



Alaska Designs

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The Official Newsletter of the Alaska Professional Design Council

Focus on Problems, Potential Solutions

ASCE Report Card on Energy: C Minus

By Greg Kinney, ASCE

As discussed in last month's newsletter, the Alaska Section of ASCE has issued its first report card on Alaska's infrastructure, covering nine critical infrastructure categories. Using ASCE's methodology, the composite grade came to a C minus, which might be compared to the national report card grade just released, a D plus.



With this article, we are introducing a series of articles highlighting each category, to give readers greater insight into the problems, and potential solutions.

The first category we'll address is Energy, and specifically electrical power infrastructure. As with many other categories, the condition of infrastructure varies considerably between rural and urban Alaska, and between different areas of the state. In this article, we focus on rural Alaska and the so-called Railbelt, illustrating challenges and opportunities in these regions.

Railbelt Energy Infrastructure

The Railbelt area stretches roughly from Homer to Fairbanks. This is the most integrated power system in the state, with interties connecting communities along the Sterling, Seward and Parks Highways. About 76% of the state's population is served by this system, and Railbelt power plants produce about 78% of all power produced in the state.

This region has several major utilities, each of which operates

power plants or other generation facilities. In recent years, major new plants and/or plant upgrades have been commissioned by Chugach Electric Association, Homer Electric Association, Matanuska Electric Association, and Municipal Light and Power. While this has greatly improved the generation capacity of the region, power transmission and distribution have not kept pace.

A study performed for the Alaska Energy Authority identified approximately \$900 million in transmission improvements that would be needed to support hydroelectric development, much of which is needed even in the absence of such development to support full utilization of the most efficient and cost-effective power sources. A key example of system limitation relates to the use of Bradley Lake hydroelectric power, the least expensive major power source, which is now primarily used for peaking loads because transmission capacity through the Kenai Peninsula is limited.

The State of Alaska, acting through the Regulatory Commission of Alaska, has been taking steps to assure that the major Railbelt utilities operate and maintain the transmission grid in a cooperative manner, through a transmission cooperative (TRANSCO). Recently, the three largest Railbelt utilities have announced a generation pooling agreement toward that end. While this is an important step, additional work is needed to upgrade transmis-

sion capacity.

It is also noteworthy that the Railbelt area is also connected by highway to areas that are not connected to the grid. The Tok-Men-tasta area (served by Alaska Power and Telephone) and the Valdez-Glennallen region (served by the Copper Valley Electric Association) could be tied in with the Railbelt grid, making power ultimately more affordable to consumers. In addition, the State has identified opportunities for power generation on the North Slope, to serve Interior and Southcentral Alaska communities with abundant gas resources into the distant future. However, the current economic climate is not favorable to these initiatives in the near term.

Finally, we must point out an under-appreciated vulnerability of transmission facilities that is nonetheless familiar to Alaskan civil en-

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ASCE Report Card on Energy: C Minus

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gineers. Frost jacking and/or settlement affects significant segments of some power pole lines in some areas of the state, perhaps most notably near the Canadian border along the Alaska Highway. Significant investment may be required to stabilize or correct these issues in the future, as has been the case in the past.

Rural Alaska Energy Infrastructure

Rural areas of Alaska are challenged in many areas of infrastructure; energy is a leading example. The rural areas generally have a low and dispersed population; numerous Interior villages are not reachable by standard surface transportation infrastructure. This has created conditions in which, commonly, individual communities manage their own “microgrids” which are remote and isolated from other systems.

Examples of challenges include the following:

- Over 71% of power generation units surveyed by the Alaska Energy Authority have been assessed in fair to poor condition;
- The Denali Commission, which has funded and overseen improvements to many rural bulk fuel storage areas, still assesses 56 communities as having unmet needs, a condition which will take several decades to remediate at current funding levels.
- It is often difficult to staff trained operations and maintenance personnel in remote communities. While the best solution may be placement of local people who are committed to the communities, it is often a hardship for local people to relocate for extended periods to train for these positions, and so recruiting is challenged.

- Because of remoteness, harsh weather and other Alaskan realities, it has been difficult to realize economies of scale for efficient operation of the utilities.

Some of these issues have been locally addressed through cooperatives, which have improved the efficient administration and delivery of power in a significant number of communities. The Alaska Village Electric Cooperative (AVEC) currently serves 57 rural communities in Interior and Western Alaska and is seen by many experts as providing a prototype for improving operation and maintenance in rural systems.

Recommendations

The ASCE Energy Report Card presents several key recommendations to raise the grade:

- Extend and improve Alaska’s energy cooperatives to enhance and streamline operations and

maintenance, particularly in rural areas. This will require creation of policies encouraging formation of energy consortiums and cooperatives.

- Invest in workforce development to build the capacity of local workers to operate and maintain rural facilities. This will likely lead to more efficient operation and, in the long term, lowered lifecycle costs.
- Upgrade Railbelt transmission line capacity to improve redundancy, reliability and economy, following Alaska Energy Authority recommendations.
- Consider extension of Railbelt utility infrastructure to accessible areas on the major road system, notably to the Copper Valley Electric Association grid and the area along the Alaska Highway served by Alaska Power and Telephone. ❖

AECOM Hires Colonell as Coastal & Ocean Engineer

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA (Apr. 3, 2017) — AECOM, a premier, fully integrated global infrastructure firm, announced that it has hired Jack Colonell to serve as senior consultant for coastal & ocean engineering for its Alaska operations, effective immediately.

In this role, Dr. Colonell brings more than 40 years of global expertise in coastal and offshore environments. Since 1980, he has held multiple leadership roles with AECOM-acquired firms, including Woodward-Clyde Consultants and URS.



“We are thrilled to welcome Jack back to our team; Jack brings with him an extensive knowledge of coastal and marine environments across the globe,” stated AECOM Alaska Operations Manager Laura Young. “We are extremely fortunate to have somebody of Jack’s caliber rejoin us and look forward to working with him again.”

Dr. Colonell holds B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in civil engineering, from the University of Colorado, Washington State University and Stanford University, respectively. Prior to his career in consulting, he was professor of marine science at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks (UAF) and professor of civil and ocean engineering at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. ❖

Coffman Promotes SlatonBarker

ANCHORAGE (May 1, 2017) –Coffman Engineers (Coffman) is pleased to announce the promotion of Tony SlatonBarker to Principal of Energy and Sustainability. He was born and raised in Alaska and has been a principal since the beginning of 2016. SlatonBarker first started at Coffman Engineers in 2000. He is a licensed civil engineer and structural engineer in Alaska and a United States Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) accredited professional. He has over 24 years of project management experience in civil/structural engineering, building, and environmental engineering industries. SlatonBarker is involved with sustainable design and alternative energy projects in Alaska, and he is currently the manager of Coffman’s Alternative Energy and Sustainability Program.

SlatonBarker has worked on many alternative energy projects that have required integration with conventional heating systems including wind, solar and other systems. Coffman has long had a focus on renewable energy, green buildings, and sustainability, but the creation of this new position solidifies Coffman’s dedication to this type of work. Coffman has been a member of the Renewable Energy Alaska Project for over six years and supported design and construction of the first utility scale wind turbines in remote Alaska 13 years ago. Coffman continues to support this type of work today. Coffman is currently working on Lithium ion battery storage facility projects in Alaska, Canada, Hawaii, and California; Microgrid projects in Oregon and Alaska; Solar projects in Alaska, Hawaii and Guam; a flywheel project in Alaska; combined heat and power



projects in Alaska and Oregon; and, Coffman has recently completed a biomass district heat system in Alaska serving 15 buildings.

SlatonBarker notes, “I am very excited with my advancement to Principal of Energy and Sustainability at Coffman. This position will help me better serve our Oil and Gas industry clients and our clients in other business sectors, such as utilities, schools, the military, and commercial businesses. I look forward to saving our clients’ money for power and heat generation and a having a greater focus on renewable energy projects.” SlatonBarker adds, “although my position is based in Alaska, I will be spending significant time assisting our other nine offices develop more expertise in this business area and helping support their clients with renewable energy, resiliency (microgrids), and efficiency projects. We have found that clients now ask about energy efficiency and renewable energy in the planning process for most projects. I have long been passionate about efficiency and energy, from installing triple pane windows in my house 21 years ago, to taking the very first LEED exam over a decade ago (making me one of the first LEED accredited professionals in Alaska and in the US). I also have had a long career managing large industrial projects in Alaska. This new position will allow me to more readily pursue emerging markets to support clients of all types working to save money, achieve additional energy security, and reduce their carbon footprint.”

Coffman is proud to celebrate 37 years of providing clients with multidiscipline engineering services including civil, structural, mechanical, electrical, fire protection, process

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The monthly newsletter of the Alaska Professional Design Council does not necessarily express the opinions of the Council, the member societies, or their members.

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Stantec Promotes Three Leaders in Anchorage

Stantec recently announced the promotion of three leaders in its Anchorage office. Francis Wiese was named senior principal, Andrew Niemiec was named senior associate and Giovanna Gambardella was named an associate of the firm.

“It is a pleasure to see my Stantec colleagues branching out and succeeding in their careers,” says Tim Vig, Stantec senior principal. “It shows great achievement in their personal development. I’m excited for them to help the Company continue to grow in Alaska.

“And the efforts of Francis, Andrew and Giovanna also are reflected in our Alaska communities. The work they do every day makes our communities stronger and better places to live.”

Wiese serves as Stantec’s technical leader for marine science in Alaska and Canada. He has 24 years of experience working in the marine environment throughout the world. Wiese joined Stantec in 2013 after working for six years



as the science director of the North Pacific Research Board in Alaska. He is currently the technical director for the Marine Arctic Ecosystem Study in the Beaufort Sea. Wiese, who is a technical reviewer for more than 20 international journals, earned his bachelor’s degree from the University of Victoria and his Ph.D. from Memorial University in St. John’s, Newfoundland.

Niemiec, PE, serves as Alaska transportation manager in the Anchorage office. He has nearly 30 years of engineering experience on design and construction projects in Alaska. Prior to joining Stantec,

Niemiec had management positions with the Knik Arm Bridge and Toll Authority and the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities. He is a graduate of the University of Alaska Fairbanks and joined Stantec in 2015.



Gambardella, AIA, NCARB, is a senior architect in Anchorage. She has 17 years of experience, with 15 of those in Alaska. Gambardella has contributed to the design of buildings of different scope and complexities in various sectors including education, community, industrial and healthcare. Gambardella graduated from the University of Architecture in Genoa, Italy, and joined Stantec in 2015.



About Stantec: We’re active members of the communities we serve. That’s why at Stantec, we always design with community in mind. The Stantec community unites approximately 22,000 employees working in over 400 locations across 6 continents. Our work—engineering, architecture, interior design, landscape architecture, surveying, environmental sciences, construction services, project management, and project economics, from initial project concept and planning through to design, construction, commissioning, maintenance, decommissioning, and remediation—begins at the intersection of community, creativity, and client relationships. With a long-

term commitment to the people and places we serve, Stantec has the unique ability to connect to projects on a personal level and advance the quality of life in communities across the globe. Stantec trades on the TSX and the NYSE under the symbol STN. Visit us at stantec.com or find us on social media. ❖

AELS Board Notice to SEs

Reminder: The grandfathering period for the SE License will end on July 31, 2017.

If you are **currently** a registered Structural Engineer in Alaska, please note the changes in 12 AAC 36.185 USE OF SEALS.

If you plan on **obtaining** an SE license in the State of Alaska by grandfathering, please submit your application and all requirements to the AELS Board prior to July 31, 2017.

An SE is required for any work that meet the definition of “**significant structure**” under 12 AAC 36.990(44).❖

Coffman: SlatonBarker

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piping, instrumentation and controls, corrosion control engineering, project management, commissioning, and land survey services. The firm’s successful history is propelled by their guiding principles of lasting creativity, results, and relationships. Coffman offers our clients an unwavering commitment to excellence in our services through offices in Anchorage, Alaska; Bozeman, Montana; Hagatna, Guam; Honolulu, Hawaii; Oakland and Los Angeles, California; and, Seattle and Spokane, Washington. For additional firm information, please visit www.coffman.com or follow us on Twitter @CoffmanEngineer. ❖

Help Wanted

Marketing Coordinator

March 31, 2017

Open Until Filled

Type: Full-Time, Hourly

Location: Anchorage, Alaska

PND Engineers seeks a Marketing Coordinator to assist with, and eventually lead, the preparation of marketing materials and proposals for civil engineering-related work. You will work alongside the Marketing Manager and with diverse professionals including engineers, surveyors, architects, environmental professionals, and other technical professionals. You will take pride in writing clearly and concisely and following style standards. You will compile and organize information from many sources into cohesive proposals and presentations that effectively communicate PND services and capabilities. The Marketing Coordinator will also participate in trade shows, advertising, social media, community relations, and special events. In short, you will never be bored!

This role requires a self-driven, energetic, and positive individual with 2+ years of related experience in an architectural/engineering environment and a bachelor's degree in marketing, communications or related field. A combination of relevant education, training, and experience may be considered in lieu of a degree. Proficiency with MS Office Suite, especially Word and Outlook, and Adobe Acrobat are required. Experience with graphic design software (InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop), project scheduling software, and Deltek Vision or related CRM software is highly desirable.

We offer an excellent salary and benefits package including medical, dental and vision insurance; life and disability insurance; paid leave and holidays; bonus and profit sharing potential.

Please submit résumé, cover letter, and three writing samples to PND on our website: <http://www.pndengineers.com/employment/current-job-openings>. Come build your career with PND!

PND Engineers, Inc., is an Equal Opportunity Employer Women/Minorities/Veterans/Disabled. PND is a full-service engineering consulting firm founded in Alaska in 1979, with offices in Anchorage, Palmer and Juneau, as well as Seattle, Wash., and Houston, Texas. PND employs 105 full-time employees, half of them registered professional engineers and/or land surveyors. Just more than half of PND's total staff is based in Anchorage.



Member Societies

Alaska Society of Professional Engineers (ASPE)
 Alaska Society of Professional Land Surveyors (ASPLS)
 American Institute of Architects Alaska Chapter (AIA)
 American Society of Civil Engineers Alaska Section (ASCE)
 American Society of Landscape Architects Alaska Chapter (ASLA)
 American Council of Engineering Companies of Alaska (ACEC)
 American Society of Interior Designers Alaska Chapter (ASID)
 Institute of Transportation Engineers Alaska Chapter (ITE)
 Structural Engineers Association of Alaska (SEAAK)

10 Years Ago

The May 2007 issue of *Alaska Designs* featured two stories with several photos each:

ASMC, UAF Celebrate International Polar Year: The 41st Alaska Surveying & Mapping Conference was in Fairbanks in March 2007 to celebrate the 4th International Polar Year (IPY) which convened at UAF.

AIA Alaska Honors 2006 Design Award Recipients: AIA Alaska announced its 2006 Design Awards for Excellence in Architecture. A photo of each recipient's project is included.

Other highlights:

- PND Engineers, Inc., debuts in the ENR Top 500 at #413
- AMC Engineers announces an electrical engineer is now a LEED AP
- Mathletes from Goldenview Middle School in Anchorage go to national competition

The APDC Board President was Rob Lang, ASCE; Frank Rast, ACEC, was president elect; Mary Knopf, ASID, was treasurer; Mike Hendee, ASCE, was secretary; and Shawn Florio, ASLA, was past president.

Sustaining Members who are still in the directory include AMC Engineers; Quantum Spatial (then Aero-Metric Anchorage); BBFM Engineers; CRW Engineering Group; Coffman Engineers; Design Alaska; DOWL; Enterprise Engineering; Golder Associates; HDL Engineering Consultants; Kinney Engineering; Kumin Associates; Livingston Slone Architects; Lounsbury & Associates; MBA Consulting Engineers; Michael Baker International; Nortech; Oien Associates.; PDC Inc. Engineers; PND Engineers; R&M Consultants; Reid Middleton; RSA Engineering; Schneider Structural Engineers; Shannon & Wilson; Terrasond; and VEI Consultants. ❖

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Sustaining Members help offset newsletter costs, and receive advertising discounts and other considerations for their support. The annual cost is \$115 for the first line, \$40 for each additional line, and \$115 to add a logo. The listing is also placed on www.apdc-ak.org. Contact the editor to join.



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*Links to Sustaining Mem-
bers' web sites are available
in the online directory at
<http://www.apdc-ak.org>.*

Alaska Professional Design Council Calendar

Tuesday, May 9, 2017

ACEC Board, 4:00 p.m., PDC, Inc., Anchorage (2nd Tues)

Wednesday, May 10, 2017

ASCE Juneau Branch and ASPE Juneau Chapter jointly hold membership meetings at Noon at the AEL&P 2nd Floor Conference Room from September through May (2nd Wed)

ASLA Alaska Board, 12:10 p.m. in the URS 3rd floor conference room (2nd Wed)

ITE Alaska Fairbanks Chapter, Noon, DOT McKinley Building (2nd Wed except June, July & August)

Thursday, May 11, 2017

ASPE Anchorage, Noon, BP Energy Center (2nd Thurs)

Tuesday, May 16, 2017

ASCE Anchorage, Noon, Moose Lodge on Arctic Blvd. (3rd Tues)

ASPLS Anchorage, 5:30 pm social, 6 pm meeting, 49th State Brewing Co. (717 W 3rd Ave, formerly Snow Goose) (usually 3rd Tues with even months at Noon at the BP Energy Center and odd months at 5:30pm, venue TBA)

Wednesday, May 17, 2017

ASCE Mat-Su Branch, Noon at the Mat-Su College (Mile 2 Trunk Road) in Room FSM 206 (3rd Wed)

ASCE Fairbanks, Noon, WestMark (3rd Wed)

SEAAK Noon, BP Energy Center, Regular meeting, presenter TBA (every other month, usually 2nd Wed)

Monday, May 22, 2017

Deadline for the June issue of *Alaska Designs* (20th of each month, or Monday)



Tuesday, May 23, 2017

ASPLS Fairbanks, Noon, WestMark Hotel (4th Tues)

Wednesday, May 31, 2017

ASPLS Valley, Noon, Windbreak, Wasilla (last Wed)

Thursday, June 1, 2017

ASPE Anchorage Directors, 7 a.m., McDonald's, 800 W Northern Lights Blvd. (1st Thurs)

APDC, Noon, Bettisworth North, 2600 Denali St, Suite 710, Anchorage (1st Thurs)

Monday, June 5, 2017

ASPE Fairbanks, Noon, WestMark Hotel (1st Mon)

Tuesday, June 6, 2017

ITE Alaska Anchorage Chapter (1st Tues except June, July & August)

Thursday, June 8, 2017

ASPE Anchorage, Noon, BP Energy Center (2nd Thurs)

Tuesday, June 13, 2017

ACEC Board, 4:00 p.m., PDC, Inc., Anchorage (2nd Tues)

Wednesday, June 14, 2017

ASCE Juneau Branch and ASPE Juneau Chapter jointly hold membership meetings from September through May (2nd Wed)

ASLA Alaska Board, 12:10 p.m. in the URS 3rd floor conference room (2nd Wed)

ITE Alaska Fairbanks Chapter (2nd Wed except June, July & August)

Tuesday, June 20, 2017

ASCE Anchorage, Noon, Moose Lodge on Arctic Blvd. (3rd Tues)

ASPLS Anchorage, Noon, BP Energy Center (3rd Tues with even months at Noon at the BP Energy Center and odd months at 5:30pm)

Deadline for the July issue of *Alaska Designs* (20th of each month, or Monday)

Wednesday, June 21, 2017

ASCE Fairbanks, Noon, WestMark (3rd Wed)

ASCE Mat-Su Branch, Noon at the Mat-Su College (Mile 2 Trunk Road) in Room FSM 206 (3rd Wed)

Tuesday, June 27, 2017

ASPLS Fairbanks, Noon, WestMark Hotel (4th Tues)

Wednesday, June 28, 2017

ASPLS Valley, Noon, Windbreak, Wasilla (last Wed)

Send calendar notices/updates by the 20th of each month to Vicky Sterling, sterlingtouch@gci.net.



When and Where

Always check locally to confirm meeting times and locations. Some organizations suspend or reschedule meetings in summer months. The newsletter publication calendar generally does not allow time to include holiday and last-minute schedule changes.

Alaska Designs welcomes articles and letters on subjects of interest to design professionals. The deadline is the 20th of each month for the following month's issue. Items may be edited for length or content and will be published as space is available. Submit items to the editor, Vicky Sterling, via email at sterlingtouch@gci.net and expect confirmation of receipt.