



PRESS RELEASE

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AIDEA and Tribal Leaders Make the Case for Jobs, Resource Development, and Expanding the Alaskan Economy

JUNEAU, ALASKA – The Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA) and regional advocates for jobs and responsible resource development recently traveled to Juneau to present to the Alaska Legislature's [House Resources Committee on March 31, 2025](#), and the [Senate Transportation Committee on April 1, 2025](#).

Presenting on Monday to House Resources was Jeff San Juan, AIDEA Project Manager, joined by Pollack “P.J.” Simon, First Chief of Allakaket, Fred Sun Sr., Tribal President from Shungnak, Charles Lampe, President of Kaktovik Inupiat Corporation, and Matthew Rexford, Tribal Administrator from the village of Kaktovik.



Pictured above, in Juneau, Alaska from left: Fred Sun, Sr., Tribal President, Native Village of Shungnak, Nancy Dahlstrom, Alaska Lieutenant Governor, Pollack “P.J.” Simon, First Chief, Village of Allakaket, Charles Lampe, President, Kaktovik Inupiat Corporation, and Matthew Rexford, Tribal Administrator, Native Village of Kaktovik.

Randy Ruaro, Executive Director of AIDEA, led the delegation's presentation on Tuesday to the Alaska Legislature's Senate Transportation Committee.

The discussions on both days focused on the Ambler Access Project, AIDEA leases along the coastal plain of the 1002 area in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), and the impact that responsible resource development will have on the residents of Kaktovik, the North Slope Borough, and the entire state of Alaska. AIDEA acquired several lease parcels in 2020, and after having the leases cancelled under the Biden administration, they were recently reinstated due to a ruling by a federal court.

Charles Lampe, President of Kaktovik Iñupiat Corporation, said, "We appreciate AIDEA's attention to the local perspective with respect to oil exploration on its reinstated leases within the Coastal Plain. We look forward to partnering with AIDEA on all aspects of their program moving forward. These jobs and projects are critical to our community for our economic future."

Matthew Rexford, Tribal Administrator, Native Village of Kaktovik, stated, "Our tribe and people of Kaktovik are supportive of oil and gas exploration and development within the Coastal Plain. We want to be clear that this area represents our homelands and that we are the primary stewards of these lands for protection. Our forefathers have told us that we need to utilize all the resources that our lands and waters have to offer. That includes those that may exist beneath our footprints."

Regarding the Ambler Access Project, Mr. Sun and Mr. Simon emphasized the positive impact mining jobs have had in the region touched by the Red Dog Mine, as well as the economic and social improvements the project will bring to the region for generations to come.



Presenting to the Alaska House Transportation Committee April 1, 2025, in Juneau, Alaska, Fred Sun, Sr., Tribal President, Native Village of Shungnak, and Pollack "P.J." Simon, First Chief, Village of Allakaket, are pictured above.

"I'm glad that we were able to travel to Juneau to meet with our Representatives and Senators to demonstrate our support for the Ambler Access Road," said **Fred Sun, Sr., Tribal President, Native Village of Shungnak**. "It is important to talk about the importance of this project to our community and our residents for jobs and training. We want to continue to be consulted and have a seat at the table going forward."

P.J. Simon, First Chief, Village of Allakaket, stated, "We look forward to the jobs, training, and education for our youth that comes with mining and the Ambler Access Road. We would like to see State funding create a training center in Allakaket for all communities along the Ambler Access Road to prepare for construction and mining."

"The importance of legislators hearing from residents of the region firsthand about the challenges they face and the generational improvements these projects will bring to the region cannot be overstated," said **Randy Ruaro, Executive Director of AIDEA**. "Hearing their voices underscores the impact AIDEA's lead on these projects has and highlights the role our financing plays in developing opportunities for current and future generations of Alaskans statewide. We appreciate the great dialogue our group had in the committee hearings, as well as meeting with individual legislators during our time in Juneau."

About AIDEA's leases in the 1002 section of the ANWR: In 2017, Congress passed the "Tax Cuts and Jobs Act," which directed the Department of the Interior (DOI) to establish and manage a competitive oil and gas leasing program in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). The Coastal Plain, often referred to as the 1002 Area, comprises 1.56 million acres within the 19.64 million-acre ANWR. AIDEA's leases cover 0.37 acres. Development of the 1002 Coastal Plain holds significant potential for economic growth. According to the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), leasing and development could generate billions of dollars in revenue for local, state, and federal governments while creating thousands of jobs.

About the Ambler Access Project:

The Ambler Access Project is a proposed 211-mile, private, industrial-controlled access road to reach the Ambler Mining District in the Northwest Arctic Borough. The district is a large prospective copper-zinc mineral belt with extensive deposits of critical minerals and other elements essential for a green economy and military effectiveness. AAP was modeled after a similar AIDEA-funded industrial access road project located in the Northwest Arctic Borough, the DeLong Mountain Transportation System, or Red Dog Road, in support of Red Dog Mine.

About AIDEA:

The Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority is a public corporation of the State of Alaska. AIDEA's purpose is to promote, develop, and advance the general prosperity and economic welfare of the people of Alaska.

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