

Hooper Bay Subsistence Trail Mapping Report

Community ATV Planning Meeting – November 6, 2007

On November 6th 2007, over 30 Hooper Bay community members and Sea Lion Corporation (SLC) shareholders gathered together to share ideas about past, present and future ATV subsistence trails on their native village corporation land. Prior to the community meeting, General Manager of the SLC, William Naneng, sat down with partner representatives to discuss the goals and objectives of the community meeting and provide a chance for a roundtable discussion of opportunities for future partnership.

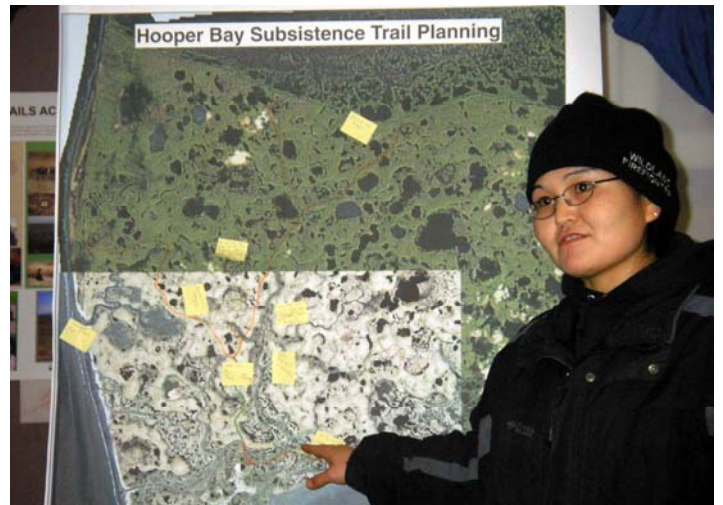
Partner Roundtable Discussion

The following individuals met with William in Hooper Bay prior to the community meeting:

- Michael Hoffman, AVCP Transportation Coordinator
- Brian McCaffery, USFWS YKDNWR Education Specialist
- Hollis Twitchell, USFWS YKDNWR Resource Specialist
- Crystal Leonetti, USDA NRCS District Conservationist
- Ryan Maroney, USDA NRCS RC&D Coordinator
- *Please Note:* Lisa Holzapfel of the National Park Service was unfortunately unable to attend.

During the roundtable, the following topics were covered and opportunities identified for future collaboration:

- Establish partnership with the existing USFWS Tribal Wildlife grantee Chevak and neighboring tribes of Scammon Bay, Paimute, and Hooper Bay. The Native Village of Chevak is managing the grant and Hollis and Brian encouraged SLC and the Native Village of Hooper Bay to work with this effort once it gets underway. Apparently, management of ATVs on native village corporation lands is identified in the grant application as a priority issue for action.
- Improve understanding of regional transportation goals for neighboring tribes. Mike discussed the Denali Commission's transportation funds and also the BIA IRR funds available and that they can and will likely be applied to ATV "TROADS" in the future. Ryan mentioned the issue of public easement requirements associated with these funds, then summarized the DC nomination submitted by Hooper Bay Tribe, City and Village Corporation for FY'08.
- Development of best-practice standards for ATV use building on the work of the USFWS and the Audubon Society and tying them into the Tribal Wildlife grant program. Ryan explained the work that NRCS, NPS and SLC are planning to do via the Musser Fund project in Hooper Bay.
- Development of a biological research project to better understand what species are occurring in the general Kokechik-Hooper Bay area, as well as detailed knowledge about the species occupying the proposed hardened trail corridors. This effort would ideally involve an Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program (ANSEP) student to work in collaboration with a FWS refuge biologist. William indicated that the SLC would



Elizabeth Bell of the Native Village of Hooper Bay shares with other community members the travel corridors identified and prioritized by her group during the November 6, 2007 community planning meeting. Photo R. Maroney.

potentially be receiving funding from a California based group that could be used for this purpose, but the source remained unclear. Hollis indicated the refuge has funds for this purpose as well. Everyone agreed that this would be a fantastic opportunity for a scientific evaluation of the impact of an improved ATV trail on coastal lowland tundra habitat and bird species.

Community Planning Meeting—November 6, 2007

Despite a fire that morning at an elder's home, attendance was good at this second community-wide subsistence trail planning gathering in Hooper Bay. William and Ryan co-facilitated the bilingual meeting conducted in Yup'ik and English.

The meeting began with a welcome address and introduction by Sea Lion Corporation Vice President, Bosco Olson. Then, William and Crystal gave reports on the accomplishments of the 2006 planning and 2007 trail installation work. The KYUK Bethel radio story was played for the audience while a slide show was projected on a screen of the trail crew at work this past summer.

Crystal then presented the routing for the trail extension of approximately 8,130 feet to be constructed in the summer of 2008 with NRCS cost share assistance and NPS RTCA technical assistance (Figure 1).

Next, discussion focused on planning for the future. Ryan recapped the 2006 planning routes identified in the first community meeting, then encouraged individuals to consider the following questions while planning for a future extension of trail:

- What is the purpose of the trail (protect soil, wetlands, wildlife habitat, waterfowl, improve access, etc.)?



Hooper Bay Community Gathers Again to Talk Trails November 6, 2007

- Will this allow SLC to decommission an existing trail(s)?
- What will be the impact of the new trail on animals, plants and land?
- How can we establish best management practices for trails?

During discussion of these questions, Brian McCaffery and Hollis Twitchell of the USFWS spoke about developing best management practices for wildlife habitat conservation and ATV access, highlighting the past successes of the SLC's patrolling efforts and the ATV posters and comic book. Elders and other community members shared their concerns regarding the importance of developing education and trail ethics standards to protect their village corporation lands from uncontrolled and increasing ATV use.

Yupik elders were saying: "*Nunaq igtuq*" — very literal translation of Yup'ik language "the land is falling." William explained that they are referring to some uplands which are getting smaller possibly due to melting permafrost. He said, "our lands are no longer covered by snow and ice for the majority of the year. Over a short period of time, even the traditional modes of transportation have changed and ATVs are increasingly replacing snowmachines as the preferred means of transportation during winter."

With these challenges and opportunities in mind, a second community trail mapping exercise was conducted. Participants in the room split into three groups and illustrated their priority routes for extension of the trail on large poster-sized maps. Group members then shared each of their prioritized trail routing ideas and provided justification to the community. Consensus was reached on a priority trail route and this corridor is identified in the yellow shaded area of the map on the opposing page (Figure 2). The priority travel corridor proposed appears to largely avoid much of the known brant colonies along Kokechik Bay (Figure 3). The relationship between this travel corridor and the breeding and nesting sites of other species of concern, however, is yet to be determined.

Both facilitators were happy with the results of the meeting and were glad that so many people in Hooper Bay took time out of their day to come and participate in the planning process. It was also beneficial to have so many of the partners present at this meeting.

William concluded, "We got away from the meeting that the public does want the trail extended. It seems it is all the more important that we include the public in the development of the education, ethic and management material."

Future Action Items

A. Best Management Practices/ Education and Ethics Project

- Jan 08'— NPS will work with NRCS, SLC and the City on this initiative and will contact Chevak to collaborate with their Tribal Wildlife Grant project.
- Feb 08'—Alaska Forum on the Environment. William is working with Ryan to prepare presentation to share Hooper Bay story.

B. Biological Research Project

- Contact USFWS biologists to assemble all known nesting and breeding sites for threatened & endangered species and species of concern in the proposed travel corridor. Ryan is working with Brian to find and overlay all information onto one map.
- USFWS will work with SLC and other partners to develop a research project with an ANSEP student from the Hooper Bay area to document trail impacts in 2009.

C. Trail Extension Project

- SLC will work with NRCS & NPS to plan for 2008 installation and order materials.
- SLC will work with partners to design future extension, possibly with Denali Commission assistance.

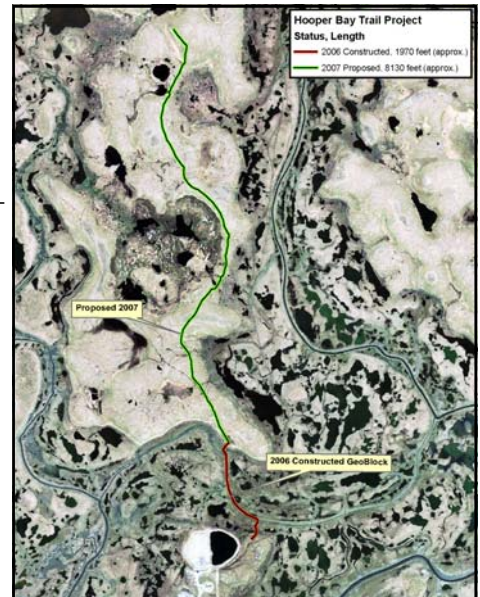


Figure 1 The red segment of trail was installed in the summer of 2007. Green reflects the segment of trail to be installed in the summer of 2008.

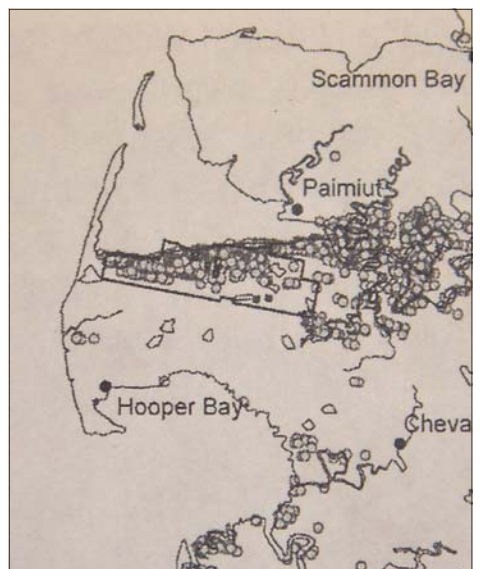


Figure 3 The above map prepared by the USFWS illustrates known locations (O) of brant colonies near Kokechik Bay.



Hooper Bay Community Transportation Planning Exercise

November 6, 2007



Figure 2

Prepared for: Sea Lion Corporation
Prepared by: Ryan Maroney, USDA NRCS
Date: November 6th, 2007



Hooper Bay Community Revisits Planning Process

Hooper Bay, November 6, 2007 — Photos R. Maroney



Hooper Bay resident Joseph Bell (left) discusses subsistence hunting and gathering travel routes on Sea Lion Corporation land with elders Nathan Fisher (middle) and George Moses, Sr. (right) during the planning exercise.



Hooper Bay residents Jerry Moses and Elizabeth Bell share their ideas on the best travel corridor for a trail extension. USFWS Education Specialist Brian McCaffery assists the group.



Community Conservation Mapping Photographs

Hooper Bay, November 6, 2007— Photos R. Maroney



Photos Top Left, Clockwise—Rueben Hill, Sr., David Bunyan, and Christine Stone review previous planning maps with Hollis Twitchell and Brian McCaffery in background; Sea Lion General Manager William Naneng reports on the trail work to date; Mary U. Tinker, Elder Nellie Night, Eleanor Simon, Beverly Hurd and Elder Ignatia Seton present their group's identified and prioritized travel corridor. Groups at work: Christine Stone & Elizabeth Bell; Rueben Hill, Sr. and Norbert Lake; and Elders Mary U. Tinker and Ignatia Seton.



The first section of the Hooper Bay Subsistence trail (right). (Below) Kokechik Bay and Bluffs. Photos: R. Maroney

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