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Contact: pressoffice@dot.gov

Biden-Harris Administration Announces Nearly \$43.5 Million in Funding for Three Projects in Alaska to Modernize Transportation and Make it More Affordable, Increase Safety and Strengthen Supply Chains

President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law more than doubles the funding for popular RAISE Program this year

Today, U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg announced that the Biden-Harris Administration has awarded \$43.5 million to support three projects in Alaska from the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) program to help move forward on projects that modernize roads, bridges, transit, rail, ports, and intermodal transportation and make our transportation systems safer, more accessible, more affordable, and more sustainable. This year's total allocations nationwide include more than \$2.2 billion thanks to the President's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which provides an additional \$7.5 billion over five years for the program to help meet the strong demand to help projects get moving across the country.

"We are proud to support so many outstanding infrastructure projects in communities large and small, modernizing America's transportation systems to make them safer, more affordable, more accessible, and more sustainable," **said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg.** "Using funds from President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, this year we are supporting more projects than ever before."

Projects were evaluated on several criteria, including safety, environmental sustainability, quality of life, economic competitiveness and opportunity, partnership and collaboration, innovation, state of good repair, and mobility and community connectivity. Within these areas, the Department considered how projects will improve accessibility for all travelers, bolster supply chain efficiency, and support racial equity and economic growth – especially in historically disadvantaged communities and areas of persistent poverty.

In Alaska, the following projects will benefit from RAISE awards:

- **Marine Service Center Sheetpile Wall and Crane City** – The Borough of Sitka will receive \$7.8 million to fund the construction of a new seawall at Sitka's Marine Service

Center. The project will also upgrade a port facility that will help move goods and service ships and replace a 2-ton crane for continued operation of this vital Sitka port. The project will construct a new seawall, which is vital to continue commercial fishing in Sitka and providing jobs for residents. The current 46-year-old seawall is at risk of collapse and puts stability of the seafood cold storage facility at risk. Without that facility, there will be insufficient cold storage in Sitka, and inbound freight would have to go to other ports for retrieval on smaller vessels, increasing costs of goods and services.

- **Clarks Point - Ekuk Road Project** – The Bristol Bay Native Association will receive \$13.3 million to construct approximately 4.30 miles of gravel road connecting the two communities of Clark's Point and Ekuk, Alaska. It will provide the only safe surface transportation between the villages of Clarks Point and Ekuk, which are currently only accessible by small skiff or ATV/snowmobile trail. The new road will reduce reliance on these hazardous and environmentally damaging modes of transportation, which impact wetlands, vegetation, and subsistence areas. It also presents economic opportunity, both for residents accessing employment, and by providing access to land that could be developed in areas farther from the threats of coastal erosion. This road will support commercial fishing operations, facilitate shared use of public services (healthcare, education, and power and waste utilities) between the villages, and allow for critical access for emergency services.
- **Qawalangin Tribe Port Infrastructure Improvement Project** – The Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska will receive \$22.3 million to fund construction of a new dock that will increase terminal capacity by providing a barge ramp, dock, and three barge mooring dolphins. It will also develop approximately 5.6 acres of adjacent container storage yard area. The project includes development of an additional upland area designed specifically to handle container-on-barge services and operations. The new dock will speed up the movement of goods by allowing the terminal to handle both ocean-going vessel and regional barge operations at the same time. This will mean that ships won't wait as long for available berthing space compared with the current single dock terminal. It includes additional onsite storage for both full and empty containers, eliminating the need for truck trips to the two satellite yards. These developments are anticipated to remove 4,000 round-trip truck trips from the local roads each year, improving both safety and environmental sustainability. The project also provides opportunity for job creation and apprenticeship in the trades as the terminal grows, in partnership with terminal operator CMA-CGM, which will also assist in project delivery. The terminal is important for supply chain movements in the remote region of Unalaska and will increase food security for the disadvantaged and underserved Tribal community.

Today, Secretary Buttigieg is in Tucson and Phoenix where he is visiting two of the projects receiving RAISE awards. Later this month the Secretary and other senior USDOT officials will fan out across the country to visit additional sites that are receiving RAISE awards to highlight the ways that the President's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is helping invest in communities and get important infrastructure projects moving in communities large and small.

The full list of awards can be found [here](#).

Additional background:

- 2022 RAISE grants are for planning and capital investments that support roads, bridges, transit, rail, ports, or intermodal transportation.
- 50% of funding is designated for projects in rural areas, and 50% of the funding is designated for projects in urban areas.
- Nearly two-thirds of projects are located in areas of persistent poverty or historically disadvantaged communities.
- The largest grant award is \$25 million. Per statute, no more than \$341.25 million could be awarded to a single state in this round of funding.
- Among this year's selected projects, 11 included a local hire provision.
- Several projects include workforce development aspects including four projects that have project labor agreements, eight projects that have registered apprenticeship programs and an additional eight projects with other workforce development provisions.

The RAISE program is one of several ways communities can secure funding for projects under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's competitive grant programs. Later this year, the Biden-Harris Administration will announce recipients of the first-ever National Infrastructure Project Assistance (MEGA) program, as well as the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) program and the Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program (RURAL).

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