

U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO)

Engagement subject: Alaska Native Village Flooding and Erosion

Source for the work: GAO is beginning this work in response to a request made by the Senate Subcommittee on Disaster Recovery, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Objective/key questions: This is an update to GAO's December 2003 study, *Alaska Native Villages: Most are Affected by Flooding and Erosion, Few Qualify for Federal Assistance* (GAO-04-142). Preliminary key questions are: (Q1) What flooding and erosion threats do Alaska Native villages currently face? (Q2) What guidelines could be used to determine federal investment in threatened villages? (Q3) What criteria could be used for setting priorities for funding and other participation in planning and construction in threatened villages?

Agencies and anticipated locations to be contacted: Departments of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service; Defense's Army Corps of Engineers; Health and Human Service's Indian Health Service; Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency; Housing and Urban Development; the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Geological Survey; Transportation's Federal Aviation Administration; the Denali Commission; and the State of Alaska. GAO will visit government officials in Anchorage, Alaska as well as village representatives in several Alaska Native villages.

The estimated start date for the work: May 13, 2008

Time frames for Alaska site visits: To date, GAO is planning to conduct field work in Alaska during two 2-week visits. Each visit will likely consist of 1 week in Anchorage and 1 week of village visits. The first Alaska visit was June 2-13, 2008 and we visited the villages of Unalakleet, Shaktoolik, and Shishmaref. We are tentatively planning the second Alaska visit for August 11-22, 2008.

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