



# Native Village of Noatak

## TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY PLAN

Funded by FHWA

May 2023



Native Village of Noatak  
P.O. Box 89  
Noatak, Alaska 99761  
Phone: (907)485-2173  
Fax: (907)485-2137



3111 C Street, Ste 300, Anchorage, AK 99503



Native Village of Noatak  
P.O. Box 89  
Noatak, Alaska 99761  
Phone: (907)485-2173  
Fax: (907)485-2137

**Resolution No. 23-31**

**A Resolution to Adopt the 2023 Noatak Tribal Transportation Safety Plan (TTSP)**

**WHEREAS**, the Native Village of Noatak, hereafter referred to as "TRIBE," is a federally recognized Tribe; and

**WHEREAS**, the Native Village of Noatak is the governing body of the TRIBE; and

**WHEREAS**, the TRIBE is committed to reducing the number of deaths and serious injuries and improving the overall safety of the transportation system; and

**WHEREAS**, the TRIBE has identified a need to create a transportation safety plan for our community; and

**WHEREAS**, the TRIBE has reviewed the 2023 Noatak Tribal Transportation Safety Plan;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Native Village of Noatak hereby accepts and approves the plan as reflecting the conditions and needs relating to transportation safety in the community, and hereby adopts the 2023 Noatak Tribal Transportation Safety Plan.

**CERTIFICATION**

It is hereby certified that on the 9 day of May, 2023, a quorum of the Native Village of Noatak was formed and did pass and adopt the preceding resolution by a vote of 9 in favor, 0 opposed, and 3 not voting.

President, Native Village of Noatak

5-10-2023

Date

Secretary, Native Village of Noatak

5-10-23

Date

---

Thank you to the Noatak Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) Council and residents of Noatak who supported work on the Tribal Transportation Safety Plan, and to the Federal Highway Administration as well as Bureau of Indian Affairs for providing funding and guidance in developing the plan. Your support helps to improve safety in Noatak that will lead towards the prevention of injury and the saving of lives on community roads. A special thanks to the Noatak Transportation Manager and members of the Tribal Council for their efforts in the development of this plan.

---



1. Introduction ..... 1

    1.1. Public Involvement..... 2

2. Background ..... 2

    2.1. Location..... 2

    2.1. History and Culture..... 4

    2.2. Transportation..... 5

    2.3. Mission..... 5

    2.4. Priorities..... 6

3. Existing Resources ..... 7

    3.1. Safety Partners..... 7

        3.1.1. School ..... 8

        3.1.2. Alaska DOT - Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)..... 9

        3.1.3. Alaska DOT - Crash Data Overview..... 9

    3.2. Overview of Existing Efforts ..... 11

        3.2.1. 2022 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) ..... 11

        3.2.2. 2021-2022 NWABSD Strategic Plan ..... 11

        3.2.3. Northwest Alaska Transportation Plan (2021) ..... 12

    3.3. Emergency Response Resources..... 12

4. Documentation of Needs & Priorities..... 13

    4.1. Community Priorities..... 13

5. Emphasis Areas, Goals and Strategies ..... 15

6. Route and Ice Road Trail Marking and Management..... 19

    6.1.1. Goal..... 20

    6.1.2. Strategies..... 20

    6.1.3. Potential Partners ..... 21

    6.1.4. Cost Estimate..... 21

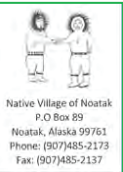
7. Street Lighting..... 21

    7.1.1. Goal..... 22

    7.1.2. Strategies..... 22

    7.1.3. Potential Partners ..... 22

    7.1.4. Cost Estimate..... 22



8. Dust Mitigation..... 22

8.1.1. Goal..... 23

8.1.2. Strategies..... 23

8.1.3. Potential Partners..... 23

8.1.4. Cost Estimate..... 23

9. Route and Ice Road Development - Safety Equipment..... 23

9.1.1. Goal..... 24

9.1.2. Strategies..... 24

9.1.3. Potential Partners..... 24

9.1.4. Cost Estimate..... 24

10. Improving and Updating Signage..... 24

10.1.1. Goal..... 25

10.1.2. Strategies..... 25

10.1.3. Potential Partners..... 26

10.1.4. Cost Estimate..... 26

11. Trail Safety..... 26

11.1.1. Goal..... 27

11.1.2. Strategies..... 27

11.1.3. Potential Partners..... 27

12. Implementation..... 28

12.1. Evaluation..... 28

12.2. Updates..... 29

Appendix I: Works Cited..... 29

Appendix II: Public Involvement & Supplemental Documents..... 30

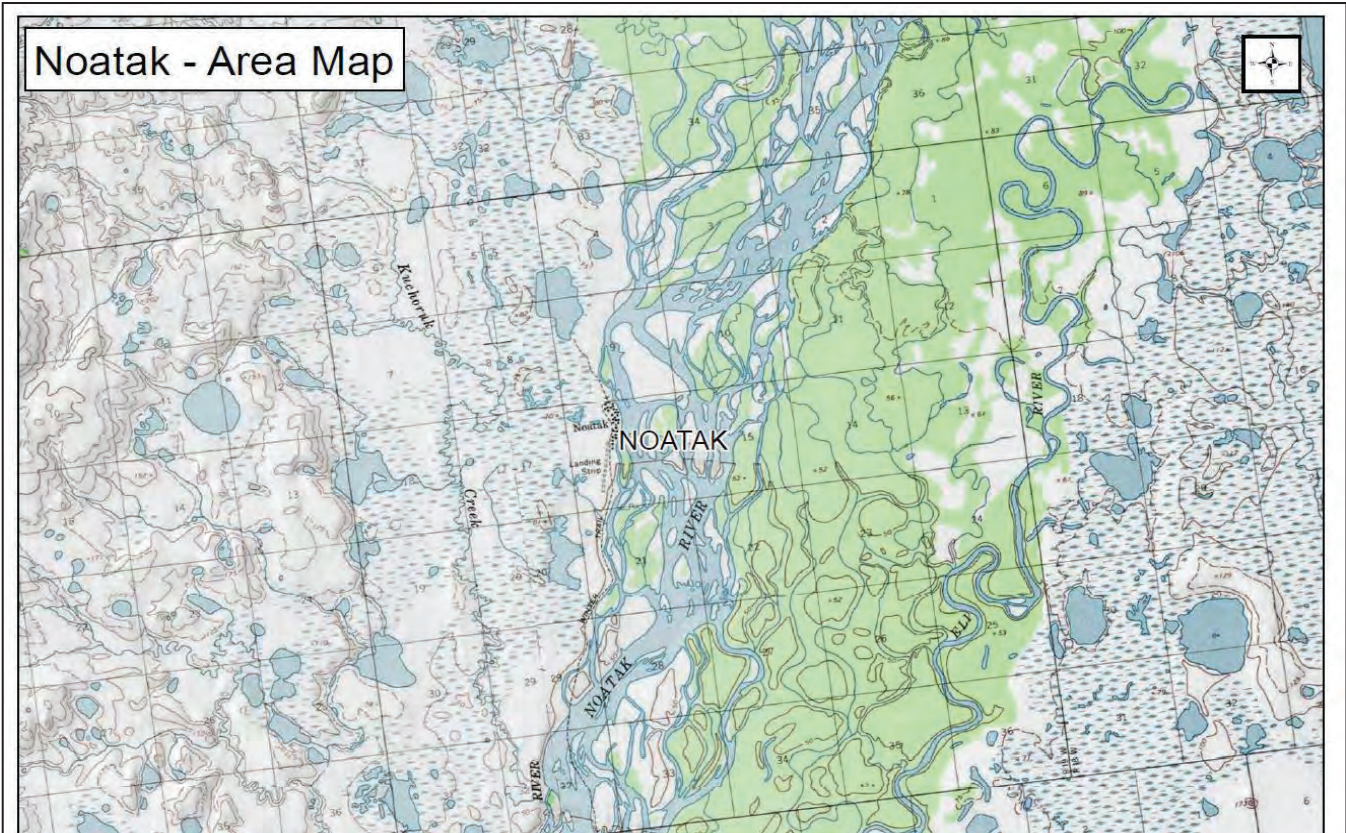


## 1. Introduction

The Native Village of Noatak is looking to update its 2014 Tribal Transportation Safety Plan and document new and existing transportation safety concerns affecting the community. These transportation safety improvements relate to vehicular, snowmachine, ATV, pedestrian, and other means of transportation within and around the community. The Tribal Transportation Safety Plan for the Native Village of Noatak was developed to identify unsafe conditions associated with the community's transportation routes and establish a plan for protecting the life and safety of community members. This plan was funded by the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) and received guidance from staff at Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Support and guidance was also provided by Kuna Engineering in the development of this plan.



Once complete, the Tribal Transportation Safety Plan (TTSP) will serve as an important resource for improving the safety of transportation on tribal lands. The TTSP will identify emphasis areas, transportation safety issues, potential improvements, and implementation strategies to improve transportation safety in and around Noatak.



*Map of the community of Noatak and surrounding topography as well as the Noatak River*

While other agencies may lead some of the identified safety actions, Noatak IRA staff will be instrumental in initiating transportation safety strategies and will monitor progress on all the strategies included in the plan to ensure that the actions are implemented. Additionally, as the TTSP is a “living document,” it is important that the Tribe reevaluate and update the document

on a regular basis. FHWA recommends that transportation safety plans be updated at least every five years to incorporate any updated priorities, monitor progress on the plan, and optimize funding eligibility.



*Noatak Community participating in transportation meeting (2022)*

## 1.1. Public Involvement

The safety plan priority list was developed through input from the IRA Council, the transportation manager (Alvin Ashby) and through a public meeting and presentation related to transportation in the community in August 2022 (led by Kuna Engineering staff members). A transportation survey was also

filled out by meeting attendees that was used to develop transportation safety improvements that can be made in the community among other transportation improvements that need to be made. A follow up meeting occurred in December 2022 with the Noatak IRA Council, the Noatak Transportation Manager and Kuna Engineering to help highlight and develop the transportation safety priorities highlighted in this plan. Additional information related to the public involvement process can be found in the appendix.

## 2. Background

### 2.1. Location

Noatak, or *Nautaaq* in Inupiaq, is an unincorporated community located on the west bank of the Noatak River, 55 miles north of Kotzebue and 70 miles north of the Arctic Circle, in the Northwest Arctic Borough and NANA region. This is the only settlement on the 396-mile-long Noatak River, surrounded by the Brook Range and the 66-million-acre Noatak National Preserve.

The community lies at approximately 67.571110° North Latitude and - 162.965280° West



*The community of Noatak is on the Noatak River and is near wilderness areas and national monuments*

*Source: National Park Service (NPS)*



Longitude. (Sec. 16, T025N, R019W, Kateel River Meridian.) Noatak is located in the Kotzebue Recording District. The area encompasses 11.6 square miles of land and 0.7 square miles of water, at an elevation of 30 feet above sea level.

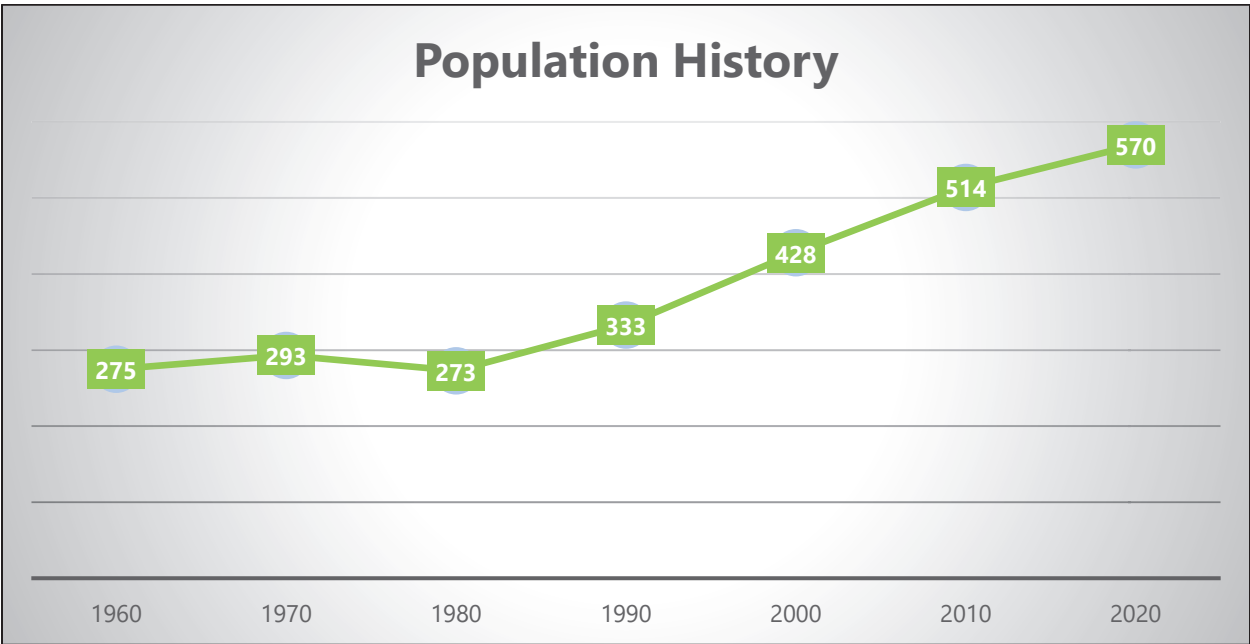


TABLE 2.1: NOATAK POPULATION (2020 CENSUS)

The 2020 Census population of Noatak is listed as 570 individuals. Alaska Natives represent 99% of the population, the demographics of the community are 53% male and 47% female. There are 90 total households in Noatak and 4.7 persons per household. Noatak has seen an 11% increase in population since the last US Census in 2010 and has a population where roughly half the population is under the age of 21.

The State of Alaska Division of Community and Regional Affairs states: Noatak falls within the arctic climate zone, characterized by seasonal extremes in temperature. Winters are long and harsh, and summers are short but warm. Temperature extremes have been recorded from -59 to 75 °F. The Noatak River is navigable by shallow-draft boats from early June to early October.<sup>1</sup>



Overview image of Noatak with braided Noatak River

<sup>1</sup> State of Alaska, DCRA Portal, Noatak, Alaska, website:  
<https://dced.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=c03b36a00b464ba6804cb1b7c5e89c32>



2.1. History and Culture

Noatak was established as a fishing and hunting camp in the 19th century. The rich resources of this region enabled the camp to develop into a permanent settlement. The 1880 census listed the site as *Noatagamut*, which means "inland river people." A Friends Church was established in the community in 1886 and a school was established in conjunction with that church shortly thereafter. In cooperation with the Friends Church and federal government, the Noatak people-built homes and community buildings from local timber to establish a more permanent community there in the early 1900's.

Noatak today is rooted in Inupiat values and relies on the historical and cultural relationship to the land and river for subsistence that has been built up over the years. In addition to the archaeological, river life and



Noatak School (1920s)

Source: UAA Consortium Library

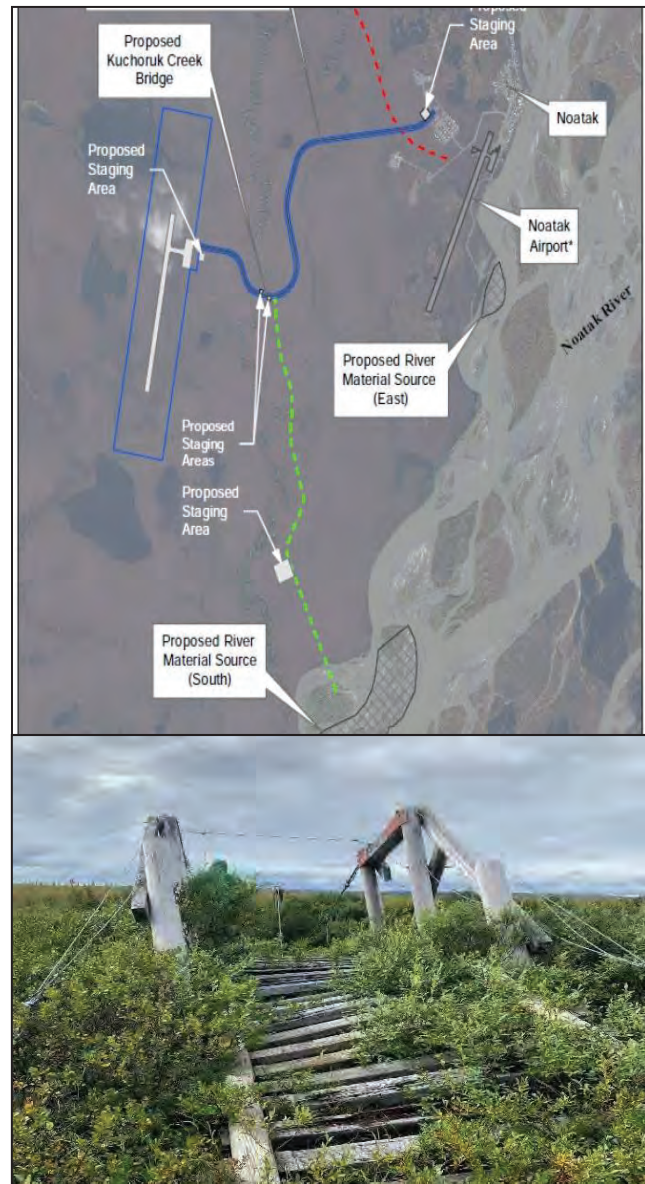
wildlife resources of the community, there are many other natural resources including metallic and nonmetallic mineral deposits and a big portion of the community is employed by the Red Dog Mine about 35 miles North of the community. Subsistence activities are the central focus of the culture, and families travel to fish camps during the summer and hunt migrating Caribou and Geese in the fall and spring months.

TABLE 2.2: COMMUNITY CONTACT INFORMATION

<b>Village Council</b> – Native Village of Noatak P.O. Box 89 Noatak, AK 99761 Phone 907-485-2173 Fax 907-485-2137	<b>Corporation</b> – Maniilaq Association P.O. Box 256 Kotzebue, AK 99752 Phone 907-442-3321 Alternative Phone 1-800-431-3321
<b>Borough</b> – Northwest Arctic Borough PO BOX 1110 Kotzebue, AK, 99752 Phone 907-442-2500 Fax 907-442-2930	<b>Regional Native Corporation</b> – NANA PO BOX 49 Kotzebue, AK, 99752 Phone 907-442-3301 Fax 907-442-2866

## 2.2. Transportation

Noatak is primarily accessed by air. The state-owned lighted gravel runway is available. Six regional air services provide cargo, mail, and passenger services. There are currently no barge services to Noatak. Small boats, ATVs, and snow machines are used for local transportation. Historic trails along the Noatak River are still used for inter-village travel and subsistence activities. resurfacing and improvements to the airport. These planned improvements would include potentially developing a new barge landing site and the creation of a new material site for the improvements necessary to update the airport. The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT), in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is planning to relocate the airport in Noatak with slatted construction to begin in 2025. The purpose of the proposed relocation project is to provide the Village of Noatak with a safe, reliable, and cost-effective facility that would provide the community with adequate access, support the community's long-term development goals, and be consistent with current FAA safety regulations. <sup>2</sup>



*Kucharuk Bridge in Noatak, and proposed location of the new bridge in relation to the new airstrip.*

*Source: ADOT*

## 2.3. Mission

The mission of the Noatak Tribal Transportation Safety Plan is to improve visibility and safety through improved trail marking and planning on trails, improved access to surrounding communities and red dog port and improved emergency response to known and as yet known hazards in the community. The plan also wishes to continue to address concerns outlined in the 2014 plan and work to improve the community as it relates to the safety of its residents. To achieve the mission in this plan, the plan will address the four elements (4 E's) of transportation

<sup>2</sup> "Noatak Airport Relocation", SOA DOT&PF, 2022, website: <https://dot.alaska.gov/nreg/noatak/>

safety – engineering, enforcement, education, and emergency services – and how they can be used to address safety issues.<sup>3</sup>

## 2.4. Priorities

Through discussion with Noatak IRA staff and key stakeholders as well as public involvement through a transportation survey and meeting, the following five emphasis areas/categories and priorities have been identified for the 2022 TTSP:

- **Transportation/Infrastructure**
  - Planning and marking trails to surrounding areas in particular BIA Route 3050 to Kotzebue and the trail/route to Red Dog Port.
  - Continuing to add more street lighting (2014 plan), adding energy efficient and LED lighting to replace existing lighting (2022 plan)
  - Continued dust mitigation on roads within the community (2014 and 2022 plan)
- **Emergency Response (EMS)**
  - Outfitting snowmachines and trail development with GPS and tracking capabilities to help in search and rescue efforts. Also providing UAS (drone) capabilities for improved trail development and search and rescue needs on trails around the community.
- **Enforcement**
  - Improving signage on existing community roads and adding reflective signage around high traffic areas in the community.
- **Education**
  - Providing trail safety training related to travel in rural Alaska and in particular Arctic climates with extreme temperatures. Education and supplemental tools that can be helpful related to travelling on ice roads and the Noatak River including ice depth thickness, GPS tracking and equipment related to surviving when falling through ice in subzero temperatures.



Diagram of the Four E's in Transportation Safety

Source: FHWA

<sup>3</sup> Strategic Highway Safety Plan, FHWA, 2011 website:  
[https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/hsip/resources/fhwasa1102/flyr3\\_in.cfm](https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/hsip/resources/fhwasa1102/flyr3_in.cfm)



### 3. Existing Resources

Many agencies work together to ensure transportation safety in Noatak and the region as a whole. This section includes a list of safety partners that contribute to the education, enforcement, maintenance and other aspects of transportation safety.

#### 3.1. Safety Partners

- Noatak IRA:** Initiated the development of the Safety Plan Update, distributed and collected community input, provided resources, photos, interviews, and reviewed and provided input for the plan. Worked with Kuna Engineering as a contractor to help manage, develop and put together the TTSP.
- Northwest Arctic Borough (NAB):** The NAB is a key stakeholder in community development plans and opportunities that can improve local and regional access in and around Noatak. One of the items listed in the 2030 Plan for the Borough was increased access between communities in the region and one of the ways they have attempted to do this is through ice roads. There are seasonal winter ice roads that currently are attempted and developed between Kotzebue, Noorvik and Kiana. Noatak due to limited funding and lack of planning capabilities to develop an ice road has not had a successful ice road developed to Kotzebue. Future attempts at an ice road will depend on ADOT funding and grant funding from outside agencies to make the project a success.
- Noatak Clinic:** The Clinic is run by the Maniilaq Association and has 3 full time staff members and provides services that include general care and services. There are rotating doctors, dentists, nurses and dental hygienists that visit the community on a rotational basis and provide more specialized care for Noatak community members. Community members can schedule appoints directly through the clinic or coordinate with Maniilaq to schedule appointments, it is particularly important to schedule ahead of time since time and availability is limited due to weather and travel difficulties in and out of the community.

#### Northwest Arctic Borough 2030 Plan: Planning for Our Future

*Roads between communities would help with high energy costs. We could drive in more fuel and more easily build transmission lines.*

- NAB Stakeholder

<https://nwab2030.org/>



*Travel on trails in and around Noatak can be dangerous and there is a need for improved trail marking and staking to improve safety*

- **Alaska Department of Transportation (DOT):** Provided Information on DOT and transportation related projects in the community, most notable the proposed new airstrip for Noatak located away from the Noatak River. There is limited traffic safety related information for rural communities in Alaska, in particular communities that are off the road system. It is important that those involved in accidents that are off the road



*Noatak River and erosion on former Airport Road that has been since rerouted closer to Airstrip.*

system still report to the DMV if injuries are involved for insurance purposes. Contact Information and Point of Contact (POC) for State DOT projects in Noatak is: Christopher Johnston, Engineering Manager, 2301 Peger Road, Fairbanks, AK 99709, Phone: (907) 451-2322.

- **NANA Regional Corporation, Inc.:**

NANA is the regional corporation for Noatak and aside from distributing funds to shareholders in Noatak provides grants to NAB communities. One of the main means of accessing grants is in the form of Village Economic Investment (VEI) grants to communities. These grants, as they relate to transportation, have in recent years provided heavy equipment,

maintenance and repairs to existing equipment. It is possible that if there is enough information provided and enough of a need these funds could also supplement and help provide grant funding for transportation safety related needs in the community as well.

- **Northwest Arctic Borough School District (NABD):** The Northwest Arctic Brough School District is an important partner for safety education and can be utilized to improve trail safety in the community. The NABD is an important partner in educating the community in trail safety and proper planning and will be useful for any education that is planned in Noatak. The school has been utilized in the past for classes and training and the principal and teachers are great resources for distributing information.

### 3.1.1. School

The school can provide important safety education and training to community members and students. The school contact information for both the school in Noatak and school district in Kotzebue can be found below. Noatak's school was completed in 2008 and replaced the existing school that still exists within the main part of Noatak. In recent years the old school has become a safety concern for the community and needs environmental cleanup and removal.

TABLE 3.3: EDUCATION CONTACT INFORMATION

<b>School</b> – Napaaqtugmiut (Noatak) School 2 Airport Rd, Noatak, AK 99761 Phone: (907) 485-2153	<b>School District</b> – Northwest Arctic Borough School District PO Box 51 Kotzebue, AK 99752 Phone: (907) 442-1802 Fax: (907) 442-2246
---	--

3.1.2. Alaska DOT - Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)  
The Alaska DOT Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is the state’s four-year program for transportation system preservation and development. It includes interstate, state and some local highways, routes, bridges, ferries and public transportation. It does not include airports or non-ferry-related ports and harbors as they are dependent on Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and Federal oversight in development and project planning. It covers all system improvements for which partial or full federal funding is approved and that are expected to take place during the four-year duration of the STIP.<sup>4</sup> No projects for Noatak are included in the 2020-2023 STIP.

3.1.3. Alaska DOT - Crash Data Overview  
Complete crash data in rural Alaska can be difficult to obtain as there is often limited data other than State Trooper dispatch data and local resources. Crashes that result in over \$2,000 in property damage or result in an injury must be reported to the Alaska Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV). Ideally, the State Troopers would be the main resource for reporting these types of crashes. The State Troopers would then send in this crash that information and submit this data to the DMV. Which then provides the crash data to ADOT for inclusion in ADOT’s crash database. The best resource for getting the most up to date crash data for communities in Alaska currently is the trooper dispatch or from the Northwest Arctic Borough which breaks down logs based on



Tracked vehicle utilized during winter months in Noatak

<sup>4</sup> Alaska DOT&PF STIP, DOT&PF, 2022 website:  
<https://akdot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e6b614a89233473c9567435b26ece34c>



location, type and an overview of the incident. There is a trooper outpost in Kotzebue that provides public safety needs to Noatak if needed since there has not been a Village Police Officer in the community for a number of years.

Aside from the State Troopers, ideally the data collected related to crash data will also be made publicly available through the DMV. The DMV collects crash reporting forms and provides data to ADOT, but ADOT must manually enter the data as the DMV and ADOT data systems are not readily compatible. Because of that issue as it stands currently there is limited publicly available data through the DOT crash data page, however it is a good historical point of record and resource for annual report data.<sup>5</sup>

There is limited data as far as accidents or incidents in the past five years as it related to the community of Noatak, however, there has been a number of reported accidents involving trails and routes. These typically involve search and rescue by the Noatak volunteer search and rescue department or from the NAB Search and Rescue Team depending on accessibility and weather. This is not always the case however as in 2019 three individuals from Noatak traveling from Kotzebue perished after their snowmachines went through the ice in the Noatak River.<sup>6</sup> The route between Noatak and Kotzebue has been a consistent source of issues as it relates to reliable and safe transportation and has been a particular issue as it relates to the development and management of a seasonal ice road in the winter months between the two communities.



*Gravel Road in Noatak leading to School*

<sup>5</sup> Alaska DOT&PF Crash Data, DOT&PF, 2022 website: <https://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/hwysafety/crash.shtml>

<sup>6</sup> "Two adults, child, die after snowmachine crashes through ice in Northwest Alaska", ADN, DeMarban, Alex, April 15, 2019, website: <https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/2019/04/15/three-dead-after-snowmachines-crash-through-ice-in-northwest-alaska/>

### 3.2. Overview of Existing Efforts

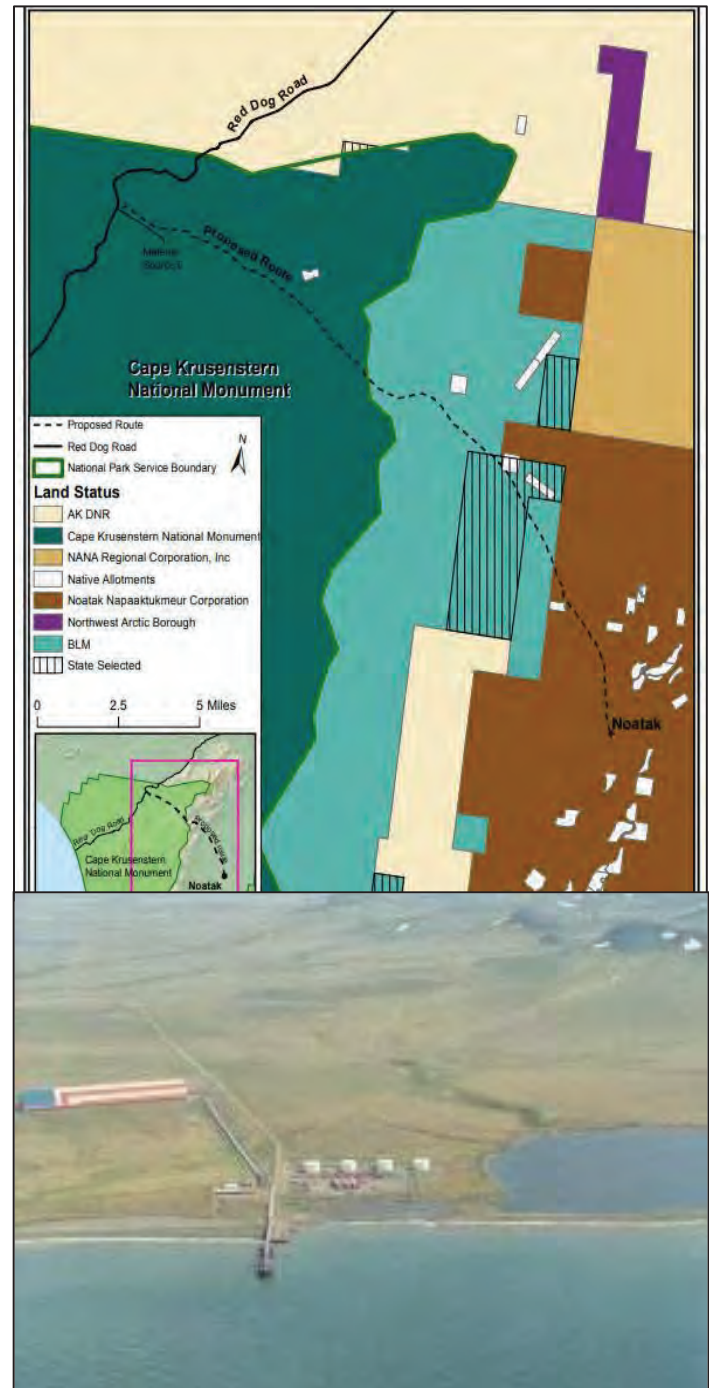
This section presents transportation safety documents, planning efforts, and other programming currently in place that can help guide transportation safety improvements in the community.

#### 3.2.1. 2022 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

The 2022 LRTP is a new and updated plan for the community that focuses efforts on projects such as the road to Red Dog Port, Cemetery Road Project and ice road to Kotzebue. The Noatak LRTP also provides a list of transportation priorities for vehicular and maintenance needs that will enable tribal leaders to take advantage of desirable development opportunities. The LRTP also allows the Tribe to develop planning for projects on its land that can be driven by members of the Tribe and enhance the use of the Tribe's land by its residents. The plan is supported and funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) whose engineering staff also provide guidance and direction in its development.

#### 3.2.2. 2021-2022 NWABSD Strategic Plan

The plan was developed and adopted in February of 2021 and worked on identifying improvements the school district could make in communities in the region. The plan works to promote and encourage educational and traditional needs that help improve the overall working atmosphere. The plan is a vital resource in supporting the education component in transportation safety as it will provide a valuable resource for working to establish mutual goals between the school and teaching transportation safety as it relates to a multitude of topics (i.e. ATV safety, boater safety, emergency response contacts).



Map of Proposed route/road to Red Dog Port with Land Ownership and photo of Red Dog Port and Fuel Terminal

Source: NPS

### 3.2.3. Northwest Alaska Transportation Plan (2021)

This plan, though focusing on transportation needs for the Northwest portion of the state in general is an important resource for showcasing the logistical and accessibility issues in Noatak. Of particular note in the plan are the slated transportation priorities of connecting Noatak to Red Dog Port via the Delong Mountain Transportation System (DMTS) and the ADOT Airport Relocation Project. Also, of note in the plan is reference to the lack of barge service to the community and alternative options for bringing in cargo to the community. One option that could be a possibility is that if a functioning and properly planned ice road is put in place cargo could be brought in through Kotzebue which does have consistent barge service.<sup>7</sup>

### 3.3. Emergency Response Resources

- **Fire:** Fire response is coordinated by the NAB, and includes a volunteer led fire response team that can provide more immediate needs and response in the case of an emergency. The fire response Point of Contact for Noatak is Enoch Mitchell and is coordinated through the Noatak IRA Office. In the case of wildfires and fires in the federal lands around Noatak those are primarily coordinated through the NPS Office in Kotzebue and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Fire Response Team. The contact information for the NPS office in Kotzebue is: Ray McPadden, phone: 907-442-8301, email: Raymond\_McPadden@nps.gov
- **Search and Rescue:** Search and rescue is managed and overseen by the Search and Rescue (SAR) office at the NAB. The NAB coordinates with each village in the region and is in charge of management and maintaining a list of those travelling outside communities in the region. The SAR office at the NAB maintains a collection of documents and an equipment inventory list of items that can be taken and borrowed from the borough when travelling in the region. The contact information for the SAR office in Kotzebue is: Shauntai Shroyer, phone: (907) 442-2500, email: sshroyer@nwabor.org
- **Medical:** Medical services are provided at the Noatak Clinic operated by the Maniilaq Association based out of Kotzebue. This health clinic can cover services such as checkups, general treatment, pregnancy care, immunizations, pediatric care, prescription



*The NAB is an important resource for facilitation and response to emergencies in Noatak*

<sup>7</sup> "Northwest Alaska Transportation Plan", ADOT, 2022 Update, website: <https://dot.alaska.gov/nreg/nwatp/files/nwatp-executive-summary.pdf>



medicine, and appointments with rotating dentists and doctor's appointments from staff coming in from Kotzebue. Medical emergencies that require more specialized care are provided in Anchorage or the Maniilaq main medical facility in Kotzebue.

- **Village Public Safety (VPSO):** There is currently no VPSO as the last Safety Officer left the position around 6 years ago. There are VPSO staff in Kotzebue at the NAB office however it is recommended that in the case of emergencies the State Troopers are called out to assist with public safety in Noatak. In the case of an emergency the State Troopers (AST) in Kotzebue should be contacted and reported to. There is on-call staff for the AST who will come out to Noatak primarily via plane but in more remote areas potentially via snowmachine. Contact information for the AST station in Kotzebue is: phone: (907) 442-3222
- **IRA Office:** The IRA office is one of the main resources for community relations and is the one of the main meeting spaces outside of the school since there is no municipal or city government in Noatak. The IRA office facilitates and organizes emergency response missions and coordinates with the NAB to bring in additional resources if needed. It is important to maintain contacts in the IRA office when travelling outside of the community and to also contact the NAB when travelling to Kotzebue or Red Dog Mine Port Staff when travelling to the Port for fuel runs.



*Trail Leading away from Noatak, travel outside the community is primarily via ATV and boat in summer months and Snowmachine in winter months.*

## 4. Documentation of Needs & Priorities

### 4.1. Community Priorities

The community's development priorities were discussed and agreed upon at the Tribal Transportation Meeting held in the community in August 2022 and an additional follow up meeting with the IRA council in December 2022. During the Meeting(s) residents and tribal members of the community compiled their top priorities as they relate to transportation safety in the community:

## Top Priority List (in order of priority):

- 1) **Route and Ice Road Trail Marking and Management:** Planning and marking trails to surrounding areas in particular BIA Route 3050 to Kotzebue and the trail/route to Red Dog Port.
- 2) **Route and Ice Road Development Safety Equipment:** Outfitting snowmachines and other equipment used for trail development with GPS and tracking capabilities to help in search and rescue efforts. Also providing UAS (drone) capabilities for improved trail development and search and rescue needs on trails around the community.
- 3) **Improving and Updating Signage:** Adding and improving signage as needed on community roads and adding reflective signage around high traffic areas in the community.
- 4) **Street Lighting:** Continuing to add more street lighting (2014 plan), adding energy efficient and LED lighting to replace existing lighting (2022 plan)
- 5) **Dust Mitigation:** Continued dust mitigation on roads within the community (2014 and 2022 plan)
- 6) **Trail Safety:** training related to travel in rural Alaska and in particular Arctic climates with extreme temperatures. Education and supplemental tools that can be helpful related to travelling on ice roads and the Noatak River including ice depth thickness, GPS tracking and equipment related to surviving when falling through ice in subzero temperatures.



The priorities listed above are relevant to transportation safety in the community and if funded

would improve life safety and community risk when using routes in and around the region. Additional information on priorities was gained through interviews with key individuals in the region, including the tribal transportation coordinator (Alvin Ashby), NAB Director of Public Services (Carl Weisner), and the Tribal Administrator (Edna Bailey).

*The boat harbor is an important resource to Noatak and needs increased visibility through improved lighting.*

## 5. Emphasis Areas, Goals and Strategies

Noatak is generally safe in regard to transportation crashes and accidents however vehicle accidents and crashes do occasionally occur both on local roads and on trails in and out of the community. Although crash and traffic data are limited through ADOT, reported accidents and crashes do occur and it is important to do what is available through Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) grant opportunities to improve the livelihood of residents in Noatak and the region.

The following sections provides background on each emphasis area, outlines the Tribe's goals in improving conditions, and describes specific strategies as appropriate with respect to the "four Es": **education, engineering, enforcement, and emergency services.**<sup>8</sup> Implementation strategies associated with each emphasis area are also included. Each implementation strategy includes a goal, targeted timeline and potential partners.



*Trails connecting Noatak to surrounding communities and areas around the village are consistently difficult to navigate. Trail Safety and markings are important resources for determining the best routes between community landmarks.*

---

<sup>8</sup> "Building Safe Roads", FHWA, Baxter, John, May/June 2004, website: <https://highways.dot.gov/public-roads/mayjune-2004/building-safe-roads>



TABLE 5.4: TTSP EMPHASIS AREAS, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES

Emphasis Area	Issue	Engineering	Education	Enforcement	Emergency Response
<b>Transportation/ Infrastructure</b>	<b>Issues in the Noatak and surrounding region related to roads, trails, and routes and how they can and may affect safety to local residents</b>				
<b>Route and Ice Road Trail Marking and Management (Section 6)</b>	Routes connecting the community to surrounding areas and neighboring communities as well as Red Dog Port is need of proper trail marking and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Trail Marking and planning is needed to help determine and maintain the best and safest trail.</li> <li>-Planning and development of trails and roads is needed as it relates to checking ice depth and snow load to determine the best route to take.</li> </ul>	Creating and distributing maps and trail tracking equipment through GPS and other means that can be used to show location of trail used to travel between outside communities.		Working with Search and Rescue and planning department at the NAB when travelling between communities and in the region.
<b>Street Lighting (Section 7)</b>	Road and Transportation network lighting is not sufficient in the community and there is a need for lighting on community roadways to and from the school and the boat launch area and fuel storage area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lighting should be energy efficient as energy costs are extremely expensive in rural Alaska</li> <li>- LED and solar or Photovoltaics (PV) are the most energy efficient options</li> </ul>			
<b>Dust Control (Spring, Summer and Fall) (Section 8)</b>	Dust is problematic during warmer drier times of the year (May-August in Noatak) and can cause health concerns to community members.	Exploring behavioral activities associated with increased road dust and receiving funding for dust palliatives that can help alleviate gravel dust.	Educating members of the transportation maintenance staff on potential chemicals that can be combined with water to alleviate gravel dust.		Checking health of community members that may be experiencing health concerns because of road





						dust. This can be done at the clinic or from research that is conducted statewide related to road dust and its effect on rural Alaskans lungs.
<b>Emergency Response</b>	<b>Issues in the community related to responding to emergencies on routes into and out of Noatak</b>					
<b>Route and Ice Road Development Safety Equipment (Section 9)</b>	Outfitting snowmachines and other equipment used for trail development with GPS and tracking capabilities to help in search and rescue efforts. Look to utilize UAS (drone) capabilities to respond to emergency response efforts on routes and ice roads.	Search and Rescue Coordinator at the NAB cites the need for more tracking capabilities and location determination when responding to emergencies on remote routes.	Members of Search and Rescue Group in Noatak could benefit from FAA Part 107 training and the capability to utilize drones when tracking lost or injured travelers into and around Noatak.			Work with Search and Rescue at NAB to set up equipment that needs inventory that can be checked out at the local office in Kotzebue along with what is available in Noatak when travelling around the community.
<b>Enforcement</b>	<b>Decrease potential for injury or death of off-road transportation users through implementation and installation of signage</b>					
<b>Improving and Updating Signage (Section 10)</b>	Some intersections that do not have stop signs need them installed and more reflective signage is needed	Mark winter trails and put in signage to help alleviate road safety issues in the community.	Help community members understand traffic signage and how to obey traffic	Hire a full time VPSO in Noatak. Or have a rotational VPSO		

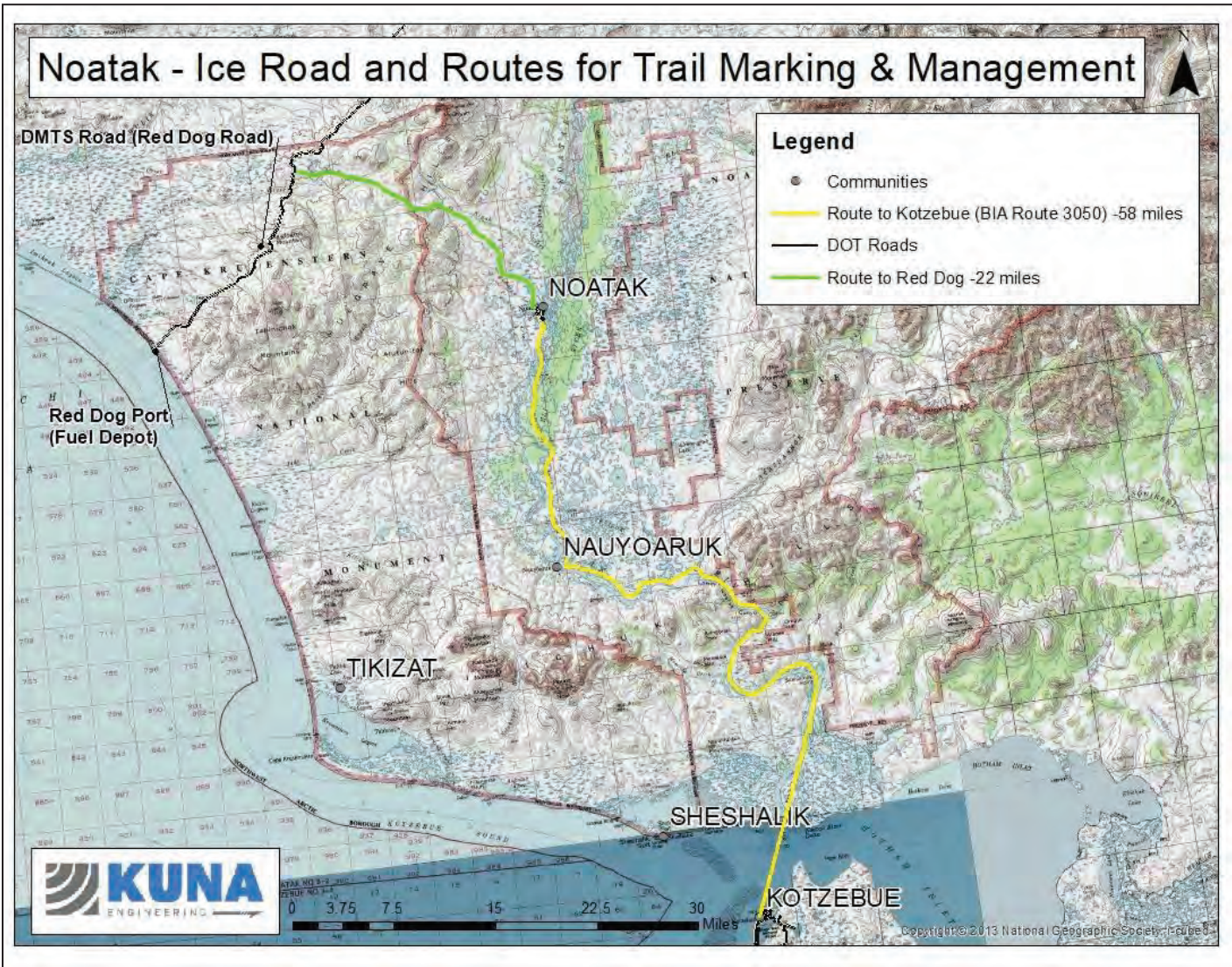


	for routes and trails in the community. Also, signage that is weathered and damaged needs to be replaced.		laws through Alaska DMV training.	from Kotzebue in the community to let the community know public safety is important.	
<b>Education</b>	<b><i>Teaching members of the community through training and learning opportunities in transportation safety and management.</i></b>				
<b>Trail Safety (Section 11)</b>	Training community members and on trail safety and what can be done when travelling in Arctic Alaska to help alleviate risk.	Getting proper training on what to do as far as working with and fixing equipment and vehicles when stranded or stuck in remote areas.	Getting training through Community Winter Trails Program that is a federally funded program administered through the State DOT office.	Keeping channels open with the State Troopers and Search and Rescue Team in Kotzebue when travelling outside of Noatak.	Learning what to do when responding to those stranded or isolated on trails as far as search and rescue response.



## 6. Route and Ice Road Trail Marking and Management

The first emphasis area for Noatak is to develop a successful trail marking and management program that can be modeled and developed to create a winter ice road between Noatak and Kotzebue on BIA Route 3050. If this program is successful and can be developed there is a potential in the future to also work on an ice road/trail between Noatak and Red Dog Port.



*Routes connecting Noatak to Red Dog Port and Kotzebue in need of trail marking, management and potential ice road development*

There was an attempt in March 2022 using a one-time allotment of ADOT funding to develop an ice road that was unsuccessful between Kotzebue and Noatak and there were lessons learned from that attempt. Kuna Engineering, the Noatak Transportation Manager and the NAB Director of Public Services had a follow up meeting in September to go over some of those lessons





1 Nathan Belz, University of Alaska Fairbanks.

*Auger being used to check ice thickness, another potential option is Ground-penetrating radar (GPR)*

*Source: University of Fairbanks (UAF)*

learned and one of the main priorities that is needed is planning (checking ice thickness and trail marking), and GPS tracking when creating the road in case of weather-related affects to the trail and proper equipment for trail development. Another important tool would be the capability to use Ground-penetrating radar (GPR) along with ice augers to check ice thickness. (See appendix for ice road meeting notes)

Experienced community members from the region (Kiana, Kotzebue and Noorvik) would also be brought in to determine what has worked for planning efforts in the region in the past. Mark Leary from Native Village of Napaimute, who Kuna Engineering had a short phone meeting in June 2022 could also be utilized as a resource as the Kuskokwim Ice Road is a great model for a

successful transportation program in rural Alaska.

## 6.1.1. Goal

To develop a successful ice road construction program that can create access points for Noatak between Kotzebue and potentially Red Dog Port.

## 6.1.2. Strategies

- 1.) Get funding to develop planning efforts, trail monitoring and ice thickness that can be utilized to develop a winter ice road that can be created every year dependent on favorable weather conditions.
- 2.) Utilize the Native Village of Napaimute and their development of the Arrive Alive Ice Road Program as a model for a successful ice road program, this ice road program is partially funded through FHWA. Using Mark Leary from Native Village of Napaimute and Larry Westlake in Kiana as resources for how to run and develop successful ice road programs.



*Ice Road between Kotzebue and Noorvik*

*Source: NAB*

- 3.) Create a model program that can be maintained and developed on a yearly basis and depended on to provide goods and services into Noatak.

#### 6.1.3. Potential Partners

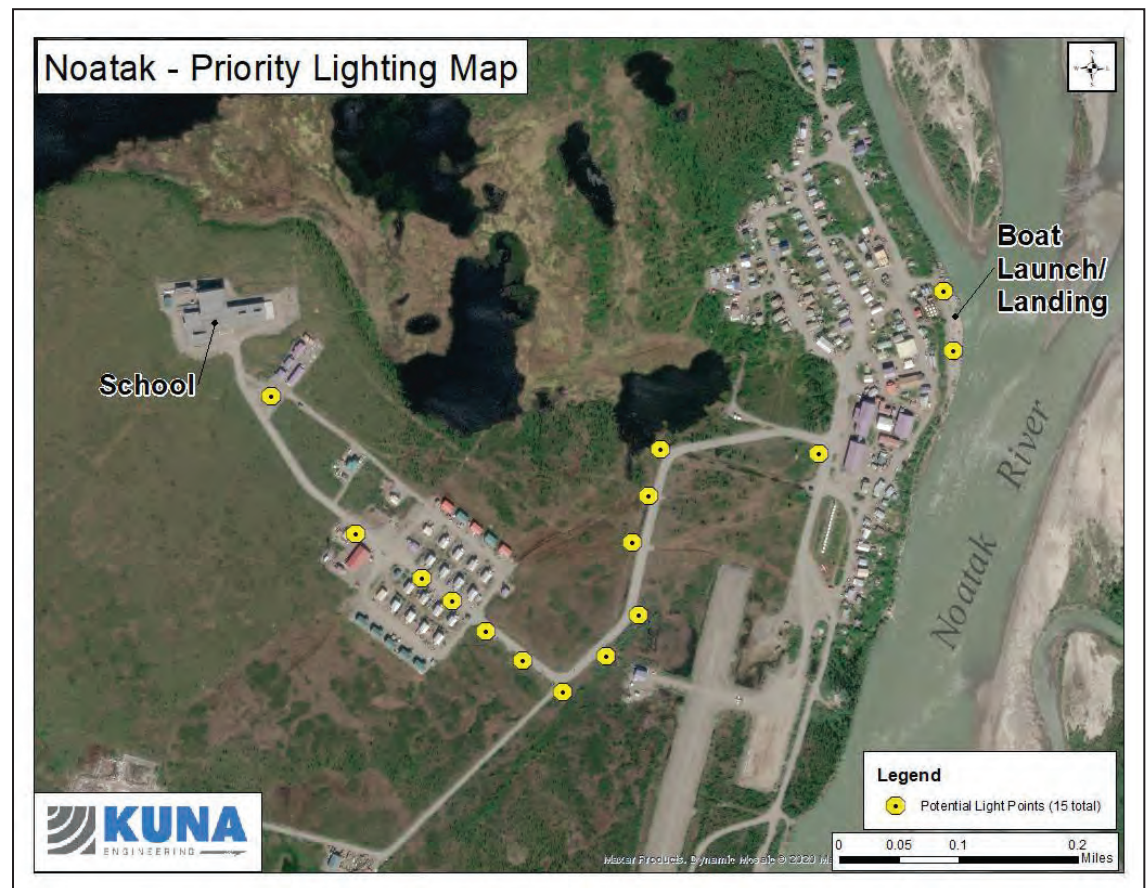
Native Village of Noatak, NAB, AVEC, BIA, FHWA

#### 6.1.4. Cost Estimate

**\$50,000<sup>9</sup>** - This amount is needed annually to develop an ice road in Noatak and is based on ADOT costs for funding ice road planning and development between Kotzebue and other regional communities.

## 7. Street Lighting

The community is looking to improve lighting on roads and at the boat launch area in Noatak and the roadway leading to the school from the community. Currently the community has street lighting or lighting in the main areas of the community near the post office and native store as well as lighting near the school and teacher housing. The Alaska Village Electric Co-Op (AVEC) is in charge of utility costs and manages the poles that the lighting would be placed on. To reduce energy costs Noatak would like to look at either



Map Showing potential light points between the Boat Launch area and School

<sup>9</sup> "Northwest Arctic Borough - Ice Road construction", SOA-DOT, 2011, website: [https://www.omb.alaska.gov/ombfiles/12\\_budget/CapBackup/proj56916.pdf](https://www.omb.alaska.gov/ombfiles/12_budget/CapBackup/proj56916.pdf)



solar/photovoltaic or low energy lighting options to bring down utility costs. New lighting should be able to work in connection with the new NAB Regional Energy Plan that works to utilize renewable energy such as photovoltaic (solar) and wind power to offset high energy costs in the region. Noatak is currently developing a solar power array through working with the NAB and Department of Energy (DOE) that will bring down energy costs and alleviate some of the costs related to flying in fuel.<sup>10</sup>

## 7.1.1. Goal

To add street lighting to the boat launch area and the road to the school, and also continue to add lighting to other less trafficked areas of the community as funding becomes available.

## 7.1.2. Strategies

- 4.) Get funding to purchase lighting for areas shown on the map and roads in the community to be placed on existing utility poles.
- 5.) Work with AVEC to get approval to place lighting on existing utility poles
- 6.) Determine the best option for lighting in the community and work to either purchase pole arm and photocell lighting or solar/photovoltaic depending on what would work best and be the most cost efficient.

## 7.1.3. Potential Partners

Noatak IRA, NAB, AVEC, BIA, FHWA, NANA



*Typical representation of gravel roadways in Noatak.*

## 7.1.4. Cost Estimate

**\$15,500**– Using estimate of cost based on information from Noatak IRA, AVEC and through information provided from other lighting projects in NAB. This does not include additional costs associated with paying for ongoing utility costs.

## 8. Dust Mitigation

An emphasis area in the community is to reduce dust and brush on roads between May-August in Noatak. Currently the community utilizes water to bring down gravel dust, however, if possible, it would be helpful to team with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). The DEC

<sup>10</sup> " Northwest Arctic Regional Energy Plan", NAB-DOE, 2022, website: <http://www.nwabor.org/wp-content/uploads/NWAB-Regional-Energy-Plan-Update-Final.pdf>

has a list of dust palliatives that with additional funding could be combined with water to have a longer lasting and greater success in bringing down gravel dust.

### 8.1.1. Goal

To control gravel dust on community roads in Noatak

### 8.1.2. Strategies

- 1.) Work with ADOT and DEC on possible funding opportunities and solutions for alleviating gravel dust on community roads
- 2.) Purchase additional heavy equipment and supplies that can be used to improve roads and in affect alleviate and gravel dust
- 3.) Work with Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation or other partners on determining the best substance to be included with water to control dust<sup>11</sup>

### 8.1.3. Potential Partners

Noatak IRA, DEC, FHWA, BIA, ADOT

### 8.1.4. Cost Estimate

**\$9,400<sup>12</sup>**– Using estimate of cost based on information from US Forest Service and information from transportation manager on supplies purchased in the past. Costs could change based on shipping costs to rural Alaska.

## 9. Route and Ice Road Development - Safety Equipment

Being in an Arctic environment where a good portion of the year there is snow or ice coverage there is an important need to utilize winter trails for travel. In Noatak trail and route development takes place typically from the middle of December through April depending on the weather and snow levels in the area. The community needs according to Alvin Ashby (Transportation Manager) and NAB Search and Rescue are:



*Trails are vital connections between NAB communities in winter. The photo above shows a Noatak trail guide (Robert Kirk) in Noatak leading Marines during a Toys for Tots delivery in the region.*

*Source: US Marine Corps*

<sup>11</sup> "Dust Palliative Basics", State of Alaska, DEC, website: <https://dec.alaska.gov/media/7493/dust-palliatives-basics.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> "Selection and Application Guide", US Forest Service, 1999, website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/t-d/pubs/pdf/99771207.pdf>

- GPS Tracking for those travelling on routes between Noatak and Kotzebue as well as surrounding communities and points of interest (Red Dog).
- Drone or Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) to help for use when performing trail and route development in winter months.

### 9.1.1. Goal

Purchase of Search and Rescue equipment to improve response and tracking of those travelling between communities in NAB.

### 9.1.2. Strategies

- 1.) Purchase additional equipment that can be used when developing trails and to track those travelling on trails.
- 2.) Utilize the NAB as a resource for inventory and management of emergency response equipment when travelling back and forth between Kotzebue and Noatak. Work with Teck Resources, which manages and is the operator at Red Dog Mine to help with managing and maintaining equipment utilized between Red Dog Port and Noatak.
- 3.) Work with the State DOT Office and the Research Program Manager & Tribal Liaison to facilitate training for use of UAS and becoming Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Part 107 certified.

### 9.1.3. Potential Partners

Teck Resources, NANA, NAB, DOT, Noatak IRA

### 9.1.4. Cost Estimate

**\$15,000** – In talking with the Transportation Manager and in researching costs of existing equipment the NAB utilizes for search and rescue including a UAS, this would include GPS tracking equipment for snowmachines and a small UAS for use in the field.



*Travelling on Rivers and Streams is vital to transportation connectivity in Noatak.*

## 10. Improving and Updating Signage

The community has a continuing need from its existing Safety Plan (2014) to improve and update and improve transportation signage. The current signage in Noatak is limited and what is in place is in need of increased visibility through lighting or reflective coating. The transportation routes in the map showing priority signage are the areas in the most need of updated or new traffic signage, as these are the main intersections in the community and are the areas with the most potential risk for accidents. These areas intersect with residential housing and are also a part of the main bus route for the community.



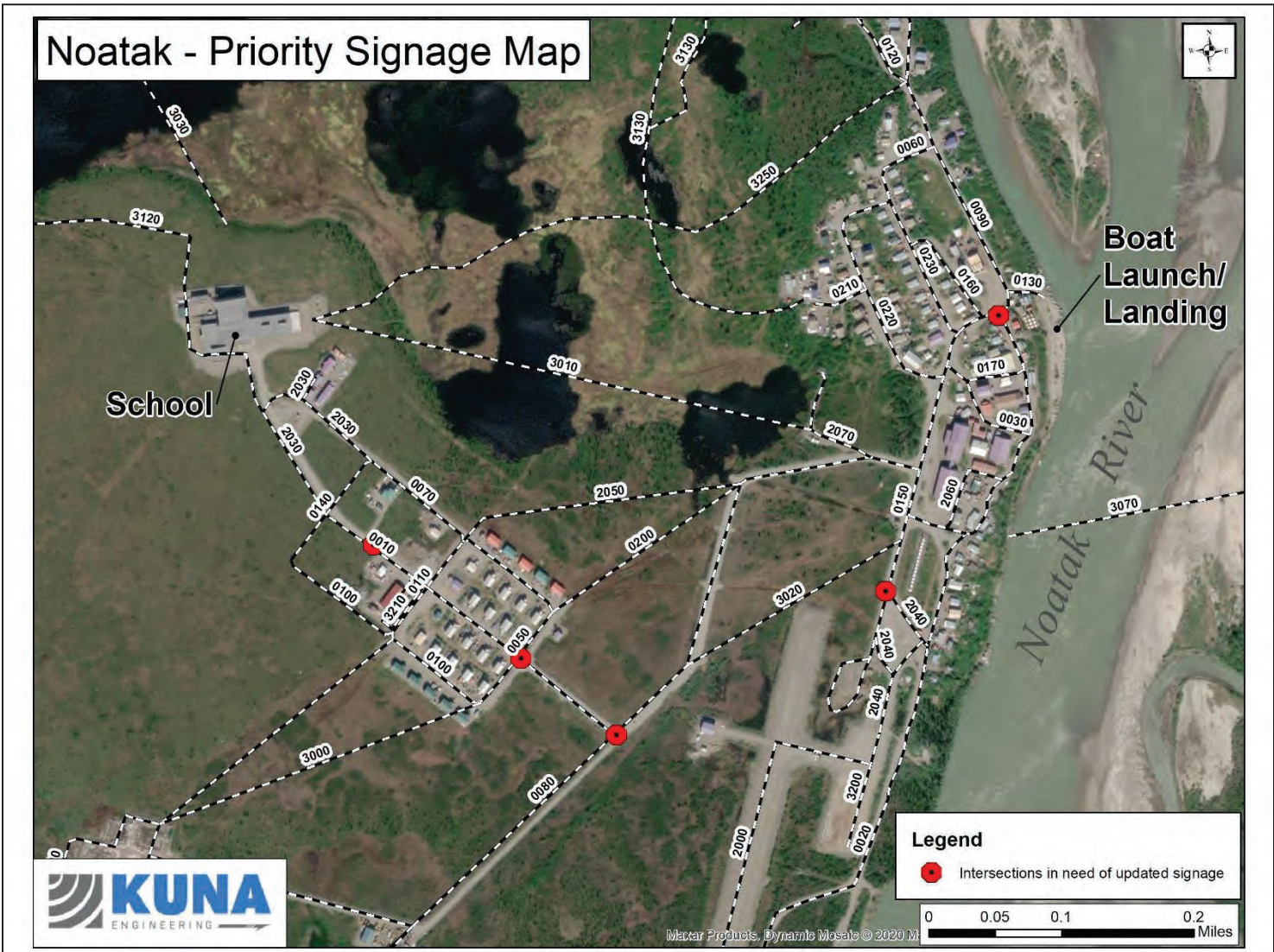
This improved signage along with improved lighting can help make pedestrians and students in particular safer in their journey between the school and their homes.

10.1.1. Goal

Purchase traffic signage to be installed at strategic locations shown in the priority signage map

10.1.2. Strategies

- 1.) Identify the type of signage that will work best in arctic climates and be most resistant to weathering as well as be the most visible during dark winter months. An important resource to utilize would be the FHWA retro reflectivity guide which determines and



Map Showing areas that are most in need of improved transportation signage

outlines the types of signs needed for high visibility no matter the time of day or weather condition.<sup>13</sup>

- 2.) Use grant or state funding to purchase signage and work with ADOT to identify how and where to place signage at intersections and roadways. Try to utilize techniques that can help alleviate issues with weathering, and movement of signs due to ground freezing and thawing.

### 10.1.3. Potential Partners

DOT, NAB, FHWA, BIA, NANA, Noatak IRA

### 10.1.4. Cost Estimate

**\$7,655** - Using estimate of cost based on grant funding provided to other similarly sized NAB communities through FHWA Tribal Transportation Program Safety Fund.

## 11. Trail Safety

An ongoing need for the Native Village of Noatak community members and those traveling in the region is education and training as it relates to trail safety. Due to its location and limited accessibility, other than by airplane, the use of trails is an important resource for connecting the community to outside landmarks in the region. Community members and members of the trail building team that creates the trail seasonally connecting the community to Red Dog Port and Kotzebue consistently face harsh weather and difficult conditions when creating trails. Along with trail markings and GPS tracking that has been discussed earlier other educational improvements that could be added for those developing the trail are first aid kits, first aid and frost bite analysis and care and other suggestions that could improve trail safety. The winter trails program, a federally funded program through State of Alaska DOT could be used as a resource for training and funding and allows for grants on a yearly basis.<sup>14</sup> Other resources could be through the NABD and utilizing the school to conduct training and help inform students and community



*The Noatak River is a vital resource for connecting the community to surrounding communities in both summer and winter.*

<sup>13</sup> "Maintaining Traffic Sign Retro reflectivity: Impacts on State and Local Agencies", FHWA, 2007, website: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/research/safety/07042/07042.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> "Community Winter Trails Program", DOT, 2023, website: <https://dot.alaska.gov/nreg/wintertrails/>

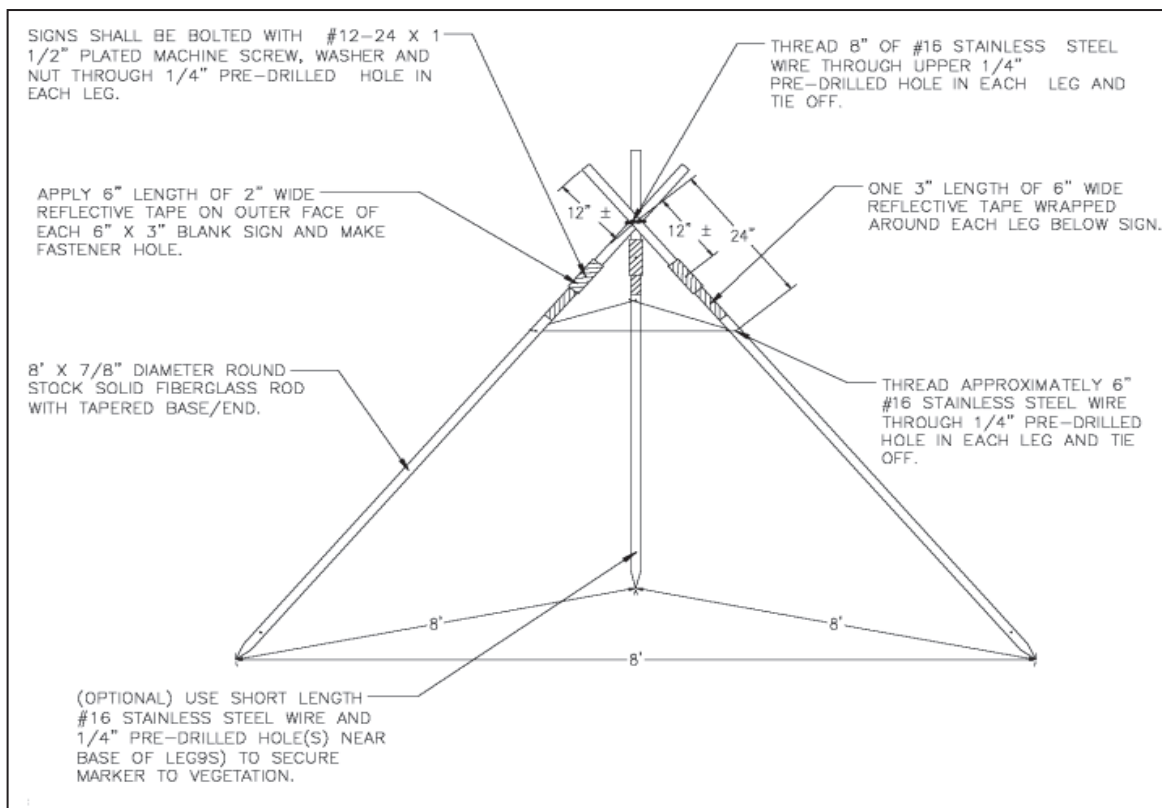
members on information related to trail safety and first aid.

#### 11.1.1. Goal

Provide training and classes on proper Trail Safety.

#### 11.1.2. Strategies

- 1.) Getting and training and guidance through the DOT Winter Trails Program on the development of a successful winter trails program as it relates to safety. Determine availability and funding for first aid and winter survival training.
- 2.) After training and classes are provided to those interested in receiving training set up a plan for those members or potential new members to be provided with training on a regular basis. Also look into potential training that could be conducted at the school and with students.
- 3.) Work with the school and district to provide trail safety information, in particular also look at the possibility of ways trails can be improved as they relate to safely travelling in the region and work with NAB Search and Rescue when implementation occurs.



*Typical Representation of Trail Marker used by Community Trails Program*

Source: DOT

#### 11.1.3. Potential Partners

State of Alaska, DOT, NANA, NABD, NAB



## 12. Implementation

The Noatak Tribal Transportation Safety Plan after working with community members, the tribe, agencies and interested parties will be ready to be implemented. The Tribe, after putting the plan before the council to vote on its adoption and after being adopted can be sent to FHWA for final review and implementation. The plan should be sent to the community, tribal members and to potential safety partners and agencies that can be utilized to access transportation safety funding. The first step that Noatak committed to was appointing the Transportation Coordinator within the community as the facilitator of this TTSP. The TTSP facilitator contracts with each potential safety partner to discuss the appropriate emphasis area(s). Each partner should also designate a safety coordinator internally. The leader will ensure that there is necessary buy-in and can map steps to effectively implement the transportation safety strategies.

As work continues toward implementation of these safety projects, care should be taken to monitor progress. Even though the primary responsibility for leading implementation of some strategies may lie with other entities, Noatak should initiate relationships with safety partners via the safety leader and help ensure follow-through by periodic review of the status of each effort. This Transportation Safety Plan should also be updated every five years to allow for analysis of new data and determine any new efforts that should be undertaken to improve transportation safety for Noatak community members and those travelling in the region.

### 12.1. Evaluation

Ongoing evaluation is important to the success of any plan and this plan is no different. The purpose of ongoing evaluation is to determine if safety plan goals are being met, if action items for emphasis areas are being pursued, and if new issues have developed since the plan was created. To provide accountability on the action items identified in this Tribal Transportation Safety Plan, a steering committee should be established. The standing committee – led by the Transportation Safety Leader – should include representatives of the significant transportation safety entities in the community and region, including the Tribe, NAB, and others as designated by the Council. Meeting frequency can be determined by a steering committee, but the group should meet annually, at a minimum.

The steering committee will be responsible for monitoring progress on action items through interviews with agencies or staff responsible for each emphasis area. Findings from interviews will be reported to the committee. If the results suggest that sufficient progress is not being made, the committee will take steps to accelerate work on the action item. The Transportation Safety Plan steering committee can assist safety partners with identifying potential funding sources or assign this responsibility to someone at the tribal level.

Results of the evaluation of the Transportation Safety Plan should be shared with the community as a “progress report” on transportation safety.

## 12.2. Updates

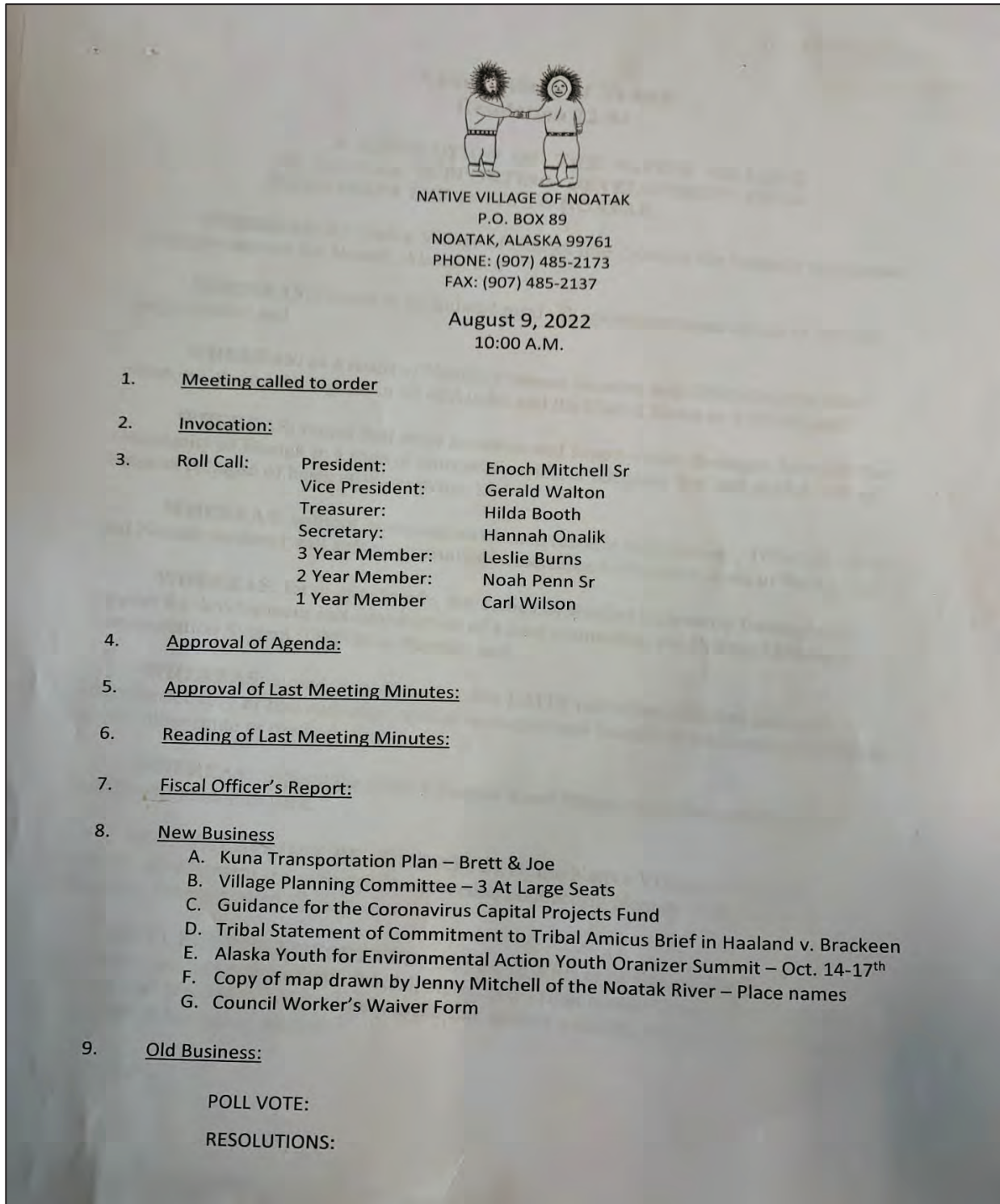
The Noatak Tribal Transportation Safety Plan should be reviewed annually and updated at least every five years to reflect completed projects, new safety data that has been collected, and any additional safety issues that need to be addressed. Past efforts to address safety issues should be described in the plan to streamline future approaches.

This Transportation Safety Plan is the first step in a series of steps needed to improve transportation safety in and around areas managed and developed by the Native Village of Noatak. With diligent advocacy, evaluation, and updates, the Transportation Safety Plan can be a strong foundation for improved transportation safety in the Noatak community.

## Appendix I: Works Cited

- 1.) Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), Online Community Profiles (Noatak) -website:  
<https://dced.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=c03b36a00b464ba6804cb1b7c5e89c32>
- 2.) "Noatak Airport Relocation", SOA DOT&PF, 2022, website:  
<https://dot.alaska.gov/nreg/noatak/>
- 3.) "Northwest Alaska Transportation Plan", ADOT, 2022 Update, website:  
<https://dot.alaska.gov/nreg/nwatp/files/nwatp-executive-summary.pdf>
- 4.) Climate Change in Noatak, Alaska, ANTHC Center for Climate and Health, website:  
[https://anthc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/CCH\\_AR\\_062011\\_Climate-Change-in-Noatak.pdf](https://anthc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/CCH_AR_062011_Climate-Change-in-Noatak.pdf)
- 5.) "Noatak, Alaska – Maniilaq Association, website:  
<https://www.maniilaq.org/northwest-alaska/noatak/>
- 6.) U.S. Department of Commerce. Census Bureau. U.S. Census. Washington, D.C., 2020, website: <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/all?q=noatak%20alaska>
- 7.) U.S. Department of the Interior. Bureau of Indian Affairs. Resident Indian Population and Labor Force Status Report. Washington, D.C., January 16, 2014, website:  
<https://www.bia.gov/sites/bia.gov/files/assets/public/pdf/idc1-024782.pdf>
- 8.) Alaska DOT&PF Crash Data, DOT&PF, 2022 website:  
<https://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/hwysafety/crash.shtml>

## Appendix II: Public Involvement & Supplemental Documents



The photograph shows a printed agenda for a Tribal Council Meeting. At the top center is a logo of two stylized figures holding hands, with the text "NATIVE VILLAGE OF NOATAK" and contact information below it. The date and time of the meeting are listed as "August 9, 2022" and "10:00 A.M.". The agenda consists of nine numbered items, some with sub-points. Item 3, "Roll Call:", lists the names of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and members for different terms. Item 8, "New Business", lists seven items (A through G) including a transportation plan, planning committee seats, a coronavirus fund, a tribal statement, a youth action summit, a map, and a waiver form. Item 9, "Old Business:", lists "POLL VOTE:" and "RESOLUTIONS:".

NATIVE VILLAGE OF NOATAK  
P.O. BOX 89  
NOATAK, ALASKA 99761  
PHONE: (907) 485-2173  
FAX: (907) 485-2137

August 9, 2022  
10:00 A.M.

1. Meeting called to order
2. Invocation:
3. Roll Call:

President:	Enoch Mitchell Sr
Vice President:	Gerald Walton
Treasurer:	Hilda Booth
Secretary:	Hannah Onalik
3 Year Member:	Leslie Burns
2 Year Member:	Noah Penn Sr
1 Year Member:	Carl Wilson
4. Approval of Agenda:
5. Approval of Last Meeting Minutes:
6. Reading of Last Meeting Minutes:
7. Fiscal Officer's Report:
8. New Business
  - A. Kuna Transportation Plan – Brett & Joe
  - B. Village Planning Committee – 3 At Large Seats
  - C. Guidance for the Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund
  - D. Tribal Statement of Commitment to Tribal Amicus Brief in Haaland v. Brackeen
  - E. Alaska Youth for Environmental Action Youth Organizer Summit – Oct. 14-17<sup>th</sup>
  - F. Copy of map drawn by Jenny Mitchell of the Noatak River – Place names
  - G. Council Worker's Waiver Form
9. Old Business:

POLL VOTE:

RESOLUTIONS:

Tribal Council Meeting with Transportation Plan on Agenda



ED: t  
d conn

ve Vil  
Trib  
ect a



Rooted in Alaska, Focused on its Future

DATE: 8/9/22 SHEET: OF  
PROJECT NAME/ #: Noatak LRTP  
PREPARED BY:  
SUBJECT: Council Meeting

Name	Organization
Gerald Walton	Noatak vice president
Leslie D Burns	Noatak 3 vs member
Hannah Onalike	Tribal Secretary
Carl Wilson	Council member
<del>Michael R</del>	24v Council
<del>Shirley R</del>	
Hilda Booth	Noatak tribal member
Wendell Booth	IRA
Jonah Walton Jr	Noatak Resident
Lena Walton	NMS
Walter Downey	
Peggy Wilson	
Danek Hicks	
Elmer K Babb Jr	Noatak
Roger Pittman Jr	Noatak
Karen Pittman	Noatak
Dolly Sage	Noatak Utilities
Norman Manroe	Noatak
Jeff Luther	
Muriel Luther-Chalish	
Connie Walton	
Josie Sly	

3111 C Street, Ste 300, Anchorage, AK 99503 | P: 907.339.6500, F: 907.339.5327 | kunaeng.com

Sign in Sheet for Transportation Safety Survey



Native Village of Noatak  
P.O. Box 89  
Noatak, Alaska 99761  
Phone: (907)485-2173  
Fax: (907)485-2137

## Northwest Arctic Borough (NAB) Meeting- Kotzebue to Noatak Ice Road – September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, 1:30 pm

**Attendees:** Carl Weisner - Director of Public Services (NAB), Joe Rolfzen – Planner (Kuna Engineering), Brett Kirk- Civil EIT (Kuna Engineering), Alvin Ashby -Transportation Manager (Noatak IRA)

**Background:** The NAB received funding from the State of Alaska Department of Transportation (SOA-DOT) in the amount of \$50,000 in March 2022 to develop an ice road between Kotzebue and Noatak. The NAB routinely receives grant funding for \$50,000<sup>15</sup> from the SOA-DOT to complete an ice road between Kotzebue-Noorvik-Kiana. This ice road has been successful in its development most winters since 2011 and there has been a collaborative effort between the NAB and the communities of Noorvik and Kiana. In particular Kiana community member Larry Westlake Sr has taken a lead in making the connection between Kiana and Noorvik, Carl Weisner has been the lead for the portion of road between Kotzebue and Noorvik.

Because the grant funding was received from SOA-DOT for the Kotzebue to Noatak Ice Road in March 2022 there was a limited window of time that the ice road could successfully get constructed. The NAB utilized equipment used to construct the ice road between Kotzebue and Noorvik and started in the middle of March and only made it as far as the Eli River, 10 miles South of Noatak. There were issues with thawing ice and overflow that caused one of the pieces of equipment to go through the ice and have to get towed back to Kotzebue. This officially ended the attempt to connect Noatak and Kotzebue via ice road for the winter of 2022.

### Lessons Learned:

The planning and development of an ice road between Noatak to Kotzebue needs to be developed early in the winter and ice thickness needs to get checked on all areas of the route along the way. The NAB is not willing to take the lead in the future development of an ice road between Noatak and Kotzebue and would need either a private entity or local NWAB communities to take the lead

---

<sup>15</sup> “ Northwest Arctic Borough - Ice Road construction”, SOA-DOT, 2011, website: [https://www.omb.alaska.gov/ombfiles/12\\_budget/CapBackup/proj56916.pdf](https://www.omb.alaska.gov/ombfiles/12_budget/CapBackup/proj56916.pdf)

on the project. Future ice road development could look to Larry Westlake in Kiana or Mark Leary in Napaimute to help develop the ice road and plan the road properly so an ice road could be successfully developed. The NAB also suggested that Kikiktagruk Inupiat Corporation (KIC) could offer support for the project. The SOA-DOT which provides grant funding for ice roads across Alaska could also recommend companies and organizations that would have experience developing an ice road similar to what is needed here.

**Conclusion:** Going forward the goal is to continue to look for ways to connect Noatak to either Kotzebue or Red Dog Road via an ice road. Noatak is still isolated from fuel other than through fuel air cargo, or via 55 gallon or smaller drums brought into the community via snowmachine in the winter or the Noatak River in the summer.

**Meeting ended 2:35 pm AKST**



# Transportation Survey - Noatak

Your input is very important to updating the Long-Range Transportation Plan and Safety Plan. The answers you provide will help to develop priorities for Noatak's current and future transportation goals.

## 1. Please rate how important each of the following transportation issues are in Noatak

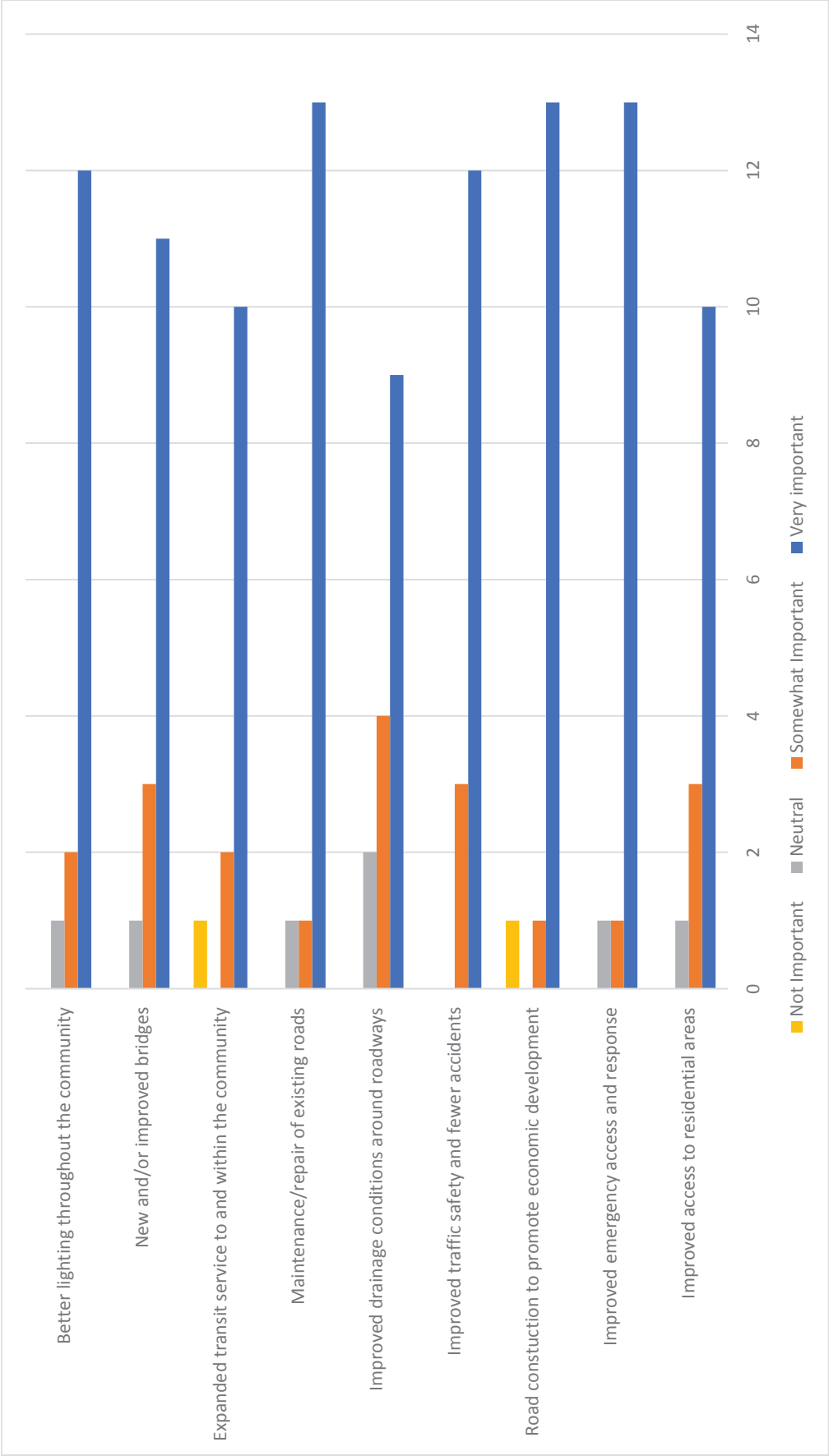
Transportation Issue	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Neutral	Not Important
Improved access to residential areas	10	3	1	
Improved emergency access and response	13	1	1	
Road construction to promote economic development	13	1		1
Improved traffic safety and fewer accidents	12	3		
Improved drainage conditions around roadways	9	4	2	
Maintenance/repair of existing roads	13	1	1	
Expanded transit service to and within the community	10	2		1
New and /or improved bridges	11	3	1	
Better lighting throughout the community	12	2	1	
Other (please specify): ice roads, snow fences, other means of transportation improvements to surrounding areas, grubbing.	11			



Native Village of Noatak  
P.O. Box 59  
Noatak, Alaska 99761  
Phone: (907)485-2173  
Fax: (907)485-2137



# Transportation Survey - Noatak



Native Village of Noatak  
P.O. Box 59  
Noatak, Alaska 99761  
Phone: (907)485-2173  
Fax: (907)485-2137



# Transportation Survey - Noatak

## 2. What transportation projects you would like to see developed in the community?

- a. In the next year
  - Road to Red Dog -24 hour work shifts on projects -New Airport Road -Cemetery Road
- b. In the next 1-5 years?
  - Road downriver -Road to Red Dog -Pit Road -Cemetery Road
- c. In the next 6-10 years?
  - Road to Kotzebue -New Bridge -3/4 done with priority routes
- d. In the next 10-20 years?
  - New Clinic and School Road -All priority routes done

## 3. What transportation maintenance do you think could be improved in the community (i.e. snow plowing, improved roads, new maintenance equipment)?

- Potholes -Grading -Road to Cemetery -Paved Roads -Improved Roads -Airport Relocation Road -New Equipment Equipment Maintenance -Rollers for roads in community -Snow Plowing/Removal

## 4. Any additional comments or suggestions related to transportation and transportation safety-

- Stop Signs -Rock Crusher -Fix potholes -Outside help getting things done -Access Road -New Route from clinic to airport -Community Input -Cemetery Road -Set Road Crew -Structured Road Crew
- Provide updates to community on projects via internet or place to see status



Native Village of Noatak  
P.O. Box 59  
Noatak, Alaska 99761  
Phone: (907)485-2173  
Fax: (907)485-2137

