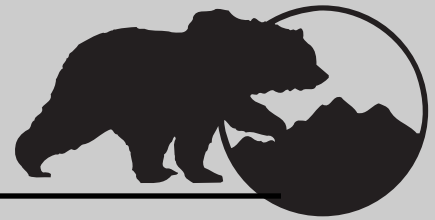


THE NORTHERN LINE



"The touch of the Arctic wind caressing my cheeks, the sweet smell of the Arctic tundra, the pale light of these summer nights, clusters of forget-me-nots, so small as to be easily overlooked – I want to stand still, compose myself, and record this landscape in the memory of my five senses."

~ Michio Hoshino, in Hoshino's Alaska.



ALASKA SPRINGS TO LIFE

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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 Alaska Environmental Center has 1,000 members.

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Shauna Mikelich, Mining Coordinator
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David van den Berg, Executive Director

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Photos on page 1 and 12, by Pamela A. Miller

Thank You to Our Volunteers!

- Mary Zalar
- Mary Ann Nickols
- Lori Fickus
- Ken Whitten
- Julie Elliot
- Greg Smith
- Larry Landry

Electronics Recycling Volunteers:

Eva Rothman, Bill Smyth, Stuart Varner, Bob Hammond, Leah Swasey, Bret Biebuyck, Amanda Huff, Matt Bennett, Bri Parrish, Dene Borland, David Albright, Bruce Tillitt, Catey Adams, Mary Zalar, Steve Kendall, Ipshita Maihi, Christy Everett, John Bollinger, Tom Dillon, Thomas Cox, James, Ray, Riley, Jamie Davis, Sheila Fellerath, Brandon Smyth, Garrett Smyth, Jenni Moore, Rachel Steiner, Aaron Wilbur, Sara Lawhead, Becky Hammer, Chris Greenfield, Rick Hoeberg, Loni Weggel, Grace Matthews, Luke Nielsen, Jenna Slater, Vallyn Atkinson, Casey Monge, Travis Britain, Julie Brice, Elisna Waugh, Jeff Yacevich, Carol Varner, Pam Seiser, Franz Mueter, Mary Ann Nickles, Rachel Potter, Larry Zirkle, Jake Zirkle, Duane, Andrew, Bir Parrish, Dene Borland, Dwight Hales, Anna Maquire, Andrea Swingley, Janice Wiegers, Cacy Wilfer, Ryan Rostad, Brian Wildman, Matt Bennett, Martha Reynold's, Daniel Dashevsky, Brandon Smyth, Garrett Smyth, Thomas Cox, Jamie Davis, David Albright, Katie Breen, Derek Muelles, Katlian Stark, Joanne Groves, Jo Ramos, Will Lentz, Catey Burtneess-Adams

Calendar of Events



June 1

Northern Alaska Environmental Center's Annual Membership Meeting & BBQ.

Annual meeting 5-6 p.m., picnic begins at 6 p.m. Join us for free food and drink, live music, and to meet and mingle with other members.

June 6 Discovering Alaska - A Summer Lecture Series

7 p.m. @ UAF's Schaible Auditorium. Ken Whitten, wildlife biologist, photographer, and woodworker shares his use of photography to enhance his enjoyment of the natural landscape. Admission is free.

June 13 Discovering Alaska - A Summer Lecture Series

7 p.m. @ UAF's Schaible Auditorium. Carolyn Kremers, teacher and author, will read from her nonfiction and poetry, and share slides of Gates of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and Chena Ridge. Admission is free.

June 20 Discovering Alaska - A Summer Lecture Series

7 p.m. @ UAF's Schaible Auditorium. Dennis Witmer, physicist, engineer, and photographer, will provide a multifaceted discussion of his view of the Alaska landscape. Admission is free.

June 27 Discovering Alaska - A Summer Lecture Series

7 p.m. @ UAF's Schaible Auditorium. Marjorie Cole, retired librarian and award winning novelist, shares her novel, *Correcting the Landscape*, a sensitive and powerful portrayal of an Alaskan community. Admission is free.

July 11 Discovering Alaska - A Summer Lecture Series

7 p.m. @ UAF's Schaible Auditorium. Lenny Kamerling, award winning documentary videographer will examine Alaskan stereotypes and how cinema contributes to their longevity. Admission is free.

July 18 Discovering Alaska - A Summer Lecture Series

7 p.m. @ UAF's Schaible Auditorium. Debbie Miller, former teacher and author of both children's and adult books, discusses her work as a naturalist and environmental writer. Admission is free.

July 25 Discovering Alaska - A Summer Lecture Series

7 p.m. @ UAF's Schaible Auditorium. Todd Sherman, artist and teacher, will share images created by field artists that were inspired by the wilds of Alaska. Admission is free.

August 1 Discovering Alaska - A Summer Lecture Series

7 p.m. @ UAF's Schaible Auditorium. Ned Rozell, Fairbanks author and adventurer, writes a popular science column and is the author of *Walking My Dog Jane: From Valdez to Prudhoe Bay along the Trans-Alaska Pipeline*. Admission is free.

August 8 Discovering Alaska - A Summer Lecture Series

7 p.m. @ UAF's Schaible Auditorium. Susan Grace, veteran singer/songwriter, will talk about the power of music to educate, inspire, and move people to take action and resolve conflict. Admission is free.

August 15 Discovering Alaska - A Summer Lecture Series

7 p.m. @ UAF's Schaible Auditorium. Mike Sfraga, geographer, educator, and author of *Bradford Washburn, A Life of Exploration* will pay tribute to mountaineer/explorer, Bradford Washburn, in his lecture. Admission is free.

August 19 Run for the Refuge

1 p.m. @ the UAF West Ridge Ski Hut. Race on hilly UAF trails. Advance registration for adults \$15, children \$10. Race day registration, add \$5. Food and live music. Contact pam@northern.org for more info.

A Letter to our Members: Spring for Renewable Energy

By David van den Berg



Spring is a good time to take a fresh green run at reducing America's super sized appetite for fossil fuels. If you care about American foreign policy and the march of democracy, America's trade deficit, your household costs, your discretionary dollars, America's economic future, global temperatures, or protecting the environment, then let's run hard.

We are long overdue in coming to terms with our fossil fuel addiction. In the impatient words of Thomas Friedman, "If you think <America> can deal with <climate-energy issues> without asking the American people to do anything hard, you're either a fool or a fraud."¹

Your mother did not raise a fool. And God did not make us fossil fuel burners, so we have free will to change. Many national leaders like former Chrysler chairman Lee Iacocca want to change. He says, "We've got to get off fossil fuels." The United States military wants to 'eat its tail,' a graphic term to describe reducing an army's vulnerable supply lines through conservation and the use of renewable energy sources.

To get up to speed to reduce our appetite for fossil fuels, we can affirm four things: What America does matters; Citizens can push government to lead the way; Domestic oil production from new sources is a costly distraction; Expression of values still leavens America's democracy.

What America does matters. Does China pollute because we do? Are China's multitudes of new coal plants unable to sequester carbon because our multitudes won't? America's soft power (our cultural appeal) in the years ahead will stem from our success at profitably innovating to curb carbon emissions, subordinating short term costs to local and global long-term benefits. This is the new American Century, is it not? What America does matters.

Governments can help create playing fields so that the invisible hand can work. Public enthusiasm and pressure got governments to set targets and incentives for the Japanese, Danish, German and Californian economies to reduce fossil fuel use and to grow their renewable energy portfolios.

America still has oil in the ground. In fact, the higher the price of oil, the more oil we count. But to produce our remaining oil is very costly: costly in dollars, costly ecologically, and costly of time – time we need to less painfully make the shift from fossil fuels we all know we'll have to make.

Our toolkit for the shift is familiar: doing what we urge in the letters we write to our leaders. And we need to intensify our efforts. By acting where we can in our personal lives and pressing our leaders for progress on renewable energy, we affirm a new playing field for business to innovate, a desire for America to lead the new energy economy, and an end to drilling our last wild places. 🌱

¹ Thomas Friedman, "The Power of Green," *The New York Times*, April 15, 2007

Fairbanks Steps Up to the Climate Challenge

By Nancy Fresco, Local Issues Coordinator

On Saturday April 14th, more than fifty Fairbanks residents concerned about the catastrophic effects of global warming rallied together to urge Congress to cut carbon dioxide emissions 80 percent by 2050.

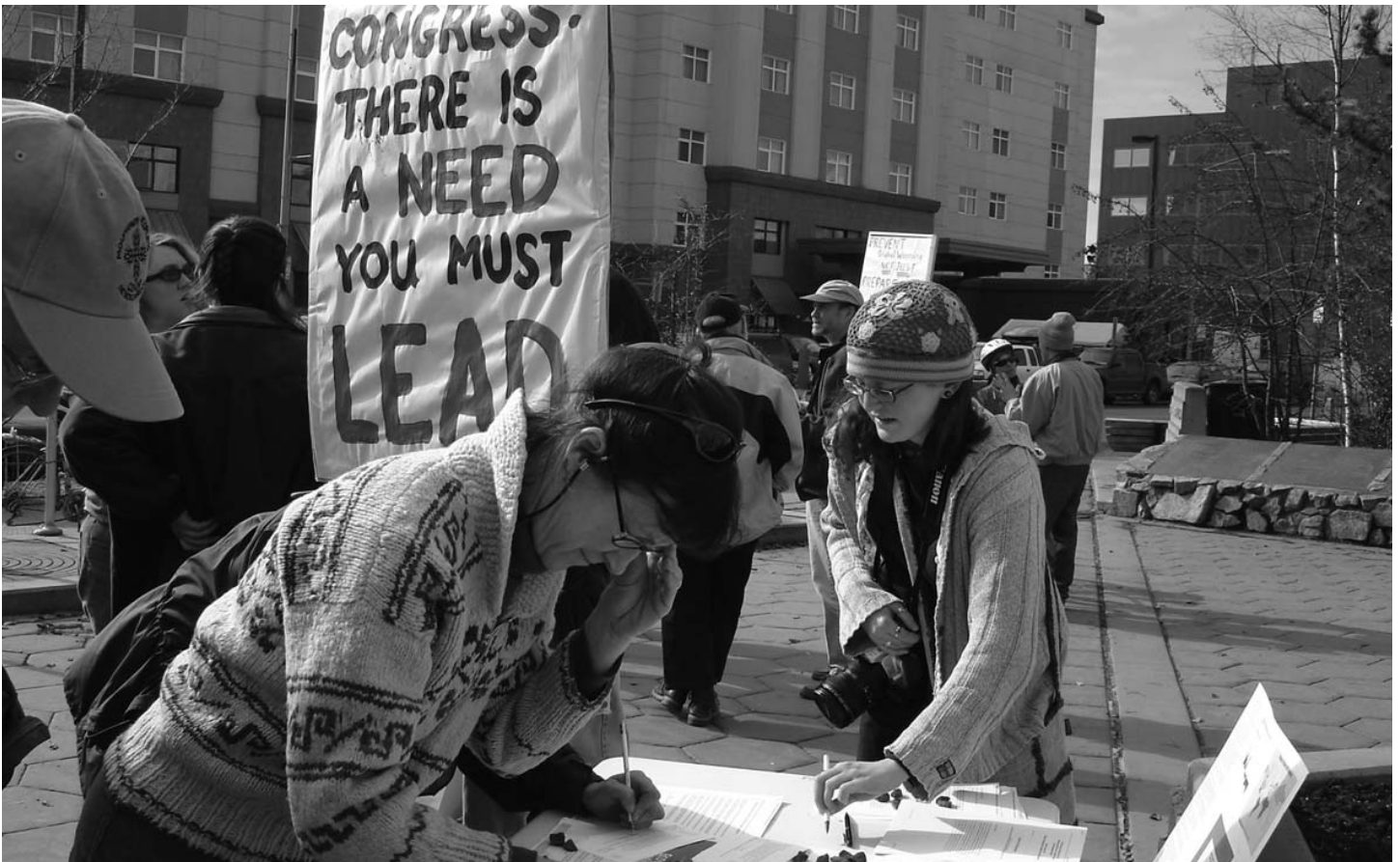
The gathering was part of the Step it Up 2007 campaign, the largest day of citizen action focusing on global warming in our nation's history. Our Fairbanks group sent a photo to Washington, D.C., along with photos from hundreds of other events across the country, in order to galvanize Congress into taking meaningful action on the issue.

From Barrow to Port Alexander, people in eight Alaskan cities and villages rallied in support of reducing global warming pollution by 80 percent by 2050. This "gold standard" goal is embodied in S. 309 (Sanders-Boxer) Global Warming Pollution Reduction Act which requires a series of strategies, including mandatory emission caps, increased energy efficiency standards, and 20%

renewable energy standard, with the goal to achieve an 80% reduction in emissions below 1990 levels by 2050.

Over 1,400 events took place in all 50 states. At sites all over the country, participants were photographed displaying the message, "Step It Up Congress! Cut Carbon 80% by 2050!"

Reducing emissions by 80 percent in the next 40 to 50 years is a bold goal, but a necessary one if we want to curb the buildup of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Our national government has the ability to set strict limits on emissions – or establish a value for carbon – thereby stimulating further development of renewable energy sources. Meanwhile, citizens and communities have the power to cut their own emissions. The State of Alaska can also do more, starting with an inventory of greenhouse gas emissions, which the Northern Center requested through a Trustees for Alaska petition to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. ♻



At the Step it Up rally in Fairbanks on April 14, 2007, Alaskans sign postcards to Congress asking for legislation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Photo by: Pamela A. Miller

Alaskans Rally at Climate Crisis Action Day

By Pamela A. Miller, Arctic Coordinator

Fifty Alaskans traveled to Washington, D.C. to jump start Congressional action on curbing global warming pollution and supporting the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge wilderness bill.

At Climate Crisis Action Day, March 20th, we rallied with nearly 3,000 Americans on Capitol Hill to bring attention to the double jeopardy facing the Arctic Refuge from our nation's oil addiction. First, the drilling lobby threatens to turn a world-renowned wildlife refuge into an oil industrial zone. Second, our oil consumption feeds the global warming already harming the Arctic ecosystem and people.

We promoted making America a leader in solar, wind, hydrogen and other clean energy.

The Arctic Refuge is irreplaceable habitat for polar bears, now threatened by global warming. Scientists predict we could lose this unique animal as quickly as the end of this century, unless we substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions and sea ice decline is stabilized. With the polar bear's sea ice habitats melting away, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed listing the polar bear as

threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The Northern Center endorsed the finding, as did most of 500,000 citizens who wrote comments. The Arctic Refuge is the most significant onshore polar bear denning area in the U.S. and permanent protection of the refuge is a key step to prevent further degradation of this key habitat. 🌿

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Support H.R. 39, the Udall-Eisenhower Arctic Wilderness bill to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge coastal plain. Please write to your members of Congress:

The Honorable
U.S. Senate, Washington DC 20510

The Honorable
U.S. House of Representatives, Washington DC 20515



Robert Thompson, at Capitol Hill Rally, speaks about global warming and the Arctic Refuge, joined by family Athena and Sharon Thompson, and grandson Jules Lord; Wesley Lord and Glenda Lord, all from Kaktovik. *Photo by: Pamela A. Miller*

Alaska's Plunge into the Mining Boom

By Shauna Mikelich Mining Coordinator

As the weather warms and the bugs come out, mining threats to Northern Alaska also emerge from winter hibernation.

This year, that coincides with rising metal prices driven by developing countries. Historically a placer mining state, Alaska sits poised to plunge into a different frontier: mass scale industrial mining, which will reverberate throughout the state for generations to come.

State legislators and regulators encourage the plunge. Compared to the oil and gas industry, mining companies pay a fractional sum for the value of the minerals they extract. The state is willing to exchange mineral development for employment opportunities, virtually giving away Alaska's mineral resources. Unfortunately, state legislators worry that any change to the current state mining royalty/tax structure would frighten off the mining industry. However, individual large hardrock mines currently operating in the state saw huge profits in 2006 alone. Red Dog Mine turned a \$1.1 billion dollar profit in zinc and lead sales last year, up from \$325 million in 2005. Predictably Teck Cominco, owner of Red Dog, waves a languid hand and pooh-poohs last year's profits as a fluke.

State regulators bow to industry with efforts to "streamline" mine permitting processes and speed mine development. This process ends up drowning the public in paperwork during short comment periods. Last summer with the Rock Creek gold mine, near Nome, state regulators released all the major permits during one 30 day comment period. Concerned citizens had to wade through several hundred pages of technical documents and individual permits. Locals felt overwhelmed and many failed to comment as a result. State regulators consider Rock Creek a successful pilot for the newly trim permitting process.

In addition to "streamlining" the state permitting process, the state seeks to assume control, or primacy, of EPA's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. NPDES permitting is intended to ensure that our

lakes, rivers, streams and coastal estuaries and seas are clean enough for children to swim and healthy enough for aquatic life to thrive. In order to gain primacy over the program, Alaska must adopt regulations at least as stringent as federal regulations. Upon assuming state control, Alaska will have to staff and fund a Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) program to the tune of \$2.5 million dollars a year, money the state can ill afford.

The view from the precipice of mass scale industrial mining is clear. Alaska has immense mineral resources, companies seeking to exploit those resources, and a timid government. Alaskans – for the most part – derive no benefit from the mining industry but stand to pay legacy costs of poor or pliant regulatory schemes. The Northern Center will continue to advocate for a fair return to the state as well as for environmentally beneficial state and federal regulatory regimes. Please encourage Alaska state legislators and regulators to change the mining tax structure, go to our website www.northern.org for more information.

Red Dog NPDES Permit Appeal

Red Dog mine is renewing their National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit (NPDES). The mine currently operates under their 1998 NPDES permit, but has never fully met permit requirements. The new permit is weak in several areas including relaxation of total dissolved solid (TDS) and cyanide restrictions. In essence, the mine could not meet the regulations set down by the 1998 NPDES permit and EPA's response has been to relax permit requirements instead of requiring the mine to clean up. The Northern Center is currently appealing the permit renewal, and the state 401 Certification, with Kivalina residents, the Alaska Center for the Environment and Alaska Community Action on Toxics. The appeals are currently under review by the EPA Environmental Board of Appeals and the Alaska DEC.

... state regulators released all the major permits during one 30 day comment period. Concerned citizens had to wade through several hundred pages of technical documents and individual permits. ... State regulators consider Rock Creek a successful pilot for the newly trim permitting process.

Alaska's Arctic Ocean Coasts Slammed by Offshore Leasing & Drilling

By Pamela A. Miller, Arctic Coordinator

Interior Secretary Kempthorne expanded oil and gas leasing off Alaska in his final Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Five-Year Plan on May 1, 2007 with nine sales (Beaufort Sea-2, Chukchi Sea-3, Bristol Bay-1, and Cook Inlet-2). For the first time, Interior opened the prized Bristol Bay moratoria area protected since the Exxon Valdez oil spill -- and Atlantic waters off Virginia near the Chesapeake Bay mouth. The first sale would be slated for the fall of this year in the untouched Chukchi.

Interior's colossal Beaufort and Chukchi Sea leasing area exceeds 73 million acres, pushing farther north than ever. Interior failed to adequately consider global warming, especially current science documenting major changes to sea ice, marine mammal and bird habitats and populations. Endangered bowhead whales, Pacific walrus and migratory birds could be devastated by oil spills that cannot be cleaned up in broken ice. Offshore oil and gas activities pose cumulative impacts to wildlife, wilderness, and Alaska Native communities. The plan goes to Congress for a 60-day review in which the Northern Center and other citizens will make their opposition heard.

Shell Oil jumped into drilling in a huge way right off the Arctic Refuge without the Interior Department taking a

hard look at its impacts. While Shell promotes itself as an environmentally responsible company, drilling just offshore the Arctic Refuge -- one of the most pristine protected areas in the world -- belies this claim and their reputation as a leader early to recognize the reality of global warming.

In June, Shell plans seismic blasting and offshore drilling during open water seasons for 3-5 years off the Arctic Refuge coast. Drill ship and bottom-founded rigs, ice breakers, and 16 support vessels will drill 12-18 exploration wells at Sivulliq (aka "Hammerhead", north of Canning River), Olympia (three miles from Hulahula River mouth near Kaktovik), and other Beaufort Sea leases (north of refuge wilderness at Kongakut River, west off NPR-A near Smith Bay, etc.). The Northern Center opposes this intense drilling activity located in the migratory path of bowhead whales and sensitive waters where spills could harm polar bears and refuge coastline and where future pressure would increase for ports, pipelines, and other industry in the refuge. Conservation and Alaska Native organizations challenged the legality of the Interior Department proceeding without an environmental impact statement for this controversial drilling project. 🌿

Addendum to 2006 Annual Report

The following are the 2006 donors to whom we owe both thanks for their support and our apologies for not acknowledging their donations in our 2006 annual report:

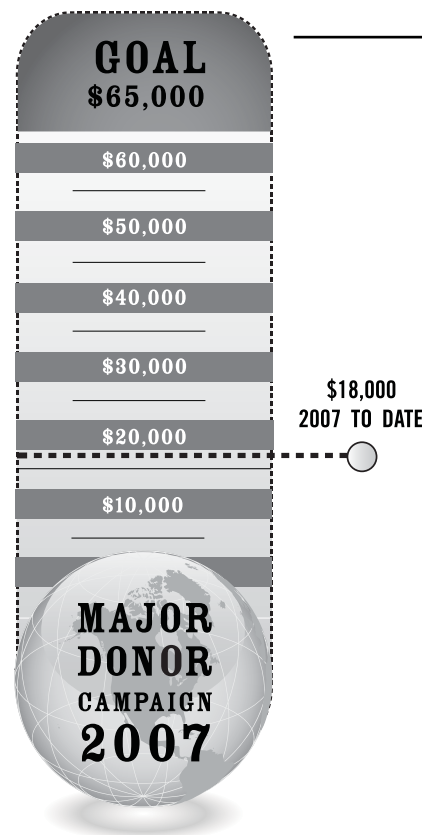
Over \$1000

- Daniel & Ann Swift

\$500-\$1000

- Mary Greene
- Simon & Jenna Hamm/Denali Park Wilderness Center
- Martha Hanlon
- William & Anne Harrison
- Bill Holman/Michelle Bartlett
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- Dan & Rita Osborne
- Scott Schuttner/Glynn Hoener
- Jim Scott/Heidi E. Fleischmann
- Catherine Symchych
- Egerton & Caroline van den Berg
- Jennifer van den Berg/Arctic Wild
- Peter Weinberger
- Bob & Lura White
- Ken Whitten/Mary Zalar





SIGN UP NOW!

Camp Habitat Summer Camps 2007

Nature Education & Ecology for Youth Ages 4–11
at Creamer's Migratory Waterfowl Refuge

Camp Habitat Schedule

PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Half-Day Program 9 a.m.–12 p.m.

Ages 4 – 5 **\$110**

Nature Sprouts I June 18 – 22
Nature Sprouts II. June 25 – 29

DAY CAMP PROGRAMS

Full-Day Program 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Ages 6 – 7 **\$185**

Nature Detectives I July 9 – 13
Nature Detectives II. July 16 – 20
Nature Detectives III July 23 – 27

Ages 8 – 9* **\$235**

Water Striders I July 9 – 13
Water Striders II **FULL**

Ages 10 -11* **\$235**

Refuge Adventurers July 16 – 20
*includes 1 overnight campout



Registration Information

A onetime registration fee of \$20 is required per family. Tuition and fees must be paid in full to secure your child's registration.

Register Three Easy Ways!

- 1. Phone:** Complete Camp Habitat's registration form. Call Camp Habitat at (907) 452-5021. Be prepared to give your Visa or MasterCard number.
- 2. Mail** completed registration form to:
Camp Habitat
830 College Rd
Fairbanks, AK 99701
- 3. Online:** Online registration is available until June 1. Go to: www.northern.org

QUESTIONS

Call (907) 452-5021 ext. 32 or
Email camphabitat@northern.org



NOW HIRING for SUMMER '07!

Camp Habitat is looking for *qualified* **Day Camp Instructors** (professional teachers, outdoor educators, college juniors & seniors) and **Junior Counselors** (high school juniors & seniors). Please visit www.northern.org to view job descriptions and download applications. Send all required application materials, including 3 references to 830 College Rd., Fairbanks AK 99701 or email to camphabitat@northern.org.

Scholarships still available.
Call for more information

Earth Day Fun!

By Laenne Thompson, Youth Education Director

On April 21, Camp Habitat celebrated Earth Day at Joy Elementary School with the help of many Fairbanks families.

Outside, there were electric cars, solar panels, and electric bicycles on display from local folks and the Golden Valley Electric Association. Inside, there was bluegrass and folk music by several local artists, including Susan Grace, founder of Camp Habitat, storytelling with local author, Debbie Miller, and music making and movement with Suzie Lozo. There were also several youth and earth friendly activities such as face painting, re-using magazines for nature collages and plastic bags for weaving, and a station where youngsters created mobiles of their favorite bugs.

The folks from the Georgeson Botanical Garden offered marigold planting, and the gents from Fairbanks Park & Recreation were on-hand to answer questions about new plans for local parks. Staff from both Friends of Creamer's Field and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game were on hand to lead nature walks and put on a puppet show.

Our local chapter of Alaska Youth for Environmental Action hosted a booth to collect signatures for their 3-2-1 campaign (www.ayea.org) and for people to decorate squares of a "Support Renewable Energy" quilt that the group will assemble and send to a legislator. A bake sale boasting delicious treats made with love were enjoyed by many a hungry attendee!

Camp Habitat thanks everyone, especially this year's planning committee and volunteers, for coming out on a gorgeous day to kick off the season and for donations made to support our 2007 Summer Camps.



Alayah Brunty and Haruka Miyake lend their creative talents to a renewable energy-themed quilt put together by youth from Fairbanks Alaska Youth for Environmental Action at the 2007 Community Earth Day Celebration to benefit Camp Habitat. *Photo by: Pamela A. Miller*

Camp Habitat Thanks

Planning Committee

Carrie Dershin
Kristin Fischer
Kathy Lang

Volunteers

Carolyn Buckingham
Scarlet Hopkins
Ritchie Musick
John O'Brien
Frank W. Pavlovic III
Alyssa Quintyne
Marilyn Richardson
Jake Timm
Karen Toland
Pat Walsh

Bakers

Jane Atkinson
Marjorie Cole
Bob Craig
Roxy Creamer
Carrie Dershin
Sara Elzey
Susan Grace
Lizanne Hanson
Bill Holman
Donna Krier
Kathy Lang
Amy Mackenzie
Jeff Merkel & Marin Kuizenga
Joy Morrison
Franz Mueter & Susan Nachtigal
Shauna Mikelich
Pamela Miller
Ritchie Musick
Carl Roland & Jacqueline D'Auria
Alexis Runstadler
Bill Schneider
Melissa Sikes

...And all the the talented folks who snuck things onto the bake sale table!

Camp Habitat Brochure & Mailing Volunteers

Julie Elliot
Mary Ann Nickols
Ken Whitten & Mary Zalar

Camp Habitat Donors

Mike Taras
Caribou Enterprises – Debbie Miller
Doyon, Limited
Image Optical
Sunshine Health Foods
Wright Air Service

Local Teen Talks to State Leaders

By Catey Burtness-Adams, Secretary, Fairbanks Chapter of Alaska Youth for Environmental Action

For 7 years, Alaska Youth for Environmental Action has brought 15-20 lucky youth leaders from all over Alaska to Juneau for the Civics and Conservation Summit, which consists of four days of high-impact, fun, and adrenaline-pumping civic engagement lessons. Youth learn how to talk with the media, how to communicate with elected officials, how to read a bill, and how to impact decisions our leaders make about the environment and our lives. The training ends with youth-led visits to state legislators to discuss environmental concerns and interests.

In March I had the opportunity to attend the 2007 Alaska Youth for Environmental Action (AYEA) Civics and Conservation Summit in Juneau, AK.

Laenne Thompson, NAEC Youth Education Director, and I were the only representatives from Fairbanks. Over 20 youth from around the state learned about the legislative process, examined three bills that support environmental goals, and met with legislators in Juneau to express opinions and voice concerns regarding environmental legislation. In four days my eyes were opened to my own role in the legislative process and how I can effect positive change on the environment.

We began the retreat with an activity that helped us discover our own political identity. We were then broken into three assigned teams, each tasked with examining and discussing a current conservation bill. I studied a bill that sought an appropriation of Railbelt Energy Funds that would be used to construct a wind farm on Fire Island (just off the coast of Anchorage) that would produce approximately 5% of the entire Alaska Railbelt's energy.

The second evening AYEА put on its annual community dinner to which legislators were invited to learn about AYEА and meet the youth participants. Several lawmakers who had helped the environmental cause were honored with a fluorescent light bulb award. At the dinner I met Representative Scott Kawasaki of Fairbanks, who was very encouraging and receptive—he even remembered my name two days later at the House Session. I learned that he was one of the founding members of Club Earth at Lathrop High School, a club in which I now participate! We gave him a light bulb award for his bill regarding more efficient lighting.

Since the purpose of the retreat was to participate in the legislative process, we were given the opportunity to speak face-to-face with legislators. Each day we were given more tools in order to prepare us to be articulate and effective. Multiple guest speakers spoke to us about the legislative process, lobbying, and communication. On the final day, we were given the chance to meet our own legislators and convey our concerns and opinions regarding environmental legislation, specifically the bills we reviewed. As the only youth participant from Fairbanks, I was grouped with Anchorage teens and got to speak with Senate President



Front to back, left to right: Nellie Winer (Beaver), Andrew Jonas (Ft. Yukon), Chloe Stoces (Anchorage), Brooke Jasky-Zuber (Sterling), Thorey Munro (Homer), Hannah Knapp (Big Lake), Catey Burtness-Adams (Fairbanks), Gov. Sarah Palin, and Harlan Joseph (Ft. Yukon.) Photo by: Kalyin Brewer

Lyda Green. However, I went alone to speak with someone from Representative Mike Kelly's staff and did pretty well.

Later on the final day, each AYEА participant was introduced on the House and Senate floors. There I met Senator Thomas of Fairbanks. It was incredible to have my name spoken in front of the most powerful people in our state. AYEА teens also met with Governor Palin's staff, but only some of us were lucky enough to meet her later at the airport.

I recently turned 18 and participated in my first election, but the true meaning of playing a part in the legislative process was not clear until I was able to participate first hand like I did at this retreat. This trip was an excellent learning opportunity, plus I met other environmentally-minded youth from around the state who inspired me to return to Fairbanks and attack our chapter's membership problems. I always knew I should vote, but now I understand my true power and responsibility regarding my State's legislative process. ♻️



For more information about AYEА,
please visit www.ayea.org.

New Advisory Board to Offer Wisdom and Counsel

To Advise:

1. To give counsel to; to offer an opinion or suggestion, as worthy or expedient to be followed; to warn.
2. To recommend as desirable, wise, or prudent.
3. To give information or notice to; to inform.

While there is no shortage of opinions on almost any topic we deal with, constructive advice on the big issues of the day and on the future and well-being of the Northern Center tend to be much more elusive. To help infuse the knowledge and wisdom of some of our founders and other long-term members into the operations of the Northern Center, we are proud to announce the establishment of the Northern Alaska Environmental Center Advisory Board. We have already received valuable advice from the newly formed group and look forward to a productive relationship.

The idea of an Advisory Board has existed in the collective memory of the organization for at least 10 years, but it was not until Dan Adams, current member of the Board of Directors, put his mind and energy to the task that the necessary steps were taken to move from abstract idea to concrete reality. The Advisory Board was officially formed in September of last year and the initial members of the group included Gordon Wright, G. Ray Bane, Jim Hunter, John Luther Adams, Sylvia Ward Schultz, and Ginny Hill Wood (as well as two NAEC representatives). Since that time, Florence Collins, Dan Swift, and Cindy Adams have graciously agreed to join. Sadly, the Advisory Board recently lost Gordon Wright, who was a key figure in establishing the Environmental Center some 36 years ago (see remembrances in the Spring 2007 issue). His energy will be sorely missed.

As implied by its name, a central purpose of the Advisory Board is to provide advice to the NAEC Board of Directors and to the Executive Director when asked or when necessary. In addition, the Advisory Board will be involved in fundraising and has agreed to help document NAEC's history, building on efforts that began last summer prior to our 35th Anniversary Celebration. Finally, the stature of the Advisory Board members makes them ideal candidates to serve as ambassadors for NAEC in the community and in the world.

Please feel free to offer your own advice to the Advisory Board, or to the Board of Directors, or share your concerns and ideas with us. We strive to be responsive to all members and we always welcome information, opinions, suggestions, recommendations, and counsel. Especially those 'worthy or expedient to be followed'!

On the Move

By Nancy Fresco, Local Issues Coordinator

It's hard to leave the staff of NAEC. After all, I've been here since the previous millennium.

I'll miss the camaraderie of shared victories, as well the keep-on-trying attitude when hurdles come along. I'll miss the phone calls from helpful NAEC members giving us inside news or new ideas. When a handful of people in a yellow house on College Road are attempting to conserve, educate, and advocate across an expanse of land extending hundreds of miles in every direction, there's never a dull moment. It's easy to enjoy working in a place where there's always something new to tackle, where everyone pitches in, and where homemade cookies regularly appear on the lunch table.

In moving on to a position at the University of Alaska, I hope to be stepping onto a parallel track rather than a divergent one. I will be working as part of a team that will assess the potential impacts of climate change and communicate those scenarios to the public. For as long as I have been studying ecology and forestry, I have been concerned that many people consider science inaccessible, incomprehensible, and even irrelevant.

If policymakers and the general public disregard or misunderstand scientific findings, and if researchers can't make their knowledge useable, then everyone's efforts are being wasted. Even worse, the policies that result – based on expedience, popularity, or on the lowest up-front cost – may lead to irreparable damage in years to come. The gap between climate change research and climate change policy is an unfortunate example; I hope to be able to help repair this disconnect.

Scientists don't necessarily have to be in the front lines of advocacy. Nor should they violate the scientific method, which rarely allows for statements or predictions to be made with 100 percent certainty. Scientists should, however, make their work available and understandable, so that advocates, naysayers, and everyone in between can use it to inform their opinions, guide their decisions, and calculate their risks.

Thankfully, NAEC has long had stalwart and helpful friends in the scientific community. I am pleased and proud to join their ranks. 🌱



Nancy, Elizabeth and Molly

Conservation Bills in the Alaska Legislature

By Becky Baird, Community Organizer

The first session of the 25th legislature ended on May 16th. During this session, we at the Northern Alaska Environmental Center had three legislative priorities: healthy fisheries, renewable energy and mining royalty reform. No priorities bills passed, some will be revisited in the next session.

We have kept an eye on the priorities and other important conservation bills, informing our members and others of what they could do to influence legislation in favor of conservation. Many legislators say that constituent input strongly influences the way they vote. We encourage community members to contact their legislators and find people who are willing to testify at legislative hearings in favor of good legislation and to oppose bad legislation.

Healthy Fisheries

Healthy fisheries are an important part of Alaska's economy. Representative Seaton's **House Bill 74** would ensure protection of freshwater fish spawning areas by prohibiting mixing zones, an area in a body of water where pollution levels exceed water quality standards. **HB 74** passed the House Fisheries Committee, and awaits a hearing in the House Resources Committee. Unfortunately this bill does not appear to have enough support to move through the legislature.

Renewable Energy

Renewable energy is a hot topic currently and the Alaska State Legislature has introduced several related bills. Representative Harris introduced **HB 152** the corresponding senate bill **Senate Bill 96** was introduced by Senators Ellis. **HB 152/SB 96** would establish a renewable energy fund to support the development of renewable energy resources in Alaska. On April 19 **HB152** passed on the House Floor 35 to 0. **HB 152** passed out of the Senate Resource

committee on April 30 and will hopefully move on to Senate Finance and the Senate floor next year. A bill that would appropriate \$24 million from the Railbelt Energy Fund to build a wind turbine farm on Fire Island was introduced in the House and Senate by Representative Crawford **HB 73** and Senator McGuire **SB 44**. **HB 73/SB 44 SB 44** has been heard and held in the Senate Resources committee and **HB 73** has not yet been heard in the House. Representative Ramras introduced **HB 28** which would require retail electric suppliers, overseen by the Regulatory Commission of Alaska, to provide their customers with an annual report of the sources of their electricity. **HB 28** is awaiting placement on the House Floor calendar. Representative Crawford introduced **HB 56** supporting the development of a hydrogen fuel industry in Alaska. **HB 56** has been awaiting a hearing in the House Resources Committee since March 7.

Mining Royalty Reform

One bill relates to the mining royalty reform priority. Representative Seaton introduced **HB 156**, which aims to increase the royalty Alaskans receive from the mining industry for the first time since 1955. This bill has had three hearings in the House Ways and Means committee but it has been quiet since March 23. There has been a great deal of opposition to **HB 156** from the mining industry. We hope to see HB 156 pass next session.

Other Noteworthy Legislation

HB 177/SB 104 The gasline inducement act passed. Representative Kawasaki introduced **HB 219**; which would require that light bulbs sold in the state for home or office use have an increased efficiency rating. Representative Doll's **HB 230** and Senator Elton's **SB 118** would establish a fee for disposable plastic bags distributed by retailers.



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