

[kyuk.org](https://www.kyuk.org)

# Kipnuk votes to relocate following devastation from Halong

*Evan Erickson*

~3 minutes

---

Published March 21, 2026 at 5:37 PM AKDT

Tribal members of Kipnuk have overwhelmingly voted to relocate their community after devastation caused by the remnants of Typhoon Halong, according to [results released by the tribe](#) on March 20.

More than 92% of adult tribal members that the tribe was able to [contact by phone](#) in recent weeks voted to relocate. Nearly all of the tribal members living in Kipnuk at the time of the storm remain displaced in Anchorage, Bethel, and in other communities.

The tribe asked members to vote on which of two potential relocation sites they preferred. Both sites lie around 13 miles to the northwest of Kipnuk, roughly halfway between the village and the community of Chefnak, near the site of a historical settlement called Cicing.

Around two-thirds of tribal members that were contacted voted in favor of an option further inland, currently owned by Chefnak's village corporation. The remainder voted for a site located roughly a mile from the Bering Sea coast, which is owned by the United

## States Fish and Wildlife Service.

According to the tribe's environmental coordinator, Rayna Paul, both sites range in elevation from 40 feet to 150 feet above sea level. Kipnuk sits at a little more than 10 feet above sea level. Paul said that the community is currently in discussions with leaders in Chefornek about relocation possibilities.

Reached by phone on March 21, Kipnuk Tribal President Daniel Paul said that the tribe is in the process of grieving recent deaths in the community and will provide updates about the next steps when the time is right.

"Out of all respect for the Native Village of Kipnuk and our tribal members, we'll move forward by and by, so it's gonna be a long process," Daniel said.

Around 700 people were living in Kipnuk before the near total evacuation of the community after the October 2025 storm. The tribe's total membership, which includes many not living in Kipnuk at the time of the disaster, is nearly twice that.

That worked out to 799 eligible adult tribal members on the voting rolls. The tribe was ultimately able to reach 662 members by phone to record their votes on the question of relocation.