

Testimony in support of the Road through the Izembek Wilderness

Good afternoon, my name is Della Trumble, I am thankful for this opportunity today to again testify in support of the road between King Cove and Cold Bay. As you are aware, I did testify at the scoping meetings in Anchorage and Washington D.C. in regard to this issue. Initially I was scheduled to travel with this group to all of the communities for the five remaining scoping meetings, however due to weather, was not able to get out of King Cove Monday morning. I have also lobbied and testified during the past decades as a shareholder and as the past President of the King Cove Corporation and as a member and past of the Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove. I have testified to the importance of safe access for the people in this community whether it was for travel in the case of health, emergencies, education, or just the peace of mind to travel between these communities. I have testified to the fact that the King Cove Corporation and the State of Alaska have given up so much in exchange for safe access 61,000 acres for a 208 acre easement. I have testified in regard to the disservices the government has done to the Aleut people by designating this wilderness without any consultation to the very people it affects the most.

Over the years, I have watched and participated with many people from this community, some who are no longer alive today, as to the hardships they experienced while either trying to get to Cold Bay or while traveling in treacherous conditions while experiencing a medical emergency. Today these situations continue on a regular basis. When I returned from my trip from the scoping meetings, I talked to a young boy in Cold Bay who broke his leg on a Friday and due to weather, could not get out until Monday.

Today, I am testifying as a mother and resident of this community. As you may be aware, I was at the airport Monday afternoon waiting for the flight from Cold Bay as my daughter Trisha was on the plane. As I waited for the plane, I noticed the wind sock go in one direction, down, up in another direction, down, in a full circle. My thoughts were, cross winds and then became concerned. I watched the plane as it circled to come in for a landing, and from where I was parked it appeared it would land safely. As I backed up and turned the car toward the airfield, I saw the plane on the runway skidding sideways to a stop. I drove as fast as I could to get to the airplane to see if everyone was okay, at which time everyone was off of the plane. Another vehicle who was on the hydro road saw the plane as it hit a downdraft and hit the runway hard and then skidded, drove behind me and I sent them to call the Police Dept to let them know what happened. We got everyone to get their baggage from the plane off to the side as we could see fuel spewing from the plane.

Time and time again we talk about the weather and how fast it can change and in this case, the situation changed extremely fast. This was a situation that could have been very serious to everyone on the airplane and I am very thankful to God that it was not any worse than it was. I cannot even begin to imagine it being anymore than it was, this was bad enough. To watch a plane crash land with your daughter on it is not something any parent should witness, but again, I am very grateful everyone is safe. As we continue with this EIS process, please know that our families and fellow resident's welfare

and safety is of utmost importance to this community. How many times must we continue to go through this to make the government understand this is a way of life for us and it is not necessary. It is harder to comprehend since this situation was created without any consultation with this community. We have a solution that many other communities in Alaska do not have we have the ability for road access to the third largest airport in Alaska. Secretary, I ask that you take these testimonies today seriously and ask that you come to King Cove and Cold Bay to see firsthand what we have been experiencing firsthand for years. Please take these requests to heart prior to making a final decision as our lives do depend on it. Thank you.