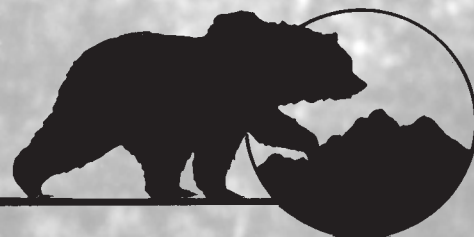


The Journal of the Northern Alaska Environmental Center

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THE NORTHERN LINE





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Director's Notes

by Arthur Hussey

Here in Fairbanks, summer turned to fall (for a moment) and then to winter, and so too the Northern Center has entered a transitional phase. For starters, we are revising our annual operating plan for the year 2001 as we always do at this time of year. At the same time, we are orienting the three new Board members brought on in the last three months, and the new Executive Director (me) continues to climb on board. This is a state of flux, an exciting time, but not one that lends itself to well-gelled Opinion articles, especially those written by the Executive Director.

Nevertheless, as a central figure in this transition, I have two comments to pass on, as well as one new Center direction to describe. My most vivid observation is that I have "inherited" well-founded, thoroughly thought-out programs and initiatives, a supportive and helpful Board and a truly dedicated and professional staff. This combination affirms that the Center lacks "founder-based" organizational problems plaguing many non-profits, wherein the organization depends on the charisma of one or two driving individuals. Indeed, it suggests that the Center is truly an institution transcending personalities, deriving strength from its mem-

bers, staff and board and with much to offer the state of Alaska.

My second impression is that the Center is a bit misunderstood by the public, particularly here in Fairbanks. The Center and its staff and Board seem variously cast as reactionary outsider hippyish obstructionists with neither an interest in economic development nor a cognizance of their own dependence on natural resource utilization. My brief association with the Center suggests that no image could be further from the truth, with some of the assertions bordering on the absurd. In fact, as we all know,

- ◆ The Northern Center does not exist to block economic development in favor of the environment. Rather, it works to assist in managing resources used for economic development and other purposes as sustainably as possible *over the long run*;
- ◆ Neither are Northern Center staff and board simply motivated believers; instead they are a group of skilled professionals counting graduate degrees from among others Harvard and Yale, more than a half a century of non-profit management experience and double that amount of Alaska time; and
- ◆ Northern Center staff, board and members are not ignorant of their reliance upon fossil fuels and electricity. Indeed, they have no intentions

whatsoever of entirely abstaining from using such energy sources and walking to work in minus 40°F temperatures.

To those of us who regularly associate with the Northern Center, the above seem obvious. But it becomes ever clearer that many possible supporters and compatriots in northern Alaska do not "see these truths as self-evident."

The Center did not create this misperception. After all, it has many other challenging things to do, such as uniting the various Intertie groups. But it can and wants to do something about it (while acknowledging that changing an image such as this is a long term process). As first steps, we are increasing both our prominence in the Fairbanks community as well as the degree to which we are perceived as a service organization, inside and outside northern Alaska.

To this end, we have taken four steps to more effectively reach the public, and are planning more. First, at the risk of committing heresy in the eyes of die-hards, we have joined the Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce. This is to some extent a symbolic move, its major "duty" being for me to shake hands at Chamber luncheons and for staff members to occasionally attend meetings of programmatic interest. But that's not all: membership has a concrete benefit in the frequent and varied opportunities to interact with key members of the business community, many of whom are our biggest skeptics and, potentially, greatest allies. Second in our "reach out" steps, we are partnering

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THE NORTHERN LINE

Environmental News of Arctic and Interior Alaska

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NAEC is a not-for-profit, environmental education and advocacy organization dedicated to preserving the environment of arctic and interior Alaska and the sustainable use of our natural resources. NAEC has 1,128 members.

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The Northern Line is produced by Beth Caissie.

We're all yearning for sun...the cover photo of Halla Estensen and Sierra Luke was taken by Amy Turner at Camp Habitat.

The back page photo by Charlie Ot was taken in Denali National Park.



Score one for ANILCA: Celebrating 20 years

By Deb Moore

This winter marks the 20th anniversary of the passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, better known as ANILCA. This amazing piece of legislation was the most significant conservation measure ever signed into law in the United States—with over 104 million acres of Alaska public land designated to expand or create national parks, refuges and wild & scenic rivers and over 56 million acres of Alaska lands added to the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Two of the many notable achievements of this act included the expansion of Denali National Park and Preserve (formerly Mt. McKinley National Park) from its original 2 million acres to approximately 6 million acres, with the original park des-

ignated wilderness; and similarly, the expansion of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (formerly the Arctic National Wildlife Range) from its original 8.9 million acres to 19 million acres with most of the original range designated as wilderness (specifically wilderness is federally defined as “an area of undeveloped federal land retaining its primeval character and influence”).

In celebration of this remarkable achievement, the environmental communities of Alaska and the lower 48 have been, and will continue to hold celebrations across the country. The first of these celebrations occurred in late August in Anchorage when former president Jimmy Carter was honored for his efforts to protect Alaska’s wild places. President Carter and his Interior Secretary, Cecil Andrus, were both instrumental in passing ANILCA and greatly deserved the thanks of the 700 Alaskans who attended the Anchorage reception.

More recently, over 120 activists from 30 different states gathered in Washington, DC in mid-September to participate in the Alaska Lands Summit. Included among the participants were several dozen “heroes of ANILCA”—people who were actively involved in efforts to get the act passed twenty years ago. Participants at the summit attended workshops and panels given by these heroes where they learned more about the history of the act from many perspectives—from within the Carter Administration and congressional offices, to DC-based congressional meetings, to the down home grassroots work in Alaska and across the nation. Participants also had the opportunity to honor some of the congressional heroes of ANILCA: former Representative John Seiberling, Senator William Roth, and the late Representative Morris K. Udall as well as more recent Arctic Refuge heroes: the late Representative Bruce Vento, Senator Barbara Boxer, and again, Senator William Roth.

However, the Alaska Lands Summit wasn’t just a celebration of the achievements of ANILCA. It was also an opportunity to focus on the actions left *unfinished* by the bill: permanent protection for the Tongass—the nation’s largest national forest; acquisition of inholdings in Alaska

National Parks such as Denali and Wrangell-St. Elias; wilderness reviews and recommendations on all lands within national parks and wildlife refuges; and, of course, wilderness designation for the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

During his speech at the Anchorage celebration, President Carter commented that the removal of the Arctic Refuge coastal plain from the wilderness package was one of the events he most regretted during the passage of ANILCA. In 1978, the United States House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed an earlier version of ANILCA that included wilderness designation for the coastal plain. However, oil interests were able to keep the Senate from passing this version into law. Eventually, a final version of ANILCA was passed that did not give wilderness designation to the coastal plain but instead designated it a study area—to determine its wilderness, wildlife, and oil and gas potential. In addition, the coastal plain *was* excluded from all oil and gas drilling until a future Congress made a final determination of its status.

Buoyed by several days of celebration and reflection on the past, present, and future of ANILCA, the 120 activists visited Capitol Hill to urge Congress and the Administration to permanently protect the Arctic Refuge coastal plain and to address the other unfinished business of ANILCA.

One more celebration of ANILCA is yet to come this year. On December 6th, the conservation community will gather in Atlanta, Georgia to dedicate a larger than life caribou sculpture to the Carter Center in remembrance of all the efforts of President Jimmy Carter to pass ANILCA.

In closing, the passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act was vital to preserving the wilderness character of Alaska. Although only several dozen “heroes of ANILCA” were able to attend the Alaska Lands Summit in DC, thousands of people actively participated in the passage of this crucial legislation. The Northern Center would like to extend our thanks to everyone among them who made the dream of preserving wild Alaska a reality.

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New Decision-maker for Intertie Proposal

by Nancy Fresco

At the urging of the Governor, Commissioner John Shively of the Department of Natural Resources formally announced that the state would reconsider its decision on the Best Interest Finding for the Northern Intertie issue. But because Shively left office in early September, he chose to pass on the decision to his successor, Pat Pourchot.

The transfer spells good news for those who want the power line situated away from the Tanana Flats, in that it allows more time for careful reconsideration. Moreover, Pourchot can provide a fresh perspective on the issue. He has also proven willing to meet with representatives of the Northern Center to discuss the issue.

Working with the GVEA Ratepayers' Alliance, a newly formed grassroots coa-

lition, and taking into account technical information provided by engineer William Mazotti, the Northern Center has come a long way towards finding a real-world compromise that might, in the end, please almost everyone. Mazotti's work shows that a second intertie could be routed parallel to the existing line, in the already developed corridor. In areas of great property conflict, the additional width required would be as little as 20-45 feet, as opposed to the 150 feet posited by GVEA. If necessary, wider spacing could be used in areas where conflict is not an issue. The greatest property conflicts occur near the towns of Healy and Ferry, and in these areas, a small portion of the Rex/South route could potentially be used before returning the line to the existing corridor along the Parks Highway.

The Department of Natural Resources

hired an engineering firm to answer specific questions about the intertie, but this company, R.W. Beck, was not given the task of hammering out a real solution. When challenged with rebutting Mazotti's results, Beck did so only in detail, not in overall substance. They agreed that it would be possible to route a segment of line across town, to hook up with the new Wilson substation. They also agreed that less than 50 feet of additional right-of-way width would be sufficient for collocating a new line. Their cost estimates differed only slightly from Mazotti's.

We hope we can work with Pourchot to affect such a solution—one that will protect property owners, pilots, hunters, and all the electrical users of the Interior. Wildlife, wetlands, migratory birds, and a hundred miles of wide-open spaces depend on it.

Mine Dredgings

by Mara Bacsujlaky

Permitting Pogo

Pogo is a 5.2 million ounce gold deposit, grading at roughly 0.5 ounces per ton. It is approximately six times richer than Fort Knox, and will be mined underground (not as an open pit). Thirty-five percent of the gold will be recovered by gravity; the rest will be concentrated through flotation and treated with cyanide to remove the microscopic gold. All tails treated by cyanide will be deposited back underground to minimize potential for environmental contamination.

In August, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released the Draft Scoping Document for the Pogo Mine Environmental Impact Statement. Prepared by Michael Baker, Jr., Inc., the third-party contractor conducting the environmental impact statement, the scoping document was open for public comment until October 10th. Two scoping open houses—one in Delta and one in

Fairbanks—were held in late September. The purpose of the scoping process is to help ensure that all significant issues are fully addressed during the environmental impact statement process. Generally, there is broad-based support for the mine project, and praise for the open-door policy of Teck Resources.

There is also agreement among businesses, environmentalists, Goodpaster property owners, hunters, and other stakeholders, that creating access in the Goodpaster region is the most serious concern about the project. Teck remains open to exploring ways to es-



The entrance to the exploration adit at the Pogo Mine.

tablish a guarantee that an all-season road, should it be constructed, will be removed at the end of mine life.

For further information, or to receive notices of upcoming public meetings, contact Matt Harrington, EPA, at (206) 553-0246.

Take Action!

Encourage Clinton to Designate a National Monument

Twenty years have passed since the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act set the Arctic Refuge coastal plain aside for study of its wilderness, wildlife and oil and gas resources. Each year oil interests try to pass legislation that would allow oil and gas development on the coastal plain and so far, they have failed.

However, Congress continues to be unwilling or unable to make a final decision on the fate of the Refuge.

We can no longer simply wait for Congress to act. The coastal plain needs increased protection now, not several years in the future.

Using his authority under the Antiquities Act, President Clinton has an opportunity to send Congress a

clear message: we must protect this vital part of the Alaska and we must protect it now.

Contact President Clinton and urge him to use the Antiquities Act to safeguard the Arctic Refuge from oil drilling.

☛ Take the time to send a personalized letter or email
1600 Pennsylvania Ave
Washington DC 20500
<president@whitehouse.gov>.

☛ Call the White House (202) 456-1414.

☛ Ask 5 of your friends to call & write letters.

*Help protect the Arctic Refuge coastal plain!
Please write today.*

© Doug Plummer

Denali Watch: Snowmobile Update

by Deb Moore

As many of you will remember, in February 1999, the National Park Service issued a temporary ban on snowmachine use in the original Mt McKinley National Park stating that recreational snowmobiling does not constitute a traditional activity within the old park. This ban was later overturned because the Park Service did not complete the required environmental reviews before implementing the ban and had not provided a definition for "traditional activity."

Since the removal of the temporary ban, the Park Service has developed the required definition and released an environmental assessment for public review and comment. Subsequently, this past June, the Park Service released their final regulatory package putting into effect the **permanent** closure of the 2 million acre wilderness core to the use of snowmobiles for traditional activities. Public support for this snowmobile closure was overwhelming—with 94% of Alaskan respondents and 96% of lower 48 respondents favoring the closure.

Definition Of Traditional Activity

The Park Service defines a traditional activity as one that "generally and lawfully occurred in the Old Park contemporaneously with the enactment of ANILCA." Moreover, a traditional activity must involve "the consumptive use of one or more natural resources of the Old Park such as hunting, trapping, fishing, berry picking or similar activities," and it must be a legally permissible activity in the Old Park. Finally, the Park Service definition makes it clear that recreational use of snowmobiles is not a traditional activity in the Old Park.

Therefore, if a particular motorized use did not occur in a National Park System Unit or Designated Wilderness Area before ANILCA's passage in 1980, it cannot be permitted now. Thus, because the undisputed facts show that the Old Park was NEVER open to snowmobile use before 1980, snowmobiles cannot be used there now.

Recent Events

In response to the Park Service's permanent snowmobile closure, the Alaska State

Snowmobile Association filed a lawsuit against the National Park Service claiming that the Park Service twisted the law regarding what constitutes traditional use of the park. This lawsuit is ongoing with the Northern Alaska Environmental Center in full support of the Park Service's definition and closure.

In addition, Senators Craig Thomas (R-WY) and Ted Stevens (R-AK) recently developed a snowmobile rider that could potentially be added to any of the remaining appropriations bills. This rider unilaterally declares that recreational snowmobiling is a "legitimate" use of national parks that it "does not adversely affect or impair park resources and values." If passed as written, this rider would have forced snowmobile use to be allowed in ALL parks—including Yellowstone, Denali and other national parks in Alaska. Fortunately, the rider was revised so as not to include any Alaska parks. However, if passed, it would still affect Yellowstone and many other lower 48 parks. *(If you would like a further update, please contact Deb Moore at <deb@northern.org>.)*

Spotlight on the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska: The Utukok Uplands

by Deb Moore

The following is the third in a series of articles, focusing on a specific area within the National Petroleum Reserve and on the wildlife, and natural values, which make that region unique and valuable.

Covering most of the southwestern corner of the National Petroleum Reserve, the Utukok Uplands is one of wildest and most remote areas in the United States. This vast region of foothills, gorges and canyons encompasses the headwaters of the Colville and Utukok Rivers as well as a large portion of the upper Kokolik River watershed.

The Utukok Uplands are the critical calving grounds for the largest caribou herd in North America, the 450,000-member Western Arctic caribou herd. Unlike the Teshekpuk herd that resides year-round on the coastal plain near Teshekpuk Lake, the Western Arctic herd migrates across the Brooks Range from their wintering grounds in the Selawik National Wildlife Refuge and Nulato Hills to their calving grounds in the foothills. These foothills, which range in elevation from 500 – 2000 feet, provide a much warmer and drier early spring climate than either the mountains or coastal plain. The east-west ranging ridges of the lower foothills are covered with nutritious tussock cottongrass, heaths and small flowering plants that are vital to the survival of the new born young while the breezy exposed sites provide necessary relief from insects.

The Utukok Uplands also support the high-

est concentration of grizzly bears in the arctic. This concentration is due primarily to the high number of caribou calves born in the foothills each spring as well as the lack of any significant hunting in the area. In addition, the uplands support relatively high concentrations of wolves and wolverines that also rely upon the abundance of caribou for survival.

The Utukok foothills contain a handful of large lakes that are considerably deeper than their counterparts on the coastal plain. These lakes provide vital overwintering ground for fish such as grayling, lake trout, whitefish and arctic char. Each spring, when the ice begins to thaw, these fish return to the major rivers and tributaries where they are an important subsistence source for the Inupiat Eskimos, the natives who inhabit the Reserve.

The world's largest zinc and second largest lead deposit in the world, the Red Dog Mine, lies only 40 miles southwest of the National Petroleum Reserve.



© Chris Larsen

The Utukok Uplands are the critical calving grounds for the largest caribou herd in North America, the 450,000-member Western Arctic caribou herd

The headwaters and upper watershed of the Colville River cut steep canyons into the upper foothills of the Utukok Uplands. Further downriver the cliffs become fewer and the corridor is less distinct from the surrounding landscape. Vegetation along the streams and rivers of the uplands are bordered by tall willows and dwarf shrubs. This combination of cliffs and riparian vegetation provides excellent habitat for a wide variety of migratory song and shorebirds. At least seven species of raptor also nest within the Utukok area. The two most abundant species—the gyrfalcon and the golden eagle—prefer to nest along the sheer cliffs of the rivers and streams and in the upper foothills and mountains, respectively. Other bird species that favor foothill habitats include sandhill cranes, lesser Canada geese, golden plovers, whimbrels and bar-tailed godwits.

The upper Utukok-Kokolik area in the far southwest corner of the reserve includes a somewhat gentler and lower version of the southwestern US's topography, with scalloped uplands, narrow deep gorges, and a few sites of red rock exposures. Only the eastern part of this "little canyonlands" extends into the Reserve. While this area is extremely remote and little known, it is an excellent destination for hikers or rafters wishing to experience the beauty of wild Alaska.

The western foothills and mountains of the National Petroleum Reserve have the potential to harbor vast quantities of coal and



© Cominco

mineral resources. The largest coal resource in the United States lies within the Reserve with the most valuable stretch crossing from the Chukchi Sea coast east through mountains and southern foothills of the Utukok Uplands. In addition, the world's largest lead and second largest zinc deposit in the world, the Red Dog Mine, lies only 40 miles southwest of the National Petroleum Reserve. Mineral surveys have indicated that the mountains bordering the Utukok Uplands may hold even higher levels of zinc and lead than are present at Red Dog. While the Reserve is currently withdrawn from all mineral leasing, recent attempts by the owners of Red Dog to develop a seaport are likely to increase Congressional pressure to allow mineral leasing within the boundaries of the Reserve.

The 4.3 million acre Utukok Uplands Special Area was one of three Special Areas within the Reserve that were identified in 1977 by the Interior Department to contain significant natural values deserving maximum protection. The Utukok Uplands were given this distinction in consideration of the wildlife values of the Western Arctic caribou herd.

Director's Notes

Continued from page 2

with teachers in the Fairbanks area to develop a mini-curriculum on Environmental Education for use in the local schools. This will supplement the well-known work we do in the summer through Camp Habitat, thereby formulating a year-round, community-based Environmental Education project. Third, we are expanding our policy positions on certain issues to include acknowledgement of the economic implications of our choices, positing realistic compromises as we have done in the Intertie. Finally, we have informally upped our contacts with key decision-makers, whether through a personal membership in the voluntary pilots' organization Light Hawk, a visit to the Rotary Club, or moral support to an emerging Environmental Education-focused preschool.

Each move of itself is small. But as a sum total over time, they will significantly expand the number and type of people that we interact with and who, potentially, can contribute to the mission of the Center.

In closing, I stress that we have not gone soft. Quite the contrary. The Center's beliefs in the value of wilderness and concern about the United States' insatiable resource consumption are as strong as ever, and there remain issues on which no amount of the Northern Center's patient explanation or rationalization will help. But in the long run, we feel that our efforts are most effective if we interact with as wide an audience as possible and take into consideration constraints—real or imagined. To this end, I solicit your assistance in identifying key partners and suggestions on issues we should consider and/or positions we should take. Thanks for taking the time to do so, as well as for your support for our work.

Boreal Shorts

by Nancy Fresco

Forest Management Plan Released

The Tanana Valley State Forest Management Plan affects 1.8 million acres of state forest in Interior Alaska—forest which is officially managed for “multiple use.” A new version of the plan has just gone through public review. Changes in the plan may affect the type, number, and total length of roads built, the total acreage harvested, or the management of specific species, age classes, or stands of trees. These changes could, in turn, affect wildlife habitat, hunting, fishing, or recreational opportunities in the forest. Below is a brief overview of the concerns the Northern Center submitted to the state.

- ♦ The Division of Forestry intends to place all marketable timber on a cutting rotation of approximately 70 years for hardwoods (aspen and birch) and 90-120 years for white spruce.

Harvest estimates do subtract so-called “retention factors” from the annual allowable cut. However, these retention factors do not represent specific “retained” trees—every tree can potentially be harvested at some point in time. Moreover, retention factors are extremely low, varying from 1% to 10% depending on species—not nearly enough to account for every type of forest protection, from stream buffers to endangered species protection to private property protection.

- ♦ The rotation lengths mentioned above are insufficient to keep old trees in our forests.



The most valuable white spruce trees being harvested currently are between 120 and 200 years old. No solid provisions have been made to keep such trees in the forest. The plan claims that Research Natural Areas (RNAs) will help protect some of these older trees. But these areas only account for 10,000 acres out of 1,800,000 (about half of 1% of the forest) and even they have been compromised; their boundaries have been moved to allow timber cutting.

- ♦ The maps provided with the Plan give no clear marking of existing or planned roads, making it very hard to determine what changes will look like.

Three hundred miles of all-season road already exist in the forest, with many more winter roads. Off-road access is supposed to only occur where it does not kill plant cover or cause erosion, but it isn't adequately monitored. Currently, the construction of timber roads is being subsidized by lowering the cost of the timber for loggers.

- ♦ The Plan includes a massive allowable cut for hardwoods (birch and aspen) although there are currently few markets for these trees, and little cutting.

The Division of Forestry claims that no large industrial uses are on the immediate horizon, but admits that they would like to encourage industries such as oriented strandboard production in the future. However, the plan does not examine the ramifications of this type of industry on the forest and the air and water environment.

Meet New Executive Director, Arthur Hussey



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Arthur with his daughter Juliana.

As is rumored, I came to the Northern Center via a somewhat circuitous routing. Here are a few mileposts from the horse's mouth, since there are many differing stories of this path. Enjoy. And thanks for the opportunity to be part of the Northern Center community.

A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away...I spent my early years in rural Maine, an area that was similar to Alaska, at least then—forested, reasonably cold, timber-dependent, etc. I loved the rural lifestyle there. I cut prodigious amounts of firewood in my spare time and took a dim view of the value of Interstate highway construction equipment, except as rusting hulks. I graduated from high school near L.L. Bean and then attended Michigan State University in ever-bland East Lansing, MI, leaving with a bachelor's of science in Honors Zoology with High Honors in March of 1981.

Immediately thereafter, I departed the US on a two-month contract, for what became a tour that lasted nearly twenty years, covered about 1.5 million miles and one hundred percent defined my professional life. This stint saw me working for the School for International Training in Nigeria and Kenya managing cultural exchange programs; the humanitarian agency CARE in Bangladesh, Mozambique and Angola overseeing relief and development projects; and, finally, the Desert Re-

search Foundation in Namibia in general management. Most of my work involved budget and grant making, proposal preparation, and project management. I also worked in project evaluation and monitoring, fiscal and budget management and design and review of strategic planning efforts. Somewhat late in my stint overseas, I became a Commercial Pilot, and flew single and twin-engine charters primarily from unimproved airstrips in Southern Africa.

My last duty, in Namibia, was particularly important professionally. There, from late 1996 to April of this year, I had the luxury of working for Dr. Mary Seely (truly "the Jane Goodall of the deserts") as her Assistant Executive Director and Company Pilot at the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN). For the DRFN, a Namibian non-profit focused on sustainable natural resource management of arid environments, I facilitated strategic planning processes and institutionalized administrative systems, managed the organizational budget, wrote new proposals and liaised with the Board of Trustees. I also flew ad hoc charters throughout Southern Africa for organizational personnel. All in all, it was I position I loved and hesitated to leave.

Digressing somewhat, in 1995 and while still with CARE, my wife and I visited Alaska on vacation and, a few months later, decided to establish eventual residency here in Fairbanks. Six months later followed the purchase of our house on Chena Ridge. A few months thereafter, I became a Northern Center member. We continued to work overseas, making yearly or semi-annual visits to Fairbanks for the next few years, which for the most part coincided with the arrival of -45°F Arctic highs. We decided to finally relocate to Fairbanks in late 1999. I arrived June 3, 2000 following a thirty-seven day transit from Namibia in a Cessna 182, V5-SNO. Many of you followed my 12,596-mile trip up the West Coast of Africa and on to Europe, and the Arctic. I then left for Maine where my wife and daughter awaited me. We drove here via Banff National Park and other places, arriving June 29 and I started at the Northern Center the next day.

One may legitimately wonder how we connected Namibia, where we lived for much of the 1990s, and Alaska. In what may seem tortuous logic, we saw that Namibia and Alaska were a very close match, differing primarily in terms of temperature. Other issues, particularly on the macro-level, appeared to have startling similarities: both Namibia and Alaska were resource-driven economies, were sparsely settled but had significant land ownership issues, were economically oriented around distant urban area, had extremely fragile environments, grappled with Caucasian/Indigenous schisms and experienced natural biological activity for only a few months a year. These parallels amplified our interest in Alaska, particularly Fairbanks and have made us feel quite at home.

That, in a nutshell, was my path to the Northern Center. It would seem pretty eccentric in most parts of the world but here in Fairbanks, I guess it's mundane. I am enjoying meeting interesting folks in the Northern Center and related communities. Please do stop by when time and energy permit. Thank you!

Mine Dredgings

by Mara Bacsujlaky

Mineral Policy Summit Held

From October 2 through 4, the mining coordinator attended the first Alaskan mining "summit" in Girdwood. Funded by the Brainerd, True North and Alaska Conservation Foundations, and hosted by the Northern Center, the Center for Science in Public Participation, and the Alaska Community Action on Toxics, the conference brought together local, regional and national groups that work on mining issues in Alaska. Among the participants were the Mineral Policy Center, Trustees for Alaska, the Western Mining Action Project, Earth Justice Legal Defense Fund and the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council. The conference focused on identifying key issues in state mineral policy and mapping out long-term strategies for extending resources and enhancing effectiveness of groups working in the mineral policy arena.

Mine Dredgings

by Mara Bacsujlaky

Red Dog



The dispute between the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) over an air quality permit issued by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation escalated when the state broke off negotiations with the federal agency. Citing a refusal to negotiate in good faith, Governor Knowles blasted the EPA for inflexibility on the Red Dog permit. The state and Cominco, the operator of the lead-zinc mine, also filed a joint final

brief in the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, seeking to overturn the EPA's authority.

On the 23rd of August, the Native Village of Kivalina, located roughly 43 miles from Red Dog, filed an *Amicus Brief*, supporting the EPA. The Tribal IRA's position is that they rely upon the EPA to objectively oversee mine operations and enforce the environmental laws that protect the air, water and natural environment that support their subsistence activities.

The air-quality permit at the center of the controversy is one that the state Department of Environmental Conservation approved for a new diesel generator to support production at the mine. The state required that the new generator be fitted

with effective air pollution control technology, and that six existing engines be retrofitted with air pollution controls that meet all state and federal emission standards.

Some time after the public comment period closed on the permit application, the EPA rejected the state's permit and insisted a different technology, "selective catalytic reduction," be used. The state and Cominco contend that the technology is more expensive, is not proven in the Arctic, and could result in more air emissions than under the state permit. As a result, the state and Cominco filed a suit in federal court in February challenging the EPA.

Are you concerned about Denali?

The Denali Citizens Council is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation of the natural integrity of Denali National Park and Preserve.

Denali Citizens Council

PO Box 78
Denali Park, AK 99755

We look
We listen
We communicate

For information on membership, write us at the above address, or email us at

denalicitizen@hotmail.com

Boreal Shorts

by Nancy Fresco



Committee Selects Buffer Zones for the Interior

Over the past few years, the public has consistently demanded better protection—in the form of riparian logging buffer zones—for our Interior streams, rivers, lakes, and sloughs. Finally, we're getting closer to a solution.

Public opinion helped instigate the formation of a scientific and technical committee to examine the issue. After a lengthy study of the available scientific literature and local ecology—including fish habitat, hydrology, and silvicultural issues—this committee suggested buffers of at least 50 to 60 feet on all waterbodies other than so-called "dynamic glacial" rivers, which received no recommendation.

These recommendations were then handed over to an implementation committee, which included representatives from Fish and Game, the Division of Forestry, the Department of Environmental Conservation, the logging industry, the Northern Center, and others. We spent a total of four days talking, compromising, and finally reaching consensus on a series of proposed changes to the Forest Practices Act and the accompanying regulations. Our proposal will be turned over to the legislature

in the next session.

The good news is that our buffer recommendations included the controversial dynamic glacial streams, as well as all other glacial waters, clearwater streams, backwater sloughs, and lakes. In fact, the group agreed that buffers should be required for commercial timber sales on all waterbodies wider than three feet which contain high-value fish for any portion of the year (or have not been proven to be devoid of fish). The width of buffers was 66 feet on each bank for private lands and 100 feet for public lands, although some exceptions were made for partial cutting in the outer half of some of the proposed buffers. It was also agreed that this summer the Departments of Fish and Game and Forestry would examine upland streams of less than 3 feet wide to determine what buffers, if any, these waterways may require.

At the Northern Center, we would have preferred wider buffers; we would also have liked to see more attention paid to values beyond the protection of fish—values such as protecting other wildlife habitat and scenic resources. However, the new recommendations are a definite step in the right direction.

Forest Facts—Logging Practices

by Nancy Fresco



© NAEC File Photo

A clearcut logging site in the Tanana Valley State Forest.

How should America be managing its forests?

This question begs the response that forests don't intrinsically need to be managed at all. Human intervention is often more of a cause than a cure for problems in forest health. This is not to say that forests can, or should, remain entirely static over time; fires, insects, and storms make forests highly dynamic, like all natural ecosystems.

Old growth forests, riparian zones, and areas of particular habitat sensitivity are all poor candidates for supplying America's ever-growing demand for logs, boards, chips, and paper-pulp. It goes without saying that we should be producing and using more recycled products, and reducing overall demand. But when land is logged—as we know that it will be—how should it best be done to protect ecosystems and ensure long-term sustainability? It turns out that we don't always know the answer to this question—but we do know that the answer is both location-specific and ecosystem-specific.

Forests vary in their age structure, their species composition, their natural disturbance cycles, and their regeneration patterns. Log-

ging practices are also varied—but not necessarily for the right reasons. Below are brief descriptions of a few common forestry practices, along with some pros and cons of each.

Clear-cutting, or removal of all trees in a given area, continues to be overused and misused, in part because it offers quick profits, especially for the pulp market. The most common mistakes made in clear-cutting have been:

- ◆ Cutting on slopes, causing rampant erosion of topsoil
- ◆ Logging along waterways, causing changes in silt, mud, large woody debris and water temperature that can kill a river's inhabitants
- ◆ Cutting large areas that in no way mimic natural disturbances, making it difficult to achieve natural regeneration.

On the other hand, clear-cutting sometimes may offer the largest return (in terms of board-feet or volume of wood) for the smallest amount of disturbed land area. Clear-cuts can vary in size, and do not have to occur at an "industrial" scale.

Selective cutting, or removal of individually chosen trees from a forest, is much more aesthetically pleasing in the short term, but can likewise be abused.

- ◆ Selective cutting is often used as a euphemism for high-grading—taking the best specimens and the most desired species. This reduces the genetic viability and changes the species composition of a forest, steadily degrading it over time.
- ◆ Too many roads can be a serious problem. The fewer trees one takes from any given area, the more roads are needed for access. Roads can change the travel patterns of wildlife, exacerbate runoff and erosion, and allow disruptive motorized use by humans. More roads also mean more stream crossings, and every crossing is a potential problem.

Well-managed selective cutting involves **thinning** of less valuable trees as well as those with the largest price tag. It is usually most practical in areas where trees are being cut for high-quality wood products rather than pulp.

The **seed-tree method** involves cutting of all but a few high-quality trees that are left behind to provide natural seed for regrowth. This sometimes helps solve problems with natural regeneration. However, one must keep in mind:

- ◆ Lone seed trees can be vulnerable in windy areas
- ◆ The genetic variability and species diversity of the resulting seedlings may be lower than normal.
- ◆ This technique is only applicable where trees normally regenerate by seeding into open areas, rather than by root-sprouts, root suckers or fire-released cones, to give a few examples.

On a positive note, this method does try to ensure that seedlings grow from local seed, rather than seed collected from off-site.

In a **shelterwood system** trees are thinned to allow regeneration on the forest floor, and then cut once seedlings have become established below. At times, seedling generation may take place without thinning.

- ◆ Logging must be done in such a way as to not unduly disturb the new seedlings.
- ◆ This is only applicable for species that will become established in partial shade and then grow in full sun without being out-competed by other vegetation.

If done successfully, a shelterwood system can have some of the advantages of a clear-cut without all the drawbacks.

Many variations on these methods have been employed—as well as other methods not mentioned here—with varying success. There is still a great deal of room for experimentation to improve not only the methods themselves, but also the manner in which they are used. The tactics foresters choose can make the difference between a functioning ecosystem and a mere tree farm, between healthy watersheds and silted, eroded streams, and between quick profits or long-term income. There is still much to learn.



This year the Northern Center, along with the Denali Group of the Sierra Club, staffed a booth at the Tanana Valley State Fair. Our booth offered fair-weary children a secure corner next to the "log cabin" where they could make stamp pictures and drawings. At the same time many new parents signed up for Camp Habitat's mailing list. Many more Fair visitors came into the booth to chat about the Intertie or other programs, to buy Center T-Shirts, books, or nature-oriented games. Many folks also picked up brochures about our work, became members, or simply put a face to the Northern Center.

Wilderness Champion Bruce Vento Dies

by Adam Kolton
Alaska Wilderness League
Arctic Campaign Director

One of the Arctic Refuge's great est champions, Bruce Vento, died on October 10th after an eight-month battle with lung cancer. We all know what a great hero he was for the environment, for the Arctic Refuge, for the Tongass, for the Boundary Waters, and for so many other wilderness areas around the country. We will miss him dearly. Not only for his leadership, but also for his good humor and friendship.

There is nothing we can say that fully captures what he has meant to the environment, to his friends and family, or to future generations. Still, all of us who love wilderness will be rewarded with signs of his good work for years to come. His

memory will live on in the landscapes that he loved – in the wilderness areas he helped to protect.

Because of Bruce Vento's work on the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980, millions of acres were protected in new parks, wildlife refuges, and designated wilderness areas. As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of this landmark law, we also celebrate Bruce Vento's visionary leadership. In recent years, Rep. Vento has led the fight to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from oil drilling. His "Morris K. Udall Wilderness Act" would designate the refuge's fragile 1.5 million-acre coastal plain as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. The bill has 177 cosponsors, surpassing any other congressional wilderness proposal.

Bruce Vento was a courageous leader who never hesitated to stand up to the special interests. We will sorely miss his good humor, his firm resolve, and his passion for protecting our national treasures. The world is truly a richer place because of Bruce Vento. In the silence of America's protected wilderness, his memory will endure.

We will continue to fight for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and, when the battle is finally won, we will take comfort in knowing that Bruce Vento will be smiling upon us.

Those of you wishing to send a donation in memorial of Rep. Vento can send a contribution to the Bruce F. Vento Science Education Scholarship Fund; c/o The St. Paul Foundation; 600 Norwest Center; 55 5th St; St. Paul, MN 55101.

Mine Dredgings

by Mara Bacsujlaky

True North



The United States Army Corps of Engineers and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources issued a 15-day Supplemental Public Notice on September 8th. The public was given the opportunity to comment on a new document released by Fairbanks Gold Mining, Inc. Titled *True North Environmental Evaluation (Response to Comments)*, the 400 page document is the company's response to comments made by regulators and the public during the first comment period, which closed August 18th.

Because the document referenced several other reports, including the Fort Knox Environmental Assessment, and a revised project description and reclamation plan, preparing comment for the new notice involved reviewing over 1,000 pages of information. Consequently, the Northern Center, among others in the public, asked for, and received a 15-day extension, which closed on October 24.

As a result of comments submitted by the Northern Center and Neighborhood Mine Watch, Fairbanks Gold Mining, Inc., the local subsidiary of Kinross Gold Corporation, has agreed to relocate all of its waste rock dumps, topsoil stockpiles, and buildings away from wetlands. This will also save a

portion of the Davidson Ditch that would have been obliterated by a waste rock dump under the original Plan of Operations. The company has also revised its original transportation route, with an underpass replacing the grade-level crossing of the proposed ore haul route and the Steese Highway.

Despite these changes, significant issues remain unresolved. A baseline hydrologic study conducted by a consultant for the mining company suggests that the open pits may not be dry, as FGMI has indicated in its plan of operations, and a dramatic reduction in the reclamation bond (by nearly half) raises concerns about the financial surety of the project. The company has not provided conclusive evidence that Cleary Summit residents and businesses will not be adversely impacted by light, noise and dust from their preferred ore haulage route still remain. Also unaddressed are questions about what the impacts will be on our communities and environment when Kinross develops its other satellite deposits.

True North is the first satellite open pit to



© Mara Bacsujlaky

View of Fairbanks Gold Mining Inc's preferred access to their proposed True North open pit mine. In July, the mining company bulldozed 5.6 miles of the proposed route through an area that had no trails or other disturbance. In their application to the State Department of Natural Resources, the company requested permission to conduct geotechnical sampling using a track-mounted drill rig, with resulting disturbance no wider than approximately 10 feet. Visits to the site revealed that the disturbance is, at a minimum, twice that distance. The state supported Fairbanks Gold's actions, stating that the steep terrain necessitated bulldozing to mineral soil, even for a drill rig designed to ride over low-lying vegetation. Right-of-Way permits for the route are still under consideration by the State.

reach permitting as part of Kinross Gold's proposal to convert the Fort Knox mill to a regional gold processing plant. The Northern Center, along with other local, regional and national organizations, continues to press for a full Environmental Impact Statement for the entire satellite mine & regional mill plan. Final decisions on the permits are expected within the next two months.

Thank you to the following
foundations which have generously
supported our work this quarter:

444S

Alaska Conservation Foundation

Brainerd Foundation

Patagonia

McKenzie River Gathering Foundation

Thank you to all of our
New Major Donors:

Susan Campbell and Keith Echelmeyer
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Tako Raynolds
Scott Schuttner and Glynn Hoener
Mary Shields
Dan and Ann Swift
Mary Teel
Ralph Wells
Mary Zalar and Ken Whitten

Planning Inconsistencies in Denali National Park

by Joyce Oswald

Joyce Oswald has been a member of the Denali Citizens Council for several years. She has been a visitor transportation system driver at Denali since 1990.

The Board of Directors and members of the Denali Citizens Council (DCC) have been focusing on the planning process at Denali National Park & Preserve. Our main concern is that although the National Park Service has published environmental impact statements (EIS) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), many of the plans are being significantly modified by the subsequent publication and acceptance of environmental assessments (EA).

A case in point at Denali is the Entrance Area and Road Corridor Final Plan of 1997. The original report received 262 written comments and 40 individuals testified at public hearings throughout the state of Alaska. However, since the publication of the Final Plan at least two significant environmental assessments have altered its recommendations:

a. **Environmental Assessment for the Expansion of the Alaska Railroad Depot:** keeps the McKinley Park Air-strip open, rebuilds the Alaska Railroad Depot and realigns the Denali Park Road in the entrance area.

b. **Environmental Assessment for Improvements to the Primrose Turnout:** redesigns the Primrose turnout and constructs permanent rest rooms at Milepost 17.

DCC's concern is the continued piecemeal development of the Park's entrance area and the potential for pressure from special interest groups to contravene the findings of fully researched, publicly supported environmental impact statements. Effectively, although an environmental impact statement is written, public hear-

ings are held, and public comments are incorporated into the document, the subsequent publication and acceptance of environmental assessments, with minor or no public input, may substantially alter this process.

This situation has been addressed by the Council on Environmental Quality:

Since NEPA was passed, the role of the EA has evolved to the point where it is the predominant way agencies conduct NEPA analyses. Conceived as a brief analysis to de-

termine the significance of environmental effects, the EA today increasingly includes mitigation measures that reduce adverse effects below significant levels. With the increased use of EAs, often to the overall benefit of the environment, comes the danger that public involvement will be diminished and that individually minor actions will have major adverse cumulative effects. Therefore, as agencies rely more heavily on EAs, agencies need to ensure that they forge true partnerships with other agencies and the surrounding communities. Only then will stakeholders trust that EAs are honestly serving to protect

the environment.
The National Environmental Policy Act—A Study of Its Effectiveness After Twenty-five Years. Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). Executive Office of the President. January 1997.

Listed as one of the ten most endangered national parks by National Parks Conservation Association, Denali is under increasing pressure by the public, politicians and tour operators to accommodate more visitors. Developments in the Park need to be carefully monitored and reviewed so that Denali can continue to be one of the crown jewels of our national park system.

It will take tremendous courage and vision by the Park Service and conservation organizations to immunize Alaska from the virus of irresponsible growth.
Kim Heacox *The Erosion of a Vision.* National Parks Magazine, Nov/Dec 1999.

termine the significance of environmental effects, the EA today increasingly includes mitigation measures that reduce adverse effects below significant levels. With the increased use of EAs, often to the overall benefit of the environment, comes the danger that public involvement will be diminished and that individually minor actions will have major adverse cumulative effects. Therefore, as agencies rely more heavily on EAs, agencies need to ensure that they forge true partnerships with other agencies and the surrounding communities. Only then will stakeholders trust that EAs are honestly serving to protect

To review Denali Park & Preserve planning documents on the web, go to <<http://www.nps.gov/dena/plans/>>.

To voice your concerns, contact Nancy Swanton, Chief of Planning and Compliance, Denali National Park & Preserve; PO Box 9; Denali Park AK 99755; (907) 257-2651.

DCC is a group of concerned citizens founded in 1974. Our mission is to preserve the natural integrity of the Park. Our activities include education, oversight, testimony and monitoring. To learn more about DCC, contact us at <denalicitizen@hotmail.com>.

Boreal Shorts

by Nancy Fresco

A Wild Fire Season



The severity of the 2000 fire season has fueled further debate about US Forest Service management practices. In question is the relationship between logging and fire conditions. Republican leaders, including House Speaker Dennis Hastert, have spoken out against the Clinton Administration's policies that reduced logging in National Forests. While speaking in Oregon, Texas Governor

and Presidential candidate George W. Bush stated that such policies, "made the forests more dangerous to fire."

However, a recent report released by the bipartisan Congressional Research Service states that there is no linkage between the current wildfires and reduced timber harvests. The report states that heavy logging in the past may instead have increased the fire hazard by removing large, fire-resistant trees and leaving behind excess brush and fuel. Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt concluded that a balance between abolishing logging and the timber industry's aim of increased harvests is needed for healthy forests.



From the Woodpile. . .

by Ginny Hill Wood,
founding member of NAEC, and regular columnist
Presidential "AN-WARS"

In August, Alaska Governor Tony Knowles wrote a letter to President Jimmy Carter who was in Alaska celebrating the 20th anniversary of the passage of ANILCA. What follows is the exchange between Knowles and Carter and a response from columnist Ginny Hill Wood.

August 24, 2000

An open letter to the Honorable Jimmy Carter, Former President of the United States

Dear President Carter:

As a former governor, you hopefully will understand my anger and disappointment about your comments Wednesday in Anchorage urging designation of national monument status for the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Alaskans welcome visitors to the 49th state with warmth and hospitality. However, I feel you abused this welcome by your actions yesterday. Without any meaningful dialogue with the people of Alaska, you used our state as a media prop and platform to project your message to President Clinton. I can only guess how you would have felt as governor if a figure of national prominence had come to Georgia to use your state in a similar manner.

The essential needs of Alaska working families all across this vast and beautiful state depend on the responsible development of our natural resources. For us, environmentally responsible oil and gas development in a tiny portion of the Arctic Refuge means jobs, the opportunity

to improve our schools and other public services, and address some of the most acute social problems in the country.

For America, such oil development would reduce our dependence on foreign imports at a time when crude prices are skyrocketing, and when a gallon of gasoline costs the American consumer more than at any time in recent memory.

You are wrong to dismiss the role of the Coastal Plain—the most promising unexplored petroleum province in North America—in alleviating this situation and creating hundreds of thousands of jobs across the nation.

You are wrong in ignoring the pressing needs of Alaska's Native families, especially those living on the Arctic Slope, whose lives depend on the delicate care of a fragile environment for sustenance, and whose hopes are nourished by the jobs, education, and decent quality of life that oil and gas development has and will bring to their children. Their long and steadfast support for responsible development of the ANWR Coastal Plain is

discredited by your call for unilateral Presidential action.

You are wrong in calling for executive action at the midnight hour instead of an open, public democratic process of carefully weighing values in the light of day.

You are wrong to call upon the President to take an illegal action that is prohibited by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. Ironically that is the very act whose anniversary you have used as the pretext for your visit to Alaska. The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act contains the "no more" clause, requiring Congress alone to enact any future land withdrawals of more than 5,000 acres in Alaska. Implicit in this provision is the concept that the American people should determine the disposition of the Arctic Refuge through their elected representatives in Congress. Just such a congressional debate is underway.

Mr. President, Alaskans understand better than most Americans the necessity of maintaining the health of our land. At the same time, we do not fear developing the resources found within it. As we have done in the North Slope oil fields, we can develop the resources of ANWR and create an economic boon for the nation while protecting our environment.

President Carter, I respect you as a former president. I greatly admire your dedication to the causes of world peace and human rights. I hope you will reconsider your recommendation to President Clinton that he thwart the working families of Alaska, the law, and the Congress by using his executive authority in the Arctic Refuge.

Sincerely,
Tony Knowles



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August 26, 2000

To Governor Tony Knowles:

We've had another wonderful visit to Alaska, our only regret being that we were not able to share greetings with you at any of the numerous events organized by your citizens to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA).

I read your letter with great care, and feel obligated to respond to the points you made, in as frank a fashion as you used to express your opinions to me.

First of all, as a governor, I welcomed to Atlanta many hundreds of visitors, many of them "figures of national prominence" and always respected their freedom to express views that were contrary to my own. My opinions on Alaska have not been secretive and I came as a former President of the United States at the invitation of the Alaska Conservation Foundation (of which I am honorary chairman), the directors of some of the federal agencies responsible for representing the nation's interests in the 49th state, and a number of present and past leaders in your own state government.

As far as the absence of "meaningful dialogue" is concerned, I made a talk and answered questions from an audience of about 700 at noon yesterday, had a press conference and responded to media reporters without avoiding any of the controversial issues, had another half-hour television interview, and participated in a two-hour public forum at the university this afternoon. This was a freewheeling discussion, moderated by Lieutenant Governor Fran Ulmer that included former Governor Jay Hammond, Paula Easley, Oliver Leavitt, Bill Horn, and Celia Hunter, along with Cecil Andrus and me. I presume that you recognize the strong diversity of opinion about ANILCA represented in this group, and feel certain that you would have been welcome to join us.



Alaskans gather to welcome President Jimmy Carter to Anchorage to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act.

It is not accurate to state that oil prices are still skyrocketing (they've leveled off) or that a gallon of gasoline costs the American consumer more than at any time in recent memory. It is generally known that the expected oil to be extracted from the Coastal Plain would supply our nation's needs for about six months, and that much of it would probably be exported to Japan and other foreign buyers. Some people are too ready to adopt the propaganda statements of the oil companies.

You only have to be familiar with the subsistence provisions of ANILCA to realize that neither Cecil Andrus, I, nor the most fervent Alaskan environmentalists have ever ignored the best interests of this state's Native families. You might wish to compare jobs created by the tourist industry in the last 20 years with what might be forthcoming if the integrity of ANWR is violated by the extraction of a relatively small quantity of oil.

I'm sure you also realize that the "no more" clause of ANILCA prohibits the taking in of new lands not previously set aside as needing special protection. Since the key portions of ANWR have been protected since President Eisenhower designated this as a special area in 1960,

the Coastal Plain would not come under this provision of the act. I know that there is some debate about this point, and if I'm wrong, then the federal courts would reverse any action of the president under the Antiquities Act. This same legal action was taken by oil and development champions in opposition to my decisions in 1978, and the courts ruled that the national monument designations were legal and proper.

I don't know what President Clinton might do concerning use of the Antiquities Act. If Democrats are successful this year, then we won't fear for the status of ANWR and no national monument designation will be needed. If it's a Republican victory, then the nation's leaders would already be committed to your position and that of the oil companies and such a designation may be advisable.

As you know, I have no political authority whatsoever, but as an American citizen I have the right (and the duty) to express my opinion. Once again, it was a pleasure to do so in Alaska, an extraordinary and beloved state.

Sincerely, and respectfully,
Jimmy Carter

Open Letter to Governor Tony Knowles

by Ginny Hill Wood

(continued from page 15)

Your recent widely-distributed—and discourteous—public letter to former president Jimmy Carter, upbraiding him for his comments made as an invited guest speaker at the 20th Anniversary of the passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) in Anchorage August 23 and 24 was also a slap in the face to most of the 700 Alaskans attending, many of whom, like me, helped get you elected to both your terms as governor.

Most of us also shared citizen Carter's recommendations to President Clinton to declare by executive order National Monument status for the Coastal Plain (the so-called 1002 area) of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, which would protect this now pristine wilderness and unique wildlife habitat from oil exploration and drilling.

You wrote "Alaskans welcome visitors to the 49th state with warmth and hospitality." However I feel you abused this welcome by your actions yesterday. Without any meaningful dialogue with the people of Alaska, you used our state as a media prop and platform to project your message to President Clinton."

Since when, Governor, have the personally expressed opinions on the management regulations and uses of federal public lands become a litmus test for welcoming visitors to Alaska? Is the criteria for welcoming them to be based on how much money they spend in Alaska or the amount of natural resources that foreign-based international corporations take out of our state?

And really, the dialogue you evidently haven't heard about—whether or not to open up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling—has been going on for more than a decade by lobbyists (on both sides) in the halls of Congress, in public opinion pages of Alaska and national newspapers and magazines, letters to the editor, and at public hearings held around the state. Then there are the full-page

newspaper ads that are run ad nauseam by the international oil companies touting the benefits of oil exploration in the Arctic—along with many myths and distorted claims.

Ironically, you chose not to accept the invitation to join President Carter at the celebration in Anchorage where a very civil and informative round table discussion pro and con the provisions of ANILCA and its repercussions took place. Participants were former Governor Jay Hammond; Paula Easley of the Resource Development Council; Lawyer Bill Horn, once assistant to Secretary of the Interior James Watt under the Ronald Reagan administration; Oliver Leavitt, Inupiat leader from Barrow; Cecil Andrus, Secretary of the Interior under President Carter, and later Governor of Idaho; environmental activist Celia Hunter from Fairbanks; and President Carter—quite a range of viewpoints about the management of public lands in Alaska.

You were conspicuous by your absence. President Carter proclaimed it "the best and most informative discussion I have ever been involved in." Personally, Tony, your inappropriate letter to President Carter—a very humble man whom I admire—left me incredulous, ashamed of a Governor I had respected, and heart-sick. I take no delight in this indictment of your letter to him.

The point is not a question of your right to your point of view regarding oil drill-

ing on the coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge. It's the tone of your letter to Carter attacking him for expressing his opinions.

Putting aside *ad hominem* attacks on Jimmy Carter, let me address the crux of your beefs: the list of "wrongs" you accuse him of perpetrating regarding oil development in the Refuge. Fifty percent of Alaskans and I take legitimate issue with all of them. This is not because you are "wrong," but that your perceptions, value systems, and worldview of our future are contrary to what we believe is best for a sustainable destiny for mankind and our fellow creatures.

A sustainable economy is dependent on healthy ecological life support systems, not the other way around.

The coastal plain of the Refuge is not "just a tiny portion of ANWR." The decision we make of whether or not to drill for oil there is an indicator of the kind of choices we will make during the 21st century. Will greed, growth, rampant consumption and corporate feudalism drive them; or will ecological wisdom, compassion, and respect for all living things and their habitats be our bottom line?

This should be the basis of the dialogue and do leave the abusive rhetoric to Don Young. It more becomes him than you.

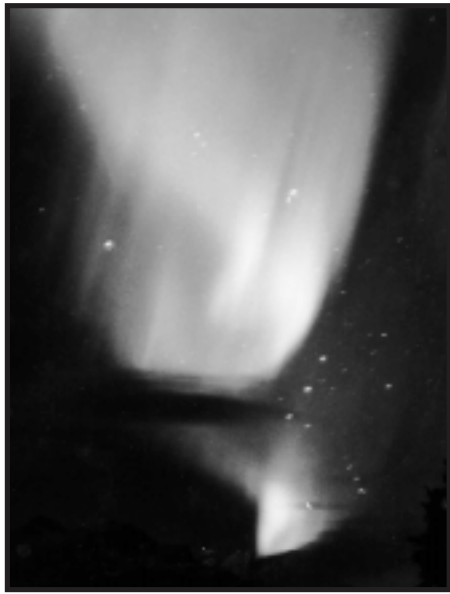
Disappointed,
Ginny Hill Wood



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Autumnal Equinox Brings Many Changes

by Amy Turner



© NAEC File Photo

The transition between seasons happens quickly here in the North and the autumnal equinox reminds us that winter is on its way. In autumn each year the sun begins to travel south. Due to the tilting of the Earth, the Northern Hemi-

sphere receives less sunlight in winter than in summer. The autumnal equinox is the day in which the sun travels south across the equator. At this point in the seasonal cycle, day and night are at equal length, but soon the length of daylight will become shorter. The dates on which day and night are each 12 hours occur a few days before and after the equinoxes. The specific dates of this occurrence are different for different latitudes. In the northern hemisphere, at latitude 5 degrees the dates of equal day and night occurs for the autumnal equinox on October 15; at latitude 40 degrees (~Central California) the autumn equinox occurs on September 26. On the dates of the equinoxes, the day is about 7 minutes longer than the night at latitudes up to about 25 degrees, increasing to 10 minutes or more at latitude 50 degrees. Fairbanks is at approximately 65 degrees, so our equinox falls close to the calendar date of September 23. *

Traditionally the autumn equinox has symbolized a time of harvest. The Alutiiq people of southern Alaska held festivals each fall

after the end of salmon fishing and berry picking. These festivals and celebrations lasted throughout the winter months and appealed to the souls of the animals whom their livelihood depended upon. Many cultures have harvest celebrations that center around the autumnal equinox.

Soon after the equinox here in Fairbanks things begin to change quickly. Our brilliant leaves fall to the ground. The first snowfall with its light, paper-thin consistency is luminous against the dry, magenta fireweed. By mid-October all the plants are covered in a bed of thick snow and the river is freezing over a little more everyday. The equinox is the catalyst for our slow descent into winter. We can look to the Winter Solstice to bring back the sun.

**Information on Equinox dates is from the U.S. Naval Observatory, you can find more information at their web site <<http://aa.usno.navy.mil/AA/>>.*

Run for the Refuge—Greatest Success Yet

By Sophie Sampson

The weather could not have been better for this year's Run for the Refuge, and the crisp, clear morning heralded the biggest turnout yet. Over 170 people came to take part, from Northern Center supporters to hardcore Equinox-training Runners, to East-Coasters in town for the Aids Ride which started the next day. Between runners and walkers with excitable dogs bouncing around in their own Northern Center bandanas, many people got around the wooded trails a little quicker than they anticipated. No one was quicker than Ryan Holzmüller, however. Despite the fact he is just entering sixth grade he took the lead and effortlessly kept it to win the 5K easily.

The 10K was messy and hard fought, with several runners taking inadvertent mud baths in their enthusiasm. First and second place both went to men named Jim (Jim Loken 40:26 and Jim Decur 41:55) who, enjoyed themselves so much that they ran it again shortly afterwards.

Of course, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is the most important part of the day. Debbie Miller gave a rousing speech about why the Arctic Refuge is worth protecting, and launched a postcard campaign to President Clinton to encourage him to designate the coastal plain part of a National Monument.

The Northern Center also gave out packets of information about the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to all the runners, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service was on hand to supplement our information.

The Run is a wonderful opportunity to reach out to the wider community in Fairbanks, and a focus point of support for the Refuge. It's now an annual fixture. We look forward to 2001's run with equal enthusiasm.



© Beth Calisse

Dogs and their owners alike enjoyed a crisp, clear morning at the Run for the Refuge this year.

Thanks to Our Hardworking Volunteers!

We could never do it without the undying support of our volunteers.

The following folks have significantly contributed their time to the Northern Center in the past few months. Thank you.

- ◆ Heather Brown, Cindy Adams and Allaire Diamond designed and made the most beautiful booth at the Fair this year. Frank Keim, Clarice Dukeminier, and John Brown helped them with the construction. Nancy Fresco and Deb Moore helped to take it down afterwards, and Arthur Hussey and Janet Daley, are storing it until next year—thank you.
- ◆ For helping man the Center's successful booth at the Tanana Valley State Fair, thanks to: Dave Allen, Mara Bacsujlaky, Linda and John Benson, Marie Beaver, Jan Cabanis, Jay Cable, Beth Caissie, Annie Caulfield, Betsy Chronic, Cristie Conway, Dave Shaw, Ed Davis, Clarice Dukeminier, Margaret and Robin Eagleton, Nancy Fresco, Pam Groves, John Hiltenbrand, John Hsu, Arthur Hussey, Janet Daley, Stan Justice, Adeline Kari, Frank and Jennifer Keim, Dave Lacey, Cathy Lange, Sean McGuire, Debbie Miller, Deb Moore, Julie Raymond-Yakoubian, Bev Reitz, Jose Reuter, Lela Ryterski, Theresa Sammis, Sophie and Vera Sampson, Roger Siglin, Beth Spalding, Ann and Dan Swift, Karen Toland, Kathy Tschida, Amy Turner, Phil & Jean Wildfang, Melody Wright, and Mary Zalar.
- ◆ Thank you to the Alaska Funding Exchange for their in-kind donation of a subscription to Grantstation.com—for those of you who are fund-raisers, Grantstation.com is an excellent resource, please check it out!
- ◆ The Run for the Refuge was a great success! Steve Dougherty from Connecticut, who had just arrived in Fairbanks, helped to set up the tent on the morning of the Run and Mary Shields, Amy Turner, Deb Moore, Todd Burnside, Sophie and Vera Sampson, Steve Dougherty, Linda and John Benson, Nancy Fresco, Ross Coen, Debbie Miller, and Mara Bacsujlaky helped make sure all the logistics of the run ran smoothly.
- ◆ The Mining and Water Quality Program extends its thanks to Mike Armstrong, a local pilot who volunteered to take Alan Septoff of the Mineral Policy Center on a flight-seeing tour of the Fairbanks Mining District. Unfortunately, the persistent rains of August kept them grounded during Alan's two-day visit; never-the-less, we appreciate Mike's willingness to fly on a weekend while he is building his house.
- ◆ Camp Habitat would like to thank its informative guest speakers: Tom Zimmer and Susan Willsrad, Jeff Estensen, Laurel Devaney, Rhonda from APLIC, Mark Ross, Andrea Swingley and Anna Thayler.
- ◆ The Camp Habitat Garden Harvest Celebration wholly appreciates the community help with the harvest. Thanks to Jen Steitz, Susan Grace, Bill Fuller, Susan Kerndt, Karen Toland, Larry Landry, and Sophie Sampson.
- ◆ Thanks to the Camp Habitat Staff (Lyndi Krause, Jim Gilbert, Michelle Peschke, Karen Toland, and Nancy Wood) for their love of children and nature; the Camp Habitat Junior Counselors (Robin Miller, Lauren Lessner, Scott Englund, and Austen T aylor) for their hard work and energy; Margaret Eagleton for Camp Habitat financial damage control; Beth Caissie and everyone at the Center for laughter and stress management; and the Camp Habitat Advisory Board for their creative visions.
- ◆ Betsy Chronic continues to keep our newspapers in order by clipping out the relevant articles and filing them.
- ◆ Melody Wright helped mail out the invitations for the meet Arthur reception. Thanks for helping out at the last minute!
- ◆ Crane Johnson and Brian Marmor tackled the seemingly unending job of databasing this summer. Thanks for all your help.
- ◆ The following members deserve kudos for helping with one or more of our renewal letters and fundraising letters: April Crosby, Crane Johnson, Ann Swift, Linda Benson, Natalie Cornforh, Jacquie Goss, Cathy Coletti, Sophie Sampson, and John Hsu.
- ◆ A big thank you goes to our 4 summer interns who braved the unknown by coming to work at the Center. Thanks to Cathy Coletti, Allaire Diamond, John Hsu, and Sophie Sampson.
- ◆ Crane Johnson spent one afternoon calling Northern Center members to encourage them to call the Governor about the Inter-tie—thank you!
- ◆ While in town for a week, Karen Colclough helped us to mail the August Conservation Abstracts.
- ◆ Thanks to all the sponsors of the Run for the Refuge prize draw: Alaska Salmon Bake, Alaska Tent and Tarp, Apocalypse Design, Beaver Sports, Fairbanks Athletic Club, Fairbanks Chiropractic Clinic, Gambardella's, Gulliver's Books, Holistic Medical Clinic, Into the Woods bookshop and coffee-house, Magic Carpet, Massage Therapy, May Clinic, River City Bagels, Sam's Club, Wright Air, especially Frontier Flying for donating the round-trip flight to Kaktovic.
- ◆ Thank you to all of Camp Habitat's sponsors: ABR, Inc., ACE Hardware, Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Alaska Feed Company, Arctic Audubon, Biodynamic Farming & Gardening Association, Cooperative Extension-Master Gardeners, Copier Care Plus, Denali Seed Co., Doyon Foundation, Emblem Club, Mike Emers (Rosie Creek Flower Farm), Fairbanks Soil & Water Conservation District, Fred Meyer, Friends of Creamer's Field, Dana & Paul Greci, Gretchen Kerndt (Basically Basil), Lou Brown & Jon Miller, Northern Alaska Environmental Center, Tack's, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc.-Agriculture Program, and the many donations in memory of Edward L. Smith. Thanks for your continued support of community education.
- ◆ Several Fairbanksans took to the streets on October 19 for the National Day of Action for the Arctic Refuge. Sean McGuire, Julie Raymond-Yakoubian, Debbie Miller, Phil Wildfang, Coert Olmsted, and Andy Keller asked the community to sign postcards urging President Clinton to designate the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge a National Monument.
- ◆ Mary Shields and Dave Shaw helped mail out the Arctic National Monument postcards to our members and contacts.
- ◆ Stan Justice continues to keep 218 Drive-way Street safe by fixing our plumbing, lighting, and by removing the tree that was ready to fall on the house late last summer.
- ◆ Ross Coen, Andy Keller, Frank Keim, and Sean McGuire attended the Alaska Lands summit in Washington DC recently.
- ◆ Jennifer van den Berg rearranged the shop one afternoon, with splendid results.
- ◆ Several burly folks took up hammer and nail this fall to help erect an emergency arctic entryway for the infamous Dawg House. Power-tool wielders include: Todd Burnside, Jay Cable, Frank Keim, Dave Shaw, Nancy Fresco, Beth Caissie, Amy Turner, and Vera Sampson.
- ◆ The Auction Committee has been working tirelessly for the last several months to ensure that the upcoming auction is a wild success. The committee members are: April Crosby, Alice Mural, Bev Reitz, Beth Spalding, Beth Caissie, Kerynn Fisher, Marie Beaver, Vera Sampson, Karen Max, and Lou Brown.

Welcome to Our New Members...

...and welcome back to old friends. Thank you for supporting the Northern Center!

IN ALASKA:

Debra Allen, Fairbanks
 Jim Allen & Claudia French, Fairbanks
 Stephen Anderson, Fairbanks
 Judy Atkinson, Fairbanks
 Carey Atkinson, Fairbanks
 Ray & Carol Barnhardt, Ester
 Lynn & Charlie Basham, Ester
 Nancy & Chris Bataille, Fairbanks
 Jerry Becker & Vicky Helfenstein, Fairbanks
 Martin Becker, Fairbanks
 Andrew & Monica Benedetti, Fairbanks
 Margie Boran, Fairbanks
 Tracy Boyayian, Fairbanks
 Staci Burke-Asbury, Fairbanks
 Jay Cable, Fairbanks
 Kurt Carlson, Ester
 Nancy Davidian, Fairbanks
 Michelle DeCorso Mark, Bethel
 Valerie Anne Demming, Fairbanks
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 Henry Eames, Anchorage
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 Andy Elsberg, Fairbanks
 Liz Finley, Fairbanks
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 Karoline Frey, Fairbanks
 Deb & Brad Fristoe, Fairbanks
 Stephen Gerrish, Dillingham
 Rusty Gesin, Fairbanks
 Anna Godduhn, Fairbanks
 Penelope Gold, Fairbanks
 John Hagey & Sonia Mazurek, Fairbanks
 Susan Hall-Goossen, Fairbanks
 Linda Handeland, Fairbanks
 Thomas Hansen, Fairbanks
 Richard & Gail Hatton, Fairbanks
 Lisa Helm, Fairbanks
 Jeanne & Dan Henry, Haines

Stephanie Hoag, Juneau
 Joan Hoza, North Pole
 Hisako Ito, Nenana
 Sandra Jennings, Fairbanks
 Micah Johnson, North Pole
 Ken & Carol Klopff, Fairbanks
 Adrian Kohrt, Fairbanks
 Leslye Korvola, Fairbanks
 Cate Koskey, Hooper Bay
 Jim & Suzanne Kowalsky, Fairbanks
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 David & Laurie Leonard, Fairbanks
 Karolyn Leslie, Fairbanks
 Gail Lordi, Ester
 Julie Luke, Fairbanks
 Michelle Mack, Fairbanks
 Deanna MacPhail, Juneau
 Kurt Marquardt, Homer
 Mildred Martin, Homer
 Mary Matthews, Fairbanks
 Randall McGregor, MD, Fairbanks
 Robin McLean & Chris Roe, Sutton
 Jeff Merkel, Fairbanks
 Paige Messer, Eielson AFB
 Bobbie Munson, Fairbanks
 Kimberly Phillips, Fairbanks
 Webb & Joanna Phillips, Fairbanks
 Mindy Prusak, Fairbanks
 Patricia & Clem Rawert, Fairbanks
 Jennifer Reed & Ian Wright, Fairbanks
 Taber Rehbaum, Ester
 Kelley Rivers, North Pole
 Howard Rixie, Salcha
 Scarlet Runyon, Eielson Air Force Base
 Paula Sawyer, North Pole
 Mike Schmoker & Margaret Mannix, Fairbanks
 Shirley Scott, Fairbanks
 Alan Seegert, Denali National Park

Brad Sheeks, Fairbanks
 Ernst & Stephanie Siemoneit, Healy
 Margo Simple, Venetie
 K Stewart, Fairbanks
 Stephanie Stowman, Fairbanks
 John Strassenburgh, Talkeetna
 Lois Henderson & Robert Sullivan, Fairbanks
 Shelli Swanson, Fairbanks
 Sara Tabbert, Fairbanks
 Bruce Tillitt, Fairbanks
 Eric Troyer, Fairbanks
 Martin Truffer, Fairbanks
 Nancy Tyler, Fairbanks
 Richard Tyler, Homer
 Erika VanFlein, Fairbanks
 Venable Vermont, Anchorage
 Paula Voss, Fairbanks
 Michael Wald, Fairbanks
 Saryn Walsh, Fairbanks
 Sandy Warner, Juneau
 Jennifer Wenrick, Fairbanks
 Sandy Westcott, Fairbanks
 Paulette Wille, Fairbanks
 Deborah Williams, Anchorage

OUTSIDE OF ALASKA:

Lorado & Arlys Adelmann, Decorah IA
 Leslie Barras, Louisville KY
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 Marcus Chibucos, Bowling Green OH
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Conservation Abstracts

by Florence Collins, member

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THE ARCTIC REFUGE WILL BE DRILLED, GOV. BUSH SAYS, if he is elected president, adding that estimated reserves are as high as 10 billion barrels. Vice President Gore says oil companies "should not invade precious natural treasures like ANWR." The Alaska Congressional delegation praised Governor Bush's plan. *Fairbanks Daily News Miner*, Sept. 30, 2000, p. A-1, A-11.

ECOLOGICAL ECONOMISTS believe the limiting factor in economic growth, which has been human labor and technology, is now the supply of natural resources, but "our economy still values natural resources at their extraction cost, not their true replacement value." Our high-tech economy creates the illusion that...we are less dependent on natural resources, but since 1950, global demand for lumber has doubled and paper use gone up 6-fold; in the US, mineral, wood-product, metal, synthetic-material use have all gone up 18 fold since 1900; The US uses 1/3 of all such material. *ZPG Reporter*, Summer, p. 9-11.

A TRAIL SYSTEM FOR SOUTHEAST ALASKA is being planned "that would link the region with land, sea, and under-sea routes....Called SEA trails, it is in its infancy," but would include biking trails, walking trails, and historical and cultural sites, wheel-chair-accessible paths, and kayaking routes, all linked by the Alaska Marine Highway System. *Fairbanks Daily News Miner*, September 17, p. H-3.

THE LOWER SNAKE RIVER DAMS will not be removed—the Clinton administration [said] in July that it will not consider removal until 2005 or 2010. Fisheries biologists say that much more water will be needed from upstream sources, which would have to come from present uses such as forestry, agriculture, and urban activities, to keep the salmon runs there. *In Brief*, Summer, 2000, p. 10-11.

GLOBAL WARMING SINCE 1900 was caused 25% by nature (volcanic activity, etc), and 75% by humans, according to Texas A and M researchers. *Amicus Journal*, Fall 2000, p. 9.

WOOD STOVES ARE "CLEANER THAN EVER"—catalytic converters like those on cars, and "secondary burn" technology can reduce particulate emissions by 90%, though the stoves are still the largest single source of particulate matter entering homes in most places in America. Using a stack thermometer to maintain stack temperatures between 300 and 400° F, and burning seasoned hard wood, produce the least pollution. *Environmental Defense*, p. 6.

POLLUTION FROM A TYPICAL ROYAL CARIBBEAN CRUISE ship on a one-week voyage includes: 210,000 gallons of raw and treated "blackwater" sewage; 1,000,000 gallons of graywater from showers, sinks, etc; that contain solvents, detergents, and pesticides; 25,000 gallons of oily bilge water; 110 gallons of photo chemicals; 5 gallons of dry-cleaning waste; 10 gallons of used paint; and 5 gallons of expired chemicals. *Southeast Alaska Conservation Council* flyer, Sept. 2000.

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