



AIANEA National Council Teleconference Minutes

Monday, September 1, 2015

12:00 pm Pacific, 1:00 pm Mountain, 2:00 pm Central, 3:00 pm Eastern

Respect, Harmony and Beauty

Council Members & Guests Attending:

President

Steve Durgin, Washington DC

1st Vice President

Athena Pratt, California

2nd Vice President

Dr. Carol Crouch, Oklahoma

Secretary

Melissa Sturdivant, Texas

Treasurer

Pam Crow, Texas

Bill Parrish, Pennsylvania

Midwest Regional Representative

Cameron Clark, Wyoming

Midwest Regional Representative

Debe Walchuk, Minnesota

West Regional Representative

Susan Looper, Nevada

Northeast Regional Representative

Cassius Spears, Rhode Island

Guests Attending:

Deborah Clairmont, National AIAN SEPM

Past Presidents Attending:

None

Meeting Minutes:

- a. Following some delays with the conference call beginning, the meeting was called to order at 2:10 pm (Central) by Steve Durgin.
- b. Initially, no quorum was achieved; therefore, business before the National Council was limited and no actions were taken. However, later on during the conference call, a quorum was achieved and action items pending before the National Council were reviewed and the appropriate actions taken, as indicated.
- c. Review of action items from past meetings or those currently on the Registry.
Facilitator – *Melissa Sturdivant*
 1. **ACTION ITEM:** Steve will work with Tanya to draft a letter that will be included with the presentation of the AIANEA's cookbook to each of the Elders and/or their family members. **9/1 Update:** *Steve commented that this is still being worked on by Tanya and Steve. Melissa added that the books are on-hand and ready to be mailed.*
 2. **ACTION ITEM:** Steve will get in touch with Sharyn Alvarez regarding sending out a National Bulletin about the professional employee's association, like the AIANEA, informing people how to join and the benefit of joining an employee's association. **7/6 Update:** *Steve reported that he is still working on this, and he is waiting until Sharyn is done working with the upcoming WiN and APIO conference planned for early August. 9/1 Update:* *Steve said that once he returns to DC, he will get in touch with Sharyn.*
 3. **ACTION ITEM:** Steve and Melissa will prepare a call for nominations for both the East and Central Region's RTCAC positions and distribute this to the Association membership so that this process can be initiated to select a Representative and an Alternate Representative to the RTCACs. **9/1 Update:** *Melissa reported that this had been completed and Yvette had distributed this to the membership.*
 4. **ACTION ITEM:** Deb Walchuk and Melissa will work on a publication that describes who in the Association is eligible to serve, and the roles and responsibilities of the RTCAC position so members know what is expected. They will get in touch with Susan Looper since she just attended a meeting and glean insight from her regarding the experience. **9/1 Update:** *Melissa and Deb reported that they had initiated the process and have drafted a document. It is still being developed.*
 5. **ACTION ITEM:** Athena will contact each of the regional representatives about attendance at the National Council meetings. **9/1 Update:** *Melissa reported that she was in touch with Athena about this and other actions were being taken.*

- d. Review and approval of minutes for the National Council meetings conducted on August 3, 2015. Melissa summarized what took place during the meeting. With no quorum present, this item was tabled until later on during the meeting when a quorum was achieved.

Facilitator – *Melissa Sturdivant*

Once a quorum was achieved with Athena Pratt's arrival to the meeting, the minutes for both July and August were reviewed with the following actions taken.

Motion to approve the minutes for the National Council meetings conducted in July 6, 2015 as presented.

Motion to approve: Carol Crouch

2nd motion: Susan Looper

Being no corrections or changes noted, all voted in favor and no votes opposed, the minutes were approved.

Motion to approve the minutes for the National Council meetings conducted in August 3, 2015 as presented.

Motion to approve: Carol Crouch

2nd motion: Susan Looper

Being no corrections or changes noted, all voted in favor and no votes opposed, the minutes were approved.

- e. Treasurer's Report.

Facilitator – *Pam Crow*

1. Pam reported the following account balances:

\$ 42,911.71 in Wells Fargo checking

\$ 127,416.41 in Frost Bank investment accounts

2. Pam reported that Judy Bryant, widow of Harold Bryant, AIANEA's former Treasurer, has donated \$20,000 to the Association to fund the "Harold Bryant Memorial Scholarship Fund." Pam further explained that this is why the Wells Fargo account balance shows a larger balance compared to what we normally carry in this account.

Pam stated that she is working to open a new account so that this money can be managed accordingly. Pam also mentioned that she is planning to meet with Judy to determine the specifications in how she would like this fund to be managed. Carol, who serves as the Chair for the AIANEA Scholarship Committee, discussed some procedures and also suggested that once we get some guidance from Judy, she will present this to the Scholarship Committee. Carol shared some of the processes currently in place as it relates to NRCS' work with the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) and how announcements on AIANEA's scholarships are distributed to students across the country. Discussions followed.

Steve shared a personal story about an employee, Chayla Rowley, who is a NRCS/AISES cadre member, and that she was recruited through AISES, and that she was attending a training Steve was involved with at the time.

Steve thanked both Pam and Bill for the work they do, and those that assist with the audit each year.

- f. President's Update.

Facilitator – *Steve Durgin*

1. Steve discussed some recent activity and work going on to get the positions filled in the RTCACs in the various regions. He commented that during last month's meeting as we were working to get our Association positions current, we did not realize that a National Bulletin (NB) was being released at the same time addressing the filling of various positions from tribes and other representatives. With the short deadline on the NB, Steve commented that he was able to get an extension so that we could proceed and hopefully, get the Association's positions advertised and filled in the near future.

Steve commented that he had received one application from the East (David Elliott) and one for the Central (Melissa Sturdivant) regions. Steve commented that others had indicated their interest but could not get their supervisor's approval which was needed. Carol provided additional background information and that she had discovered that there were openings for tribal representatives in addition to AIANEA positions. Steve stated that he would send an email to the Council with the list of nominees to get authorization, and then forward this information to NHQ, as requested.

2. Susan discussed some of the procedural problems presented recently with assisting with the arrangements to conduct the West RTCAC's recent meeting. She discussed some of the challenges which were presented just in getting the travel arrangements completed for the RTCAC members (West). She commented that some of those on the RTCAC were no longer involved with the tribes so there was a gap and no updated information. The West RTCAC discussed some of these challenges, and Susan added that it helped her understand how the Association's representative can serve as an integral component to help with the communication link between the tribal representatives in these areas to the RTCAC leadership. Discussions followed.

The report provided from Susan Looper, Alternate AIANEA Representative to West RTCAC, about the recently-conducted West RTCAC meeting, was forwarded to the National Council for review and is attached (Attachment C).

3. Steve discussed the ongoing action item that Melissa and Deb Walchuk are working on in developing guidelines and specific job responsibilities for the AIANEA's RTCAC members. He added that feedback such as this from Susan is exactly why we are trying to get these guidelines established and recorded. Carol offered to assist with this. Discussions followed.

Athena joined the teleconference (at 2:45 pm, Central).

Cassius joined the teleconference (at 2:50 pm, Central).

4. The AIANEA's South Central Regional Rep position was discussed. Cameron indicated that Patra had moved to Minnesota and was leaving the agency. Discussions followed. Carol indicated that Patra is planning to stay active in the Association. It was decided that if Patra wants to continue as the regional rep, she can. Carol will get in touch with her.

ACTION ITEM: Carol will get in touch with Patra and see if she wants to continue as the regional representative.

- g. National AIAN Special Emphasis Program Manager (SEPM) Report.

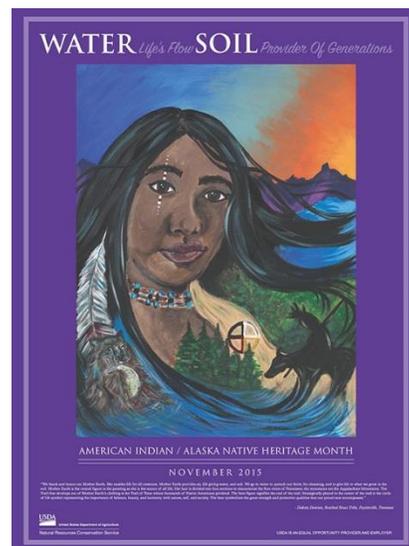
Facilitator – *Deborah Clairmont*

Deborah provided the following information:

1. Deborah extended her appreciation for all the AIANEA members who donated leave to her during her recent illness. She was truly grateful to everyone for their generosity.
2. Deborah reported on this year's poster to celebrate AIAN Heritage Month:

"Water Life's Flow Soil Provider of Generations" (photo inset at right) is this year's theme for the American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month Poster. With the help of many individuals across many states, NRCS has a poster that represents the importance of balance, beauty, and harmony with nature, self and society.

Deborah reported that NRCS American Indian Alaska Native Special Emphasis Program Manager (AIAN SEPM)/District Conservationist Mitchell Aman collaborated with local Tribal Communities, NRCS Georgia AIAN SEPM/Public Affairs Specialist Ron Morton, NRCS Tennessee Public Affairs Specialist Carter Harris and Grace Lutz, Assistant State Conservationist for Management and Strategy, Rachel Bush, Assistant Professor of Graphic Design for Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, Tennessee, and NRCS National AIAN SEPM/Soil Conservationist Deborah Clairmont to create the 2015 American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month Poster.



Each year, NRCS supports and reaches out to Tribes by creating the AI/AN Heritage Month Poster for November to celebrate and recognize American Indian and Alaska Native culture. A rotational list by NRCS regions opens the door for all states and tribes to participate. This year, the poster contest made its way to the Southeast Region where the NRCS Southeast Region American Indian Work Group selected Tennessee as the state to hold the contest.

Aman reached out throughout Tennessee with local Tribal Communities advertising the American Indian Alaska Native Heritage Month Poster Contest to Tribal Members. Many may have thought he would not get any responses since there are no Federally Recognized Tribes, however through the Relocation Act in 1956 (relocating AIAN to urban areas) there are pocket AI/AN communities everywhere. Today, many tribal members have moved back to their homelands and live off reservations.

After much deliberation, Dakota Duncan, artist from the Rosebud Sioux Tribe now living in Fayetteville, TN was selected as the winner of the AIAN Heritage Month Poster Contest and received \$2,000 for his artwork.

Many thanks go to Rachel Bush, who volunteered many hours of her personal time to help with the graphic layout of Duncan's artwork developing it into a poster. Rachel entered beautiful artwork in the American Indian/Alaskan Native Heritage Month Poster Contest that was not selected. She graciously offered her assistance in an effort to preserve her Cherokee Heritage.

The American Indian Alaska Native Heritage Month Poster will be printed and distributed between late September and early October 2015. You can acquire a poster through the NRCS Distribution Center.

Deborah indicated that 15,000 posters will be generated and available to tribes and states. Deborah also reported that she is implementing a tracking mechanism so that we can determine the number of posters provided to tribes in each state. She indicated that we need to show that the posters are reaching beyond the field office walls and hopes that she can capture some of this data this year.

Susan asked about the artist and if they will receive recognition for their work. Deborah reported that the artist received a \$2,000 award. Deborah also indicated that she is preparing a news release.

- Deborah reported that she collaborated with NRCS Web and Design Team Lead Public Affairs Division/Robert Gesh, NRCS Distribution Center/Christopher Radley and NRCS Graphic Designer Devie Perry to create a new look for the American Indian Alaska Native (AIAN) Recruitment and Outreach Banners.

Christopher Radley approached Deborah Clairmont about the old AIAN exhibit banner which was old, outdated, and difficult to ship and assemble. Gesh and Perry worked directly with Clairmont's design to develop the AIAN exhibit banners. Together they created a team to redesign the exhibit banners to reflect the goals of NRCS outreach to tribes and tribal students for recruitment or outreach events with a Native American emphasis.

The new AIAN exhibit banners will be more accessible to everyone in the Nation and since they cost less to ship and easy to set up, this will create a valuable resource and needed tool for upcoming tribal recruitment and outreach events for all the NRCS AIAN SEPM's and NRCS staff. These new banner stands help to show the relationship that Native American tribes and people have with the NRCS today and in the past years. We hope that the banner stands will also show the agencies commitment to helping the Native American tribes and communities in the future.

Deborah reported that the NRCS American Indian Alaska Native Dream Big Recruitment and Outreach Banners (photo inset below) will be ready at the end of November 2015. You can reserve the Banners through the NRCS Distribution Center.



- Deborah reported that the departmental observance event for AIAN Heritage Month is planned for November 19 in Washington, DC. Anyone who is available to assist is welcome to be involved.

- h. Regional Representatives' Reports
Facilitators – *Steve Durgin & Regional Representatives*
1. Midwest Region, *Deb Walchuk*
With the meeting running long, Deb had to leave the conference call and was unable to provide a report.
 2. West Region, *Susan Looper*
Susan commented on her recent attendance at the West Region's Regional Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (RTCAC) meeting in Alaska. Her report is attached (Attachment C). Susan added that one of the biggest take-home messages she gleaned from attending this meeting was that we need to be constantly thinking about how we can do a better job at getting our programs and services out to local tribal communities, especially in challenging logistical settings such as those posed in Alaska. Susan added that it was amazing to see what is being done in Alaska especially considering that there are hundreds of tribal corporations across the state.
 3. Northern Plains Region, *Cameron Clark*
 - a) Cameron reported that the Wyoming's Civil Rights Advisory Committee was working to follow-up from the listening sessions conducted earlier in the spring.
 - b) The state's Civil Rights Advisory Committee is also evaluating the work environment situation for NRCS employees to include areas such as training, morale and communication. Using information provided by employees, they are providing recommendations to the State Conservationist.
 4. Northeast Region, *Cassius Spears*
 - a) Cassius reported that many of the tribes in the northeast are completing their cultural time, to include seasonal and social gatherings, and preparing for Green Corn Harvests and Ceremonies.
 - b) The local tribe in his area is getting ready for their first harvest in their People's Gardens. This garden is important to the tribe and the Elders.
 - c) Cassius reported that he attended a regional United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET) meeting and reported that there was a presentation and discussion about efforts to combine LIDAR technology to assist tribes in locating, identifying, and managing cultural resources. NRCS may be able to partner with tribes to help them in this process.
 5. Southeast Region, *David Elliott*
David was not present at the meeting.
 6. South Central Region, *Patra Ghergich*
 - a) Patra was not present at the meeting.
 - b) Steve asked Melissa if she had anything happening in Texas. Melissa indicated that she was fortunate to attend an Informal Consultation and Listening Session in Oklahoma with Garry Stephens, Texas Tribal Liaison. Carol had invited them. Carol, as Tribal Liaison for the state of Oklahoma, worked to conduct the event, and it was sponsored by the Chickasaw Nation, the Oklahoma Tribal Conservation Advisory Council and other USDA partners. Melissa reported that it was pretty impressive with many federal agencies attending. Melissa also reported that while she was there that she was able to attend a meeting with the Professional Chapter of Oklahoma for the AISES.
- i. National Tribal Liaison Officer Report
Facilitator – *Barry Hamilton*
No report.
- j. Committee Reports
Facilitator – *Steve Durgin & Committee Chairs/Representatives*
The following committee reports were provided:
1. Elders' Committee, *Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen*
In Tanya's absence, Steve provided an update based on conversations he has had recently with Gina. He reported that Gina and Tanya are finalizing the transcript of the interviews conducted with the Elders. This is part of the DVD project for the Working Effectively with American Indians training.
 2. Bylaws & Constitution Committee, *Athena Pratt & Carol Crouch*
In Carol's absence, Steve provided an update, and items listed below are those that are being investigated to determine how and if they need to be addressed in the Bylaws and Constitution:
 - a) Athena was recommending that the Association adopt an official non-discrimination statement as part of our bylaws as this is something embraced Agency-wide.

- b) Athena is reviewing ethics guidelines as they pertain to the roles of Liaisons working with tribes in official work duties who also hold elected officer positions with the Association because this potentially could pose a conflict of interest for our National Council members. Susan asked what was deemed to be a conflict of interest. No one was sure of how the conflicts arose but it is being researched. Melissa reviewed additional background information based on the past few meetings and items which were discussed.
3. Cookbook Committee, *Melissa Sturdivant*
- a) Steve commented that he was so impressed at how well the AIANEA Cookbook has been received, and extended his appreciation to Melissa, Yvette and the committee for all the hard work to make this happen.
- b) Melissa added to Deborah Clairmont's earlier comments about the AIAN Heritage Month poster process. Melissa reported that the working group for SEPM project work (Mitchell Aman, Melissa Allen, Ron Morton and herself) had asked Talent Management about awards for this year's AIAN Heritage Month poster. Melissa indicated that Sharyn Alvarez reported that there was no money to award as a gift to the volunteer who assisted with the poster's creation. She indicated that the committee wanted to do something and agreed they would buy a cookbook. Melissa also reported that Mitchell was arranging for the State Conservationist for Tennessee to write a letter and present the cookbook to the volunteer, Rachel. Melissa reported that the AIANEA Cookbook was being purchased by this small working group so that it could be presented.
4. Database Committee, *Cameron Clark*
- a) Cameron and Steve reported on their progress to update member listings, and their efforts to bring this together as an Access database.
- b) Cameron indicated that he continues to update and add components to the spreadsheets. Steve commented that they need to make time to work on the database.
5. Communications Committee, *Gina Kerzman*
In Gina's absence, Steve provided some information, and reported that Gina had scheduled a committee meeting for the near future and that they were beginning in their planning to help with developing a communications plan.
- k. New business:
Carol asked that we proceed with nomination for the award of the Sequoyah Lifetime Fellowship, and asked if this could be decided on as she has to submit that information to AISES for the upcoming conference. Discussions followed. Carol mentioned the schedule for the 2016 conference and that it will be on the east coast. This year's conference is being held in Phoenix.

Motion to nominate and approve Roy Doore, AIANEA Elder, as the recipient of the Sequoyah Lifetime Fellowship Award.

Motion to approve: Carol Crouch

2nd motion: Deb Walchuk

Being no objections, all voted in favor to nominate Roy Doore for this award.

- l. Review of Action Items from current meeting:

ACTION ITEM: Carol will get in touch with Patra and see if she wants to continue as the South Central regional representative.

- m. Closing thoughts & comments.

- 1) Susan commented about sharing of information and ideas with one another. She referenced information and efforts she had shared with Herb Webb recently. She was reminded about how important it is for us to be able to share information with one another, and how much we can gain from one another and the work we are accomplishing.
- 2) Steve extended his appreciation to Susan for attending the West RTCAC meeting and providing the report.
- 3) Steve thanked everyone and for all the work our members continue to do, and for those members and committee chairs attending,

- n. Adjourn – Being no further business, Steve adjourned the National Council meeting at 3:55 pm, Central.

3 attachments

- A. 2015 Action Item Registry
B. National Council 9 1 15 Meeting Agenda
C. West Region RTCAC Report (Looper)

Minutes respectfully submitted by Melissa Sturdivant, AIANEA National Council Secretary. Please respond to melissa.sturdivant@tx.usda.gov with comments or corrections.



2015 AIANEA National Council *ACTION ITEMS* Registry

Date: September 30, 2015

Respect, Harmony and Beauty

Date Initiated	Action Item Description	Person(s) Responsible	Disposition Date	Reference Document
ACTION ITEMS – PENDING				
9/1/2015	<i>Carol will get in touch with Patra to see if she is still interested in serving as the South Central Regional Rep position.</i>	Carol Crouch		
8/3/2015	<i>Deb Walchuk and Melissa will work on a publication that describes who in the Association is eligible to serve, and the roles and responsibilities of the RTCAC position so members know what is expected. They will get in touch with Susan Looper since she just attended a meeting and glean insight from her regarding the experience.</i>	Deb Walchuk & M. Sturdivant		
7/6/2015	<i>Steve will work with Tanya to draft a letter that will be included with the presentation of the AIANEA's cookbook to each of the Elders and/or their family members.</i>	S. Durgin & T. Meyer- Dideriksen		
5/15/2015	<i>Steve will get in touch with Sharyn Alvarez regarding sending out a National Bulletin about the professional employee's association.</i>	S. Durgin		



2015 AIANEA National Council *ACTION ITEMS* Registry

Respect, Harmony and Beauty

Date Initiated	Action Item Description	Person(s) Responsible	Disposition Date	Reference Document
ACTION ITEMS – COMPLETED				
8/3/2015	<i>Athena will contact regional representative about attendance at National Council meetings.</i>	Athena Pratt	8/4/2015	Emails dtd 8/4/15 (MCS/AP/SD)
7/6/2015	<i>Steve and Melissa will prepare a call for nominations for both the East and Central Region's RTCAC positions and distribute this to the Association membership so that this process can be initiated to select a Representative and an Alternate Representative to the RTCACs.</i>	S. Durgin & M. Sturdivant	8/21/2015	Emails dtd 8/14/15 & 8/21/15 from Y. Dulle to Association
7/6/2015	Melissa will order 12 cookbooks to be presented to the Elders and/or their families. 8/3/15: Melissa reported that the books were ordered and she is waiting on the letter to enclosed and will then ship the books.	M. Sturdivant	8/3/2015	AIANEA Nat'l Council Minutes, August 2015
7/6/2015	<i>Herb Webb will contact Barry Hamilton to determine if a news release was prepared to highlight the awards presented to Millie Titla and NRCS at the recent SAIGE Conference. 8/3 Update: Melissa reported that Herb did get in touch with Barry as she was copied on the email to Barry. However, she had not seen a specific news release regarding Millie's award. However, several Council members reported they had seen a notice about the NRCS award and the photo of Ron Harris being posted, but nothing on Millie's award. Melissa asked if SAIGE would send a news release. Deb offered to ask Herb about SAIGE sending a news release.</i>	H. Webb	8/3/2015	AIANEA Nat'l Council Minutes, August 2015
6/17/2015	Steve will send out an email for Council to vote on the matter of the Association reimbursing Melissa \$500.00 out-of-pocket travel expenses she paid to Elder Ted Herrera when he helped her conduct education outreach to AIAN youth. 7/6/15 Update: voted on during National Council meeting.	S. Durgin	7/6/2015	AIANEA Nat'l Council Minutes, July 2015
6/17/2015	Steve will be notifying all the State Conservationists and Regional Conservationist by email about who was currently on the Council, and who would be sending out emails and making other communications in their respective regions.	S. Durgin	7/6/2015	President's Report in Nat'l Council Minutes, July 2015
6/17/2015	Steve will work with Cassius to direct Maine Tribal member to Maine NRCS staff.	S. Durgin	7/6/2015	Emails dtd 7/6/2015, and President's Report in Nat'l Council Minutes, July 2015
6/17/2015	Susan will forward Steve the information regarding Deborah Clairmont and the Voluntary Leave Donation Program. Steve will send the information out to the Association for those who want to donate leave for Deborah's medical needs.	S. Looper	7/6/2015	AIANEA Nat'l Council Minutes July 2015

5/15/2015	Steve will send the information that Rick Chavez is working on to Melissa. Melissa will prepare an informational flyer and then send it to the membership to see if anyone is interested in participating in the project. 7/6/15 Update: Melissa created the flyer, and it was distributed to Council members; voted on during National Council meeting.	S. Durgin & M. Sturdivant	7/6/2015	AIANEA Nat'l Council Minutes July 2015
4/6/2015	Melissa will make sure the notice regarding Sarah Bridges is distributed. 5/15 update: <i>Melissa reported that this information was distributed by Yvette to the membership.</i>	M. Sturdivant & Y. Dulle	5/15/2015	Email dtd 4/10/2015 (YD)
4/6/2015	Melissa will forward to the National Council a copy of the latest Bylaws. 5/15 update: <i>Melissa reported that the Bylaws were forwarded to the members of the National Council.</i>	M. Sturdivant	5/15/2015	Email dtd 4/20/2015 (MS)
4/6/2015	Cameron will forward a member listing to each Regional Representative and the National Council. 5/15/ update: <i>Melissa reported that Cameron had reported that he done this. Deb reported that she is working with Cameron and is emailing members in her region. Steve added that there are several lists being developed to help develop the database; however, he reported that we are sensitive to personal information being distributed, and we have several lists in development. He added that eventually, we may have a more public list available to the Association. Deb asked if she should be sharing Association minutes with non-members, and Steve indicated that this was fine. But, he added that member listings should not be distributed at present.</i>	C. Clark	5/15/2015	AIANEA Nat'l Council Minutes, May 2015, Regional Rep Report (CC)
3/2/2015	Gina and Steve will meet to discuss the effort to build and further develop the Communications Committee. 5/15 update: <i>Steve reported that Gina, Steve, Yvette and Melissa met to discuss some planning for the membership committee and Gina has the lead for working on this.</i>	S. Durgin & G. Kerzman	5/15/2015	AIANEA Nat'l Council Minutes, May 2015
3/2/2015	Steve will visit with Carol about the Bylaws review process and review what is needed to be accomplished by the Committee. <i>Melissa reported that Steve had indicated that he is working to schedule a meeting with Carol. While in Oklahoma on his travel, he hopes to meet with Carol and review what needs to be done. Carol added that she hopes to meet with Steve tomorrow and get the committee work started. 5/15 update: Carol has the committee information and is beginning her work with this committee.</i>	S. Durgin & C. Crouch	5/15//2015	AIANEA Nat'l Council Minutes, May 2015
2/3/2015	Steve and Melissa will research the process to determine the course of action needed to fill the East Region RTCAC position upon the retirement of John McCoy later in the year (Oct 15). 3.2.15– <i>Steve reported that the Bulletin provides the guidance for this process, and also that the same process which was just completed for filling of the West Region RTCAC position and Alternate will be conducted for those positions that are coming vacant this year. This item needs to be looked at to determine the status is the Central Region RTCAC representation and filling of the East Region position. 6.17.15 - Steve stated that David Elliot would be the interim Central Regional Representative, but that the East Region RTCAC position would be vacant soon too. Steve felt that the Association would have a better idea about filling these two positions over the next few months, and prepare to fill the positions in the fall. CARRIED FORWARD FROM 2014 REGISTRY</i>	S. Durgin & M. Sturdivant	6/17/2015	AIANEA Nat'l Council Minutes, June 2015, Pres Report (SD)
1/20/2015	<i>Steve and Melissa will work to get award notifications distributed to award recipients and supervisors. 2.3.15–Melissa reported that she gathered the contact information and addresses and forwarded this to Steve. 3.2.15–Steve reported that he is still working on this. 6.17.15 – Steve reported that this was completed and all personnel and their respective State Conservationists received their award notifications. CARRIED FORWARD FROM 2014 REGISTRY</i>	S. Durgin & M. Sturdivant	6/17/2015	AIANEA Nat'l Council Minutes, June 2015, Pres Report (SD)

REFERENCE DOCUMENTATION

- “AIANEAs” indicates emails which were forwarded from the AIANEAs Membership email account maintained by Y. Dulle.
- “Nat’l Council Mtg Minutes” for the respective month when disposition was reported/recorded.

Initials indicate the principal individual.

- AP – Athena Pratt
- CC – Cameron Clark
- DCC – Dr. Carol Crouch
- GK – Gina Kerzman
- MS – Melissa Sturdivant
- SD – Steve Durgin
- TM/TMD – Tanya Meyer- Dideriksen
- YD – Yvette Dulle

For information regarding the registry and/or its content, contact Melissa Sturdivant, AIANEAs Secretary, at melissa.sturdivant@tx.usda.gov.



AIANEA National Council Teleconference Tuesday, September 1, 2015

12:00 pm Pacific, 1:00 pm Mountain, 2:00 pm Central, 3:00 pm Eastern

This meeting will take place by teleconference.

Call-in number: 888-844-9904

Passcode: 5203411

September 1, 2015			
Time (PST)	Duration	Topic	Presenter
12:00	10 min	Welcome and Introductions -Review agenda and ask for new agenda items	Steve Durgin
12:10	10 min	Review action items from previous minutes	Melissa Sturdivant & Council
12:20	5 min	Review/Approval of July & August Meeting Minutes	Melissa Sturdivant & Council
12:25	5 min	Treasurer's Report	Pam Crow & Bill Parrish
12:30	10 min	President's update RTCAC Positions (East & West); South Central Regional Rep. Position and, Harold Bryant Memorial Scholarship	Steve Durgin
12:40	10 min	National AI/AN SEPM Report	Deborah Clairmont
12:50	10 min	Regional Representative Reports	Regional Reps
1:00	10 min	National Tribal Liaison Report	Barry Hamilton

1:10	10 min	Committee updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elders Committee - Awards Committee - Bylaws & Constitution Committee - Ad Hoc - Cookbook Committee - Ad Hoc - AIAN Contact Database Committee 	Committee Chairs
1:20	10 min	New Business	Steve Durgin
1:30	10 min	New agenda items	All
1:40	10 min	Review of Action Items from current meeting	All
1:50	10 min	Closing thoughts and comments	All
2:00		Adjourn	

Additional items:

ATTACHMENT C

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS)
2015 Regional Tribal Conservation Advisory Councils (RTCAC)
WEST REGION, NRCS

August 3 – 5, 2015
Anchorage Marriott Downtown

Attendees

Astor Boozer, NRCS West Regional Conservationist, Washington, DC
Yvette Rushing, NRCS Operations Analyst, Washington, DC
Robert Jones, NRCS State Conservationist, Palmer, AK
Keisha Tatem, NRCS State Conservationist, Phoenix, AZ
Astrid Martinez, NRCS State Conservationist, Casper, WY
Carlos Suarez, NRCS State Conservationist, Davis, CA
Barry Hamilton, NRCS Nat'l Tribal Relations Liaison Officer, Washington, DC (Dial-In Participant)
Noller Herbert, Official AIANEA RTCAC West Representative, Washington, DC (Dial-In Participant)
Susan Looper, Alternate AIANEA RTCAC West Representative, Reno, NV
Harold Joseph, Jr., Tribal Representative, AZ Association of Tribal Conservation Districts, Tuba City, AZ
Thora Padilla, Tribal Representative, Mescalero Apache Tribe, Mescalero, NM
Jason Robison, Tribal Representative, Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, Roseburg, OR
Molly Voeller, Public Affairs Specialist, Palmer, AK
Kristie Harper, Tribal Liaison, Palmer, AK
Charles Parker, President & CEO Alaska Village Initiatives, Anchorage, AK
Angela Peter, Executive Director, Alaska Tribal Conservation Alliance Chair, Anchorage, AK <http://aktca.org/>

Summary Report Introduction

The Alaska RTCAC West Regional Meeting was hosted by Alaska NRCS State Leadership, Robert Jones (STC), Molly Voeller (PAS) and Kristie Harper (Tribal Liaison). The Alaska RTCAC meeting minutes were written and recorded by Yvette Rushing, who serves the RC's Office as a Team Leader for the RTCAC. The final draft of the meeting minutes have yet to be distributed.

The informational handouts provided by the Alaska NRCS Public Affairs Specialist, Molly Voeller are outstanding. The information provides a snapshot of how NRCS does business with the Alaska Native villages and Tribal Conservation Districts. The presentation provided by Charles Parker captured the complicated relationship between Alaska Natives and state and federal government, before and after Alaska acquired it's statehood in 1959. Included as addendums to this report are:

- Power Point Presentation "Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act"
- Alaska Natives and the Land Claims Settlement Act of 1971 by Norman Chance
- NRCS Alaska "Who we are, Who we serve, What we do"
- NRCS Alaska "Protecting Traditional Land Use By Hardening Trails"
- NRCS Alaska "Enhancing Moose Habitat Through Willow Tipping"
- US Department of Agriculture Food & Nutrition Service

Monday, August 3, 2015

Meeting Opening Ceremony, Marriott Anchorage Room, Anchorage, AK

The Alaska RTCAC West Region meeting was relatively small as only three West Region Tribal Representatives attended the meeting. No Tribal Elder was in attendance. The meeting began with an Opening Prayer given by Harold Joseph, Jr., representative for the Arizona Association of Tribal Conservation Districts. Harold gave the prayer in his native Hopi language and it was beautifully spoken. Even though I couldn't understand what was being said, I could hear the tenor of hope in his words. Attendees then introduced themselves, including Official AIANEA RTCAC West Representative, Noller Herbert by phone.



LEFT: Charles Parker, President & CEO Alaska Village Initiatives (AVI) provided an introduction to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) as related to the historic establishment of Alaska Native entities. "AVI is a self-supporting non-profit corporation organized in 1968 by and for Rural Alaskans, to promote the economic well-being of Rural Alaskans through economic development assistance, networking, advocacy, and education."

Charles talked about the driving forces that have primarily structured Alaska Native villages being 1) Alaska statehood in 1959, along with the development of cities and the subdivisions of state government; and, 2) federal recognition of Alaska Tribes, ANCSA and the formation of 12 Village Corporations by the state; and, 3) the battles over the Alaska timber, oil and mineral (gold) resources pending intense environmental impact studies.

The 12 Village Corporations were defined as "Regions" set by cultural and linguistic lines, where the Alaska Natives were made the shareholders, receiving cash and subsurface rights. Within the 12 Regions, 220 Village Corporations received surface estates. The hope was to create opportunity for Alaska Native peoples to enter into the capitalist economy of the U.S. that would allow people to stay in their villages and preserve their culture. While some Village Corporations have been successful in benefiting village Natives, many Village Corporations have not. The Alaska Native village culture continues to be largely subsistence. For more on the Charles Parker presentation, please read the addendum "Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act."

Charles Parker's presentation about the 12 Regional Alaska Native Corporations organized by the state was complicated and captivating. NRCS's ability to provide USDA program services to these Native Corporations is limited by the vast Arctic wilderness, in undeveloped villages with no running water or roadway infrastructure. Alaska State Conservationist, Bob Jones, described the limitations for NRCS to work with the Native villages as unique, and I would agree. Alaska NRCS must travel by helicopter, boat, snow mobile, foot, snowshoe, four wheeler and bush plane to work with Alaska Native villages requesting services. If you factor in the variable of Arctic weather extremes, getting conservation on the ground is a challenge.

I've learned that 40% of the Federally Recognized Tribes in the U.S. are located in Alaska (229 tribes). These villages are primarily subsistent villages. With the establishment of 12 Tribal Conservation Districts between 2005 and 2014, and the start up of the High Tunnel Pilot Project in 2010, Alaska NRCS has been able to offer assistance to subsistence villages. Alaska has erected more High Tunnels through NRCS than any other state.

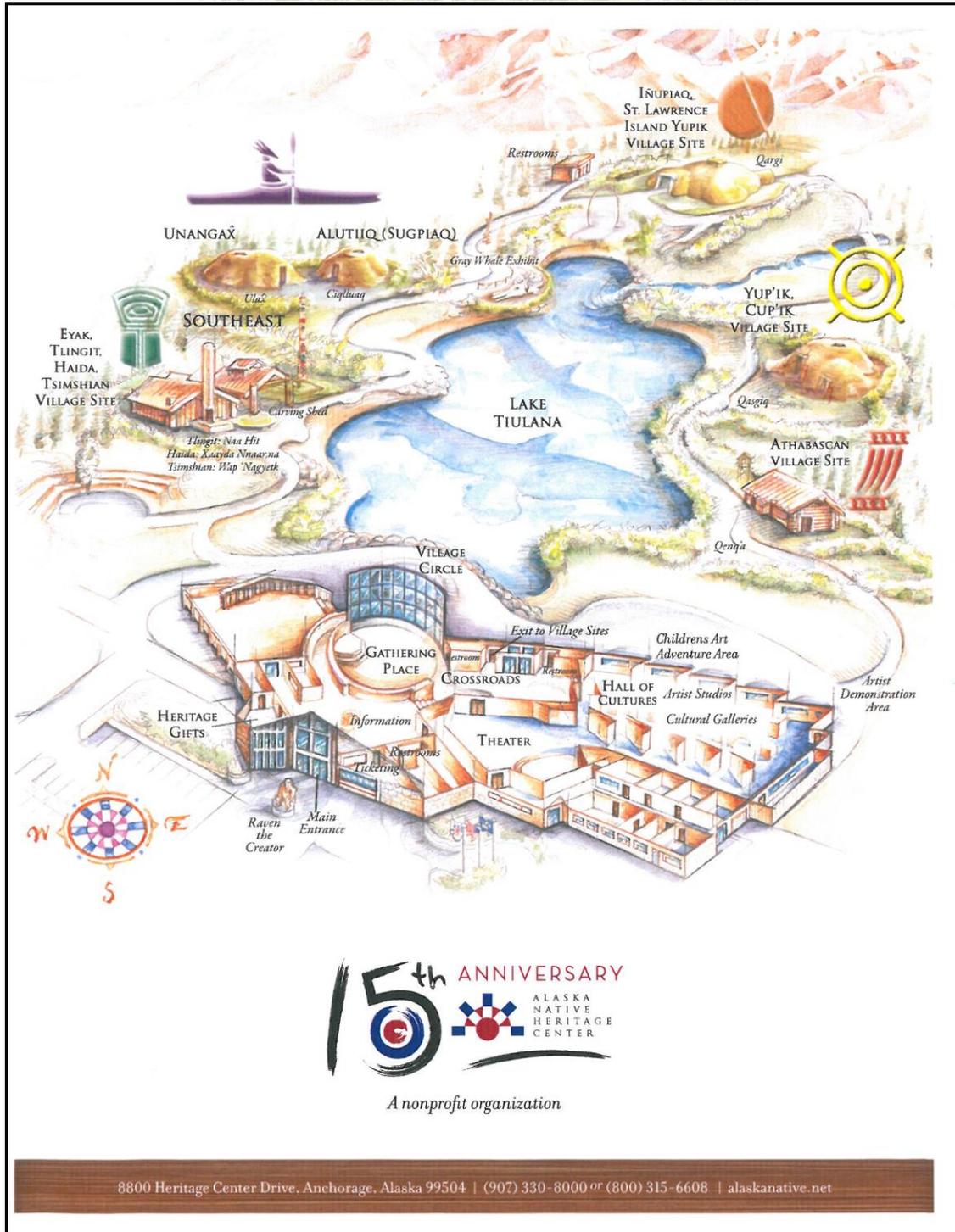


LEFT: Angela Peter, Executive Director, Alaska Tribal Conservation Alliance (ATCA) Chair provided a presentation on the establishment of Tribal Conservation Districts (TCD) and the establishment of the multi-tribal ATCA on March 30, 2011. Angela talked about the many benefits of establishing TCD and having a collaborative relationship with NRCS Tribal Liaison, Kristie Harper. Kristie has played a key role in outreaching to the Native villages, providing a bridge between the field office and the tribe. Angela describes the High Tunnels built on or near the local schools as being the most successful projects because students are actually managing the projects.

Tuesday, August 4, 2015

Tour – Alaska Heritage Center, Anchorage, AK

The Alaska Heritage Center is located on the edge of Anchorage, heading northeast on Glenn Highway. The surrounding countryside is very lush and green, thick with various conifers, poplars and other deciduous trees. It's a beautiful setting surrounded by the tallest mountains I can remember. The Center shares the rich heritage of Alaska's major cultural groups. Visitors can take guided tours on the grounds and/or explore the cultural exhibits on their own. Enjoy the pictorial!



8800 Heritage Center Drive, Anchorage, Alaska 99504 | (907) 330-8000 or (800) 315-6608 | alaskanative.net



LEFT: Gathering Place stage where traditional drum, dance, story telling and hunting games are performed.



ABOVE: Alaskan Native boots, clothing and regalia, fishing tools and canoes (BELOW).





ABOVE-BELOW: We had the opportunity to experience Alaska dog sledding and ride a dog sled on wheels, pulled by a team of (18) mushing dogs. The string of mushing dogs below came in 8th place last year at the Annual Iditarod Race from Anchorage to Nome. Dogs used for mushing are cross bred varieties, born to run!



ABOVE L to R: Harold Joseph, Jr. AZ Tribal Organization Representative, Bob Jones, AK STC, Susan Looper, NV Alternate AIANEA West RTCAC Representative and Kristie Harper AK Tribal Liaison.

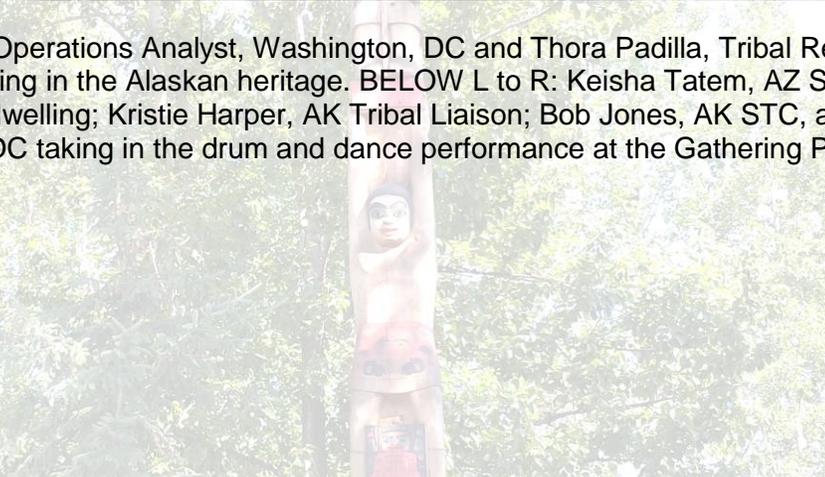
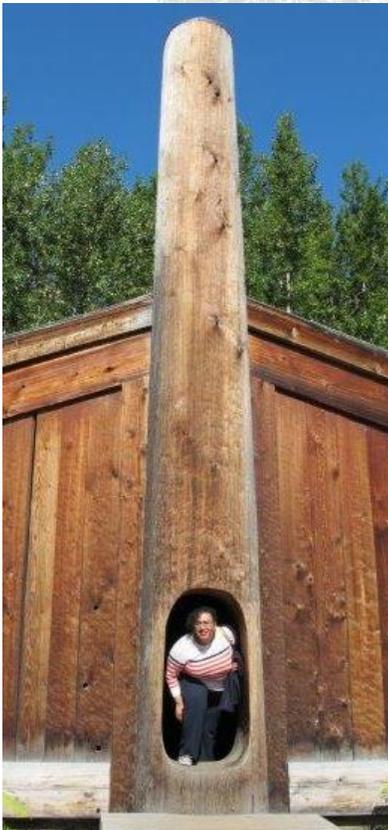


ABOVE L to R: Astrid Martinez, WY State Conservationist takes in the size of whale jaw bones; totem pole.
BELOW L to R: Traditional Alaskan Native food cache and skeleton of Gray Whale.





ABOVE L to R: Yvette Rushing, Operations Analyst, Washington, DC and Thora Padilla, Tribal Representative, Mescalero Apache Tribe, NM taking in the Alaskan heritage. BELOW L to R: Keisha Tatem, AZ STC emerges from a traditional Alaska Native dwelling; Kristie Harper, AK Tribal Liaison; Bob Jones, AK STC, and Astor Booser, West RC, Washington, DC taking in the drum and dance performance at the Gathering Place.





LEFT L to R: Keisha Tatem, AZ STC; Astrid Martinez, WY STC; Carlos Suarez, CA STC.

Wednesday, August 5, 2015
Meeting wrap-up by NOON

The morning discussion began via teleconference with Barry Hamilton, NRCS Nat'l Tribal Relations Liaison Officer, about the general decline of participation by Tribal Representatives at RTCAC Meetings. To address this matter, National Bulletin 360-15-30 PER-Solicitation of NRCS State Conservationist Volunteers and Nominations of Tribal Members to Serve on Regional Tribal Conservation Advisory Councils (RTCAC) would be released again, extending the deadline to COB, September 11, 2015. Final meeting items discussed included:

- NRCS Leadership agreed that Tribal participation on the RTCAC had decreased since its inception 5 years ago due to lack of communication and follow-up.
- Tribal Representatives feel the Farm Bill Policy concerning land eligibility for cost share on irrigated practices, requiring land be irrigated at least 2 of the last 5 years, is unfair and unrealistic with the on-going drought conditions. It is recommended that the irrigation policy be more flexible.
- Tribal Representatives feel the new definition of the "Clean Water Act" by EPA and Army Corps of Engineers is too restrictive. There is concern that the new definition will prevent common sense diversion of water during high water events that may prevent flooding damage of agricultural lands.
- Tribal Representative felt that trying to organize a TCD would be extremely difficult because the tribe already has the ability to implement their own conservation program within Tribal Council.
- State Conservationists agree that a Tribal Liaison is an integral political arm for State Leadership and that those relationships are critical to tribal participation in USDA programs.
- CA STC organized 1st State Tribal Advisory Meeting with NRCS held on April 15, 2015.
- Next RTCAC West Teleconference is scheduled for Wednesday, January 13, 2016 at 4:00 PM EST.

Closing Thoughts

When the StrikeForce Initiative was launched in 2010, it opened the door to greater financial assistance for rural communities through USDA Programs collectively. StrikeForce has largely targeted Tribal communities, including Alaska Natives which only became eligible for StrikeForce funding in 2013. I think the ongoing challenge for USDA has been to effectively demonstrate through outreach workshops and/or pilot projects how StrikeForce program assistance from one agency, like Rural Development (RD), can create program assistance possibilities from another agency, like NRCS, Farm Service Agency (FSA) or US Forestry.

For instance, when NRCS, FSA and RD work together, RD assistance for a commercial kitchen facility in a Tribal Community Center can lead to NRCS assistance for installing a High Tunnel for growing Tribal specialty crops. The specialty crops could support the Tribal meal planning in the pending commercial kitchen. Installing a High Tunnel could lead to FSA assistance for the High Tunnel and/or field farming operations that include tools, farm equipment and management, to grow the Tribal specialty crops.

I think we need to do a better job of showing our Tribal communities how USDA agencies are tied together, integral and complimentary to each other. If USDA agencies collaborated for agricultural community development, it would build confidence in our Tribal partners and customers to work with us. I shared these thoughts during Charles Parker's presentation after hearing him reiterate how difficult growing a village economy can be in the bush. Many Alaska Native villages are primarily subsistent and located in some of the most remote, harsh, rugged wilderness in the world. The USDA challenge to provide assistance to Alaska Natives, positively impacting their daily economy and culture, is greatly over-shadowed by the vast Alaska frontier. USDA agencies need each other to meet the challenge of doing business in Alaska.

The Alaska RTCAC West Regional Meeting was small in attendance, but very productive. The meeting carried some great discussion, and the meeting size encouraged everyone to participate. I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to serve the RTCAC West Region at the Alaska meeting and meet the other members serving on the RTCAC. I have made some new friends. Learning about the culture of the Alaska Native people was awesome, and the unique challenges NRCS faces to provide assistance in Alaska has made me ponder how they do it. It was my first time visiting Alaska, Land of the Midnight Sun, and I would love to go back! I want to thank Alaska NRCS STC, Bob Jones and PAS, Molly Voeller and Tribal Liaison, Kristie Harper for hosting the event and for sharing Alaska with us.

Respectfully Submitted, Susan E. Looper, Alternate, RTCAC West Representative



Thank you Bob, Molly and Kristie for sharing Alaska!

ALASKA NATIVE CLAIMS SETTLEMENT ACT

Introduction to ANCSA

&

Alaska Native entities

Presented by Charles Parker, Alaska Village Initiatives



AVI (formerly CEDC) is a self-supporting non-profit corporation organized in 1968 by and for Rural Alaskans, to promote the economic well-being of Rural Alaskans through economic development assistance, networking, advocacy, and education

Origins

- ▣ 2 driving forces have structured our villages
- ▣ Statehood - 1959
 - Implementation of Cities
 - Subdivisions of State Government
- ▣ Tribal Recognition & ANCSA
 - Federal Recognition of Tribes
 - Formation of Village Corporations (ANC) as primary landowner and economic engine
- ▣ Or, the world according to Juneau and the world according to everyone else

Oil discovered in Prudhoe Bay

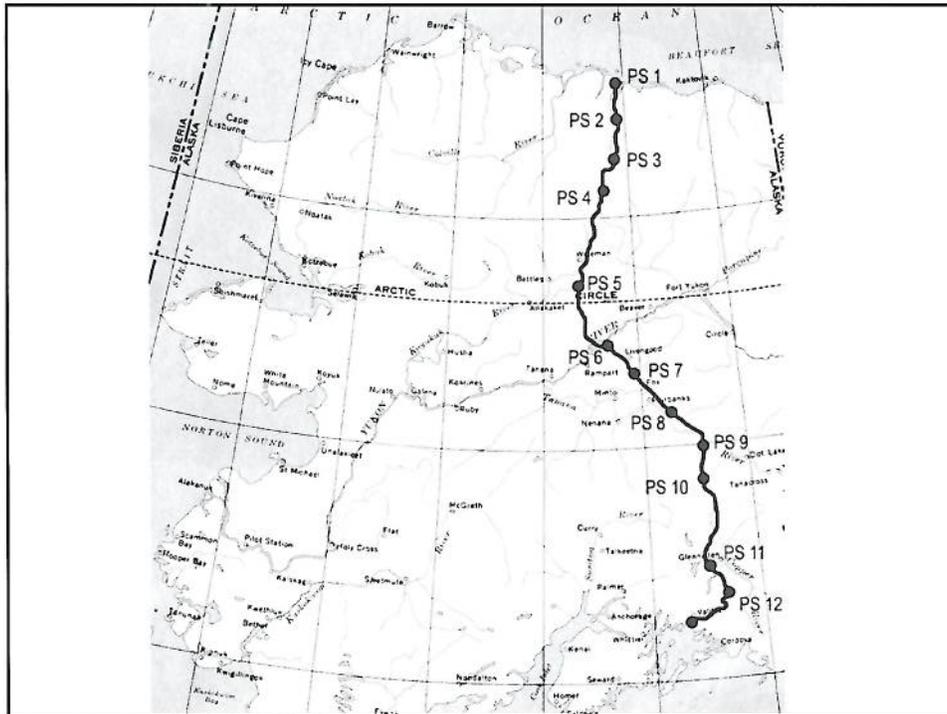
- ▣ Geologist directed to oil seepages by an Inupiat whaler
- ▣ 1968 Humble, ARCO & BP form Alyeska (unincorporated) to develop Prudhoe oil
- ▣ Alyeska began preparing to build an 800-mile pipeline in 1969, applying for DOI permits
- ▣ Sec. Of Interior Udall enacted a freeze on development permits for Alaska in 1966 to push for Native Land Claims settlement

Reversal

- ▣ In fall of 1969, Secretary of the Interior Wally Hickel (later Governor Hickel) bypassed the freeze
- ▣ Allowed TAPS to negotiate with only the directly impacted villages “one by one”
- ▣ This was actually completed, and we would not have ANCSA if TAPS had met its legal obligations in hiring natives
- ▣ Injunctive relief was sought and granted by a D.C judge

Alyeska Becomes an Ally

- ▣ Alyeska then incorporated
- ▣ The new head of Alyeska pressed for settlement of claims to allow project to move forward
- ▣ Opposition included Alaska Natives and conservation groups concerned about violations of the newly passed NEPA
- ▣ Conservation groups successful in requiring intensive environmental impact studies in 1970

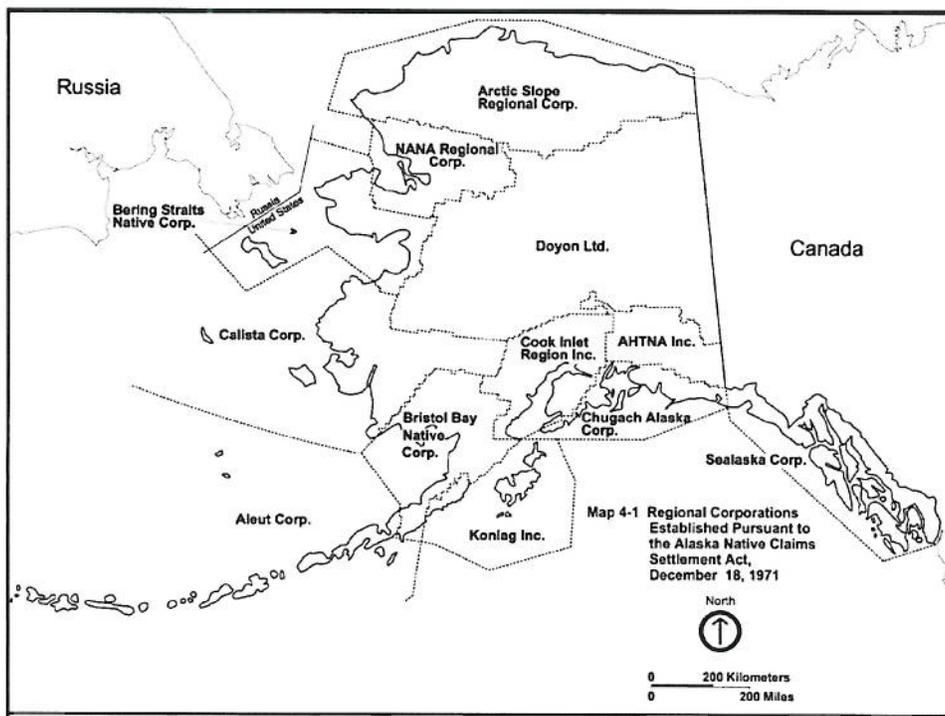


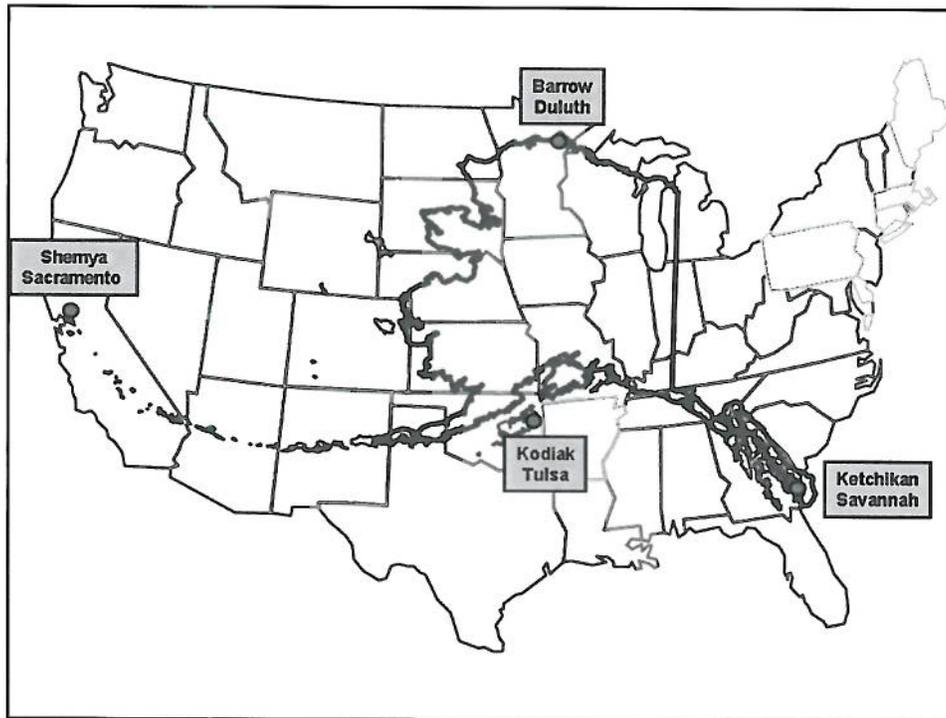
Alaska Native Land Claims

- ▣ Native Land Claims pre-date statehood
- ▣ Battle began in 1902 when USDA named the Tongass a National forest over the objections of the Tlingit people
 - Tlingit people sued in 1935
 - Won a court settlement in 1968
- ▣ Alyeska did not want to wait 33 years - joined the legal effort made a significant impact

ANCSA

- ▣ December 18, 1971
- ▣ Formed 12 regions in the state
- ▣ 13th region for Alaska Natives no longer living in state
- ▣ Regions set by cultural and linguistic lines, with political considerations used to finalize the boundaries of the regions
 - ▣ TCC - Ahtna
 - ▣ Yupik villages in Bering Straits region
- ▣ Gave back 44 million acres (still in process) and “purchased” rights to the rest of the state for just under \$1 Billion





ANCSA - up close

- ▣ The regional corporations were intended to be economic engines for their people and the state
 - Received cash and subsurface rights
- ▣ The hope was to provide entry into the capitalist economy of the U.S. by making Alaska Natives shareholders
 - Provide economic benefits that would allow people to stay in their villages
 - Preserve the culture
- ▣ ANCSA was supported by Native leaders, but no vote was ever taken to determine popular support

ANCSA

- ▣ Cash payment was large (in 1971 dollars)
 - Amounts to selling the state for about \$3/acre
 - Too much was lost in subsequent years to lack of education and predation
- ▣ Regionals received subsurface rights
- ▣ Over 220 Village Corporations received surface estate (now estimated at 180)
 - Subsistence
 - Economic opportunity (timber, minerals, etc.)
- ▣ 13th region and “at-large” received cash only

Equalizer

- ▣ Revenue sharing was included to make the selections more equitable
 - Some had timber, oil, or gold
 - 7(i) - 70% of these revenues are shared among the regions
 - Less lucrative lands were able to share in the wealth received by others
- ▣ 14(c)3 provisions also hold out 1280 acres for a subdivision of state government (city)

The Disagreement

- ▣ Some hold that section 4 of ANCSA extinguished tribal rights
 - State of Alaska Attorney General
 - Alaska Legislature
 - Past Governors
- ▣ We hold that it extinguished future land claims, not tribal rights as people and governments
- ▣ Federal Government agrees with us and treats us as tribal people, State still on the fence

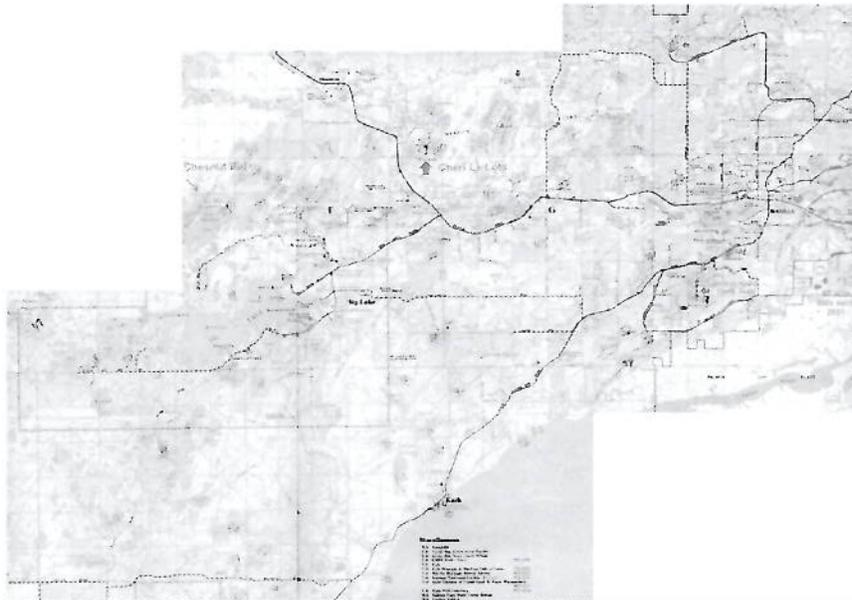
Simple, or Fee Simple?

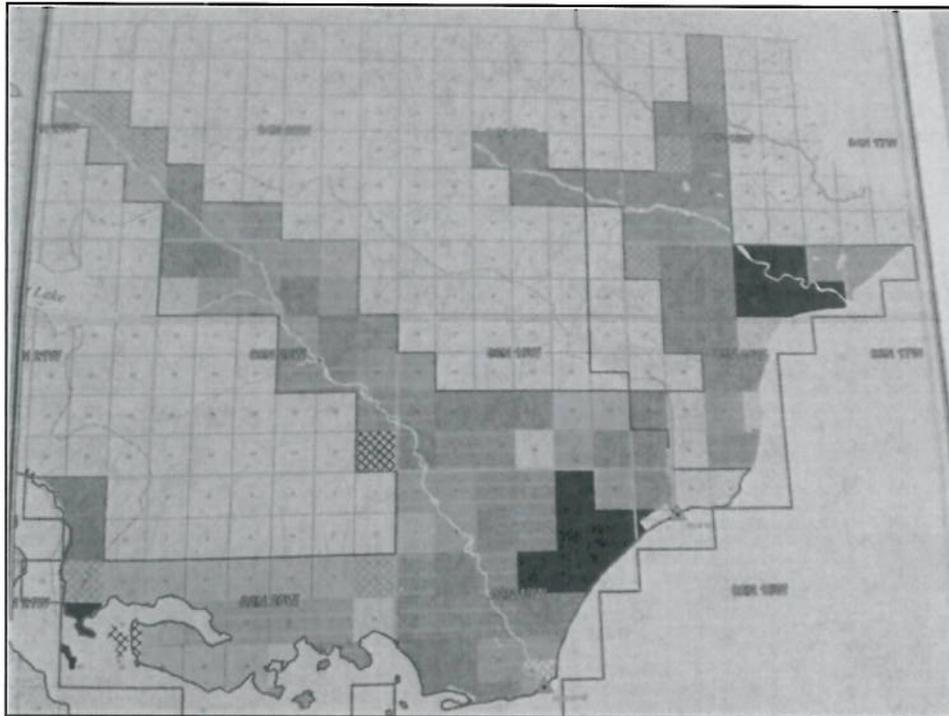
- ▣ Most common misperception – “Indian Country”
- ▣ Supreme court has upheld that the nature of the agreement did extinguish reservation status for these lands
- ▣ ANCSA lands are fee simple – same as if you came and purchased acreage from a realtor.
 - Makes working with some agencies easier (NRCS)
 - Makes other issues more complicated – tribal courts, Indian gaming

Fee Simple, but not “Simple”

- ▣ A prevailing guide to land selections was that they were supposed to be contiguous wherever possible
- ▣ Only in remote villages was this possible due to competing state/federal/private interests
 - Eklutna - Anchorage
 - Chickaloon - Colony settlement in Palmer
- ▣ Land is often scattered among other ownership
- ▣ In-holdings in National and State Parks

Checkerboard effect





Complications – 1st edition

- ▣ Reservation model: Tribal Council & Business Council
- ▣ Alaska's experiment: Tribe & ANC
- ▣ ANCSA split the political arm from the business arm of the tribe
- ▣ ANC completely separate entity, tribal enrollment estimated 90 to 99% overlap with shareholders, as of Dec. 18, 1971
 - Divergent memberships

Village by Village

- ▣ Each of the 12 regions therefore have 2 aspects
 - For-profit - Alaska Native Regional Corporations
 - Non profit arm - tribal consortium
- ▣ Furthermore, each village has 2 aspects
 - Federally recognized tribe - some of which are formally 501(c)3 non profits, others which are service providers or IRA's
 - Village Corporation -commonly referred to as ANC's

In Theory....

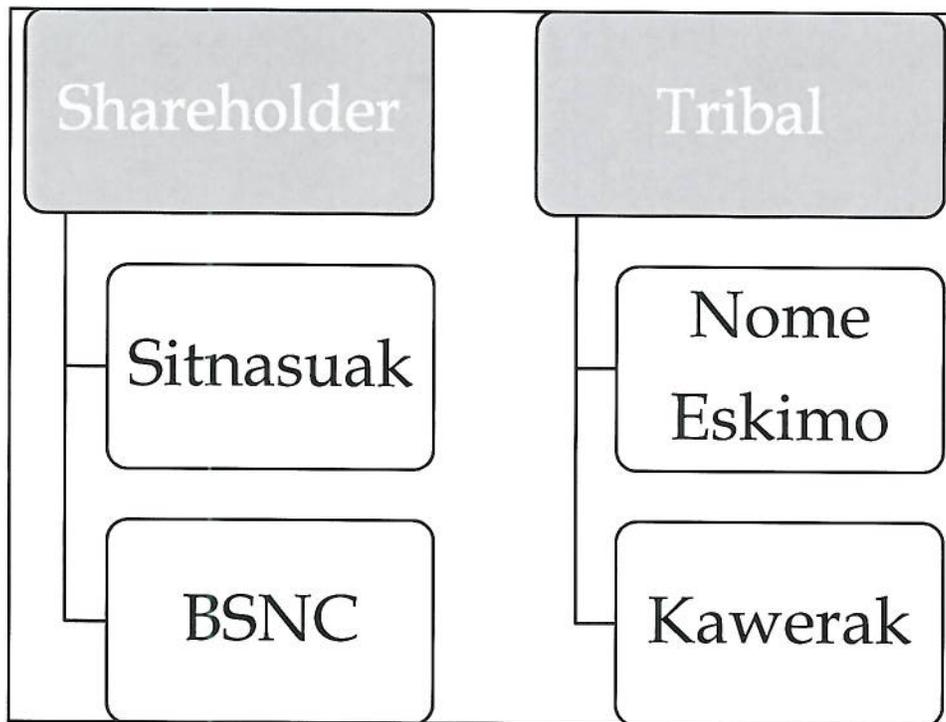
- ▣ Every Alaskan Native has an affiliation with the following (if born before December 1971)
 - Tribe
 - Village Corporation
 - Regional tribal consortium or regional nonprofit
 - Regional Corporation
- ▣ And through their above affiliations represented by statewide organizations

Examples of Regionals

- ▣ Aleut Corporation
- ▣ Arctic Slope Regional Corporation
- ▣ Bristol Bay Native Corporation
- ▣ Bering Straits Native Corporation
- ▣ Calista
- ▣ Sealaska Corporation
- ▣ Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association (APIA)
- ▣ Arctic Slope Native Assoc.
- ▣ Bristol Bay Native Association
- ▣ Kawerak
- ▣ Association of Village Council Presidents
- ▣ Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska

Who am I?

- ▣ My Mother was raised in Nome
 - Living in Tok (Doyon) when ANCSA passed in '71
 - Grandmother from Point Hope (Arctic Slope)
 - Grandfather from Kotzebue (NANA)
 - Implementation of ANCSA allowed for self-identification (my sister is Arctic Slope)
- ▣ Enrolled in Nome Eskimo Community (tribe)
- ▣ Which makes me a member of Kawerak (tribal consortia or regional nonprofit)
- ▣ 100 shares in Sitnasuak Corp. (ANC)
- ▣ 100 shares in Bering Straits Native Corporation



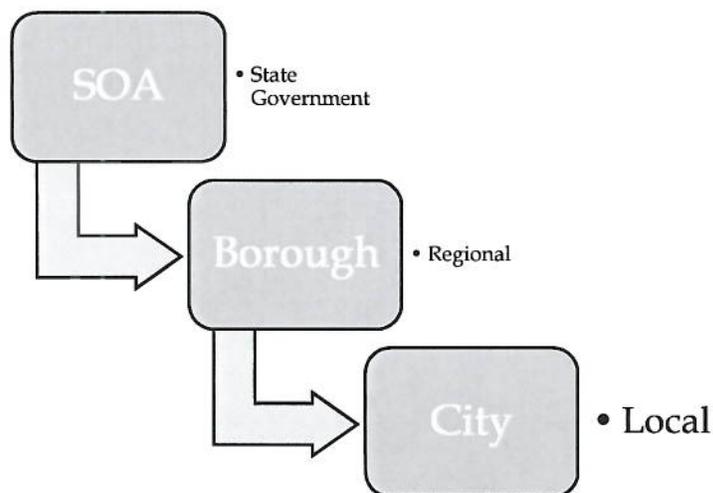
Complications - 2nd edition

- ▣ By separating the political arm from the economic arm, we created 2 different organizations with completely different missions
 - Can cause strife when those missions are not aligned
 - Development vs. preservation
- ▣ The quiet cause of conflict - divergent enrollment
 - Tribes enroll descendants, provide services for members of other tribes (open system)
 - ANC only adds new members through inheritance and gifting (closed system)
 - 40 years of youth being embraced by tribe, alienated by their parents' corporation

3rd Edition: the State's perspective

- ▣ 145 City Governments in Alaska
 - 24.5% of states population
 - Largest cities outside of Anchorage - Fairbanks with 29,486 and Juneau with 30,966
 - With roughly 50% of the state's population in Anchorage - 75% of the state lives in organized "cities"
- ▣ No counties - Alaska uses Boroughs
 - Over 374,000 in the "unorganized" borough
- ▣ Previous administrations have not recognized the existence of Tribes

From the State's perspective



The Best Case

- ▣ Village has strong tribal council, works well with city council
- ▣ Village corporation and tribe work well together - may even share board members
- ▣ Both have good relationship with their regional
- ▣ Works well with other regional organizations such as housing authority, school board, and health corporation
- ▣ Now you have a team that works together to resolve huge challenges

The “Worst” case

- ▣ Non-natives dominate city council and city business, do not get along with others
 - In some cases they even live segregated
- ▣ One family or faction controls the majority of the tribal council
- ▣ Does not work well with other family/faction which controls majority of ANC Board
- ▣ Each is less successful for the lack of cooperation
- ▣ Each project and program struggles all the more to succeed

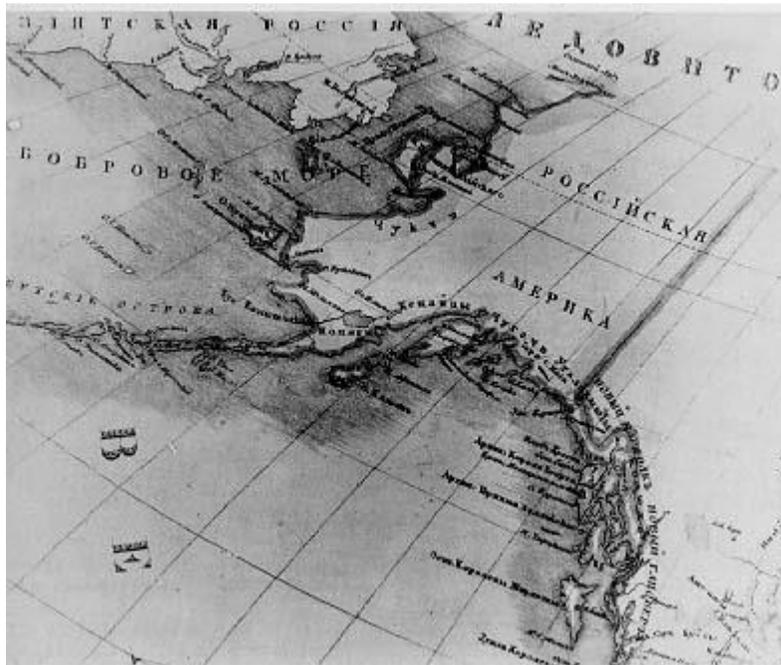
Or somewhere in between...

- ▣ Most villages fall in between these extremes
- ▣ We have unique villages in a vast and magnificent land
- ▣ We need to work *with* our villages
 - Not do things to them
 - Not do things for them
- ▣ Find innovative solutions to old problems
- ▣ Make decisions and implement programs “On terms and conditions acceptable to the community”

Final Thought

Instead of comparing our lot with that of those who are more fortunate than we are, we should compare it with the lot of the great majority of our fellow men. It then appears that we are among the privileged.

--Helen Keller



Alaska Natives and the Land Claims Settlement Act of 1971

by

[Norman Chance](#)

"Standing here and looking far off into the Northwest, I see the Russian as he busily occupies himself in establishing seaports and towns and fortifications on the verge of this continent...and I can say, Go on, and build up your outposts all along the coast, even up to the Arctic Ocean -- they will yet become the outposts of my own country."

Remarks made by William H. Seward at the 1860 Republican Convention, St. Paul, Minnesota, on the future of Alaska.

Introduction

In certain fundamental respects, the history of western development is a history of the accumulation of capital. With the rise of capitalism in England, the demand for raw materials, land, and labor increased dramatically. Quickly outstripping England's ability to obtain such resources within its own borders, the country's new entrepreneurial leaders had to look elsewhere. In an effort to compete with Britain for world resources and markets, other European countries followed suit.

In the Alaskan Arctic, the search for capital accumulation largely followed this classic historic pattern. Russian penetration of Alaska effectively began in 1741 when Vitus Bering, a Dane on a mission for the Russian government to determine where Asia ended and America began, sailed across the Bering Strait from Siberia. Significantly, the survivors of this expedition returned with valuable fur seal and sea otter skins along with information regarding the habits of animal life among Alaska's newly discovered Aleutian Islands and offshore waters. With these pelts bringing very high prices on the world market, the Czarist regime recognized that it could expand its revenue considerably. In a few short years, large numbers of Russian traders began cruising these waters, conscripting Native Aleut labor and demanding from them annual tributes of fur.

While the Russians were pushing east into Alaska, the British were expanding west. Almost a century earlier, England, not unlike the government of Russia, had turned over vast territories of Central Canada to the Governor and Company of Adventurers - better known as the Hudson's Bay Company. Protected and supported by the constabulary, this early corporation was able to extract conditions of exchange that generally resulted in a significant transfer of wealth from northern Canada back to England.

For the Russian leaders of this era, maintaining direct sovereignty over the land was secondary to expanding commercial operations. However, by the 1860s, even these ventures had become more difficult. Faced with a decline in fur bearing mammals, the Russian-American Company was in financial trouble. A recent war with the British in the Crimea had also drained the national treasury and defense of their newly obtained eastern possessions appeared less and less viable. To increase their liquidity and reduce their colonial responsibility, Russia offered to sell Alaska to the United States government for \$7,200,000.

In the spring of 1867, without consulting the original occupants of the region or obtaining title through purchase or treaty, the sale was completed. The one brief reference made in the treaty to [Alaska's Native people](#) addressed neither the issue of status, rights, or land ownership. It simply stated that "The uncivilized tribes will be subject to such laws and regulations as the United States may, from time to time, adopt in regard to aboriginal tribes in that country." From that moment on, the threat to Alaska Native rights shifted from Russia to the United States. But it was not until the passing of the Alaska Statehood Act of 1958 that the issue was directly addressed by the U.S. Congress. This legislation, while acknowledging the right of Natives to lands they used and occupied, authorized the new state government to select for its own use 103 million acres from the Territory's public domain. With each selection by the state, more Native lands were placed in jeopardy.



The Land Claims Settlement Act of 1971

<http://arcticcircle.uconn.edu/SEEJ/Landclaims/anca1.html>

In the final version of the Settlement Act, Native claims to almost all of Alaska were extinguished in exchange for approximately one-ninth of the state's land plus \$962.5 million in compensation. Of the latter, \$462.5 million was to come from the federal treasury and the rest from oil revenue-sharing. Settlement benefits would accrue to those with at least one-fourth Native ancestry. Of the approximately 80,000 Natives enrolled under ANCSA, those living in villages [approximately 2/3rds of the total] would receive 100 shares in both a village and a regional corporation. The remaining 1/3rd would be "at large" shareholders with 100 shares in a regional corporation plus additional rights to revenue from regional mineral and timber resources. The Alaska Native Allotment Act was revoked and as yet unborn Native children were excluded. The twelve regional corporations within the state would administer the settlement. A thirteenth corporation composed of Natives who had left the state would receive monies but not land.

Along with cash compensation, these corporations could also earn income from their investments. However, the drafting of the bill did not clarify whether the corporations were expected to redistribute the proceeds from their investment income to their shareholders or whether they could keep them for further investment. A "shared wealth" provision of the Act [Section 7(i)], stipulated that 70 percent of income received by regional corporations from their resources were to be shared annually with the other corporations. To protect the land from estrangement, no Native corporate shares could be sold to non-Natives for 20 years - until 1991 - at which time all special restrictions would be removed. Then, non-Natives would be eligible to become shareholders, lands would be liable for taxation by the state, and the regionals would be open to the possibility of hostile takeovers.

Under the supervision of the regionals, village level corporations would also select lands and administer local monies received under the settlement act. Although village corporations could choose to be non-profit entities if they so wished, all selected the profit-making category.

With the President's signature on the settlement act, the relationship between the Native peoples of Alaska and the land was completely transformed. No longer was ownership directly linked to Native government. Instead, by conveying land title to the 12 regional corporations and 200 local villages, (ones chartered under the laws of the state of Alaska) all ties to traditional or IRA "tribal" governments were bypassed. With the President's signature, Native Alaskans whose earlier use and occupancy had made them co-owners of shared land, now became shareholders in corporate-owned land.

To what extent did this legislation reflect the hopes and aspirations of Alaska's Native population? At the time of passage, most Native people were unaware of the complexities of the bill, but looked forward to having their own land and additional monies that could be used to improve their low standard of living. Alaska Federation of Native leaders were enthusiastic at the large settlement, feeling they had achieved a considerable accomplishment under highly adverse conditions. The limitations in the bill stemmed primarily from pressures placed on them by the government and petroleum industry forcing them to make compromises not of their choosing. They also saw the corporate solution both as a way to remove themselves from the bureaucratic yoke of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and as a new tool in the struggle to maintain their culture.

Not all, however, took an optimistic view. Critics feared that eventually the regionals could become conduits for larger multi-national corporations, enabling the latter to [take over valuable lands and resources currently held in Native hands](#). Loss of this land would then be followed by destruction of Native culture and the rise of new class divisions mirroring those of the larger society. By this means, the government's long term goal of assimilating Alaska's Native population into the larger mainstream would finally be achieved. As summed up by Fred Bigjim, a Inupiat educator from Nome who had once been a close aide of Eben Hopson, "What is happening to Native people in Alaska is not a new story; it is a new chapter in an old story."

Still, whether one supported the bill or opposed it, all agreed that the implications of the land claims settlement for Alaska's Natives were profound. Given the discovery of oil at Prudhoe Bay, even more pronounced changes were to occur on the North Slope. Due to this circumstance, the Inupiat and other Alaska Natives were able to bring into being a unique development strategy - one which combined elements of both adaptation and resistance to the steadily mounting pressures impinging on them from what they formerly referred to as the world "outside."

Used for educational purpose only

NRCS Alaska

Who we are

Who we serve

What we do



Alaska is B I G



It is larger than Texas, Montana, and California combined. This image of Alaska superimposed over the lower 48 is to scale.

Alaska is north and west of the rest of the continental U.S. and is on the same continent.



The NRCS Alaska State Office in Palmer, Alaska is 4,300 miles from Washington D.C.

If you were to drive from D.C. to Palmer and you drove 8 hours a day with no breaks, it would take 9 to 10 days to complete the trip.

A Brief Time-line

1867

Alaska is purchased from Russia by the United States. Treaty of Cession provides that "uncivilized Native tribes" to be subject to such laws and regulations as the United States may from time to time adopt in regards to aboriginal tribes of that country."

1867-1884

Governance of Alaska by the Army, then by the Collector of Customs, then by the Navy.

1878

Beginning of salmon industry; first canneries established.

1880

First important gold discovery in Alaska (Juneau).

1884

The Organic Act makes Alaska a District with appointed governor and other officers; protection for lands used and occupied by Natives promised.

1906

Native Allotment Act provides first opportunity for Natives to obtain land under restricted title.

1912

Alaska becomes a territory with two-house legislatures; capital at Juneau.

1912

Alaska Native Brotherhood is founded in Sitka.

1924

Citizenship Act extends citizenship to all Alaska Natives who had not become citizens earlier.

1924

First Native --William L. Paul-- elected to territorial legislature.

Native Townsite Act provides opportunity for Natives to obtain restricted deeds to village lots.

1934

Provisions of Indian Reorganization Act extended to Alaska permitting establishment of reservations for Native groups.

1958

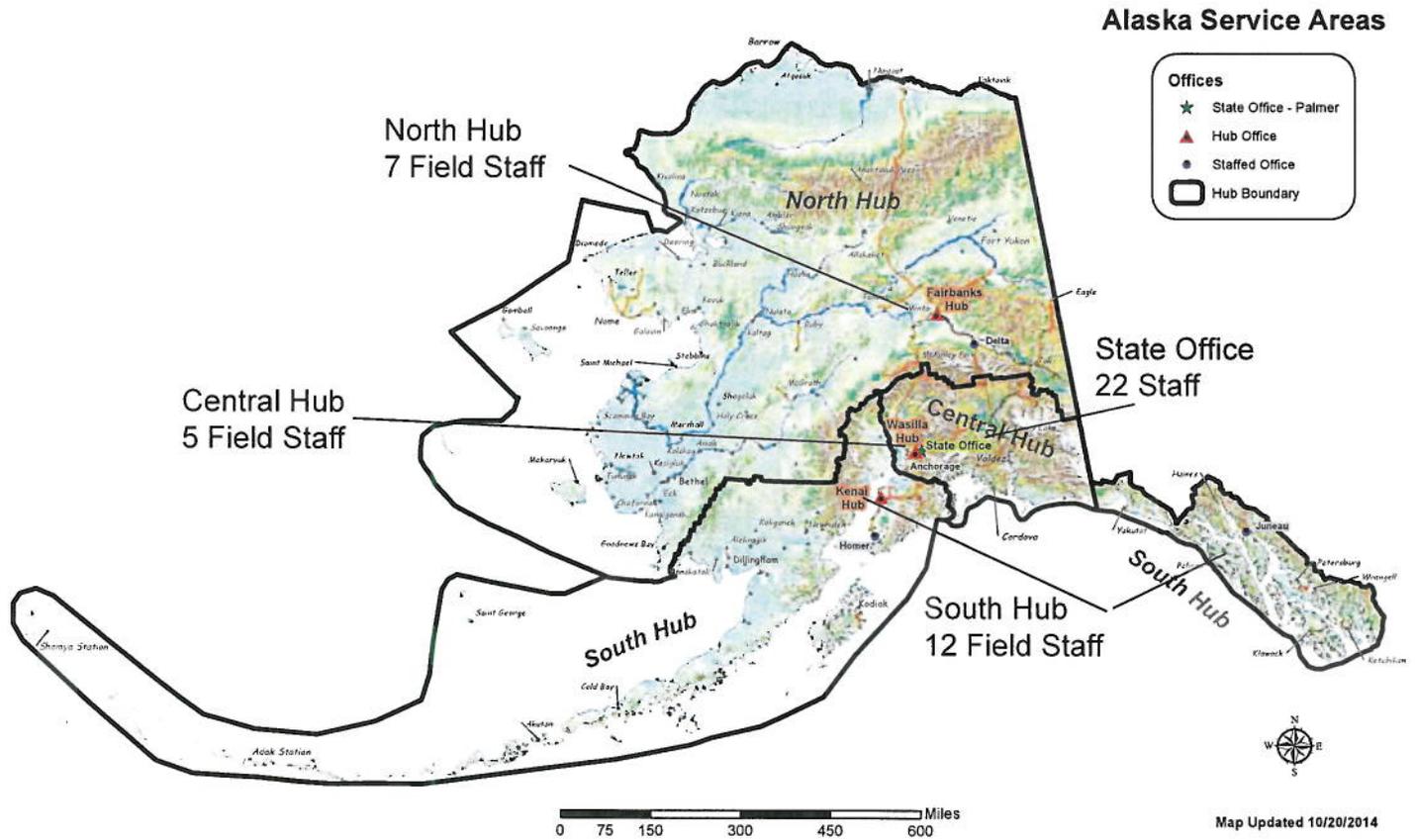
Congress approves the Statehood Act; right to Native lands is disclaimed; State to choose 103 million acres.

1959

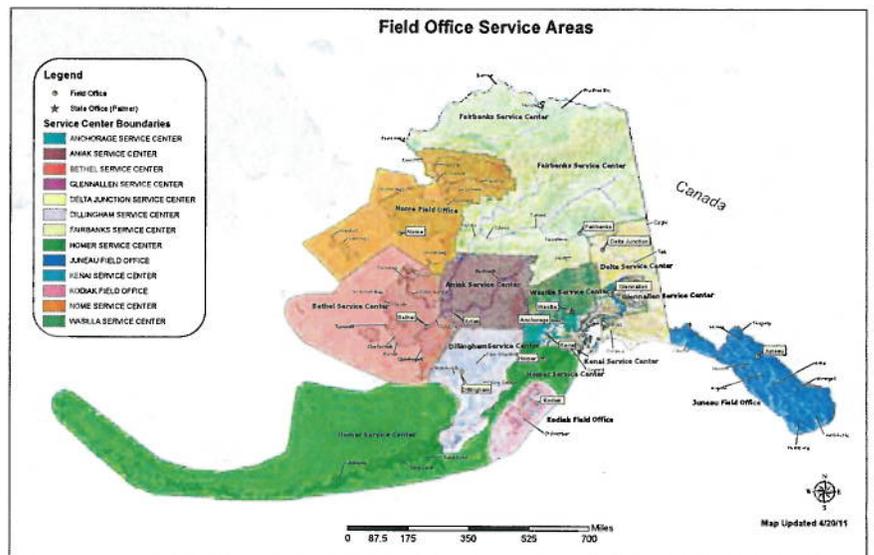
Court of Claims rules that Indian title of Tlingits and Haidas was not extinguished and they were entitled to compensation for lands taken from them by the United States.

Who we are

There are 46 employees statewide. We work in three hub offices and a state office.



Prior to 2011 we had more offices
(but not more staff).



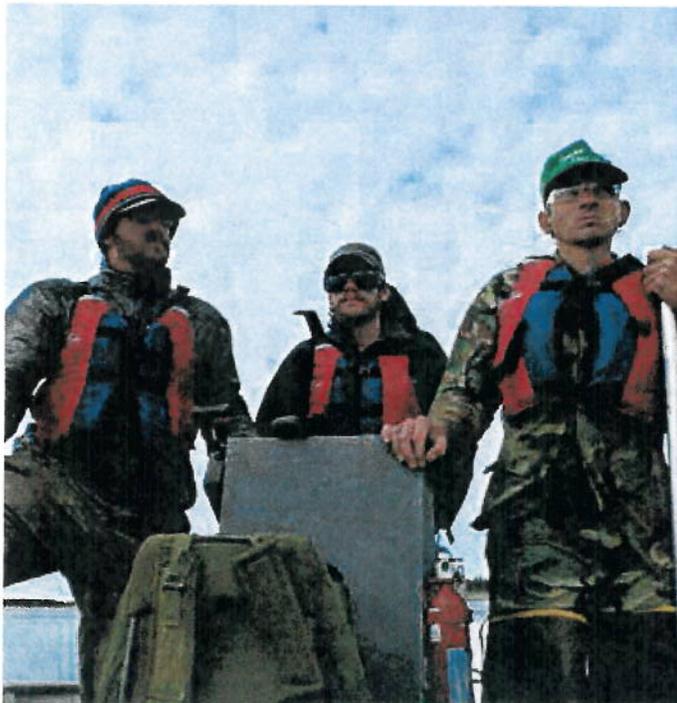
Who we are

We aspire to conserve and enhance more than 70,000 square miles of privately owned property.



Who we are

We travel by helicopter, boat, snow mobile, foot, snowshoe, four wheeler and bush plane.



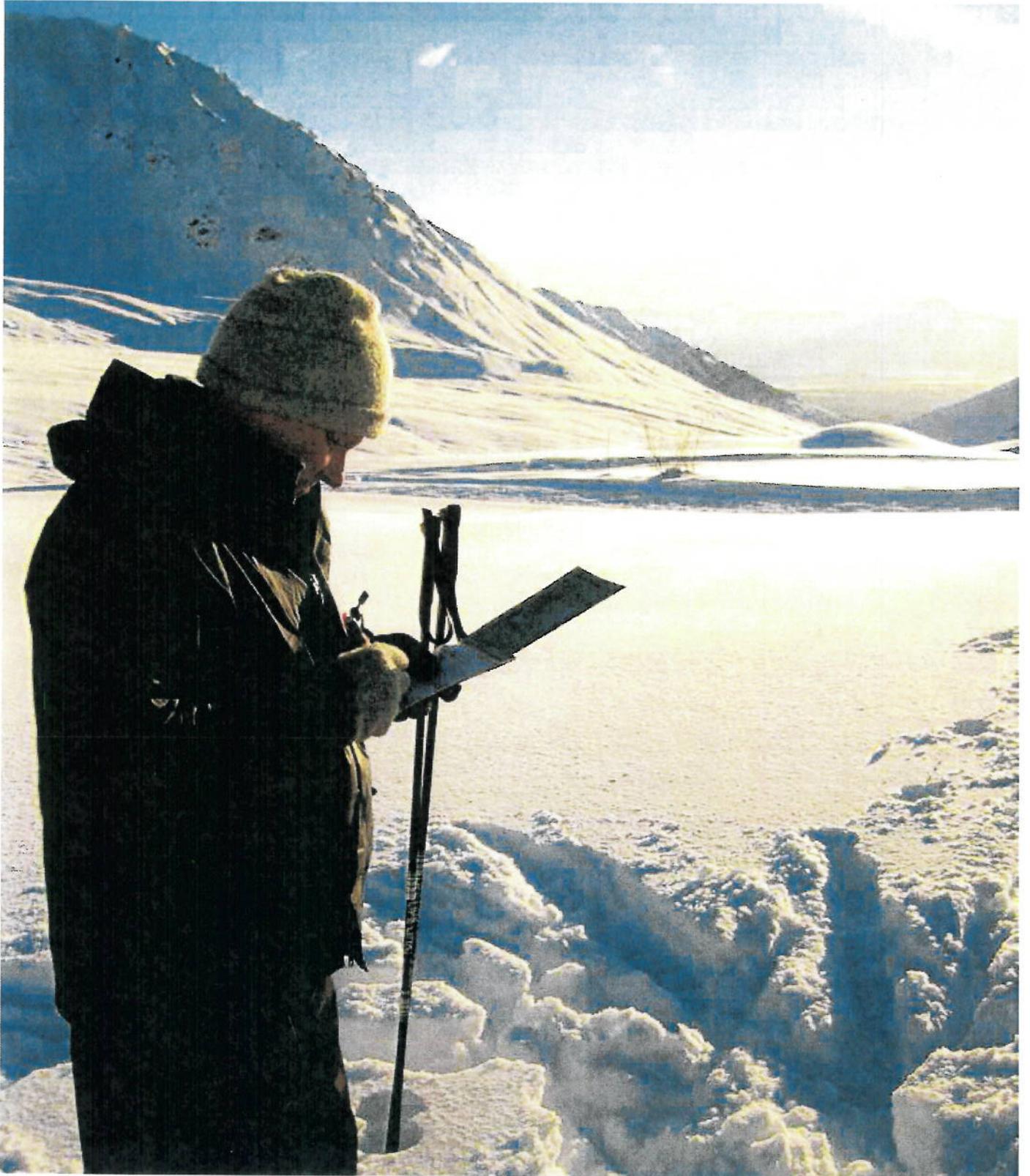
Who we are

Sometimes we find rank situations, like this rotting whale carcass in Barrow in August.



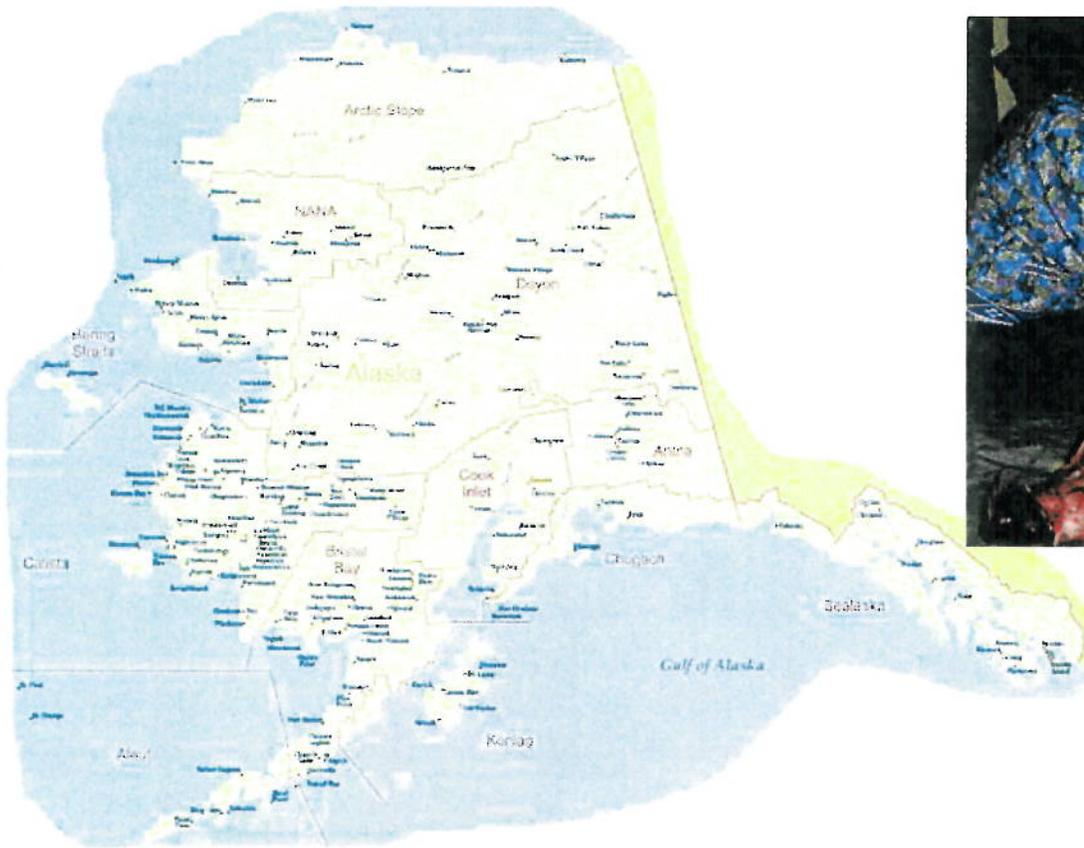
Who we are

We don't close the office because of ice or snow.

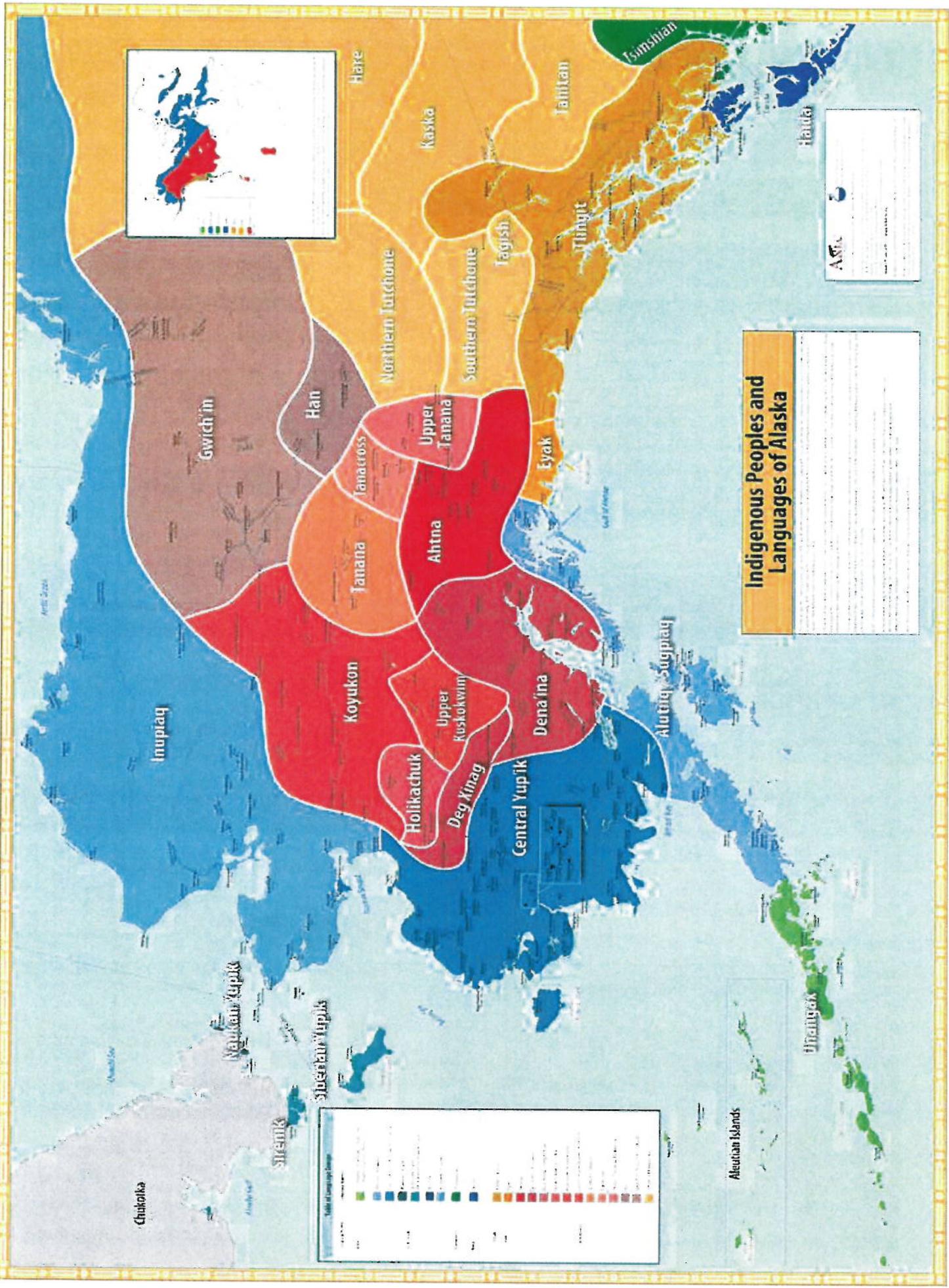


Who we serve

There are 229 Federally Recognized Tribes in Alaska, 40 percent of recognized tribes in the U.S. The cultures and languages of Alaska Natives are as diverse as the terrain. See the *next page* for a map of the traditional cultures and languages.

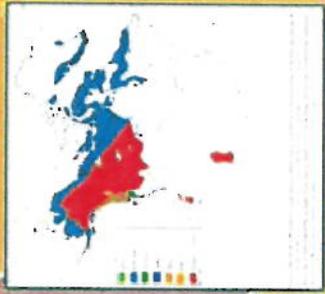


Indigenous Peoples and Languages of Alaska



Number of People Speaking

Number of People Speaking	Color
100,000+	Dark Red
50,000+	Red
25,000+	Orange
10,000+	Light Orange
5,000+	Yellow
2,500+	Light Green
1,000+	Green
500+	Dark Green
250+	Blue-Green
100+	Blue
50+	Light Blue
25+	Very Light Blue
10+	White



Who we serve

Some of the people we serve operate huge corporations and manage millions of acres.



The 12 Regional Alaska Native Corporations and 220 Village Corporations own and manage a significant amount of private lands.*

Regional Native Corporations

Ahtna 1.5 million acres (entitled to 1.77 million acres)

Aleut 66,000 acres and 1.5 million acres of subsurface

Arctic Slope 5 million acres

Bering Straits 2.1 million acres (mostly subsurface)

Bristol Bay 101,500 acres of surface and 2.7 million acres of subsurface

Calista 4.99 million acres

Chugach 928,000 acres

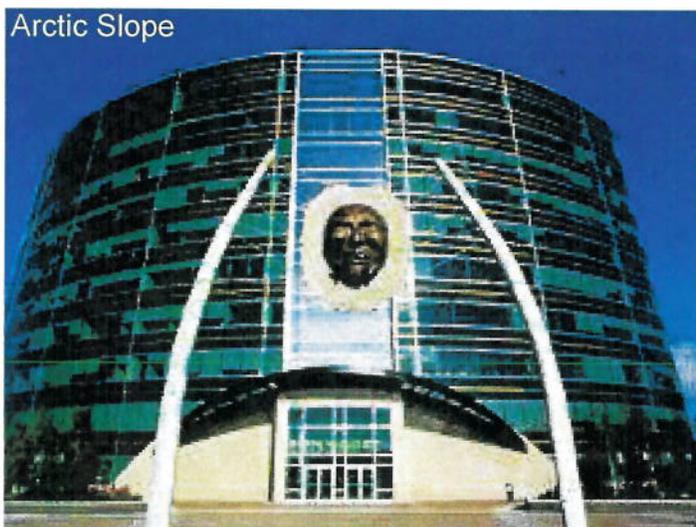
Cook Inlet 1.3 million acres of subsurface

Doyon 9.8 million acres (entitled to 12.5 million acres)

Koniag 145,000 acres of surface and 990,000 acres of subsurface

NANA 2.28 million acres

Sealaska 290,000 acres surface and 560,000 acres of subsurface



Who we serve

Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA)

ANCSA formed the Alaska Native Regional Corporations and Village Corporations.

On December 18, 1971, Public Law 92-203, the "Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act," was signed into law by President Nixon. It was enacted by Congress to settle the claim of Alaska's native Indian Aleut and Eskimo population to aboriginal title to the land on which they have lived for generations. This claim had been unresolved during the more than 100 years since the U.S. purchased Alaska from Russia in 1867.

- ANCSA is the only legislation of its kind.
- Like the U.S. Constitution, it is a guideline that must be followed for future development.
- It provides the opportunity for self-determination by the Alaska Natives.
- It provides compensation for land lost.

Summary of the Provisions of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act

1. Land

(a) The Natives will receive title to a total of 40 million acres, both surface and subsurface rights, divided among the some 220 villages and 12 Regional Corporations.

(b) The villages will receive the surface estate only in approximately 18 1/2 million acres of land in the 25 township areas surrounding each village, divided among the villages according to population.

(c) The villages will receive the surface estate in an additional 3 1/2 million acres, making a total of 22 million acres, divided among the villages by the Regional Corporations on equitable principles.

(d) The Regional Corporations will receive the subsurface estate in the 22 million acres patented to the villages, and the full title to 16 million acres selected within the 25 township areas surrounding the villages. This land will be divided among the 12 Regional Corporations on the basis of the total area in each region, rather than on the basis of population.

2. Money

The Natives will be paid \$462,500,000 over an eleven-year period from funds in the United States Treasury, and an additional \$500,000,000 from mineral revenues received from lands in Alaska hereafter conveyed to the State under the Statehood Act, and from the remaining Federal lands, other than Naval Petroleum Reserve Numbered 4, in Alaska. Most of the \$500,000,000 paid to the Natives would otherwise be paid to the State under existing law, and the State has agreed to share in the settlement of Native claims in this manner.

3. Corporate organization

(a) The Natives in each of the Native villages will be organized as a profit or non-profit corporation to take title to the surface estate in the land conveyed to the village, to administer the land, and to receive and administer a part of the money settlement.

(b) Twelve Regional Corporations will be organized to take title to the subsurface estate in the land conveyed to the villages, and full title to the additional land divided among the Regional Corporations. The Regional Corporations will also receive the \$962,500,000 grant, divided among them on the basis of Native population. Each Regional Corporation must divide among all twelve Regional Corporations 70 percent of the mineral revenues received by it. Each Regional Corporation must distribute among the Village Corporations in the region not less than 50 percent of its share of the \$962,500,000 grant, and 50 percent of all revenues received from the subsurface estate. This provision does not apply to revenues received by the Regional Corporations from their investment in business activities. For the first five years, 10 percent of the revenues from the first two sources mentioned above must be distributed among the individual Native stockholders of the corporation.

Who we serve

Some of the people we serve live in off-road villages. Village Corporations own property, usually at least 50 square miles, and are an important customer. See the *next page* for an example of a conservation plan map on a Village Corporation.

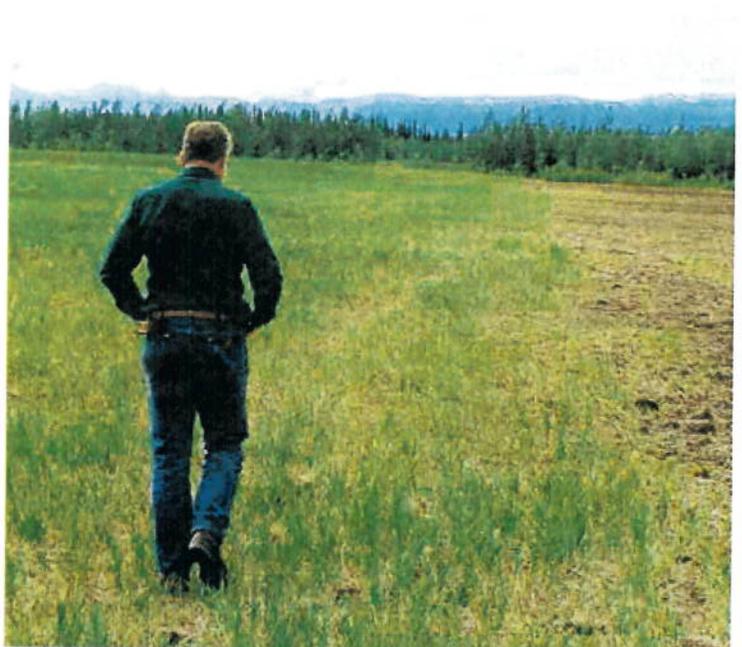
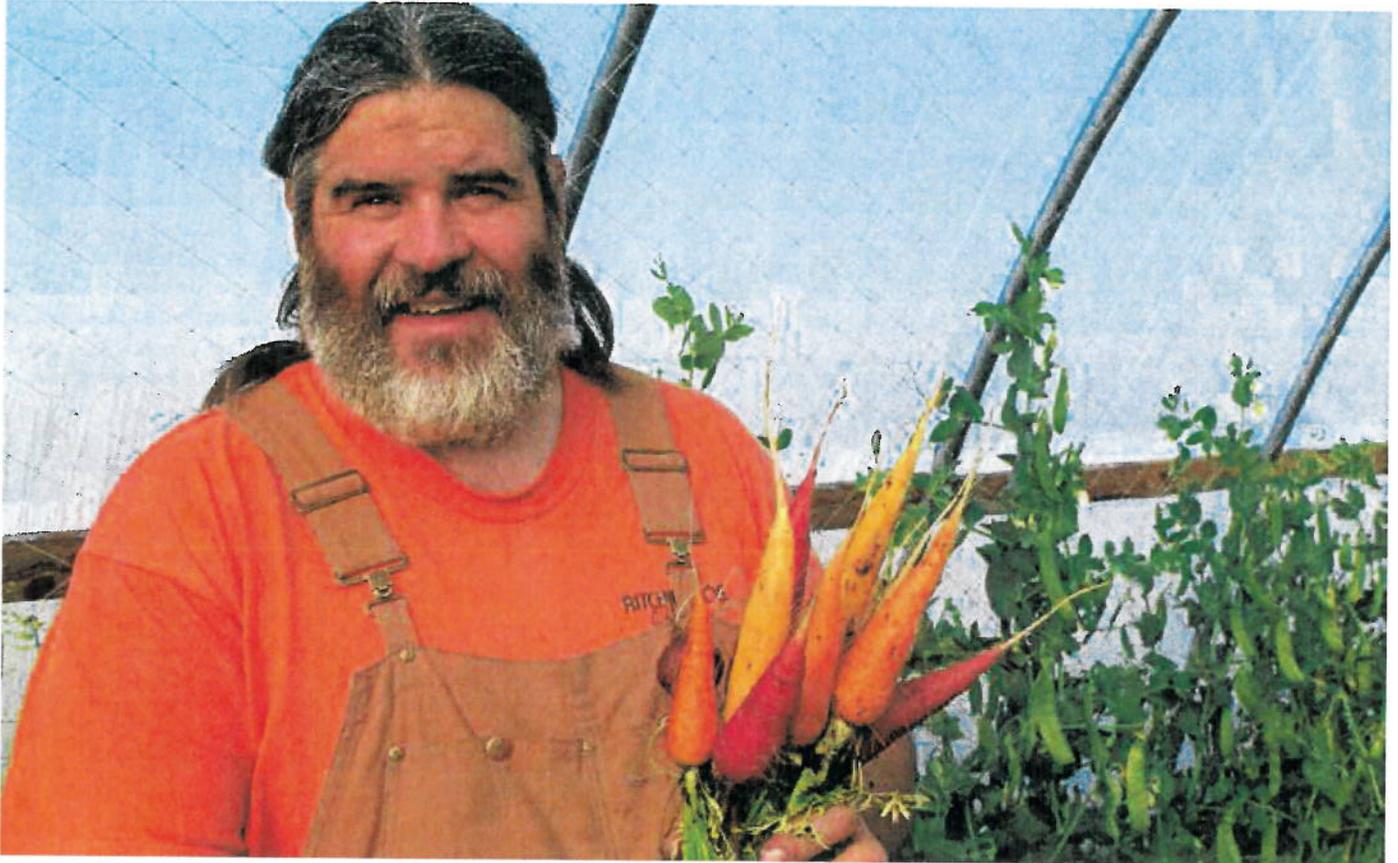


Some of the people we serve live on off-road homesteads.



Who we serve

And some of the people we serve are old-time farmers and some are first-time farmers.



What we do

EQIP is our most used Farm Bill program with \$7.7 million awarded and \$6.9 million paid to landowners in 2014.



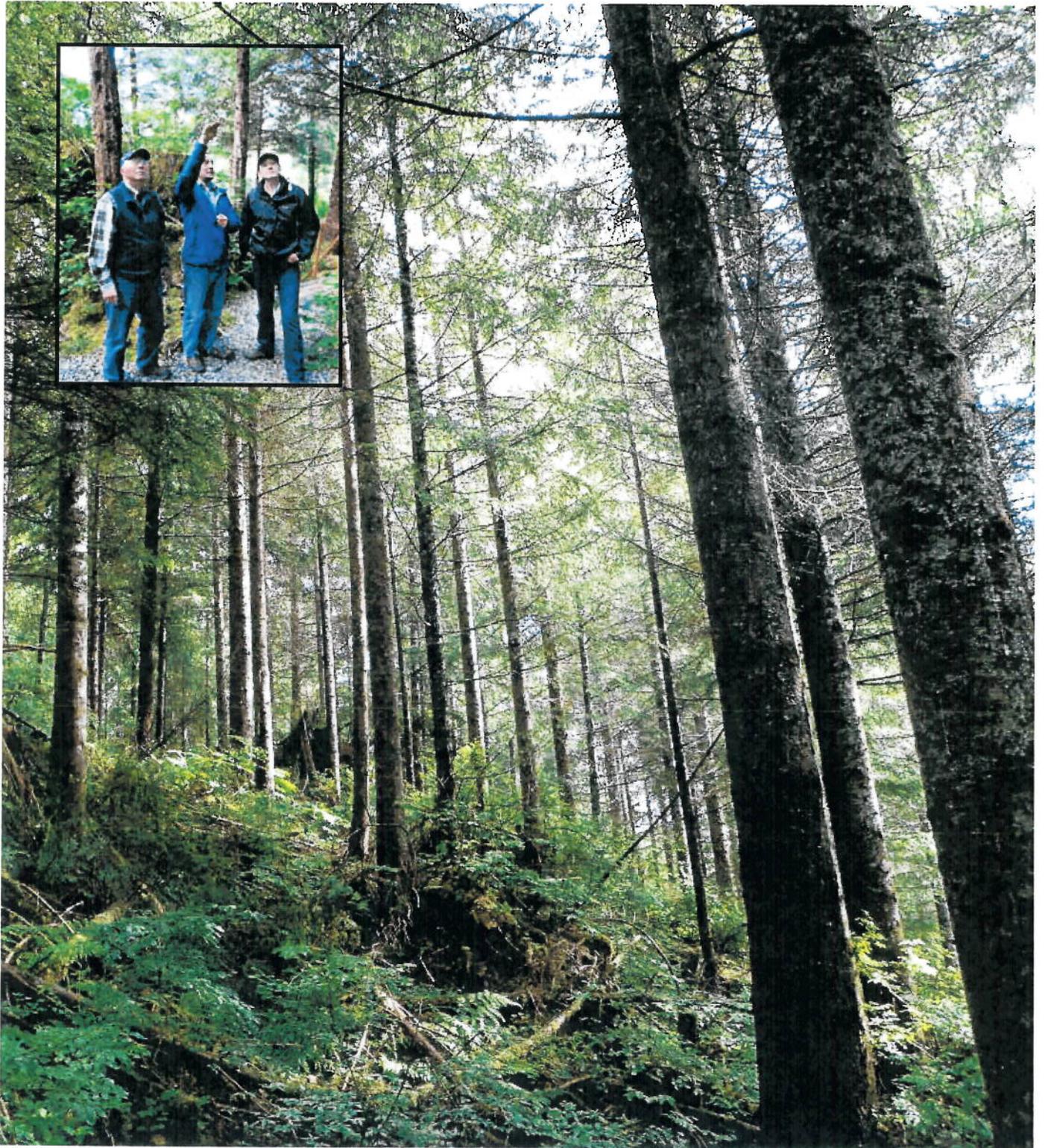
What we do

Alaska ranks number one amongst all states in high tunnels with more than \$4.75 million paid to landowners for 550 NRCS high tunnels erected. Another 200 are being built this year.



What we do

Alaska made more than \$3 million worth of payments in forestry practices in 2014.



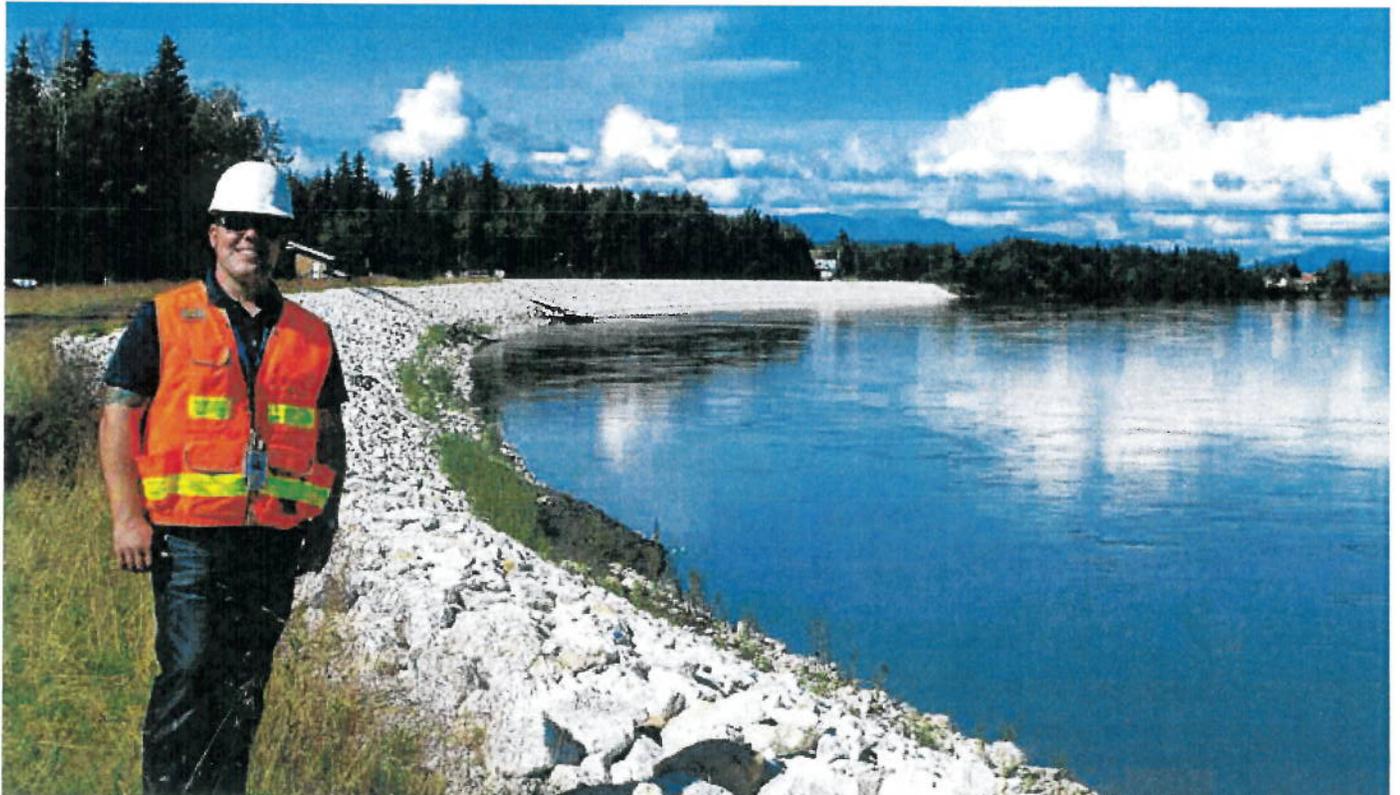
What we do

Alaska's primary crops are hay, grass and barley at nearly 30,000 acres. Potatoes are next in line for crops but the land of the midnight sun is known for its giant vegetables. The world record cabbage tipped the scales at 138.25 pounds.



What we do

The Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program is well used because Alaska's wild rivers erode banks and threaten village infrastructure.



What we do

The Copper River Inter-Tribal Resource Conservation District received a Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) to study, plan and complete willow stand improvement for moose habitat and biomass harvest on their lands.



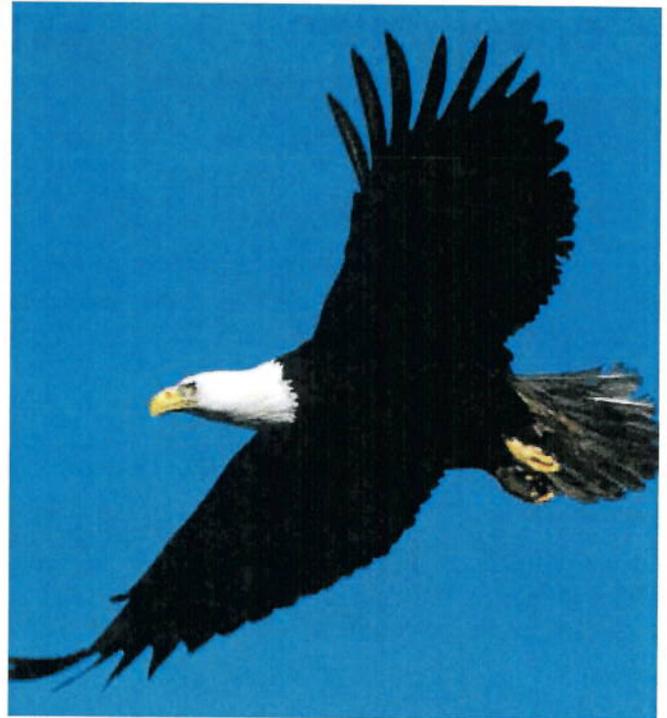
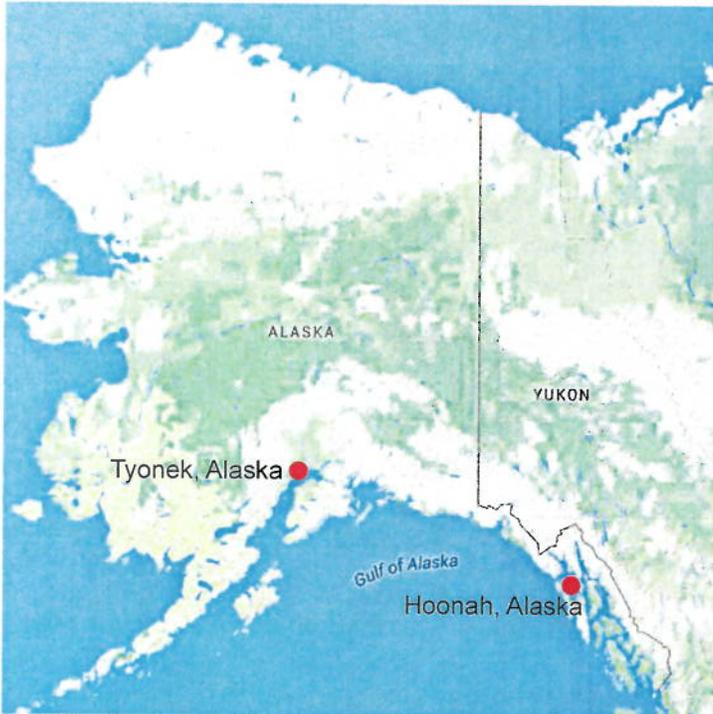
What we do

Easements are particularly important as the few good farming areas are also sought after for housing developments. This year, the Palmer Musk Ox Farm is enrolling in the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP).



What we do

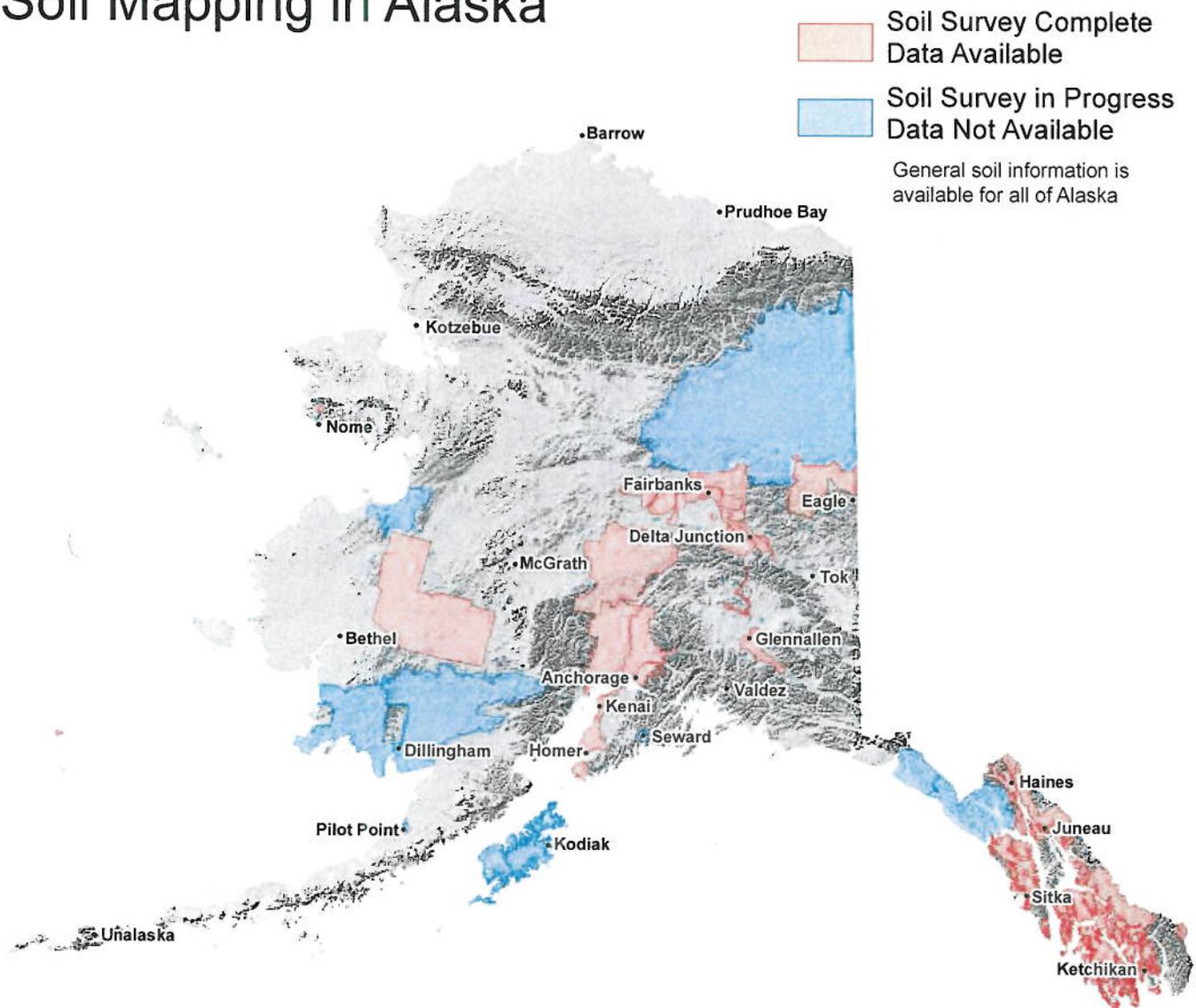
The new Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) already has two contracts in Alaska. Both are with Alaska Native partners, Tyonek and Hoonah.



What we do

Alaska is without detailed soil surveys for most of the state. Mapping off-road private property, like tribal conservation district lands, is a high priority.

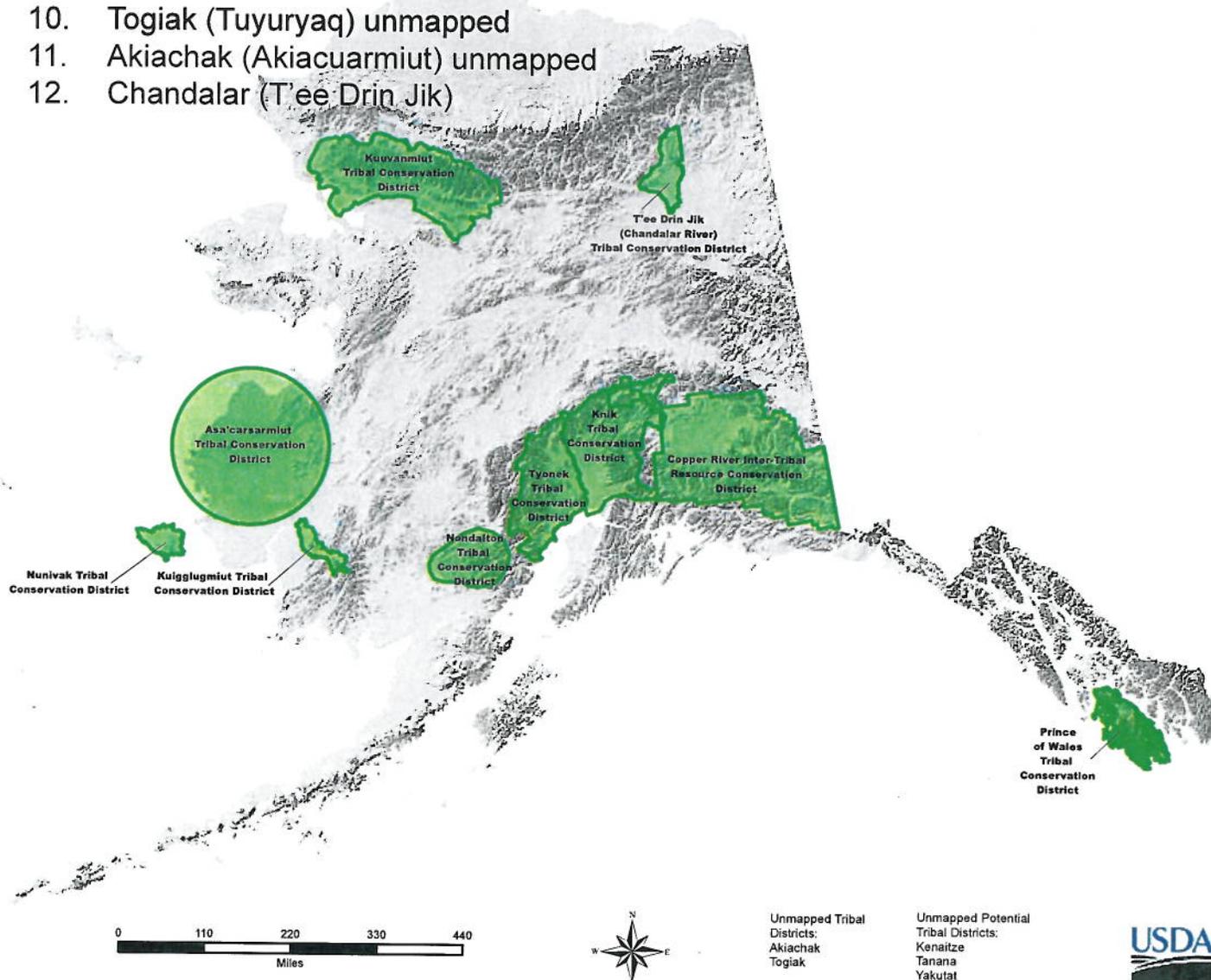
Soil Mapping in Alaska



What we do

Alaska's Tribal Conservation Districts are booming. There are now 12 with more coming.

1. Tyonek, 6.6 mil. acres
2. Kwethluk (Kuigglugmiut), 898,000 acres
3. Mt. Village (Asa'carsamiut), 15 mil. acres
4. Nunivak Island, 1 mil. acres
5. Copper River Ahtna Inter-Tribal Resource, 18.6 mil. acres
6. Ambler (Kuuvanmiut), 11.5 mil. acres
7. Knik, 8.9 mil acres
8. Nunvendaltun, 3.5 mil. acres
9. Prince of Wales, 2.2 mil acres
10. Togiak (Tuyuryaq) unmapped
11. Akiachak (Akiacuarmiut) unmapped
12. Chandalar (T'ee Drin Jik)

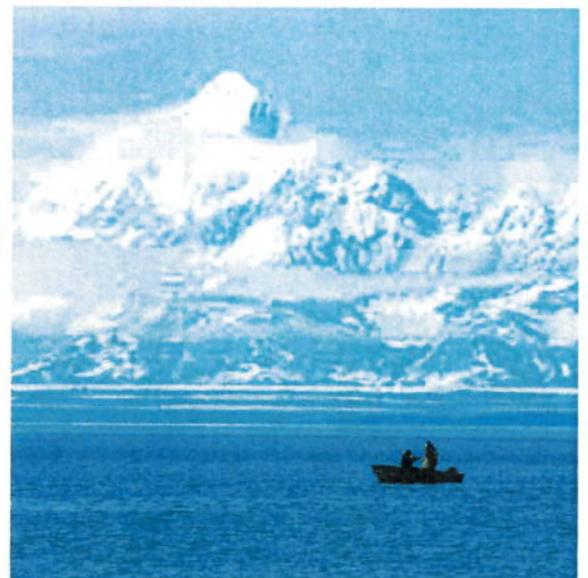


What we do

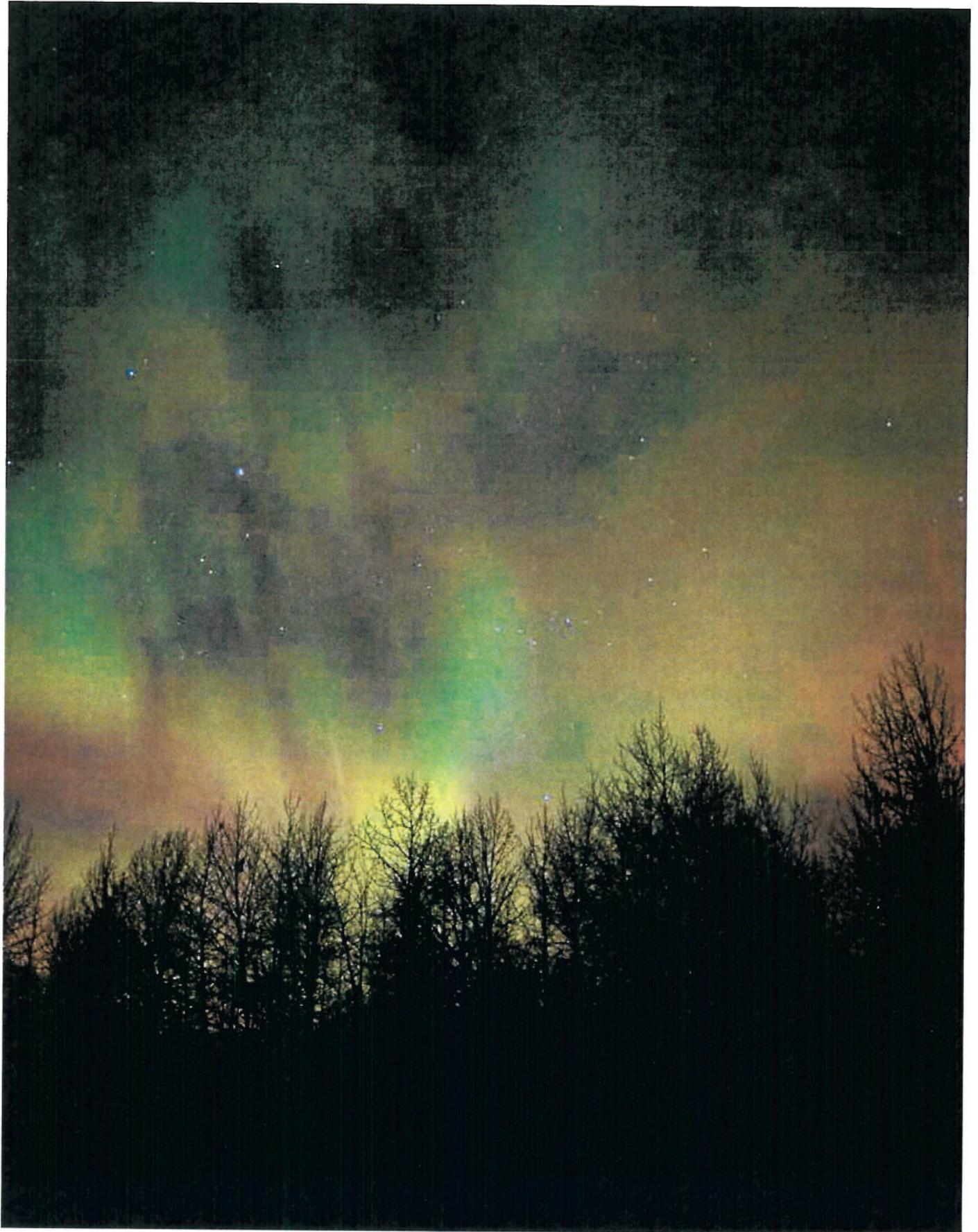
T'ee Drin Jik, or Chandalar, is the newest Tribal Conservation District. The Secretary and the TCD president signed the nation to nation agreement in Anchorage in November, 2014.



Yakutat Tribal Conservation District is ready to have their nation to nation agreement signed. They will add to the diversity of Alaska's Tribal Conservation Districts with their lush forests, rugged coast and steep mountains.



Enjoy your visit to Alaska



Protecting Traditional Land Use Areas by Hardening Trails



Porous pavement provides a hardened trail, allowing the fragile tundra to heal from unconfined ATV use.

Overview

Hardened trails benefit tundra and wildlife by controlling all-terrain vehicle (ATV) damage. When ATVs stay on hardened trails, the tundra has an opportunity to heal previously-made ruts, waterfowl nests are protected from crushing wheels, and access to traditional hunting and gathering areas is maintained.

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service can provide communities technical and financial assistance for trails through the Farm Bill's Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) and Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

Assistance

Contact your local NRCS office to learn how financial assistance contracts can benefit you and your community. Alaska Natives may receive greater financial assistance and are not subject to payment limitations.

Eligibility

Land eligible for financial assistance contracts include privately owned land suitable for fish and wildlife habitat development and improvement (such as traditional subsistence areas), and non-industrial private forestland including rural land that has existing tree cover or is suitable for growing trees.



This improved trail will allow the mud rutted lowland to heal. Wood trails are effective and cost efficient where timber is available.



Hooper Bay's Story

The land north of the Alaska Native village of Hooper Bay is rich in subsistence resources important to the Yupik people including migratory birds; harvest areas for blackfish, whitefish and needle fish; ponds for collecting greens; grasses for textiles; and blackberry, blueberry and salmonberry.

For centuries, local Yupik people traveled to this area by foot or by dog team. Today, the primary modes of transportation are all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), often referred to as Hondas. ATVs flush the nesting birds and make their nests vulnerable to predation. The vehicles also tear apart the fragile tundra and wetlands and destroy nesting habitat. It takes a long time for the tundra to heal when it is repeatedly subjected to uncontrolled and unconfined ATV use.

Although many community members utilize ATVs to access these traditional land use areas, the people also recognized the threat motorized vehicles pose to the tundra and their subsistence way of life.

Contact NRCS in Alaska

Northern Hub, Fairbanks
590 University Ave, Suite B
Fairbanks, AK 99709

(907) 479-3159

Southern Hub, Kenai
110 Trading Bay, Suite 160
Kenai, AK 99611

(907) 283-8732

State Office, Palmer
800 W. Evergreen, Suite 100
Palmer, AK 99645

(907) 761-7760

www.ak.nrcs.usda.gov

Hooper Bay Worked with NRCS

The residents of Hooper Bay approached NRCS with an idea to utilize technical and financial assistance through the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program to build one main trail between the village and the beach just south of Kokechik Bay. This managed trail would provide a sustainable path to traditional berry, greens, eggs, and fish harvesting areas while decommissioning secondary trails. The trail concept featured a clear trailhead and signs informing people to park their machines and walk onto the land.

Educating and informing the community about the trail and the benefits to the nesting birds and their habitat is a key component to the successful project.

Hooper Bay's Trail and Walkway

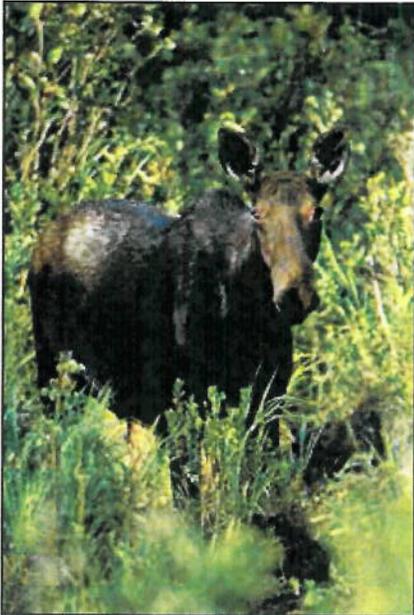
Hardening and improving the trail improved the tundra wildlife and plant habitat by concentrating ATV traffic. Managing use by creating an improved travel corridor protects greater expanses of connected, undisturbed, high quality tundra.

The trail now begins at the northeast edge of the village and will eventually traverse over five miles of Sea Lion Corporation land to the coastline. The trail is six feet wide and constructed with GeoBlock,[®] a porous plastic material.

Numerous local and federal agencies contributed in planning, design, and funding included the National Park Service and the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge.



Enhancing Moose Habitat through Willow Tipping



If the Moose are Hungry Now, the Village will be Hungry Later

When the people in the village of Dillingham noticed a decline in the local moose population, specifically poor calf survival, they knew they should take action. As a subsistence village, they rely on moose and salmon for traditional food. Without moose, villagers would be forced to change from their traditional local diet.

Choggiung Limited, the Village corporation of Dillingham, Alaska, contacted the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to see if help was available to improve the declining quality of their moose forage. NRCS investigated sites within the village's traditional hunting areas, as identified by elders and tribal members, to determine the quality and quantity of moose habitat and develop alternatives for improvement. The sites revealed moose had browsed the willows so heavily the trees displayed a reverse hedge effect – in other words, the moose browsed the willows bare as far up as they could reach, eight to ten feet! In some cases, even the willow trunks were stripped of bark which occurs only when no other vegetation is available. Willow stands in this condition simply cannot sustain a stable moose population.

NRCS biologists, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologists, and village residents scrutinized the correlation between moose population and willow stand health, carefully considering forage availability and quality with seasonal use patterns. Late in winter, cows, female moose, are in critical stages of gestation. Also late in winter, nearly all the nutritious willow leaves and stems have been consumed. A hypothesis formed: Cows carrying new calves were not finding nourishing food, so calves were born weaker, sickly. Sick calves and underfed





Contact NRCS in Alaska

Northern Hub, Fairbanks

(907) 479-3159

Delta Junction

(907) 895-4241

Southern Hub, Kenai

(907) 283-8732

Homer

(907) 235-8177

Juneau

(907) 586-7220

Central Hub, Wasilla

(907) 373-6492

State Office, Palmer

(907) 761-7760

www.ak.nrcs.usda.gov

cows result in high mortality and the moose population suffered. It seemed obvious, then, the solution to improving and increasing forage quality and availability for all area moose was to make better and more willow browse available.

How do people improve hundreds of acres of willow in remote, roadless, wet, brushy tundra? In a world of immediate gratification, large gas powered equipment, and "get it done yesterday" attitudes, the Alaska answer may be difficult to accept: manual labor and perseverance. The improvement plan involved local people manually "tipping" tall willows over, forcing new growth (basal sprout) from partially severed trunks. The work had to be performed in midwinter with chainsaws, handsaws and brush whackers in areas with only snow machine access. The trick was to work on frozen ground, which is easier to traverse than boggy marshland. To keep the willows alive, first the trees must be completely dormant, then the willow trunks must not be entirely severed; instead, a viable amount of cambium (the soft woody layer just inside the bark) needed be left intact for optimum stem regrowth. The new stems provide nutritious browse necessary for healthy cow moose. Because of the regrowth, the food supply will last through the winter. The willows' regrowth is like a fully stocked pantry.

With a plan in place, the Village sought a work crew with the tools and winter gear to do the job. Winter work in western Alaska is as hard to come by as good moose browse. The regional village corporation forestry crew eagerly stepped up. This crew was normally without work or income during the winter, had the tools and skills, and understood harsh tundra outdoor winter work. In first winter, the crew completed a test plot of "tipped" willows. The next summer, people eagerly watching stem regrowth and waiting to see how moose would respond the following late winter. Just as the biologists and village residents hoped, the willows regrew bushy stems supplying a whole winter's worth of moose food (and it is presumed the spring calves were born healthier – herd health research is impractical at this time).

The plan, tested over the course of a year and a half, proved successful. The work crew, eager for winter employment, undertook larger willow "tipping" plots during the next winter. As the work was completed on the plots, other villages along the river took notice. NRCS is now looking at numerous new clients and additional moose habitat improvement projects.

NRCS in Alaska is proud of improving moose habitat, the wide-ranging affects of sustaining village subsistence food sources, putting an otherwise unemployed crew to work in winter, and gaining new customers.

The willow "tipping" plots in this project are located 34 water miles up the Nushagak River from Dillingham, in southwest Alaska, off the shores of Bristol Bay. The villages in southwest Alaska are an off road villages, meaning people must fly or boat to get there. Access to southwest Alaska villages is by plane or boat only. The village of Dillingham, a hub for the region, is an hour and a half flight from Anchorage.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer



United States Department of Agriculture Food & Nutrition Service

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)

works to end hunger and obesity through 15 federal nutrition assistance programs. More information is at www.fns.usda.gov.

FNS supports the StrikeForce goal to promote food security in persistent poverty communities, by working with state agencies and StrikeForce partners to increase access to and awareness of the Summer Food Service Program, the School Breakfast Program, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefit redemptions at farmers' markets for eligible recipients and participating farmers' markets.

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is a federally-funded, state-administered program that provides reimbursement to local community providers who serve healthy meals to children and teens at no charge primarily during the summer months when school is not in session.

All children 18 years old and under, and persons with disabilities over the age of 18 who participate in school programs for mentally or physically disabled people, can receive free meals and snacks during the summer at various approved locations like parks, recreation centers, schools, places of worship, summer camps, libraries, and mobile buses in low-income communities.

Organizations and local governments can apply to become a SFSP sponsor or site by contacting their state agency on the back of this flyer.

For information on your nearest summer feeding site contact the National Hunger Hotline at 1-866-348-6479 (1-866-3-HUNGRY) or 1-877-842-6273 for Spanish (1-877-8-HAMBRE).

To search for food help online or to register your organization in the National Hunger Clearinghouse's database of hunger resources and receive referrals of individuals in need by the National Hunger Hotline visit www.whyhunger.org/findfood.

The School Breakfast Program provides cash assistance to states to operate nonprofit breakfast programs in schools and residential childcare institutions. Children from low-income households may be eligible for free or reduced-price school breakfast.

To receive free breakfast, families either fill out an application or are approved by the school district through direct certification. Although direct certification systems vary by state, all such systems eliminate the need for households that receive benefits under other social services to fill out a paper application.

For more on free or reduced-price school breakfast contact the state agency on the back of this flyer.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) offers nutrition assistance benefits to millions of low-income individuals and families on Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards - a type of debit card. The program's main purpose is "to permit low-income households to obtain a more nutritious diet ... by increasing their purchasing power" (Food and Nutrition Act of 2008).

Farmers' markets can apply to become authorized to accept EBT payment for food. In 2012 FNS received funds to increase availability of wireless point-of-sale (POS) equipment at farmers' markets not currently participating in SNAP. FNS is making these funds available through state agencies that administer the SNAP program. These funds can help offset the startup costs of getting the POS equipment needed to accept SNAP benefits.

Accepting EBT allows farmers' markets to widen their customer base, and increase access to healthy and local food for customers on SNAP.

To apply to become an authorized SNAP retailer visit the FNS Web site on the back of this flyer. To find out how you can access POS funds, contact the state agency on the back of this flyer.

Contact Information

State of Alaska

Alaska Department of Education and Early Development
<http://www.eed.state.ak.us>

School Breakfast and Summer Food Service Program
Jo Dawson, State Program Administrator Child Nutrition Programs
(907) 465-8708, Jo.dawson@alaska.gov

Alaska Department of Health and Social Services
<http://dhss.alaska.gov>

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Erin Walker-Tolles, Chief Division of Public Assistance
(907) 465-6161, erin.walker-tolles@alaska.gov

Federal

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
www.fns.usda.gov

School Breakfast Program and Summer Food Service Program
Ronna Bach, Special Nutrition Programs
(415) 645-1946, Ronna.Bach@fns.usda.gov

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
Dennis Stewart, Western Region SNAP
(415) 705-2333, Dennis.Stewart@fns.usda.gov

Farmers' Markets (Retail Application Inquiries and Electronic Benefit Transfer Questions)
FNS Retailer Operations Branch
1-877-823-4369, <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailers/application-process.htm>

USDA Office of the Inspector General Fraud/Abuse Hotline
1-800-424-9121, usda_hotline@oig.usda.gov <http://www.usda.gov/oig/hotline.htm>