



*The Native Village of Napaimute Briquette Demonstration Project .....*

*Funded through a 2009 grant from:*

*EPA & Rural CAP*





**December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009:** after an 8 month wait, unusual River conditions, allow us to transport the Briquette Making Equipment ourselves.

*..... Or the Difficulties of Transportation Logistics in Rural Alaska!*

*Background:*



*Napaimute means: The People of the Forest*





Wood Gathering in the 1940's: Napaimute's leadership has always looked back to help us remember where we come from & to help plan where we want to go in the future....

(photo used permission of Placid C. Joseph, Sr.)

Our Wood Resources & Alternative Energy have been key components of the formal planning for our community's development:

## *Napaimute Community Plan*



*Prepared for:*

*Native Village of Napaimute*

*Prepared By:*

*ASCG Incorporated*

*June 2004*







*Bringing out logs from cutting site*



*Delivering the logs to Napaimute*



*Logs awaiting use along the Kuskokwim River bank*



*The State granted the Tribe a timber-cutting permit at this site 3 1/2 miles from Napaimute*

### **Timber Sales**

The Tribe has obtained a timber permit to harvest trees on State land located near Napaimute. The timber is intended to be used for local Tribal building projects. In the future, timber could be sold for other purposes. The Tribe is also considering applying to the Kuskokwim Corporation for rights to harvest timber on Corporation lands.

### **Lodging**

The Tribe has a rental unit for visitors. Opportunities exist to build additional rental units or a lodge to accommodate tourists.



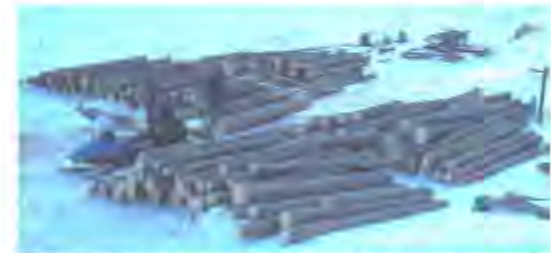
- Mineral/Oil – Exploration and Development
- Sawmill Business – produces lumber and cabin packages for local use. There is also the potential for firewood sales to down-river communities.
- Consulting – various Tribal members have training and technical expertise that can be marketed.
- Environmental Oversight – with development occurring nearby, such as the proposed dock downriver from Crooked Creek and road from there to Donlin Creek Mine, Napaimute is uniquely situated to act as an environmental “watchdog” for the region, monitoring water quality and other related issues.

Just as communities along Alaska’s highway system serve the needs of highway travelers, Napaimute proposes to serve the needs of travelers along the Kuskokwim River. The River links the area’s communities providing the potential for a customer base of several thousand. Already, the fuel and snack food store serve these travelers. As the community grows, so will opportunities to tap into this market.



*Milling lumber for the Napaimute storage building*

***These pages from our Community Plan show the work we’ve done using our wood resources to fulfill the Economic Development Goal & Supporting Objectives for Napaimute. This work will always be ongoing as we strive to be a sustainable community.***



*Logs for the multipurpose building wait in the staging area at the sawmill*



## ***Firewood Packages Now Available for Fall Delivery!***

*Cut, Split, & Palletized – Spruce, Birch, or Mixed – Delivered to Kuskokwim River Communities*

*For more information or to place an order call: (907)222-5058/222-6084 or 543-2016 (message)  
email: [napaimute@gci.net](mailto:napaimute@gci.net)*



*A product of Napaimute Enterprises, LLC:*

*"An Affordable Energy Alternative Produced by Local People, Using Local Resources"*





All of this work with our sawmill & firewood production has produced a great deal of wood “waste” that we have been looking to put to further use:



**Briquette Press Machine**

*Maximizing the use of Napaimute's Forest Resources through:*

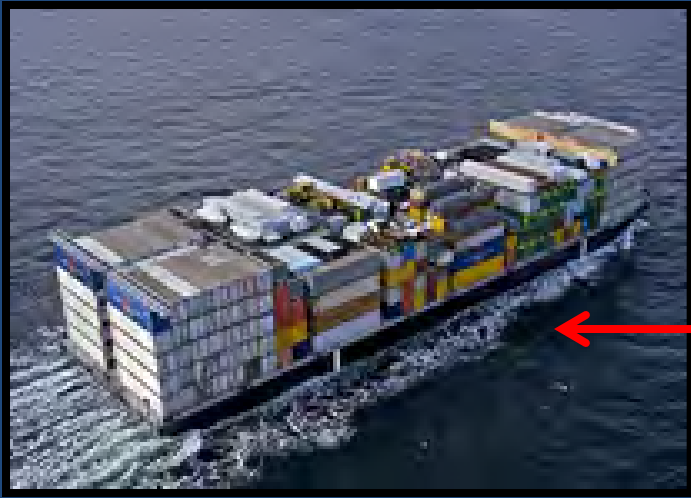
*The Briquette Making Demonstration Project*



**Grinder**

*The Goal of this Demonstration Project was and still is to turn our wood & paper waste products (branches, brush, firewood/sawmill scraps, saw dust, etc.) into Briquettes that can be used to heat Tribally-owned buildings as a way of introducing briquettes to the people of our Region. There is some potential for commercial production & sales of briquettes.*



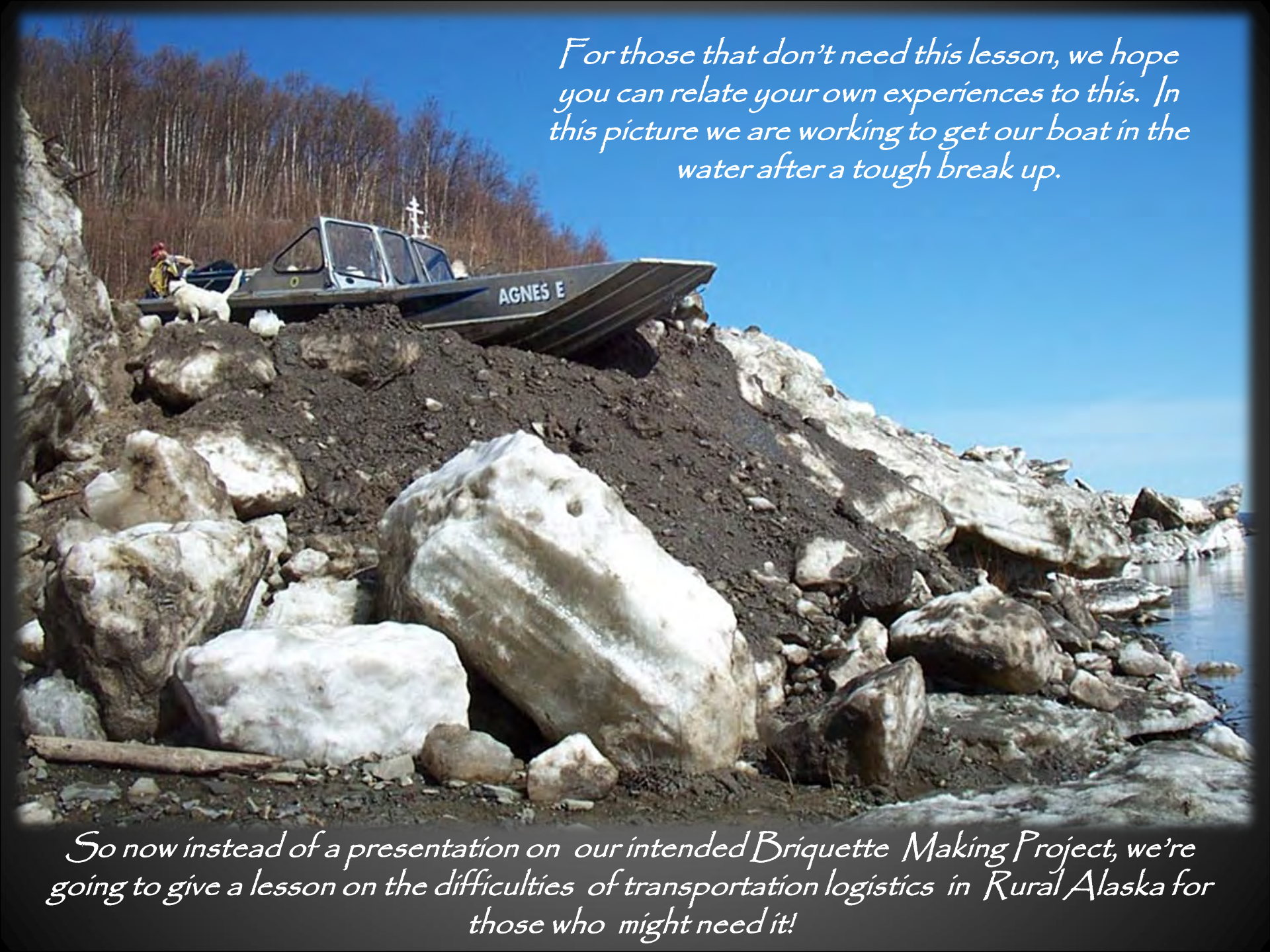


*Unfortunately, the vendor in California could not understand the critical importance of shipping our briquetting equipment on the first ocean barge leaving Seattle in May...*

*...so that it could get on the first river barge going up the Kuskokwim in June.*







*For those that don't need this lesson, we hope you can relate your own experiences to this. In this picture we are working to get our boat in the water after a tough break up.*

*So now instead of a presentation on our intended Briquette Making Project, we're going to give a lesson on the difficulties of transportation logistics in Rural Alaska for those who might need it!*





*Rural Alaska is highly dependent on barge transportation for the delivery of large freight items. The window for this is about 120 days per year, but is variable due to weather & river conditions. For some areas there is no set schedule for barges ~ they come when they have enough freight and/or fuel to make the trip pay.*





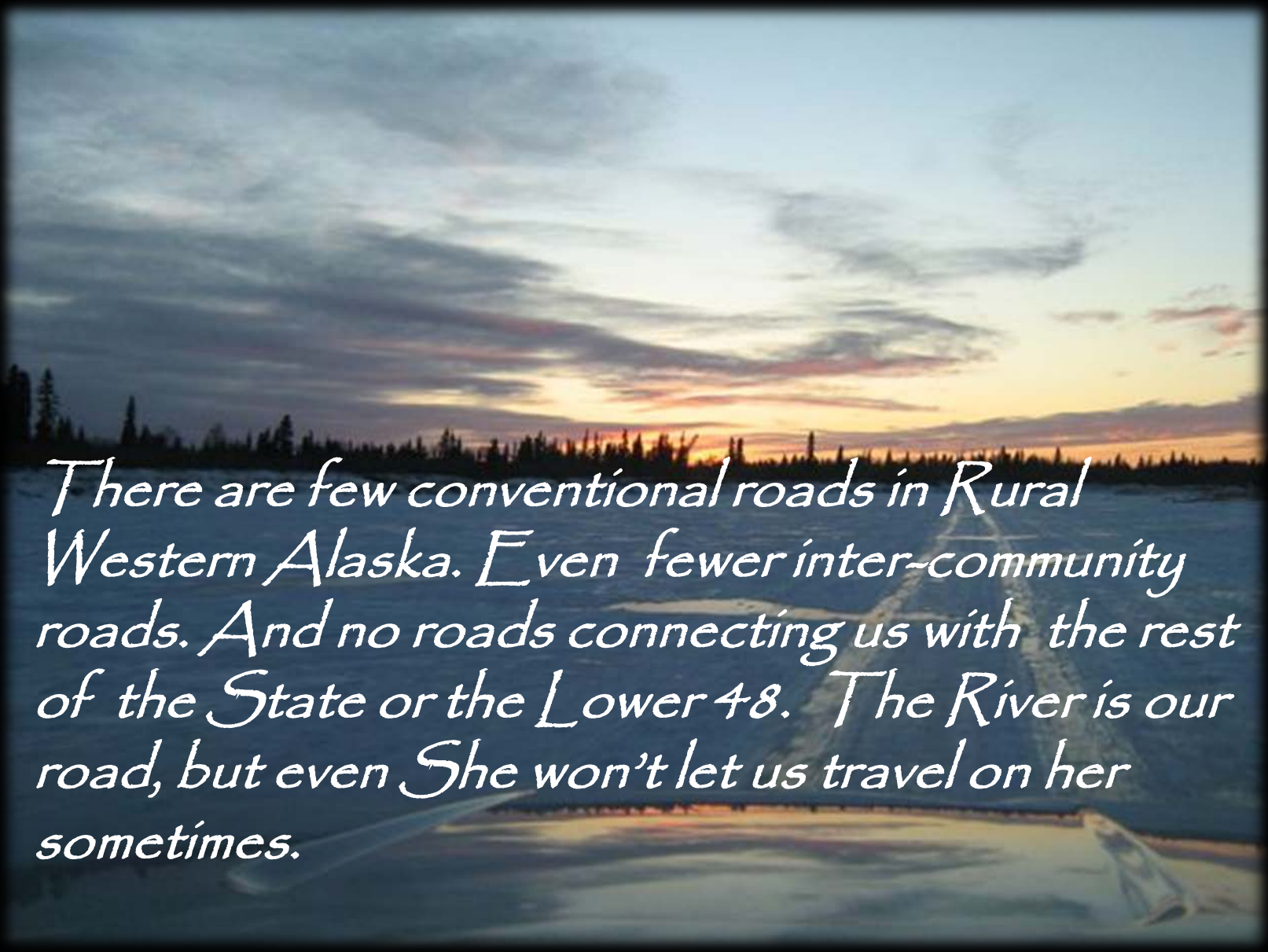
*In the Middle & Upper Kuskokwim, we can count on a spring barge, but may not see another until fall and that one is highly dependant on water levels. The fall of 2009 saw near record low water on the Kuskokwim River making fuel & freight deliveries difficult or impossible by barge.*







*August 2009, even unloading freight at  
Napaimute from a small boat was  
challenging!*



*There are few conventional roads in Rural Western Alaska. Even fewer inter-community roads. And no roads connecting us with the rest of the State or the Lower 48. The River is our road, but even She won't let us travel on her sometimes.*





*Many of the few roads we do have are inadequate or impassable at certain times of the year*



*Here a muddy road bed is "corduroyed" with logs.....*



*.....so that gravel can be hauled in .*





*The State of Alaska is working hard to improve rural airports, but many of these are also still inadequate.*

*In addition, rising fuel costs have made air transportation increasingly cost prohibitive for both passengers & freight*





*It cost our village over \$20,000 to fly this well drilling machine & supplies to Napaimute!*





*With no road system network, a short unpredictable barging season, and costly air transportation, we continue to rely on the River, and often times ourselves to move what we need to move.*







# By Snow machine



01/19/2001





*By Boat*







ATV



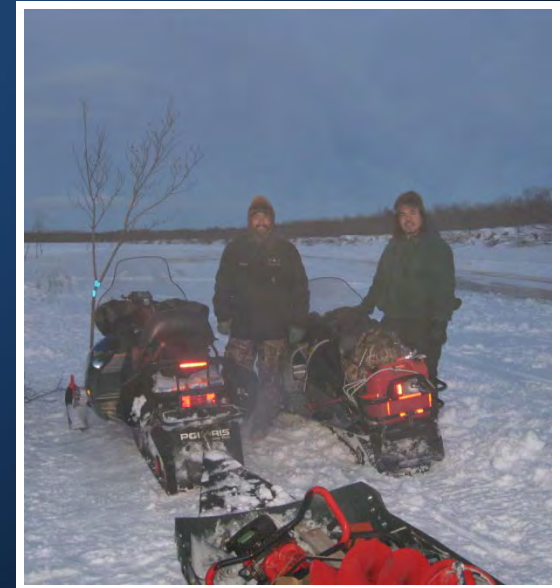
*Or any combination  
of the above!*







*Each year volunteer search & rescue groups all along the River work in conjunction with the Alaska State Troopers to monitor conditions, mark trails, and ensure the overall safety of travelers.*





*Occasionally, we are fortunate to have good conditions for truck travel on the River: thick, smooth ice with little snow.*







*And for a time we can  transport what we need almost as easily and cheaply as the rest of America!*



*160 miles later, Napaimute's  
Briquette Maker finally  
arrives Home*





*Shucks, we didn't even get to mention the fires, floods, and tough freeze ups!*





*We hope to have a more advanced Briquette Project  
Report next year.*

*Thank you!*



Photo: Lower Kuskokwim Resident making the long, expensive journey upriver to gather firewood for the winter.