



CENTRAL COUNCIL

Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VPSO Program Receives FY 2011 Funding



Central Council President Edward K. Thomas signs VPSO grant award in presence of VPSO Coordinator Jason Wilson

Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Central Council) is pleased to announce that the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) Program has been funded for fiscal year 2011 in the amount of \$679,909 from the State of Alaska Department of Public Safety. This is an increase of \$211,707 from last year's budget of \$465,202. The program runs July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011 and provides rural Alaskan communities with needed public safety services and basic law enforcement at the local level. Communities currently working with Central Council include Angoon, Hydaburg, Kake, Pelican and Thorne Bay. During these past months, four positions were filled putting two (2) VPSOs in Kake, one (1) in Hydaburg, and one (1) in Pelican.

The VPSO Program was designed to train and employ individuals residing in the village as first responders to public safety emergencies such as search and rescue, fire protection, emergency medical assistance, crime prevention and basic law enforcement. The presence of these officers has had a significant impact on improving the quality of life in participating villages. The Community Services & Self-Governance (CSSG) Division's VPSO Coordinator works closely with the local Mayor and City Council as well as with the Alaska State Troopers to administer this program in designated Southeast communities.

"We at Central Council have worked diligently with the State of Alaska and our rural communities to reestablish this vital program," states VPSO Coordinator Jason Wilson. "We look forward to continuing our partnership with the communities and expanding the VPSO Program to as many rural communities as possible."

Central Council is partnering with Tlingit-Haida Regional Housing Authority (THRHA) in providing housing for VPSO positions where possible. THRHA has listed the VPSO position as essential for the communities. We are excited about the VPSO Program expanding, working with the local city councils, and strengthening our relationship with THRHA.

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