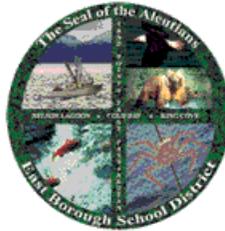
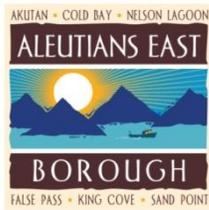


In the Loop



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

Residents Hold Steady Through Shakers

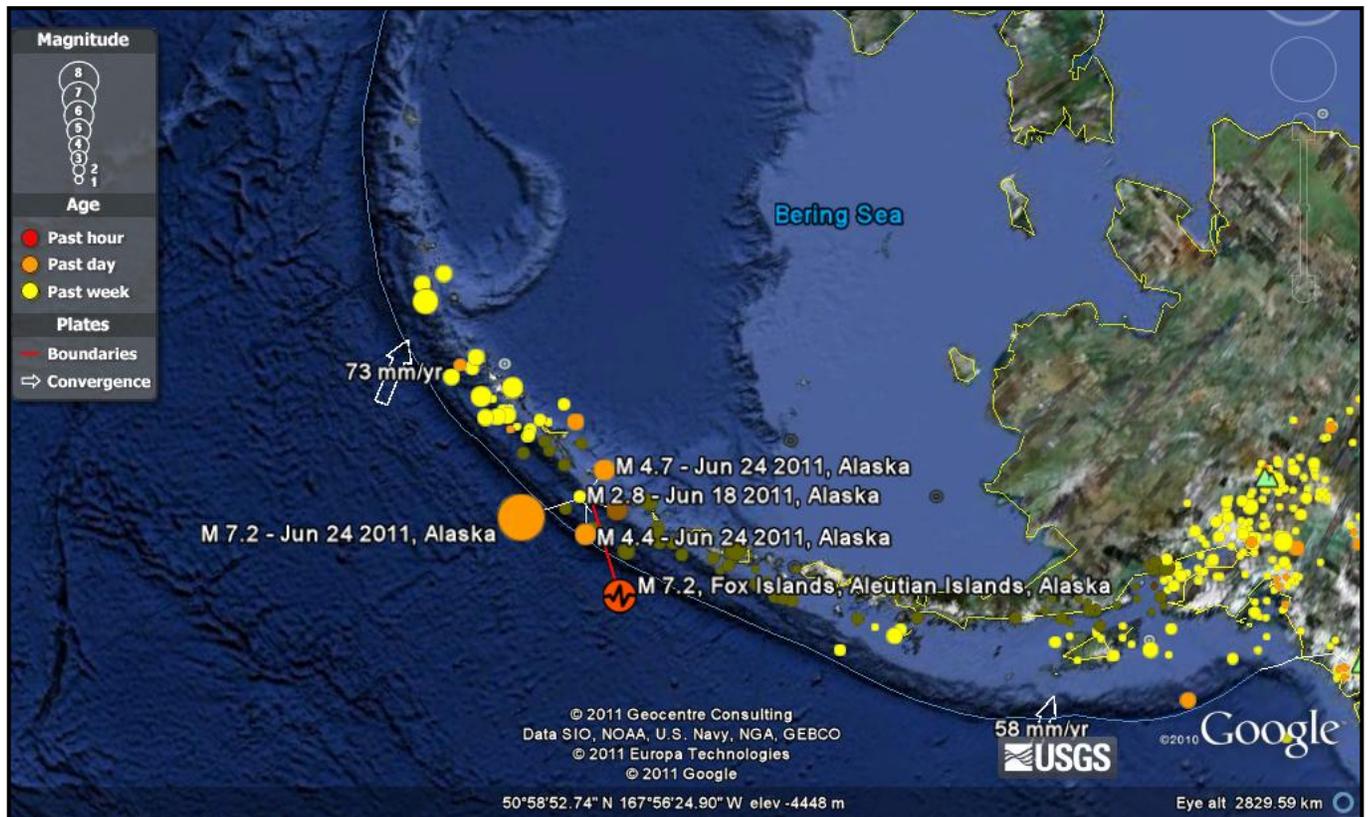
By Ernie Weiss, AEB Development Coordinator and contributions from Bruce Wright, senior scientist of the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association

The people of the Aleutian Islands and the Alaska Peninsula are no strangers to frequent earthquakes and tsunami drills. Just last month, a magnitude 7.2 earthquake activated an evacuation of Unalaska. Luckily, no significant waves or tsunamis were generated from that quake. Earlier this year, however, a 9.0M earthquake rocked Tohuko, Japan, causing a devastating tsunami. Residents all along the Pacific Rim were reminded again of the destructive powers of earthquakes and tsunamis.



A 7.2 magnitude earthquake sent Unalaska residents to higher elevations last month to avoid a possible tsunami.

Last weekend was a busy time for seismic watchers in the Aleutians East. Just south of Woseneski Island, at a depth of 28 miles, an earthquake hit at 10:28 p.m. on Friday, July 22nd, measured by the Alaska Earthquake Information Center at 6.4 M. This quake was felt throughout King Cove and other communities in the AEB. It was the largest quake of an entire weekend of rumblings. Earlier Friday, numerous quakes jolted the area, including two earthquakes of 4.0M or greater. At 3 a.m. on Saturday morning, a 3.6 M jolt felt stronger, at a depth of only nine miles. There were other shakers throughout the day, including a 4.3 M earthquake at 8:13 a.m.



It's difficult to predict when and where earthquakes will occur.

“Earthquake predictions have a strong scientific physical basis and are derived through the use of mathematical modeling,” said Bruce Wright, senior scientist of the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association.

According to the USGS, Alaska has experienced five earthquakes of magnitude 7.0 - 7.9 since 1987. Wright points out that the current (2009) long-term Alaska prediction is for a major earthquake at approximately 500 km within a center point (100 km) south of Anchorage.

“The Aleutian Islands are on the Ring of Fire and are very geologically active. I think it's wise to be prepared for the inevitable,” Wright added.



Small quakes may temporarily relieve stress on geologic faults, but they do not prevent the possibility of larger earthquakes.

Communities in coastal areas need to be vigilant and prepared for earthquakes and tsunamis. The City of Sand Point was declared a tsunami-ready community in 2010. King Cove is still working towards this recognition. While cities and villages work on emergency plans, each family in our coastal communities should prepare for earthquakes.

Take the time to read the preparedness guide developed by Alaska Earthquake Information Center, available at:

http://www.aEIC.alaska.edu/html_docs/pdf_files/eqprepare.pdf

King Cove Access Project Making Headway

By Dan Rowley, AEB Engineer



Construction crews are blasting and drilling at the material site at Lenard Harbor to get rock for building the beach section of the road.

The King Cove Access Project is underway, and crews expect to complete the road from the temporary hovercraft terminal in Lenard Harbor up to the permanent terminal site at the northeast corner of Cold Bay by the end of September 2012. That's a distance of almost 12 miles. AIC is the construction contractor. The Alaska Department of Transportation has staff in King Cove overseeing AIC's work and performing all of the inspection, testing and environmental compliance services.

To date AIC has been focusing on developing a material site near the Lenard Harbor terminal. This work

involves removing the top layer of plants and soil to the underlying bedrock. Once the rock is exposed, drilling and blasting can begin. The drilling and blasting work had to wait until after June 15th due to an environmental stipulation that any denning bears in the near vicinity could not be disturbed. Evidently bears can wake up people but people can't wake up bears.

The temporary hovercraft shelter at Lenard Harbor has been dismantled. Originally, the plan was to relocate this shelter to the northeast corner. However, subsequent engineering analysis indicated that the shelter had some structural shortcomings, and several wind storms in King Cove damaged the shelter beyond repair. A new upgraded shelter, a metal building, will be provided at the northeast corner terminal site.

We anticipate that the pace of work will be picking up considerably in the near future, which will hopefully lead to more local hires for operating equipment and culvert installation labor.

The following article appeared yesterday, July 28, 2011, in the Anchorage Daily News (editorial section, page A11).

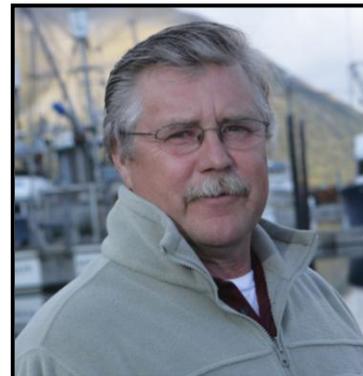
COMPASS: *Other points of view*

Road from King Cove to Cold Bay is vital

By Henry Mack, Mayor of King Cove

My name is Henry Mack, and I am the mayor of King Cove. While most folks in Alaska came from somewhere else, my family has always lived and fished on the shores of the Alaska Peninsula. As a commercial fisherman, going out to sea has shaped my values: hard work, perseverance and enjoyment of each moment because life lived on the edge of wilderness can be quickly claimed.

For more than three decades now, King Cove has battled to have a road to Cold Bay's all-weather airport. For us, it is, and has always been, about transportation safety and dependability, allowing everyone, from our elders to our children, to reach medical centers in times of emergency. When the Omnibus Public Lands Act of 2009 passed, we



King Cove Mayor Henry Mack

"I don't just hear the wind at night. I hear the helicopter that could not land, the baby who could not breathe, the elder whose heart raced against time. Then I remember how fragile our lives on the edge of this beautiful wilderness can be."

crossed a major hurdle. Pending approval by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, a small, single-lane gravel road, requiring about 200 acres of federal government land, will be built from King Cove through a small section of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge to Cold Bay. In exchange for the federal road corridor, the state of Alaska and the King Cove (Native) Corp. will give up about 60,000 acres to the federal government -- that's

60,000 versus the 200 acres for our road -- how can that not be a great deal?

We have again invited Secretary Salazar to personally see these lands in mid-August when he will be visiting Alaska.

Currently, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is conducting an environmental impact study on the land exchange and road. King Cove is fully engaged in this process to help ensure its thoroughness and timely outcome. While I respect that the USF&W must conduct its research without haste or pressure, and with appropriate focus on the diverse species of our refuge, I remain vigilant in advocating for the well-being of my people, who also have long called the area of the refuge home.

I remain vigilant because someone must speak for the five King Cove residents who needed emergency care last winter. On one of those nights, King Cove's winds blew more than 80 mph relentlessly with less than a half-mile visibility. It was a tough time to be 80-year old Lucy Kenezuroff with chest pains. After flying 300 miles to reach her, the Coast Guard helicopter could not land and diverted to Cold Bay. Not until morning, 17 hours from the first call for help, was she on her way to a doctor's care. So when I attend EIS meetings, Lucy and her family are with me, and I remember their white-knuckle night when time was measured in ragged heartbeats.

I also carry the memory of the 5-month-old girl with erratic breathing and the 63-year-old with abdominal pain. For these constituents, a road could have meant moments waiting for an ambulance, instead of praying for the wind to die down.

I am one of many King Cove mayors who have traveled, testified, cajoled, signed checks, negotiated a land swap, all in an effort to persuade powerful people thousands of miles away that our transportation dangers are real and our motives sincere. We know everyone in this process wants to get it right. We recognize that the



Courtesy: Ron Engstrom/Anchorage Daily News

final EIS is still a year away and we will be patient. But as mayor, I am determined to ensure that our hard work and perseverance pay off on land as it does on the sea -- every offspring of every species must be respected in this process.

I don't just hear the wind at night. I hear the helicopter that could not land, the baby who could not breathe, the elder whose heart raced against time. Then I remember how fragile our lives on the edge of this beautiful wilderness can be and how nothing is more important than this: safe, reliable and life-saving access to the all-weather airport in Cold Bay.

Akutan Harbor Update



Since the beginning of this month, approximately 500,000 cubic yards of material has been excavated from the basin for the Akutan Harbor Project.

The Akutan harbor basin side slope and rock placement continues. As of the beginning of this month, approximately 500,000 cubic yards of material has been excavated from the basin. North and south side slopes of the disposal area have been hydro-seeded and jute matting has been installed. Grass is sprouting in areas previously seeded. Harbor side disposal area side slopes are

scheduled to be hydro-seeded next week. Production of B and armor rock have started in Unalaska.

Redistricting Update

The Aleutians East Borough (AEB) assembly passed Resolution 11-27 on June 30th opposing the final plan proclaimed by the Alaska Redistricting Board (ARB) on June 13th. The AEB did not file a legal action, but on July 13th, the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) filed an application with the Superior Court of Alaska to compel the ARB to correct the redistricting plan. The FNSB lawsuit includes assertions made in the AEB resolution to argue that the ARB plan is unconstitutional.

There were three applications made to the Superior court by the July 13th deadline: two from the Fairbanks area and one from Petersburg. At a hearing on Friday, July 22nd, Fairbanks Judge Michael P. McConahy granted motions to expedite the trial and to consolidate the cases. The trial will begin January 9th, 2012 in Fairbanks. The next hearing is scheduled in Fairbanks for Friday, August 5th.

“The Aleutians Region is tied together with similar economies based on commercial and subsistence fishing, and is comprised of Aleuts who share a rich cultural heritage. The Board’s plan divides the Aleutians East Borough and the Aleutians region into House District 36 and 37, and Senate Districts R and S.”

The FNSB complaint to the Superior Court states in part, “The Aleutians Region is tied together with similar economies based on commercial and subsistence fishing, and is comprised of Aleuts who share a rich cultural heritage. The Board’s Plan divides the Aleutians East Borough and the Aleutians region into House District 36 and House District 37, and Senate Districts R and S.” The complaint goes on to remind the Court that the Supreme Court, in *Hickel v. Southeast Conference* (Alaska 1992), raised the issue *sua sponte* (of their own accord) and ruled that the separation of the Aleutians was clearly a violation of Article VI, Section 6 of the Alaska Constitution, requiring house districts be formed of “contiguous and compact territory containing as nearly as practicable a relatively integrated socio-economic area.”

The Aleutians East Borough Attorney Joe Levesque is continuing to monitor the court proceedings of the redistricting plan challenges.

Independent Scientific Panel Disagrees with NMFS' Steller Sea Lion Biological Opinion

Previously Published in Fish News on July 26, 2011

An independent scientific panel disagrees with the National Marine Fisheries Services' Bering Sea - Aleutian Islands Fisheries Management Plan Biological Opinion (BiOp). In its draft review of the BiOp, the panel concludes that NMFS misinterpreted crucial evidence from statistical studies of relationships between fishing and sea lion demographics. The panel's draft review is

now available on the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife website.



An independent scientific panel is criticizing NMFS' Bering Sea - Aleutian Islands Fisheries Management Plan BiOp.

Last February, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife assembled an independent panel to scientifically review the BiOp concerning the impact of groundfish fisheries on Steller sea lions. The goal of the panel was to determine whether NMFS used all relevant scientific information and impartially considered those facts in the final BiOp for the Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands and the Gulf of Alaska groundfish fisheries issued last November.

Many fishery managers, scientists and industry stakeholders expressed concern about the credibility of the BiOp when it was issued last fall. The biological opinion served as the basis for significant fishery closures and restrictions in the western Aleutians that went into effect January 1, 2011. Lawsuits by the State of Alaska and other organizations followed. State officials were concerned that the restrictions would result in fishing losses up to \$66 million and would affect about 900 people employed by commercial mackerel and cod fisheries fleet. They also believe the BiOp failed to provide sound scientific justification that the restrictions were necessary.

In the executive summary, the independent review panel said:

“We do not agree with the finding of jeopardy of adverse modification for Steller sea lions in the western and central Aleutian Islands as concluded in the BiOp for the FMP. We find that NMFS misinterpreted crucial evidence from statistical studies of relationships between fishing and sea lion demographics. NMFS also failed to scientifically support their explanation of how fisheries affected sea lions (fishery-driven nutritional stress), and disregarded or misreported evidence that refutes the fishery-driven nutritional stress hypothesis. And finally, NMFS did not seriously consider alternative ecologically mediated explanations for declines in sea lion numbers not involving fisheries (environmentally-driven nutritional stress and the killer whale predation hypothesis).”



The independent scientific review panel said NMFS misinterpreted crucial evidence from statistical studies of relationships between fishing and sea lion demographics.

To read the draft review by the independent review panel, click on the link below:

http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/steller_sealions/fmp_biop_ind_sci_rev_21july2011.pdf

A public review meeting is scheduled for August 22, 2011 at the Hilton Hotel in Anchorage.

Fisheries Update

Sea Lions, Pollock and Chinook:

AEB Natural Resources Director Beth Stewart and AEB Consulting Biologist Dr. Vidar Wespestad recently traveled to Washington, D.C. and met with Jim Lecky, Director of the Office of Protected Services. The purpose of this meeting was to alert his office that Borough fishermen have asked the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) to consider eliminating the pollock D season and redistribute the catch to the A, B and C seasons.

Beth pointed out that although we don't have genetic data for all the Chinook caught, the coded wire tagging data does indicate that Washington, Oregon, and California stocks are present

during the D season. Dr. Lecky was open to considering the balance of protecting one endangered species against the rules for another.

Cooperative Research:

Among other meetings, Beth and Vidar also met with Arne Fuglvog, Fisheries Aid to Senator Lisa Murkowski. Arne was very concerned about Dr. Lubchenko's Marine Spatial Planning Initiative. After talking to him, Beth has moved this item to near the top of her list of things to monitor. Congress is increasingly frustrated with Dr. Lubchenko's insistence on proceeding without specific funding. Beth shares Arne's concern that Lubchenko will pull money from other programs to fund this effort. This is especially worrisome if it means fewer surveys.

The NPFMC is on record as being opposed to the project in its current configuration.

Development of Community-Based Tagging Program to Enhance Information on Pacific Cod Distribution and Movement in the Western Gulf of Alaska

*By Beth Stewart, AEB Natural Resources Director and
Dr. Vidar Wespestad, AEB Consulting Biologist*

Cod is a very important species for the people of the eastern Aleutian Islands, and has formed the economic backbone of the communities since the 19th century. Dory fleets and shore-based fisheries began operation in the late 19th century that endured until the 1950s when cod began to decline in abundance. In the late 1970s, cod again grew in abundance and attracted fishing efforts into the region. Today, cod is an important part of the assembly of fish that supports the local economy of the eastern Aleutians.

Quotas and catches in the western Gulf of Alaska have been nearly constant since the early 1990s at around 37,000 tons. To the west, in the eastern Bering Sea, and to the east, in the



Wm. Helgeson, "Whiskey Bill", hand-lining for codfish
near Pirate Cove, Popov Island. July 1913.
From John Cobb field notebook: UW Lib. Spec. Coll.

central Gulf of Alaska, the annual cod quotas are larger. Local fishermen observe the seasonal shifts of cod within the area and are convinced that there are seasonal differences in the cod present in the western Gulf of Alaska. The western Gulf of Alaska is a difficult place to conduct trawl surveys because of the extensive fjord system and rough bottom. The local communities are interested in improving estimates of cod in the region and to document exchanges with adjacent areas.

Cod have been tagged in the Bering Sea and in the central Gulf of Alaska, but tagging has been limited in the western Gulf of Alaska. Past studies have focused on the EBS and these studies show a significant amount of movement into the WGOA. There may be similar movement from WGOA to EBS, but in the absence of tagging, there is no way to quantify the amount and degree of inter-area movement.

Local fishermen feel strongly that the absence of tagging in the western Gulf provides a very biased view. Therefore, they would like to develop a cooperative program with NMFS. The local communities of Sand Point and King Cove are very excited about the prospect of developing further cooperative research opportunities with NMFS. The current cooperative pollock acoustic sampling program is viewed very favorably by local fishermen as a means of quantifying local abundance and distribution. Having recording echo-sounders makes it possible for fishermen and scientists to view fish abundance data from a common basis that can be quantitatively addressed. This has provided a stronger acceptance of NMFS' survey methodology. Local fishermen have invested in additional acoustic gear to broaden acoustic sampling for krill, an important forage for both cod and pollock, as well as the burgeoning whale population.

To build on the success of the pollock acoustic survey and to answer the pressing questions on cod distribution and abundance, the AEB is seeking funding to establish a cooperative cod-tagging program. The Borough will utilize Dr. Vidar Wespestad, AEB consulting biologist, to develop a tagging protocol in conjunction with the AFSC cod-tagging program. He will also locate and train local fishermen to capture, tag and release cod from local vessels during the cod fishing period and on locally-chartered vessels in the non-cod fishing periods. Capture will be via cod pots and jigging machines. The majority of tagging efforts will be directed toward shallow water areas to minimize trauma from strong pressure change and to maximize the survival of tagged fish. Tags compatible with the NMFS Bering Sea efforts will be deployed. Also, if local processors can be encouraged to install monitors with radio frequency identification tags, that could be tested as an automatic recovery method. Funding is sought for a two-year trial program to test the concept of local tagging and monitoring and the ability to integrate with a larger NOAA program

Year One will focus on training a technician, and acquainting local high school students on the program as well as the scientific concepts surrounding a fish-tagging program. The people of the eastern Aleutians are very interested in the education of their students. They have made their livelihood from the seas for millenia and have few opportunities other than to continue to draw

their living from the sea. In today's economy, the opportunity for all of the village youth to go fishing has greatly diminished as the Alaska fisheries have been fully developed and privatized. There will be future opportunities in fishing, but the greatest opportunities for young villagers that want to continue to live by the area will be from fishing and non-fishing technical work. There is a growing need for fishery observers, sampling technicians, oil and gas development and other marine technology. This program is a first step to educate the local community on the opportunities afforded by strong technical training.

In the first year, tagging protocols and sample sizes will be developed in cooperation with AFSC. Tagging locations will be determined for capture, tagging, and release of cod on summer feeding grounds and winter spawning grounds. Specific tagging sites will be identified in consultation with local cod fisherman. General tagging efforts within the western Gulf of Alaska will be coordinated with NMFS to ensure adequate and statistically-valid sample distribution. A database, comparable with NMFS/ADFG tag/recovery data formats will record releases and recoveries. This will facilitate easy transfer and sharing of data.

The first year will also focus on educating fishermen and processing plant workers on locating tags and how to report them. Informational posters will be distributed and mark-recapture information posted on a seasonal basis. A reward program will be established with a small basic reward and an entry into a drawing for a significant prize. There will be strong community outreach on educating the community on the tagging program and the importance of tag recovery.

The second year of the project will continue to place and recover tags. At the completion of the second year, a project report will be prepared for publication. The report will relay all of the tagging and recovery data. It will also critique the overall production of the project, relative to other programs and evaluate whether community-based programs have higher participation than agency-run programs. The Borough believes the results will be a positive endorsement for the continuation of the project and perhaps result in NMFS contracting with the AEB for future tagging work.

Estimated Budget:	months	Year 1	Year 2
Technical supervision	2.5	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
Technician	6	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
Travel		\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
Vessel Charter	0.3	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 40,000.00
Equipment		\$ 15,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Year 1		\$ 142,000.00	\$ 122,000.00
Year 2			
Total			\$ 264,000.00

Nominations sought for Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC) - Nominations accepted through August 26, 2011.

Just a heads up that NOAA posted the request for nominations to Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC) on July 12, and will close the nominations process on August 26, 2011. MAFAC advises the Secretary of Commerce on all living marine resource matters that are the responsibility of the Department of Commerce. The Committee makes recommendations to the Secretary to assist in the development and implementation of Departmental regulations, policies and programs critical to the stewardship mission of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries).

Nominees should possess experience in a field related to fisheries and living marine resources, and be able to fulfill the time commitments required for two annual meetings. Individuals serve for a term of three years for no more than two consecutive terms, if reappointed. MAFAC members represent a wide spectrum of fisheries interests, environmental, academic, state, tribal, consumer and other related national interests. Members draw on their expertise, experience and other appropriate sources to conduct their work.

The committee functions solely as an advisory body who reports to the Secretary. Full nomination instructions and guidelines are detailed in the Federal Register notice. All relevant information on MAFAC and this nomination process are located [online](#).

For questions, please contact Dr. Mark Holliday, Executive Director for MAFAC at: Mark.Holliday@noaa.gov.

Got News?

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



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