



## Backhaul Alaska Bulletin Spring 2019

*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](mailto:Info@BackhaulAlaska.org) if you have any comments or questions. The Solid Waste Alaska Taskforce looks forward to hearing from you.

### Overview

It has been a busy year. Pilot 1 communities are completing their final inventories and undergoing site inspections prior to the summer backhaul events. Pilot 2 communities are phased one year behind Pilot 1 counterparts. They first convened in February at the Alaska Forum on the Environment and, like Pilot 1 communities, have been meeting monthly via phone. Pilot 2 communities just completed their week-long training and will be returning home to begin their inventories and set up their facilities.

Pilot 2 communities include Kwigillingok, Chignik Lagoon, Iliamna, Larsen Bay, Noatak, Noorvik, Old Harbor, Ouzinkie, Port Heiden, Port Lions, Saint Michael, Ugashik, Shaktoolik, Scammon Bay, Hooper Bay, and Unalaska.



Dr. Lynn Zender and John Kyte hold up the MOU they signed on behalf of the Solid Waste Alaska Taskforce (SWAT) and the Responsible Battery Coalition (RBC). Also pictured are RBC member representatives from O'Reilly Auto Parts and Advance Auto Parts, other SWAT members, and the Backhaul Alaska Team Leads from sixteen remote Alaska communities.

## Memorandum of Understanding Signed with the Responsible Battery Coalition

After several months of meetings, the Solid Waste Alaska Taskforce, which oversees Backhaul Alaska, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Responsible Battery Coalition (RBC). The RBC is a coalition of companies, academics and organizations committed to the responsible battery management. The MOU formalizes a partnership between the two organizations to collaborate in their shared efforts to recover and recycle spent lead-acid batteries. RBC will receive and recycle all batteries backhauled from Pilot 1 villages and assist the Program in education and outreach efforts. Backhaul Alaska will help to inform the public about the 2 Million Battery Challenge. The 2 Million Battery Challenge is an RBC Program intended to find and recycle the 12% of the nation's batteries that have not made it back into a recycle stream. Read more about the MOU [www.responsiblebatterycoalition.org/news/](http://www.responsiblebatterycoalition.org/news/)

### Pilot 1 Community On-Site Inspections



On-site training in Ekwok and Koliganek, Photo courtesy of Melany Eakin, Backhaul Alaska Regional Coordinator, BBHNC

Throughout the Winter and early Spring Backhaul Alaska staff have been sending out packing supplies to Pilot 1 villages – tailored to each community's inventory and transportation logistics. On-site training and facility inspections are carried out at each pilot community prior to the backhaul event. Communities are evaluated for adequacy in the following areas: Supplies and PPE, Facility Conditions, Staff Competence, and Packaging

status. Packing, labeling, and loading protocols are reviewed and checklists for inventory, safety gear, appropriate signage, and recordkeeping are signed off. When needed, staff receive individualized training to gain sufficient skills. Once a community passes this inspection, they are scheduled for backhaul. The first site inspections were carried out in May for Chefnak, New Stuyahok, Koliganek, and Ekwok. The initial site inspections serve a dual purpose because they provide an opportunity to train the Regional Coordinator. By using a train-the-trainer approach in each region builds consistency and conformity throughout the system.

## Building A Rural Alaska Safety Culture

Backhaul Alaska is building a system of checks and balances that ensures communities have properly trained staff with adequate infrastructure to backhaul safely and effectively, in compliance with all applicable federal rules and guidelines. In doing so, communities are given the tools, gear, and training to build a rural Alaska safety culture. From handling batteries to driving them via 4-wheeler to the airstrip or barge port, all backhaul work is performed by Backhaul Alaska certified signers. These are staff trained and tested in Backhaul Alaska protocols, including USDOT HMR and OSHA 10 hr Safety. Backhaul Alaska sends out a full OSHA-verified list of safety gear for each crew member, including Hi-Vis vests, and mercury and battery acid spill kits. Also sent are erasable aluminum emergency contact signs

**EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS**

**911** FIRST EMERGENCY RESPONSE NUMBER

**P** POLICE CONTROL

**★** SPOKE LOCAL POLICE

**★** STATE TROOPERS

**★** SPILL RESPONSE

**★** FIRE - LOCAL

**★** FIRE - STATE RESPONSE

**H** LOCAL CLINIC AND/OR NEAREST HOSPITAL

LOCATION OF FIRE EXTINGUISHER

LOCATION OF FIRST AID KIT

LOCAL WASTE DISPOSAL

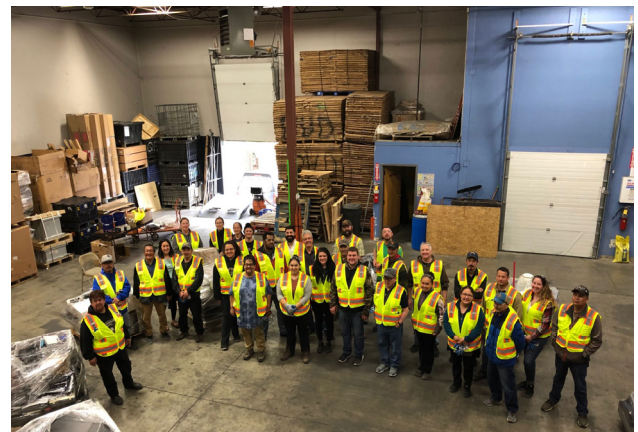
TRAINING IN USE



From left to right: Backhaul Team Leads from Old Harbor, Unalaska, Port Lions, Larsen Bay, Scammon Bay, and Interior Greenstar—a Fairbanks non-profit recycling organization .

example, the VPSO, State Trooper, Clinic, Local Scanner/VHF Channel, and the area's alternate "911" number are all critical contacts that are not listed on stock Emergency Contact Signage. Finally, during the on-site training and inspection visit, the safety supply inventory is checked to ensure it is all in-place. The function specific safety training is reviewed, and training recordkeeping file checked and updated. When safety issues are identified with the storage/staging area or protocols that the staff are using, they are flagged during site visits and the Regional Coordinators assist the community in correcting them.

## Pilot 2 Uniform Backhaul Curriculum Training



The Training Class and their instructors at the Total Reclaim Alaska facility on the first of two field days.

The 5-day Backhaul Alaska Uniform Training was held in Anchorage May 20 – 24th with 35 participants from 16 communities, plus regional Coordinators from Nome, Dillingham, Kodiak, and Fairbanks. Trainees were concurrently enrolled in three University of Alaska, Fairbanks courses for a total of 3 class credits. Together, these classes cover the full curriculum developed by an expert group of transporters and recyclers. Included within the training was OSHA 10 hr Construction Safety certification and DOT HMR General Awareness, Function Specific, and Safety Training. Trainees complete Security Awareness online and submit their certification to the Program prior to beginning backhaul activities. In addition to classroom work that covers such topics as recordkeeping, loading, required forms, and management of a community collection point, two afternoons were devoted to function specific training and testing at the Total Reclaim Alaska warehouse.

Multiple stations were set up for participants to practice and be tested on proper packaging and labeling for batteries, electronic wastes, and fluorescent lights. In the case of batteries, both plane and barge

that the Program developed specific to rural Alaska. For



Senator Murkowski opened the May 20-24<sup>th</sup> Uniform Backhaul Training for Pilot 2 communities with a heartfelt videotaped thank you to the many Communities, companies, organizations, and agencies who are part of Backhaul Alaska. In the video, she noted how far the Program had come – reminiscing about the day she conceived the original idea in the Bethel Airport. To view the Senator’s message, visit: [www.backhaulalaska.org/docs/MURK\\_BACKHAUL.mp4](http://www.backhaulalaska.org/docs/MURK_BACKHAUL.mp4)

When	What
<b>Monthly</b>	Regional and statewide teleconferences on various Backhaul Alaska Topics are held for both Pilot groups.
<b>June-July 2019</b>	Pilot 1 final backhaul materials inventory and site inspections completed for all Pilot 1 villages.
<b>Throughout the Summer</b>	Pilot 1 backhaul events take place in all villages
<b>October – December 2019</b>	Pilot 1 backhaul event evaluation with transporters, recyclers, and villages

<b>Fall 2019 – Spring 2020</b>	Pilot 2 performs inventory, receives supplies and site inspections, works on community engagement
<b>Summer 2020</b>	Pilot 2 backhaul events.

Zender Environmental Health and Research Group was awarded a USEPA Collaborative Problem-Solving grant by the USEPA Environmental Justice Program. The intent of the grant is to ensure that communities are an integral piece of the planning process and in defining what a successful Backhaul Alaska program will look like. Afterall, it is for the rural communities that Backhaul Alaska is being developed. Through a collaborative session using audience real-time texting technology and participatory discussion, the May Training included a session that asked trainees to develop and identify Backhaul Alaska program goals and performance measures that were important to their communities. The below Word Cloud on community values depicts the most common trainee responses in larger font.

[illegible]

SWAT would like to thank the **USDOT PHMSA, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Kawerak Inc, USEPA**, and **ADEC** for making this training possible. USDOT grant to Zender Environmental Health and Research Group covered much of the training cost. They also provided an instructor for the HMR General Awareness component, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs funding to Kawerak was critical to provide supplies, supplementary materials, and Backhaul Alaska specific training. USEPA IGAP funds



The graduation photograph for the Backhaul Team Leads from Pilot 2 communities.

were used by many participants to pay for their personnel time and USEPA EJ grant monies were used to plan and develop the community engagement session. [ADEC Solid Waste Program](#) and [Kawerak](#) provided staff to serve as co-instructors, and the [Bristol Bay Native Health Consortium](#) (BBNHC), [Interior Greenstar](#), and [Kodiak Area Native Association](#) (KANA) provided regional coordinator staff time. During the training, every participant was enrolled as a student at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and they received credit for three 1-unit classes. The [University of Alaska Fairbanks, Bristol Bay Campus](#) assisted in UAF enrollment and class registration. [Total Reclaim Alaska](#) graciously provided their full facility use for the day, even though it disrupted their normal business. The [City of Anchorage](#) midtown Transfer Station uses an old rail car that is nearly the exact size of the shipping containers used by communities for their own recycle facilities. The Transfer station staff gave of their time and expertise in demonstrating to participants a real-world model of how to operate and organize their own recycle facilities. The experience provided participants the ability to return home with a concrete vision of what their own communities could attain. [Moose's Tooth Pizza](#) was very generous and provided a working lunch for 40 people, allowing us to complete the training on-time so that people could return home to start their summer preparations.

---

*The Solid Waste Alaska Taskforce oversees the development of Backhaul Alaska. Learn more about SWAT and its affiliates at [www.907SWAT.org](http://www.907SWAT.org) To unsubscribe to this mailing list, please email [907swat@gmail.com](mailto:907swat@gmail.com) For more information about the Backhaul Alaska program, go to [www.backhaulalaska.org](http://www.backhaulalaska.org)*



Hands-on training for packing batteries to representatives from Hooper Bay and Scammon Bay



DOT HMR General Awareness Training taught by Neal Suchak, DOT



Hands-on training for packing electronic wastes on pallets at Total Reclaim.