

# Nine Abandoned Sewage Disposal Bunkers ACTION PLAN



Hooper Bay, Alaska

Prepared by

Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council  
Brownfields Tribal Response Program  
815 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Suite 201  
Fairbanks, AK 99701

November 2009



## INTRODUCTION

In April 2009, the Hooper Bay Tribal Council applied for an Environmental Site Assessment of the Nine Abandoned Sewage Disposal Bunkers through the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council (YRITWC) Brownfields Program. Based on the hazards posed to human health and the environment, this site was ranked as a top priority and selected to receive a *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA)* and this *Action Plan*.

**The EPA defines a brownfield as ‘real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant.’**

The information contained in this Plan is based on the Phase I ESA, communication with the Hooper Bay Tribal Council Environmental Department, interviews with local residents, and communication with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Brownfield State Response Program.

## PURPOSE

This document is an Action Plan, with the general purpose of providing the Hooper Bay community with relevant information to inform future decisions regarding the Nine Abandoned Sewage Disposal Bunkers. This document will provide site-specific background information, summarize major findings of the Environmental Site Assessment, outline future recommended actions, and identify potential funding opportunities.

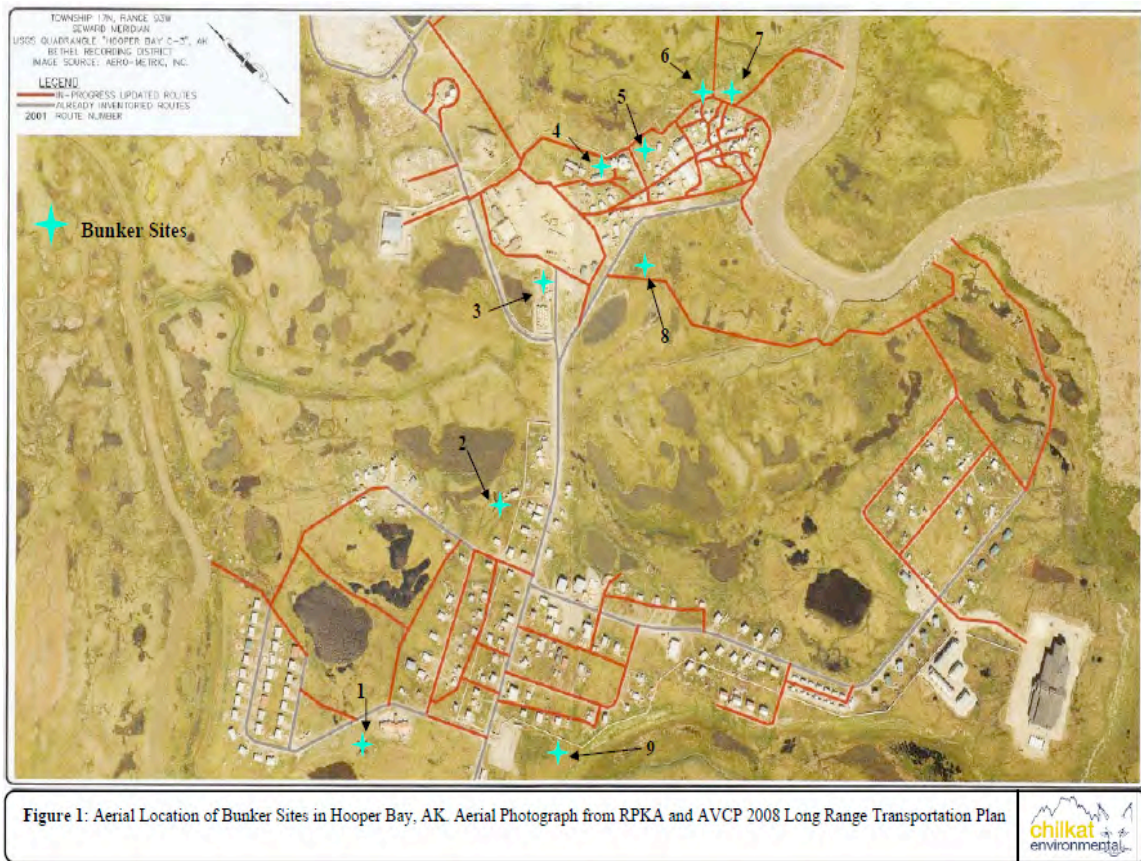
Sections in this Action Plan include:

1. Site Description
2. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Findings
3. Recommended Actions
4. Potential Funding Opportunities

# 1. SITE DESCRIPTION

In April 2009, the Hooper Bay Tribal Council applied for a Phase I ESA with YRITWC for an assessment of Nine Abandoned Sewage Disposal Bunkers. YRITWC hired Chilkat Environmental to complete the work, and travelled with two of its environmental professionals on August 27-28 to Hooper Bay to participate in the Phase I ESA.

The Nine Abandoned Sewage Disposal Bunkers are located throughout the village of Hooper Bay where they provided efficient access for sewage disposal (see Figure 1).



The bunkers were constructed of 2 X 4 lumber and plywood with an average length and width of 14 ft X 8 ft with a depth of 3 ft, set atop the tundra in the 1960s and used until the late 1970s for disposal of household sewage waste. Seven of the bunkers remain in place with trash and sewage inside while the remaining two (Bunkers 3 & 7) have been entirely removed or buried. While the bunkers have been abandoned for many years some of them continue to be used for sewage disposal and garbage.

## **2. PHASE I ENVIRONMENTAL SITE ASSESSMENT FINDINGS (Chilkat Environmental)**

After meeting and interviewing Hooper Bay Tribal Council Environmental Department staff Bernard Murran – Environmental Coordinator for Native Village of Hooper Bay; Leota Lake – Environmental Assistant for Native Village of Hooper Bay, and David Bunyan – 1<sup>st</sup> Chief, Native Village of Hooper Bay, Chilkat Environmental and YRITWC staff gathered information through records review, on-site interviews, and physical investigation of the sites.

In the report produced by Chilkat Environmental - which conducted the investigation with YRITWC - a review of the site history, regulatory records, aerial photographs and field investigation indicates no presence of contamination from hazardous substances or petroleum products associated with the nine bunkers which constitute the subject property for this Phase I ESA. Potential hazards presented by the bunkers include entrapment and impacts of sewage moving through the community above and below the surface.

## **3. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

As a result of site investigation, it has been determined that the bunker sites do not qualify as “brownfield” sites, because there was no petroleum or hazardous waste contamination discovered. They are, however, a solid waste concern for the community, and the YRITWC staff recommends that the Tribe continue to pursue cleanup of these sites using other sources of funding.

### STEP 1: Site Control

- a) Post signs and participate in community meetings to educate the public about the hazards and safety issues of the site.
- b) The area should be blocked off by using caution tape or boards to prevent children from playing on or near the bunkers.

### STEP 2: Planning For Clean-Up

- a) Hold a community meeting to determine property reuse goal.
- b) Establish planning committee (city, tribe, individuals, partnering organizations).
- c) Work and meet regularly with planning committee and partnering organizations to develop clean-up plan.
- d) Identify resources:
  - o *Local*: equipment, HAZWOPER trained individuals, and landfill.
  - o *Regional*: partnering organizations, funding agencies.
  - o *State/Federal*: ADEC Solid Waste Program and EPA Solid Waste or Indian General Assistance Program

#### **4. POTENTIAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

The EPA Indian General Assistance Program (IGAP) provides an opportunity for tribes to build capacity and management capability to implement environmental programs administered by the U.S. EPA. Under the Program, tribes can tailor capacity-building through an integrated plan that may include financial assistance complemented and/or supplemented with additional assistance through project and program-specific grants. <http://www.epa.gov/region08/tribes/gap.html>

## ATTACHMENT: RESOURCE CONTACTS

### Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council

Brownfields Tribal Response Program

Rose Hewitt, Program Manager - rhewitt@yritwc.org

Caleb Aronson, Environmental Technician - caronson@yritwc.org

815 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Suite 201

Fairbanks, AK 99701

phone: (907) 451-2530

fax: (907) 451-2534

<http://yritwc.org/Departments/SustainableLands/tabid/61/Default.aspx>

Backhaul State Response Program

Stephen Price, Program Manager - sprice@yritwc.org

725 Christensen Drive, Suite 3

Anchorage, AK 99501

phone: (907) 258-3337

<http://yritwc.org/Departments/Backhaul/tabid/62/Default.aspx>

### Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

Brownfield Program

John Carnahan, Coordinator

john.carnahan@alaska.gov

phone: (907) 451-2166

Sonja Benson, Environmental Program Specialist

sonja.benson@alaska.gov

phone: (907) 451-2156

Deborah Williams, Environmental Program Specialist

deborah.williams@alaska.gov

phone: (907) 451-5174

610 University Avenue

Fairbanks, Alaska 99709

fax: (907) 451-2155

<http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/csp/brownfields.htm>

Solid Waste Program

Bob Blackenburg, Program Manager - bob.blankenburg@alaska.gov

phone: (907) 269-7581

<http://www.dec.state.ak.us/eh/sw/index.htm>

➤ Landfill Permitting:

[http://www.dec.state.ak.us/eh/sw/SW\\_Permits/permitapps.htm](http://www.dec.state.ak.us/eh/sw/SW_Permits/permitapps.htm)

- Water Quality Standards for Surface Water Monitoring at Landfills:  
<http://www.dec.state.ak.us/EH/sw/Factsheets/Surface%20water%20MCL%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>

Solid Waste Action Network landfills page:

<http://www.ccthita-swan.org/Tutorials/landfill.cfm>

EPA Waste Management in Indian Country:

<http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/wycd/tribal/finance.htm>

- Grant Resources for Solid Waste Activities in Indian Country:  
<http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/wycd/tribal/pdfxt/tribfund.pdf>