

YK Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Energy Work Session Meeting Notes

10:00 pm – 12:00 pm, Tuesday, February 7, 2024 | [Link to meeting recording](#)

Attendees (alphabetized by organization)

Attendee Name	Organization
Marilyn Stanislaus	Alakanuk Tribal Council
Mary Ayunerak	Alakanuk Tribal Council
Ben White	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Romorenzo Marasigan *	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Audrey Alstrom *	Alaska Energy Authority
Shaun Codman	Alaska Logistics
Anna Sattler *	Alaska Village Electric Cooperative
Coralette Waite	Association of Village Council Presidents
Eric Evon	Association of Village Council Presidents
Sam White	Association of Village Council Presidents, Regional Housing Authority
Ana Hoffman	Bethel Native Corporation
Alba Brice *	Calista Corporation
Iliodor Philemonof III	Calista Corporation
Miranda Strong *	Calista Corporation
Vernon Chimegalrea *	Calista Corporation
George Guy	Kwethluk Inc.
Kim Sweet	Lower Kuskokwim School District
Jack Hébert	National Renewable Energy Laboratory
Vanessa Stevens	National Renewable Energy Laboratory
Sean Glasheen	Nuvista
Iva Karoly-Lister	Rural Alaska Community Action Program
Jonathan Samuelson	The Kuskokwim Corporation, Kuskokwim River Intertribal Fish Commission
Archie Andrew	Tuntutuliak Community Services Association
Ann Fischer	U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Science
Brett Nelson	U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Science
Robert Chambers	U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development
Marybeth Whalen	Yupit Piciryarait Cultural Center

*Starred attendees participated in the work session virtually while unmarked attendees participated in person.

Each breakout session featured a specific focus area summary document to guide the discussion. This summary document was used as a baseline and will be updated for the future CEDS document based on Work Session attendee feedback. To view the draft focus area summaries referenced in the breakout sessions, visit the YK CEDS page [here](#).

Data Indicators Discussion Highlights

- The amount of energy generated from renewable energy i.e., how much generation is being produced, what is the amount of diesel used?
- Track the age of generators in each community.
- Track outages per year.
- Track the number of days/hours that are offset with renewable energy.
- Measure success on action items with future gatherings to see if there is any progress. Update at annual meetings, other regional meetings.
- Measure and highlight disparities to raise awareness, i.e., some YK communities are considered poorest in nation, while also having highest cost of living metrics.

Objectives, Strategies, and Actions Discussion

What strategies or actions are missing?

*Starred items are noted as a proposed priority.

- **Strategy A – Improve utility operations, reliability, and data collection.**
 - Energy and maintenance training and capacity building. *
 - Provide training for rate making to ensure communities are not only covering costs for fuel and routine O&M but planning for replacement costs, too.
 - Advocate for Alaska Energy Authority to do their fiduciary responsibilities and provide technical assistance when power goes out.
 - Utility and energy programs need to unify to address the lack of stable, resilient energy.
- **Strategy B – Research and invest in renewable energy.**
 - Fast track solutions that can be realized within five years, i.e., pilot projects with Alaska Center for Energy and Power. *
 - Transitional energy – upgrade energy systems in the communities to support the addition/incorporation of renewables. Many older generators in communities cannot be integrated with renewables. “Renewable ready.”*
 - Retrofit schools and community buildings with clean energy, solar, and wind.
 - Explore thermal heaters that use excess electricity.
 - Explore solar power, wind power, hydro power, and battery cells.
 - Define “renewable energy” as a region. What renewable/clean energy projects are most supported and feasible in YK i.e., is nuclear energy considered renewable? (There is a definition from the Department of Energy that could be considered. Nuclear energy is usually considered non-renewable.)
 - Address challenges with Coast Guard certificates of inspection for receiving fuel, which can be a barrier for some communities.
 - Simplify processes for community relocation.
- Other ideas

- Assist all communities with developing disaster plans and climate adaptation plans. Need to be responsive and proactive. The Alaska Climate Adaptation Center can likely help.
- Move from feasibility to implementation. The region is “studied out.” *
 - Lots of funding available for renewables, just need to apply.
 - Many agencies have free technical assistance.
- Increase weatherization funding, programs, and incentives. *
 - Leveling homes also has weatherization benefits.
- Address home heating fuel prices, perhaps through consortium or collaborations. *
- Build cost/kw ratio understanding with federal and state funding partners.
- Explore micronuclear battery cells – small scale microreactors. Pilot in the YK?
- Microgrids: connect groups of 3-4 communities for increased efficiency and resiliency.
 - At the same time, when there is an outage, multiple communities can be impacted.
- Improve diesel efficiency.
- PCE protection and expansion. PCE helps ensure cost equity.*
- Address fuel delivery challenges; these result in increased costs, and can cause high fuel prices that persist all season.
- Ensure equitable distribution of funding/assistance such as weatherization. Some income limits disqualify residents from participation.
- Tribal administrators play a critical role and need to be supported.

How can we collaborate to make progress?

- Better sharing, less duplication.
- Explore Alaska Municipal League Energy Hub.
- The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Energy Transitions Initiative Partnership Project (ETIPP) <https://www.energy.gov/eere/energy-transitions-initiative-partnership-project>.
 - McGrath worked with UAF’s Alaska Center for Energy and Power (ACEP) the Renewable Energy Alaska Project (REAP), and the ETIPP program to address energy solutions. <https://www.uaf.edu/news/mcgrath-looks-to-sustainable-energy-future.php>.
- Ensure Alaska regulations are open to alternative energy projects, such as micro nuclear.
- Seek new funds, target infrastructure upgrades that can be realized within our lifetime.
- Work with Alaska Energy Authority, Environmental Protection Agency, State Legislators, School Districts, ANTHC, Nuvista Light and Electric Cooperation, Department of Energy, and Office of Indian Energy. Convene 2-4 times per year?
- Partner with manufacturers of generators.
- Develop Independent Power Producer (IPP) template agreements to generate funding for improvements; ANTHC helping develop templates. Six feasibility studies have already been completed.