It has taken us months to recruit a behavioral health clinician for King Cove,” said Harrison. “Now my challenge will be retention, and that’s my goal – retention, longevity and keeping people that are good.”

Harrison said the field of behavioral health is known to have a high burn-out rate because like social work, the job is very stressful. She said she would like for EAT to encourage more people to become behavioral health aides.

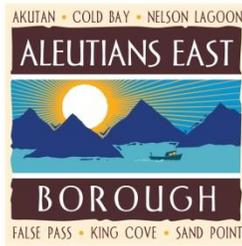
“I think we can grow our own,” she said. “It’s just like community health aides where you go up to different levels.”

Harrison said one of the biggest problems in the region as well as statewide is tackling substance abuse. In addition, when people who are addicted want to quit, they need help in doing so. However, there aren’t enough beds available within Alaska for detox.

“It’s hard because when people make the decision to become clean, they need to go that week, that day,” she said. “They can’t be on a six-month long waiting list, and that’s what’s happening right now.”

Harrison also acknowledges that a support system is needed for when people come back home after participating in a detox program. She said when people get clean and come home, they face the same situations and the same peer pressure, so it’s easy to fall back into old habits.

“It’s a statewide issue, which also makes it a regional and a community issue,” she said. “I definitely want to start talking to people on a regional issue to try and resolve this problem.”



# Akutan Marine Link

The Aleutians East Borough is responsible for providing the link between the Airport, situated on Akun Island, and the City of Akutan, located approximately six miles away. The link is now being provided by a helicopter, serviced by Maritime Helicopters. For more information regarding the service or to make reservations please go to:

<http://www.akutanairportlink.com>.



<http://www.akutanairportlink.com>

# INFORMATIONAL MEETING

**What?**

## NELSON LAGOON COASTAL EROSION STUDY

**When?**

Monday, May 12, 2014  
2:00 PM

**Where?**

Community Center



**YOUR QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, AND INPUT ARE IMPORTANT!**

**Why?**

This will be an informal meeting to talk about the coastal erosion study and provide input regarding potential shoreline protection measures. All are welcome!

Come and learn about:

- The coastal erosion study process
- Shoreline erosion projections
- Potential ways to address erosion in Nelson Lagoon



**Who?**

If you have  
questions, contact:

Laurie Cummings  
HDR Alaska, Inc.  
(907) 644-2065

[laurie.cummings@hdrinc.com](mailto:laurie.cummings@hdrinc.com)

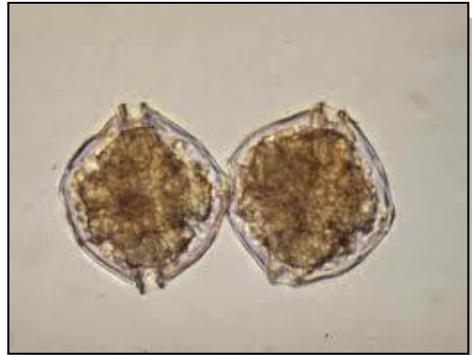
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## APIA Scientists Seek Help Collecting Sand Lance for Research on PSP

Dear Sand Lance Collectors:

Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association (APIA) scientists have been working with federal, private, state and university researchers since 2006 studying paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP). The research may help us determine the cause of near extinctions in some of Gulf of Alaska locations of top predators, sea otters, sea lions and declines in other predator populations. Studies of food, predation and disease have not satisfactorily resolved these population declines, so we are investigating the theory that widespread PSP may be partially responsible.

Paralytic shellfish poisoning is caused by naturally occurring toxins produced by a small marine plant, or phytoplankton, called *Alexandrium*. Every year coastal Alaska has PSP blooms; some years are worse than others. PSP levels can sicken wildlife and people and both can die if the PSP levels are high enough. The most common manner people get sick from PSP is from eating PSP-contaminated shellfish, mussels, clams and scallops which filter the PSP-producing organism, *Alexandrium* sp., from the ocean. Small marine animals called zooplankton, which include the copepods, eat the *Alexandrium* and concentrate the PSP toxins.



Sand lance or sandlance are also known as "sand eels" or "needle fish" gets its name from its slender body and pointed snout. Sand lance primarily feed on copepods and may become toxic with PSP because the copepods are toxic from eating the organism that produces PSP.



Many of the marine predators in the North Pacific Ocean depend upon sand lance as an important food source. Sand lance are high in energy, mostly in lipids (fats), and they contain many important nutrients. Some of the predators that feed on sand lance are whales, sea lions, seals, sea otters, marine birds, and fish including salmon and halibut. PSP affects the central nervous system so when sand lance become contaminated with PSP, they may lose

their ability to swim and they may not be able to avoid predators. In Alaska's Taiyasanka Harbor, Dungeness crab became so contaminated from eating dead PSP-contaminated sand lance and mussels they were toxic enough to sicken people, and sea birds have been reported to have died on Kodiak Island and in the Aleutian Islands from eating contaminated sand lance.

Yukon king salmon also eat PSP-contaminated sand lance when rearing in coastal waters. Dead seabirds washed up on the beach may have been killed by eating PSP-contaminated sand lance. Check the bird's crop to see if the bird ate sand lance. These sand lance can be tested for PSP too.

We need your help! Contact an APIA senior scientist if you find sick acting or dead sand lance on the beach or in shallow water. You can handle the sand lance without risk of getting sick, but don't eat any dead or sick sand lance. If you find dead or dying sand lance, collect 5, put in a Ziplock, label with your name, location collected and date, freeze and contact: Bruce Wright at 907-222-4260 or [brucew@apiai.org](mailto:brucew@apiai.org). More information at: <http://environmentalaska.us/psp-harmful-algal-blooms.html>.

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## WANTED: DEAD

### Sand Lance AKA Needle Fish AKA Sand Eels

Sand lance can become contaminated with paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP) and become sick or die. Sea lions, seals, sea otters, marine birds and salmon that eat these toxic sand lance can die, too.



If you find dead or dying sand lance: collect 5, put in a Ziplock, label with your name, location collected and date, freeze and contact:

Bruce Wright at 907-222-4260 or [brucew@apiai.org](mailto:brucew@apiai.org) for shipping instructions.

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## City of Sand Point – Job Opening:



The city of Sand Point is seeking a new Water and Sewer Supervisor. Under the direction of the Public Works Director, the Water/Sewer Supervisor assumes full responsibility and authority of the city-owned water and wastewater systems. This includes the planning, coordinating and implementation of all activities of the water and wastewater programs and infrastructure. In addition, this position has primary responsibility for all repair and maintenance needs of the city water and wastewater infrastructure. Must have knowledge of and adhere to the Occupational Safety and Health Agency regulations, practices and procedures as they pertain to water and wastewater operations. Must have high school diploma or equivalent. Must have five years' experience in the water and wastewater field with appropriate certifications required by DEC. Class 2 Certification required. Salary D.O.E. Contact City of Sand Point for full job description. Call 907-383-2696, Fax 907-383-2698, or Email [sptcity@arctic.net](mailto:sptcity@arctic.net).

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## Got News?

If you have news you'd like to share, please email [ltanis@aeboro.org](mailto:ltanis@aeboro.org) or call AEB Communications Manager Laura Tanis at (907) 274-7579.



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*Thank you for reading In the Loop. If you would like to subscribe or unsubscribe, please send an email to [ltanis@aeboro.org](mailto:ltanis@aeboro.org). For more information about our communities, our people, and our fisheries, please visit us at [www.aleutianseast.org](http://www.aleutianseast.org) and [www.aebfish.org](http://www.aebfish.org), and check out our Facebook page at: <http://www.facebook.com/AleutiansEastBorough>.*