

Submission Date: February 15, 2008

Priority: 1 of 2



# Ted Stevens

United States Senator for Alaska

Please Note:

- Fill out one request form for each request
- This form (and any attachments) can be returned via:

Fax - (202) 224-2354  
 Mail - The Honorable Ted Stevens  
 United States Senate  
 522 Hart Senate Office Bldg.  
 Washington, D.C. 20510

- Requests are due by February 15, 2008.

## FISCAL YEAR 2009 PROJECT REQUEST FORM

Project Name: Beringia Museum of Culture and Science

Project Location: Nome, AK and the Bering Strait Region

Project Description (please attach additional pages as required):

The requested funding will enable Kawerak to proceed with our planning to develop and construct the Beringia Museum of Culture and Science (BMCS). BMCS will showcase the outstanding ethnographic and archeological collections unique to the Bering Strait Region, including beautiful and unique tools, implements, jewelry, ceremonial objects and other cultural artifacts made by our people in the past. There will be rotating displays of each community in the region that includes their environment and how residents adapted. We will be able to house Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) artifacts presently being housed in the nation and other parts of the world. In addition to the museum component, our facility will include demonstrations of traditional arts and crafts, cultural demonstrations such as Eskimo dancing, serve as a research center and house a library, provide education classes to the region's students and residents, provide economic opportunity by providing jobs, promoting tourism to both Nome and the (continued on page 2)

Related Appropriations Bill: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of federal funding requested for FY09: \$3,000,000

Total funding to complete this project: \$23,092,288

Number of years to fund this project: 5

Matching funds from the State of Alaska: requesting

Matching funds from local and private entities:

Kawerak, Inc. matching funds for ANA: \$125,307; Kawerak land for facility: \$272,500; Bering Strait Native Corp.: \$25,000

If this project was funded in prior appropriations bills (within the last five years), list each bill and the amount funded:

Kawerak received a \$426,523 planning grant from the Administration for Native Americans (ANA) from September 30, 2005 through September 29, 2008.

Amount included in the President's FY09 Budget: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount included in the State of Alaska FY09 Budget: \_\_\_\_\_

Check this box if state funding was sought but not provided.

List legislation that authorizes this project:

\_\_\_\_\_

Check all that apply:

- A change in the current law is necessary in order to proceed with the project. (If so, attach language and a list of laws that need to be amended)
- Bill or report language is needed. (If so, attach requested language)

surrounding villages, promoting careers in science and other professions and a place to celebrate our wonderful heritage. The Bering Strait Region is one of the few regions in Alaska without a museum or cultural center. The small museum in Nome focuses on the gold mining history in the region.

The museum will operate within a state-of-the-art, energy efficient facility. We will also create a "museum without walls" that will allow for the electronic exchange of information and images on a global scale.

Kawerak's Beringia Museum of Culture and Science furthers the U.S Arctic Research Commission's and National Science foundation's charge for basic and applied scientific research in the Arctic, including natural resources, biological and health sciences and social behavioral sciences. There would be increased interaction with and participation by Arctic residents. The museum can benefit from close partnerships with the International Arctic Research Center & the Arctic Region Supercomputing Center who will assist with exhibit development and the use of web-based technologies in the museum's educational and research programs. The museum and cultural center will promote careers in sciences for our youth by exposing them to on site research projects. The facility also meets goals and objectives of the International Polar Year, which includes climate environmental changes that are already affecting Alaska residents.

This project will promote and facilitate economic development in one of the most remote rural areas of the nation and is in line with the President's initiative to develop sustainable economies in rural areas. This will occur through increased tourism, expanded markets for our artists and craft which will all have a positive effect on the local economy.

The museum will promote Indian education initiatives by providing classes to students and adults in the region by using a full range of web-based technology and interactive exhibits.

The design and construction of the facility will use cutting-edge, energy efficient technology to minimize operational costs and the impact on the natural environment and thus can be used as a model for other facilities in the Arctic. The Cold Climate Housing Research Center located at the University of Alaska Fairbanks will assist with the design of the facility. Last but not least this project promotes cultural knowledge and history of the region in the area known as Beringia.

Memoranda of Understanding have been signed with: International Arctic Research Center / UAF, Bering Strait Native Corporation, Bering Strait Foundation, Museum of the North / UAF, Alaska Saami Reindeer Herders, Alaska Department of Fish & Game. Letters of Support and Resolutions were received from the the region's tribal councils, village corporations, City of Nome, US Department of the Interior, Bering Strait Native Corporation, Solomon Native Corporation and Museum of the North.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Kawerak, Inc.  
Cultural Center Design and Construction

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## **Beringia Museum of Culture & Science Construction -** *Economic Development, Historic Preservation and Climate Science Education*

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The City of Nome supports Kawerak's efforts to seek funding to design and construct the Beringia Museum of Culture & Science, which will explore the ingenuity of the Arctic by simultaneously looking at the ancestral traditions of our region while also engaging in cutting edge scientific research and education. Our museum will connect the Bering Strait region with communities across Beringia – a vast region that includes present day Alaska, eastern Siberia and western Canada – by exploring common issues from changes in the Arctic climate to changes in our cultural landscapes. The museum will unearth, investigate, display, and spark discussions about the many ways in which communities, individuals and nations will respond to these changes. The Beringia Museum of Culture and Science will be like the funnel that the sands in an hourglass pass through: all that we know from our millennia in this land will be channeled into all that we need to know to continue thriving in this region for millennia to come.



The Beringia Museum will strengthen the economic vitality of Nome and the surrounding villages. The museum will provide an engaging destination that will encourage visitors to remain longer in the region. The business plan developed for this project used existing tourism data to predict that 35% of visitors to Nome would visit the planned museum. If half of these visitors were to extend their stay in Nome for one extra night, using a per diem spending of \$200, to include lodging and meals, the value would be \$463,860 of increased spending in the community each year. For the City of Nome these overnight guests also generate additional revenue from Nome's 4 percent bed tax. In addition to increase visitor spending in Nome, the museum will house a tour broker that will arrange package visits to area villages. This will increase visitor spending in the region, as well as increasing the market for local art and other locally-made goods.

An even more significant and longer-term economic benefit of the museum will be an increase in professional development opportunities. A stated goal of the museum is to encourage and grow a local, professional workforce in all aspects of museum operations. Internships and apprenticeships, as well as partnerships with the University of Alaska and other museums, will create a conduit for developing a local, professional workforce for this museum and others around the state.

The Beringia Museum will focus on the youth of our region and the communities of Beringia. By engaging elders to be mentors and teachers to young people to connect them with the millennia of

cultural ingenuity that our people developed in response to our environment; by engaging scientists to work with young people to light the spark of curiosity in them about the natural world and our place within it; by engaging artists to coax the vision from our young people and teach them to express their particular sense of the world to others through art; the Beringia Museum will bring together people of all ages and ways of thinking and living to learn about the past and work together for the future. The Beringia Museum of Culture and Science is a key piece of intellectual infrastructure that will continue the ingenuity of the Arctic for years to come.



### **Who Kawerak Is**

Kawerak, Inc. is the regional non-profit corporation for the Bering Strait Region which includes the villages of Brevig Mission, Council, Elim, Gambell, Golovin, King Island, Koyuk, Little Diomed, Nome, Savoonga, Shaktoolik, Shishmaref, Stebbins, St. Micheal, Solomon, Teller, Mary's Igloo, Unalakleet, Wales and White Mountain. Based in Nome, Kawerak contracts with the state and federal government to provide services to our residents, 75% of whom are Eskimo, Aleut or of American Indian descent. Our organizational goal is to assist Alaska Native people and their governing bodies to take control of their future. With programs ranging from education to housing, and from natural resource management to economic development, Kawerak seeks to improve the social, economic, educational, cultural and political conditions of our region. Kawerak is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of the president, or Tribal Chief of each IRA or Traditional Councils in our region, two elder representatives and a representative from the regional health care provider.

### **Project Description**

The vision of the Beringia Museum of Culture and Science is to celebrate the shared history and living culture of Alaska and Russian Native peoples of the Bering Strait region and beyond. The facility and its programs will educate and inspire local residents in sustaining Inupiat, St. Lawrence Island Yupik, and Yupik traditional values and practices, while introducing contemporary art, dance and current circumpolar scientific research to everyone who visits. The museum will operate within a state-of-the-art, energy efficient facility. We will also create a "museum without walls" that will allow for the exchange of information and images on a global scale.

General themes of the museum programs and displays include:

- *Environment:* featuring the interdisciplinary scientific collaborations on wildlife, geography, climate change science and weather patterns of the region
- *People:* connections between communities within Beringia; how Elders have taught traditions to younger generations and how they learned from those that came before them; exploration of local family trees and genealogy; history and celebration of leaders; history of villages of the region

(Continued) General themes of the museum programs and displays include:

- *Tradition:* methods for living from the sea, land and air; food and clothing; arts and crafts; impacts of contact between Western and Native cultures; documentation of Native language, dance, music and story telling
- *Innovation:* telling the story of the “Ingenuity of the Arctic” -- the people of Beringia and the adaptations that we developed living in the region for thousands of years

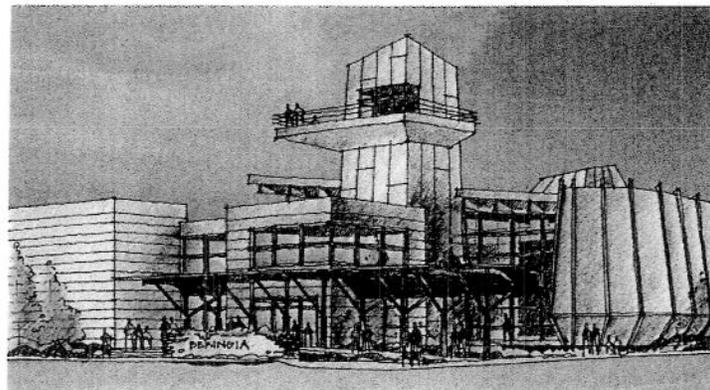
The facility will include a visitor desk which will coordinate tourism activities, bringing the visitor to the villages of the Bering Strait region. Kawerak is working with villages to set up tour packages for single and multi-day trips with cultural tourism and the local environment as an emphasis. Based on a survey completed by the Nome Convention and Visitor’s Bureau, the region sees significant visitation, but the duration of trips is relatively short. Most visitors reported spending less than one night in the area, while the average time reported for visitation to the state as a whole was 13 days. Increasing the number of local visitor offerings and providing high quality programs targeted at particular visitor interests can increase the length of stay for out-of-region visitors. By increasing the number of visitor amenities in a destination, we will provide reasons for visitors to stay longer, with local business benefitting from a longer stay.

Additionally, according to a 2006 study completed by the State of Alaska DCCED, visitors reported being drawn by the remote character of the region and appreciated interaction with local residents. This survey found that those visitors interested in learning about the region’s culture tended to travel more widely around the state, more often in rural areas and tended to stay in Alaska longer, with more dollars spent staying in local hands. This facility can act as a conduit that will attract and feed larger numbers of visitors into the regional market. Other potential areas of interest that will help increase visitation and create more local jobs include: educational opportunities, wildlife viewing, research opportunities, meetings and conventions, local events including traditional festivals and the Iditarod finish.

### **Where We Are**

A preliminary business plan for the museum was completed in June 2007 and revised in November 2007. Kawerak owns a 28,000 square foot lot that is will be the site for the facility. A 10% design of the facility was completed in September 2007. Kawerak is entering the capital campaign phase of the project. A State appropriation will allow us to move forward in making this museum a reality.

The total project cost for this facility, based on the 10% design, is estimated at \$23,092,448.



## **Community Support**

Community support for this project is dynamic and growing with strength & vitality. Guidance for the development of the facility is provided by a Cultural Advisory Committee, made up of representatives who are culture bearers from the area's 20 tribes. The Cultural Advisory Committee has provided the input on the cultural component of the museum. A Leadership Committee has advised the planning for the project and is composed of representatives from the following interests: culture, education, science, tourism, commerce, fishing, labor, education, utilities, natural resources, workforce development, local elected officials, local tribes and the regional native corporation. Planning for this project began as a result of identified priorities from local and regional plans. The City of Nome Comprehensive Plan, published in February 2003, includes a number of goals and objectives that will be fulfilled by the establishment of the Beringia Museum.

Memoranda of Understanding to document the mutual goals and activities of collaborative partnerships to secure further funding for and subsequently plan, design, construct, and operate a cooperative, collocated cultural center, museum and scientific research center and administrative facility have been signed by the below listed agencies and organizations .

Memoranda of Understanding have been signed with:

- International Arctic Research Center / UAF
- Alaska Department of Fish & Game
- Bering Strait Native Corporation
- Bering Strait Foundation
- Museum of the North / UAF
- Alaska Saami Reindeer Herders
- Cold Climate Housing Research Center

Letters of Support & Resolutions from the following entities have been received:

- US Department of the Interior
- Bering Strait Native Corporation
- Native Village of Council
- Northwest Campus / UAF
- Native Village of Koyuk
- Native Village of St. Michael
- Nome Eskimo Community
- Bering Strait Foundation
- City of Nome
- Sitnasuak Native Corporation
- King Island Native Corporation
- Inalik Native Corporation
- Brevig Mission Native Corporation
- Solomon Native Corporation
- Museum of the North
- Alaska State Council on the Arts

The Beringia Museum of Culture and Science is an important infrastructure facility that will provide lasting economic, scientific and cultural benefits to those who call the Bering Strait home for

generations to come. This Project has had in-depth planning participation from our local tribes and organizations.



The Beringia Museum of Culture & Science will be our Nation's first and only dedicated to Beringian history and climate change. This new museum will educate and inspire all peoples of the world. The City of Nome supports Kawerak Inc.'s request that funds for the design and construction of this facility be made a priority for federal funding.

