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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 10
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

January 29, 2002

Reply To
Attn Of: ECL-115

Fritz Waghiyi, President
Native Village of Savoonga
P.O. Box 120
Savoonga, Alaska 99769

Dear President Waghiyi:

Thank you for your invitation to your Annual Membership Meeting to discuss the Northeast Cape site and potential listing on the National Priorities List (NPL). I appreciate your invitation, however, I will be unable to attend the meeting. This letter is intended to provide an update of EPA's activities concerning possible listing of the NE Cape Site on the NPL.

As you know, EPA is in the process of reviewing the existing reports and plans for the NE Cape site that were prepared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). Once this review is complete, EPA will provide a written evaluation to the Villages of Savoonga and Gambell and discuss our findings with the Tribal governments. We expect that this review will be completed sometime in February, 2002. The ACOE has been receptive to EPA's plan for a review of the NE Cape project and was interested in hearing EPA's evaluation. If EPA does find any serious problem with the ACOE's remedial work at the NE Cape site, we will raise it to the ACOE's attention. EPA will also coordinate with Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), the current agency overseeing the ACOE, to gain their perspective on current activities at the NE Cape site.

EPA will consider several factors in determining whether placement on the NPL is the best approach for cleaning up the site. For the NE Cape site, it will be necessary to determine if EPA involvement will improve the current activities at the site and promote a quicker cleanup. It is important to recognize that, even if EPA were to list the site on the NPL, EPA could *not* provide additional funding for site investigation and cleanup. The ACOE must continue to provide the funding for cleanup. The main result of NPL listing is that EPA, with ADEC, would oversee the ACOE's cleanup work at NE Cape.

Once EPA determines whether the ACOE's work at the site is consistent with EPA requirements, a decision will be made as to whether or not to list the site on the NPL. If the ACOE's work is found to be consistent with what EPA would do at the site, then we believe that it would not be necessary to oversee the project and therefore, it would not be necessary to place this site on the NPL.



I hope this information is helpful to you. Should you have any additional questions or concerns regarding this site please do not hesitate to call me at (206) 553-2594.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joanne LaBaw". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joanne" being larger and more prominent than the last name "LaBaw".

Joanne LaBaw

Site Assessment Manager

cc: Gerald Soonagrook, Sr., Native Village of Gambell
Scott Sufficool, EPA Tribal Office
Marcia Combes, EPA Alaska Operations Office
Richard Porter, EPA Alaska Operations Office
Jerald M. Reichlin, Fortier & Mikko