

Galena: A Mess- Galena Tires of 'Dream City on the Yukon'

Galena, Alaska
July 10, 1971

Tundra Times
Box 1287
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Dear Sir:

Galena is in a mess brought on by red tape and deceiving of the people of Galena by the state and other government agencies.

Before we ever had a flood this past spring ASHA (Alaska State Housing Authority) came here taking a survey to put 22 homes here in the Galena area, but not in the present village site. Alexander Lake area was the ASHA chosen site to build the 22 houses. At that time, the people of Galena did not want to move.

After the flood, most all of the people decided to move to the lake area, which is about one mile above the present village site, looked good. As soon as the people decided on the move, picked out their lots to build and move on in the Alexander Lake site, ASHA found other reasons not to build there. All our and your so called helpful government agencies decided that the Campion hill area, which is about ten miles above Galena, was the ideal spot to build this dream town.

Campion hill is a real hot spot, boat dock and all other luxuries the average Indian dreams of. By the time we have six or more meetings and these so called helpful agencies are able to pound the picture of this false "dream city on the Yukon" into the heads of us "dumb Indians" and we decide to move again, just like moving to Alexander Lake, our happy false promising agencies will have found good solid reason why Campion hill is not suitable to build on. Then Mueller Mt., fifteen miles from Galena, will be the next dream spot.

All we have gotten from the housing agencies are a few sketches of poor grade house, false promises, and dream towns.

The U.S. Air Force has done an outstanding job in helping the people during and after the flood. A lot of credit is given by the people of Galena to the Air Force for an outstanding job in caring for its American citizens. We thank them from the bottom of our hearts. We also want to give our appreciation and thanks to the Red Cross for a job well done.

I am sure we all know now we were made damned fools of by some of our big housing and moving agencies. The Indian, once again, becomes the mockery of the human race.

These same people could have been told at one of the first of many meetings that they were not going to get anything. The dream town presenters should have left the people alone.

If the agencies did not make false promises, many of our people would have had their homes half built by now with logs. Logs are very easy to get during high water in the spring. To get logs now is very hard, if not impossible, unless you have power to get the logs out. Also it is now late in the season.

So looks like our people who are homeless can give thanks to our betraying agencies who don't care to help. The agencies who have put them in a situation where if they chose to stay here at the present site will have a very cold, unhoused, unsanitary, and miserable winter. Here again, thanks for making damned ignorant fools of us.

For all the time spent waiting, traveling, and having meeting after meetings, these agencies could have put rip rap with steel piling along the bank of Galena or raise the ground level above high water level right here at the present site. Galena has gravel right at its front yard. The hauling distance is very short and gravel cost would be low compared to any other area.

Why does the government and other agencies want the people to move away from their economy in the first place? You move the people away from the economy, you put them on welfare and food stamps. Isn't the taxpayer already overburdened, why invite more tax?

You read everyday of low standard living conditions in other countries all over the world. Looks like somebody is helping create some right here in your last frontier, Galena, Alaska.

The word "environment" has been used to no end this past year. Used to abuse Alaska both economically and progressively. Looks like there's a very good environment program going right

here in Galena.

Why are the agencies trying to tear Galena apart? This small town on the Yukon has more jobs to offer and more economy than any other town on the central Yukon river. Right now there are 200 people employed in and out of Galena. We have people coming from the small villages and even the large cities here to work, and bringing money back to their villages and cities.

So why try so hard to cut our throat and yours too? Who's so damn dumb? I think, me, to be so concerned over the welfare of my fellow man. I have been taught to help people, not to stamp them into poverty. Remember we are Americans, let us live.

Sincerely,
Sidney Huntington

cc: Senator Gravel
Senator Stevens
Fairbanks Daily NewsMiner