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Sealaska Corporation  
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## **Sealaska and Central Council to Host Energy and Economic Crisis Summit**

Juneau, Alaska – Sealaska Corporation has called for a region-wide Alaska Native Summit focused on the energy and economic crisis in Southeast Alaska. The meeting, scheduled for November 14-15 at Centennial Hall in Juneau, is a follow-up to a Southeast Village Corporation meeting held in Ketchikan in 2002.

“With rising oil prices and nation-wide economic issues, it is more important than ever that we look out for our Native people,” says Albert Kookesh, board chair of Sealaska Corporation.

The region’s 13 Alaska Native Corporations, Southeast Alaska tribes, Denali Commission as well as state, municipal and federal entities are among the invitees. Participants will be confirmed at a later date.

The agenda will focus on the crisis among Southeast Alaska Villages where rising fuel costs and unprofitable fisheries have the greatest impact. “There are more than 65 rural villages that rely on fuel to heat their homes. Unlike other urban areas in Alaska that use gas, our villages will feel the affects of rising fuel prices the most,” says Blake Kazama, executive director of the Tlingit-Haida Regional Housing Authority.

Socioeconomic indicators related to employment, cost of living and education, as well as the general economic forecast will also be discussed, and recommendations will be made for programs, federal and state proposals, and job opportunities.

“Alaska Natives have faced socioeconomic problems for decades. Natives are several times more likely than other Alaskans to be poor and out of work. The rate of heart disease and diabetes continue to rise. And what we’ve discovered is that all of these problems are worst in remote areas, where the cost of living is the highest,” says Edward Thomas, president of the Tlingit and Haida Central Council.

The Summit will also highlight economic success stories and discuss long-term strategies to deal with this crisis situation and improve the Alaska Native economy.

*This Energy and Economic Crisis Summit is co-sponsored by Sealaska Corporation, Tlingit and Haida Housing Authority, Tlingit and Haida Central Council and the Alaska Municipal League. Sealaska Corporation was formed in 1971 as a result of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. Sealaska represents 17,500 shareholders as the Southeast Regional Native Corporation.*

*For additional information please visit [www.sealaska.com](http://www.sealaska.com)*

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