

*T & M Glover*

# Seldovia Comprehensive Plan

## August 10, 2005

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# I. Introduction

## A. COMMUNITY HISTORY

Seldovia is a small community located at the southern end of the Kenai Peninsula, across Kachemak Bay from Homer. Known as Chesloknu to the Kenaitze Indians who called the area home, Seldovia was recorded as Zaliv Seldevoy, or Herring Bay in the 1852 edition of an atlas complied by Russian colonial manager Mikhail Teben'kov. A coal mine was discovered eight miles south of Seldovia in 1790 and Russian settlers began to arrive in the area soon after. The Portlock Mine produced coal for the Russian fleet and settlements through the 1800s. Seldovia's economic base at the time also included fur trapping, timber and fish processing. The Seldovia post office was established in 1898.

At the turn of the century, Seldovia became a stop for prospectors enroute to the gold claims in the Interior. The first public school was established in 1908, and the first cannery opened around 1911. A salmon cannery was the first to be built, with several herring processing plants constructed in the following decade. The city became a center of commerce and the major shipping center for south central Alaska in the 1920s. Seldovia continued to thrive over the next several decades.

The earthquake of 1964 caused the land to subside four feet, flooding buildings with high tides and destroying three fish-processing operations along with much of the community's business infrastructure. After rebuilding, only one or two processing facilities were active at any one time and the community's last remaining fish processing facility closed in 1991. Today Seldovia is still home to an independent fishing fleet and a vigorous sport fishing charter community.

## B. PROFILE & DATA

Seldovia, a first class city since 1945, is nestled on Seldovia Bay where summer temperatures range from 50 to 70 degrees and winter temperatures range from 0 degrees to 45 degrees. Annual precipitation averages 34.5". Seldovia is accessible only by air and water. The population of Seldovia grew steadily until after WWII. The population has slowly decreased since the latter half of the 1980s due to statewide economic down sizing and the decline of Seldovia's fish processing industry. The population of Seldovia was 315 in 1990 and, decreased 12 percent to 276 residents by 1996. This increased to 286 by the 2000 Census but is recognized as 256 in 2004 Census figures. These numbers do not include the residents outside the city limits, who are tallied in a separate census district called Seldovia Village.



*S. Hansen*

The age distribution of the population has changed since the 1990 Census. The median age was 31 in 1990, compared to a median age of 45 in 2000. This increase is due partly to the natural aging of the population but is also due to the out-migration of some families with children and residents between the ages of 25 and 44 and in-migration of retirement-age residents. In 1990, there were 112 residents between 25 and 44 years of age (35.5 percent of the population); by 2000, only 60 residents were in that age group (21 percent of the population). One factor in the out-migration may be the closing of the fish processing facility in 1991, which had been one of the community's largest employers. The loss of 55 jobs following the closure resulted in some residents relocating to seek employment elsewhere.

Seventy-three percent of Seldovia residents are white, and approximately twenty-three percent are of Alaskan Native descent. Residents are more educated than in many rural areas of Alaska: almost 87 percent of residents have a high school diploma or equivalency and 21 percent hold a bachelor's degree or higher.

Seldovia is part of the Kenai Peninsula School District. Susan B. English School serves Kindergarten through 12th grade. The Seldovia Village Tribe maintains a playgroup for younger children. Seldovia also has an active Boys and Girls Club program housed in a building adjacent to the school.

### C. THE CITY'S MISSION

The community of Seldovia is using strategic planning to identify and address the major issues of the future. The City Council, Planning Commission, and administrative staff developed this plan, using the results of community planning meeting to guide the City to the year 2020. The goals and objectives identified under each vision element were developed based on public input.

- The City of Seldovia will:
  - o Offer quality leadership, operate efficiently and be responsive to the desires of its residents.
  - o Preserve and promote the unique heritage, natural setting and beauty of the Seldovia area.
  - o Create a safe place to live and further the social and economic well being of its citizens.

## II. Our Vision

Building on Seldovia's heritage, beautiful natural setting, and strategic location, our community vision includes:

- An attractive, healthy, vibrant and safe community.
- A process for orderly growth.
- City government and local tribal organizations that work cooperatively while facilitating investments in infrastructure, economic development, training and other issues that affect our community.

- Enhancement of Seldovia's pedestrian-oriented Main Street as the center for our commercial activity, tourism, and creating a common area where the local community can enjoy gathering.
- Promotion of the artistic, cultural and entrepreneurial spirit of our residents by providing opportunities for environmentally sound businesses and home occupations.
- A strong diverse economy with year round employment opportunities:
  - o Jobs in the renewable resource industry, value added fisheries and aquaculture products.
  - o Tourist-oriented business and employment opportunities.
  - o Growth of community-based merchandising, small industries and commerce-based jobs.
  - o Support of ongoing volunteer organizations, such as EMS/Firefighters, the Seldovia Arts Council, and the Seldovia Public Library.
- An appreciation of local history and a sense of community, with respect for different cultures and social values.

## III. Vision Elements

### A. ECONOMIC BASE

We are a community that wants a strong and diverse economy with year-round employment opportunities, and we choose to promote environmentally responsible industries and jobs that create a higher standard of living.

### B. TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

We are an isolated community with limited transportation facilities. In order to reach Seldovia you must travel by plane or waterway. As the community expands into the twenty-first century, we foresee the need for local road expansion, bicycle and pedestrian accesses that meet the needs of residents, businesses and visitors. We will also encourage opportunities to pursue improved ferry service to Homer to improve accessibility to Seldovia.

### C. GROWTH MANAGEMENT AND LAND USE PLANNING

We have an attractive community, located in a beautiful, pristine area where we live, work, educate our children and have recreational opportunities. Growth is orderly and driven by community consensus. Growth and land use planning are coordinated through the collaboration of public and private entities. We promote and facilitate balanced development.

### D. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

We celebrate our natural environment by preserving views and open spaces while working in harmony with nature. We choose to preserve environmentally sensitive access to waterways, mountains and marine life.

### E. RECREATION AND LEISURE

We want to provide more diverse year-round, indoor and outdoor recreational, educational and cultural opportunities with facilities for residents and visitors of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds. Because of our prime location and beauty of our surroundings, this includes opportunities in eco-tourism and businesses involved in the promotion and education of art, health, nutrition and fitness.



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### F. INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE

With economic growth in mind, it is extremely important to not only add to our existing infrastructure, but to keep our present infrastructure maintained and in good condition. Seldovia's aging sewer and water system as well as the privately owned fuel tank farm are in much need of repair and upgrading.

### G. TELECOMMUNICATIONS EXPANSION

As technology advances into the new millennium, it will become increasingly important for Seldovia to change and upgrade its present telecommunication system. The increase of home-based, computer-dependent businesses will only add to the demand for expanded and state-of-the-art telecommunications. In addition to business needs, communication links are necessary to such a remote community for safety reasons. Seldovia is not presently served by cell phones and DSL demand exceeds available resources.

## IV. Economic Resources

### A. PORT FACILITIES

The State recently transferred ownership of the boat harbor to the City with $2.628 million of repair funds. The harbor is ice free in the winters and is therefore the lifeblood of Seldovia. The City is already engaged in the planning process for harbor renovations; that work is expected to be completed in 2007.

The City also owns and operates a deepwater dock that is used by the Alaska Marine Highway System, has two small cranes and is also used by the fuel station for refueling vessels of all sizes. The City has applied for a grant to expand this dock in order to improve and enhance our existing facilities for state and other ferries.



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The City of Seldovia operates the only boat haul-out and storage area on the south side of Kachemak Bay. A travel-lift haulout facility would improve the city's ability to service both commercial and sports fishing customers of all sizes, as well as providing employment opportunities to residents in the marine maintenance field. With this equipment, we could service both larger and smaller boats. This type of operation would increase our chances for a full service marine repair and maintenance shop, thus employing more residents. Through a grant from the Economic Development Administration, the city has acquired ownership of a large tract of waterfront industrial land adjacent to the city dock that it has committed to developing in a manner that will provide employment for local residents.

## B. FISHERIES

Seldovia currently has three main fisheries that contribute to both primary and secondary jobs within the community: charter sport fishing, individual sport fishing and commercial fishing. These charter operations have stimulated other kinds of businesses; including food service and lodging that provide employment as well as increased services for residents.



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Commercial fishing plays a major role in Seldovia history. Fishing-related work has been a major source of employment since the first cannery was built around 1911. Boasting five canneries when Seldovia's population was at its peak, the community still identifies itself as a "fishing community." Seldovia continues to have a small but active commercial fleet comprised of long-liners, gill-netters, set-netters, seiners and crabbers. There are between six to ten commercial fishing operators based in Seldovia who deliver their product to other locations for processing. While it is true that availability of fish species varies with the changing sea environment, competition for stocks remains a factor in the fishing economy.

One issue facing many coastal communities in Alaska today is how to manage local fisheries. Seldovia is a member of the Gulf of Alaska Coastal Communities Coalition that is providing support to small communities. They help members to understand and address local area management plans and possible use of quotas to sustain commercially harvested species. Management plans that have been discussed by this group are:

o Individual fishing quotas (IFQ) for charter boat operators
o Community fishing quotas (CFQ)
o Community development quotas (CDQ)
o Crab rationalization program
o Subsistence program
o Local area management plans

Plans include programs that have the potential to maximize all fisheries in the Seldovia area, i.e., salmon, crab (Bairdi -Tanner or King), grey cod, black cod and halibut. The City plans to remain active in the discussions of expanded economic development within the fishing industry, including value-added production facilities.

## C. TOURISM

**1) Sport Fishing** There are a number of professional charter boat companies that provide access to sport fishing grounds, with private vessels ranging in size from small skiffs to 60-ft boats. The Seldovia Slough hosts a state-stocked king salmon run, accessible from the Seldovia Bridge. This fishing experience is a significant tourist attraction, and is enjoyed by both visitors and locals alike. City fishing opportunities would be enhanced by a second planted run of either king or silver salmon.



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**2) Hunting** Several of licensed guides run wildfowl and black bear hunts. Local residents also have access to bird, black bear, and, occasionally, moose hunting.

**3) Casual Visitors** Surveys reveal that the majority of tourists who come to Seldovia are here to escape the "hustle and bustle of the big city." They arrive via personal sea craft, privately owned tour boats, water taxis and the three flight services that make regularly scheduled trips. The State ferry also calls twice weekly in the summer and the state's Southwest Regional Transportation Plan calls for the addition of a third call as the *Tustumena's* schedule is further refined. Seldovia has a wide variety of lodging, ranging from B&B's to hotels. Prices range from budget to luxury.

**4) Recreational Trails** There are two maintained hiking trails that are easily accessible from within the city limits. There is also an extensive trail system outside the city maintained by the State. These trails must be cared for and maintained annually, and are major attractions for visitors and locals.

**5) Natural Beauty and Wildlife** Seldovia is geographically centered within a region of both dramatic and subtle scenic attractions. Seldovia's proximity to Kachemak Bay State Park and

the unique scenic attributes of the bay and surrounding uplands plays a major role in drawing in-state, out-of-state, and international visitors. Opportunities to see and enjoy wildlife in the area, close up and in a natural setting, are memorable and exciting. Much of Seldovia's appeal to both visitors and residents alike stems from the quaint, water-oriented charm of the community. Seldovia has developed historically according to a pattern dictated by a need for self-sufficiency and lack of access to the road system. Maintenance of the character of the City and surrounding area is important if the quality of life enjoyed by residents is to be sustained, and local business encouraged.



*J. Chissus*

# IV. Economic Development

## A. WATER TRANSPORTATION

In the past, Seldovia has relied on commercial transportation services. Because of physical isolation from the remainder of the Kenai Peninsula, marine freight and passenger access to the City are limited to private barge services and the state ferry system. Water transportation presently includes the state ferry, two private tour boats in the summer, and a number of smaller water taxi services based in Homer.



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The principle means of water travel to and from Seldovia is by the "M.V. *Tustumena*," operated by Alaska Marine Highway System. This system provides scheduled year-round service to Seldovia, with decreased service during the winter months. The isolation imposed by the infrequent ferry service makes it difficult and expensive to ship or receive goods, and limits the community from enjoying an uncomplicated level of mobility. This situation serves to limit Seldovia's economic development options. Because the *Tustumena* is the only vessel capable of transporting large tractor-trailers and container vans, the residents of Seldovia encourage the State of Alaska to homeport the *Tustumena* in Homer and to continue to serve Seldovia as called for in the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Southwest Regional Transportation Plan.

Being 'off the road system', the City of Seldovia needs to remain on the Alaska Marine Highway route and continue to be included in the State's plans. In order to survive economically, the City of Seldovia and surrounding areas need reliable ferry service to move freight and passengers.

Seldovians have identified a minimum of three-times-a-week service as their desired level of transportation access. Seldovia also calls for the basing of a Coast Guard Search & Rescue vessel here because of our location on Kachemak Bay.

As of this writing, the City is participating in a regional effort with Seldovia Native Association, Kenai Peninsula Borough, the Kenai Peninsula Borough Economic Development District, Port Graham, Nanwalek, Halibut Cove, and Homer working to bring a year-round daily ferry system to service the south side of Kachemak Bay. Funding has already been appropriated for a feasibility study. Some residents have voiced a strong belief that this type of reliable and consistent transportation link to the peninsula would offer increased job opportunities and more possibilities for business development to the community.

## B. AIR TRANSPORTATION

Seldovia has several commercial air carriers. Two provide multiple daily flights between Seldovia, Port Graham, Nanwalek, and Homer, and one provides charter services directly to and from Anchorage. The City and its residents rely on air taxi service for both passenger and freight deliveries in both directions.

The Seldovia airport has an 1845-foot long gravel runway that lies in the north-south direction. We do not have fixed lighting, though emergency lighting is available. The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and the Federal Aviation Administration are currently working on a 20-year Airport Master Plan that could include upgrades.

## C. HARBOR UPGRADE

In March of 2004, the State sold the small boat harbor to the City of Seldovia. Along with the transfer agreement, the State provided $2.628 million for repairs and improvements to restore the harbor to "good" condition. These improvements may include dredging, upgrades to the electrical system, improvements to fire prevention and security systems, replacement of pilings, and improvements to floats. As of this writing, the city has commissioned the construction of a new fish cleaning station on an emergency basis while continuing to work on an overall harbor renovation plan.

With the above-mentioned improvements and the fact that Seldovia is a year-round, ice-free harbor, the City hopes to entice new commercial business ventures, including bringing in larger draft vessels such as ocean going sea tugs and commercial fishing boats.



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## D. WATERFRONT AND COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION

Seldovia's use of the land reflects the natural constraints of the area. Buildings along the steep shoreline of the slough are constructed on pilings, while rock outcroppings and wetlands meander in and out of developed lots. In contrast to the natural terrain, the post-1964 earthquake waterfront urban renewal project is characterized by a large plain of fill used to restore waterfront areas to elevations above the range of high tides.

Seldovia's waterfront property is zoned to encourage marine and tourism-related businesses and to maintain Seldovia's small town charm. The harbor and the city dock provide the first impression many visitors receive upon their arrival in Seldovia. We must enhance, maintain and staff these areas to welcome our visitors.

Boardwalk sections located on the south end of Main Street are all that remain of pre-earthquake waterfront buildings. They are a major tourist attraction, but are in need of restoration and preservation. The City sees the inherent value in the revitalization of the existing boardwalk area, as well as pursuing the renovation and preservation of historical buildings in the community.

Because the Seldovia area is so confined and a large percentage of the population lives within the city limits, pedestrian traffic is substantial all year long. Because Seldovia is not accessible by road, visitors often arrive without their vehicles. This results in a significant increment of visitor-based pedestrian traffic. This situation requires special planning for pedestrian safety and access, without limiting the vehicular traffic. Sidewalks and improved road conditions would greatly enhance the walking and driving ease within Seldovia. The majority of residents and visitors spend most of their time in "downtown" Seldovia. Much thought and care need to go into the development and enhancement of the natural beauty of this location as well as the beautification of the downtown buildings, streets, parks and public areas.

## E. HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Since Seldovia has gone through so many changes from being a major Alaskan port in the early 1800's to the height of the fishing days (when over 2000 people called Seldovia their home), there is a wide range of sizes, styles and conditions existing in Seldovia's housing stock. This diversity is one of the community's greatest physical assets. It is a typical result of Alaskan housing prices that it may be difficult to obtain suitable housing for all residents. Population growth on the Kenai Peninsula, coupled with vacation and retirement home demands, continue to drive up the prices of many homes and land and make it more difficult for many residents to obtain satisfactory dwellings.



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As of the 2000 Census, Seldovia had 238 housing units, with 41 rentals and 106 owner-occupied homes, which left 91 homes (39%) vacant. Most new dwellings built since 2000 have been single-family homes. All of the Seldovia homes within the city limits are on the public water supply and city sewage disposal systems.

In 2000, the average value of a single family home in Seldovia was $81,900 compared to the statewide average of $137,400. Rental costs also averaged much lower, with the average being $300/month in Seldovia compared to $638/month statewide. Housing costs continue to rise in keeping with statewide trends.

In order to encourage housing repair and rehabilitation, the City should encourage greater awareness of public and private housing improvement finance opportunities by facilitating establishment of greater local presence by public and private lenders. This could include an information center at City offices and preparation of brochures explaining housing finance, contracting, subsidy programs, and similar resources.

## F. TOURISM

1) **Lodging.** Seldovia is presently home to lodging businesses that offer a total of 200 beds ranging from luxurious B&Bs to hotels to cabins. These businesses are a great asset to the community with their support and employment opportunities. There are also four other lodging establishments outside of Seldovia on this side of Kachemak Bay that offer the opportunity for more remote accommodations.

2) **Enhanced transportation packages.** Some of the local lodging establishments offer packaged trips, with boat rides into Seldovia, one or two night's stay, then a flight-seeing return trip out of Seldovia. This has been a popular option for many tourists and guests.

3) **Taxi service, bike and water sports rentals.** Seldovia has two establishments renting bicycles to guests on a daily basis during the summer season. There is a long-standing kayak rental business and an ATV rental business that started in the summer of 2004. There are two taxi services in town for those needing transportation in town or out Jakolof Road.

4) **Evening and late night food service.** At the present time, Seldovia has several food establishments serving evening and late night meals. All establishments have increased hours during the summer season while wintertime sees a decrease in hours and some closures, leaving the year-round residents with few choices. Although these establishments offer a variety of food items from fast food to sit down and take-out, there may still be market opportunities for additional food venues. Since the city of Seldovia is currently working on economic development projects for future growth, the expansion of food services should be included in this planning.

5) **Support for small tourism related businesses (retail and recreational).** Seldovia can be characterized as a rural city in transition. Some residents have lived in Seldovia for many years, but population demographics have changed considerably despite little change in population numbers. With the expansion of economic focus from fishing to include tourism, Seldovia is presented new challenges in providing offerings for visitors while caring for its residents. Given the potential for many retail and recreational opportunities this trend presents, the City encourages those that take advantage of the area's natural beauty while remaining sensitive to its preservation. Providing for increased accommodations, eating establishments, shopping and recreational opportunities will in turn create local employment and enhance the community's year-round population base. One of the keys to Seldovia's future is an increased population base. Our hope is that by encouraging new businesses and activities to accommodate the growing tourist industry, we will in fact provide employment opportunities that allow more individuals and families to make Seldovia their year-round home.

## G. RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Seldovia maintains a two-acre park located at the Outside Beach, as well as several smaller parks. Campers are encouraged to utilize the tent area at the Outside Beach location. RV facilities are available about a mile and a half out of town. Jack English Lollipop Park and the Lake Susan Park are underutilized areas that have fallen into neglect. Visitors experiences will be enhanced by having an area where they may enjoy the beauty of Seldovia, eat an ice cream cone and watch their children play in a safe area. There is a noted lack of 24-hour restroom facilities available to the public. The town presently has only one public restroom, located at the harbormaster's building that has been in disrepair but is presently undergoing renovation. Alleviating this restroom shortage should remain a City priority.



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## H. ROAD

There are 6.3 miles of improved roads within the City limits. There are two roads leading out of town, one going north to Jakolof Bay, and the other one leading east to the landfill. There are two miles of paved roads within city boundaries. Main Street and the airport road are owned and maintained by the state. Outside of the City limits, roads are all dirt and gravel and maintained by the borough and state. Dust control is often a problem during the summer months and snow removal is often a challenge in the wintertime.

## I. LAND USE

The future use of land in and around Seldovia will modify the City's character and could possibly conflict with existing uses. Since land within the City's boundaries is limited to approximately 300 acres, it is likely that a large proportion of Seldovia's future growth will occur outside of existing city boundaries. Seldovia must develop financial partnerships with out-of-city residents if it is to continue to provide services to this wider community and meet the costs of providing in-city services to an expanding population that does not directly contribute to its tax base.

## J. ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES

Alternative energy sources are a reality in Alaska and are being studied and developed by some small communities as supplemental to present energy suppliers. The term "alternative energy" and/or "renewable energy" are generally referred to as electrical power derived from "renewable" resources that are commonly thought of as wind and solar. However, micro-hydro waterpower, hydrogen fuel cells, and solar energy are in the developmental future of many smaller Alaskan communities. Micro-hydro power requires a constant flow of water and is emission-free and environmentally low-impact. There are many types of hydrogen fuel cells, which must have a supply of hydrogen and oxygen to produce power. One method of obtaining power from a renewable resource is using an "electrolyser" to separate water into

hydrogen and oxygen and stored in tanks to be fed into the fuel cell. The wastewater (which is still pure) from this process is fed back into the initial water source. Solar energy is being widely used in homes and businesses throughout Alaska, which is well documented in the data. Seldovia is interested in developing alternative energy resources through joint ventures and/or grants.

### K. HISTORICAL PRESERVATION

Seldovia is the oldest incorporated city on the Kenai Peninsula. Until the Sterling Highway was built connecting Peninsula cities to Anchorage, Seldovia was a major commerce center for trades and fisheries. The Kenai Peninsula's first hospital building is in Seldovia. For many years, even the residents of Homer would come across Kachemak Bay for treatment and childbirth. There are many structures throughout the city of Seldovia that have historical significance. Due to the damage of the 1964 earthquake to the boardwalk and many of the waterfront buildings, the few original buildings that survived this period have an important place in history that should be preserved. It is appropriate, therefore, for us to work for the preservation of its existing historical areas, and it is essential to the preservation of Seldovia's heritage to promote and educate people regarding its historical significance. As tourism becomes more important to the survival and economic existence of our city, we see an added value in developing this marketable commodity.

## IV. Public Services and Organizations

### A. WATERSHED MANAGEMENT AND WATER AND SEWER SERVICES

The City operates an Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) permitted Class A Public Drinking Water System. The City's primary water source, the Upper Dam and Reservoir, is located approximately one-half mile east of the airstrip on an unnamed tributary that flows into Seldovia Lagoon. The backup raw water resource, Fish Creek Dam and Reservoir, which is located near the airstrip, was disconnected from the water system in 2000 due to increased contaminants and lack of year-round water rights ownership. There was an extensive water and sewer feasibility study done in 2003 by the engineering firm of Michael L. Foster & Associates under the Village Safe Water Program.

The source of water for the Upper Dam and Reservoir is a 784-acre watershed that reaches elevations greater than 1,900 feet. The Upper Dam was built in 1953 and underwent major repairs in 1994. The dam is approximately 20 feet in height and 126 feet in length, with a crest elevation of 618 feet. The elevation of the 20.5-foot wide spillway is about 615 feet. The normal reservoir capacity is about 13.5 acre-feet, or 4.4 million gallons, and the normal reservoir surface area is about 2.0 acres. Watershed control is an ongoing issue for the Upper Dam and Reservoir because the City does not own some of the reservoir land and has not been successful in obtaining a watershed agreement with all of the watershed landowners. Watershed management is further complicated by popular hiking trails upstream of the dam. The other issue of concern is that of private property downstream from the Upper Dam: any new homes constructed on private property downstream could be at risk if the dam failed.

The source of water for the Fish Creek Dam and Reservoir is a 2,451-acre watershed that reaches to over 2,400 feet in elevation. Approximately 200 acres in the lower region of the watershed lie in an area of private development. A watershed control plan has not been developed for the Fish Creek Dam and Reservoir. Fish Creek Dam and Reservoir are located on an anadromous fish stream. The City maintains the dam and reservoir as an alternative water supply for fire fighting and for fish stocking.

The City practices filtration avoidance per the regulatory requirements set forth by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. After treatment with chlorine, the water is stored in a welded steel storage tank. The water distribution piping consists of 33,300 linear feet of water mains. The system has many leaks due to very old components as well as inadequate freeze protection, inadequately sized water lines and corrosion.

Fire protection is generally adequate. There are 49 fire hydrants located throughout the City and two mobile fire-fighting carts capable of using water piped to the boat harbor floats.

The wastewater system includes an underground piped wastewater collection system, a septic tank treatment system and an ocean outfall discharge system. The city has been awarded a grant under the Village Safe Water Program to begin repairing and upgrading its water and sewer systems; design work under the grant is scheduled to commence in 2005.

## B. HEALTH, SAFETY AND RESCUE RELATED SERVICES

City/regional growth and changing population demographics will pose increased demands on city services. The Seldovia Volunteer Fire and EMS provides free services within the boundaries of the City of Seldovia and its immediate outlying areas. The service is funded by community donations and gaming revenues, although the city owns department vehicles and provides vehicle maintenance, headquarters building, and a part-time administrator. EMS services have a new state-of-the-art ambulance, a sponsoring physician who has resided in Seldovia for 25 years, and a core of very dedicated volunteers. Services are provided 24 hours a day, seven days a week all year. The EMS organization has an active training program and its various volunteers hold certifications as ETT's and EMT's I, II and III. Medivacs available 24 hours a day but are weather dependent. They are provided by local air taxis or helicopter services to Homer and via Lifeguard to Anchorage. Water transportation may be available in bad flying weather. Keeping the Fire and EMS department staffed, technically updated, and supplied, is a priority for every citizen of Seldovia.



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The fire department's vehicles include a rescue truck, a water tanker, and a new four-wheel drive pump truck. It has one paid part-time employee and the rest of the participants are volunteers. Firefighters meet twice a month for training and practice sessions and they

receive training in both urban and wilderness fire-fighting techniques. The department would be willing to become state certified if training was readily available. The City provides clinic space for the local physician, visiting health nurse, mental health services and a visiting dentist. Currently, the doctor's office is open three days per week, and in emergency situations. The physician provides family medical care and emergency services. A state health nurse visits once a month. The City owns the clinic x-ray machine and is currently engaged in replacing it with an updated model. Seldovia has one full-time police officer. A back-up officer or state trooper is on hand when the officer is unavailable. Seldovia does not have marine rescue capability, either in personnel or watercraft.

## C. OIL AND FUEL SUPPLY

Seldovia has a privately owned fuel station that provides oil, propane and gas to boats, automobiles and homes. The storage tanks and fuel distribution system are over 60 years old, representing two decades of service past their design life. This aged facility presents a risk of environmental and economic disaster. The City needs to work with the private owner of the fuel business to update the facility to current construction and safety standards and to ensure a safe and reliable storage and supply for the community

## D. REFUSE MANAGEMENT

In 2003, the Kenai Peninsula Borough bought a large tract of land along Rocky Road in order to construct a new landfill. The new area also includes a burn barrel, which will increase the life of the dump. A barge calls annually in Seldovia to collect all hazardous waste materials for safe disposal elsewhere on the Peninsula.

## E. CHURCHES

**St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox** Church was constructed in 1891. In 1981 it was restored and placed on the National Historic Register. It is a major landmark and tourist attraction as well as continuing to serve a small congregation with monthly services conducted by a visiting celebrant. Tours are available on special occasions and volunteers open the building daily during the summer months.



*T&M Glover*

**Saint James Catholic Church** and **Faith Lutheran Church** share the same building on Alder Street. The two churches alternate Sundays and work together to create schedules that work for their own congregations. The Lutheran Pastor generally travels to Seldovia on the 1st and 3rd weekends of the month to conduct services for his community.

**The Seldovia Bible Chapel was established in 1943.** It became locally supported and independent in 1972. It is a congregation led body that chooses its own pastor. The church provides a junior church service for children during the worship service, and seasonal programs for Christmas and Easter are also part of the ministry. Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of every month. The parsonage is attached to the church and the pastor is readily available to serve the needs of the community.

## F. LIBRARY

The Seldovia Public Library was established as a non-profit corporation in 1935 and continues to provide free library services to the community and its visitors under a state library operating grant. The library collection offers about 10,000 volumes in adult and children's collections as well as over 1000 titles on video/DVD, an audio book collection, interlibrary loans, and a Gates Foundation public-use computer. Volunteers under the supervision of the library's Board of Directors and an unpaid Library Administrator staff the library. It is open three days a week and serves roughly 200 patrons a week in addition to hosting art and educational programs throughout the year.

## G. NOAA LABORATORY

On Jakolof Bay Road, about nine miles from the City of Seldovia is the Kasitsna Bay Laboratory, which was started in 1959 by the U.S. Bureau of Commercial Fisheries. It became a part of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in 1972 and a partnership was formed with the University of Alaska, Fairbanks (UAF) in 1988. In 2001, the laboratory transferred to the National Ocean Service's (NOS) National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS).

NCCOS, and UAF are partners with Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research (KBNERR) and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)" to forge an ecosystem research, education and training program that will afford opportunities to explore the application of an ecosystem based approach to the management of cold water, fjord type ecosystems in which increased human use has begun before the effects of that development have been fully realized."

In 2000, the smaller laboratory underwent major renovations and to build new housing and promote research by UAF staff and students as well as to accommodate researchers from NCCOS for habitat research within the Kachemak Bay reserve. The renovated facility includes a new SCUBA dive building, a new wet laboratory and a series of dry laboratories for sorting and other types of work as well as a dock and pier combination. Construction was recently completed. Although the lab is used primarily by researchers and students, the facility is available for use by community groups. Seldovia is cooperating with these agencies to promote further education and interest in our local ecosystem, with the goal of stimulating economic growth.

## H. BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB OF SELDOVIA

With the support of many individuals as well as major philanthropists, The Boys and Girls Club of Seldovia built a brand new facility in 2004. For over 6 years, the Club has been servicing the youth of Seldovia between the ages of 6 and 18, and has close to 100% of the community youth as members. This is an outstanding program that was nationally created to inspire and enable all young people, especially those from disadvantaged circumstances, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible



*J Chissus*

and caring citizens. It is an after-school and summer program that promotes athletic and educational programming in a fun and safe environment for the youth of the community. In a town of this size it is essential to have a place for kids to go, where they are accepted, cared for and encouraged. The Boys and Girls Club is the place where everyone gathers to play basketball, baseball, watch a movie, play pool or surf the Internet. Taking care of the youth of Seldovia is an essential part of the health and well being of our community. We want to continue to encourage and support their efforts.

## I. SELDOVIA VILLAGE TRIBE

The Seldovia Village Tribe is a federally recognized Indian tribe that works to serve its members and the communities of Kachemak Bay through many different programs. They host a Museum and Visitor Center in their office building located on Main Street. This facility is frequently visited and enjoyed by tourists and local residents. The Seldovia Village Tribe is currently building a Conference Center that will accommodate large groups for a variety of activities. The Conference Center will be available for rental. SVT owns the Alaska Tribal Cache/Gift Store where they sell their locally produced jams and jellies, along with many other Alaskan gifts, Alaskan art and Tribal logo apparel. SVT offers a variety of health services, including providing local contract health care and prevention programs and a clinic in Homer. The Tribe also has environmental, social service, housing and scholarship programs that serve their members.



*S Lewis*

## J. SELDOVIA NATIVE ASSOCIATION, INC.

SNA is a village corporation created by Congress under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. It's business activities include land leasing, timber sales, and gravel and armor rock sales. The SNA is venturing into tourism enterprises. They own the Main Street Market and Bayview Suites in Seldovia as well as the Dimond Center Hotel in Anchorage.

## K. SELDOVIA ARTS COUNCIL

The Seldovia Arts Council is a very active volunteer group who organizes and promotes education and enrichment through the arts. They are the coordinators of the hugely successful Seldovia Summer Solstice Music Festival, as well as year round entertainment and education for both the community and the school. The City supports their mission as enhancing the quality of life for community residents and economic development through the attraction of visitors.

## L. SELDOVIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Chamber of Commerce has over 50 members comprised of the majority of the Seldovia businesses. A few members are Seldovia individuals. The remaining members are businesses that partner with Seldovia (some are based in Homer) or partner with the Chamber. Its mission statement is to promote the growth of Seldovia in economic, social and environmental concerns. In any given year, the Chamber enacts the following programs: publication of the Seldovia Summer Gazette; the Citizen of the Year/Business of the Year/Youth of the Year awards; the Christmas Lights Contest; the Familiarization Day Event for the travel industry; the beautification of Seldovia via information signs, support of litter clean-up, and support of street cleaning; and, the sponsoring of the July 4th Celebration. The 4th of July Celebration is a widely famous event drawing people from all over the State and visitors from the Lower 48. This day long celebration has long been known as an "old fashioned 4th of July." The Chamber has participated in the Kenai Peninsula Tourism and Marketing Conference and at the Homer Chamber of Commerce Volunteer Training Conference as a speaker to promote Seldovia within the tourism industry. The City supports the Seldovia business community and its efforts to further economic development.




*S Lewis*

## M. SUSAN B. ENGLISH SCHOOL

Susan B. English School is a K-12 grade facility owned by the Kenai Peninsula Borough and operated by the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District that provides a full public education for the youth of our community. Seldovia is represented on the Kenai Peninsula School Board. The youth are the future of Seldovia, and as a community we continually strive to support and encourage the students as well as the staff. During the 2004-05 school year, the Seldovia Sea Otter Booster Club raised over $23,000 to assist with the costs of student travel for sports and academic events. As state and district funding cuts diminish the staff numbers and curriculum choices the local schools can offer, the community and City continue to explore creative ways to offer our youth the educational experience they need to be productive citizens as they mature.



*S Lewis*

## N. Seldovia Response Team (SOS)

The Seldovia Response Team (SOS) is a not-for-profit oil response organization that was created as a direct result of the grounding of the EXXON VALDEZ in 1989. Oil that leaked from the grounded tanker, escaped Prince William Sound, migrated down current and entered Cook Inlet. Area subsistence beaches were oiled and both subsistence and commercial fisheries were disrupted. Seldovians became involved in the clean up activities and some in the ensuing public and political reaction. The current vision of the SOS team is to have an effective and efficient network of community-based response teams existing along the coastlines to aid each other in times of need. They has 39 members, 17 of which have hazwoper training

## O. Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council (CIRCAC) and Prince William Sound Regional Citizens Advisory Council (PWSRCAC)

The federal Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA 90) established Citizens Advisory Councils in Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet to review, monitor and comment on oil production and transportation issues in both Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound. Seldovia is represented on the board of both of these councils. These positions have allowed Seldovians to continue to be involved in shaping industry and regulatory decision concerning the petroleum industry, a process that continues to help protect our local and regional environment.

# VI. Conclusion

It is important to say that Seldovia is at a major turning point. We recognize that we have a significant and important past that is essential to preserve. We also see the opportunity to enjoy our beautiful environment and take advantage of the many assets and opportunities for growth. Our city is full of entrepreneurial people with vision, determination and the willingness to work towards a promising and productive future for Seldovia. We are ready to plan and work towards meeting our future needs with a progressive, open-minded and forward thinking attitude that will make Seldovia the destination for tourists and future residents alike. For our city to be successful, we must continue to seek new avenues and methods to enhance, develop and nurture our assets (people, organizations and land) to create a beautiful, safe and prosperous community.



*T&M Glover*

***Just another day in Paradise . . .***