

***New Records for the New Climate – February & March were both the warmest months on record for our region***



***12" Thick Slab of Ice below Napaimute on February 3, 2019***



***The Same Slab of Ice 31 days later***

***Through a combination of traditional knowledge and new technology NVN personnel were able to observe a similar – but slower – effect on the Kuskokwim River ice that we depend on for safe winter travel. The Kuskokwim River ice thickness was 60% of normal this year and by late March was unsafe for general travel.***

Director's Report, March 2019

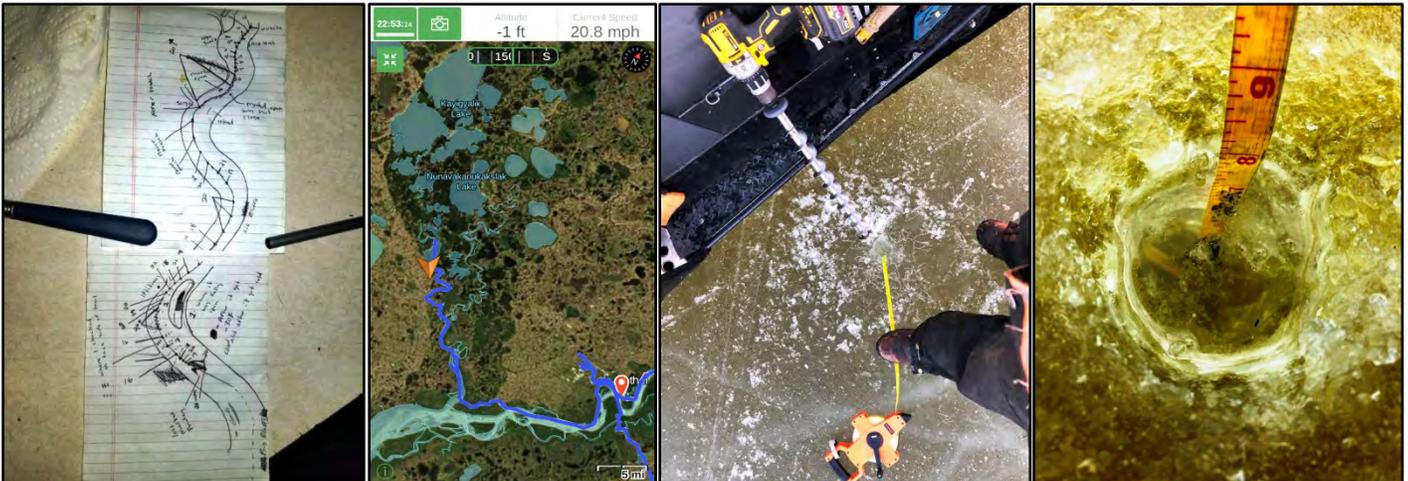
*"The Warming of Winter"*

**Summary:**

The record warm months of February and March by far had the greatest influence on NVN's normal activities for this time of the year. The same could be said for the normal subsistence, social, and economic activities of nearly everyone in the entire region.

The warm wet weather affected our ability to maintain the ice road, transport firewood to the Lower River, conduct an effective timber harvest, and required major changes to the Kuskokwim Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event that NVN provided logistical support for.

Experienced personnel, newly acquired technology (ice radar), and our specialized ice road equipment (the Tumlista plow truck) positioned NVN to be **THE** leader in the establishment and maintenance of safe winter travel throughout a large part of the region.



*Traditional Map of the River*

*GPS Track Line*

*High Speed Ice Drill*

*Specialized Measuring Tools*



*Ice Radar has become one of our greatest assets for the winter work we do on the Kuskokwim River along with...*



**...Tumlista! NVN's lighter weight plow truck**

**Hired by LKSD to plow the road to Atmautluak for basketball games**

P.O. Box 1301  
 Bethel, AK 99559  
 Cell: (907) 545-2877  
 Email: napsimute@gcl.net  
 Website: www.napsimute.org

**RECEIPT #1541**  
 Lower Kuskokwim School District  
 P.O. Box 305  
 Bethel, AK 99559 2/15/19

QTY	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	AMOUNT
	Ice road plowing		
	Bethel - Kasigluk -		
	Nanapitubuk		

Cash  Charge  On Account  Check   
 SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ Thank You!



**Support for NVN's Kuskokwim Ice Road work has come from many sources along the 200 long mile route that we helped establish and maintain this winter. Every tribe and many other entities have contributed money, fuel or supplies to our efforts.**

**L - R: The Lower Kuskokwim School District paid us to plow the road to the Johnson River villages for a basketball tournament**

**The People of Kasigluk took up a collection and raised \$600 which they handed to us on the ice when we arrived**

**Lynden Transport regularly contributed fuel so that they could haul the mail**



**L - R: The Back Story: groceries to support the crew on the 5 day trip plowing from Bethel to Aniak, Late Night Tail Gate Party: fresh coffee on the gas stove and a quick sandwich, Auntie Dora's akutaq on ice**



***L – R: NVN’s new skidder is driven up the ice road from Bethel to the Kalskag Harvest Site. The harvest crew is given a thorough orientation to the new skidder before using it***



***L – R: A limited amount of firewood being flown to the coast at great expense. The warm wet weather has a negative effect on our firewood sales: inventory in Bethel sold out. Unsafe conditions didn’t allow us to bring more down the River and Coastal customers couldn’t travel to come pick any up. Unstable ice conditions at the harvest site made it necessary to build a road out of logs to get out the safe ice. We were only able transport one load of wood to Bethel right at the end of the season***



***L –R: Heavy Load of Firewood – 40,000 pounds – heads down the ramp at the harvest site to begin the long journey to Bethel. Travel speed was kept at 15 MPH to avoid putting stress on the ice. Trip was made safely but was the only trip we were able to make with a full load of firewood this winter***





### **Wood Operations:**

***With the mild weather and the need for increased volume for the sawmill 2019 Timber Harvest was started earlier this year.***

***It was off to a good start with the operator accurately keeping track of the daily number of trees harvested. On a good day he can cut and stack over 200 trees.***

***However this season the harvester has been plagued with mechanical problems, delays in parts ordered, and a lack of experienced personnel – they just don't know how to properly troubleshoot and repair things.***

***Between wood harvested in 2018, wood harvested in 2019, all the unsold 2018 inventory and wood that will be harvested over the summer I think we will be OK though.***

***On a positive note – we found a way to patch the hole in the transmission on the old skidder so now are able to run two skidders.***

***The sawmill, under the operation of Stanely has continued to work almost daily at filling 3 lumber orders and one small cabin package. It too had one break down that caused additional expense and delay but it is working now. Stan is slowly gaining experience – the learning curve is steep.***

***We continue to work with the UAA Center for Economic Development on refining our business plan. Charlie Sparks an accounting professor is now reviewing the final plan.***

***All operations at the harvest site have ceased due to unsafe ice conditions, hopefully they will resume soon with what looks like it will be an early break up. Extensive preparations were made by the crew this year to protect NVN's assets from any high water event that may occur during break up.***





**Taking Up The Slack:**

*With the warm weather reducing our normal firewood sales we looked for other ways to supplement our revenue stream. The 2019 Kuskokwim Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event was one way. This 10 day project was sponsored by Donlin Gold, LLC.*

*Our expenses during this were \$20,000 – equipment rental, personnel, and fuel.*

*It was a good project that would not have been successful without NVN's involvement. We have continued to discuss our future involvement with the Project as it grows with Donlin's management and they are supportive of NVN's continued involvement.*



*L-R: NVN trucks loaded with electronic waste in Nunapitchuk*

*Napaimute Firewood was used as a door prize – very popular!*



*L – R: NVN Trucks loaded with waste oil in Akiachak, NVN Personnel called on to respond to a vehicle accident on the River while we were traveling for the back haul. We transported injured people directly to ER at the Bethel Hospital*

**Taking Up the Slack, cont'd:**



***Adam Larsen, Safety Engineer & Safety Program Manager, Office of Tribal Transportation, Federal Highway Administration accompanies us to see the ice radar being used to assess River conditions. The electrical generators in Tuluksak were critically low on fuel to keep the power on in the village. The ice was too thin to drive conventional fuel trucks on the River. The fuel company hired us to establish and mark a safe route so that a convoy of small trucks and tanks could deliver the fuel to Tuluksak.***



***L-R: First load of fuel arrives at Tuluksak to keep the generators running – this emergency fuel delivery went on for another week providing enough fuel to last until barge season. NVN personnel participate in USCG Ice Rescue Training on a down-time day during the back haul project.***



*The Aniak Dance Group led by NVN's Audrey Leary performs the Basketball Dance at the TKC Tribal Gathering held in Aniak last month*

**Other:**

*The following items were additional things the Council wanted information on:*

**NVN ASSETS:** all of NVN's assets are where there normally would be for this time of the year. Ice Road Equipment is kept in Bethel. This worked well this winter – we found ourselves in the position to be the only entity with the right equipment to establish and maintain the ice road in the lower river. The sawmill site has been prepared for high water. The only exception is the old red truck – it got stuck in Kalskag due to deteriorating River conditions. It was my goal to have all three trucks in Bethel for the summer to get them properly maintained. We found the red truck (16 years old) to still be a good running truck this winter and I wanted it brought to Bethel to get a few things fixed on it but it didn't make it. Perhaps we can send it by barge later – especially if we get our own barge.

As I prepare to move to Napaimute for spring/summer operations we have vacated the Bethel Office. I have learned over the years of moving back and forth to keep the Bethel operations minimal and mostly electronic. All of the physical contents of the Bethel office are in 8 totes that have been put into storage until they can be transported by boat to the home office in Napaimute. A decision on whether to or where to locate a Bethel office can be made next fall.

**GRANTS UPDATE:**

I have asked for an grants summary from Michelle. I will provide it to the Council as soon as I receive it.

Dan also has grants and grant proposals to report on.

From my end I know we are confirmed to receive the following:

**FHWA Extreme Weather Pilot Project – over land trail revitalization Aniak to Tuluksak - \$120,000**

**EDA Funding For Landing Craft - \$600,000 – Shirley Kelly called on 4.2.19 to update. We should expect to receive formal award notice within 2 weeks.**

**AVCP-RHA SMALL TRIBES MEETING:**

I attended this meeting in Bethel on March 26-27. The purpose was to see what small tribes can do with their minimum \$50,000 annual allocation.

A Title VI loan seems to be one of the best bests for small tribes although it would not cover the cost of a full blown AVCP house.

There is a real need to find a more affordable housing alternative for the region beyond the \$400,000 AVCP-RHA houses. But AVCP-RHA is really constricted by the regulations of NAHASDA.

They are very interested in the housing packages that NVN is offering.

I believe this covers the bulk of our activities over the past weeks and addresses most of the items the Council wanted information on.

The remaining items will be included on the meeting agenda.

Thank you.