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Construction starts on Kivalina Evacuation & School Site Access Road DOT&PF teams up with local communities to accelerate project delivery

(KIVALINA, Alaska) – Barges delivering equipment, fuel, and supplies arrived in the coastal community of Kivalina, Alaska last month, kicking off construction of the Kivalina Evacuation and School Site Access Road project. The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) used an innovative team approach to deliver this project, located in DOT&PF’s Northern Region.

“Upon this moment lies the future well-being of our people,” said Stanley Hawley, Tribal Administrator for the Native Village of Kivalina, underscoring the urgency and deep need for this project in the face of increased erosion and sea storm intensity.

The project will increase community resilience by constructing a safe, reliable, all-season evacuation road between the community of Kivalina and Kisimigiqtuq Hill that residents will be able to use in the event of a catastrophic storm or ocean surge. The seven-mile-long road will be constructed with local material, and is estimated to cost \$2.5 million per mile. In addition, a 3,200-foot lagoon crossing that will connect the barrier island community to the mainland will also be constructed at an estimated cost of \$25 million.

As part of the innovative teaming process, DOT&PF, the Federal Highway Administration, the Northwest Arctic Borough, the Native Village of Kivalina, the City of Kivalina, NANA Regional Corporation, and other permitting and stakeholder agencies delivered the project into the construction phase in less than 22 months. Each member of the team contributed significant resources to bring the project to construction.

“Increasing the safety and resilience of our transportation infrastructure and the communities we serve is an essential part of our mission,” said DOT&PF Commissioner Marc Luiken. “This important safety project could not have advanced so quickly without the engagement and hard work of our local partners.”

“I heard first-hand from residents during my visit to Kivalina the importance of this road,” Governor Bill Walker said. “We made a promise to the people of Kivalina to support them as they looked for solutions to build a safe, reliable future for their school – and their community. As Alaskans continue to experience the impacts of coastal erosion and climate change, it’s our responsibility to step up and help.”

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities oversees 239 airports, 10 ferries serving 35 communities, more than 5,600 miles of highway and 731 public facilities throughout the state of Alaska. The mission of the department is to “Keep Alaska Moving through service and infrastructure.”