

Bong Tungul - Trip Report- March 5-7, 2014

SWAMC- South West Alaska Municipal Conference

I Depart Unalaska on Tuesday March 4th on the 4:30 PM Flight.

Day 1-March 5th -8:00-5:00- The Conference Started on the Energy Workshop focusing on reducing power cost over the long term for Aleutian & Pribilof Region, Bristol Bay Region and Kodiak, they talk about Regional opportunities on improving energy efficiency of residential and community buildings, upgrade diesel power system to reduce line losses, improve overall efficiency, prepare for integration or renewables, implement or expand heat recovery for community buildings, pursue hydro and wind power where local opportunities exist, convene a stakeholder forum to share information on energy project and common issue and identify opportunities for collaboration, asses emerging opportunities in tidal and wave power and evaluate availability of fish waste for community energy use. It is a good learning experience for me to know what other communities are trying to achieve in reducing power cost on their communities.

Day 2-March 6- 8:00- 10:00- Economic Development Day

Day two started on Educational Model for a Competitive Alaska, presentation made by Diane Hirsberg on Institute of Social and Economic Research. I am surprise to hear how high the percentage of drop out of students, turnover of teachers, graduation rates and failure around the Aleutian and Pribilof Region, we all know Unalaska is doing a lot better on this, our drop out ratio is next to zero and our students are well prepared when they go to college, to seek for higher Education and the community involvement specially parents when talking about the school is way over 100%.

10:00-12:00 – Economic Development Fostered by Broadband, Better Communication for Rural AK.

Talk about all kinds of possibilities on developing Broadband and Better Communication around rural Alaska and a trend of nonstop presentation of ten different speakers on programs and ideas that are working on around the state.

12:00-100- Lunch and Update from Capitol Hill from Senator Mark Begich and answer some quick question regarding Southwest Alaska.

1:00-5:00 – Talk about importance of local resources – Multiplying effects of trade, SWAMC- Business Council on Southwest Alaska Economic engine and Leader of Industry, Southwest Alaska economic development Strategy, discovering opportunity and Member's Policy discussion on What we stand for.

Day 3-March 7 – Fisheries & Politics Day

8:00- The conference started with Lieutenant Governor Mead Treadwell updating the ups & downs on the financial outlook of the state along with the challenges that we are going to face moving forward for the future of Alaska. I am glad to hear when he address the traffic of all the ship that are passing

through Western Alaska on what kind a spill response we have in place if another Selendang Ayu will happen again.

10:00 – Regional Legislator Update with Representative Alan Austerman and Senator Gary Stevens they gave an overall update on where things are around the State, Educational, Transportation , Revenue Sharing, and more, but the one that really got my attention is when representative Austerman talk about the Stimson was going to be staying in Unalaska.

10:30 – SWAMC 2014 Annual Business Meeting A number of resolution where passed.

12:00 – Managing for Overall Value-Ecosystem Based Management by Dr. Ed Farley , it was an interesting presentation gave me a lot of ideas on the Ecosystem research that NOAA was doing .

1:00-4:00-Talk about connecting national fishing perspective to local priorities, Quality certified-Ensuring Sustainable fisheries – Managing for maximum sustained benefit, comparing federal and Alaska Policies. The presentation is about policies, regulatory, environmental, industry, marketing and economy to better manage fisheries to benefit Alaska.

Overall the Conference was good for me, It's a great learning experience on my part and it gave me chance to meet some of the leaders from the other communities that attended SWMC.

I want to say thank you for the opportunity for being a part of this Conference.