



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rural Energy Conference to be in Valdez Sept. 20-22

A large contingent of rural community representatives including mayors, local government administrators, utility operators, bulk fuel plant managers, power plant operators and utility clerks along with vendors, contractors, researchers and government officials will attend a three-day conference on energy and electricity issues facing rural Alaska September 20-22 in Valdez.

Sponsored by the Alaska Energy Authority (AEA), the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the University of Alaska's Arctic Energy Technology Development Laboratory (AETDL), the conference, entitled "The Changing Face of Energy in Rural Alaska," will be held at the Valdez Convention and Civic Center on September 20-22. This year's conference features a wide variety of technical sessions along with plenary sessions each morning on energy issues.

Mayor Bert Cottle of Valdez will welcome the conference attendees on the first day, before remarks from Ron Miller, Executive Director of AIDEA/AEA, Roger Marcil, the new Executive Director of the Denali Commission, and Drue Pearce, Special Assistant to the Secretary of Interior for Alaska, on rural energy issues. Dignitaries speaking on the second day include Representative John Harris, Speaker of the Alaska House and former Mayor of Valdez, Representative Mary Kapsner, co-chair of the Legislative "Bush Caucus" and Senator Gene Therriault, Chair of the Senate State Affairs and Legislative Budget and Audit committees.

Technical sessions include a wide range of energy subjects, such as utility management and financing, wind generation and wind hybrids, training, green energy incentives, diesel generation improvements, data acquisition and control, new fuels, end-use efficiency, fuel cells and hydrogen fuels, hydroelectric, wave and tidal power and biomass energy.

Associated with the conference is an “Energy Assets Tour” compliments of Copper Valley Electric Association (CVEA) on Monday September 19th. As a representative of the local electric service provider, CVEA President and CEO Robert Wilkinson will address the conference. CVEA is also a conference sponsor and will provide an internet café, a first for the conference attendees.

Approximately 300 attendees are expected. As of today, 41 villages are represented in the registrations. A trade show runs concurrently with the conference. Alaska gas line alternatives will be featured on the second day with Scott Heyworth of the Alaska Natural Gas Development Authority speaking on “The Impact of the Gas Line on Rural Alaska” and Mayor Jim Whitaker of the Fairbanks North Star Borough presenting the “All Alaska Gasline” proposal of the Alaska Gasline Port Authority.

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