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Seal Lion Basking.....A Long Way from the Sea

Newtok, Alaska, Was Supposed to Be a Model for Climate Relocation. Here's How It Went Wrong

Rural AK School Asked State to Fund a Repair. Two Decades Later, Building Is About to Collapse

The Militant Archives

Real-time Federal Budget Tracker

ITCN 51st Annual Conference: Together as One, Advancing Unity Among Nevada's Tribal Nations

Job Corps Being shut Down

Nevada Tribal Emergency Coordinating Council Meeting Today



- **California on May 9, 2025. Occasionally sea lions will make their way through the Delta about 75 miles inland from San Francisco Bay Area to Walnut Grove.**

CLIFFORD OTO/THE STOCKTON RECORD

(Sometimes we all get a little off-course)

Newtok, Alaska, Was Supposed to Be a Model for Climate Relocation. Here's How It Went Wrong.

The project's challenges highlight how ill-prepared the U.S. is to respond to the way



climate change is making some places uninhabitable.

An uninhabited home is eclipsed by snow in Newtok, Alaska. Credit: Ash Adams for The Washington Post

by Emily Schwing, [KYUK](#) May 29, 2025, 6 a.m. EDT

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NEWTOK, Alaska — A jumble of shipping containers hold all that remains of the demolished public school in Newtok, Alaska, where on a recent visit, a few stray dogs and a lone ermine prowled among the ruins.

Late last year, the final residents of this sinking village near the Bering Sea left behind the waterlogged tundra of their former home, part of a fraught, federally funded effort to resettle communities threatened by climate change.

Nearly 300 people from Newtok have moved 9 miles across the Ninglick River to a new village known as Mertarvik. But much of the infrastructure there is already failing. Residents lack running water, use 5-gallon buckets as toilets and must contend with intermittent electricity and deteriorating homes that expose them to the region's fierce weather.

[Newtok's relocation](#) was supposed to provide a model for dozens of Alaskan communities that will need to move in the coming decades. Instead, those who've worked on the effort say what happened in Newtok demonstrates the federal government's failure to oversee the complex project and understand communities' unique cultural needs. And it highlights how ill-prepared the United States is to respond to the way climate change is making some places uninhabitable, according to an investigation by The Washington Post, ProPublica and KYUK radio in Bethel, Alaska.

Dozens of grants from at least seven federal agencies have helped pay for the relocation, which began in 2019 and is expected to cost more than \$150 million. But while the federal government supplied taxpayer dollars, it left most of the responsibility to the tiny Newtok Village Council.

The federally recognized tribal government lacked the expertise to manage the project and has faced high turnover and internal political conflict, according to tribal records and interviews with more than 70 residents as well as dozens of current and former members of the seven-person village council.

Federal auditors have warned for years that climate relocation projects need a lead agency to coordinate assistance and reduce the burden on local communities. The Biden administration tried to address those concerns by creating an interagency task force led by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Interior Department. The task force's report in December also called for more coordination and guidance across the federal government as well as long-term funding for relocations.

But the Trump administration has removed the [group's report](#) from FEMA's website and, as part of its withdrawal of climate funding, frozen millions in federal aid that was supposed to pay for housing construction in Mertarvik this summer. The administration did not respond to a request for comment.

"We're physically seeing the impacts of a changing climate on these communities," said Don Antrobus, a climate adaptation consultant for the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium. "And the fact that we don't have a government framework for dealing with these issues is not just an Alaska problem, it's a national problem."

Newtok's relocation follows the resettlement of Isle de Jean Charles, Louisiana, where land vanished under rising sea levels. Both relocations have been labeled as "blueprints" for the federal government's response to climate change. Both have been mired in complicated and disjointed funding systems and accusations that the government neglected traditional knowledge.

For centuries, the area's Indigenous Yup'ik residents lived a nomadic subsistence lifestyle, timing their seasonal movements with the arrival of migratory birds in spring, fish in summer and the ripening of berries in early fall. But that changed in the 1950s after a barge, loaded with construction materials to build a school, got stuck near present-day Newtok and couldn't navigate farther upriver. So the Bureau of Indian Affairs built the school there.

At the time, elders knew the location wasn't fit for permanent settlement because the low-lying ground would shift as the permafrost froze and thawed seasonally, said Andy Patrick, 77, one of two residents who remember life in the old village before Newtok.

"My grandma used to tell me, 'It's going to start wobbling,'" he said. But they moved because the BIA required their children to attend its school.

Born and raised in Newtok, Jack Charlie was relieved when he moved into a modest brown house in Mertarvik in 2022. His old plywood home in Newtok was moldy and sinking into the tundra as the permafrost that supported the land thawed.

But within months, the light fixtures in his new house filled with water from condensation, and gaps formed where the walls met the ceiling in his bedroom. Charlie started stuffing toilet paper into the cracks to keep out the persistent coastal winds.

“Once I found it was leaking and cold air drifting in, I said: ‘Hell! What kind of house did they build?’” he said.

Charlie is one of multiple residents who complained about problems with their newly built houses. When KYUK asked for inspection reports, the tribe and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development said they didn’t have any. In the absence of an official inspection, KYUK hired a professional with expertise in cold climate housing to examine seven of the 46 homes in Mertarvik, which were built by three different contractors.

According to the inspection performed last year, Charlie’s home is among 17 houses, built by one contractor, that are rapidly deteriorating because they were designed and constructed the same way. The foundations are not salvageable, and the buildings do not meet minimum code requirements, said the inspector, Emmett Leffel, an energy auditor and building analyst in Alaska.

“This is some of the worst new construction I’ve ever seen, and the impact is so quickly realized because of the coastal climate,” Leffel said in an interview.

His inspection report concluded: “The totality of the work needed to correct these conditions and issues may cost substantially more than the original construction.”

There are other problems beyond housing. The BIA committed more than \$6 million for roads but failed to coordinate with other agencies to install water pipes underneath, according to a former project manager, the tribal health consortium and the Denali Commission, an independent federal agency tasked with providing critical infrastructure support to Alaska’s most remote communities. As a result, none of the houses in Mertarvik has a flush toilet or shower. Residents go to the town’s small well to fill jugs for household use.

As more people have moved to Mertarvik, the town’s power plant hasn’t kept up with electricity demand, leaving residents without heat or power in the winter, said Calvin Tom, the tribal administrator. And a wastewater system that handles sewage from the school, health clinic and a dormitory for construction workers has been overwhelmed for more than a year, he said. Last spring, [sewage backed up](#) into the school’s basement.

The BIA, the largest funder of the relocation that helped plan the community, did not agree to an interview request. The agency said in an email that it’s working closely with the Newtok Village Council and that the council has established a plan to repair the homes. The tribe’s attorney, Matt Mead, said, “NVC does have a repair plan and is seeking funding from multiple sources to allow for implementation of the plan.”

That was news to council secretary Della Carl and council member Francis Tom, whose home has some of the worst problems. Both said they knew of no such plan, and Mead declined to provide one. Four other council members (one seat is vacant) declined to comment or didn’t return calls or emails. Mead said the plan to fix the houses needs to be better communicated to council members and residents. He said the tribe disagrees that the homes are deteriorating and declined to comment about its management of the project.

Patrick LeMay, the Anchorage-based contractor whose company was hired by the tribe to build Charlie's and 16 other deteriorating houses, was fired last year because of the construction and design problems, according to tribal council members. LeMay didn't respond to questions or comment on Leffel's report other than to say, "I do not work for Newtok any longer."

Greg Stuckey, administrator for HUD's Office of Native American Programs in Anchorage, said the agency is not required to inspect the LeMay houses because the grant went directly to the tribal government. Federal law allows tribes to administer government programs themselves to recognize their independence and cultural needs.

"So they can't say it's the federal government," Stuckey said, "because they chose this."

Mead said the Newtok Village Council didn't dispute that.

The Government Accountability Office, however, has repeatedly recommended that federal agencies provide more technical assistance to small tribes in climate relocations.

"When you have 20 or 30 different programs that can all interact together and they all have different rules," said Anna Maria Ortiz, the GAO's director of natural resources and environment, "that's going to cost more in the long run and can be nearly impossible for some villages."

In 1996, after decades fighting erosion from storms and the deteriorating permafrost, the Newtok tribe began negotiating with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to exchange land for the relocation. Congress approved the trade in 2003. For the next two decades, the tribe worked with federal and state agencies to plan the new community at Mertarvik. Storm damage shut down the public school for good last year, and the Newtok Village Council [voted to finish the evacuation](#).

Dozens of remote communities in Alaska face similar threats from climate change, according to a [2019 report](#) by the University of Alaska Fairbanks and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The issues affecting such communities are well understood in Arctic regions around the world, but policymakers aren't heeding warnings from relocation experts, said Andrea Marta Knudsen, a relocation and disaster recovery specialist in the Iceland prime minister's office.

"It's not like this is a new thing or hasn't been researched," she said. "The government should maybe say: 'Oh wow, we're dealing with a disaster or relocation. Who knows this? Let's have a team of experts working with the government on this.'"

Over the years, several government bodies tried to coordinate efforts in Newtok. At first, Alaska's commerce department formed the Newtok Planning Group to coordinate assistance for the relocation. But in 2013, the group's work stalled because the BIA paused its funding for the tribe after a political dispute resulted in two competing tribal governments. The planning group has met only three times since 2019.

The Denali Commission took on project management responsibilities in 2016 but ceded control to the BIA three years ago after the agency announced a \$25 million grant funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

This inconsistent oversight and coordination has significantly affected the quality of housing, according to experts who have worked on the relocation.

Walter Tom and Dionne seal and walrus while with their dog, Pobby. Tom and his family live in that is intended to be Adams for The



Kilongak harvest a ring their 2-year-old son plays

a tiny home in Mertarvik temporary. Credit: Ash Washington Post

The first two housing projects in Mertarvik received high ratings from Leffel, the inspector hired by KYUK. The Alaska-based nonprofit Cold Center designed 14 homes to maximize energy efficiency and withstand the harsh weather. The houses also provide space for residents to cut fish, dress moose and host large family gatherings — activities integral to the Yup'ik lifestyle. An additional 15 houses were built by a regional housing authority that has decades of experience on Alaska's Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta.

Charlie's home and 16 others were part of a third round of houses, designed and built by LeMay Engineering & Consulting. At various times, LeMay was also employed by the tribe in other roles, including tribal administrator and relocation coordinator. Representing the tribe while simultaneously earning money from it could create a potential conflict of interest, said Ted Waters, an attorney who specializes in federal grants administration.

According to Leffel's inspection, the foundations of Charlie's home and the others designed and built by LeMay "do not meet minimum code requirements for corrosion resistance, adequate supports" or "structural integrity requirements." Two years of fuel usage data provided by the tribe shows residents in the LeMay houses pay more than twice as much for energy each year compared with the other two housing projects.

Francis Tom, the council member, said outside entities like LeMay and federal agencies often ignored his community's needs. "They don't know. They weren't born here," he said. "They don't spend enough time here."

A year before Leffel examined the houses, a group of BIA officials took a tour and saw the water pooling in light fixtures and moisture damage in several of the LeMay homes, council members said. It's unclear what they did with that information. The BIA said its staff has made three trips to Mertarvik since, and the tribe's attorney said multiple homes were inspected by independent engineers this past year, something both council members Carl and Tom disputed. Charlie and nearly a dozen other residents said no one other than Leffel had been inside their homes to inspect them. The attorney declined to provide copies of any inspections.

HUD was also made aware of problems after a 2022 report submitted by the tribe showed occupancy numbers that exceeded the agency's overcrowding standards.

In addition to the problems with the LeMay homes, several other residents said they're facing similar issues with some of the temporary tiny homes that were shipped in by barge in the fall because of the urgent need to move. Rosemary John's was among the last families to relocate. John, who grew up in Newtok and raised her six kids there, said the move has been agonizing. Seven people are now living in her house. This winter, John posted a video to social media that showed water running down a wall and pooling on the floor.

Next door, in Dionne Kilongak's temporary house, the windowsills are already covered in mold. She works at her kitchen table every day while her children, ages 2 and 4, scurry up and down the narrow hallway. She said winds bring water into her house.

"I think these aren't for Alaska," she said.

With no solution in sight, Charlie has tried to make his house feel more homey. Tired of white paint that did nothing to hide the water damage, he found scrap paneling from one of the housing authority's projects and fastened it to his walls.

Like most people in these houses, he said he hopes they'll be fixed, but he's unsure where to turn.

"I have no idea who's gonna be responsible for these homes," he said.

For more pics: https://www.propublica.org/article/newtok-alaska-climate-relocation?utm_source=firefox-newtab-en-us

A Rural Alaska School Asked the State to Fund a Repair. Nearly Two Decades Later, the Building Is About to Collapse



Arianna Wahwasuck



The Militant

<https://www.themilitant.com> > ...

There are many small organizations and presses where often archives contain articles and information not covered, or covered from a different perspective may be found. Below is a sample of such:

July 15, 2024

Hundreds sign in Vermont to put SWP on the ballot

...Outside a Walmart in Williston, Maynard Pearo signed the SWP petition. Pearo is a Mohawk Native American construction worker and runs a gunsmith shop. "The economic crisis affecting working people...

September 4, 2023

[Evidence shows capitalist greed, gov't policies led to Maui disaster](#)

...Big Five sugar barons — Alexander & Baldwin, Castle & Cooke, American Factors (now Amfac), C. Brewer and Theo H. Davies. These ruling families introduced the concept of private ownership...

April 3, 2023

[Black farmers rally in Washington, DC, discuss road forward for farmers today](#)

...here, Hispanic farmers over there, Native American farmers over here. That's like taking us back to separate water fountains. We're all just farmers!" He said he does believe white farmers...

January 2, 2023

[Holiday greetings to workers behind bars](#)

...82 jails on Native American reservations. In addition, there are military prisons and prisons in U.S. colonies like Puerto Rico. An increasing number of women are behind bars, many for...

December 12, 2022

[25, 50, and 75 years ago](#)

December 15, 1997 SYDNEY — Prime Minister John Howard has moved to curtail Aboriginal land rights. His proposed amendments to the Native Title Act have been met by protest rallies...

July 25, 2022

[Constitutional right to freedom of worship is upheld by court](#)

...did so in a court ruling that overturned a ban on borrowing books through the state's book lending program at religious schools mostly attended by Hispanic and Native American students....

June 14, 2021

[SWP: 'Workers need a fighting class-struggle road forward'](#)

...other capitalists are in control, everything will be decided for their profits, with little regard for family farmers and farm workers, or fishermen and Native American tribes who depend on...

May 3, 2021

[After outcry, SF school board reverses renaming 44 schools](#)

...and Jefferson because they were slaveholders. Lincoln because of his policies toward Native Americans. Paul Revere based on false information that he participated in an attack on a Native American...

March 1, 2021

[San Francisco renames 44 schools, 'cancels' US revolutionary history](#)

...embodied that." Paul Revere, known for his role in the first American Revolution, was crossed off because he allegedly took part in an expedition against a Native American tribe. But...

December 28, 2020

Holiday greetings to workers behind bars

...and 80 jails on Native American reservations. Others are held in military prisons, civil commitment centers, state psychiatric hospitals and prisons in U.S.-controlled territories worldwide. The capitalist rulers' bail, plea-bargain,...

October 19, 2020

US gov't steps up executions, kills 7th prisoner in 3 months

...a Navajo. He was executed for a crime committed on a Native American reservation against strong objections by Navajo leaders. Decline in support for death penalty While public support for...

September 21, 2020

25, 50 and 75 Years Ago

standoff by Native people against the Royal Canadian Mounted Police is about unsettled native land claims. This summer Native people have erected barricades and occupied land at seven different points...

September 14, 2020

Gov't execution rejects Navajo Nation protest

...Native American for a crime committed on a Native American reservation over the objection of the tribe. The decision by federal officials to go ahead with this execution — the...

May 4, 2020

Put workers back to work! Fight for jobs, no wage cuts!

Bosses seek to make workers pay for today's capitalist crisis ...
York Times April 14. "This is going to kill small-town America." The layoffs and imposed joblessness hits harder on workers who are Black, Latino and Native American, who make up...

February 17, 2020

Support miners on strike against Asarco bosses' union busting!

...central question posed in the battle unfolding today. The mines are almost all located in rural areas in southeastern Arizona, many near longstanding Native American reservations. A significant part of...

February 3, 2020

Asarco strikers in 'fight against corporate greed, social injustice'

...copper workers — mostly Mexican Americans, as well as Native American, Caucasian and Black workers — went on strike after Asarco refused to budge on its "last, best and final"...

December 23, 2019

'Militant' sends holiday greetings to workers behind prison walls

...Leonard Peltier, a Native American activist framed on murder charges and imprisoned for decades far from his family; and Mumia Abu-Jamal, who was railroaded into jail in Pennsylvania in 1982...

Dec 26, 2016

Protests in Washington: 'Free Leonard Peltier!'

— *The Native Americans who led the struggle at Standing Rock* are fighting “for the same purpose” that Peltier has spent his life fighting for, his ...

Feb 9, 2004

Genocide against the Indians: materialism vs. moralizing

For example, American Holocaust by David Stannard compares the massacres against *Native Americans* from the 15th through the 19th centuries ...

Sep 5, 2020 —

Gov't execution rejects Navajo Nation protest

Federal authorities Aug. 26 executed Lezmond Mitchell, a 38-year-old Navajo, despite strong objections by the leaders of the Navajo Nation.

May 22, 1995

Hundreds March Against Police Killing Of A Young Native ...

Policeman Tim Blum shot and killed Kimberly Frazier, a 29-year-old Santee Sioux Indian, on the porch of her Sioux City, Iowa, home March 1.

Sep 19, 2016

Free Leonard Peltier! Framed for defending Native ...

Peltier, 71 and in poor health, was convicted in 1977 and given two consecutive life sentences on frame-up charges that he killed two FBI agents ...

June 18, 2001 -- Native American activist sentenced to life in prison

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina--Eddie Hatcher, a longtime Native American activist, was convicted of first degree murder May 17 and subsequently sentenced to life ...

4/1/96 -- Forum Demands Justice For Native American

The forum was held in memory of Frazier but other cases showing widespread discrimination against *Native Americans* were discussed. These cases ...

5/15/95 -- Campaign Demands Clemency For Peltier

Peltier, a Native American political activist, is a prisoner in the federal penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas. His supporters are campaigning to win his ...

Nov 14, 2020 U.S. gov't to execute first woman in nearly 70 years

The U.S. government has scheduled the first execution of a woman in nearly 70 years, setting a Dec. 8 date to put Lisa Montgomery to death.

President Donald Trump, an outspoken advocate of capital punishment, resumed federal executions in July after a 17-year federal hiatus. The administration has been embarking on an effort to carry them out before Trump's term ends in January and the government has executed

more people in 2020 than any year since 1896. President-elect Joe Biden is expected to [put an end](#) to federal executions when he takes office.

March 20, 2000 -- `

[Students protest college's support of racist group](#)

The fight against the club by *Native Americans* and other students goes back three decades. In 1972, a group of *Native Americans* informed Michigamua and the ...

[Real-Time Federal Budget Tracker](#)

<https://budgetmodel.wharton.upenn.edu/issues/2025/4/3/real-time-federal-budget-tracker>



Inter Tribal Council of Nevada 51st Annual Conference: Together as One, Advancing Unity Among Nevada's Tribal Nations



Dates: July 13-18, 2025



Location: Reno, NV



Theme: *Together As One – Advancing Unity Among Nevada's Tribal Nations*

The **Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada (ITCN) 51st Annual Conference** is a premier gathering dedicated to fostering unity, collaboration, and growth among Nevada's Tribal Nations. This enriching and dynamic event will bring together Tribal leaders, policymakers, community advocates, and professionals to discuss critical issues, share best practices, and develop strategic solutions for the future.

What to Expect:

- ✓ **Thought-Provoking Keynotes** – Hear from inspiring leaders and experts.
- ✓ **Engaging Panel Discussions** – Address pressing challenges and explore innovative solutions.
- ✓ **Interactive Workshops** – Gain hands-on skills and practical insights.
- ✓ **Networking Opportunities** – Connect with fellow attendees, industry professionals, and change-makers.

Who Should Attend?

- ◆ Tribal Leaders & Council Members
- ◆ Elders & Community Advocates
- ◆ Tribal Program Administrators & Staff
- ◆ Educators & Child Care Providers
- ◆ Health & Social Services Professionals
- ◆ Economic & Workforce Development Leaders
- ◆ Youth & Emerging Leaders
- ◆ Anyone invested in the success of Nevada's Tribal Nations

Why Attend?

This conference is designed to empower participants with actionable insights, cultural knowledge, and strategic solutions to navigate the evolving landscape of our communities. Whether you're involved in governance, education, health, economic development, or social services, this event will provide valuable resources and meaningful connections to support your work.

Register Now! For questions, contact us below:

Registration: abaker@itcn.org

Exhibitors: tmoreno@itcn.org

Sponsorships: aclustka@itcn.org and dquintana@itcn.org




Volunteer/Convention Services: codaye@itcn.org

<https://whova.com/web/4HIzUZ0zTNYvfmBQv0vHwRMU10S4x2gw-XiLCuc%40kf4%3D/>

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[Exhibitor & Sponsor Registration](#)

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The Job Corps program on Treasure Island is being shut down by the federal government (as well as all locations nationwide). Young people (including my son) are being given 7 days to find an alternative placement. Not only is he losing his apprenticeship, but he is losing room and board and his Job Corps basketball team. The program on Treasure Island is 40 years old, with some staff having worked there for over 20 years.

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|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Nevada Tribal Emergency Coordinating Council |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                       |
| 03/04/2025 10:00 AM                          |  | - Conference line #: 1-669-219-2599 Meeting ID# 202 331 8963 When prompted for Participant ID, please press # -                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                       |
|                                              |  | - <a href="#">There will be no physical location for this meeting. The meeting can be listened to, or reviewed live, over the Internet through the Nevada Division of Emergency Management YouTube channel at: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFGa6exzrZdlgA6PP55kfqq">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFGa6exzrZdlgA6PP55kfqq</a> -</a> |  |



