

**Project Objective:** The purpose of the project was to explore and document the impact that climate change may be having on subsistence harvests and to demonstrate culturally appropriate adaptation strategies to help address food insecurity issues in Lower Kalskag.

**Results:** The project involved 3 major activities: 1. Research, 2) A community survey, 3) and adaptation strategies in the form of community gardens and food preservation classes. Climate change research was conducted and it was determined that temperatures have raised 3.8 degrees since the late 1940s. A survey was developed and administered to 27 residents to document traditional knowledge subsistence resources and climate change. Because food insecurity has been increasing, 7 gardens were implemented in the community as a demonstration to people on how to grow their own food. Food preservation demonstrations were also held to illustrate methods for preparing foods for drying and jarring. A Facebook page was created for the project to share results.

#### **Benefits:**

- Local traditional knowledge is documented about changes to subsistence resources.
- Project promoted physical activity and introduced healthy food alternatives.
- Residents are more knowledgeable about growing and preserving their own foods.
- Increased knowledge about how residents view food insecurity will prepare the tribe to provide culturally relevant advocacy for future adaptation efforts.

#### **Lessons Learned:**

- **People do not always attend community meetings!** This is especially true if you are competing with bingo night. Be prepared to try different ideas to get people involved and on more than one occasion.
- **Rain, rain, and more rain.** Alaska weather is unpredictable so prepare for the worst and be ready to modify your project as needed. Hoop house enclosures were built to protect the growing veggies.
- **Climate change adaptation.** It's important to understand and take into account how local communities envision food security. Don't assume that it's about replacing one food source with another.
- **Don't bypass Traditional Knowledge – It's valuable.** When considering adaptation strategies consider and build on traditional understanding of wellness. Traditional cultures do not always align with the "western way" of doing things.
- **Change takes time.** At the end of the growing season an elder reported being "greened out" from so many fresh vegetables. If people are not accustomed to something, they may not embrace it immediately but don't give up.

#### **For more information:**

Village of Lower Kalskag \* Nastasia Levi \* Ph. 907-471-2300 \* E-mail: [village\\_of\\_lower\\_ta@yahoo.com](mailto:village_of_lower_ta@yahoo.com)  
ANTHC project website: <http://www.anthc.org/chs/ces/hve/community-environmental-demonstration-grants.cfm>

# VILLAGE OF LOWER KALSKAG



## Identifying and Adapting to Climate Induced Food Security Issues Utilizing Culturally Relevant Practices



Funding provided by ANTHC through the Community Environmental Demonstration Grant Program made possible with the Alaska Tribal Multi-Media Grant from the US EPA.



# \* PROJECT TIMELINE \*

2012 Community Environmental Demonstration Project Grant



Worked with the school, homeowners and local volunteers to gather supplies and plan garden plots

Began research and collecting data on local weather patterns

Started planting seeds and constructing garden plots

Hosted the first food preservation class and community outreach meeting



The garden was harvested throughout the month



Created a project Facebook page to educate people about the project



Received CEDP grant from ANTHC

Began planning and ordering supplies for the community gardens

Developed survey to collect traditional knowledge about local food security. A release form was also created.

Held cooking class to educate residents about food preparation utilizing garden and subsistence harvest

Worked with school children to help conduct interviews with 27 members of the community

In order for the project to be successful, it needed to be a coordinated community effort. From planning to implementation, regular communication with other local organizations, volunteers, and residents was very important

Compiled and analyzed research and survey results

