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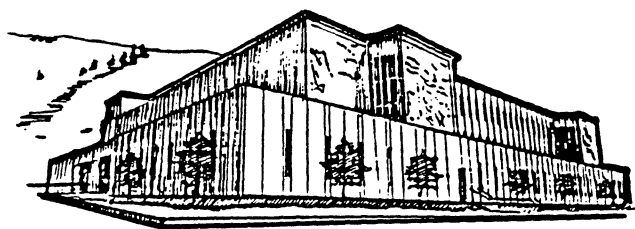
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University of  
**Montana**



**A CASE STUDY OF NATIVE PEOPLE AND LAND & WILDLIFE  
MANAGEMENT AGENCIES IN NORTHWEST ALASKA**

By

Elizabeth A. Beringer

B.S., Grove City College, 1986

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements

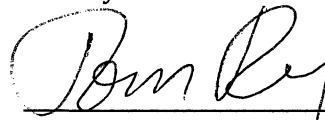
for the degree of

Master of Science

University of Montana

1993

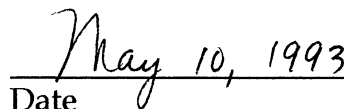
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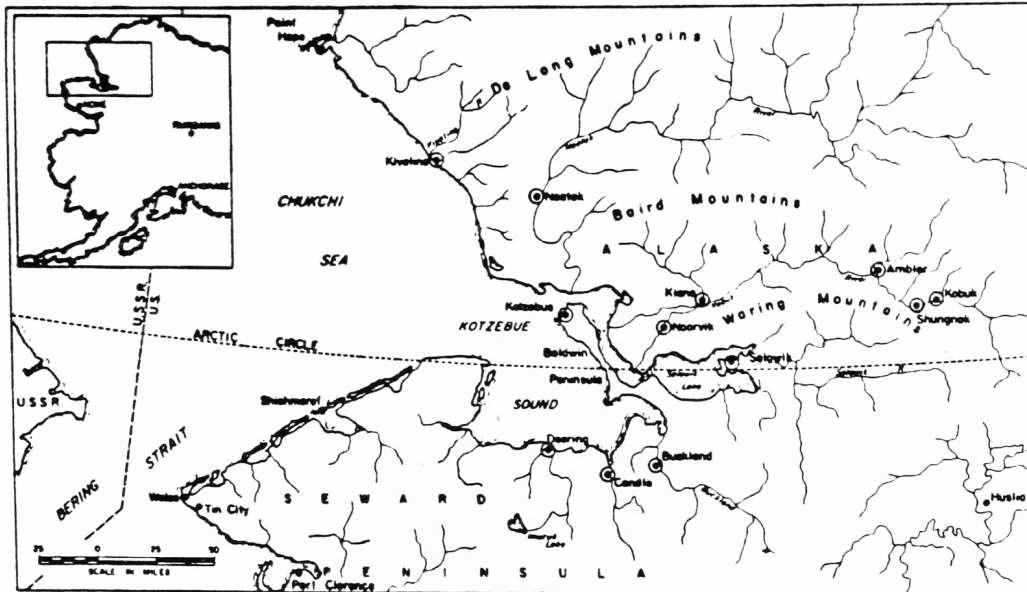
## Chapter I

### INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, subsistence harvest of wild resources formed the basis of all life for Inuit, Indian and Aleut (Native) residents of Alaska. To a great extent, subsistence remains the foundation for personal relationships, community and family roles, spirituality, as well as physical sustenance in rural Alaska. Despite overwhelming cultural change in the past century, the Inupiat of the Northwest Arctic Borough (Figure 1) continue to maintain many of their subsistence traditions. Unfortunately, as in the history of Lower 48 Indian tribes, actions of the United States government have progressively eroded the underpinnings of Alaska Native societies. Congressional legislation, culminating in the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971, directly undermined the subsistence economy of rural Native Alaskans by extinguishing all indigenous land and resource claims. This legislation was followed by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980 which established National Parks, Monuments, Preserves, and Wildlife Refuges across much of the traditional hunting and fishing grounds of Native Alaskans (Figure 2). Once providing sustenance without interference, these federal lands are now regulated and managed for wildlife conservation, sport and subsistence hunting, and recreation. Today, land and wildlife managing agencies such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the National Park Service and the State of Alaska (collectively referred to as "agency" or "agencies" throughout this paper), issue and enforce game regulations in rural Alaska that have an identical effect as the above mentioned Congressional legislation: all deny cultural

practices and restrict the continuation of centuries-old traditions that unite Native families and communities.

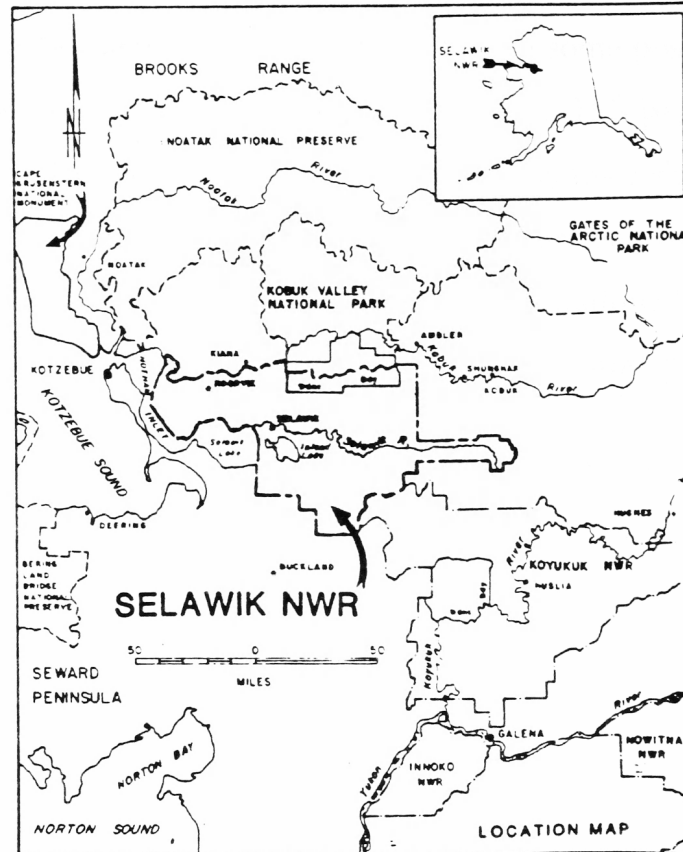
Figure 1 - The Northwest Arctic Borough



Because of federal and state legislation and policies, a fervent, antagonistic relationship exists between Native residents and most agency land managers (predominantly Anglo) working in rural Alaska. Consequently, there is little Native involvement in land and wildlife management. Although agency personnel have made an effort to involve local residents in administrative decisions in a few regions of the state, northwest Alaska Inupiat express frustration with the avenues for involvement that are currently offered by federal and state government. Fortunately, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as other agencies, are now realizing that their goals to conserve and to protect wildlife populations in rural Alaska cannot be accomplished without communication and collaboration with Native residents. As a result, many agency personnel now

desire to unite their efforts with local Native residents to manage fish and wildlife resources. Cooperation offers some hope that culturally sensitive management will replace the existing paradigm of law enforcement of game regulations with little regard for subsistence traditions.

Figure 2 - Land Jurisdiction in the Northwest Arctic Borough



Selawik National Wildlife Refuge (Figure 2) was selected as a case study because of its problematic relationship with local residents and inadequate effort towards community outreach at the time of this research. Despite the localized nature of this study, it is evident from this research that the problems confronted on the Selawik National Wildlife Refuge are not exclusive to northwest Alaska. Similar situations exist throughout Alaska and anywhere different cultures, philosophies or users meet. Likewise, the

solutions proposed in this document should be evaluated for possible implementation in other regions.

This paper discusses federal legislation affecting Inupiaq subsistence, the current Native perceptions of federal and state land management and resulting concerns of both Native residents and Anglo land managers of the Northwest Arctic Borough. It concludes by offering some possible solutions to the problems encountered in this region of Alaska. This paper is part of a joint project with Theresa M. Ferraro. Consequently, the recommendations espoused within this document cannot be fully understood or implemented without the inclusion of the research and recommendations Researcher Ferraro outlines in *Environmental Education: The Cultural Bridge*.

## Chapter II

### PROCEDURE (Beringer and Ferraro 1993)

In early January of 1991, Researcher Theresa M. Ferraro and I traveled to Anchorage, Alaska to meet with USFWS officials. We met with Alaska Region Deputy Refuge Manager Jerald Stroebele (past Refuge Manager of the Selawik National Wildlife Refuge), and Education Specialist Beverly Farfan, to determine the status of resource education on the Selawik National Wildlife Refuge. While at the USFWS Regional Office in Anchorage, we reviewed relevant environmental education curriculum available to USFWS personnel.

After several days in Anchorage, we traveled to Kotzebue, Alaska, which served as the base for our field work through March, 1991. During this three month period, we conducted over thirty five formal and informal interviews with Inupiaq and non-Native residents of the Northwest Arctic Borough. Initial interviewees were selected by recommendations from area land managing agency personnel and anthropologist Richard Nelson. Each interviewee was asked who they thought we ought to speak with and so our list of interviewees grew. We spoke with regional educators, Inupiaq elders, community adults and children, and employees of the following organizations: NANA Regional Corporation, Northwest Arctic Borough, Northwest Arctic Borough School District (NWABSD), Maniilaq Association (Native social service organization), IRA (Indian Reorganization Act) or Village Councils, Regional Elders Council, Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G), National Park Service (NPS) and the USFWS.

We developed two general interview questionnaires; one designed for regional educators and a second for all other interviewees. Questionnaires were used as starting points to generate topical and meaningful discussion. Interviews lasted approximately one hour to an hour and a half in length. Our goals for interviews were twofold: 1) to solicit Native and non-Native local residents' opinions about the presence and policies of regional wildlife managing agencies, specifically the USFWS; 2) to assess the potential of environmental education to build partnerships and to foster cooperation between cultures in land and wildlife management. Because of the sensitive nature of the interview topics, all quotes used in this paper will remain anonymous.

In addition to interviews, Researcher Ferraro and I observed and conducted classes in both Kotzebue and Selawik schools. Through this experience we were exposed to cross-cultural teaching styles, children's perceptions of customary and traditional subsistence practices as well as their understanding of the USFWS and other land managing agencies that operate in northwest Alaska.

To understand the political structure of the Northwest Arctic Borough, we attended the NANA Regional Corporation Annual Board of Directors Meeting, the Kikiktaruk Inupiat Corporation Annual Shareholders Meeting and the Northwest Arctic Borough School District January Board Meeting.

In early March we traveled to Anchorage to participate in two USFWS training sessions. We attended an Alaska Region USFWS Environmental Education Workshop to become familiar with the present USFWS education and information policy and future direction. Additionally, we presented some initial findings of our Selawik study to Workshop participants. The second training session was for USFWS Refuge Information Technicians

(RITs). These employees are Native representatives of villages which now fall within National Wildlife Refuge boundaries. Their job is to dispense and gather information in selected Native villages to facilitate communication between the USFWS and local residents. This training session was most beneficial for it gave us an opportunity to appreciate the perspective of Native employees who work for the USFWS.

The information collected during the above field work provides the foundation for our manuscripts. The joint effort and collaboration of Researcher Ferraro and myself present the background, current issues and possible solutions for successfully managing public lands in areas of rural Alaska. The following outline merges the Ferraro and Beringer documents.

## OUTLINE - JOINT BERINGER/FERRARO PROJECT

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **II. PROCEDURE**

### **III. HISTORY AND PRESENT SITUATION OF THE INUPIAT**

- A. The Inupiat of Northwest Alaska
- B. Alaska Native Subsistence Issues
  - 1. The Legal Status of Subsistence
  - 2. Native Public Involvement in Subsistence Management
  - 3. Subsistence as a Lifeway
  - 4. Summary
- C. Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971
  - 1. Evolution of a Land Claims Settlement
  - 2. Intents and Effects of ANCSA
  - 3. Native Corporations - Sustaining Profits
  - 4. Sociocultural Effects of ANCSA
  - 5. ANCSA'S Lessons
  - 6. Conclusions

### **IV. NATIVE VIEWS OF USFWS AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

- A. Current Perception of Federal & State Agencies
- B. State and Federal Game Regulations
  - 1. Complexity and Language
  - 2. Cultural Relativity
  - 3. Regulations may be Inappropriate for Local Conditions
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- A. USFWS Education and Information Policy
- B. Case for Environmental Education on Selawik NWR
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    - d. Walking in Two Worlds With One Spirit
    - e. Coordinating Educational Efforts
    - f. Topics for School Programming
    - g. USFWS Teacher Education
  - 2. Interagency Visitor Center



- 3. Community Outreach
  - a. Multiculturalism
  - b. Encouraging Local Hire
- D. Conclusions

## **VI. NATIVE VOICE**

- A. Native Hire
- B. Incorporating Native Knowledge into Western Wildlife Management
- C. Current Native Voice - Alaska State Advisory System
  - 1. Problems with Advisory System
    - a. Funding
    - b. Regional Boundaries
    - c. Subsistence Representation
    - d. Processing Council Recommendations
    - e. Accessibility of Technical Information
  - 2. Conclusions
- D. Cooperative Agreements

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

## **VIII. SOURCES CONSULTED**

## Chapter III

### THE ALASKA NATIVE CLAIMS SETTLEMENT ACT OF 1971

For over one hundred years, the United States government has dishonored the land and resource rights of Alaska Natives. With each succeeding federal act, Congress has divided Native people by imposing western culture and denying them access to their vital subsistence economy. This subsistence economy forms the foundation for personal relationships, community and family roles, and spirituality as well as physical sustenance. Perhaps the most significant federal legislation affecting Alaska Natives and their subsistence lifeway is the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) of 1971. ANCSA was originally hosted as the "new departure for the resolution of aboriginal claims" (Berger 1985, 20); in return for the extinguishment of all indigenous land and resource claims, Congress awarded Alaska Natives land, capital, corporations, and therefore opportunities to enter the business world. Despite high expectations, this hastily compiled act deeply affected subsistence traditions and consequently, the family and community relationships of Alaska's Native population. Critics suggest that ANCSA was merely another assimilative policy of the United States government towards Native Americans (Anders 1989, Berger 1985, Perret 1978).

Today most Alaska Natives view federal legislation with distrust and resentment. One Northwest Arctic Borough Inupiaq explains:

It is obvious that Statehood, ANCSA and ANILCA [Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (1980)] were not creations of the Native people. One must question the ability of one group to extinguish Native aboriginal rights behind closed

doors. Often this "civilized" way is more savage than the savage. There seems to be an overwhelming urge of the Federal bureaucracy to consume Native peoples. Divide and conquer! They have done it throughout the lower 48 and continue here in Alaska....The Feds have a way of trampling Native peoples' simple human dignity (Anonymous 1/25/91).

Obviously, federal legislation has significantly altered the lifeways of Alaska Natives. Although numerous commissions, researchers and agencies have undertaken complete studies of ANCSA, this chapter outlines some of the major incongruities of ANCSA, and how ANCSA altered Alaska Native life.

#### **A. EVOLUTION OF A LAND CLAIMS SETTLEMENT**

A brief summary of the federal legislative history in Alaska is crucial to an understanding of the present relationship between the Inupiat of northwest Alaska and the United States government. This chronology vividly portrays the unraveling of the Native subsistence economy in rural Alaska leading up to ANCSA's extinguishment of all indigenous land and resource claims.

The 1867 Treaty of Cession with Russia 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 of that country" (in Arnold et. al. 1978, 25). This Treaty began the continual postponement of any moral decision regarding the claims of Aleuts, Indians and Inuit (collectively referred to as Natives) of Alaska. In a similar fashion, the Organic Act of 1884 addressed, but deferred any resolution to, Native rights: "[The Natives] shall not be disturbed in the possession of any lands actually in their use or occupation or now claimed by them by the terms under which such persons may acquire title to such lands is reserved for future legislation by Congress..."

(in Arnold et.al. 1978, 69). While the Organic Act acknowledged that Natives held aboriginal rights, it assumed that these rights could (and would?) be extinguished by Congress at any time, without compensation (Cohen 1982).

The Alaska Allotment Act of 1906 did little to secure Native land title. This Act was unsuitable for Alaska in general, and to Alaska Natives in particular, because of its emphasis on agriculture rather than subsistence. Similar to the General Allotment Act, the 1906 Alaska Allotment Act was initiated when farming was the prevailing convention in America. Extending this agricultural mandate to Alaska seems inappropriate considering the climate, soil type, and topography of much of Alaska. Additionally, by allocating only 160 acres, the Alaska Allotment Act was inappropriate for indigenous Alaskans who rely heavily upon a hunting and gathering type of subsistence. Under traditional land use patterns, people used approximately 3,000 acres per person for subsistence (Perret 1978). Subsistence requires the use of a multitude of natural resources existent across wide ranges. Limiting access to large areas, in effect, denies access to primary subsistence resources thereby eliminating this lifeway. Also, making the Native situation even worse, the Alaska Allotment Act forbade allotments on land containing valuable deposits of coal, oil, or gas. In other words, the Act discriminated against traditional subsistence uses and potential "modern" resource exploitation interests of Alaska Natives.

Like the Organic Act, the Alaska Statehood Act of 1958 acknowledged the existence of Native land and resource claims. In addition, the Statehood Act promised some protection for lands used and occupied by Natives. In this Act, the new State and its Anglo residents disclaimed all rights (including fishing rights) or title to lands "the right or title to which may be held by Eskimos, Indians, or Aleuts" or held in trust for them by the United States (in

Arnold et.al. 1978, 91). Although this act was the strongest statement in history regarding Alaska Native aboriginal claims, it also was the greatest threat to their land rights. In addition to the recognition of Native lands, the Statehood Act granted the State of Alaska the right to select more than 104 million acres (out of a total of over 362 million acres) from the public domain that were "vacant, unappropriated or unreserved" at the time of their selection. The state proceeded to select much of the best land, including substantial land that the Natives considered to be theirs (Burch 1984b). As a result of intensifying hostilities within the State, in 1966, the Secretary of the Interior posed a freeze on State selection until the Native claims issue could be settled.

It is well documented that the real impetus for the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) was economic: the discovery of North Slope oil made it evident that riches would be dominated by whomever controlled the land (Perret 1978, Anders 1989, Cohen 1982, Graburn 1990). The finding of the Prudhoe Bay oil deposit in 1968 marked the beginning of an organized movement to settle Native land claims. Oil companies knew that a land settlement was needed to secure a right-of-way to build the 1,200 mile Trans-Alaska Oil Pipeline. Additionally, by the late 1960's, Native subsistence economies had become increasingly dependent upon items available only for cash. Fishing and hunting now entailed the use of snowmachines, outboard motors, gasoline, nets, lines, guns and ammunition: all which require cash. Consequently, many Natives desired the chance to participate in the state's flourishing economy of primarily oil extraction (Carey 1987). The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN), a statewide association, was the unifying entity that merged the concerns of many different Native groups in the state. The AFN, in association with major oil companies such as British Petroleum,

became an effective lobbying effort that pushed Congress to a land settlement (Burch 1984b, Anders and Langdon 1989).

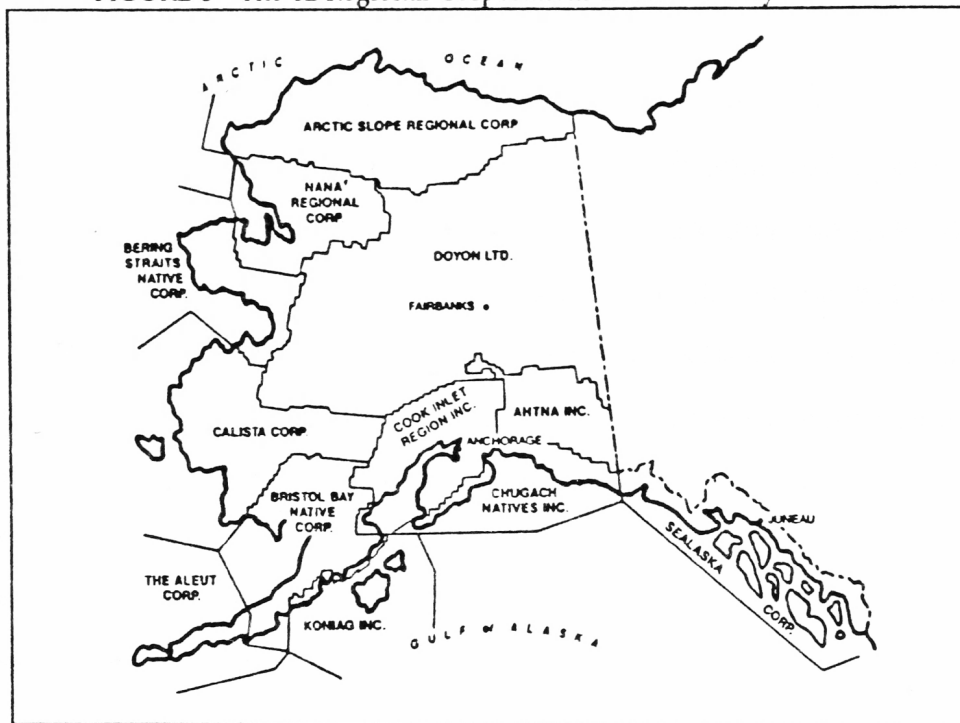
## **B. INTENTS AND EFFECTS OF ANCSA**

ANCSA effects are exceedingly far reaching; every aspect of village life has felt reverberations from this Congressional decision. Today, critics suggest that ANCSA was a cleverly designed social engineering scheme complete with well-contemplated outcomes. However, back in 1971, Natives and non-Natives alike hoped that ANCSA would provide Native Alaskans with tools to function effectively in western society.

In developing the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971, the AFN, as well as Congress, emphasized the avoidance of controversial elements of previous settlements with Native Americans. Congress mandated that the settlement should be accomplished without the establishment of "permanently racially defined institutions, rights, privileges or obligation" and without creating a "reservation system or lengthy wardship or trusteeship" (in Arnold et.al. 1978, 146). Consequently, ANCSA was designed to give Native Alaskans tools to compete in the expanding U.S. economy. The means for Native economic participation focused on the establishment of for-profit regional and village corporations to manage a cash settlement of \$962.5 million dollars and 44 million acres (approximately 12%) of land in return for extinguishment of aboriginal Native title. This included not only a forfeiture of ancestral lands, but also all aboriginal rights to hunt and fish on anything else but Native (now corporation and personal allotment) lands. Each Native of at least one-fourth Indian, Inuit, or Aleut descent alive on December 18, 1971, was given 100 shares of stock in both a

regional and a village corporation (those born after that date did not receive shares). Twelve regional corporations (actually thirteen, one for nonresident Alaska Natives) were established with boundaries reflecting prior regional or cultural associations (Figure 3). Village corporations were organized in over two hundred rural communities.

FIGURE 3 - The 12 Regional Corporations Established By ANCSA



The funds from the cash settlement, in addition to the land base, formed the initial capital to organize the corporations. Regional corporations were given four major, Congressionally mandated responsibilities:

- 1) operate one or more for-profit businesses, with the intent on serving stockholders needs economically, socially, and culturally;
- 2) supervise the creation of village corporations in their region and aid them in the their land selection process and operation of any business endeavors they choose;

3) receive the cash payments of ANCSA and invest or distribute about half of the money to village corporations and individuals;

4) become owners of all subsurface lands transferred under ANCSA along with the surface rights of regional corporation lands [Village corporations were awarded only surface title to their lands as the regional corporation retained all subsurface rights] (Arnold et. al. 1978, and Burch 1984b).

Village corporations were to function in a similar way to the regional corporations, but on a smaller scale.

The land settlement of 44 million acres was to be distributed in a complex hierarchy to regional corporations, who then allocated a portion to villages, who then were to transfer allotments to individual Natives. Besides land title, ANCSA benefits included the payment of almost one billion dollars (\$500,000 from State oil revenues) to Alaska Natives through the regional and village corporations. Statewide, the cash settlement amounted to about \$12,675 per shareholder; however, most Natives only received approximately \$375. Most of the money (90%), as well as much of the land, was retained by the corporations to be invested by them, for the benefit of their stockholders (Arnold et.al. 1978).

The ANCSA legislation was originally thought of as the "new departure for the resolution of aboriginal claims" (Berger 1985, 20). The statewide Native issues newspaper, *Tundra Times*, hailed the Act as "the beginning of a great new era for the Native people of Alaska" (in Arnold et.al. 1978, 146). Nicholas Flanders (1989), an anthropologist and professor of Alaska's rural development, suggests that, "Corporations seemed an ideal middle ground between reservations and termination, between complete domination of Native affairs by remote bureaucrats and the loss of Native identity through the individuation of money and land (Flanders 1989, 302). In 1971, most Native leaders supported the corporate-style settlement. Fred



Paul, a Native attorney who worked as a representative of the Arctic Slope Native Association during the passage of ANCSA explained: "Western society was moving in and it was necessary that the settlement provide enough white man's tools to compete in a white man's world, and so that's in part, the acceptance by the Native leadership of the corporate concept" (in Black et. al. 1989, 78).

The Native lobby supporting ANCSA hoped to promote a more reliable cash flow in rural Native villages that would in turn, help sustain traditional lifestyles (Carey, 1987). Anthropologist Ann Fineup-Riordan expressed that the testimony of Alaska Natives in 1968 concerning the proposed ANCSA legislation stressed that:

Western material advantages would be used to support rather than to supplant the maintenance of traditional Native values. The Natives expressed a desire to escape their immediate past of powerlessness and poverty, but not their past values. They wanted...were willing to conform to Western standards but they did not want total integration (in Black et. al. 1989, 78-9).

Since ANCSA's enactment in 1971, however, people continually question the appropriateness of the corporate model to mediate the settlement. One critic, Karen Perret suggests: "[It is] difficult to envision any element of acculturation that could have such far-reaching effects as the establishment of U.S.-style corporate entities in every Native village, with their general legal complications and eventual encouragement of natural resource development (Perret 1978, 6).

The use of the corporate model to resolve Native claims, with its dependence upon profit, is an increasingly controversial subject in rural Alaska. Although the establishment of corporations lifted some members of Native society into financial and political limelight, it did little, and continues to provide little security for most rural Natives because it

jeopardizes the basis of Native society: subsistence. Most Native corporations have found it very difficult to ensure subsistence opportunities for rural Natives while sustaining corporate profits.

### **C. NATIVE CORPORATIONS - SUSTAINING PROFITS**

Native corporations were given perhaps too many roles in Native society. On one hand, they were to protect Native subsistence and uphold traditional values; yet, on the other hand, corporations were to secure profits and provide jobs for local residents. Since 1971, however, most Native corporations have found limited success due to the inherent obstacles to accomplishing their shareholders diverse goals.

Since ANCSA's enactment, Native shareholders have expressed their diverse objectives and concerns to their regional corporations. These include:

- 1) profitability to increase the resources of the corporation and the maximization of shareholder wealth;
- 2) generation of employment opportunities for local shareholders;
- 3) continued protection of the land base;
- 4) growth in opportunities to help realize the region's human resources potential (as indicated by increasing levels of education, health, income supports, and other social services;
- 5) the preservation and enrichment of Alaska Native culture and language;
- 6) the provision of economic and managerial assistance to village corporations in the region (Anders and Langdon 1989, 169).

Rural Natives expected their corporations to provide local jobs, protect Native land (and therefore subsistence resources), provide social services and

earn a profit and pay dividends. Unfortunately, these wide-ranging expectations are often incompatible. Researchers suggest that the corporate institution is a profit-maximizer and is therefore, "intrinsically inappropriate" to achieving balance among these diverse, usually conflicting goals (Anders and Langdon 1989, 170 and Flanders 1989, Case 1987).

Native business leaders confront difficult decisions of how best to utilize the corporate structure to meet the needs of Alaska Natives; answers are not simple. According to the Secretary of the Interior's *ANCSA 1985 Study*, only one regional corporation has not reported a loss since its formation and most village corporations have experienced even more serious financial troubles. SeaAlaska, the largest regional corporation in terms of capital, has never paid a dividend and only a few other corporations have been able to maintain consistent payments (Berger 1985). Nevertheless, most regional corporations have greater potential for establishing profitable enterprises than village corporations; regional corporations have more shareholders and therefore, more monetary capital, more land, in addition to all subsurface rights. Regional corporations have invested in stocks and bonds, construction, resource development, hotel management, real estate, food processing, tourism, and pipeline maintenance companies (Flanders 1989, Arnold et. al. 1978, Berger 1985).

Unfortunately, most of these investments are not in rural Alaska, hence they do not provide employment for rural shareholders. A 1984 Alaska Department of Labor study found that regional corporations employ about 1,800 people (Native and non-Native) annually. Over 50% of this number are employed in the Anchorage area, mostly in corporation-owned hotels (Berger 1985). Corporations found that investments in local villages may provide some Native employment, but are usually less profitable

(Flanders 1989). One rural business venture, however, is profitable: oil/mineral development.

Alaska's economy developed from and has expanded through periods of natural resource-based extraction and exploitation. Native corporations quickly discovered that if they are to make profits, they must participate in these principle activities of Alaska's economy (Berger 1985). Conflicts arise, however, when Native corporate survival depends on earning revenues through extractive businesses. Corporations may earn a profit, but it is frequently at the cost of the traditional subsistence economy; mineral development is often incompatible with subsistence fishing or hunting. Hence, ANCSA as written, does little to protect the land base for subsistence users of today and the future through its encouragement of extractive industries.

Although some regional corporations secured enough capital to invest in a variety of businesses and were thus able to avoid bankruptcy, most village corporations were not so fortunate. As early as 1974, the Department of the Interior estimated that any village with fewer than six hundred shareholders would not have enough capital to operate successfully (Berger 1985, 33). Because each shareholder "invested" (they did not have a choice) their portion of the cash settlement in their regional and village corporation, those corporations with more shareholders acquired greater capital with which to invest. Only eight out of all two hundred rural villages contained over six hundred shareholders, and another five had over five hundred. Obviously, the great majority of village corporations would encounter economic hardship, if not bankruptcy, if they stood alone. In addition, because they were given only surface title to the land, many village corporations faced another dilemma: their only marketable resources were

timber and the land itself. Heavily forested regions of southeast Alaska could prosper under this arrangement, however, at least 55 of the 200 village corporations could not sell timber because their lands lay beyond tree line (Flanders 1989). Others located in forested areas encompassing the Arctic Circle, do not have marketable timber. With few assets to develop on the land's surface, the outlook for local businesses based on marketable natural resources was poor. Consequently, some village corporations merged with their respective regional corporation in order to concentrate capital for investment purposes.

Besides merging with the regional corporation, the only other option for many village corporations was either to sell or to lease their land to outsiders or non-Native corporations. To follow this path would be catastrophic; the majority of village residents (shareholders) are dependent on the land for subsistence activities. Alaska Natives pushed for a land claims settlement to protect their land and cultural values. One can see how the profit-making objective of corporations could be used to justify resource exploitation which is directly incompatible with traditional subsistence fishing or hunting lifestyles (Cohen 1982). A Native woman from Nome illustrates her perspective of the ANCSA corporations:

When you look through the corporate eye, our relationship to the land is altered. We draw our identity as a people from our relationship to the land and to the sea and to the resources. This is a spiritual relationship, a sacred relationship. It is in danger because, from a corporate standpoint, if we are to pursue profit and growth, and this is why profit organizations exist, we would have to assume a position of control over the land and the resources and exploit these resources to achieve economic gain. This is in conflict with our traditional relationship to the land, we were stewards, we were caretakers and where we had respect for the resources that sustained us (Mary Miller in Berger 1985, 90-1).

Through the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) of 1980 and the ANCSA Amendments of 1987, Congress provided additional options for village corporations with respect to undeveloped land. The new provisions, such as the Alaska Land Bank or Settlement Trust, afford some protection, but by no means protect Native corporations from all risks involved in business operations (Black et. al. 1989).

Congress provided village corporations with the choice of either a for-profit or a non-profit structure. The non-profit alternative would not make money, nor pay dividends, but would provide needed social services to the village. All two hundred plus village corporations chose to be profit-making enterprises. Soon after their formation, both village and regional corporations realized that providing social services, such as health, welfare, and education, often acted against the maximization of their major goal: earning a profit. As a result, non-ANCSA funded, nonprofit agencies were organized in the 1980's to provide essential social services in some Native villages. The total amount of funds and services (mostly from the State) dispensed directly to the people through these non-profit organizations is far greater than through any of the profit corporations (Davis 1979). In this way, Native communities are attempting to solve some of the incongruencies of ANCSA's development corporations. Something to keep in mind, however, is that non-profit social service agencies represent a Western bureaucratic method of conducting traditional functions of the family and village.

#### **D. SOCIOCULTURAL EFFECTS OF ANCSA**

Besides severely limiting Native access to land and subsistence resources, ANCSA deeply altered many social aspects of traditional life in

rural Alaska. The Act affected the entire Native way of life: traditional patterns of leadership and decision making, customs of sharing, and subsistence living. Furthermore, ANCSA altered family relationships. As originally written, ANCSA provided shareholder benefits to those Natives born on or before December 17, 1971. In doing so, the definition of Native became economic rather than cultural; a brother or sister born after the date was not "Native," and did not receive ANCSA benefits that siblings acquired. The Amendments of 1987 provided each corporation with the option of issuing new stock to those born after the December, 1971 date. Even though this necessitated a dilution of stock value, most corporations recently voted to issue full rights to Natives born after 1971.

At the time of ANCSA's enactment, few Alaska Natives had substantial business or executive experience. Changes came overnight as many rural Native residents were, "all of sudden managing corporations...some of us could hardly spell corporation" (Aleut Lillie McGarvey in Black et. al. 1989, 83). One Yupik man expressed his frustration:

We cannot just become businessmen overnight and be a Ford company or GMC company. We can't do that. And you know it. But the way things are now, you're just pushing us, pushing us, and pretty soon you take this land and you take that land over there too... Now, I think what you're trying to say is that you are hoping someday we get into your economy, you know, get with it in your economy and live your standards. Have steak on Sundays, every morning have eggs, juice, that is the thing that I feel is being imposed on the people... It's destroying our life style (Yupiktak Bista, 1974).

Obviously, the corporate structure was a radical alteration from typical village life in the late 1960's. ANCSA disrupted cultural traditions of leadership and relationships. The type of authority needed to manage a regional corporation is contrary to the traditional kinship-based household autonomy found in

most rural Alaskan villages (Davis 1979, Tuck and Huskey 1986). What was once a subsistence economy based on sharing and cooperation, was transformed into a Congressionally-mandated Western economy oriented to competition for a larger share of a certain resource. Instead of Alaska Natives working to minimize hardship in an often times harsh environment, they must now maximize their profit at the cost of many of their cultural values.

Judge Thomas Berger, a Canadian lawyer well-versed in Native land rights issues, was contracted by the Inuit Circumpolar Conference to form an Alaska Native Review Commission. This Commission conducted hearings in over sixty Alaskan villages in the early 1980's to review the effects of ANCSA. Testimony from these hearings confirms the breakdown of Native relations as an outcome of ANCSA and the resulting corporate structure. One Native testified how ANCSA disrupted his village: "ANCSA has made its scars on Gambell today...the scars that I am talking about were the dividing up the people...and that is a big scar to the community itself- to the people- because we think...out here we think as one, work as one and live as one" (Branson Tungiyang of Gambell in Berger 1985, 32). Conflicts occur not only within villages, but also between village and regional corporations over competing land uses. Subsurface resource development of the regional corporation has usually met tremendous resistance from village corporations, because the latter tends to prefer subsistence land preservation over mineral development (Langdon 1986, Arnold et.al. 1978, Davis 1979, Berger 1985).

The situation in the Northwest Arctic Borough exemplifies this concern. Because most area village corporations merged with NANA Regional Corporation (NANA), Native residents are now without a local corporation to promote subsistence interests. Although NANA declares that protection of subsistence is their number one priority, village residents are



disturbed about NANA's Red Dog Mine business venture with Cominco Alaska, a Canadian-based mining corporation. Area Natives, especially those downstream from this massive lead/zinc mine located in the Northwest Arctic Borough, are concerned about fish and game resources they depend on for survival. Although all villages are represented on the NANA Board of Directors, many rural Natives feel that they have little actual power within the corporation to protect subsistence.

Despite extensive campaigns by regional corporations ensuring subsistence protection for shareholders, many village Natives complain that the regional corporations are out-of-touch with subsistence and village life. They see corporate decisions as ones made by and for the upper income elite created inadvertently by ANCSA. These perceptions are evident in northwest Alaska. Individuals working for NANA and Maniilaq (social service agency) declare:

Here, NANA and Maniilaq and the Borough are the spokespeople (Anonymous 2/4/91a).

You will rarely hear the hunter speak his mind. He is used to having [NANA and Maniilaq] be the spokespeople.... [Villagers] want to continue to be close to the land, and carry on their subsistence traditions, and they have chosen to have the top positions speak for them.... They are confident that the agencies will work for them and fight for subsistence rights, as well as other things (Anonymous 2/4/91b).

Interestingly, many villagers disagree; their perception is that NANA makes decisions that do not reflect their subsistence interests. Selawik residents assert:

NANA never listens to the village people. They are out of touch with life out here (Anonymous 2/15/91a).

NANA doesn't listen to the villages. They come here and tell us things, but they never listen. It is different here than in Kotzebue (Anonymous 2/15/91b).

The NANA leaders are rich and don't lead the subsistence life.... They have no clue about the land (Anonymous 2/14/91c).

Although corporation officials perceive that they represent the interests of villagers, this testimony suggests that this assertion is incorrect.

Unfortunately, despite being shareholders, there are few avenues for villagers to take when they oppose corporate decisions. Their representation seems to be easily overshadowed by larger, corporate concerns.

#### E. ANCSA'S LESSONS

Although one intent of ANCSA was to settle indigenous land claims thereby opening land for commercial exploitation, the other purpose of the Act clearly was to provide Natives with opportunities for upward mobility in a "Western" model society. Most studies, hearings, and Congressional investigations reveal, however, that the majority of Native Alaskans have experienced little positive change as a consequence of the Act (Davis 1979, Arnold et.al. 1978). Some suggest that corporations give limited actual economic or political power to Natives; therefore, ANCSA has failed on one of its most basic tasks. Despite corporate attempts to respect rural Native subsistence interests and provide local jobs, corporations have been forced to hire trained Anglos to aggressively implement resource development to generate profits in order to remain solvent. Influential corporate jobs, especially legal advisors and accountants, are often held by Anglos living in Anchorage. Researchers suggest that by forcing corporations to concede jobs

and authority to outsiders, ANCSA remains "simply another form of government/ corporate cooptation forcing Natives to compromise themselves" (Gondolf and Wells in Anders and Langdon 1989, 169).

Evidence shows that substantial involvement in large-scale resource projects, such as the petroleum and mineral development ANCSA encourages, actually increases Native and corporate dependence on remote societies and markets, thereby additionally reducing local self-determination (Weeden 1985, Tuck and Huskey 1986, Perret 1978). Despite considerable local Native hire provisions, upper-level jobs created by corporate industries most frequently go to non-Natives; thus local technology is not utilized but is brought in from Outside. Most Native corporations, let alone private businesses, have little chance of ever having enough capital to actually buy into the exploitative process or of becoming large-scale resource owners (Weeden 1985). Prudhoe Bay oil development is an excellent example. Although North Slope Natives (and all Alaskans) benefit financially from this oil development, large oil companies reap nearly all profits. After resources become depleted, oil companies will abandon this region leaving little but the industrial remnants of oil extraction. Profits that all Alaskans have come to rely on will also disappear with the oil companies.

The case of economic development in rural Alaska is similar to that of many previously colonized, yet now independent, countries. The term "underdevelopment" has been applied to both Alaska Natives and people in similar situations in the Third World. Through this comparison, Berger (1985) suggests that ANCSA is a Third World development strategy turned domestic. The central thesis of this approach, he asserts, is that "with large-scale economic development, the modern sector of the economy will expand and, in this process, the traditional sector will gradually disappear" (Berger

1985, 46). This process leads to underdevelopment when the customary subsistence economy is destroyed, but not replaced by substantial new village activities. Often, as in areas of Africa and Alaska, resource extraction industries pave the way for the destruction of the traditional economy.

Over the past twenty-five years, economic growth in Alaska has increased in a few realms, namely oil and mineral exploitation, but these limited corporate endeavors have not significantly enhanced the rural Native economy. Resources are extracted in remote areas of Alaska and shipped to industrial or refining regions of the U.S. or overseas. Under this scheme, most upper level jobs as well as most profits go to outsiders. Hence, little economic change has occurred in rural Alaska, except in the lives of a small elite who directly negotiate with the outside administration and technology. In Alaska, this upper income elite is represented by a few Native corporate leaders, most of whom spend a good deal of their time outside of the village and not within the traditional subsistence sector of the village economy (Arnold et.al. 1978, Anders 1985, Davis 1979, Langdon 1986). Hence, under ANCSA's corporate development strategy, local interests (protection of subsistence lands) are pushed aside as select rural resources are offered to meet the demands of the world market.

The ANCSA legislation ignores some basic sociocultural characteristics of Alaska Natives (strong subsistence economy), and the economic (high infrastructure costs) and environmental conditions (extremely harsh environment) in which they live. With that in mind, it is logical to assume that Native villages are unlikely to develop a commercial economic base in the traditional Western sense (DeMan 1982). However, there are other economic strategies which could be pursued. One suggestion is to encourage production of goods and services for local and regional use. This would

create local jobs and maintain more cash within the regional economy (Tuck and Huskey 1986). Perhaps this would entail drawing more rural Alaska communities into common markets by creating interregional transportation links rather than today's situation: one way tickets from Fairbanks and Anchorage to rural Alaska. This approach should be evaluated.

## F. CONCLUSIONS

The legislative history of Alaska illustrates little Congressional support for a Native subsistence economy. Certainly, the most far-reaching Act, ANCSA, directly attacks Native subsistence by encouraging corporate exploitation of natural resources. ANCSA was not the ideal answer to Alaska Native land issues, economic development, or personal and cultural well-being. Despite an endless series of Congressional amendments in the past two decades, culminating in the major changes of the Amendments of 1987, most Alaska Natives remain dissatisfied with the Settlement and look to the future for Congressional reevaluation.

On a positive level, ANCSA empowered Alaska Natives to become a more dynamic political force through organizations such as the Alaska Federation of Natives. ANCSA helped Natives realize their unique identities. As one Inupiaq suggests, "It was not until NANA and Maniilaq [social service agency] that we figured out we had values that were worthwhile" (Anonymous 1/16/91). Certainly, the more successful (in purely western terms) corporations have been able to financially sponsor and promote certain cultural or academic activities in regional schools and communities. For example, NANA Corporation in northwest Alaska is integrally tied into school and community cultural preservation activities.

In a more general sense, however, after twenty years it is evident that ANCSA has not benefited the majority of Natives in practical economic terms by improving their ability to make a living or to get a job. The Act puts the land, the most significant "asset" to a subsistence hunter, at risk of being lost in the name of Western style development. Russell Barsh, a Canadian expert in international aboriginal law has suggested that:

[ANCSA is] the most cleverly disguised Indian swindle in American history. The legislation was too complex, the assets too cumbersome, the corporate structure and its accompanying profit motive too inimical both to the Native spirit and to existing tribal structures, for there ever to have been a realistic chance of ANCSA working in Natives' behalf (in Carey 1987).

ANCSA seems to be another postponement of justice to the Native people living within the grasp of the United States Congress and "big business."

Economic development in rural Alaska will be the result of far-sighted efforts of many organizations. Agencies of land management, fish and game, social services and economic development must coordinate with Alaska tribal governments if elements of rural village life are to survive. It will take a concerted effort, to utilize ANCSA's corporate framework to promote economic development while still preserving land. Don Wright, AFN President when ANCSA was passed, affirmed that, "ANCSA [was] an arbitrary mandate of the Congress of the United States and I don't believe the door is closed...at some point, there will be a reconsideration and justice will truly have been done" (in Case 1987, 217).

## Chapter IV

### NATIVE VIEWS OF USFWS AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN NORTHWEST ALASKA

It is apparent from speaking with Native and non-Native residents of the Northwest Arctic Borough that the mission and operations of land and wildlife management agencies are either unclear or misrepresented. The current perception of land and wildlife agencies in the Kotzebue region is that enforcement of game regulations is their primary function. However, compared to the late 1950's and early 1960's, these agencies do relatively little enforcement. Nevertheless, Natives' fear and anger about enforcement persists. Native rural residents believe state and federal wildlife regulations hinder subsistence; these agencies require the hunter to adhere to complex restrictions that reflect a strong bias towards sport and urban hunters. Given the fact that the Inupiat have hunted and fished for centuries without government intervention, many Native hunters struggle to understand these current regulations against food procurement. Additionally, Native residents question the use of some wildlife management procedures employed by local agencies (i.e. harvest data collection and collaring of animals for radio tracking studies). Techniques and policies employed by Anglo managers and biologists often encounter Native opposition because of differing cultural perceptions of animals, hunting practices, and proper treatment of wildlife. Other local concerns include wanton waste of caribou, the impact of sport hunting and fishing in the region, and the threat of "environmentalist" action against subsistence.

Throughout this chapter, local Native and non-Native residents' words emphasize their perspectives on the above topics generated during

interviews conducted the winter of 1991. Interviewees represent many elements of northwest Alaska society including Regional Corporation employees, Anglo land managers and biologists, Inupiaq elders, school district employees and rural Native hunters deeply dependent upon subsistence. The sensitive nature of these topics requires all quotes to remain anonymous. Although this research focuses primarily on perceptions and operations of the Selawik National Wildlife Refuge (SNWR), discussion includes local attitudes towards other land managing agencies as well. For simplicity, the term "agency" will be used to refer to state and federal land management bureaus in northwest Alaska: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

#### **A. CURRENT PERCEPTION OF FEDERAL AND STATE LAND & WILDLIFE AGENCIES**

In northwest Alaska, considerable confusion exists among Native residents about the differences between the federal and state agencies who manage land and wildlife resources. Hence, comments about "Fish and Wildlife" or "Parks" may refer to any or all agencies (or even personnel) including Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G), Alaska State Fish & Wildlife Protection Officers, National Park Service (NPS) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Poor relations with one agency or employee is often transferred to include **all** agencies and most people working for federal or state agencies. A prominent viewpoint exists, perhaps historically justifiable, that Outsiders (capitol "O" referring to a rural Alaska term meaning Lower 48 Anglos) initiate trouble and dictate unpopular policy. One local Native discusses the origins of this conflict: "At first, good people in



Parks came, then the enforcement people who didn't care that we were hunters. White outsiders have only been looked at as enforcing laws and making money" (Anonymous 1/16/91). Another Inupiaq echoes this perception: "Outsiders are always looked on as restricting our activities...like game wardens" (Anonymous 2/26/91).

Clearly, government enforcement efforts initiated the current Native perception of government officials. State and federal governments began regulating subsistence harvest in the late 1950's and the "game warden" often served as local people's introduction to government land management. Older hunters, like this Yupik elder, clearly remember initial perceptions of game wardens: "A while back they were scared of the Fish and Game warden in the plane because he never tell them what he's doing. When I was little I was afraid that the warden would pick me up and take me some place else" (Anonymous 3/7/91e).

Area hunters still relate early encounters with game wardens that cemented negative local opinion against agencies. Inupiaq hunters effortlessly recall the Barrow duck incident. In 1961, federal wardens arrested two Inupiaq hunters in Barrow for killing eider ducks in violation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act ban on spring waterfowl harvest. In a unified statement of defiance, nearly 140 Inupiaq hunters shot eiders and presented themselves, and the dead eiders, to local officials. The charges against the two hunters were consequently dropped (Berger, 1985, p.23). A Kotzebue area elder relates another memorable incident in northwest Alaska:

The other [story] is with a guy...who got one of the very first moose in these parts [moose have only recently expanded their range into many parts of this region] and was as proud as ever. He brought it into town on his boat, I think. He ended up getting his stuff confiscated, and even spent a night in jail. People remember this stuff, and the idea that government

people are game wardens will stick for a long time (Anonymous 2/26/91).

People do not easily forget these early encounters with game regulation.

Several hunters share their impressions of authoritarian Anglo wardens in the Kotzebue area:

Back in 1972, a warden came into town and everyone knew within half an hour. He had his gun on his hip and was looking for people who just took the tusks from the walrus. At that time, people in my village were using everything of the walrus... that early image of the government really stuck (Anonymous, Interview 2/4/91).

The National Park Service's entry into Northwest Alaska, emphasized enforcement. They made the government influence always to be looked at as negative...game wardens. It didn't matter if the person was Federal or State, they were viewed as game wardens. It is still hard to get over that initiation to government officials. These officials, most of whom have had kingdoms before come in here and dictate to us how our lives will be (Anonymous 1/25/91).

Obviously, angry feelings about these past incidents persist today.

Agencies active in northwest Alaska are not solely law enforcement entities. However, Native residents seem unaware of other agency programs. Most cannot verbalize distinctions between law enforcement officers, managers, and biologists (Anonymous 1/15/91 and Anonymous 1/16/91). Unfortunately, with either underfunded or otherwise inadequate public outreach programs, local people must figure out for themselves what agencies do with their personnel, planes and boats. One rural villager relates, "In this village, people think that Fish & Game flies their airplane purposely to scare caribou away from the hunters" (Anonymous 2/15/91a). Watching Selawik Refuge biologists pass through his village all summer, another Inupiat insists, "the government is trying to raise birds here so California and Washington can shoot them" (Anonymous 2/15/91b). This long-standing

problem was identified in the Selawik Refuge scoping process as early as 1985. The Selawik Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) states, "In Selawik, questions were raised [at the public meeting] about the waterfowl surveys being conducted by refuge staff each summer. The general feeling was that the refuge was producing birds for lower 48 hunters" (CCP 1987, 13). Unfortunately, because of the lack of agency outreach programming, the Selawik Refuge still lives with this perception, as well as that of the game warden.

Ironically, although Congress mandated the NPS and USFWS through ANILCA to protect subsistence opportunities, local residents do not view these agencies as subsistence advocates. Quite contrarily, state and federal agencies are most often viewed as **the** entities that limit subsistence opportunities and destroy a way of life. A Kotzebue Native echoes this concern: "Subsistence is a priority in these Federal agencies, but Fish and Wildlife Service doesn't come across that way. Fish and Wildlife Service needs to show the people that they are protecting subsistence opportunities for the people" (Anonymous 3/1/91). With a properly funded and administered public education program, local residents may come to understand the mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as that of other agencies. Once the many facets of a wildlife agency are recognized, people may be more apt to participate and offer support for agency wildlife management in Northwest Alaska. An Native Borough employee asserts that, "If education and service to the people and the resource was first, people should respond much better to the Federal presence" (Anonymous 1/18/91).

The remainder of this chapter discusses specific concerns of the Kotzebue area Native community. USFWS information and education

efforts should be directed to these issues. As highlighted above, law enforcement of game regulations is of utmost concern to Native hunters.

## **B. STATE AND FEDERAL GAME REGULATIONS**

Up until 1990, State game regulations applied to Natives and non-Natives on all lands in Alaska. Because of the *McDowell* Alaska Supreme Court decision in 1989 [see Ferraro, unpublished master's manuscript], the federal government was forced to resume harvest management on federal lands while the state retained authority on all non-federal lands. This transition is extremely confusing for Natives unaccustomed to bureaucratic management systems. In northwest Alaska, Natives worry about adhering to complex regulations they may not be aware of or may not understand. In addition, cultural differences between Anglos who design harvest policies and rural Natives who must adhere to regulations further complicate the issues. As a result, game regulations give rise to numerous cultural conflicts in northwest Alaska.

### **Complexity and Language**

Despite earnest attempts to create a readable document, State game regulations remain difficult to follow and understand, especially for Natives without formal education or who speak a Native language. One Borough resident explains: "The regs are complicated. The people fear that they did something wrong and that if they offer the information, they will get ticketed for something they may have done without knowing" (Anonymous 1/24/91). Likewise, a Kotzebue elder clarifies that, "People are afraid of giving the number of what they caught because they are afraid of breaking some rule"

(Anonymous 3/1/91). In some areas of Alaska, efforts are made to provide information in the hunter's primary language; however, this practice has not been widespread. Interviewees stress the importance of providing an interpreter at all village public meetings in northwest Alaska.

The varied regulations of National Parks, Preserves, Monuments, and Wildlife Refuges, often requiring different permits and means of hunting, contribute additional confusion for local hunters. In many peoples' eyes, land jurisdiction and regulations change "overnight," as the result of each new political administration. This is extremely frustrating to rural Natives who have lived generations without government intervention. Now, with the recent transfer of game management from state to federal jurisdiction on federal lands, residents feel unsettled and have many questions concerning harvest regulations and the future of their subsistence lifestyle.

One positive outcome of the jurisdictional transfer of harvest management on federal lands from state to federal rule is the format change of the Subsistence Management Regulations for Federal Public Lands in Alaska (1991). Rather than assuming the design of the Alaska State Hunting Regulations, which defined restrictions by animal, the Federal Subsistence Board issued their regulations by Game Management Unit. Now, instead of having to comb the entire booklet for regulations and special restrictions applicable to a specific region, all pertinent information for each Unit (including maps) is presented in a few, well-organized pages. Hopefully the State will recognize the benefits of this format and produce a similarly organized document for non-federal lands in Alaska.

## Cultural Relativity

To a people whose existence has depended upon their ability to harvest wild resources in a harsh environment, game regulations enforced by a gun-toting, white stranger are completely foreign. Even now, decades after the tumultuous introduction to game law enforcement, older Native hunters may struggle with the concept of regulation on food procurement. One Native elder provided an excellent analogy for what he perceives as unjust restrictions: "If I were a white man and I saw you [a Native] in a restaurant buying food for your kids... and I tell you 'no!' and then take the food away and give it to someone else. That is how it is" (Anonymous 3/7/91d). An area resident further illustrates the situation in rural Alaska:

Pretend your dad was a recent immigrant to the United States and he was a cobbler or something, working hard to make an honest living, barely able to feed his family. One day the IRS came and confiscated all his tools because he didn't pay his income tax...something the new immigrant did not quite understand. This is the same as what you are up against here. The rifles got taken, when the hunters were just trying to get food to feed their families...real subsistence hunting! It is hard to now change the opinions. And, if now a native was in Fish and Wildlife Service, that person would be put in the position to tell others, including relatives, what they can and cannot do. Remember, regulations are culturally relative (Anonymous 2/11/91).

Older Natives especially cannot comprehend how one culture can impose restrictions upon another without attempting to understand the Native subsistence life. In their culture, to dictate strong restrictions on such a basic need of another society is ludicrous. One Kobuk Eskimo suggests:

Eskimos should make laws for those people Outside. That would be just the same as what they try to do to us. We know nothing about how they live, and they know nothing about how we live. It should be up to us to decide things for ourselves.

You see the land out there? We never have spoiled it (in Anderson et. al., 1977, 434).

Another Native hunter offers an accurate analogy to Anglos creating game regulations with little or no input from local subsistence hunters:

Somebody made laws. Eskimos did not make them. We do not go outside of our state and tell other people how they should live. We do not put a limit on how many cattle or how many cows or how much food should outsiders have. We do not make any regulations on that. We do not tell them that they should have this much supply of food. We do not make rules and regulations for them so they will have a limit on... certain items of food. (in Berger 1985, 66)

As the above comments reveal, divergent cultural views clash in northwest Alaska. The Inupiat continue to perceive caribou, moose, fish, geese and sea mammals as food and material for clothing. In addition to this pragmatic connection, many Natives uphold a traditional symbolic association with certain animals. Although individuals encompass a wide array of belief systems, the prevalent Outside view places wildlife in a very different light. Anglo culture may view animals as food, like the Inupiat, but there is also a strong aesthetic appreciation of wildlife and "wild" ecosystems. Dominant culture's primary motivation for wildlife management in Parks and Refuges in northwest Alaska is to preserve pristine "wild" ecosystems, and secondarily to ensure harvestability of waterfowl in the Lower 48 by protecting nesting habitat. While strictly regulating hunters to ensure "wild ecosystems" may be considered noble within Outside culture, the Inupiat may view these same restrictions as an attempt to quell their hunting culture by denying them access to basic food. Perhaps some regulations are inappropriate for rural Native hunters in Alaska.

## **Insensitivity to Local Customs**

Native residents express discomfort with a number of specific game regulations. Traditional members of Inupiat society advise that some agency restrictions and policies are inappropriate for Native cultures. Other, more westernized Inupiat, counter these ideas and suggest that specific traditions have lost their importance in modern village life. Nevertheless, in rural land management decisions, it is important to respect traditional views when possible or at least provide strong justification (in a public education program) for controversial regulations. Managers should strive to create culturally appropriate regulations that concur with conservation requirements.

Alaska State Fish and Game Advisory Boards, composed of sport, commercial and subsistence users in rural Alaska, review local game regulations and provide feedback to the State Game Board. In a 1989 subsistence study, RurALCAP (Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.) asked members of the Alaska State Fish and Game Advisory System if game regulations reflect local conditions and uses. Although those involved with the Advisory System may not provide the best indication of the opinions of most rural subsistence hunters (see *Native Voice* - Chapter V), responses from the predominantly Native, Arctic region show a significant dissatisfaction with present restrictions and policies. Although state and federal governments do not differentiate between Native and non-Native subsistence hunters, "subsistence users" in this paper refers to predominantly Native hunters. The results are outlined in Table 1. Overall, the majority of people, Native and non-Native, approve of the current restrictions. As one might expect, sport and commercial users, mostly non-Native, condone existing State policies. It is interesting to note that the Arctic Region, which



includes the Northwest Arctic Borough, stands out as the only area of the State in which the majority of respondents felt regulations do not reflect local conditions and uses. Other areas representing predominantly Native concerns, namely the Western and Interior regions, express notable discomfort with current regulations. One may conclude then, that state policies may not represent Native subsistence lifestyles in rural Alaska.

Table 1 - Do game regulations reflect local conditions and uses?

Respondent	Yes	Somewhat	No
All users	116	73	56
Subsistence users	61	48	39
Sport users	43	19	18
Commercial users	61	29	20
<b>Arctic Region</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>
Western Region	7	6	4
Southwestern Region	18	12	10
Southeastern Region	38	15	9
Interior Region	17	17	11
Southcentral Region	29	14	13

(from RurALCAP 1989, J-9)

The RurALCAP study asked three other questions pertinent to this issue. For the first question, "Should the State find alternatives to hunting licenses for subsistence hunters?", the Arctic Region was the sole area which stated there should be other options. A Kotzebue Fish and Game Advisory Committee Report (1986) confirms this view; it asserts that only 15-20% of Native hunters in northwest Alaska obtain hunting licenses (Schaeffer et.al. 1986, 3). This local disregard for licensing procedures suggests that relatively few hunters in this region wholly embrace the state regulatory regime (Minerals Management Service 1988, 316). A second question in the RurALCAP study asked whether the State should to extend or eliminate hunting seasons. The results are shown in Table 2. By a narrow margin,

subsistence users and sport users advocate the elimination or extension of hunting seasons. It should be noted that all rural regions with large Native constituencies, including the Arctic, prefer an extension or more likely, the elimination of harvest seasons. Subsistence in rural Alaska requires the exploitation of a variety of resources spanning all seasons. Certainly, some regulations allow hunting during traditional Native harvest periods, yet, the need for moose meat to feed a family does not end on March 25th at midnight. Natives cannot "eat by seasons, nor [can] sporting bag limits suffice for family sustenance" (Atkinson 1987, 435).

Table 2 - Should the State extend or eliminate hunting seasons?

Respondent	Yes	No	Notsure
All users	95	104	30
Subsistence users	63	52	21
Sport users	32	31	12
Commercial users	39	53	8
<b>Arctic Region</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>
Western Region	7	7	1
Southwestern Region	19	15	2
Southeastern Region	18	32	7
Interior Region	21	11	9
Southcentral Region	18	30	6

(from RurALCAP 1989, J-II)

RurALCAP's third question posed the possibility of community bag limits as an alternative to individual bag limits for the harvest of some species. Overall, respondents oppose this option. As in other questions, however, the Arctic Region was the only region to endorse community bag limits. Although the cumulative number of subsistence users voted quite closely (FOR community bag limit = 52 and AGAINST = 67), even the predominantly Native Western and Interior Regions opposed this option. Some Inupiat believe that individual permitting and bag limits are

inappropriate because they inhibit traditional practices of communal hunting and sharing among villagers. Thomas Berger, author of Village Journey, suggests that, "...by requiring individual permits for a wide range of activities, including hunting, fishing, cutting wood, and travel, [managing agencies] have changed subsistence from a communal enterprise to an activity permitted and limited to the individual (Berger 1985, p.67). A Kotzebue resident concurs: "The bag limit of one moose for one hunter is not appropriate to village life. A village bag limit might be more appropriate because often a few hunters take all the moose for the village and share" (Anonymous 2/11/91).

Sharing among Inupiaq relatives and families is well documented (Nelson 1982, Anderson 1977, Loon 1989). "In the Native villages of northwest Alaska, the family group extends over many households. Within the traditional extended family it may be the responsibility of only one or two hunters to supply the family with meat. The concept of a 'bag limit' has no relevance to a Native hunter on whom a great many people depend" (Atkinson 1987, 435). Sharing of subsistence foods is not limited to small rural villages; evidence shows that sharing of wildfoods is a "constant and general practice" in the city of Kotzebue (Minerals Management Service 1988, 319). A subsistence study recently conducted in Kotzebue found that 42.5% of the respondents who ate subsistence food in the last day acquired that food from another household. Additionally, 25% of the respondents ate subsistence food "the day before yesterday" and 32.5% of that food was obtained from another household. Fifteen percent of that food was obtained from another village (Mineral Management Service 1988, 319). Certainly, in northwest Alaska, "The hunt, the sharing of the products of the hunt, and the beliefs surrounding the hunt tie families and communities together, connect

people to their environment, link them to their past, and provide meaning for the present" (EIS 1992, III-C-8). Regulations should respect these lifeways.

Many state and federal harvest rules are based on a sports hunting and fishing model and therefore, are often inconsistent with traditional hunting practices (Atkinson, 1987). Bear harvest provides two excellent examples of these inconsistencies. To hunt a grizzly bear in Alaska, all hunters are required to purchase a twenty-five dollar tag before hunting. Problems arise when an Inupiaq hunter must concede to a license vendor that he intends to kill a bear; many Inupiat believe that bears hear these boastful hunters and consequently the hunt will be unsuccessful and perhaps dangerous. The grizzly, holding much spiritual power, will retaliate against the insulting hunter (Georgette 1989, 10 and Nelson et.al. 1982, 45). Additionally, game regulations require the sealing of hides and/or skulls of all brown bears, lynx, wolf, wolverine, and some black bears. This conflicts with Inupiaq customs. In traditional hunting practices, the head, and often the hide of bears are left in the field. Some hunters believe that the hide continues to have "life" for three years, so it cannot be used for clothing or anything else until this time has passed (Nelson 1982, 47). The head of the bear is rarely taken home and cooked; traditionally it was the basis of a male feast, conducted outside the village. After the feast, the head was left in the woods to avoid showing disrespect to the bear spirit (Anderson et.al. 1977, 338). Today, although illegal, many Inupiaq hunters retain the tradition of leaving the head behind (Georgette 1989, 10).

As with certain traditional hunting practices, some locally accepted, modern hunting techniques are also illegal. A well-respected Inupiaq hunter conveys:

I just found out that using my snowmachine to cut a caribou out of the herd is against the law. I cut my choice one out, so I don't have to shoot into a herd. I was taught not to shoot into the herd, because you'll hit ones you don't want and you may not get the one you want... We use technology for our benefit. Our people survive through adaptation (Anonymous 2/4/91b).

Although very well educated, perhaps this hunter does not know that recent biological studies show that caribou lungs become frostbit when excessively run by snowmachines (Anonymous 1/15/91a and Anonymous 1/15/91c). Agency public education in local communities would not only maintain healthy caribou in this case, but also foster a positive relationship between local hunters and land managers.

One cannot discuss inappropriateness of game regulations without addressing the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the ban on traditional Native spring waterfowl harvest. The United States participates in three treaties [with Great Britain (for Canada), Russia and Japan] prohibiting the hunting of all migratory waterfowl between March 10 and September 1. This seasonal period spans nearly all waterfowl use of Alaska; most ducks and geese breeding in Alaska head south by early September. Treaties with Japan and Russia allow Natives to take migratory geese for subsistence, thus it is the agreement with Canada that stands in the way of legal waterfowl harvest for Native Alaskans. Unfortunately, despite U.S. efforts, Canada shows little interest in altering the original 1916 agreement (Anonymous 2/27/91).

In the past as well as the present, the spring return of waterfowl is a joyous occasion for Natives signaling the end of a long, dark, Arctic winter. While Lower 48 hunters may think all year of hunting waterfowl during the autumn migration, Inupiaq hunters dream of spring migration when the skies and waterways become alive with birds. Fall hunting is not nearly as important to the subsistence hunter in northwest Alaska because birds are

generally uncommon, few species are available in this region and they are in poor condition for consumption (Uhl 1977, 66, and Nelson 1982, 53). Despite the complete prohibition of spring waterfowl hunting as stated in the MBTA, many Inupiaq continue to harvest birds out of season.

Waterfowl harvest is an incredibly volatile issue in northwest Alaska and is, perhaps, the major issue creating tension between Native residents and the USFWS. An Inupiaq hunter shares the origins of his anger towards the USFWS: "We get all the species of waterfowl and geese here in the springtime, but only Canada Goose in the fall... A goose season that opens in September when there are no geese, is NO good! This is how Fish & Wildlife Service becomes our enemy" (Anonymous 2/12/91). The Inupiat are most enraged about the USFWS's enforcement of the MBTA. In the late 1950's, the Department of the Interior (through the USFWS and NPS) assumed an active game enforcement policy in rural Alaska. A Kobuk man explains how USFWS enforcement affects his hunting:

It has been tough...because this Fish and Wildlife [Service] has been looking out for us way before that, way before 1971... In the springtime, when we try to go hunt ducks and geese, we have to hide out like the ducks and geese from the Fish and Games, so they don't catch us. (George O. Cleveland of Kobuk in Berger 1985, 60)

Active enforcement in rural Alaska turns subsistence hunting from a proud venture to one that must be hidden and unspoken.

Although the USFWS cannot explicitly authorize closed season hunting, they do have wide discretion over MBTA enforcement (Federal Register 1988, 16879 and Osherenko 1988, 102). Consequently, over the years USFWS enforcement policies have fluctuated adding to the stress Natives experience as they become involved in conducting an illegal, albeit traditional, harvest of waterfowl. A hunter attempting a customary goose

hunt constantly worries if this year someone will enforce the regulations, despite the fact that last year officials said they would abstain from MBTA enforcement. One dilemma today stems from a USFWS Regional policy which muddles harvest data collection with law enforcement activities (see next section). Under this policy, USFWS agents question hunters in the field and search boats claiming to be collecting harvest information. Even though few citations are issued during this procedure, USFWS enforcement presence in villages is perceived the same as if tickets were in fact written.

The MBTA with Canada was signed in 1916 when few policy makers considered the lives of Alaska Natives. One Inupiaq elaborates on his perceptions of the MBTA:

The Migratory Bird Treaty was designed with no regard for Native peoples. In 1966, we began to have our crew of Native rebels who voiced the Native opinions.... They fought for our rights. With the Sea Mammal Act, we could fight that. Congress would have given all our rights away then too, the same as the migratory birds, but we fought to protect our way of life. Now we must hunt with an eye always to our back, so we don't get caught (Anonymous 2/12/91).

Most Inupiat agree that international agreements are essential to prevent the decline of migratory species. Although treaties are necessary, exceptions for customary and traditional activities should be included when conservation is not threatened; unfortunately, Natives must still fight for their rights. For the vast majority of species in rural Alaska (exception being a few species of geese), a legal Native spring hunt would not pose a significant threat to waterfowl populations.

The United States has attempted negotiations with Canada to modify the 1916 Treaty. In fact, the Yukon Kuskokwim Goose Management Plan includes a commitment from the USFWS to pursue amendments to the

Migratory Birds Convention (Swerdfager 1990, 62). Recently, after many years of failed negotiations, there is evidence that the Canadian Wildlife Service is exploring the possibility of implementing MBTA amendments through a series of regional cooperative wildlife management agreements (Swerdfager 1990, 73). Perhaps now the United States, Canada and Native residents of both countries can reach an agreement that allows some legal harvest of waterfowl. Because, as one Alaska land manager remarks, "For the Natives, at this point, no one will starve if they can't hunt ducks in the spring. But, it is a matter of their dignity...and we shouldn't take that away from them" (Anonymous 2/26/91a).

### **Enforcement Policy**

Regulations and their enforcement, to a great extent, are the cause of the current antagonism and poor communication between Northwest Arctic Borough residents and the USFWS. In northwest Alaska, the USFWS is perceived as, "heartless law enforcers, looking for the smallest infringement" (Anonymous 1/16/91). For the most part, Native residents perceive regulations as superfluous and an unnecessary interference of outsiders in local affairs. A Native shares his view of regulations imposed by outsiders:

When we try to hunt and provide ourselves and feed our family, our children, somebody comes around and tells us, "If you catch birds, if you catch moose or, if you gather food, we will put you in jail. We have rules and regulations that you have to follow." We do not believe in the rules and regulations, when we try to survive and provide for our family, our own, very own existence. We have been promised punishment for trying to survive (in Berger 1985, 66).

Most Native hunters feel that such rules are needless within a subsistence culture because traditional hunting ethics preclude wanton waste.



Hence, there is little need for enforcement personnel to patrol rural hunting areas or villages. One Native relates that, "Self-preservation and conservation are things that we have always had in our culture. Whenever we go out subsisting, we don't want people looking over our shoulders" (Anonymous 3/1/91). Agency enforcement efforts cause Native hunters to feel displaced from their traditional lands: "It feels very bad to go hunting in your own land, and always feel as if there are eyes on you, watching everything you do" (Anonymous 2/12/91). Kotzebue area Natives suggest that social pressure through Native organizations, governments and elders councils can function to discourage waste of game. In this way, "Native people will be the best law enforcers, not Outsiders" (Anonymous 1/25/91).

It is very interesting to note that although the current (1991) image of the USFWS is law enforcement, local USFWS officers issued only one citation in the region since 1986 and few, if any, for several years prior to that. The more recent citation was given to a white man possessing a walrus tusk (Anonymous 2/18/93). Other law enforcement activities occurred in the Northwest Arctic Borough since 1986, perhaps most notably conducted by an Alaska State Fish & Wildlife Protection Officer. This clearly illustrates the points made above in the initial section of this chapter: the current law enforcement issue is deeply rooted in history. The USFWS conducted unpopular law enforcement activities in this region long before the establishment of the Selawik Refuge in 1980. Although aggressive enforcement occurred nearly two decades ago, the game warden image continues to haunt current USFWS employees by hindering their ability to function in northwest Alaska. Additionally, other agencies in northwest Alaska conduct law enforcement activities. Because of confusion of the differences between land managing agencies in the region, many local

residents generalize between agencies; there is little distinction between ADF&G, USFWS, NPS, and the Alaska Fish & Wildlife Protection Officer.

In the interviews, as well as recent wildlife management literature, an interesting question has arisen pertaining to the validity of strict hunting regulations placed on rural Natives hunting healthy wildlife populations. The question emerges in Alaska, an area of comparative vitality in contrast to much of the Lower 48 where regulation may be critical for species survival. Perhaps enforcement policies that function well in other areas of the country do not work as effectively in Native communities of rural Alaska. One Borough resident offers a thoughtful perspective on this topic:

There are so many regulations and odd enforcement policies, that when there comes the time when a species needs critical protection, the people will not know what's what. It would be best to get rid of all regulations except those that are critical and then enforce those regulations. Otherwise, unless it is a case of waste, and conservation isn't threatened, let them take those [animals] that they need without the fear of regulations they don't know about or don't know will be actively enforced. As it is now, when an important regulation comes out, the people don't believe it is really critical (Anonymous 2/11/91).

Migratory Bird Treaty Act enforcement provides an example of confusing government policy. The USFWS sends mixed signals to hunters by saying that the MBTA is an important treaty, critical for species survival; "However, as a general rule, unless the taking involves Arctic nesting geese or their eggs, wanton waste, or the use of aircraft, it is unlikely that [a case] will be recommended for prosecution" (USFWS Memorandum, 2/26/91). A rural land manager criticizes this policy:

I think we are sending a very confusing message to many hunters. If we confront a hunter in the field with a half dozen teal and take information or a pink slip - that hunter most likely will have the perception he has been cited - regardless of what we say. Then, when that hunter receives no punishment for

that "citation" he is going to have very little concern about doing it again next year. What have we gained? (USFWS Memorandum 2/22/91)

How is the rural hunter to determine if regulations are "important" or when they will be enforced. Granted, enforcement activities should not be the motivation for compliance however, without education about the justification for laws, what else are people to think? If law enforcement activities are perceived as the most visible activity of the USFWS, more so than educational programming or informational public meetings, USFWS sends the message that enforcement is the reason for compliance.

Gail Osherenko, of Vermont's Center for Northern Studies, has extensively studied wildlife management partnerships between government agencies and indigenous people in the North American Arctic. Osherenko suggests that "some regulations and procedures are so unenforceable that by policy (or individual discretion) public authorities ignore them, thereby undercutting the credibility of the entire system" (Osherenko 1988, 94). State and federal agencies are clouding the issue by distributing a multitude of complex rules, seasons and permits for hunting in an extremely remote, culturally distinct, sparsely populated region. Here, enforcement is not only difficult, but also perceived as antagonistic and culturally irrelevant. Rather than attempting to superimpose subsistence-appropriate rules on already existing sport-oriented regulations, state and federal agencies should embrace a new policy: issue and enforce culturally-appropriate regulations (Atkinson 1987) only when it is necessary for species conservation. Agencies must accomplish this in collaboration with Native and non-Native local residents.

In addition, it is imperative that a joint Native organization/agency public education program provide the justification for all management plans that include hunting restrictions. For example, the Yukon-Kuskokwim

Goose Management Plan is a collaborative agreement between Native hunters, sport hunters and government agencies that functions to reduce goose harvest on the Yukon Delta in Alaska. A significant part of this plan is a commitment to public education conducted by the USFWS and the Association of Village Council Presidents (area Native leaders). The Delta management model should be extended to other regions of Alaska.

### **C. WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES**

Many Native residents question the use of certain wildlife management procedures employed by local agencies. Their most frequent complaints challenge agency harvest data collection procedures and the current practice of collaring animals for radio-tracking studies.

#### **Harvest Data Collection**

The use of hunter harvest numbers to evaluate species populations is a widespread wildlife management tool. To assess animal populations in a large, rural state such as Alaska, the gathering of accurate harvest information is essential. All of the wildlife managing authorities in northwest Alaska express frustration over their inability to collect reliable data. Agency personnel conclude that local residents do not understand the reasons for harvest data collection and hence, are uneager to participate. Local residents express both fear and resentment that law enforcement activities may occur as a result of their harvest reports. One Kotzebue Native retells what happened at a USFWS public meeting when harvest surveys were discussed:

There was a meeting about spring duck hunting. [The USFWS employee] told the people how even though spring duck hunting is forbidden, the USFWS would let it happen. Then he told how the people were to fill out harvest data forms, as accurately as possible. Then [he] really blew it. [The USFWS employee] was asked "Will there be law enforcement actions taken against us if we report our take?" [The USFWS employee] responded to the crowd, "It just depends on the information you turn it." I just wanted to walk right out that door (Anonymous 2/4/91a).

Inupiaq concern that enforcement will result from their harvest reports is legitimately based on historical interactions with government game wardens. Biologists and managers attempting to collect information today, face years of local animosity towards the wardens of two decades ago. A regional elder relates the history of this conflict:

There were terrible mistakes made before statehood. There was a government program to distribute free guns and ammo to the Natives, but then even that got tarnished. A government person came in and made the people put down on paper how many caribou they got that year. The limit back then was three per year. In the beginning of the line, the men put down an accurate count of how many caribou they got... and promptly their guns were taken away from them. By the end of the line, people started realizing what was happening and put down under [the limit]. One guy even put down two and a half because he was afraid of loosing his gun. (Anonymous, 2/26/91b)

Unfortunately, even today harvest information collection efforts are frequently entangled with law enforcement activities. An internal USFWS Memorandum (2/22/90) regarding the implementation of the USFWS policy on harvest of migratory birds during the closed season goes so far as to equate these two different tasks: "Prior to any patrols, I want all refuge personnel to visit (in person) each village in the area where they will be conducting **routine information gathering/ law enforcement activities** during the closed season" (emphasis mine). The 1991 version of this memo to Refuge

employees and special agents about closed season enforcement policy stresses the same antithetical tasks: "I would like more emphasis in 1991 on contacting hunters with the objective of documenting where and when hunting occurs, how extensive it is, and what the magnitude of harvest is" (USFWS Memorandum 2/26/91). An irritated refuge manager responds critically to this directive:

One objective of the policy is to document "where and when hunting occurs, how extensive it is, and what the magnitude of harvest is." If this is what we want, then I contend we cannot meet this objective with a law enforcement effort. Unless we check all hunters, there is no way we can extrapolate, with any confidence, the magnitude of the harvest. It does not work to just count concentrations of geese and assume that density is existent over a widespread area - and it will not work for hunters either.

The village harvest survey [that is undertaken separately from law enforcement activities] is statistically acceptable and the results of it meet the stated objectives. Let's be honest - we are making field contacts to discourage hunters from shooting birds in the spring. If we are going to do that, let's not try to say we are doing it for some other reason. People will see right through it (USFWS Memorandum 2/22/91).

It is clear that law enforcement actions are counterproductive to collecting accurate harvest information.

Another local perception is that managers use harvest information to justify further restrictions on hunting activities. Some agency personnel suggest that local residents inflate harvest numbers of certain species to give the impression that they are harvesting many animals, yet the population remains strong; hunters believe that regulations will then be relaxed (Anonymous 1/24/91). There is also evidence that some Natives infer that their harvest information is used by managers to restrict hunting, thereby enhancing the manager's reputation within a federal agency. One Kotzebue Native asks, "Are statistics used to better this community or are they used for

the government peoples' political ends...so they can get a better job? This is how they are perceived" (Anonymous 1/16/91). One can understand how this perception originates. Anglo managers move into Kotzebue and implement plans which often include changes in hunting regulations or enforcement procedures. The typical trend is that within two or three years, these managers find themselves in gridlock with influential local Native organizations and consequently the managers move to Anchorage, often with a promotion. Northwest Alaska Natives see little commitment on the part of managers to a sustained relationship with the local area and people. Some government managers are committed to Alaska, yet it is true that many USFWS and NPS managers are from the Lower 48; for them, spending a few years in Alaska is exciting and often financially profitable. Unfortunately, a few self-motivated government employees have tarnished the record for many highly dedicated managers.

In future planning of harvest surveys, local residents and subsistence specialists in northwest Alaska suggest:

1. Do not combine harvest data collection with law enforcement activities.
2. All collection procedures must be simple, voluntary and anonymous.
3. Collection must be combined with an education program to explain how statistics are used by the agency. People may not know that hunters elsewhere in the U.S. must also report their take.
4. Always ask permission from IRA or town council to conduct work in villages. It may be preferable to conduct surveys cooperatively with one or more of these Native entities.

5. Hire Native village technician to collect information. One reason for this is that some residents feel that the harvest ticket system is unsatisfactory because they are afraid they will lose the ticket, or forget to turn it in to authorities. Residents suggest using a village monitor to collect information especially over extended open seasons. In addition, villages look positively upon agencies hiring local Natives.

### **Collaring of Animals**

The collaring of animals for radio tracking studies is a moderately controversial wildlife management issue in northwest Alaska. We received a wide diversity of responses to interview questions concerning collaring. Because of inadequate public education on behalf of agencies employing animal collaring, local residents are often unaware of the procedures, reasons for using radio collars, and information acquired through this technique. For many Inupiaq, collaring dishonors the symbolic association they uphold with certain animals. One hunter claims that, "People won't eat an animal that's been collared" (Anonymous 2/10/91), because researchers may have offended that animal's spirit by tranquilizing and collaring it; to consume the flesh of this animal may bring bad luck to the hunter or his family. Additionally, older Native hunters are very familiar with the habits and behaviors of certain animals and often view collars as biologically damaging to wildlife. Perhaps by his field experiences, one hunter perceives that, "The collar makes it so the animal can't get through small places when it is being pursued by a predator" (Anonymous 2/11/91). Another hunter told the story of a sick, collared animal he witnessed. He cautions: "Collaring stresses the animal and damages the fur. The collar is restricting, and the animal is not fat or healthy" (Anonymous 2/12/91).

Local residents are suspicious of wildlife collaring and of the information wildlife agencies report to villagers. Despite information from



government biologists, a Selawik elder remains skeptical: "I think that collars killed about eight wolves... they said it was rabies but I think it was the collars" (Anonymous 2/14/91a). One Kotzebue resident provided an excellent analogy for this problem. She explained that Russia reports that little damage to humans and the environment occurred as a result of the Chernobyl accident. Americans respond, "Yeah, right...they just don't want us to know" (Anonymous 2/11/91). This is similar to what happens in rural Alaska. USFWS and ADF&G tell local people that collaring doesn't hurt wildlife; meanwhile, a Native hunter probably encountered a sick or mean collared animal and related his experience to other hunters. The very nature of subsistence requires the hunter to assimilate all field information to improve his hunting success; consequently, an assumption that collaring is harmful may be a natural response to a hunter's experience. In addition, some Natives are critical of radio tracking because it is a more removed form of wildlife study that is perceived to replace direct observation. One Native hunter angrily exclaims: "Just go out there and watch the animal! Those biologists just would rather sit at a desk and watch a blip on a screen! I can tell you the patterns of wolves! I've watched them" (Anonymous 2/12/91).

Certain species, namely bear, wolf, and wolverine are still perceived as spiritually powerful animals by many Inupiaq. Many Native hunters believe that animals respond to the hunter's treatment of past animals. Therefore, the chasing, darting, drugging and collaring of an particular animal offends the animal spirits and will thwart hunters' future success. One Kotzebue resident warns that, "If you treat a bear like that, it will be revengeful. In Noatak [most grizzlies around Noatak have been collared], the bears are more aggressive. The drugs they use [when capturing and collaring] are making the

bears sick" (Anonymous 2/11/91). ADF&G Subsistence Specialist Susan Georgette reiterates this concern:

Some Inupiaq hunters believe this [tranquilizing, handling, radio collaring] will make bears likely to retaliate, and even more dangerous. I have heard villagers worry about the safety of biologists engaging in such research, fearing that bad things may happen to them for being - in the villagers' view - disrespectful to bears (Georgette 1989, 10).

Other Inupiaq are troubled that bear and wolf ruffs, which are used on winter parkas and traditional clothing, are destroyed when an animal is collared. Be it for spiritual or functional reasons, bear and wolf receive more concern than moose or caribou.

As the example of collaring demonstrates, many Natives view the manipulation of animals by biologists as wrong or excessive; not only does collaring offend the symbolic relationship with animals, but it is often considered as "playing with the food." One Native hunter questions an apparent contradiction of wildlife management: "Alaska Department of Fish and Game tells hunters that they can't run down caribou with their snowmachines to shoot and eat them... but then the State biologists can run them down, dart, collar, and run them with helicopters!" (Anonymous 2/11/91). Are wildlife agencies sending the message that certain practices are okay if you are "trying to find out information" yet illegal if you are conducting those same practices to procure food?

In some areas of Alaska, local residents blame federal and state agency biologists for fish and wildlife population declines. Wildlife managers and biologists on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta are familiar with this issue:

Some Natives believe the decline in geese is related to the arrival of biologists on the delta. In recent years, National Wildlife Refuge managers have reduced the number of research camps and researchers permitted in the delta during the

summer, but many Natives question whether the researchers comply with the agreement by all parties to refrain from unnecessarily disturbing the geese. Many elders in particular regard techniques such as capturing and tagging birds or writing on eggs as intrusive and believe that the researchers hamper the birds' reproductive success. Hiring of Native assistants has not healed the rift (Osherenko 1988, 102).

Many Borough residents share this opinion of biologists. An area elder (who incidentally worked for a federal agency) explains: "They did a sheefish study and they caught and tagged a lot of fish. A lot of people up here [upper Kobuk River] think that the fish bled to death in this cold water. Lots of those fish died" (Anonymous 2/12/91). The result of this game management procedure is a Native population that remains skeptical of western management methods.

To minimize this growing conflict, wildlife agency personnel must inquire further about Native beliefs towards collaring, marking or handling of wildlife. Perhaps it is inappropriate for agencies to use such techniques in regions expressing hostility. It is evident that informational voids pertaining to wildlife management techniques generate misunderstanding and conflict between agency personnel and local people. For example, a well-respected Selawik elder believes that, "Collaring gives biologists very good information and if people know what the collars are there for, then they will not feel bad about them" (Anonymous 2/14/91). Harvest data collection procedures must also be clarified in northwest Alaska. The USFWS may need to adjust both their enforcement and information gathering methods if they intend to collect accurate harvest data from Native residents. Ongoing public education about wildlife management techniques, as well as perceptive listening to local Natives about their beliefs, will make headway towards resolving these issues.

## D. WANTON WASTE

My old man...my grandpa made me learn that the wildlife is for everybody and that a lot of people are hungry out there. That's why you must remember not to get too much (Anonymous 3/7/91e).

It's unwritten laws that we follow. We don't waste the game, we don't waste the fish, we don't cut down timber for nothing unless we're going to use it, and all that (Larry Williams in Berger 1985, 59).

Inupiaq elders are very familiar with the long-term game population fluctuations and the resulting cycles of starvation and plenty in the lives of subsistence people. They tell stories of abundance and scarcity, offering a hidden hunting ethic for those who listen. Inupiaq society is changing though, and many young people have little contact with older generations. "Western" model education, the use of snowmachines, diet shifts to more processed foods, need for wage-earning jobs, and family mobility all modify the intergenerational sharing of hunting practices and ethics (Feit 1988, Osherenko 1988, and Gunn et. al. 1988). As one Selawik resident suggests, "The problem is that the skills are not being passed down very well. Parents need to become more involved in teaching their kids how to hunt (Anonymous 2/15/91b). Elders, along with other concerned Inupiaq hunters and agency personnel, are distressed that wanton waste persists in the Northwest Arctic Borough. A Kotzebue Native illuminates this subject:

We are troubled by the lack of values in our youth. They need positive role models, which really aren't there for them. Some of the youth are wasteful. They do not have the traditional values of respect and care for others. Someone in town has offered to pay one or two dollars per pound of caribou antlers and that poses conflicting signals to someone who would like some easy cash. They shoot more than they need, or waste the meat, or shoot carelessly into the caribou herd, which may kill

more than the bull, but also calves and females (Anonymous 1/18/91).

A local Alaska State Fish & Wildlife Protection Officer lists waste of caribou, and use of game to feed dogs, as two of the top four game violations in the Northwest Arctic Borough (other major violations are spring duck hunting, and out-of-season hunting of bear and moose). A Protection Officer tells his experiences with Native hunters: "I find that the young are more open about the waste. They say, 'Why do I want that skinny caribou I just shot, when there are 3000 fat ones over there.' It seems that the young shoot indiscriminately into the herd more often than the older subsistence hunters. Then they kill ones they don't want" (Anonymous State Fish and Wildlife Protection Officer 1/24/91).

When caribou populations are high, as they have been in the past decade, waste as defined by the Anglo, may be more visible. However, "waste" may be culturally relative term. Borough subsistence philosopher Bob Uhl observes:

This feeling of being free to "waste" in times of plenty comes naturally to the subsistence person in this region as he sees natural patterns all around him following this system. This does not mean he wantonly kills after he has taken enough for what he sees as his need, but if he has taken more than he can preserve he is not guilt ridden because of the "waste" that occurs....The whole pattern of subsistence living has been to make use of whatever species is plentiful at any given time, and to expect species density to be fluctuating between more than enough and less than enough (Uhl 1977, 159-60).

Uhl is not attempting to justify waste in Borough hunters; his purpose is to initiate a discussion of the cultural definitions of waste. To a culture using many resources from one animal (i.e. sinew, skins, meat), "waste" may not exist as it does for Outsiders. Again, Uhl questions:

What is waste when populations of a cyclic species is high, has peaked and is on its way down? Non-use of leg skins or a head or sinew or bone and marrow may seem to be waste to the subsistence oriented person, whereas the more easily or quickly spoiled portions of roast and steak meat may to him be less important if caribou are plentiful. Non-use of roast, steak, and hamburger cuts may seem a waste when value systems are oriented to meat rather than bones, sinew and clothing materials (Uhl 1977, 45).

Although this point may have been more significant twenty years ago when most tools and clothing were prepared from regional materials, Uhl's example challenges Outsiders to examine disparate cultural definitions of waste.

Interestingly, in the 1990's, the Inupiat furiously complain that sport hunters kill and take out bear hides and moose antlers, but waste the meat. This apparent contradiction suggests that two value shifts have occurred since Uhl wrote the above account in 1977.

- 1) Subsistence today tends to focus on meat more than resources for clothing and tools. The modern hunter relies on a multitude of purchased manufactured goods that reduce, or eliminate his need for some regional resources.

- 2) The Outside value system has also changed. Many state and federal regulations exhibit a sport orientation which values wildlife for trophies and hides. Today, wild meat is not a necessity for the vast majority of Outside hunters; they have other options.

The issue of waste is complex and without easy answers. Wanton waste of caribou may become a critical problem in northwest Alaska if (when?) the population succumbs to low numbers once again. Therefore, public education on this topic, especially in the local schools, is essential. Agencies should incorporate elders and active Inupiaq hunters in this endeavor for it is primarily their values, and their social pressure, that will eliminate future waste.

## E. IMPACTS OF SPORT HUNTING AND FISHING

There is always pressure here...either from preachers or outside sporthunters coming in (Anonymous 1/16/91).

Although it may be difficult for Anglos to see a correlation between preachers and hunters, to the Inupiat, both embody an Outside value system in conflict with Native culture. Anglo missionaries first challenged the Inupiaq lifeway a hundred years ago and their presence continues in northwest Alaska. Only relatively recently did sporthunters discover this region. In the mid-1960's, Kotzebue was known as the "Polar Bear Capitol of the World" because of its orientation toward Anglo trophy hunting of this species. Today Anglo hunters cannot hunt polar bears; they come to northwest Alaska to take brown bear, moose and fish. Numbers of sport hunters and fishers in this region have increased over the past decade (ADF&G 11/10/92), despite a multitude of less expensive, sportsman-catered alternatives in other areas of Alaska. Borough residents perceive escalating hunting pressure from Outside and raise two particular concerns: catch and release sheefishing on the Upper Kobuk River, and sporthunting of moose in the middle Noatak and on the Selawik Refuge, particularly in the Tagagawik River area.

The Selawik Refuge is specifically mandated through ANILCA to conserve sheefish and salmon populations. ADF&G is also interested in sheefish conservation issues and recently conducted user surveys on the upper Kobuk River. Both agencies are concerned that sheefish, a relatively long-living species, are overharvested in this region. Apparently, conflicts between subsistence and sport users of sheefish have escalated because of the decline in numbers and size of fish caught (Magdanz 1989, 42). Moreover, sportfishing for sheefish is increasing on area rivers (Anonymous 1/15/91).

Jim Magdanz, ADF&G subsistence resource specialist in Kotzebue, shares his interaction with one sportfishing group on the upper Kobuk:

Around the next bend [in the River] we met a party of seven kayakers.... We stopped and introduced ourselves. The leader of the trip had guided float trips down the Kobuk for more than 15 years. They were "floating and fishing, with an emphasis on fishing," he said. They had caught and released about 80 sheefish. It appeared to him that big sheefish were less common and catches were lower than in the past (Magdanz 1989, 43).

What is the cumulative effect of many such float trips? Certainly, guides rely on healthy fish populations for their livelihoods and therefore would not knowingly overexploit this resource. Natives, however, apparently believe that the practice of catch and release fishing is inappropriate; this form of fishing is perceived as both "playing with the food," and biologically unsound. One area Native fisherman explains:

I have a camp up the Kobuk and I learned that sheefish can't be handled much. I take all I catch and use them. That catch and release sheefishing... causes more conflicts, especially when they catch them in the gills. That's like their lungs, you know. ...This [sportfishing] is causing a lot of friction between Natives and other people (Anonymous 3/1/91).

Another Inupiaq warns, "The Kobuk people resent the catch and release idea, especially. Lots of those [sheefish] died" (Anonymous 2/12/91).

Federal and state agencies are responsible for undertaking studies to determine the effect of catch and release sportfishing in the northwest Arctic region. Agencies must continue to monitor both sport and subsistence take of sheefish, as well as initiate further studies of the biology of this important species (i.e. Are sheefish more sensitive to handling than other species?). The sheefish controversy illustrates a previously discussed concern: agencies must obtain accurate subsistence harvest information (as well as sport impacts) in order to properly assess sheefish populations. If Native fishermen are



unwilling, or afraid to provide information, then it will remain difficult for agencies to manage certain species. This is also the crux of the next dilemma we turn to: moose management.

Local hunters are extremely disturbed by the increase in regional sporthunting of moose fearing the decline of moose for subsistence. Kotzebue ADF&G confirms a threefold increase in moose trophyhunters in the Northwest Arctic Borough in the last ten years. As a result, the sex/age structure of the moose population in some areas has changed, possibly indicating an overharvest of large bull moose (ADF&G, 11/10/92). Unfortunately, I have been unable to compile numbers of sport and subsistence moose hunters using Game Management Unit 23 (the Borough). Despite several attempts to acquire numbers locally and through State Headquarters in Juneau, ADF&G refuses to provide this information. This material is by law, public knowledge, and local authorities in Kotzebue must report numbers each year to ADF&G in Juneau. When pressured, officials respond that the numbers will not show actual use of wildlife; subsistence numbers are low because of an inadequate game reporting system, and for some reason, officials do not want the public to know how much sporthunting goes on in the region. I perceive two reasons for ADF&G's hesitation: 1) To tell how many sporthunters use this region may invite more hunting pressure either because there is good hunting here, or because there are few hunters so chances for success are greater; 2) There is a predominant view in Kotzebue that a zealous anti-hunting, anti-subsistence movement across the Lower 48 is working to eliminate hunting in northwest Alaska. To dispense harvest numbers to the public only fuels this anti-hunting movement. Officials are of the opinion that numbers will be misconstrued or

otherwise used against the Inupiat; hence, agency personnel are willing to discuss trends but refuse to provide quotable statistics or statements.

ADF&G submits that although the moose in the region are not yet approaching a population crisis, local residents are uncomfortable with the escalating pressure on this resource. Researchers suggest that the subsistence/sporthunting conflict is not based on numbers of moose available to subsistence hunters, but rather on clashes over places to hunt. The Inupiaq live in wide open country and, in general, prefer not to interact with other hunting groups (especially non-Inupiaq) while hunting (Anonymous 11/10/92). The rise in sporthunting may not diminish subsistence hunter success in northwest Alaska, however, it does increase contact with a culture upholding conflicting values. For local hunters, the increased interaction with fly-in sporthunters has confirmed the disparities between resource use. What constitutes waste to one cultural group, is often irrelevant to another. Although regulations require sporthunters to take out a certain percentage of the meat, there is often waste in Inupiaq eyes. One Kotzebue Native explains: "When [Natives] see the waste of trophy hunters, it is upsetting that the meat has spoiled. The State regulates that a trophy hunter take out a certain percentage of the meat. Usually the trophy hunter takes out the minimum" (Anonymous 1/18/91).

Many local residents express discomfort with state jurisdiction of subsistence because the state receives considerable revenues from the sale of sporthunting and fishing permits. Area Natives remark:

I worry about the sport-hunting industry because I know that they have lots of clout in this state. Subsistence doesn't bring the money in for the State, the sport-fishing and sporthunting brings in the bucks (Anonymous 2/4/91b).

The State caters to sportsmen and trophy hunters who can afford the land-and-shoot type of hunting (Anonymous 1/18/91).

Current game regulations reflect the State's bias towards sport industries. For example, regulations require hunters to salvage the skull and hide of grizzly bear, but little of the meat. This stipulation is rooted in a Euro-American view of bears as trophies, not food (Georgette 1989, 10). Some Inupiaq are more confident under federal jurisdiction. The federal government, although by no means flawless, is required by Congress to uphold a subsistence priority. Unfortunately, there is a pervasive concern in northwest Alaska that conservation and anti-hunting lobbies will influence Congress to legislate the end to Native subsistence. The last section of this chapter will consider this topic.

## F. ENVIRONMENTALISM

Although not an issue specifically related to USFWS policy, Lower 48 "environmentalism" concerns many Inupiat. We sensed a potential problem with the term when we began our first interview with, "We need your help in preparing an environmental education program for the Selawik Refuge." Interviewees reacted defensively, not to the project, but to our terminology. Once we explained what we meant by "environmental education," people were generally eager to share their ideas. Consequently, it is meaningful for the USFWS to know how this phrase is perceived, and that they should avoid using it to describe school programs. We found that "resource education" or "Service education" elicited more favorable responses.

Local hostility towards "environmental" education stems primarily from an unfavorable media (RATNET & local radio) portrayal of the

environmental movement. Because of the media portrayal, many people in northwest Alaska consider the environmental movement as the entity forcing the federal government to adopt policies which deny access to resources and traditional Native lands. One Kotzebue hunter explains: "Federal control of subsistence is not all bad because the feds have a caretaker role. But, federal control is tied to and influenced by conservation and anti-hunting groups in the Lower 48. This worries many Natives" (Anonymous 1/18/91). Another Inupiaq echoes this concern:

We get worried when the name is "National" Park Service or "U.S." Fish and Wildlife Service. Who's interest are these agencies playing with? We feel like the Fish and Wildlife Service is serving the millions of other Americans, rather than the people here. There are many issues of conflict between the Native subsistence hunters and the environmental lobby of the U.S., especially all those people of New York, Washington and Boston (Anonymous 2/4/91b).

The environmental movement is frequently linked with the animal rights/anti-fur campaign. One Native hunter maintains:

We worry about environmentalists and especially the anti-fur lobby in the Lower 48. Those anti-fur people call themselves animal lovers...but who are the real animal lovers? I think the Inupiat are the real animal lovers. We don't just want to read about our hunting culture. I think our culture will be destroyed by outside legislation against subsistence (Anonymous 2/4/91b).

It is no wonder that the Inupiat dislike environmentalists and conservationists; environmentalists are perceived as the creators of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, ANILCA, the Wilderness Act and other unpopular policies that deny recognition of indigenous uses of land and resources. The MBTA nullifies the traditional spring take of waterfowl; ANILCA withholds access to land, resources, and regional control; Wilderness designation denies

that the Inupiat ever used this land or have a relationship with the land. These issues eat at the very heart of Native existence and identity.

For the most part, the above federal policies are necessary for conservation of wildlife and ecosystems. In Alaska, we can no longer implement wildlife management on a microscale because of the nature of today's society; in the 1990's, many user groups including sport, commercial and subsistence users all desire access to limited resources. Additionally, we now see a growing state population and the use of technological improvements that enhance the ability to harvest resources. Many of Alaska's wildlife species are migratory; hence the protection efforts by one isolated population does not ensure the vitality of the species. Consequently, federal policies like the MBTA and ANILCA are essential to ensure species conservation.

The most damaging omission, however, was that indigenous interests were not acknowledged during the planning of such decisive legislation. Unfortunately, the United States/Great Britain (for Canada) MBTA was signed long before Alaska Natives became organized as political entities, successfully voicing their opinions within the large bureaucracy. Today, Alaska Natives should be signatories, not victims, of the MBTA. Unlike the MBTA, ANILCA was designed to include some protection for subsistence opportunities. Yet, thirteen years later the federal lands in Alaska are still seen as barriers to conducting a traditional way of life. It is time for Congress to amend legislation to guarantee Native subsistence and provide meaningful avenues for local input in regional land and wildlife management. In addition, agencies must endorse public education to inform local residents of the positive aspects of the above laws and treaties, and why they were first initiated.

## G. CONCLUSIONS

Evidence shows that many rural Natives are uncomfortable with government employees and management policies but feel powerless in rectifying these problems within the complex state and federal bureaucratic systems. Moreover, because of the lack of productive Native involvement in regional management and inadequate agency public outreach, past hostile perceptions of government agencies persist today in northwest Alaska. USFWS personnel, as well as those of other agencies, now realize that without the support and participation of Native residents of the Northwest Arctic Borough, they will remain unable to fulfill Congressional mandates to conserve fish and wildlife populations and their habitats.

One avenue to the incorporation of Native perspectives in wildlife management is to employ local Natives throughout all levels of government agencies. To reach this goal, however, current local views of agencies must be examined to better understand why Kotzebue area residents dislike agencies. An excellent means to correct community misperceptions of agencies' missions is through the implementation of a public education program which targets many of the wildlife management issues discussed in this chapter.

In light of the concerns outlined in this chapter, it is clear that the USFWS and other agencies must alter their management priorities. The role of law enforcement and regulation must be thoroughly questioned; priorities must be evaluated with respect to cultural traditions and current conditions in rural villages. One form of wildlife management that deserves agency consideration is cooperative management agreements between governments and Native users. This structure has functioned quite successfully in many rural areas of Canada. Cooperative wildlife agreements offer substantial

improvement over present conditions by giving indigenous users a direct, meaningful role in management. Evidence shows that superior management occurs when user groups and governments collaborate in wildlife management: culturally appropriate regulations result from Native/government consensus hence, regulation compliance improves; and Natives become more eager to participate in harvest surveys (without fear of agency enforcement action) because they understand that this knowledge is important for management (Swerdfager 1990, Osherenko 1988 and Gunn et.al. 1988). It is imperative that Natives be integrally involved in the management of wildlife and lands in rural Alaska. Credible management will result only by agencies working together with local residents.

## Chapter V

### NATIVE VOICE

Improving relations between the USFWS and local residents in northwest Alaska requires certain changes in refuge policy. The USFWS must alter its current management approach and hire Natives throughout all levels of employment, seasonal biological technicians to managers. In addition, the USFWS must begin to allocate certain management authority to local Native organizations. This imperative, the incorporation of the Native voice in wildlife management, is the subject of this chapter. Currently, many researchers and administrators understand the numerous benefits to Native hire in rural Alaska; yet, both agencies and Native communities recognize several obstacles to implementing a Native hire priority. Despite difficulties, the evidence shows that agencies must strive to blend indigenous knowledge with western science to achieve sound and culturally appropriate wildlife management in rural Alaska. Although ANILCA provides some avenues for rural Native participation in wildlife management, the shortfalls of the current Regional Fish and Game Advisory System, from the subsistence user point of view, are numerous. Hence, other administrative strategies employed in similar rural situations deserve consideration. Cooperative wildlife management agreements between indigenous users and government agencies is an emerging paradigm in rural situations. Planners should look to this management model for the future, for without significant participation of local Natives, federal and state governments will be unable to manage the land, fish and wildlife of rural Alaska.



## A. NATIVE HIRE

Recognizing some benefit to hiring local employees, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provides special means to employ Alaska Natives on rural refuges. Native and non-Native rural residents can qualify for certain Service positions on the basis of local knowledge and experience, rather than possession of advanced academic degrees. On rural refuges, Natives are most often employed as Native Liaison, Interpreter, Refuge Information Technician (RIT), Biological Technician or Maintenance. The USFWS also acknowledges the advantages of training and hiring Natives to work in upper level management positions. To accomplish this, the Service participates in internship and academic enrichment programs for high school youth. The Resource Apprenticeship Program for Students, which the USFWS sponsors with other agencies, encourages young Alaskans to work towards resource management-related careers as biologists or land managers.

Although addressing these Native hire issues, the USFWS has not, to this point, fully endorsed a long-term goal of significant Native employment at all levels - seasonal technicians to managers. Albeit local hire [local hire predominantly equals Native hire, yet the federal government cannot discriminate against non-Native rural residents so therefore they use the term local hire] programs appear in formal USFWS plans, actual recruitment and training programs are not well established throughout Alaska. Small rural refuges tend to be understaffed hence, busy managers and biologists find little time to encourage local young people to accept seasonal jobs or to prepare for a Service career. Fortunately, the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge is an exception to the norm; here, USFWS planners realized that their goal of conserving fish and wildlife populations could not be met without the assistance, and employment of Yupik residents. Consequently, USFWS

managers: implemented a comprehensive educational program in local schools which encourages young people to consider natural resource careers; actively recruited local full-time employees and seasonal workers; and hired a network of Refuge Information Technicians (RIT) to disseminate and gather information in rural communities within Refuge boundaries. Lessons learned on the Delta need to be shared with other rural Alaska refuges including Selawik National Wildlife Refuge.

Yukon Delta Refuge managers understand the need for local involvement to help solve conservation dilemmas. Unfortunately, similar wildlife/local resident concerns exist on other rural refuges (perhaps not yet at a crisis point) but the USFWS remains generally inattentive to these needs. Like past crises on the Delta, many of the difficulties facing rural refuge managers today stem from misunderstandings and poor communication with local residents. In many cases, on-staff Natives could have provided insight into local customs and needs, thereby reducing or eliminating much of the problem. One rural USFWS manager explains the situation in Alaska:

Most of the managers on the bush refuges, as well as the regional office crowd, are transients, doing time in Alaska only to retire or get a promotion. They are not here to learn about and work with other cultures, and are only here for the short-term. The answer to all this is clear, but the higher-ups would not support it because it would take their jobs. The answer is to train local managers. This would be the best for the resource, and for the community. There are too many Fish and Wildlife Service people who feel they can manage a duck in Texas, so they can manage one in rural Alaska. This won't work. A local person can work with their own Native organizations and work on cooperative agreements most effectively. We really don't have a choice but to train Natives to take our jobs (Anonymous 2/26/91a).

A Kotzebue elder concurs:

A person with those more traditional talents, though, could have a career or job with the FWS. Often we come from the school of "imported expertise is the best." The FWS must be willing to loose their job to local person. This will take putting away the selfish ideas most people have (Anonymous 2/26/91b).

As mentioned above, refuges, wildlife and local communities benefit from the employment of regional Natives. Most rural Native residents have a stake in the conservation of regional resources; their families depend on subsistence resources for survival. Hence, Native inclusion can result in superior management of wildlife resources if the USFWS comprehends the value of local knowledge incorporated into western scientific management (see next section). As biotechs or Refuge Information Technicians, Native USFWS employees are often more successful than their Anglo counterparts at collecting accurate subsistence harvest information (Anonymous 2/11/91 and Anonymous 2/14/91). Given the past interaction between Anglo wardens and rural Native hunters, it is safe to assume that a local Native may be more effective in collecting harvest data because he/she does not have to contend with cross-cultural barriers, nor the law enforcement/warden stereotype. Community benefits to hiring Natives to accomplish this task are obvious: harvest information is critical for the management of regional wildlife, and the protection of subsistence opportunities for indigenous residents. On the managerial level, regional Natives can be effective in preparing regulations that reflect local conditions and respect traditional uses. Without the cross-cultural communication barriers that often plague Anglo managers, local Natives can effectively interpret Service policy and explain the need for important regulations in area villages. As we look to the future of rural wildlife management, local Native employees may be most suited to

organizing cooperative agreements with regional IRA governments, and other Native organizations.

On the most basic levels, the USFWS and other agencies can offer stable, in-region employment for Native residents. This is extremely valuable in rural Alaska where employment opportunities are scarce, often seasonal or intermittent, or require leaving the local village. Additionally, in most small rural Alaskan villages, children are exposed to few career role models. The importance of successful, local, Native role models working in land managing agencies should not be underestimated.

Although advantages to Native hire appear substantial and obvious, the obstacles, from both Native and Anglo perspectives, are numerous and complex. Local residents employed by government agencies must learn to work within a complex bureaucracy that is not their own. One Inupiaq elder explains his experience:

As a people, we are not used to regulation. Before I worked for the NPS, I worked for the Post Office...for twenty years. To do my job, I had to learn to work with the system. It took many years to learn.... People [who work within agencies] don't stay long. They are not used to the schedule.... When people work for the government, they often don't know how to deal with problems they might be having. They don't know the avenues to take when there is a problem (Anonymous 3/1/91).

To make matters worse, Natives are caught between expectations of two different cultural systems; they are expected to function as Anglos within a western scientific management system, yet also live and relate to fellow villagers as kin. A long-time Borough resident, with extensive experience with the NPS and USFWS, criticizes current practices:

A Native working for the FWS is put in a tough position. FWS preaches to their seasonals that any information about game and where it is, is confidential to the Service. So USFWS says, "Don't tell villagers what you find out through working for us." To the Inupiaq culture though, if you don't tell then you are stingy and greedy (Anonymous, 2/26/91b).

Sharing of knowledge is inherent to the Inupiaq subsistence economy. By ignoring this practice, the USFWS forces Native employees to make difficult decisions about loyalty to family or work. An additional problem is law enforcement or other managerial authority. One Kotzebue resident warns of this dilemma: "And, if now a Native was in Fish and Wildlife Service, that person would be put in the position to tell others, including relatives, what they can and cannot do" (Anonymous 2/11/91). The USFWS has not begun to address this problem of asking a Native employee to reprimand a fellow villager.

Native and non-Native residents of Kotzebue generally perceive USFWS, NPS and ADF&G Native hire positions as extremely difficult and precarious jobs. Natives do not envy individuals holding government positions, yet often place high esteem upon people willing to be a conduit between two diverse worlds. Many Natives are comforted knowing that they have representatives within agencies to whom they can turn to with questions and concerns. One Native from Kotzebue emphasizes this point: "The Native community feels good knowing that their are [Native] people...that work in the federal agencies. They are people that village people can call up and ask questions of. They feel comfortable with them so it works" (Anonymous 2/4/91a). Unfortunately, other residents believe that "the uniform makes them say things so they can keep their job, rather than being there to work for Natives" (Anonymous 1/16/91a). One Inupiaq explains why she chose to work for a local Native organization over the NPS:

I would like to work in the National Park Service Cultural Preservation and Interpretation program yet, then I would be forced to take from my culture, and give to the government. I want to gain from my culture and give it back to them. My people may like to work for the government, it's a good job and usually in fields they are familiar with, but this splits their loyalty. (Anonymous 1/16/91a).

Unfortunately, those Natives who decide to work for the USFWS are often viewed as "Uncle Toms" by fellow residents. Service Refuge Information Technicians attest to this perception:

First they call us "game wardens", then they say, "You are a white man." ... Then the next slam is ,"you are only doing it for the money." Ha! I can get more money elsewhere! The last blow is "you've turned against your own people." These are the things we face (Anonymous RIT, 3/7/91g).

They think we Natives that work for Fish and Wildlife Service are spies for the FWS (Anonymous RIT, 3/7/91c).

Because of these issues, some Anglo agency personnel have become frustrated with local hire employees and consequently no longer make an effort to seek additional Native workers. They complain that locals are unreliable, and cannot be depended upon to show up for work, collect accurate data, be trusted with information or to complete tasks. Most Anglo personnel respect the concept of Native hire, but remain caught within the time constraints of their job; local hire requires extra time and effort for recruiting, training, supervising and evaluating workers. For some agency employees it is easier to recruit volunteers from Outside that are already familiar with western wildlife management techniques, than work with Native residents (Anonymous 1/20/91). Hence, local hire provisions, including Refuge Information Technician positions, may be misused by

employees who want to avoid the inconveniences of hiring Natives. This should not be an option.

Despite these drawbacks, Native hire is an important component of successful land management in rural Alaska. In order for a true goal of Native hire at all levels to be reached, the USFWS must make recruitment a priority. From a regional level to the local level, the Service should actively pursue promising high school students and young adults to participate in programs such as Resource Apprenticeship Program for Students and the Rural Alaska Honors Institute of the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. To enhance the local hire experience, the USFWS should provide cross-cultural training to all employees, Native and Anglo. Additionally, the USFWS could create additional incentives to encourage their Anglo employees to hire local Natives on rural refuges. It is important to remember though, that the full emphasis must not be on Natives fitting into Anglo or Western models of communication, and education. An equally important task is to research means to blend Native knowledge with western science.

## B. INCORPORATING NATIVE KNOWLEDGE INTO WESTERN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

A wealth of ethnographic literature exists about indigenous knowledge of regional lands and wildlife. In fact, many explorers, traders, and anthropologists in the past have depended upon the vast body of knowledge of northern hunters for their survival (Nelson 1969, Lopez 1986, Steffanson 1923). Unfortunately, Native knowledge has remained largely within literary and anthropological disciplines, and rarely is found within "scientific" subjects. In a few instances, military science took an interest in Native survival knowledge, but this usually was for their own technological advances and this knowledge was seldom shared. Within the last decade, some resource managers and biologists have taken an interest in the local indigenous knowledge base. Most frequently, indigenous people's knowledge "tend to taken into account only when they can be translated into 'scientific language' and validated by strictly scientific methods of inquiry" (McDonald 1988, 70). In some regions of Canada, however, the government recently mandated cooperative management efforts between indigenous users and Federal and provincial agencies. Here, local Natives, agency managers and biologists are researching management schemes that value and integrate both forms of knowledge.

Perhaps as a result of today's more stable wildlife populations, indigenous hunters and Anglo biologists in the Northwest Territories have recently "engendered a more cooperative approach, rather than the past's confrontational routine" (Gunn, et.al. 1988, 22). Anne Gunn, a biologist for the Northwest Territories Department of Natural Resources, has undertaken in-depth studies about the differences and compatibility of Inuit hunter knowledge and western scientific methods. She suggests that hunters' keen



observations contribute significantly to western science's understanding of wildlife distribution and relative abundance. "The passing on of observations of wildlife in particular areas over generations is an incomparable reservoir of knowledge of annual patterns in wildlife distribution and migration routes" (Gunn et.al. 1988, 24). This is quite significant when one considers that western scientific baseline wildlife surveys have only been undertaken within the past forty years (at most) in Alaska. When hunters' information combines with that of agency biologists, who often have greater access to advanced technological resources (radio collars, computer mapping and imaging, airplanes, etc.), an unparalleled ability to manage and monitor wildlife species results.

Although the two systems of knowledge have common objectives in the encouragement of sustainable wildlife populations, the process of integrating indigenous and western knowledge is difficult. Biologists and hunters must initially recognize the value of each other's system. After interviewing residents of northwest Alaska, I am sure we have not reached this point. One rural Alaska land manager recognizes that many of his co-workers place themselves "above" local residents:

[FWS employees] from Outside come in with the idea that western management is the best way - like all will eventually end up that way. It's like they think that on an evolutionary scale, western is so far ahead of Native knowledge of management, or animals in general, that we should discount Native knowledge! (Anonymous 2/26/91a).

In northwest Alaska, there is evidence that Native residents may also perceive their knowledge as "better." One hunter explains his point of view: "We have thorough knowledge of animals in this region. Those of us that are active hunters have a better knowledge, I think, than most biologists" (Anonymous 2/12/91).

Ineffective cross-cultural communication leads both managers and Natives to perceive the other as wrong. This can present a formidable problem. Gunn suggests that, "Indeed, the late and as yet relatively small contribution of hunter's knowledge to scientific wildlife management has stemmed more from a communication failure than any inherent limitation in either system of knowledge" (Gunn et.al. 1988, 27). Cross-cultural communication is, undoubtedly, time consuming and patience demanding. Unfortunately, the commonly used, western methods of gathering Native information including public meetings, interviews, and surveys may not provide the best avenue to knowledge integration (Gallagher, 1988).

It will take an active effort on the part of wildlife managers and biologists to incorporate Native knowledge in management. Three methods that facilitate information synthesis are: 1) employ local Natives on staff and be ready to accept their recommendations; 2) station biologists in the smaller villages rather than the regional hub city; and 3) design ground-based biological studies (rather than aerial) which rely on hunter's knowledge of wildlife, and their local skills for traveling on the land.

Northwest Arctic Borough residents echo these recommendations. An Anglo agency employee relates a memorable encounter working with a Native woman:

Often their advise will not be direct, in the way we are used to....Once I was packing up a camp and went to put a tarp over a wood pile. The Native woman I was with suggested that the tarp over the wood would attract bears. I really wanted the tarp over the wood, but I could tell that the woman was insistent about the tarp bringing bears, even if she didn't say it directly. Really, up here we need to be ready to do it their way. In doing so, it tells them that we respect them (Anonymous 2/11/91).

This is important advice for Anglos working with Inupiat in northwest Alaska. By working together on tasks, Natives and Anglos will break down cultural barriers. Besides working together, living and eating together also transcends barriers. Several residents suggest that Selawik Refuge personnel should base their operations out of the smaller village of Selawik rather than Kotzebue:

The best thing would be to have a person on-site in the village. [Natives say], "Why does Selawik NWR just work out of Kotzebue?" The local [agency] person shouldn't be the protection officer. There are pros and cons to putting biologists in the village but really, this would build relationships. Local Natives can help with research and data gathering (Anonymous 2/14/91a).

Why do the biologists live in Kotzebue rather than Selawik? The Fish and Wildlife Service should station people in Selawik in the future. Friendship and sharing everyday living space with people transcends cultural barriers (Anonymous 2/11/91).

By working and living together, Anglos and Inupiat may come to appreciate what each other has to offer. One Inupiaq relates that the USFWS appreciated his local knowledge: "The Fish & Wildlife Service liked me as their [Refuge Information Technician] because I run boats, know the country and can take them right there" (Anonymous 2/14/91b).

In the Northwest Territories, wildlife management surveys to describe sex and age composition of caribou and muskoxen are being planned as ground-based, rather than aerial surveys. Not only do ground surveys involve and depend on local knowledge and skills, but biologists are afforded more opportunities to experience ecological interactions and to exchange their knowledge with that of the hunters (Gunn et.al., 1988, 28). It is very interesting to note that within the past few years the USFWS in Alaska turned to aerial helicopter waterfowl brood surveys rather than relying on

ground surveys as in the past. The USFWS suggests that this is cost effective and eliminates problems of hiring, training and supervising seasonals (Anonymous 1/14/91b). Unfortunately, this decision may further alienate local residents from the wildlife management process. In addition, although this decision is cost effective in a more immediate sense, it will most likely cost the USFWS more in future reparations in the form of public relation campaigns.

Communication and patience are the keys to integrating local Native knowledge and western scientific information. Inupiaq residents and Anglo agency employees working in the Northwest Arctic Borough must begin to address ideas of cooperative management, founded upon an appreciation of local knowledge and the benefits of western science. The following sections address the current Native voice in management, and the possibilities of future co-management agreements to enhance Native participation in regional wildlife management.

### C. CURRENT NATIVE VOICE - The Role of the State Advisory System

The Inupiaq residents of northwest Alaska independently managed their regional resources for hundreds of years until Statehood. In 1959, with statehood, Alaska issued game regulations and established nearly eighty Local Advisory Committees to provide an avenue for local involvement in resource management. Although including Native hunters, the State advisory system was not designed specifically to protect subsistence above sport or commercial interests; the system was conceived to give many user groups voice in the management of a large state. Not until the passage of the Alaska National Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) in 1980, were Native subsistence interests formally recognized in a rural subsistence priority clause. "Rural" priority may have been used to avoid a potential quagmire of racial discrimination law suits claiming a violation of either Alaska's or United States' Constitution (Atkinson, 1987). ANILCA Title VIII - Subsistence Management and Use - of ANILCA states:

The Congress finds and declares that -

(1) the continuation of the opportunity for subsistence uses by rural residents of Alaska, including both Natives and non-Natives, on the public lands and by Alaska Natives on Native lands is essential to Native physical, economic, traditional, and cultural existence and to non-Native physical, economic, traditional, and social existence;...

(4) in order to fulfill the policies and purposes of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and as a matter of equity, it is necessary for the Congress to... protect and provide the opportunity for continued subsistence uses on the public lands by Native and non-Native rural residents;...(ANILCA Sec. 801, 1980).

In ANILCA, Congress envisioned an approach to wildlife management that would promote Native involvement, utilize local knowledge and give some regional control over management decisions. A Regional Advisory

System was devised: "...for the purpose of enabling rural residents who have personal knowledge of local conditions and requirements to have a meaningful role in the management of fish and wildlife and of subsistence uses on the public lands in Alaska" (ANILCA Sec.801.5). Consequently, the state was divided into six subsistence resource regions, taking into consideration differences in subsistence uses, and a Regional Advisory Council was instituted for each area (Figure 4). ANILCA's advisory system, in combination with the eighty State Fish and Game Local Advisory Committees operating since 1959, became the new management system. Local needs and concerns would be addressed first through a Local Committee, then through its Regional Council, and finally passed on to the State Game Board [NOTE: Under ANILCA, the State was to manage fish and wildlife on federal lands, only if it complied with the Title VIII rural subsistence preference on those lands. Until the *McDowell vs. State of Alaska* decision in 1989, the State was in compliance with ANILCA. As a result of the *McDowell* decision, claiming that rural preference was unconstitutional for Alaska, the federal government was forced to assume management of fish and game on federal lands. [See Ferraro, unpublished master's manuscript for a full documentation of this decision]. This system was designed to give local residents explicit participation in the management of wildlife in their resource region.

Section 805(a) of ANILCA Title VIII declares that each Regional Advisory Council, composed of local residents of the region, shall have the following authority:

- A) the review and evaluation of proposals for regulations, policies, management plans, and other matters relating to subsistence used of fish and wildlife within the region;

B) the provision of a forum for the expression of opinions and recommendations by persons interested in any matter related to the subsistence use of fish and wildlife within the region;

C) the encouragement of local and regional participation pursuant to the provisions of this title in the decision-making process affecting the taking of fish and wildlife on the public lands within the region for subsistence uses;

D) the preparation of an annual report to the Secretary [of the Interior] which shall contain:

i) an identification of current and anticipated subsistence uses of fish and wildlife populations within the region;

ii) an evaluation of current and anticipated subsistence needs for fish and wildlife populations within the region;

iii) a recommended strategy for the management of fish and wildlife populations within the region to accommodate such subsistence uses and needs; and

iv) recommendations concerning policies, standards, guidelines and regulations to implement the strategy. The State fish and game advisory committees or such local advisory committees as the secretary may establish pursuant to paragraph (2) of this subsection may provide advice to, and assist, the regional advisory councils in carrying out the functions set forth in this paragraph.

The power given to local residents, through the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Advisory System established in ANILCA, is unprecedented in the United States. Its intent was to give Natives, via the Committees and the Councils, real authority to manage fish and wildlife in their region. Who better to include than those people who rely on the wildlife of the region for their very subsistence? Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, what appears on paper as progressive and positive, has functioned poorly on the ground; the advisory structure has not satisfied the needs of many Native Alaska, especially those involved in subsistence. Today, many rural subsistence users

place little emphasis on the councils to represent their interests in the regulatory process (Marshall and Peterson 1991, 10).

This chapter attempts to outline some of the problems with the State advisory system, especially with respect to the Arctic region (which includes the Northwest Arctic Borough). Does this program, now under jurisdiction of the Federal government on National Wildlife Refuges, Parks, Preserves, and Monuments in Alaska, really accomplish what ANILCA intended, even with modifications provided for in the 1992 publication of the Final Environmental Impact Statement for Subsistence Management for Federal Public Lands in Alaska?

### **Problems with the Advisory System**

Two studies of the advisory system have recently been published. Richard Marshall and Larry Peterson of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Anchorage conducted a review of the adequacy of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Advisory System. The 1991 report was formulated as a preliminary step in the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement of Subsistence Management for Federal Public Lands in Alaska (henceforth called the EIS). The second study, published in 1989, is the results of a survey undertaken by the Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc., Subsistence Department (RurALCAP CAP). It assessed the implementation of ANILCA's subsistence priority through the State Advisory System. Both reports highlight a multitude of problems with the State program. Further substantiating their claims are the multitude of public comments on the Draft EIS.

Recently released in February, 1992, the Final EIS and Record of Decision of Subsistence Management for Federal Public Lands in Alaska



(ROD), attempt to remedy many of the complaints of the State system in effect until June, 1990. Most significantly, new Federal Regional Advisory Councils will replace the State Regional Advisory Councils, although their tasks (as outlined in ANILCA Title VIII, Section 805(a)) are essentially identical. Native subsistence concerns with respect to management on Federal lands will now be represented through the new Regional Councils to the Federal Subsistence Board (comprised of the Alaska Regional Directors of the USFWS, National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Bureau of Indian Affairs.). For issues pertaining to non-Federal lands, local input will continue to flow through the nearly eighty local advisory committees to the State Game Board or State Fish Board.

An in-depth study of the State Advisory structure is helpful because it generally reflects how Alaska Natives have responded to their Congressionally-authorized involvement in fish and wildlife management to this point. For the next several years, the Federal Regional Advisory Councils may struggle to overcome negative impressions of advisory systems, especially in rural areas. Additionally, Native concerns on non-Federal lands still operate within a system that unsatisfactorily represents them. The most critical topics to be addressed are:

- a) Lack of sufficient funding from State and Federal sources to operate the advisory system;
- b) Number of regional councils is too few to adequately represent the residents.
- c) Lack of subsistence user representation on local advisory committees;
- d) Neither the State Game Boards nor the Department of the Interior seem to listen to or act upon council recommendations in accordance with ANILCA;

e) Lack of technical information made available to local committees or regional advisory councils;

## **Funding**

The majority of comments received through recent public hearings as well as written comments to the Federal Subsistence Board, express that there is insufficient funding to hold enough local advisory committee and regional advisory council meetings to fulfill the responsibilities specified in ANILCA Title VIII, Section 805. As the North Slope Borough explains in a review statement:

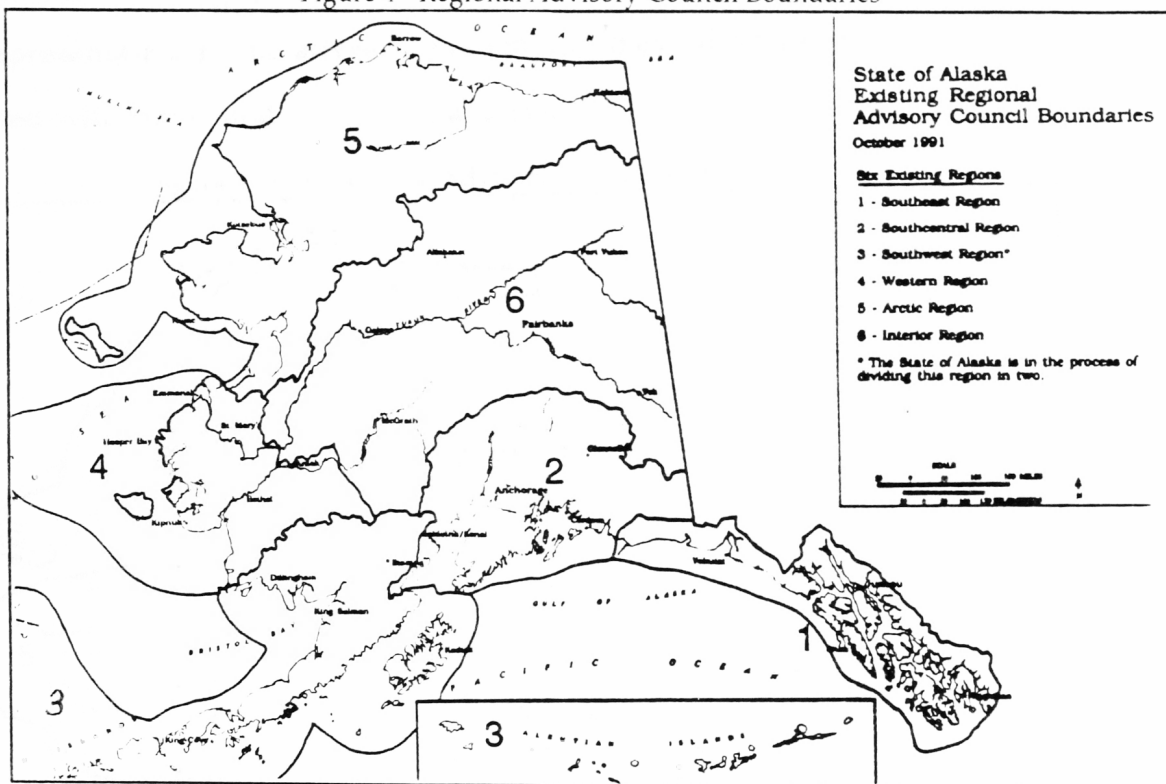
There has been inadequate funding and technical expertise and advice made available to the local advisory committees, with the result that many have remained inactive. This has left many communities without representation or direct input into fish and game management decisions (in Marshall and Peterson 1991, E-8).

Most councils, including the Arctic Regional Council, have been able to meet only once per year due to lack of funding. Sufficient funding for travel, training and administrative assistance to complete council annual reports is needed. Participants acknowledge that with appropriate funding the councils and committees would function as intended. An anonymous voice at a Point Barrow public meeting concurs: "The present State Advisory system was designed to bring local concerns to the ultimate decision makers but failed because of lack of funding. If adequately funded ... progress can be made" (in Marshall and Peterson 1991, A-4).

Under a joint agreement, adequate funding of the past councils and committees was the responsibility of both State and Federal governments. There are numerous accusations that either side was not fulfilling the

contract. Under the new system, the State will fund the local committees and the Federal government will fund the regional advisory councils.

Figure 4 - Regional Advisory Council Boundaries

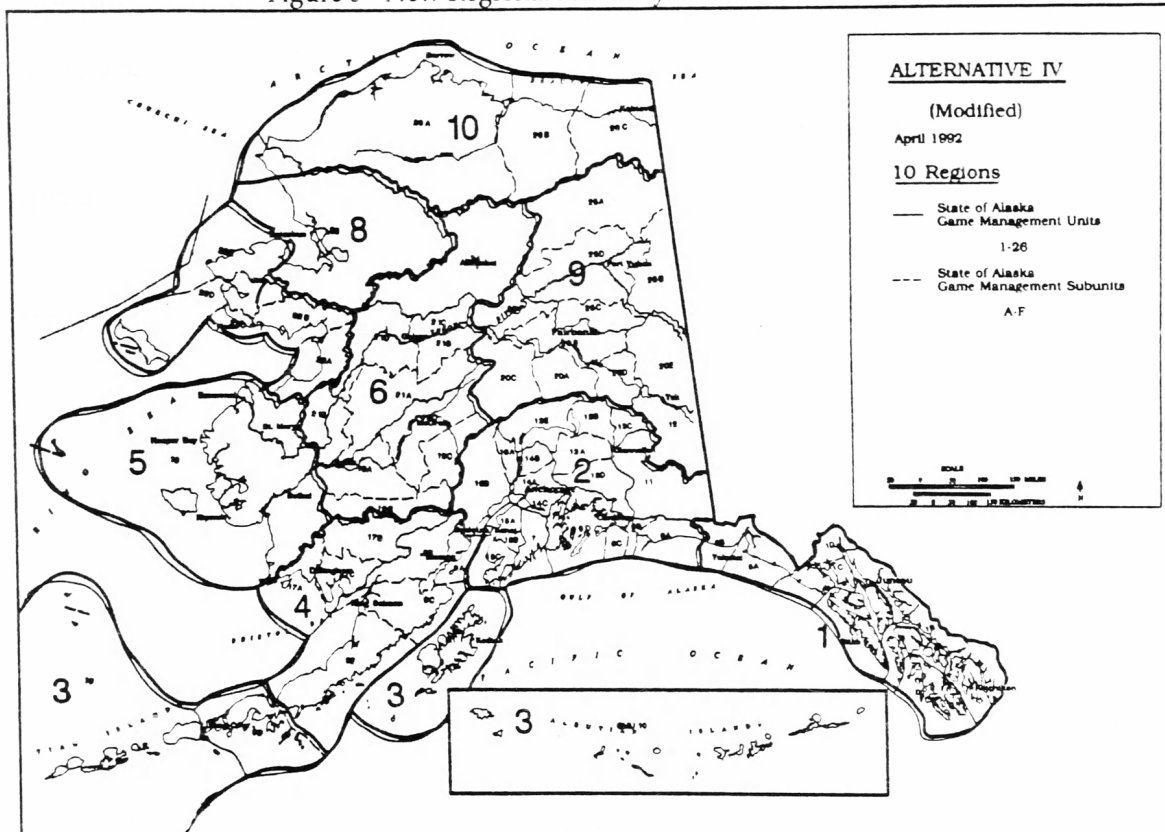


### Regional Boundaries

ANILCA originally established six Regional Advisory Councils whose boundaries were chosen to reflect cultural differences and resource use patterns (Figure 4). After functioning for twelve years, members of several large regions recognize that they represent such divergent views that consensus is rare. Major problems have been expressed in the Southwest Regional Council, the Arctic Regional Council, and also the Interior Regional Council. The Final EIS suggests that the Southwest and Arctic regions be divided further to make a total of eight regions. The Record of Decision (1992) however, further modifies the structure to include two additional

regions. Final divisions from the past system will now include three separate regions from the original Arctic Region, two from original Southwest, and two from the Interior (Figure 5). Hopefully, this new system will enhance rural representation in the advisory system and may eliminate problems associated with travel and sociocultural disparity

Figure 5 - New Regional Advisory Council Boundaries



### Subsistence Representation

With the exception of a few regions, subsistence users believe that they do not have adequate representation on the committees and councils. This problem stems from State decisions made back in 1959: local advisory committees were established with no specific mandate for the involvement of subsistence interests. The State only requested that "three user groups" be

represented on each committee. Hence, committee membership is comprised of sport, commercial, subsistence users, village representatives, conservation association delegates and other area interests. Regional councils, on the other hand, were established with ANILCA in 1980 to ensure subsistence constituency involvement. The State supervised the entire system after 1980 and put forth no specific regulations to guarantee subsistence user representation on each committee.

In some areas of Alaska, commercial and sport interests (predominantly Anglo) tend to dominate Native subsistence concerns on local committees. For instance, the following is the 1990 composition of a local advisory committee in southcentral Alaska:

1 Transporter/outfitter  
 1 Commercial hunting  
 1 Interested Citizen  
 1 Westside gillnetter  
 1 Southside gillnetter  
 1 Large crab boat  
 1 small crab boat  
 1 small seiner boat  
 1 travel boat  
 1 fish processor  
 1 subsistence user  
 1 Village seat  
 1 Village seat  
1 Village seat  
 14 TOTAL

Out of fourteen seats on this committee, four specifically represent subsistence, however, the actual number of subsistence advocates could vary depending on individual viewpoints. Still, in many coastal regions of Alaska, the commercial fishing industry is an extremely potent lobbyist. Commercial and sport industries are traditionally well organized and can raise money quickly to support their investments. Native subsistence

interests, on the other hand, have only recently become a powerful force in some areas of the state. Despite this organization, subsistence interests still lack the financial power to adequately counter commercial and sport forces.

In other areas of the state, where there is less pressure from commercial or sport interests, committee composition often seems confusing and boundaries between user representation less distinct. It appears as if Native subsistence representation may become diluted by conflicting interests of wage-earning jobs versus traditional subsistence lifestyles; loyalties become blurred because of individual needs to be involved in many economic sectors. User group self-designation of one predominantly Native committee is as follows with each line representing one member:

1. trapping, sport fishing, subsistence hunting, commercial fishing, personal use
2. trapping, sport fishing, subsistence hunting, commercial fishing, personal use
3. sport fishing, subsistence, commercial fishing
4. sport fishing, subsistence, commercial fishing
5. trapping, subsistence, hunting, commercial fishing
6. subsistence, personal use, outdoorsman, Association/Corporation
7. subsistence, hunting, commercial fishing, Association/Corporation
8. trapping, subsistence, hunting, commercial fishing, photography, outdoorsman
9. trapping, sport fishing, subsistence hunting, commercial fishing, personal use

One can see how confusing things can be! Those Natives that represent subsistence are the same individuals representing sport and commercial fishing. In a recent survey of advisory committee members, Native subsistence users did not strongly advocate several proposals designed to facilitate subsistence hunting (RurALCAP 1989, J-13). This further confirms

that those who sit on the councils and committees and call themselves subsistence users, often represent other interests as well.

Rural committees pull their membership from a small population base where there is a tendency for a few individuals who have time and interest for planning boards, to become involved in several boards. Often, those on the school board, are those on a city planning board, as well as the local Fish & Game advisory committee. Additionally, "those that are elected are often those most sophisticated in the ways of the State;...those who do participate and get elected tend not to be the more traditional hunters and fishermen" (RurALCAP 1989, J-12). One can see how Native subsistence representation can become diluted within this system.

Subsistence representation on Local State Fish & Game Advisory Committees will likely remain controversial. For representation on Federal Regional Councils, the Final EIS ensures that, "Council membership will be structured to provide subsistence users the maximum possible opportunity to participate in the Federal program." (ROD 1992, p.10). Unlike the past State Councils, the new regional councils are designed specifically to "provide advice about subsistence hunting and fishing in their region to the Board" (Federal Subsistence Board Announcement, 8/18/92). Individuals interested in participating in the Council must be:

- (1) a rural resident of the area that they wish to represent;
- (2) familiar with local and regional subsistence uses and needs;
- (3) knowledgeable of other uses of the area's fish and wildlife resources;
- (4) willing to travel to and attend annual council meetings;
- and (5) willing to attend Board meetings, as requested (Federal Subsistence Board Announcement 8/18/92).

Although eliminating strong commercial and sport interests from Federal Regional Advisory Councils, the new councils will still have to contend with confusing and often dichotomous individual representation.

## Processing Council Recommendations

The government agencies do not utilize the regional councils at all...this is a very sore point with us. Regional Councils are our protection... that our way of life will be protected. I think that the Native community and the government interpret ANILCA differently (Anonymous Kotzebue Advisory Council member 2/12/91).

Many subsistence users believe that neither the State Board of Game [State must comply with ANILCA's regulations] nor the Department of the Interior process Council proposals in accordance with ANILCA. Section 805(c) states:

The Secretary [and also the State in Sec(d)] ...shall consider the report and recommendations of the regional advisory councils concerning the taking of fish and wildlife on the public lands within their respective regions for subsistence uses. The Secretary may choose not to follow any recommendation which he determines is not supported by substantial evidence, violates recognized principles of fish and wildlife conservation, or would be detrimental to the satisfaction of subsistence needs. If a recommendation is not adopted by the Secretary, he shall set forth the factual basis and the reasons for his decision (ANILCA Title VIII, 1980).

Although the ultimate decision rests with the State and Federal governments, ANILCA intended that recommendations of local councils would be accepted unless they violate the specific mandates above. If, for any reason, recommendations are rejected, the Secretary of the Interior (or State) must acknowledge the local council or committee and provide justification for his decision. Unfortunately, many Native and non-Natives state that council proposals have been ignored. One Alaskan concurs: "My observation is that boards listen to advisory committees when they are in agreement but often ignore the opinions of advisory committees when there is a difference (in Marshall & Peterson 1991, F-4). Comment on this issue during public meetings and EIS review was overwhelming. Arctic Regional Council



disapproval resulted in litigation. This council filed a complaint in U.S. District Court requesting the Court to force the Board to comply with ANILCA Section 805 in its dealings with Advisory Council recommendations (Marshall & Peterson 1991, E-5).

Council members express that the State Board and the Department of the Interior not only provide inadequate responses to Council proposals, but their responses are also untimely. Recent suspension of State action on recommendations, may have been the result of current controversial subsistence litigation. There is evidence that for two years prior to Federal takeover of subsistence management on Federal lands because of the *McDowell* decision (1989), the State Board apparently deferred decisions on regulation proposals involving subsistence, because of legal and jurisdictional upheaval within the State (Marshall & Peterson 1991, 7). Each State decision seemed to be countered with additional litigation.

The lack of proper State or Federal response to council efforts is reflected in Council and Committee member frustration, difficulty in recruiting and retaining members, reaching a quorum, interacting effectively with local State and Federal managers and biologists. In 1991, I witnessed the following advisory committee meeting in rural Alaska:

Two Anglo park managers, four Anglo resident State and Federal biologists, and a handful of other representatives (all Anglo) of the State and Federal land managing agencies arrive at 7pm at Borough Hall. A large square table is set up in the center of the room for the advisory committee members. All those arriving at 7pm find seats in scattered chairs around the perimeter of the meeting room and begin small talk about the weather. About 7:20pm, one committee member, who represents his Native corporation, arrives and sits at the center table. Stretching, he puts his feet up on another chair. Idle chat continues around the perimeter but nothing is discussed that has relation to the meeting topic. Fifteen minutes later, another gentleman enters the meeting room and whispers something to

the committee member. The Native Corporation representative stands and announces that they've made some phone calls no members are coming to the meeting tonight - they are all sick. He leaves the room. The Anglo bureaucrats continue to talk about storms and snowfall as they put on their boots, facemasks and gloves (Author's Journal 1/14/91).

Many advisory committees are essentially inactive as the one above. When people feel that their avenue for expression is blocked, interest in committee participation quickly dwindles. Unfortunately, this also intensifies feelings of hopelessness in land managers attempting to participate and biologists trying to advise. Occasionally the local participation level is extended to infer that Natives really are uninterested in wildlife management; this opinion persists despite its untruth. Two Kotzebue Anglos vocalize this opinion:

They don't even come to the advisory meetings! They aren't really interested in participating (Anonymous 2/7/91).

When you include [local Natives], they attempt to throw a wrench into anything you try to do (Anonymous 2/8/91).

This type of interaction does nothing for the land, resources or Native residents of Alaska. ANILCA intended that local people have an integral role in the management of the regional resources. Unfortunately, many Committee and Council members, local citizens, and managers and biologists are unhappy with the Advisory system. Much of their dissatisfaction originates from perceived improper processing of council recommendations. We look to the future to see how the State Game Board and Federal Subsistence Board will process recommendations in light of the concern voiced in the past several years.

## Accessibility of Technical Information

Councils and committees require up-to-date scientific information to prepare meaningful proposals for the Federal or State Boards. There are numerous complaints from some regions of the state that committees are not receiving sufficient technical data to function effectively. ANILCA Title VIII, Section 805 (b) specifically states: "The Secretary shall... make timely distribution of all available relevant technical and scientific support data to the regional advisory councils and the State fish and game advisory committees" (ANILCA Section 805(b)). In some areas of Alaska, district biologists work closely and effectively with advisory committees. Occasionally, committee members request the undertaking of certain wildlife studies. In other areas of the state, however, there is little interaction or positive communication between biologists and committee members. There are two dilemmas inherent in this transfer of information in rural Alaska. First and foremost, because local biologists may not actively associate with committee members, committees remain unaware of the studies conducted by Federal or State agencies in their regions. Consequently, they do not know what information to request from district biologists. A second impasse arises when Native committee members are uncomfortable with methods used (collaring of wildlife, catch and release of fish, etc..) and conclusions of locally conducted Federal and State biological inventories and surveys (Freeman in Feit 1988, 83 and Anonymous 2/12/91).

The Alaska Advisory System requires that two cultures interact and collaborate to achieve sound wildlife management. At its worst, the system operates with little cooperation as exhibited in the committee meeting narrative in the previous section. At its best, the Advisory System functions as a partnership between local people (Native and non-Native), and land

managers and biologists. This alliance depends upon the appreciation and acceptance of varied knowledge systems.

### **Conclusions**

Most researchers and participants acknowledge that although the Native voice is currently underrepresented, the Regional Advisory System established in Title VIII of ANILCA is inherently a good structure and should be continued. By far the majority of complaints center on logistics and present functioning: inadequate funding, inappropriate regional boundaries, processing of Council recommendations, and technical information transfer. Although inheriting a nonfunctioning system from the State, the Federal Subsistence Board now has the opportunity to remedy many of these problems in their administration of the new Federal Regional Advisory Councils.

To facilitate the proper functioning of the Advisory Councils, the Federal Subsistence Board is hiring five Federal Regional Subsistence Coordinators. Each coordinator will oversee the operations of two Councils. Specific duties include: fulfilling a liaison role with Councils statewide; accomplishing all administrative tasks and training needed by the Council and members; serving as primary contact between Regional Councils and the Office of Subsistence Management on all issues related to the program; preparing budget requests; "ensuring that local [Native] considerations such as traditional practices, local harvest customs, and local knowledge of fish and wildlife populations are utilized appropriately in regulation development; and ensuring compliance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act and appropriate federal chartering of the Regional Advisory Councils" (USFWS Job Description). Although only one Subsistence Coordinator position has

been filled as of February, 1993, the USFWS intends to have the system functioning by Autumn, 1993 (Anonymous 2/18/93). Funding of coordinator positions is a very positive step towards the functioning of the Federal Advisory System. Nonetheless, the real future of the Advisory program depends upon the ability of the Federal Subsistence Board to uphold ANILCA.

#### D. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS - THE FUTURE OF WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT IN ALASKA

Indigenous people across the continent are awakening to a new sovereignty movement. Alaska Natives are a dynamic part of this crusade. Within the last decade, Native leadership in the form of corporations, Elders councils, IRA governments, and others have made detailed requests for regional self-management of fish and game. In 1987, the Kotzebue Advisory Committee in cooperation with the Arctic Regional Advisory Council, formulated a plan that advocated the elimination of state regulation of subsistence resources in rural Native villages. The plan also requested the delegation of game management authority to village IRA (Indian Reorganization Act) governments. The State rejected these plans on the grounds that they could not entertain such proposals from IRA governments (Minerals Management Service 1988). Since the transition of authority on Federal lands from State to the Federal Subsistence Board (1990), Native organizations have initiated requests to the Department of the Interior for self-management of local resources. Section 809 of ANILCA allows the Secretary to:

...enter into cooperative agreements or otherwise cooperate with other Federal agencies, the State, Native Corporations, other appropriate persons and organizations, and acting through the Secretary of State, other nations to effectuate the purposes and policies of this title (ANILCA Title VIII, Sec 809).

In the past year, the Secretary of the Interior awarded contracts to several Native organizations to conduct harvest surveys (Anonymous 2/18/93). The formation of Native-implemented harvest surveys is a constructive initial step towards cooperative management in many areas of Alaska.

Besides advocating self-management of regional resources, many Alaska Natives now exercise exclusive hunting privileges on ANCSA

corporation land. Both tactics function to eliminate Outside sport and commercial resource pressure. Unfortunately, the end result is heightened racial tension in many rural villages (Anonymous 2/18/93 and Anonymous 1/30/93). In areas such as northern Canada, indigenous people are successful in obtaining rights to manage regional resources. However, the situation in Alaska differs considerably from that in Canada; "competition for resources is both more acute and political [in Alaska] as a result of an active sport and commercial lobby which does not exist in the Canadian North" (Wheeler 1988, 38 and Feit 1988). Consequently, what may work in Canada, may not function in Alaska because of powerful industry lobbies.

An additional concern is the Native/Federal/State land ownership mosaic in Alaska. Alaska Natives relinquished their aboriginal land rights with ANCSA in 1971; now, Native corporation lands and private allotments represent patchwork squares between large Federal and State holdings. Corporate lands are not expansive enough to support the subsistence existence of a growing rural Native population. In light of these two concerns, sport/commercial interests and complex land ownership and jurisdiction patterns, researchers suggest that cooperative management rather than sovereignty is a more functional approach to wildlife management in Alaska (Wheeler 1988, Osherenko 1988, Feit 1988). Cooperative management includes all user groups and governments, and attempts to balance the needs of all parties from within the system, rather than from an outside bureaucratic administration.

With the recent surge of interest in the topic, researchers have formalized their definitions of co-management (or cooperative management) of wildlife resources. Most literature on this subject originated from studies in Canada within the past 5-10 years. Gail Osherenko of the Center for

Northern Studies in Vermont offers a comprehensive definition of co-management: " A co-management regime is an institutional arrangement in which government agencies with jurisdiction over resources and user groups enter into an agreement covering a specific geographical region" (Osherenko 1988, 94) Most co-management agreements to date focus on a single species.

Co-management systems must include:

- 1) a system of rights and obligations for those interested in the resource, 2) a collection of rules indicating actions that subjects are expected to take under various circumstances, and 3) procedures for making collective decisions affecting the interests of government actors, user organizations, and individual users (Young in Osherenko 1988, 94).

While researchers advise that cooperative wildlife management is not a "panacea for all management problems arising in areas populated by aboriginal user groups" (Swerdfager 1990, 19), they show excellent potential for widespread application in many areas of rural Alaska. Cooperative systems are especially suited for management of vast, relatively unpopulated areas where enforcement of game regulations is virtually impossible and/or where relations have deteriorated because of enforcement attempts (Swerdfager 1990). Certainly the interviews conducted for this project illustrate an extremely poor relationship between agencies and local people in northwest Alaska. Game regulation enforcement attempts are a major cause of the current problem. Additionally, as the Kotzebue Fish and Game Advisory Committee reports, there is little compliance with certain harvest regulations or procedures (Schaeffer et.al. 1986) perhaps because local Inupiaq residents remain estranged from the management of regional resources. In general, people are less willing to comply with restrictions developed by a alien system of which they are not a part.



Trevor Swerdfager of the Canadian Wildlife Service acknowledges that by giving indigenous people a direct role in management, cooperative wildlife management systems:

...increase the likelihood that all hunters will voluntarily comply with regulations developed by the system. The sense that resources are being managed with aboriginal interests in mind and with aboriginal practices and expertise factored into decision-making, encourages the view that it is in aboriginal hunters own best interests to comply with regulations (Swerdfager 1990, 21).

On the Yukon Delta, there was little compliance with spring goose harvest until the formation of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Goose Management Plan (YKDGMP). Now, Yupik hunters believe they are a part of the management and hence, illegal harvest (in terms of State and Federal regulations) has declined. Perhaps, if a similar agreement was extended to the people of the Northwest Arctic Borough, one would see a subsequent rise in compliance of game regulations. One must keep in mind, though:

If government parties see the [cooperative] agreement as nothing more than a better way to enforce existing legislation, the agreement will not work....Similarly, if aboriginal groups see [cooperative wildlife management] simply as a mechanism for legitimizing what they are already doing in terms of harvesting, [co-management] will not work (Swerdfager 1990, 25).

Because of the large number of user groups involved over expansive ranges, cooperative management agreements are appropriate for situations involving migratory wildlife species. Migratory species cross political jurisdictions of borough, state, country and continent; consequently, tribal sovereignty alone will not protect certain migratory subsistence resources. By uniting the common objectives of governments, sport users and subsistence users, cooperative arrangements ensure protection for all users across wide ranges. Again, the YKDGMP exemplifies this consideration. This plan brings

together the USFWS, Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta tribal governments, California waterfowl hunters, and Fish and Game Departments of Alaska and California in an effort to protect waterfowl populations. By respecting user differences, joint management agreements unite opposing sides to achieve common goals.

Co-management contracts greatly enhance the collection and exchange of information regarding regional wildlife resources (Osherenko 1988 and Swerdfager 1990). Gail Osherenko, of the Center for Northern Studies in Vermont, conveys that the reporting of caribou harvest numbers "improved dramatically" following the creation of a Caribou Management Board in the central Canadian Arctic. Known harvest figures doubled in one year over previous estimates (Osherenko 1988, 97). With Native users representing eight out of thirteen members of the Board, local hunters realized their input was a valuable component in the management of this important subsistence resource.

Likewise, in northwest Alaska, agency wildlife managers now realize that without the input of local users, they remain unable to assess completely regional wildlife resources. Accurate harvest information is critical yet, local residents are unwilling to report their take for fear of agency law enforcement action. Consequently, within the last few years USFWS Regional Office has begun the process of forming a cooperative agreement with NANA Corporation for the purpose of collecting subsistence waterfowl harvest information. This agreement would be similar to the YKDGMP in that although neither document directly addresses the enforcement issue, it is understood that:

...any enforcement attempt that has not been agreed on in the Plan would not be viewed as 'working together' by local leaders and could easily jeopardize the Plan itself....any attempt to use the harvest survey...data to enforce the MBTA would be cause for cancellation of NANA cooperation with the plan and therefore the survey (USFWS Draft Issue Paper 1991, 4).

This pending agreement is a positive step forward for the USFWS in northwest Alaska.

Trevor Swerdfager of the Canadian Wildlife Service has extensively researched cooperative wildlife management agreements across the Arctic. In his discussion paper on the topic, he outlines the objectives, scope, management structures, and implementation of cooperative agreements.

Swerdfager (1990) suggests that cooperative agreements should include:

- 1) a management body comprised of equal number of government and aboriginal representatives; or equal representation of all user groups.
- 2) an impartial chairperson appointed from outside the membership of the management body
- 3) provide some means of obtaining biological information. Duties of the management body should include directing or undertaking surveys and research.
- 4) methods for public participation
- 5) methods and criteria for setting harvest levels

Most researchers agree that in a strict legal sense, government must retain ultimate decision making authority. This ensures that the government can uphold any wider societal requirements or intervene in unique or extremely conflictual situations. On a more pragmatic level, however, management bodies are de facto decision-making entities (Swerdfager 1990, 8). Therefore, the agreement must contain a provision which binds the Minister [in Canada] or the Secretary [in U.S.] to respond to recommendations in writing when

conflicts arise. "This is commonly known as a 'disallowance clause' and leaves Ministers [or Secretary] the option of rejecting recommendations but forces them to have good reasons for doing so" (Swerdfager 1990, 16).

This is not to suggest that indigenous users should function solely on an advisory level. It is critical for planners to acknowledge that "No management body will receive the support of its constituents if it is purely advisory in nature and can be ignored at will" (Swerdfager 1990, 15). Consequently, the intent must be that the government will defer to the board or council. Additionally, users must be fully involved in all stages of planning, design and implementation of any cooperative management scheme.

Interestingly, ANILCA includes many of Swerdfager's suggestions for cooperative agreements. As illustrated in Section C. *Current Native Voice*, ANILCA specifies the responsibility of the Secretary of the Interior to provide "timely distribution of all available relevant technical and scientific support data to the ... councils and ...committees" (ANILCA Title VIII Section 805 (b) 1980). Additionally, it specifies methods for public participation and functions of advisory councils. Most researchers agree that ANILCA intended that regional advisory councils be de facto decision-making bodies despite retention of government authority. Recommendations are to be accepted unless they violate specific mandates. And, just as Swerdfager advocates, "If a recommendation is not adopted by the Secretary, he shall set forth the factual basis and the reasons for his decision (ANILCA Title VIII, Section 805(c) 1980). Finally, the recently approved hiring of Federal Regional Subsistence Coordinators will function to provide an impartial, externally appointed chairperson to advisory boards.

As mentioned above, the YKDGMP represents a successful venture of Federal, State, Native and sport cooperation. Essential to the YKDGMP is the inclusion of a significant education and information component that echoes the benefits of cooperative management efforts to all users. In his article, "Wildlife Management in the North American Arctic: The Case for Co-Management," Osherenko (1988) highlights successes of cooperative agreements including the YKDGMP, Northwest Territories' Caribou Management Agreement and a northern Quebec beluga whale agreement (part of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement). In all three cases, education and information programs were integral elements of the joint management system. In fact, Osherenko suggests that much of the success of the three programs is due to public outreach efforts describing the planning, functioning and implementation of the cooperative agreements.

Albeit not nearly as extensive as the YKDGMP, other cooperative management strategies exist in Alaska. Perhaps the most well-known of these may be the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission. Composed of respected whaling captains from whaling villages, the Commission is now an integral component of the international bowhead whale management system. The Commission serves to supervise crews, allocate and maintain harvest quotas, and provide Native knowledge to national and international researchers (Berger 1985). Arising from a similar threat to Native subsistence harvest as the Whaling Commission, the Eskimo Walrus Commission formed in 1978 to conserve the walrus population while safeguarding the continuation of hunting opportunities. Like other cooperative agreements, management authority of the walrus remains with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service although the Commission collects population data, monitors walrus hunting, conducts local hunter education about wasteful practices, and

participates in the Walrus Technical committee of the Marine Mammal Commission. Matthew Iya of the Commission explains:

In 1987, we signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Fish and Wildlife Service and Fish and Game. A cooperative agreement is the only way to go when we are all agreeing on conservation and sustained harvests. The Walrus Commission has definitely had an effect. The take of females is down by 25%. We support the sealing and tagging program and keep track of illegal activities and have good compliance. We're going to try now for an international cooperative agreement and plan to meet soon with the Soviets.

We're always under pressure to get rid of the harvest. The walrus population is strong; if it starts to go down, people will point the finger at the Native peoples. Our biggest concern is conservation of walrus so we can all enjoy them (in Cullenberg 1990, 10).

Other commissions, advisory councils and working groups (focusing on sea otters, polar bears, caribou, and salmon) operate in Alaska, although many have yet to sign formal agreements with the state or Federal government.

### **Conclusions**

There is potential for cooperative management in Alaska. Besides using the YKDGMP as a model for other situations, the USFWS can look to successful cooperative management agreements in Canada. Additionally, the Federal and State wildlife agencies should actively pursue management agreements with Native resource commissions already operating in the state. Two groups currently working towards agreements are the Alaska Sea Otter Commission (consisting of six Native representatives of southern coastal Alaska) and the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (consisting of nine people representing subsistence, sport, and commercial interests).

Basic to the formation of such agreements, however, is the acknowledgment that each participating group contributes unique and important information to be combined within a new management paradigm.

Parties must recognize the value of each management system and must see the mutual benefits of bringing the systems together. Government agencies have to realize that they cannot manage without the support and contributions of aboriginal user groups. Equally necessary is an aboriginal recognition that without government, they cannot ensure the health of migratory species which periodically leave their control and that aboriginals cannot regulate the harvesting activities of non-aboriginals (Swerdfager, 1990, 26).

Cooperative management combines varied sources of knowledge to produce improved management of resources. By involving local residents, it ensures that regulations are appropriate for local needs and practices, and that regulations will be respected by the majority of community members. Initiating cooperative agreements in the Selawik Refuge region is an affirmation of improved relations that serves to strengthen wildlife management for the future.

## Chapter VI

### CONCLUSIONS

Congressionally extinguished aboriginal land rights and culturally insensitive federal and state land management policies have created an antagonistic relationship between Inupiaq residents and government land managers in northwest Alaska. Moreover, local residents believe that agencies provide few purposeful avenues for Native involvement in regional management. This, along with the lack of agency public information and education programming in this region, has alienated local people from policy formation and implementation procedures, and day-to-day activities of government land and wildlife managing agencies functioning within their communities.

Cross-cultural barriers are a cornerstone of the existing problem in northwest Alaska. Insightful Anglos and Inupiat perceive that many Anglo agency employees are generally unprepared for the human setting of rural Alaska (Anonymous 2/26/91a and Kotzebue resident in Berger 1985). Ignorance and fear on behalf of both cultures often create racial barriers that are difficult to destroy. Perhaps "wildlife management" is actually a misnomer and should be referred to as "people management"; wildlife populations are generally manipulated by managing the **human** harvesters by setting seasons, quotas, and bag limits rather than controlling animals directly (Riewe and Gamble 1988). Unfortunately, it appears that in our academic zeal to create proficient scientists and managers for refuges and parks, the human elements of wildlife management are often ignored. Such is the case in much of Alaska. Cultural differences accentuate interpersonal communication



difficulties. Therefore, in-depth cross-cultural education and communication training should be mandatory, not optional, for all Anglos accepting positions in rural Alaska. In this way, agencies can make strides towards conversing and collaborating effectively with local people.

The encouragement of Native hire and cooperative management espoused within this paper are only one part of a plan for enhancing relationships between local people and the USFWS in northwest Alaska. Equally as important is the implementation of the environmental education strategy outlined by Ferraro in her segment of this joint project. An agency education and information program can initiate a new paradigm of understanding between land managers and Inupiat residents of the Northwest Arctic Borough. This outreach program, explicitly demonstrating how agency management policies will benefit the local people, is crucial if the USFWS is serious about fulfilling its congressional mandates of wildlife and habitat conservation.

To successfully maintain healthy wildlife populations in northwest Alaska, there must be support and input from local Inupiat communities. This can only be achieved if: 1) agencies implement a cross-cultural education program that encourages informational exchanges; 2) Native people are given an active and meaningful role in land management. It has been proven throughout rural areas of the world that the true sustainability of any plan (ie. conservation and protection of land and wildlife resources) depends heavily upon the effective involvement of local people. After many years of misguided policy, most land management agencies now recognize this fact. Often, however, government agencies seem to be more concerned that their local participation procedures function to educate residents and facilitate implementation of **agency** plans, rather than serve as a vehicle for true

collaboration. In no way does "communication to" substitute for "communication with" local residents (West and Brechin 1991). With this as a warning, we must ensure that agency efforts to: conduct conservation education programs, increase Native hire, merge Native knowledge of land and wildlife with western science, and inaugurate advisory councils and cooperative agreements are **not** merely public relations campaigns. It is imperative that Native people in northwest Alaska participate in all aspects of agency operations. It is the responsibility of Anglo managers, regional directors, education specialists, and biologists to actively encourage, recruit, and respect Native involvement in land and wildlife management in rural Alaska.

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