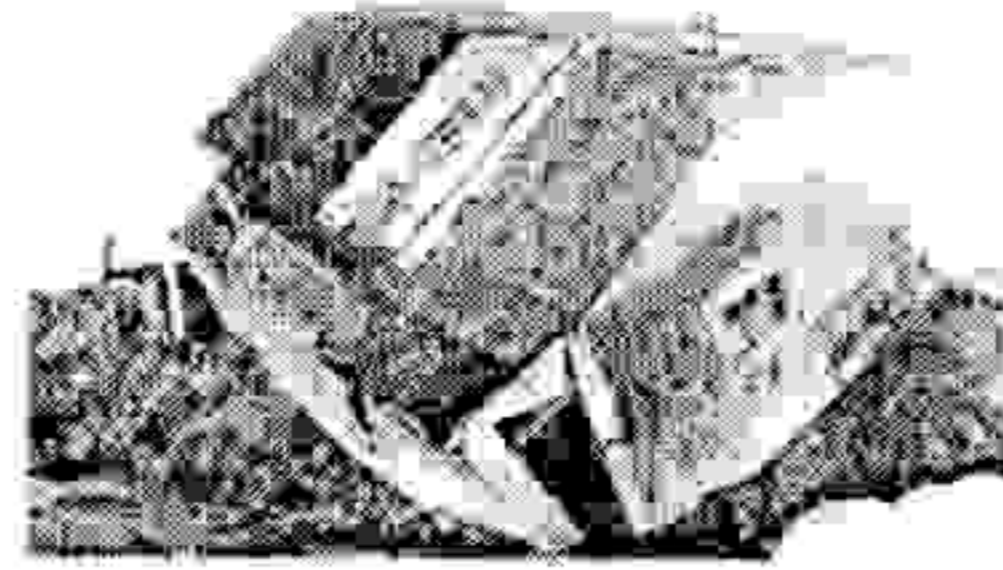


"Igazaunoqtuut"
Inupiaq Eskimo for, "We Need Help".
Students Band Together To Save Our Shishmaref, SOS Project



SOS Project
Shishmaref School
PO Box 155
Shishmaref, AK 99772
907-649-3021

Dear Mr. Gore,

We, the students of the Bering Strait School District in Shishmaref, Alaska have joined together to generate funds that are needed to relocate our village. Our native island of Sarichef is slowly eroding into the Chukchi Sea. Our village of Shishmaref needs enormous funds in order to match any state and federal money before the village can be moved to a site on the mainland.

Shishmaref, Alaska is a village of about 600 people. It is located on Sarichef Island in the Chukchi Sea just north of the Bering Strait, five miles from the Alaskan mainland. We are a traditional Inupiaq Eskimo village and our residents are proud of and rely heavily on a subsistence lifestyle. For more than two thousand years we have been hunting and gathering most of our food from this ancestral region.

Our island has experienced erosion of its north shoreline at an average loss of 3-5 feet per year except during the storms of 1973, 1997, and 2001 where erosion was as much as 125 feet of horizontal distance. Many buildings were lost while others needed to be relocated to the farther end of the island. Our community has determined that it is unacceptable to continue to face the ever-present threat from ocean-based storms. We voted on the only viable solution; to relocate the village to a nearby mainland location that is accessible to the sea, suitable for the subsistence lifestyle of our community, yet is still a part of our ancestral hunting grounds. We must preserve our Shishmaref Inupiat Eskimo people and our unique and precious culture.

No more money will be invested and all infrastructure building plans and grants for the current village have been canceled due to the eminent demise of our island. Subsequently, our village is without running water and there is no sewage system. We've run out of room and are unable to move homes that are in peril. Funds have been spent to build seawalls that may only postpone further erosion by fifteen years at the maximum to protect our community while plans are developed for the safe relocation of our town and its people.

We cannot successfully relocate on our own. "Igazaunoqtuut" We need help. Advocates are needed to help with generating awareness, initiating fundraising activities, organizing benefits, and providing personal donations to our cause. For further information you may visit <http://shishmaref.bssd.org/sos/> . Donations for relocation should be made out to Shishmaref School for the SOS Project. Donations can also be made toward relocation at the Coalition website <http://www.shishmarefrelocation.com>.

"Quyaana" Thank you,
Students of Shishmaref School

Yvonne Greerson
Neresa Olanna
James Barr
Fonda T. Braach