

NELSON ISLAND CONSORTIUM BROWNFIELD/NIC/CARE



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Umkumiut Tribe on Global Warming Research

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Alaska is the home of many who rely on subsistence gathering and fishing, and is used as healthy diet for families across the state. Now, many are noticing the dramatic change in climate each season, which is happening now. Politicians, Scientists, Environmentalists are doing surveys and researching: on ice caps melting (glaciers), permafrost melts, oceans' (air and water) warming, changes on season's temperatures, and shows a big effect on them since the past years.

Every year, almost 7 billion tons of carbon dioxide is released into the atmosphere by human activity. That is the equivalent of 107,700,000 jet airplanes being in the air at once! This disturbing amount is the main cause of global warming, and has been increasing for the last 50 years. Global warming is caused by the increase of greenhouse gasses, carbon dioxide and methane primarily in the earth's upper atmosphere, directly caused by human burning of fossil fuels, industrial, farming, and deforestation activities.

In the Arctic region, the temperatures are rising more quickly than anywhere else causing the Arctic ice to

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Umkumiut Tribe on Global Warming	1
DBA Forms on Nelson Island	2
Umkumiut Trash	2
Newtok Fishing	2
Tununak Elder on Climate Change	3
Growing up on Nelson Island	3

melt, rupture, and thinning. Since the 1970's, the ice at the Arctic has melted 20%. With the polar ice cap affected, it accelerates global warming. Snow and ice is a protective cooling layer over the Arctic, and when that melts the earth absorbs more sunlight and gets hotter. Melting glaciers and land-based ice sheets also factor the rising sea levels, threatening low-lying areas around the globe with beach erosion, coastal flooding, and contamination of freshwater supplies. (Sea level is not affected when floating sea ice melts.)

The polar bears in Alaska are currently listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act as a

Please see *Umkumiut Tribe on Global Warming* on page 4

*Cakcaaq yuut nekssurvikaat, kaillun neket
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DBA Forms on Nelson Island

Joey Billy, Brownfield Coordinator

Native Village of Tununak Brownfield Response Program, along with three active Brownfield Representatives under Nelson Island Consortium submitted DBA forms to ADEC in Fairbanks. Every year ADEC plans a revitalization and reuse all over Alaska and this is a good opportunity for sites to be cleaned up. Nelson Island Brownfields

submitted six sites in total for possible revitalization of contaminated sites in our villages. All the sites did not make the ranking. Some of our inventories and all are old tank sites that have been in existence since 1970's and abandoned. Over the years, the old tank farms without berms have seeped gas or stove oil to the grounds and this does warrant phase I cleaning. The reuse, in our DBA forms were mostly greenspacing the sites since our areas are rich in game and pristine.

Umkumiut Trash

Evelyn Agnus, Technician

Umkumiut Tribal Council June 18, 2009
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Picture of Umkumiut - Occupied during summer season

Expected Clean-Up in Nightmute 2009

The Umkumiut Environmental Department had a phone call one morning from another organization concerning the trash around the community of Nightmute. Since a few years, there hasn't been a clean up because of minimum funding to provide the youth pay for participating. It is said that "A squeaky wheel gets the grease." It is good to have people come together and finding ways to solve problems as a community, and this is one of

the examples.

With high expectations of needing the village cleaned the Umkumiut Environmental Department and the Nightmute Environmental Department work together to do something about this. Many adults in town discussed about their ideas, mainly about volunteering. Anyways, the Nightmute Clinic donated a box of (BSI) Latex Gloves, and the donation tin can

Please see *Umkumiut Trash* on page 6

Newtok Fishing

Joseph John, Jr, Newtok BRP Rep

This summer, our fishing has been good for this season and for some fish has not been doing good in some areas. The fish that we catch are not around like they were compared to last years season. It usually is good fishing in some places at Nelson Island area.

Maybe the fish are not all around because there was a trawler fishing in between the Nelson Island and the Nunivak Island. The salmon and halibut are not all around like they were last year, possibly the trawler



had caught a lot of salmon and halibut and made it harder for us to catch them this summer. The contributing factor is probably making too much noise and possibly the environment is a greater risk in playing a roll for small catches.

Tununak Elder On Tununak Climate Change

David Hooper, Tununak IGAP

How did you take care of the land when you were young?

– Our ancestors said, “Keep the land clean and respect the environment.” The land was good. We carefully used it. They tried to keep it clean because they respect the land and the tundra. The land changed while the time goes on. They didn’t abuse the land because there was no engine vehicles to do so.

Was it better then? What about now?

–Yes, The land wasn’t broken, because people cared and respect it.

– Not as much as like the past, but now, we have more trash everywhere, and the land is falling apart slowly.

Is the land changing?

– Yes. The land was different back then.

Growing up on Nelson Island

David Hooper, Tununak IGAP

How did you take care of the land when you were young?

– We followed our parents with the use of the land. We all helped to keep the land clean by picking up trash. We enjoyed helping each other as like very good friends.

Was it better then? What about now?

– Yes it was better, the tundra was good and we liked the land. Though it didn’t change that much. Right now, I want to get out to the tundra but I’m getting a little too old.

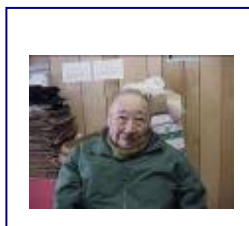
Is the land changing?

– Yes, land is changing a little bit because of vehicles and the permafrost is melting. Also, the land is eroding a little bit.

How was the land in the past?

– It wasn’t that different as today.

What about the weather? Is it unusual or not?



Edward Hooper, Long time resident of Tununak

How was the land in the past?

–Healthier than today. Never had trash around. The environment was good, but the stormy sea and river flooding erode the land.

What about the weather? Is it unusual or not?

–Yes it is unusual, because in the past, it was always good and change slowly, and today, the weather changes quickly.

What do you think the weather on season will be like?

–More high winds. Longer winters.

Did you guys protect your land area from other people?

–Yes, we protected the land from other people when they came to our land.



Tommy Hooper, Long time resident of Tununak

– The elders used to say that the weather follows how the people are behaving. Not unusual, but the weather is becoming unpredictable.

What do you think the weather on season will be like?

– I can’t tell how the weather will be like because its hard to predict.

Did you guys protect your land area from other people?

– We used to share the land and not protect it from others to use. Now with the government, it became a property, which I can say it belongs to me or somebody else’s.

Umkumiut Trash page 1

that was placed in a local store made sufficient money for some supplies. Six hundred (600) bags were ordered from ALPAR, so many thanks to those for their support in this effort! Photos of the littered trash around the village were taken while planning, so this way it will show what difference is made with a handful of help from the community. After looking into the budget and signing up the youth, we will have a summer clean up soon.

We would also like to say thanks to the Hageland Aviation, Grant Air, and the Northern Air Cargo for shipping our recyclables. 12

bags of recycled cans were shipped out since a few weeks, 3 boxes of plastic bottles, and 2 bags of paper. The establishment of recycling programs helps reduce the amount of solid waste in communities' landfill, and is a good practice for families to consider. Therefore, we would like to encourage many to keep it up. The recyclable aluminum cans are now being shipped to the Anchorage recycling center. ALPAR suggests to have them shipped to Anchorage because it costs more to recycle them there, especially since the Northern Air Cargo ships them for free. Another addition we would like to inform offices'– is to start ordering 100% recycled paper. This reduces the number of trees cut, and has the same brightness and weight

"I have forgotten the names of people that died. The people who lived in these old villages are gone." Nightmute–Sophie

Umkumiut Tribe on Global Warming from page 1

result of a petition and court case by the Center for Biological Diversity. The Fish and Wildlife Service is under court order– to make a conclusion on the Center's petition to protect the Pacific walrus under the Endangered Species Act by September 10, 2009.

"This study is by no means exhaustive. Our data suggest the possibility that sea ice features may be critical factors for the walrus when choosing a habitat. Using techniques developed during this project, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may be able to determine, over time, if climate change is affecting Pacific walrus populations," said Jay Skiles, senior research scientist in biosphere science at NASA Ames Research Center, Moffett Field, Calif.

Many of us know that the walrus' has been our main source of subsistence for food, clothing,

and shelter since our ancestors were living the traditional lifestyle. It may be hard giving up the walrus' when put under endangered species, but it is what global warming is doing to our lives. The ice which the walrus' rely on is diminishing rapidly, and scientists are studying them closely.

For the first time radar sensors were used to study the walrus in the Alaskan Yukon–Kuskokwim Delta to study the population and supporting habitats of the Pacific walrus. Students from the NASA Develop program worked with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Alaska to determine the relationship between polar sea ice patterns and the ideal habitat of the Pacific walrus. The minimum population of the Pacific walrus estimated a 15,164 count. Even if this weren't a precise estimate, they are still in risk with the ice melting.

In effect, Alaska has longer summers and higher temperatures causing drier conditions, and lakes are

Continued on the next page

declining, challenging the ecosystems. Although it may seem like a tropical change with warmer days to bathe in, but there are wildfires and insect outbreaks. With climate change, it is changing the marine ecosystems, affecting fisheries. Pollock's are going further north to the Russian waters. The catch of Pollock in the Bering Sea is further to reach for fisherman, and being experienced in the American Seafood's Industry, it is surely in effect of going further north for the catch.

Coastal communities are threatened by erosions and the loss of sea ice, which serves a protective buffer. Thawing permafrost limits transportation, damages roads, and releases a large amount of carbon dioxide into the air. Erosions have affected many villages in Alaska, along with places like Newtok and Kevalina (a few of the villages) the sea clambered to. With these erosions in effect, the result of it is causing them to plan and move their homes to higher grounds.

As an example, Kevalina, Alaska – an Inupiat village of 400 people is located on the tip of an 8 mile long barrier island located between the Chukchi Sea, and a lagoon at the mouth of the Kevalina River. It lies 80 miles northwest of Kotzebue. The village is being beat by waves on the coastline, causing massive erosions. "The result of the increased storm damage is a massive erosion problem. Houses and buildings are in imminent danger of falling into the sea." The estimated cost of relocating the village is up to \$400 million. Kevalina sued 23 oil and energy companies because they are suffering the consequences of global warming due to these companies' actions, many of which are known as the U.S. largest companies that releases greenhouse gas. The companies include Exxon Mobil, BP, and Conoco Phillips, all three of which

operates near the community.

In June 25, 2007, one of the residents of Kevalina discovered something rather shocking. Since many years, underground storages for food were used to keep the food fresh using the permafrost underneath as a coolant. Anyways, Janet Mitchell's father (a resident of Kevalina) went to the storage cache where he stores his summer catch. What he discovered there was five feet of water covering the whole bottom of the storage area. The permafrost has already begun to melt so that storage cache is no longer usable.

"The evidence is much stronger than it has been." White House science adviser John Holdren said in a statement that the findings make the case for taking action to slow global warming – both by reducing emissions and adapting to the changes that "are no longer avoidable."

When we burn fossil fuels: oil, coal and gas to generate electricity and power our vehicles, we produce the heat-trapping gases that cause global warming. The more we burn, the faster global climate change inflame. The most important thing we can do is save energy, and we *can* do it. Some technologies today are more energy efficient that run clearer and burn less gas, generate electricity from wind and sun. As individuals, each of us can take steps to save energy and fight global warming. As a nation, we are responsible as the leading cause of global warming, with a lot of greenhouse gas emissions. With our decisions, and an influential country in the world, we can choose to sit by and watch it happen, or we can decide to become a more environmentally aware population, and set an example for the entire world to see.

*"Nallunrilkenganka. Nauwa yuut? Nallunrill...
Nallunritellruyaaqekena nalluyaguskenka
tayima yuullrit tangernanriamkia ak'a.
Tangernanrirluki." Nightmute-Sophie*

as regular paper.

After two clean ups were done in Umkumiut in 2006 and 2008, a new project is now being constructed. Residents who camp during the spring and summer can now place their trashes in these 3 trash bins that will be placed on the west, middle, and east side alongside of the beach. They will be emptied by the Umkumiut Staff weekly during the spring and summers, and will be dropped off to the Toksook Bay landfill. This will help reduce the trash around homes and will protect the beauty of our subsistence environment.

One of the other ideas that were researched thoroughly was the drum barrels many residents have. Practically every village has barrels near the

rivers banks, along the bushes, or somewhere on the ground abandoned, rusted. Rather than leaving them behind, these barrels can be reused, or recycled. Anchorage has a recycling program for these, but it costs to ship them out in barges, or purchasing a barrel crusher. Maybe if some are in good conditions, we can have the youth paint them and place them around the villages for garbage disposals. This may help reduce the amount of litter, and possibly will find habits of the litterbugs to use these. All the rusty ones will eventually need to be placed out of their spot, so if we searched for grants to get them out, it would be great.

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"The ones I know. Where are the people? I know the ones who lived there, but I have forgotten them, because I do not see them anymore." Nightmute–Sophie

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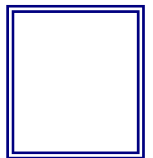
Working together to keep the
Coastal and Nelson Island
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