

THE NORTHERN LINE

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Celia Hunter

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Director's Headline

By Arthur Hussey

As 2001 blends into 2002, I stop for reflection and review on the past year (doing so is easy in Fairbanks' 18 hour winter nights). Three things come to mind, plus one thought for the future. First, it was clear in 2001 that the Northern Center family continued to be committed, united and ardent. We numbered 1,098 at the beginning of the year, and added a few siblings along the way, ending 2001 at 1,164. For local members, 2001 was not an easy year to be a committed conservationist, given the federal and state delegations' reluctance to consider conservation issues in fashioning legislative agendas. I can only appreciate that keeping the faith for more distant members was just as challenging, if in a different way. Whatever the case, I do wish to say a big thank you. Your membership has enabled the Northern Center to reinforce its niche of demonstrating that Alaskans place high value on responsible natural resource stewardship and its contributions to dynamic, evolving economies.

Second, late in 2001, the Northern Center parted with one of its extraordinary champions and founding members, Celia Hunter. To few of you is this news. But to everyone is it a loss, although not totally. Celia may be no longer with us physically, but we will always have a number of things to be grateful to her for, the value of cutting

to the chase, seeing the essence of an issue, being high up there.

Even as I write, people continue to reflect on other aspects of Celia's work, as do they dedicate funds to the Center in her honor. In this spirit, we think it is important to focus these funds on a specific issue of import to Celia. Deciding what issue was a tall order—Celia loved all of Alaska. In the end, we concluded that nothing was nearer and dearer to her heart than Denali, hence our dedication of memorial funds in support of conserving Denali and its ecosystems. Internally, we call this the Denali Watch project, an effort that represents a large part of the conservation community's eyes and ears in the Denali area. The project, began in late 2000, is of growing importance programmatically to the Northern Center, only fitting for Celia's legacy.

Third, I should like to thank the Board of Directors, major donors, members, volunteers and staff for all their work throughout the year. This is not an idle thank you; for starters in 2001, we:

- represented environmental viewpoints on two Fairbanks North Star Borough commissions;
- purchased a new home through member loans, but without incurring one dollar of commercial debt;
- organized and participated in Fairbanks' largest single show of public support in recent years for conservation of the Arctic;
- supported efforts to educate the public on the merits of energy conservation, through

- workshops, slideshows and mailings;
- worked, with many other partners, to assist the public in identifying behaviors to reduce Fairbanks' carbon monoxide emissions;
- developed a proactive strategy to diminish the deleterious impacts of hardrock mining in Interior Alaska; and
- developed growing relationships with conservation partners in the Denali area.

Finally, looking ahead, 2002 promises to be a challenging year, looming energy legislation and Denali developments to name but two issues. As we meet these challenges, I repeat some advice from a defacto supporter, albeit posthumously:

"Do not burn yourself out. Be as I am; a reluctant enthusiast — ... a half-hearted fanatic. Save the other half of yourselves and your lives for pleasure and adventure. It is not enough to fight for the land; it is even more important to enjoy it...So get out there and mess around with your friends, ramble out yonder and explore the forests, encounter the grizz, climb the mountains. Run the rivers, breathe deep of that yet sweet and lucid air, sit quietly for a while and contemplate the precious stillness, that lovely, mysterious and awesome space. Enjoy yourselves, keep your brain in your head and your head firmly attached to your body, the body active and alive..."

I'll be heeding this advice in 2002 and taking off for the lovely Alaskan bush when time permits. I hope you will, too, whether vicariously or in person. It's a great place. All the best for 2002.

THE NORTHERN LINE

Environmental News of Arctic and Interior Alaska

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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. The Northern Center has 1,164 members.

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The cover photo of Celia Hunter was taken by Clark Mischler in 1992. The background of a birch forest was taken by John Lyle.

All photos on pages 10 and 11 are compliments of Ginny Wood. The back page picture of caribou in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is a NAEC file photo.

Local Issues: A New Priority

By Nancy Fresco
Boreal Forest and
Local Issues Coordinator

Air pollution is so bad during Fairbanks winters that we are often inhaling more toxins than residents of downtown Los Angeles. Every spring, hundreds of Fairbanksans diligently clean heaps of trash off the roadsides, only to see it reappear within days. In the summer, the water of the Chena River flowing under the Cushman Street Bridge is visibly clogged with grass clippings and garbage. Clearly, there are environmental issues in Interior Alaska that have nothing to do with wilderness, wildlife, and the "last frontier," and everything to do with the problems of urban living.

Every August, the Northern Alaska Environmental Center runs an informational booth at the Tanana Valley State Fair. We hand out fact sheets, sell conservation-oriented games and T-shirts, and answer questions. This year, however, we tried something new: we asked a question. In order for folks to enter our free raffle drawing, they had to give us information – a quick sentence on what conservation issue or environmental problem most concerned them. The results of this survey – while admittedly highly unscientific – were nonetheless interesting.

It seems that people do care deeply about the issues we're working on; protection of the Arctic Refuge was on many minds, as was general protection of open spaces, forest and river habitats, and wilderness values. But some of the public's concerns fell even closer to home: they worried about the quality of the air they and their kids are breathing, the quality of the water they're drinking and catching fish from, and the prevalence of garbage in the streets of Fairbanks.

Partly in response to these concerns, and partly to formalize the sporadic efforts already undertaken by the Northern Alaska Environmental Center, we're adding a Local Issues Program to our priorities, and to 2002's Annual Operating Plan. We hope to work with the City and the Borough, as well as with local residents, to address air quality, water quality, and trash (including, when possible, recycling). While these issues may not be as monumental as the struggle over thousands of acres of unspoiled wildlands, they are issues that affect people's daily lives, and people's health. And that makes them more than worth the effort.

Air Quality

- Fairbanks is one of only seven cities nationwide ranked by the EPA as a "non-attainment" area for carbon monoxide pollution.
- The main source of carbon monoxide in our air is motor vehicle exhaust.
- When inhaled, carbon monoxide enters the blood stream and chemically binds to hemoglobin, the substance that carries oxygen to the cells. This reduces the amount of oxygen delivered to all body tissues.
- Results from vehicles tested in Anchorage and Fairbanks indicate that during the first minute after a cold start, emissions are 50 to 100 times higher than they are when the engine is fully warm.
- Results also suggest that using engine block heaters can cut emission rates by about two-thirds.
- Using a timer programmed to turn a block heater on two hours before driving costs about 12 cents a day.
- Human health effects such as impaired breathing, chronic respiratory disease, weakening of the immune system, cancer, and premature death can also be caused by other air pollutants, including nitrous oxides, ground-level ozone, sulfur dioxide, and particulates.
- Particulates are produced from many sources, including wood stoves, open burning, and driving with studded tires on dry roads. Using wood stoves with catalytic converters – and using stoves efficiently – can greatly reduce particulates.

Trash and Recycling

- The Fairbanks - North Star Borough currently collects paper, aluminum, and hazardous materials such as batteries and household chemicals.
- The paper is pelletized and burned as fuel at Eielson Air Force Base, while aluminum and other metals, which have higher market values, are sold for reuse.
- Obstacles to implementing glass and plastic recycling include the lack of local markets for these materials, and the prohibitive expense of transporting them down to Anchorage or beyond.
- The Borough lacks collection points for recyclables, other than the landfill itself. This lack severely hampers citizen participation.
- The Northern Center has adopted a 1.8 mile stretch of College Road as part of the local adopt-a-highway program, and we have cleanups at least three times each year.
- The annual spring cleanup, organized and facilitated by the Borough, is always a successful event, but does not solve the root problem of littering.



From the Woodpile...

By Ginny Hill Wood,
Founding Member of NAEC, and Regular Columnist

Getting Even

September 11, 2001 – In the early morning of September 11th, 2001, I was still snuggled in my sleeping bag at my cabin in the Kantishna extension of Denali National Park, without radio or TV, when friends from Camp Denali burst in to report that suicide pilots had just crashed two hijacked commercial airliners full of passengers into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City; and another, similarly hijacked, into the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. Thousands had been killed in the resultant conflagration and collapsing debris.

From my south-facing big windows, another Kodachrome fall day at the west end of the Park road was unfolding. Twenty thousand three hundred foot Mt. McKinley and its glacier-clad neighbors stretched in panoramic splendor against a brilliant blue sky. The tundra foreground spread like a multicolored carpet of fall colors. How could mankind perpetrate this death and destruction in such a beautiful world? I couldn't reconcile these two scenarios.

Nature, too, has its catastrophes – floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, droughts, and lightning-caused forest fires. Every geological era or so, an errant meteor slams into Earth causing the demise of a large percentage of life on it. The birth of our solar system was the result of a catastrophic event, and all is not live-and-let-live in the animal kingdom. But none of this is motivated by sheer malice. It took the cunning and conniving of the Homo sapiens mind to orchestrate wars, terrorism, genocide, homicide, and even suicide in the cause of religious martyrdom. What has civilization wrought?

But if we humans can muck up

the world with our cunning, avarice, mayhem and anger, can't we also use our human gifts of reasoning and perception to fix it? Will our nation choose revenge or restraint and reflection first? Shall we rally around our flag and send in the marines? Or shall we contemplate just why these terrorists chose the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in our country on which to vent their hatred so flagrantly? Shall the battle hymn of our republic be about "bombs bursting in air" and "our flag still there", or about "purple mountain's majesty" and "crowning good (or bad) with brotherhood"?

September 12, 2001 – More questions than answers ricocheted around my mind during the long drive back to Fairbanks listening to my car radio. Assassinate Osama bin Laden, the Muslim fanatic who seemed to be the number one suspect who masterminded these terrorist acts? Wouldn't that make him a martyr in the eyes of the entire Islamic world? Stealth and murder never succeeded in eliminating Hitler, Stalin, Saddam Hussein, or even Fidel Castro, our past reincarnations of the devil. I recalled the history of the Middle Ages, when the Papacy exhorted knights from European Christendom to go forth to slay a Muslim for Christ, especially Saladin, their leader. In retrospect, history now views him as wiser and more compassionate towards his enemies than were the Crusaders.

I couldn't shake off the flashbacks I had of the terror, deaths, and destruction my own country had inflicted in the cause of "getting even". There was the slaughter and displacement of so many Indians who had inhabited this

continent thousands of years before the white man embarked on "winning the West"; the senseless relocation of U.S. citizens of Japanese descent after the Nipponese attack on Pearl Harbor; the inexcusable bombing of the exquisite old city of Dresden in east Germany, whose sanctity as an "open city" had been respected by both the Allies and the Nazis during the devastations of World War II. Then with the victory assured, my country's air force had to get in their last licks by demolishing it.

We were the country that incubated and dropped the first A-bomb on Hiroshima. History will debate whether this saved more lives on both sides than a land invasion of Japan would have cost. But what was the justification for dropping a second one on Nagasaki after Japanese recapitulation was assured?

Getting even! The schoolyard mandate: "If someone hits you, hit them back." The patriotic response: "My country, right or wrong!" The biblical command: "An eye for an eye!" The macho threat: "If you trespass on my turf, I'll get my gun!" The popular response: "We can't take this lying down, can we?"

We can't punish the pilot/hijackers for their inexcusable deeds. They are already dead – intentionally. How do we seek out and destroy an enemy that has no standing army, navy, air force, or even a central government? Doesn't violence always beget violence? The Berlin Wall didn't come down because we bombed the Soviets into submission.

What about freedoms? Isn't this the battle cry – the *raison d'être* – that exhorts us to "let loose the dogs of war"? What fiction! Personal freedoms to do,

go, or even say or write anything that can be misconstrued as “unpatriotic” or “giving aid to the enemy” are the first freedoms to be curtailed. War demands secrecy, stealth, obedience, and military dictatorships. A prolonged one means rationing, and even sacrifice of lives, especially the enemy’s. Wars cannot be conducted by committees, consensus, in public hearings or at a voting booth. Warfare is not a democratic procedure.

If truth is the first victim of war, the democratic process has to be the second. What about our natural environments in this matter of “getting even”? We don’t do environmental impact statements before declaring wars. The Vietnam era bumper sticker is still valid today: “Wars are not healthy for children or other living things” – or the habitats of either.

The tragedy of September 11 will only be exacerbated if the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge has to be sacrificed on the false altar of “national security”. Granted that the technology involved in modern warfare gulps petroleum, any found in the Arctic Refuge won’t be available for use this decade, even if it can be found there in economically recoverable amounts. This spurious energy use is not about the war effort (or jobs) – it’s about corporate profits, the politics of getting elected, and the gullibility of our citizens.

How about restraint – the Precautionary Principle – to err on the side of caution? When one’s offspring has a temper tantrum, your first impulse is punishment. Then (hopefully) you have second thoughts: what is really bugging this child to elicit this behavior? Often you discover it had a justifiable cause. Sometimes you find that you, yourself, had unwittingly been it.

Two months later: Usually winter sets in here in sub-arctic Alaska with the first snowfall (“termination dust” we used to call it), plunging temperatures and daily diminishing daylight hours,

(Woodpile continued on page 9...)

Arctic Refuge Update

By Deb Moore, Arctic Coordinator

After a fall of continuous attempts by pro-drilling advocates to pass Arctic Refuge drilling legislation in the wake of the September 11 tragedy, the holidays gave us time for a collective sigh of relief. Thanks to the work of our Senate champions and all the people who spoke out against destroying our last great wilderness, the Arctic Refuge is still wild. While the battle is far from over, we had time to sit back, thank our Senate champions... and prepare for the fight ahead.

Now that Congress has reconvened, our first challenge is likely to be over a national energy policy. Last October, at the request of Senate Majority Leader, Tom Daschle, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chair Jeff Bingaman suspended further work in his committee on the Republican energy bill. Instead, Senators Daschle and Bingaman drafted an alternative energy bill, introduced in early December, and likely to be brought up for debate around February 11. This alternative bill does not include drilling

in the Arctic Refuge; however, one of several “business as usual” senators is expected to attempt to attach a Refuge drilling amendment prior to a vote.

Please contact call your Senators and urge them to keep Arctic Refuge drilling out of our national energy bill. Let them know that energy conservation, alternative energies and improved energy efficiency can do more to reduce our dependence on foreign oil than can sacrificing one of our last great wilderness areas.

To contact, write to: The Honorable (full name), United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510 or call the US Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121 and asked to be connected to your Senator’s office. You can also go online to <http://www.northern.org/arctic/anwr.htm> and click on “Washington, DC, contact information for Senate.”



Alaskan teamster, Bill Watkins, speaking out for protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge with a delegation of U.S. Senators, including vocal proponent of Arctic Refuge protection, Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.).

Making the Renewable Connection

By Deb Moore, Arctic Coordinator

Renewables in Mainstream America

Renewable energy sources are slowly working their way into conventional American communities. From Seattle to New York, individuals, companies – and sometimes city planners – have taken steps towards incorporating solar and wind power into their daily lives. Yet, until fossil fuel is no longer the cheapest, most easily accessible energy source available, renewables are likely to continue to play only a minor role in powering mainstream America.

So how can the cost and accessibility of renewables become comparable to that of gasoline and coal or nuclear-powered electricity? One way to do that is to increase the cost of purchasing fossil fuels so that it incorporates the *true* costs associated with using polluting, nonsustainable fuels. Another way is to make renewables more easily accessible and affordable.

As seen with any new technology, there is an initial period when the technology is extremely expensive and not very advanced. When personal computers were first made available in the 1970's, they were expensive, limited in ability, difficult to use and lacked a support system of knowledgeable technicians. Today computers are abundantly available, capable of a myriad of tasks, easy to use and well supported. This change occurred because a small number of individuals were willing to pay the price, and thus get the technology moving. As more people became involved, prices began to drop and the technology began to improve.

Your neighbor may not care where the energy he uses comes from, or may not be willing to put the money or effort into switching to alternative sources. However, there are many peo-

ple who will. Once the cost and accessibility of renewables begins to change, your neighbor just might begin to give some consideration to the alternatives.

So what can you do? Push the envelope – be one of those committed enough pay that little bit extra or put in the extra effort. If your community's power company provides an option for paying a slightly higher rate for electricity from multiple sources, including renewables, go for this option. If not, encourage your power company to invest in renewables and to make this option available. Also, encourage your local, state and federal government to provide incentives for renewable energies. Contact your representatives and tell them you believe it's worth spending more to have renewables as an energy option in your state.

Renewables in Alaska Bush Communities

One place where renewable energy sources seem to making headway is in the bush communities of Alaska. Some of these remote communities – where fuel transportation is difficult and costly – see renewables as the cheaper, more easily accessible alternative.

Going Solar: Lime and Arctic Villages

Lime Village is a small Athabaskan village approximately 150 miles west of Anchorage. This extremely remote village has no barge service, no store or post office, and no running water. Diesel must be flown in – in 240-gallon increments – and costs more than \$4 per gallon.

With the help of Alaska Energy Authority (AEA) and BP, Lime Village has installed an experimental solar/diesel hybrid system at a central power plant. The 200 amp-hour battery bank can be charged by either solar panels or diesel generators. The diesel engine



Residents of Arctic Village shared a sense of community and activism while they installed solar panels throughout the village.

turns on and off automatically and can be off for 5-12 hours each day. On good days almost half of the village's energy is provided by solar power.

Overall, the current system is expected to reduce diesel use by 20%. However, the performance data will be studied to determine the best mix of power sources for the system – possibly leading to a greater reliance on solar power.

Arctic Village is a small but well-known Gwich'in village approximately 200-250 miles north of Fairbanks. As in Lime Village, fuel is expensive and hard to transport. To offset these problems, Arctic Village decided to develop a variety of renewable energy sources – beginning with solar.

Arctic Village opted for a line-tie system where the solar power feeds directly into the existing electrical lines rather than into batteries. Their initial goal was to provide enough energy to power the washeteria – on top of which the solar panels were installed. Any additional energy would then be available to the rest of the village.

An important component of

Arctic Villages' project is to decrease the overall energy use of the village through community and youth education about energy conservation. In addition, by involving youth and other community members in the installation of the solar panels, the village has created a sense of community ownership and pride.

Between reducing their overall energy use and increasing the amount and types of alternative energy used in the community - they also intend to explore the possibility of tapping into wind energy from the nearby mountains and hydro from the rivers - Arctic Village eventually hopes to become completely independent of diesel.

Riding the Wind: St. Paul Village

Not all of Alaska receives unlimited supplies of sunshine during the summer. Some communities, such as St. Paul Village on St. Paul Island in the Bering Sea average only seven days of sun each year. However, St. Paul Island, along with many other areas of the state, has an abundance of another renewable resource – wind. In fact, St. Paul Island has a “class 7 wind load” with a docu-

mented average annual wind resource in excess of 18 mph.

Tanadgusix (TDX) Power, a Native-owned power company, has developed a wind/diesel hybrid project just outside of St. Paul Village. The project couples a 225-kW Vestas wind turbine with two diesel generators providing for the total electric needs of a company-owned commercial airport and hotel. Although the wind blows almost continuously, the turbine cannot operate at wind speeds below 10 mph or above 65 mph, so the system relies on the diesel generators approximately half the time.

Rather than batteries, the hybrid system captures excess electricity in the form of heat for use in a hot water heating system. This in turn is used to heat both the airport and hotel and significantly reduces the use of diesel heating fuel.

TDX hopes that the success of the pilot project will eventually convince the people of St. Paul Village that wind energy technology is a viable, economical means of powering the village and the entire island.

Boreal Shorts

By Nancy Fresco,
Boreal Forest Coordinator

Boreal Buffers

The bad news is that the State Legislature didn't manage to get the Boreal Riparian Buffer Bill onto the floor last winter. The good news is that we have a lot of people on our side pushing to get it passed this session – including DNR's Division of Forestry and the State Board of Forestry. Because the bill was written through a consensus process by stakeholders, everyone is eager to see it turned into law. Moreover, the Division of Forestry has agreed to abide by the agreed-upon standards for buffer width



along lakes and streams even before the bill passes.

The Oldest Trees in the Forest

The most recent five-year schedule of timber sales (for the Delta Region) states that “the majority of the proposed sales contain white spruce sawlogs 90 to 220 years old.” We have yet to see any provision reconciling the harvest of trees in this age range with the State's long-term plan to put the forest on 70-120 year rotations. How will we guarantee that there will be a healthy range of ages among forest stands, especially if future demands rise above

today's relatively modest levels? The Division of Forestry has promised to convene a scientific committee to study the question.

Monitoring

It is prudent to monitor timber sales and other activities in our own forests, because the State often doesn't have the funding to do it. In particular, it is important to note whether the standards in the Forest Practices Act are met for road construction, stream crossings, reforestation after harvest, and correct harvesting methods. Poorly constructed roads, or temporary roads that are not closed, can cause severe erosion. Erosion or blockage at stream crossings can damage fisheries. Too much cut wood left on-site for long periods can restrict reforestation and lead to outbreak of bark beetles and other insects.

Forest Facts – Forest Certification

By Nancy Fresco,
Boreal Forest Coordinator

Wood products – including everything from raw lumber to high-grade paper – are a necessary and functional part of almost everybody's lifestyle, yet conservation-minded consumers are often left with a conundrum when it comes to choosing what to buy. Wood is a renewable resource, and in that sense it can be a "greener" choice than plastic or metal. But not all forests – or even most forests – are harvested sustainably. A ream of computer paper and a beautiful bookcase may be the products of an old-growth ecosystem that will never return. On the other hand, they may come from wood that has been selectively harvested from a second-growth forest by a responsible manager who is looking hundreds of years into the future. It's not easy to tell the difference. Moreover, how can we be sure that protecting or conserving forests in our own part of the world won't merely accelerate destruction

elsewhere?

This is where forest certification schemes come in. A MORI poll conducted in 1990 showed that 80% of consumers would buy 'green' products given the choice. Forest certification programs are meant to provide the consumer with reliable assurance that the products they buy have been harvested responsibly. Around the world, different groups are rushing to provide such certification. However, not all such programs are conducted on the same principles. If you buy a wood product or a paper product labeled "certified," what does that really mean about the origins of the product? How are claims of "sustainability" substantiated, and does a forest need to be sustainable from the point of view of all its native flora and fauna in order to be given credit, or does it merely have to continuously grow a particular species of marketable trees? In other words, is it worth paying extra

for a label – and if so, *which* label?

Unfortunately, most certification schemes are still in their infancy – and most do not show any real promise of providing trustworthy information. An authoritative study by the World Wide Fund for Nature found that of a sample of 80 different environmental claims found on wood and paper products, only three could even partially be substantiated.

In addition, a recent analysis, performed in collaboration with seven different environmental organizations from all over the world, gave a depressing summary of the situation. Only one of the four biggest forest certification schemes – the Forest Stewardship Council – received a passing grade. Not only have none of the others yet to reach a stage at which they can provide labels for consumers products; they also fall far short when it comes to how they assess forests, whether they include all stakeholders in the process, and whether they make their methods open and accessible to public scrutiny.

The analysis focuses on the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), the Pan-European Forest Certification (PEFC), the Canadian Standards Association's Sustainable Forest Management Standard (CSA) and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). They found the following major flaws:

- PEFC, SFI, and CSA all give overriding power to stakeholders with economic interests (e.g. timber companies) with no balance of ecological and social interests.
- PEFC certifies logging in the last fragments of remaining old-growth in Europe.
- SFI and CSA both certify large-scale clear-cutting of old growth and logging on indigenous peoples' lands without their consent.
- PEFC allows different certification rules in different countries.



© Charlie Ott

Certification of forests like this one can help ensure that trees harvested for paper and raw lumber are taken in an environmentally responsible manner.

- SFI has weak and easily modified standards.
- CSA allows the operation applying for a certificate to determine the level of performance requirements.

While not perfect, the FSC does have more rigorous criteria for sustainability, covering ecological, social, and economic interests and giving fair weighting and decision-making power to all. Moreover, the FSC takes a worldwide focus, allowing for a better perspective on global markets and widely varying ecosystems and local economic situations. This gives them an edge over small local certification groups. Some small groups adhere more strictly to appropriate standards than do the groups

listed above, but if the meaning of their label is not well-known to consumers, their efforts may be in vain.

Clearly, forest certification has an important role to play in the future of forestry. However, there are not yet nearly enough appropriately certified forests to meet demands. The FSC has yet to certify any forested land in Alaska, and coverage elsewhere in the US and Canada is sparse. Europe is markedly ahead of us in FSC certification, but even there, the work has only just begun. As market pressures on all of the world's forests increase, it becomes more and more necessary to ensure that effective and widespread forest certification becomes the norm, and that consumers insist upon it.

The Northern Alaska Environmental Center is Online!

Visit our website at
<http://www.northern.org>

While at our site you can:

- ♦ Visit our exclusive Fort Knox and True North Photo Galleries!
- ♦ Subscribe to our email lists, including Arctic Action and Mining Memos!
- ♦ Learn more about environmental issues facing Alaska!
- ♦ Read past Northern Line issues!

For more information, see:

- ♦ "Behind the Logo: An environmental and social assessment of forest certification schemes," Fern, May 2001. – www.fern.org/
- ♦ Forest Stewardship Council — <http://www.fscoax.org>
- ♦ Pan European Forest Certification — <http://www.pefc.org/content.htm>
- ♦ Canadian Sustainable Forestry Certification Coalition — <http://www.sfms.com/>
- ♦ <http://forestry.about.com/cs/certification/>
- ♦ Sustainable Forestry Initiative — <http://www.afandpa.org/forestry/sfi/menu.html>

"The love of wilderness is more than a hunger for what is always beyond reach; it is also an expression of loyalty to the earth, the earth which bore us and sustains us, the only paradise we shall ever know, the only paradise we ever need - if only we had the eyes to see... No, wilderness is not a luxury but a necessity of the human spirit, as vital to our lives as water and good bread."

— Edward Abbey, *Desert Solitaire*

From the Woodpile, continued from page 4...

but also with a sense of coziness indoors, and a slowing down from the frenzied pace engendered by our short, frantic summers with their 24 hours of warmth and daylight.

Yet as we head toward the winter solstice this year, there is a sense of uneasiness, insecurity and apprehension in the aftermath of the September 11th atrocities. It pervades us in different ways. We have been admonished by the powers-that-be to live our normal lives, spend money to bolster our shaky economy – yet to be always wary. "They" can perpetrate more evil deeds at any time, any place. If you feel too unsettled, see your psychologist or take

a sedative. Now perhaps we Americans may understand what the British, the Russians, and the German civilizations endured almost nightly in World War II.

Our government has chosen the path of military retaliation in the wake of the September 11th holocaust. We now ponder its denouement. Will peace, when and if it comes, mean only another few years' hiatus between another "war" during which our nation invents new and more diabolical weapons to use (or to sell)? There has to be a better future for 'man-kind' or we don't deserve either syllable of this moniker. Expanding our missile defense system won't protect us

from the terrorism, foreign or domestic, that has already disrupted our Congress, our Supreme Court, our U.S. Mail system, and our sense of well being without using any weapon of war.

Can't we expand the vision our founding fathers had of "forming a more perfect union" to "forming a more perfect world not only for its human inhabitants but for all living interdependent life on it"? What's the alternative?

For a start, instead of rebuilding the World Trade Center, the implications of which stick in the craw of so many, symbolically, let's honor this grave of so many victims of this treachery with a park full of trees, shrubs, and flowers as a monument to their memory.

Celia's Life

By Debbie Miller, Naturalist and author of "Midnight Wilderness"

Many are called, but few choose to hear and give of themselves completely. Celia Hunter heard the call of the wilderness at an early age and answered it with her adventuresome spirit, loving heart, and thoughtful mind.

Born on January 13, 1919 in Arlington, Washington, Celia grew up during the Depression in a logging community. After high school graduation, she worked as a clerk for Weyerhaeuser

Timber Company for \$50 a month, enough to buy a car. Each day when Celia drove to work, she passed by Everett Airport and saw an opportunity. An admirer of Amelia Earhart, she decided to learn to fly. One week after her 21st birthday, she took off on her first flight and was immediately hooked.

"The viewpoint from on high is so different, and so much more comprehensive... just that whole feeling of being aloft. It gives you a feeling that birds must have. In fact, if I want to be reincarnated, I'd like to be a bird of some sort."

Celia had discovered her first wilderness. Her love of flying led her to train with the Women Airforce Service Pilots, and she became skilled at flying a number of aircraft, including the famous P-47 fighter that zoomed up to 300 mph. Celia ferried aircraft across the country for the Air Force during WWII and dreamed of flying to Alaska one day to see the vast wilderness that other pilots had described.

In December 1946, she and pilot friend Ginny Hill were hired to fly

(Continued on page 18)

"I think what I'd like to leave with people your age is the idea that change is possible, but your going to have to put your energy into it... I'm past 80 and I'm not going to be the mover and shaker of this, but people like you are. And you're going to have to bite the bullet and really decide what kind of world you want to live in."

- Celia Hunter, in an interview with Rhonda McBride, on KSKA, November 28, 2001.



Celia hiking with Romany Wood on Cranberry Ridge above Camp Denali



Ginny (on ladder) and Celia on their newly built cache at Camp Denali.



Celia, with former President Jimmy Carter, speaking on a panel to discuss the protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.



Celia flagging down help in remote Nevada after their van broke down.

So Long, Celia

By Ginny Hill Wood

Farewell, old buddy. You were my companion of our ski trails, of the skies in our respective cockpits ferrying airplanes, as business partners establishing and operating Camp Denali in Kantishna for 25 years, electrician and chain sawyer around our Fairbanks home.

We lived interdependent yet separate lives, each adding further elements to the other's quality of life. We argued some, laughed a lot, shared much, and accomplished goals we couldn't have achieved on our own. You used to say we could do anything I thought up. Lately its been more like I could do anything you would help me do — spelling words I wrote incorrectly and transferring my illegible scrawl to print on your computer which I refused to master.

I am missing you in many ways and places I could not have imagined, each of us savoring our individuality as we did. I miss your laughter bursts; your insufferable cheerfulness so early on dark, bleak days; your willingness to tackle any problems—mechanical, societal, or environmental—undaunted.

We had a relationship unusual for women in our younger days. More like the comradeship of soldiers in combat, mountain climbers and shipmates where one's life depends on the skill, endurance, and judgment of the other.

Today I found the last loaf of bread you baked and put in the deep freeze. I'm savoring it as a last sacrament. I don't know what Valhalla you envisioned as an afterlife—"reincarnation as a bird", you once said? So perhaps you'll have wings, but not with the angels. I'd like to think there is a special place for Earth/Nature/Wilderness lovers where you are joining Donella Meadows and David Brower, and our recently departed neighbor, Gordon Herreid. Save a campsite for me.

Skol! *Ginny*



Celia (left) with Ginny, bicycling through northern Norway and Finland while volunteering at a work camp in 1948.

Those wishing to make a donation in memory of Celia are encouraged to donate to the following organizations:

Northern Alaska Environmental Center
830 College Road
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Alaska Conservation Foundation
411 West 5th Ave, Suite 401
Anchorage, AK 99501

American Friends Service Committee
(a Quaker organization)
1501 Cherry Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102



Celia and Ginny flew in prospectors to Fishwheel, Alaska, near the Yukon River in 1949. A gold strike here eventually "fizzled out."



Celia at home with Yukon.

North Access into Denali National Park: Bill Vetoed but Threat Remains

By Linda A. Paganelli
Denali Watch Coordinator,
and Member, Board of Directors,
Denali Citizens Council

On July 5, 2001, Alaska Governor Tony Knowles vetoed House Bill 244. The premise of the bill stipulated the transfer of 3,500 acres of state land to the Denali Borough for the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of a railroad. The proposed corridor is to run from near Healy to the eastern boundary of Denali National Park and Preserve. The bill required the borough to lease the land, to a person for a railroad development project, by September 1, 2010, or it would revert back to the state.

During the short 30-day period that House Bill 244 was considered by the legislature, testimony from local residents was summarily dismissed as "NIMBY", the not in my backyard syndrome, while the conservation point of view was rejected as being purely anti-development. Instead of heeding the concerns, of residents who would be most affected by rail development and groups focused on the wise and sustainable use of our state's natural resources, the legislators were wooed by pro-development adherents, who presented a big project scheme, which was devoid of any groundwork, had questionable financial backing, and garnered no support from the National Park Service or state agencies.

Although the Governor supports alternative access into Denali as being in the best interests of the state, his rationale for vetoing House Bill 244 was based on the flawed process used to achieve its purported goal. The Northern Alaska Environmental Center, Denali Citizens Council, and others who actively opposed HB 244 resoundingly support the Governor's veto and his reasons for doing so.



20,320 foot Denali, seen from a high ridge overlooking Wonder Lake in Denali National Park, near the terminus of the proposed northern access railway.

© Charlie Ott

Both prior to, in a meeting with a diverse group of Denali Borough residents, and subsequent to the bill's passage in the State Legislature, Representative James was asked to revise HB 244 to clarify ambiguous language and to address areas of concern.

The most insidious aspect of the bill was the give-away of sensitive state lands, which after having undergone extensive study and public input were selected by the State to be retained in the public domain because of their value to wildlife, hunters, and recreationists. In the final draft of the bill, the 3,500 acres were charged to the Denali Borough's municipal land entitlement. Conservationists and local residents argued that the Borough and Kantishna Holdings, Inc., did not require land ownership to facilitate a railroad project or to benefit from its development. The limited conveyance of a right-of-way would have achieved the bill's purpose while at the same time would have prevented unrestricted development in the corridor. Representative James refuted this line of reasoning citing that under previous legislation, the Department of Natural Resources failed to produce a viable right-of-way for a railroad. Under HB

244, the responsibility for the identification of the lands necessary for the corridor and ancillary facilities fell to the Denali Borough, in consultation with Kantishna Holdings, Inc.

Opponents of the bill expressed grave concern that the bill mentioned "ancillary developments" as a valid use of the conveyed land. Representative James conceded that the phrase was vague, but assured locals that the intent of the bill was to build a railroad only, "HB 244 authorizes no road and no additional development." However, she has since backtracked on that angle by stating that "if the end results [sic] is an inability to get through the park boundary, then there must be some kind of visitor facility in the plan and [development] would therefore have to be on the state land." In any case, once the Borough met the "lease" test it would have gained unrestricted ownership of the land and could have used it for any purpose.

The reversion clause was weak because it only required the Borough to lease the land to a railroad developer in order to retain ownership, not that a railroad must be built on the land. A stronger reversion clause should have been scripted that specified demonstrated due

diligence towards railroad development and guaranteed that if this was not accomplished the land returned to the state under its current classification in the Tanana Basin Area Plan. Representative James espoused to understand the concerns about the reversion clause but specified no apparent resolution beyond stating that, "the law should be very clear about what is meant."

To make certain that the integrity of the Wolf Townships are not jeopardized by large commercial developments, to guarantee the maintenance of healthy wildlife populations and associated habitats, and to ensure that present consumptive and nonconsumptive uses and modes of access are retained, the Representative has been asked to sponsor legislation that would bestow State Game Refuge status on the land. James stated that she could support introducing a separate piece of legislation to protect the townships and the continuance of present uses, with the stipulation that a railroad corridor must be identified. She has since modified the area she is willing to protect to the land "left over" from the railroad project. She suggested that a revised reversion clause could direct that the 3,500 acres of identified land be included under the umbrella of protection if the land reverts back to state dominion. A condition to the introduction of this legislation is the approval of the

From the Canary's Mouth

By Mara Bacsujlaky, Mining Coordinator

According to the year-end wrap up by the Northern Miner, grassroots mineral exploration worldwide withered in 2001. A study by the Canadian Metals Economic Group found that for the fourth consecutive year, exploration expenditures fell, down 58% from peak spending in 1997. Among factors cited were sagging base and precious metal prices, and industry consolidation as monolithic multinational mining companies, such as Rio Tinto, and BHP, snap up smaller competitors.

Additionally, major mining companies have increasingly reduced their

financial risk by relying on junior mining companies to conduct early-stage exploration – stepping in only when there appears to be mineralization of significant worth.

In these tight times, however, juniors are finding it difficult to raise money – with the result that base metal and gold discoveries remain flat since 1997. While lack of new discovery does not affect existing production, it portends a decrease in future mine development, especially if metal prices remain low.

Denali Borough Assembly.

Despite strong opposition to the bill, from Denali Borough citizens, local business owners, hunters, residents of the Stampede Road, conservation organizations, and federal and state agencies whose lands would be traversed by the project, Representative James is resolute that unless she can be assured that progress toward a second northern access into the park is being pursued, she will attempt to override the Governor's veto during the next legislative session in January.

Concurrently, \$1.65 million has been appropriated for planning, recon-

naissance, and environmental analysis for a proposed second northern access into Denali National Park and Preserve. The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, state and federal agencies, and a representative of the Denali Borough are presently discussing the scope and responsibilities of conducting such a study. The Department of Transportation would oversee the sponsor of the project, the Denali Borough.

Pursuit of a logical approach to development, initiated with planning and analysis, is paramount to the success of any project. The scope of the study for a second north access into the Park should address whether another access is needed or feasible, which mode of access is best, where that access might originate, economic and environmental impacts, and public participation in the decision making process. HB 244 sets a terrible precedent for legislative overrides of state land planning, opens the door for future impromptu state land giveaways, takes a whimsical approach to altering state and federal land management policies, and attempts to predetermine solutions to access into Alaska's premier National Park sans justification. Representative James and the Alaska State Legislature should adhere to a sound planning process and let HB 244, which is destined for failure die.



Dall sheep live along rocky slopes throughout Denali National Park.

© NAEC File Photo

From Pristine to Polluted: Red Dog Ore Contaminates Road

By Mara Bacsujlaky, Mining Coordinator

Residents of the Native Village of Kivalina in northwestern Alaska fear their food and water are being contaminated by lead and zinc from the Red Dog Mine. Findings by the National Park Service of high levels of heavy metals along the Red Dog ore haul road in May 2001 bolstered their suspicions that they may be exposed to levels of lead that pose serious health risks to them and their children (see sidebar)². While others may have been surprised by the Park Service results, Kivalina villagers weren't—they've seen disturbing changes, like increased numbers of diseased fish, in their environment since the mine began operation in 1989. And they have been telling state and federal regulators about their concerns and working to obtain comprehensive health and environmental testing.

A galactic deposit

Red Dog, the world's largest lead-zinc mine, is located 50 miles up-river from Kivalina. Perched above the headwaters of the Wulik River, which villagers depend on for fish and drinking water, is the mine's open pit, mill facilities, and tailings impoundment. Operated by the Canadian giant Teck-Cominco, and owned by the Native regional corporation NANA, the mine processes 3.3 million tons of lead-zinc ore annually. The ore concentrate is trucked, via dedicated haul road, to the DeLong Mountain Terminal facility (Port Site) on the shores of the Chukchi Sea 62 miles to the west. Once there, the ore is stored in large barns until it can be shipped out during the 3-month summer window when the Chukchi is ice-free.

A rich deposit, averaging 21% zinc and 5% lead, it is considered galactic in size by miners, and dangerously

toxic by the people who live near it. Their fears are not groundless: according to the Environmental Protection Agency's Toxic Release Inventory, which tabulates toxic chemical releases into the environment, Red Dog is the top on- and off-site releaser of toxics in Alaska, and in the mining industry, is ranked fifth overall in the nation.

"The advice from the elders is to watch..."

Villagers from Kivalina don't need the Toxic Release Inventory database to know that Red Dog may pose dangers to their health and to the animals and fish they depend on for food. Even kids in the village school talk about the damaged fish. "The beauty of growing up here is not there to share with our kids", says Nelda Swan, vice-president

of the Kivalina IRA Council, speaking about how life has changed since the

"The beauty of growing up here is not there to share with our kids."

mine went into operation. Colleen Swan-Koenig, the Village's Tribal Administrator, agrees, adding that the village will do whatever is necessary to protect their children from heavy metal contamination. "The advice from the elders is to watch", she says. Her grandfather told her villagers must do their own studies for their children's sake.

Although the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation and the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, in response to the Park Service results, conducted limited sampling of subsistence foods in late summer, Ms. Swan-Koenig and the Kivalina

IRA Council, along with the Northern Center and Alaska Community Action on Toxics (ACAT), maintain that more environmental sampling needs to be done, that there must be a complete and thorough health analysis of villagers, in-



Red Dog zinc mine in the DeLong Mountains, 50 miles northeast of Kivalina, in northwestern Alaska

cluding blood, urine and hair testing, and that the scope of the investigations must be expanded to include heavy metal sampling both within and without the boundaries of the port and mine sites.

Teck-Cominco meanwhile, contends that there is no evidence of potential health risks to people and animals in the region, and that tests they have conducted on lead toxicity of the ore demonstrate that it is not dangerous to people working and living near the mine. The results of the interim public health evaluation concluded that it was safe for people to eat plants and berries gathered at the Port Site, but villagers remain unconvinced.

Lead Sulfide vs. Lead Oxide

At issue is the matter of how easily lead from Red Dog ore can be absorbed by humans and animals ingesting it as dust on their food. Teck-Cominco and the state claim that the Red Dog ore, because it is a sulfide, is not readily “bioavailable”—in other words, that it occurs in a form that remains inert when consumed. According to Pam Miller, Executive Director of ACAT—this assumption is on shaky ground. A nationally recognized lead expert, Dr. John Rosen of the Albert Einstein Medical College in New York, has strongly criticized the notion that ingested lead sulfide is not bioavailable. Research by

him and others has demonstrated that lead sulfides are readily transformed by stomach acids to lead oxides—a form of lead that *is* toxic to humans and animals.

A Red Dog Fugitive Dust Technical Team was formed in early July to work on this issue. Initially limited to representatives from state and federal agencies, from NANA, and from Teck-Cominco, the team has now expanded to include the Native Villages of Kivalina, Noatak and Point Hope, and non-governmental organizations such as the Northern Center, ACAT, and Trustees for Alaska, a public-interest law firm. The purpose of the team, as crafted by its early members, is to evaluate the extent of and the potential health and environmental risks from dust migrating “off-site,” i.e. dust from mining activities that travels beyond the physical boundaries of the mine, the road and the port. Trustees, on behalf of Kivalina, the Northern Center and ACAT, has argued that this is insufficient and that contamination at mine must also be addressed now, not 75 years down the road when the mine is closed and undergoing reclamation.

Kivalina IRA Council Speaks Out

At an October meeting of the Technical Team, held at the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation offices in Anchorage, the Kivalina IRA Council spoke out. Jerry Norton, the Council’s president, talked about the clear sloughs he’s fished for over 30 years now running brown and murky and gray dust on the snow 15 miles away from the Red Dog mine. But it was when he spoke in his language that he gave his most eloquent testimony to the changes he’s seen since the Red Dog mine began production in 1989. Although no translation was needed, Ms. Swan-Koenig provided some for the non-Inupiaq speaking audience, “We know...our land and our river, that is where he started from...he talked about how after the mine was built—how it’s changed—how dirty it is now.”

National Park Service Study Reveals Contamination

In the summer of 2000, the National Park Service conducted moss and soil sampling along 24 miles of Red Dog haul road that traverses National Park Service lands within the Cape Krusenstern National Monument in northwest Alaska. The study provided alarming information – that areas adjacent to the road contained levels of heavy metals that matched or exceeded those found in the most heavily polluted industrial regions in Eastern Europe and western Russia. Analyses of moss, soil, and road dust samples, coupled with analyses of materials site samples (i.e. road bed gravel), demonstrated strong enrichment of lead, zinc and cadmium from sources other than remobilized soil. The study concluded that the likeliest source is falling and blowing ore concentrate from the Red Dog haul trucks. Additionally, anomalously high heavy metals occur even 1600 meters away from the road, suggesting possible contributions of airborne heavy metals from mining activities to the Omikviorok River drainage as a whole.

The people of Kivalina are not waiting around while experts ponder lead bioavailability and agencies worry over artificial boundaries for the contamination. Heeding the words of their elders, they are commissioning their own health assessments and seeking ways they trust to conduct wild food sampling. They are angry that they have to do it themselves, but resigned that this is what it will take to answer their questions about the mine.

² Ford, J. and Hasselbach, L., *Heavy Metals in Mosses and Soils on Six Transects Along the Red Dog Mine Haul Road, Alaska, Western Arctic National Parklands, National Park Service, May 2001, NPS/AR/NRTR-2001/38.*

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On TAPS for 30 Years: Renewing the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System Permit

By Ross Coen,
Executive Director,
Alaska Forum for
Environmental Responsibility

The Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS), the 800-mile transportation conduit from the North Slope oil fields to the terminal at Valdez, crosses either state or federal land for nearly its entire length. The permission to cross that land was granted in 1974 by both the State of Alaska and the United States government in documents known as the Grant and Lease. These permits allowed for a 30-year renewal period, the first of which is set to expire in 2004. The reauthorization of those permits is of utmost importance to the oil industry - it is the very franchise that keeps them in business - and will result in quite possibly the most comprehensive examination of the pipeline since its design and construction.

The pipeline has been in operation for 24 years and, like any piece of aging mechanical equipment, requires extra vigilance and maintenance to ensure its safe operation. The history of pipelines and risk assessment suggests that as a line ages, it is more prone to operational difficulties and incidents.

The reauthorization of TAPS will, in practical terms, revolve around the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Argonne National Laboratory has been contracted to write the EIS and plans to issue a draft in summer 2002, with the final copy coming out at the end of that year.

The owners of TAPS - principally BP, Phillips, and Exxon - submitted an "environmental report" as part of their permit application. That report, in this writer's estimation, is a 600-page behemoth that is long on tables, photos, and lists of wildlife; but dramatically short on details for how the oil companies intend to guarantee the pipeline's integrity for the next 30 years. It is probably not surprising that the TAPS Owners would publish a report where every topic and issue has been carefully screened, with the facts either presented or omitted, to leave the reader with a certain impression, namely that there are no problems whatsoever on TAPS.

Consider the case of the pipeline's



© NAEC File Photo

The Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) stretches over 800 miles from the oil fields of Prudhoe Bay to the port of Valdez on Prince William Sound.

Vertical Support Members (VSMs), those goalpost-shaped pilings that support the aboveground sections of TAPS. The Joint Pipeline Office has estimated that some 25,000 VSMs (almost one-third) are subject to movement from changing permafrost conditions.

They also document that 84% of the heat pipes (installed to maintain frozen ground) have some degree of blockage that may diminish their performance.

Does one find any mention of these serious problems in the TAPS Owners' environmental report? Of course not. Go ahead and perform a word search in the 600-page document for all mentions of VSMs. You will find diagrams, brief design descriptions, even a mention of raven and gyrfalcon nests atop some VSMs. You will not find any detail whatsoever on how the TAPS Owners intend to maintain VSM integrity for the next 30 years.

The Alaska Forum for Environmental Responsibility has spent the better part of a decade researching the status of TAPS and, most recently, the issues that should be addressed in the upcoming reauthorization. One of the more disturbing findings of that research is the degree to which budget targets and the quest for profit continually take precedence over environmental protection.

For example, the Remote Gate Valve 39 (RGV-39) at the Koyukuk River was installed to seal and isolate that section

of the pipeline to minimize any oil that could be spilled from a breach in the line. This valve was diagnosed in September 2000 as sealing poorly and thus having a high enough internal bypass rate to mandate its replacement. The valve was scheduled to be replaced in 2001.

Alyeska, always under pressure from the TAPS Owners to hold down cost and boost profit, deferred the project and has yet to replace the faulty valve. In the interim, the TAPS Owners will gamble that this important safety device will not be called upon to perform the function for which it was designed and installed.

The loser in this situation is clear: the environment. Located in the heart of the Brooks Range, between Wiseman and the landmark Sukukpak Mountain, RGV-39 protects key wilderness, wildlife, and subsistence resources in the Koyukuk River Valley. The only winners in this situation are the top-level managers in Alyeska's Fairbanks Business Unit, who were able to trim \$4.25 million from their capital budget by deferring the project.

There is no doubt that the TAPS reauthorization will be granted in 2004. The only question is the extent to which we will have learned from the oil industry's inconsistent record for environmental protection and demand that the next 30 years on TAPS reflect an higher standard of responsibility.

Introducing Sara Elzey

Bookkeeper

I was born in Sitka, Alaska at Mt. Edgecumb hospital. At three months of age I went on my first camping trip as my family drove out of Alaska to a new home. My parents' hearts were always in Alaska however and they moved back, albeit not to Southeast, their first choice, but to Fairbanks. I spent most of my childhood like most Alaskan children, enjoying the great outdoors. Since my hunter/fisher/outdoorsman father did not have a son, I spent many hours accompanying him on great outdoor adventures. My favorite was our annual float trip down the Gaulkana river with the great fly fishing and only a few near-death experiences in the rapids! As I grew older my passions turned to horseback riding. I still get nostalgic for my trail riding days when the smell of fall is in the air. In high school I still loved the outdoors but had discovered sports. I ran track (400m dash) and cross-country and was a member of the cross-country ski team. I also decided that I really DID NOT like Alaska and was "going away" for college. Little did I know how things would change.

Romance and unexpected finan-

cial shortfalls kept me here at the University of Alaska, grumbling the entire time. I took the whole range of classes but mostly settled on business and psychology courses, graduating with a BS in Psychology and high hopes for my future. Unfortunately (or fortunately depending on your perspective!) I did NOT find

the job of my dreams. I re-evaluated my situation and headed back to school, this time studying for a Masters in Business Administration. I still wasn't too thrilled about Fairbanks but by now a marriage was in the works and it didn't look like I would be leaving any time soon. And then a miracle happened. I talked my husband into a puppy and we went to the animal shelter. A black husky/lab (who turned out to actually HATE water so cannot be lab at all) came home with us. Shortly there after I discovered skjoring and the rest is history! My friends and



Sara, with husband David, and furry friends Shadow, Myst, and Ayla

© NAEC File Photo

family all tease me about loving Alaska these days and looking forward to winter all summer long. I've added two more dogs to our family and am anxiously awaiting a real snowfall this year so I can risk my neck skjoring with all three.

Alaska is truly my home now and I love it. Even the cold dark winters are beautiful with the snow covered trees and Northern Lights. And summer... well, need I say more? Between running, hiking, gardening, biking, sunbathing, boating, etc., who has time to sleep? I can't imagine living anywhere else. I'm excited to have an opportunity to use my education and experience at a job that also promotes my love for Alaska's wilderness and my need to be outdoors as much as possible. I look forward to a long tenure here at the Northern Alaska Environmental Center.

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True North Mine Update:

On January 23, 2002, oral arguments in Neighborhood Mine Watch's (NMW) appeal of the True North Right-of-Way permit were heard in the Alaska Superior Court. The judge's decision in the case, in which NMW is represented by Brad DeNoble, is expected to be handed down in a matter of months.

(Celia, continued from page 10)

two Stinson airplanes from Seattle to Fairbanks. They arrived in a snowstorm at Weeks Field in Fairbanks on January 1, 1947, nearly a month-long trip with

all the weather delays. They decided to stay and work in the tourism industry, ferrying visitors to a travel lodge in Kotzebue during the summer.

This experience inspired Celia, Ginny Hill Wood, and Woody Wood to build Camp Denali, a wilderness camp just outside the original boundary of McKinley National Park. There, visitors could see Denali and enjoy hiking and wildlife-viewing in a magnificent setting. For more than two decades, Celia and Ginny shared the wonders of

the Park with visitors from all over the world.

In 1960, Celia and Ginny helped found Alaska's first statewide environmental organization, the Alaska Conservation Society. This small group of pioneering conservationists was inspired by Olaus and Margaret Murie to work for the establishment of the Arctic National Wildlife Range, and to protect the special and unspoiled lands of Alaska.

Working together, Celia and Ginny have tackled all of Alaska's major environmental issues. They fought against Project Chariot and the Rampart Dam project, became loving stewards and advocates for Denali National Park, and worked to create and pass the 1980 Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, the greatest lands conservation act in world history.

In the late 1970s, Celia's leadership moved to the national level when she served as Executive Director for the Wilderness Society. She also began writing memorable environmental columns for the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner. Fearless and outspoken, Celia carefully studied a diversity of issues and wrote articulate and compelling columns for more than 20 years. Dedicated to the conservation movement, she also

helped found the Alaska Conservation Foundation in 1980.

Through the years, Celia not only devoted her energy to environmental causes, she also loved people and the web of connections between them. She had the natural ability to inspire and nurture countless individuals by listening to their ideas and dreams and sharing their views. Her glacial-blue eyes could look into one's soul and bring out the best of a person's spirit, including a good laugh.

Celia leaves a tremendous legacy of conservation accomplishments. Her vibrant spirit will live on in the wilderness she loved, in the lives of those she inspired, and in the legislation that holds her tireless efforts to protect what she truly loved. The Earth and all its living things are grateful. Alaska will forever remember Celia.

Editor's Note: In addition to her many other accomplishments, Celia, along with Ginny Wood and others, founded the Fairbanks Environmental Center, which, in 1981, was changed to the Northern Alaska Environmental Center. Many consider Celia and Ginny to be the founders of the Alaskan conservation movement.

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- ♦ Special thanks to *Dana Durham, Stu Pechek, Bill Watkins and Jeff Forsythe* for taking the time and energy to visit DC and express their opinions on drilling in the Arctic Refuge.
- ♦ *Pat Rawert*, for helping to distribute Arctic Refuge action alerts across the UAF campus.
- ♦ *Greg Egan* performed an electrical energy audit of the Northern Center and providing suggestions on how to improve our building's energy efficiency.
- ♦ *Pam Miller and Nancy Wainwright* - for providing technical advice on North Slope water and oil issues.
- ♦ *Betsy Chronic* carved our beautiful front door sign and continuously helps to keep us up to date with all the news clippings!
- ♦ For addressing thank you notes, stuffing envelopes, and sticking labels, thank you to *Elizabeth, Hector, and Dean!*
- ♦ In November, *Magoli* helped to organize and run an Arctic Refuge phone bank.
- ♦ Many of you enjoy reading the Conservation Abstracts on the back cover of the Northern Line. *Florence Collins* has been compiling these for many years now and her hard work is appreciated.

Annual Auction Is Most Successful Ever!

The 2001 Northern Alaska Environmental Center annual auction, held in November, was our most successful fund-raiser in history! Over 150 Fairbanksans came to the Chena River Convention Center to show their support and bring home outdoor gear, certificates for trips, fancy desserts, massages, and a whole host of other great auction items. They were also treated to a night of delicious hors d'oeuvres, delectable desserts, bluegrass music, and much joviality. Thanks to your generosity, we were able to raise over \$23,000—WOW! Plans are already underway for next year's auction, if you would like to help out or make a donation please contact the Northern Center (907) 452-5021 or <info@northern.org>.

Thank you to all the businesses and individuals who generously donated to the Northern Center's auction!

Walter Bennett, Basically Basil, Jean Lester, Wood Fired Pottery, Pattie Saunders, Gambardella's Pasta Bella, Mermaid Imports and Designs, River Tracks Productions, Daniel & Rita Osborne, April Crosby, John & Linda Benson, Pauline Wilson, Crazy Creek Products, Siglin Sleds, Ron & Mary Teel, Massage Therapy Assoc., The Wood Joint, Moose Mountain Ski Resort, North Star Golf Club, Inc., Kenai Fjords Tours, School of Integrating Shiatsu, Laurent Dick, Debbie Miller, Roger Kaye, Bev Reitz, Patagonia, Mary Shields, Fairbanks Drama Association, Fairbanks Children's Theater, Leatherman Tool Group, Inc., John Hagey, Apocalypse Design, Alaskan Freelance Writers/Photographers, Alaska Tent and Tarp, Custom Stitchery, Chena Hot Springs Resort, Water Wagon, Judie Gumm Designs, Gulliver's Bookstore, Prince William Sound Cruises & Tours, McAfee Chiropractic Clinic, Pike's Landing, Kinko's Copies, Brenda Stanfill, Aldona Jonaitis, Paul & Sonja Ollig, Country Kitchen, Polhaven Massage, Alaska Wildlands Adventures, Wright Air Service, Inc., Nancy Fresco, Clarice Dukeminier, Mountain Sports, Great Alaska Bowl Company, Arthur Hussey and Janet Daley, David van den Berg, Judy Kreith, Whiff Eagleton, Jennifer Wenrick, Jana Canary, Sally Anderson, Little Granite Creek Pottery, Sternwheel Riverboat Discovery, Northern Alaska Tour Company, Camp Denali, Todd Burnside and Deb Moore, Erik Holland, Sarah Campbell, Darleen Masiak, Hidden Hill Friends Community, Maiden Alaska, and the Alaska Railroad!

Shape and Protect Alaska's Future. . .

. . . become a member of the Northern Center or make a donation.



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Thank you for your support. Please return to: NAEAC, 830 College Road, Fairbanks AK 99701

Conservation Abstracts

By Florence Collins, Member

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CELIA HUNTER, long-time Alaska conservationist and Fairbanks resident, died at her home December 1, 2001. She helped found the Alaska Conservation Society (now superseded by the Northern Alaska Environmental Center), and helped defeat Project Chariot, a plan to excavate a harbor at Cape Thompson with nuclear bombs, and Rampart Dam, which would have flooded the Yukon Flats. She will be missed by her many local, state, and national friends. Redpoll, December 2001, p. 2-3; Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, (FDNM), December 2, 2001, p. A-1, A-9; December 9, p. A-4; December 10, p. A-1, A-8

MORE THAN 3000 ACRES of state land at Hatcher Pass in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough is being given to the borough, to "make it easier to develop a proposed ski area" and a possible resort village. Opponents say the borough can not protect the key wildlife habitat there. FDNM, December 4, 2001, p. A-3

THE U. S. 1872 MINING LAW should be addressed in the 2002 session of Congress; more than 40% of Western watersheds have been polluted by mine drainage, and a half-million closed mines "dot the landscape nationally", with cleanup costs estimated at tens of billions of dollars. Interior Secretary Norton has revised Pres. Clinton's environmental restrictions on hard-rock mining, and the changes will take effect December 31, 2001. She affirmed his requirement of 100% bonding for cleanup costs, however. FDNM December 11, 2001, p. A-3

THE ROSS ICE SHELF has advanced several miles in the last 2 decades "creating a sheltered cove of sea ice" for an emperor penguin colony that has grown from 100 pairs to 1500. However, the population in a colony near an Arctic Research station has dropped 50% in the past 5 decades. National Geographic, December 2001, p. 2-21; National Wildlife, December-January 2001, p. 10

HOT WATER DISCHARGED into the Chena River by the Aurora Energy Co (which bought the Fairbanks city power plant in 1998) is opposed by some people because it prevents ice forming on the river, and also prevents winter recreation there; "there is no evidence...[that it] causes environmental harm". The state will hold a public hearing on the matter in March 2002. FDNM, December 6, 2001, p. B-1

CHINOOK SALMON in the Yukon River watershed are a "mixed stock", with a unique one for each part of the river and its tributaries; they are not opportunistic and are very selective, returning to spawn at specific locations. Destroyed habitat cannot be restored—only 18% of restored stream channels support fish, and altering one part of a stream will affect the rest of it. In addition, habitat alteration is often not done. Walk Softly, December 2001, p. 9-10

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