



Northern Alaska Environmental Center

*Conservation's Northern Voice*

# 2003 ANNUAL REPORT



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**The Northern Alaska Environmental Center promotes conservation of the environment in Interior and Arctic Alaska through advocacy, education, and sustainable resource stewardship. This report summarizes the highlights of our 31<sup>st</sup> year of operation.**

In 2003, the Northern Alaska Environmental Center completed its 33<sup>rd</sup> year of operations as the nation's most northerly broad-spectrum environmental non-profit. As always, we sought to promote "conservation of the environment in Interior and Arctic Alaska through advocacy, education, and sustainable resource stewardship." Doing so has never been easy, based as we are in conservative Interior Alaska. But it is an important task, particularly in order to represent those conservation interests that are not well represented by the Alaskan political establishment. Highlights of the year are noted below.

### **Camp Habitat**

A cooperative venture of the Northern Center, Friends of Creamers' Field and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Camp Habitat nature education day camp ran its 13th successful season. A total of 156 campers participated in 2003, down from 192 in 2002, a drop largely attributable to the poor economy. Nonetheless campers enjoyed a successful season focusing on having fun while developing their understanding of and appreciation for Alaska's ecosystems. Older campers had the option of enrolling in an introductory backpacking course that exposed them to basic wilderness etiquette and survival skills as well as environmental education issues. Despite the lower-than-desirable enrollments, Camp's revenues came to within a few thousand dollars of expenses, largely due to cost-consciousness by Camp Director Ruth Prokopowich. The Camp Board of Directors, drawn from members of the three cooperating partners, devoted tremendous energy and enthusiasm to Camp, organizing fundraising events such as the Tex-Mex dinner and informational events including a booth at Earth Day.

### **Local Issues**

Local Issues, our program dealing with Fairbanks-specific concerns, became fully operational in 2003. Coordinator Nancy Fresco worked with Kelly Hill Scanlon to develop an internal waste and reduction program for NAEC, thereby permitting us to join and contribute to the Interior Greenstar program. Key to our Local Issues program was an increased presence at local events, including the Tanana Valley State Fair, the Golden Days Parade and membership in both the

Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown Rotary Club. In addition, the Local Issues program helped coordinate and facilitate members' participation at legislative hearings and in submitting Letters to the Editor during the legislative season. Moreover, NAEC partnered with UAF and the Sustainable Campus Task Force to lay plans for glass recycling in Fairbanks. Late in the year, NAEC bought and became a resale center for 100% post-consumer recycled paper.

### **Boreal Forest**

Boreal Forest continued to be a conservation partner in efforts to steward Interior Alaska's vast boreal forest. NAEC worked with the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (AKDNR) as a member of the Region II planning team for forestry planning in the old Minto area. We also participated in various international meetings and activities, including planning for an academic gathering on the forest of the circumpolar north. A notable success for the project was the legislature's passage of the Riparian Buffers Bill, which culminated several years of NAEC, Alaska Boreal Forests Council and others' efforts to mandate setbacks from rivers in logging operations. On another issue, we were less successful as the state legislature passed a short-sighted bill establishing logging as the priority over all other uses of the state forests. As we entered 2004, the Boreal Forest program of NAEC continued to represent conservation interests at a number of University and state events and to the legislative community.

### **Mining**

In 2003, the NAEC's Mining program continued its pattern of excellence in tracking and analyzing hardrock mining activities. Primary among our efforts was staying on top of Pogo Mine's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and efforts by the mine's operator, Teck-Cominco, to obtain permits for wastewater discharge. Another Teck-Cominco project, Red Dog and its allied port expansion project, also occupied the NAEC for considerable time. Here, we funded and oversaw the Ecology and Law Institute's economic assessment of the port expansion, an effort that concluded that the expansion was unwarranted on economic grounds. In addition, the mining program also assisted local residents who face possible environmentally and culturally dis-

rptive extractive resource development projects, one near the ever-popular Tangle Lakes area in eastern Alaska, the other at the proposed Donlin Creek mine near the village of Sleetmute on the upper Kuskokwim River.

### **Denali Watch**

Denali Watch is unique among NAEC programs, for it is based not in Fairbanks but rather in Healy, just outside renowned Denali National Park and Preserve. During 2003, NAEC continued the work of this project, focusing on monitoring proposed North Access options — including expansions to developed areas along the Stampede Trail. Denali Watch also kept close watch on the Northern Access Reconnaissance Study, or NARS, which was to be contracted by the Denali Borough but over which the State later resumed control. The program continued its strong advocacy for designated Wilderness through its drafting of NAEC's position on the Denali Back Country Management Plan. Denali Watch Coordinator Linda Paganelli worked closely with our sister organization, Denali Citizens' Council (DCC), to coordinate contacts between the conservation community and park officials, as well as other organizations based in the area.

### **Arctic**

One of the programmatic mainstays of NAEC, the Arctic program enjoyed another excellent year. The Coordinator position changed hands, with long-time activist Deb Moore leaving to pursue other options and Kelly Hill Scanlon joining the effort. NAEC's roles, as in previous years, were as three-fold: a) to demonstrate the existence of an Alaskan "opposition" to drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; b) to articulate values of the Arctic to the community at large; and c) to facilitate access of the conservation community to technical and cultural experts on the Arctic. Key wins in the year included yet another Senate vote defeating drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and increased prominence of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPRA) in the conservation movement. NAEC work on the NPRA has been key and included developing a slide show kit on the wildlife and ecological values of the Reserve. NAEC has also been the lead conservation organization monitoring State of Alaska attempts to revise tundra travel standards for oil and gas exploration. In addition, the program acted as the fiscal sponsor for a documentary film on the effects of oil production in the

Arctic, titled *Oil on Ice*.

### **Board**

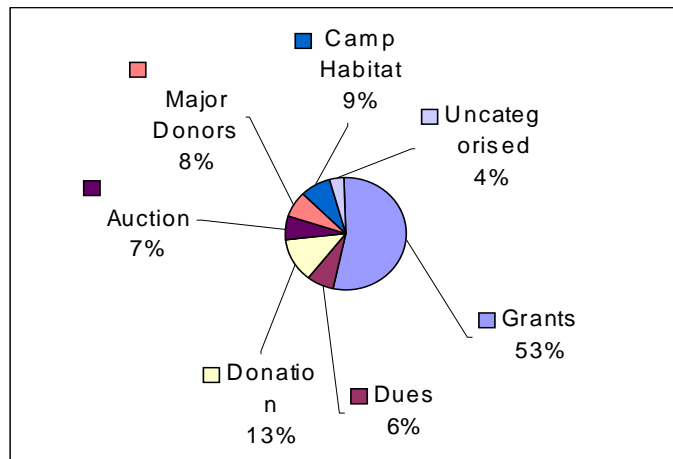
During 2003 the Board of Directors was active in oversight and support of Northern Center programs and activities. The annual meeting was held in January and, with the exception of July, the board met monthly throughout the year. In April the Board conducted a retreat as part of ongoing efforts to finalize the organization's strategic plan. Throughout the year, Board members volunteered for a number of organizational events including the Golden Days Parade float, Run for the Refuge, and the fair booth. The Issues Committee under the chairmanship of Phil Wildfang worked with staff to write and update organizational positions. Fundraising by the board was successful during 2003. Through the spring major donor appeal and the fall auction, the board raised almost \$60,000 for the Northern Center. Thanks in large part to the efforts of Board member John Hagey, we solicited enough no-interest personal loans to settle the interest-bearing mortgage on the Northern Center. The Northern Center's operating expense cash reserves generally exceeded the two-month goal.

# Financial Report 2003

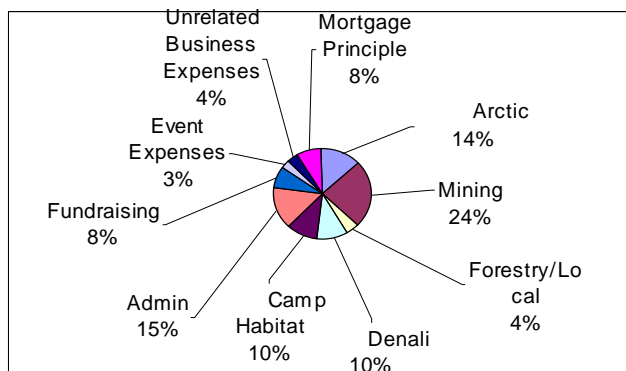
INCOME 2003	
Grants	\$221,119
Dues	\$26,352
Donation	\$54,503
Board Fundraising:	
Auction	\$27,983
Major Donors	\$34,039
Camp Habitat	\$35,803
Uncategorised	\$16,193
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$415,992</b>

EXPENSES 2003	
Program Expenses:	
Arctic	\$57,009
Mining	\$97,155
Forestry/Local	\$18,004
Denali	\$41,459
Camp Habitat	\$40,841
Admin	\$64,064
Fundraising	\$32,676
Event Expenses	\$14,266
Unrelated Business Expenses	\$15,812
Mortgage Principle	\$34,706
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$415,992</b>

## Income



## Expenses



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