



BACKHAUL ALASKA

Protect Subsistence • Create Jobs • Remove Toxins

Backhaul Alaska Bulletin – Fall 2018

Your source for news on the collaborative project to create a backhaul service program for rural Alaska

Hello Backhaul Alaska Stakeholders,

You are receiving this Backhaul Alaska Bulletin because you have expressed interest in receiving updates on the project to create the Backhaul Alaska program. Read on for news and information about the program and please contact us at Info@BackhaulAlaska.org if you have any comments or questions. We look forward to hearing from you.

Status Update – Pilot Phase 1

Following the June 24-29, 2018 intensive six-day training course for the 15 communities participating in Pilot Phase 1 (“Pilot 1”), the pace of the pilot project slowed a bit as communities were busy with subsistence, summer projects, and other activities. During the summer, the Backhaul Alaska team worked individually with each community to:

- Review protocols for tracking time spent in various activities,
- Ensure University of Alaska course registration was complete -- 18 participants received three UAF college credits from the June Backhaul Training!
- Complete insurance paperwork, and
- Procure the supplies and safety gear needed to backhaul next summer.

Monthly calls were halted for the summer season and will pick up again on November 15, 2018. The agenda for that meeting will be to review the timeline and major milestones for the year ahead, discuss inventory and staff timesheet protocols, and answer participant questions.

Funding News

Backhaul Alaska has been very fortunate to receive generous financial support from our federal partners -- the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of Transportation, and Environmental Protection Agency. Below is a brief description how each funding source fits into the program.

Bureau of Indian Affairs

The BIA has contributed compact monies to cover multiple and substantial aspects of Pilot 1 and Pilot 2 activities, including the purchase of supplies and small infrastructure for villages, shipping and recycling fees, program coordination, logistics coordination, control tower contracting, and travel. Their support has allowed the pilot to broaden the number of regions in the pilot from three to five (or six, depending on Pilot 2 Village selection), and provide adequate safety gear and supplies to all pilot villages. We cannot say enough how critical BIA's support has been in implementing this pilot.

Department of Transportation

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials and Safety Administration (PHMSA) awarded a FY19-20 Hazardous Materials Instructor Training (HMIT) grant to Zender Environmental Health and Research Group to fund all the aspects of training needed to ensure safe transportation of hazardous materials. Activities funded under the award includes training the regional coordinators; developing and carrying out on-site village inspection and training visits; supporting minimum infrastructure and supplies; refining and carrying out the Uniform Training curriculum; travel and tuition for participants; training, monitoring, and evaluation of regional coordinators and villages; compiling standard operating procedures to ensure regional coordinators are trained and that the appropriate measures are in place for them to ensure their villages are properly trained in turn; and planning for distance learning of the Uniform Backhaul Alaska Training course.

PHMSA's mission is to protect people and the environment by advancing the safe transportation of energy and other hazardous materials that are essential to our daily lives. To do this, the agency establishes national policy, sets and enforces standards, educates, and conducts research to prevent incidents. Their purview includes the Hazmat Regulations governing the transport of lead-acid batteries. PHMSA provided an instructor who taught the General Awareness component of the Hazmat Regulations during the June 2018 Uniform Backhaul Alaska Training course.

DOT acknowledges the importance of assisting rural Alaska villages to backhaul safely. PHMSA Administrator Howard "Skip" Elliot and his staff visited Anchorage in late September and were briefed about Backhaul Alaska. The next day, a smaller team, together with Dr. Lynn Zender representing Backhaul Alaska, visited Napakiak and Bethel to see first-hand some of the challenges faced in storing and transporting hazardous materials from rural Alaska villages. Thank you to the Native Village of Napakiak and Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) for serving as hosts.



Pictured above: Sally Billy (Left) and Joanne Slats (Right) from the Napakiak Environmental Department showing PHMSA Associate Administrator William Schoonover their barge landing and actively eroding riverbank. Increasingly difficult port access in communities across Alaska is just one of the many backhaul challenges that the DOT Team saw firsthand. Not pictured, but also present were Chief of Hazardous Materials Grants and Registration, Shakira Mack, and Marc Nichols, Director of Western Region Field Operations.

Environmental Protection Agency

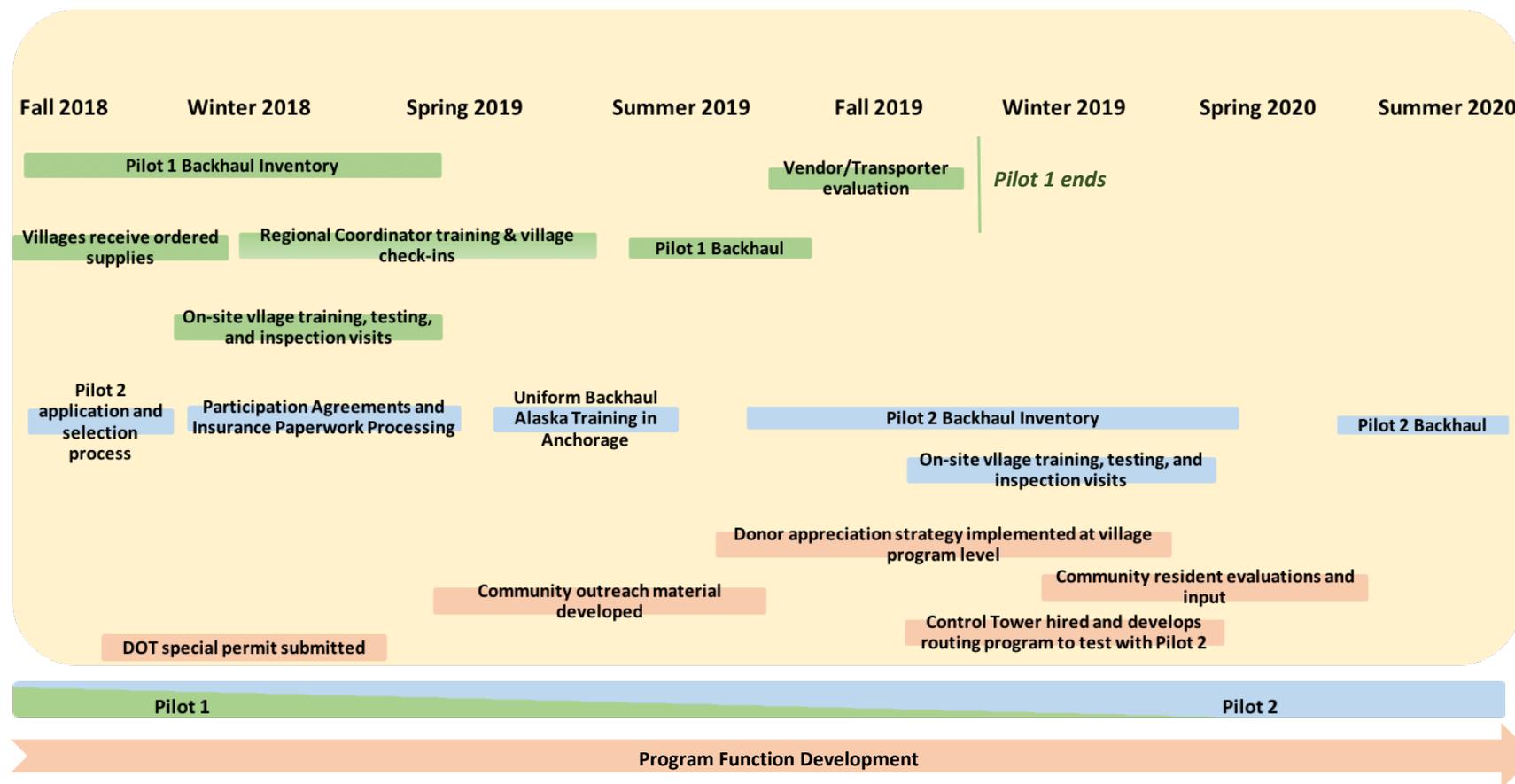
The EPA Office of Environmental Justice awarded a Collaborative Problem-Solving grant to Zender Environmental Health and Research Group, to ensure full integration of community needs and opinions into the Backhaul Alaska program. The grant will begin in December 2018 and funding will support working with pilot villages to assess community understanding of Backhaul Alaska, community desires and suggestions for the program (both locally and statewide), and residents' measures on whether Backhaul Alaska is successful. Development of outreach materials, including at a minimum Yup'ik language translation, is included. EPA has provided funding in support of the development of Backhaul Alaska for the past three years. And now, the Backhaul Alaska team looks forward to expanding partnership and networking opportunities with EPA's Environmental Justice program.

Upcoming Backhaul Alaska Pilot Program Major Milestones

When	What
November 2018 – May 2019	Pilot 1 Regional Trainers trained on materials packing and program readiness testing
November 12 – November 30, 2018	Outreach and presentations at AML, ATCEM, and BIA Provider's conferences
November 15 – December 21 2018	Pilot 2 village application period. See final section of this Bulletin for details
January 15, 2019	Pilot 2 villages selected and begin paperwork
December 2018 – June 2019	Pilot 1 villages visited by Regional Trainers or Logistics Coordinator to ensure backhaul readiness and identify additional training needs
February 2019	Pilot 2 in-person orientation meeting
March - May 2019	Transportation and recycling logistics are worked out with carriers and vendors
April 2019	Pilot 1 final backhaul materials inventory complete for all villages
By Late Spring 2019	Pilot 1 and Pilot 2 Regional Coordinators training in Anchorage
Early June 2019	Pilot 2 villages attend Uniform Backhaul Alaska Training in Anchorage
June – September 2019	Pilot 1 backhaul events take place
October – December 2019	Pilot 1 backhaul event evaluation with transporters, recyclers, and villages
2020	Pilot 2 incorporates lessons learned from Pilot 1

Backhaul Alaska Timeline

The full Backhaul Alaska timeline through Summer 2020, including major development components, is illustrated below.



Pilot 2 Village Application Period

Soon, villages can apply to participate in the Backhaul Alaska Pilot Project 2. Applications will be online and disseminated by November 16, 2018. The application materials will include priority ranking and eligibility criteria updated based on results of the pilot program to date. Villages that have already submitted applications do not need to reapply and will hear from the Backhaul Alaska team during the application period. Interested villages should look for the applications at www.BackhaulAlaska.org on November 16, 2018.