

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 4, 2014

The Alaska Energy Authority and Cook Inlet Regional and Village Corporations Reach Susitna-Watana Hydro Land Access Agreement

Anchorage – The Alaska Energy Authority (AEA), six Cook Inlet village corporations and Cook Inlet Region Inc. (CIRI) collectively reached agreement on a complex land-use permit to support Susitna-Watana Hydro environmental study.

“This permit is the result of months of negotiations and is a step toward continuing a long-term positive relationship between AEA, the Cook Inlet village corporations and CIRI,” said Sara Fisher-Goad, AEA executive director.

“This permit protects land owners while providing AEA the necessary access to conduct Susitna-Watana Hydro environmental study. We look forward to the continued development of this partnership.”

As part of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, Chickaloon Moose Creek Native Association; Knikatu, Inc., Ninilchik Natives Association, Inc., Seldovia Native Association, Inc., and Tyonek Native Corporation own surface rights to some lands within the Susitna-Watana Hydro project area; CIRI owns sub-surface rights.

“Completing this monumental task has been a historic achievement requiring much commitment, time, effort and willingness to compromise for the greatest good for the greatest number of people,” said Greg Encelewski, president of the Ninilchik Natives Association.

Susitna-Watana Hydro is in the midst of a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) licensing effort and implementing 58 FERC-approved environmental studies. A land access permit is necessary for AEA to implement the studies and conduct field work on private lands.

Susitna-Watana Hydro would be located at river mile 184 on the Susitna River, above Devils Canyon, and would provide long-term, stable electric rates for 100+ years. It is estimated to provide approximately half of the Railbelt’s electrical demand, with an average 50-year estimated cost of power less than 7 cents per kilowatt hour. The Alaska Energy Authority is a public corporation of the state whose mission is to reduce the cost of energy in Alaska. More information about Susitna-Watana Hydro can be found at Susitna-WatanaHydro.org.

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