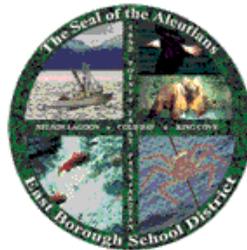
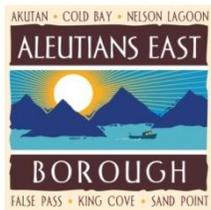


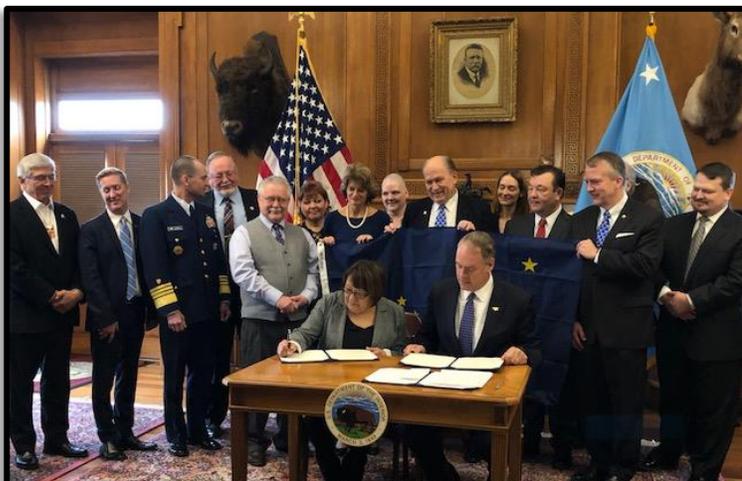
In the Loop



Eastern Aleutian Tribes

King Cove Applauds Secretary Zinke for Signing Land Exchange

Decision allows construction of life-saving link to all-weather airport to advance



U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and Della Trumble of the King Cove Corporation sign an agreement, which begins a process of identifying land of equal value needed to build a life-saving road between King Cove and Cold Bay.

Washington, DC – Jan. 22, 2018 – Tribal and civic leaders from King Cove, Alaska today applauded U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke for championing a land exchange with the King Cove Native Corp. that will allow the community to establish reliable overland access to the all-weather airport in nearby Cold Bay.

“The people of King Cove deeply appreciate the dedication and hard work of Secretary Zinke and his team for making this land exchange possible,” said Della Trumble, spokeswoman for the King Cove Native Corp. and a member of the local Agdaagux tribe. “Today’s agreement goes a long way toward restoring our faith that the federal

government takes seriously its trust responsibility to Alaska Natives.”

The Aleut residents of King Cove have worked for more than three decades to win federal approval of a life-saving road corridor connecting their isolated community to the all-weather Cold Bay Airport. A small stretch of road, approximately 12 miles long, is all that is needed to link King Cove to the existing road system within the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge, which is located next to a 10,000-foot runway build by the U.S. Military during World War II. The corridor – through an area the Aleut stewarded for thousands of years before the federal government came along – will provide dependable ground transportation during medical emergencies.

“We have spent decades fighting for this road for one reason – it is critical for our survival,” Trumble said. “We have already lost too many friends and loved ones for there to be any legitimate reason to oppose this agreement. A small road connecting two remote communities may not seem like an important issue to many people, but to us, it is a lifeline to the outside world.”

The federally recognized Agdaagux and Belkofski tribes of King Cove make up the largest Aleut community in Alaska with more than 700 tribal members combined.

When the federal government created the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge in 1980, it cut off the traditional land route between King Cove and the old World War II outpost of Cold Bay. The residents of King Cove have been trying to get road access to the all-weather airport in Cold Bay ever since.

There have been 18 deaths attributed to the lack of road access, either in plane crashes or the inability to receive timely medical treatment. In a community with no hospital or doctor, King Cove residents must fly 600 miles to Anchorage for most medical procedures.

“Having the peace of mind that our loved ones will be safe when they travel to and from our community – something most Americans take for granted – means the world to us,” said King Cove Mayor Henry Mack. “We would like to thank Secretary Zinke for taking this important step to protect our children and grandchildren. We are also grateful for the steadfast support of Senators Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan, Congressman Don Young, Alaska Governor Bill Walker, the Alaska Legislature, the National Congress of American Indians and the Alaska Federation of Natives.”

The agreement signed today begins a process between Interior and the King Cove Native Corp., which is made up of tribal members from the local Agdaagux and Belkofski tribes, of identifying land of equal value to be exchanged with the federal government to construct a single-lane, restricted-access road.

The road must still be permitted by federal and state agencies.

For more information, visit the following links:

[Press release from the Department of the Interior](#)

[Press release from the Alaska Delegation](#)

[Press release from Governor Walker's office](#)

[Myths vs. Facts - King Cove Land Exchange](#)

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