Modernize the Chignik's Recycling for Future Generations

A proposal to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency — prepared for the Chignik Regional Climate Resiliency Symposium

Grant Program	EPA Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) — Tribes & Intertribal Consortia (EPA-I-OLEM-ORCR-25-02)
Applicant & Partners	Native Village of Chignik (Chignik Bay Tribal Council), with the Native Village of Chignik Lagoon and Chignik Lake Village
Communities Served	Chignik Bay, Chignik Lake, and Chignik Lagoon
Funding & Period	**$1,499,618** over September 2026 – September 2030
Status	Passed EPA merit review — awaiting EPA's final funding decision

WHAT WE ARE APPLYING FOR

The three Chignik tribes have jointly applied for an EPA SWIFR grant to modernize recycling, composting, and solid-waste handling across all three communities. Because there are **no roads** connecting our villages — access is by boat or air only — managing waste responsibly is both expensive and logistically difficult. This grant would pay for the infrastructure, training, and shipping that our small but stable EPA General Assistance Program (GAP) grants cannot cover on their own.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

With the bankruptcy of Trident Seafoods and the closure of the Chignik Bay processing plant, the sub-region's income and transportation networks have changed. This project builds recycling systems that **do not depend on the fishing industry** and that protect our subsistence way of life for future generations. It is a direct continuation of the regional stewardship goals developed through the Chignik Subregional Watershed Plan and this Symposium.

WHAT THE GRANT WOULD FUND

- **Composting & food-waste diversion —** a Big Hanna T-120 in-vessel composter housed indoors in Chignik Bay (to avoid attracting bears), plus household composters in Chignik Lake and Lagoon, so we can compare which approach works best.
- **Bear-proof collection bins —** durable bins placed throughout the communities to expand recycling access and keep bears from contaminating recyclables.
- **Recycling backhaul —** contracting Backhaul Alaska to ship out both accumulated "legacy" materials and ongoing recyclables: electronics, batteries, scrap metal, derelict fishing nets, light bulbs, and construction & demolition debris.
- **Glycol recycling —** sending used glycol to Republic Services in Anchorage, the only true closed-loop circular economy currently available in Alaska.
- **Local training & jobs —** up to 15 residents trained in HazMat, U.S. DOT rules, and safe backhaul practices, building a workforce that can keep recycling going after the grant ends.
- **A regional recycling strategy —** a sustainable, repeatable plan each community can carry forward afterward using its EPA GAP grant.

CONNECTING YOUTH AND THE SYMPOSIUM

If funded, we intend to align our recycling training with the next Symposium and to grow **youth composting groups** in each community (supported by the GAP grants). Youth will compost, grow seeds in the compost they create, and present their work at community and Council meetings — building lasting local buy-in. Chignik Bay has managed an EPA grant for 25 years without a single lapse, with all audits and reports completed on time.