



2022 **ANNUAL REPORT**



MISSION

Promoting conservation of the environment and sustainable resource stewardship in Interior and Arctic Alaska through education and advocacy.

HELLO FROM FAIRBANKS



Since 1971, Northern Alaska Environmental Center has been organizing around the conservation of Interior and Arctic Alaska. As our work continues today, we recognize that Indigenous peoples of Alaska have been doing this work for far longer than conservation groups like ours, and that future generations will continue this work long after us. This is large scale, long term work that requires a sustainable and collaborative approach from all of us.

Jim Kowalsky, Founder and first Executive Director of Northern Center, worked to bridge the gap between traditional conservation groups and Indigenous peoples of Alaska in approaches to sustainability. When large scale conservation groups generally opposed subsistence hunting and fishing, he took environmentalist David Brower out to Chevak, Alaska to meet with families and experience subsistence first hand. Jim later said, "This was my attempt to give voice or give presence to subsistence in a very real way by bringing him to a subsistence household." We continue the work to shift the narrative and bridge the gap between large scale conservation nonprofits and Indigenous leadership in sustainability.

In 2022, we found ways to foster that collaboration. We helped facilitate strategic planning sessions on the Arctic and the proposed road to Ambler. In the fall, we worked with new partners to host the first ever Arctic Fest in Fairbanks. Several new staff members joined our team, expanding our capacity. We also devoted time and resources to listening to directly impacted communities in an effort to align our work with the wishes of people on the ground. Our staff members spent time traveling to villages throughout Interior and Arctic Alaska for listening sessions and meetings with leaders and advocates.

With that grounding and collaboration in mind, we traveled far and wide to connect with others doing Arctic advocacy. From legislators in D.C. to the Arctic Circle Assembly in Reykjavik, Iceland, we built relationships globally that will strengthen our work in Alaska. As the ConocoPhillips' Willow Project has entered the national and global spotlight, those far-reaching coalitions are essential in our next steps, and we now have joined several organizations in suing the federal government over this project's approval. Meanwhile, we are supporting the resistance to the proposed road to Ambler and Donlin mine, and working with folks who have been active and outspoken against these projects for years.

We work for a future where people in industry and power understand that climate change can be stopped only if we both transition to renewable energy and protect the forest, wetlands, and tundra that sustain traditional ways of life. We work for a future where the only sacrifice zones are existing landfills and junkyards, not Refuges or ancestral homelands. A future where our communities are not in conflict, workers needs are met, and the next seven generations can live sustainably in a healthy environment.

Your voices and grassroots support made these successes possible, and I know we are building momentum that will last throughout 2023. Thank you to our dedicated board and staff, volunteers, strong partnerships, and individuals and organizations like you for supporting our mission. We could not do this without you.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elisabeth Balster Dabney". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Elisabeth Balster Dabney

At the Northern Center, we have adopted the Arctic Protocols, which were informed by the Jemez Principles, to guide our organizing.

ARCTIC PROTOCOLS

We endorse the following protocols for partnership engagement among local, regional, and national groups on campaigns to halt oil and gas exploitation on Arctic lands and waters. They apply and provide guidance to individual as well as organizational relationships:

- 1. Include Arctic Indigenous Peoples in advocacy about Arctic lands, waters and wildlife, whose survival depends on their protection.** Our campaign strategies must include Indigenous groups or organizations and ensure that the leadership of those partner organizations are included in the development of those strategies. This includes media and communications development, events planning, and long-term campaign strategy.
- 2. Include local organizing from local people as a critical strategy.** The success of our collective work depends on building a diverse base of support engaging and organizing at the local level, centering impacted communities and building outwardly. Trusting, empowering and amplifying Alaska strategies, communications, and leadership is key to success. This requires meaningfully increasing the capacity of impacted communities to ensure they are able to collaboratively engage in messaging development, strategic pathways, and movement building. Impacted communities do not need saving—their leadership is in place and simply needs to be supported as the key strategy it is.
- 3. Be curious and don't assume: Clarify roles, representation, and accountability structures regularly.** In order to build trust and understand the differing dynamics present for differing organizations, we cannot assume we know all about one another. We must make intentional space for reflecting and clarifying our roles, representations, and accountability processes.
- 4. Make efforts to meaningfully align visions.** When developing campaign strategies and goals for work in the Arctic, ensure local communities and organizations are included from the beginning. Actively seek alignment for a long-term vision and incorporate goals of solidarity in campaign strategies.
- 5. Support just and equitable resource sharing amongst coalition members.** Groups bring different levels and kinds of resources, including funding and expertise, to coalitions. To promote equitable and effective access to resources, groups should identify and articulate what they need and can contribute to the coalition's success. Jointly raising funds is necessary but not sufficient. Groups also should examine where they can directly share resources that they enjoy disproportionately and help strengthen and build relationships with other groups by responding to their articulated needs.
- 6. Engage in ongoing organizational and individual learning and unlearning for transformative and adaptive change.** Success depends upon a commitment to regular and consistent training, practices, and evaluations of ourselves and our organizations to build deep intersectional analysis. Coalition partners need to make time for reflection, growth, and adaptation while building trust and accountability to each other and ourselves. Staff and board involved in Arctic advocacy must prioritize training, resources, actionable practices, and check-ins for growth and accountability.
- 7. Be accountable to each other for group growth.** It will be important for the coalition, as they adopt these Protocols, to build meaningful accountability measures and commit to each other to follow them, constructively and generously. These should be developed together, through an open dialogue on how best to build trust, while ensuring organizations and individuals have an ability to process and resolve breaks in protocol fairly and with the goal of continued growth.

By endorsing these protocols, we acknowledge that our work is stronger and more effective when there is inclusivity of diversity of people, groups, strategies and ideas; clear and consistent communication; commitment to transformative and adaptive change; and trust. We recognize that this is an iterative, living document, and we commit to reviewing the protocols as their implementation warrants.

STAFF

Elisabeth Balster Dabney
Executive Director

Scott Fogarty
Senior Advisor

Lois Barger
Deputy Director

Sarah Frampton
Chief Financial Officer

Emily Sullivan
Communications Director

Ryan Marsh
*Director and Head Guide for
Adventure Borealis*

Katie McClellan
*Clean Water and Mining Program
Coordinator*

Christin Swearingen
Development Coordinator

Alex Petkanas
*Communications Assistant &
Outreach Coordinator*

Siqiñiq Maupin
*Co-founder & Director of Sovereign
Inupiat for a Living Arctic (SILA)*

BOARD

Laramie Maxwell Ardissono
President

Paul Reichardt
Treasurer

Nick Clarke
Vice President

Helen Chmura
Secretary

Molly Nakayama

Chad Brown

Shannon Busby

Kasey Keogh



Imago Initiative Trip 2022
PHOTO BY EMILY SULLIVAN

ARCTIC PROGRAM



In 2022, the Arctic program continued to think global and act local, recognizing that what happens to the Arctic happens to the entire world. We continued to organize against AIDEA—the one remaining leaseholder in the Arctic Refuge—through group letters, op-eds, and demonstrations. Northern Center staff, in collaboration with other local grassroots organizations, invested in ongoing narrative-shifting work, creating and uplifting

alternative narratives to the dominant narrative of Alaska's reliance on oil and gas. Northern Center continues to facilitate the Alaska subgroup of the national Arctic Refuge Defense Campaign.

We worked with SILA and other partner organizations to mobilize against the Willow project in the Western Arctic, an effort that made waves, but unfortunately did not result in our desired outcome from the Biden administration. Work will continue against Willow in 2023, including challenging the administration's decision in court.

In June, Arctic program manager Emily Sullivan traveled again to the Arctic Refuge with The Wilderness Society's Imago Initiative, a trip aimed at reimagining conservation through an Indigenous worldview. Indigenous leaders and conservation partners spent a week brainstorming conservation solutions for the Arctic Refuge, building shared understanding of historical traumas associated with conservation work, and even spent time with US Fish & Wildlife Service staff discussing the future of the Arctic Refuge.

In October, Arctic program staff traveled to Reykjavik, Iceland for the annual Arctic Circle Assembly, creating new opportunities to uplift our local issues internationally, while building relationships with like-minded organizations and individuals from around the world. It was a great reminder for staff that many global thinkers are working towards a Just Transition away from fossil fuels to sustainable and regenerative economies. To learn more about what a Just Transition is, go to justtransitionak.org.

NEW PROGRAM: ADVENTURE BOREALIS



Ryan Marsh came back to the Northern Center in 2022 to launch Adventure Borealis. Starting in 2023, this program will offer accessible and inclusive excursions in all seasons in Alaska, with a particular focus on BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities.

The overall purpose of Adventure Borealis is to deepen connections to Interior and Arctic Alaska's public lands through experiential natural history programs for all people regardless of identity, age, ability or socio-economic status. With that in mind, we look forward to seeing and updating our members about the impact of this program over the next few years.



SOVEREIGN IÑUPIAT FOR A LIVING ARCTIC (SILA)

In 2022, SILA accomplished many things. These events have been compartmentalized into 4 groups: Conferences/organizing events, Sovereignty Stories, Willow Events, and Creative Work.

During this year, we attended six conferences from Alaska to Iceland. We started the year with the Arctic Encounter Symposium, discussing the future of economic opportunities in Alaska and the Arctic. This was followed by the Alaska Just Transition conference, hosted by Indigenous leadership across the state discussing the future of a just transition away from non-renewable energy sources and how that is involved in the state economy. Following this, we attended the Pueblo Action Alliance climbing camp in New Mexico and then the Imago Initiative in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, both of which prioritized Indigenous leadership in the future of the protection of the environment. Next, we attended the Arctic Circle Assembly in Reykjavik, Iceland and brought much needed Arctic Indigenous perspectives in conversations about development and protections in the Arctic. Finally, we ended the year by attending Arctic Fest in Fairbanks and held a table for SILA. This is also where we held our in-person event explaining what Sovereignty Stories is.

For Sovereignty Stories, we held 4 virtual screenings of our Iñuit stories and their storytellers. It was an intimate experience and deepened our relationship with our communities. We look forward to continuing Sovereignty Stories events in

SILA Banner Drop
PHOTO CREDIT: EMILY SULLIVAN





2023. We also held a public event at Arctic Fest screening the stories and sharing our new website and upcoming events.

For Willow, we attended all virtual public hearings for the comment period along with the in-person hearing in Utqiagvik, AK. During this comment period, we held a banner drop in Alaska and shared via social media. We collected, in collaboration with People vs. Fossil Fuels, over 8k comments submitted to the BLM. We held an informational meeting to discuss the commenting period, how to comment, and information to the public. We created graphics and a page on our site dedicated to sharing information about the Willow Project. After the comment period, we held a banner drop in DC in front of the White House and gathered national attention. We also have national support from environmental organizations through the People vs Fossil Fuels coalition.

Lastly, our creative work included an Indigenous Peoples' Day Zine that covered the importance of mental and physical health. We also hosted a virtual screening of the historical films on The Duck-In and Project Chariot, educating the public on the history of Iñupiat resistance while building community. We also hosted the qulliq class with Kunaq Marjorie Tahbone, connecting Iñupiat virtually to teach how to make our traditional seal oil lamps. Finally, our Instagram gained hundreds of followers and engagement, increasing our outreach and impact.

CLEAN WATER & MINING PROGRAM



The Clean Water and Mining program saw many successes in 2022, big and small. The No Road to Ambler coalition continued to grow, as did public opposition to the project. In the fall, Northern Center staff, fellow coalition organizers, and in-region tribal members traveled to Ambler, Shungnak, Kobuk, and Kotzebue to share the film *Paving Tundra* and host community sessions where we heard community member's concerns, shared

information, answered questions about the proposed development, and established new connections in affected communities. With the coalition, we launched a communications campaign to respond to the scoping comment period opened by BLM to take a second look at the Ambler Road environmental impact statement, with more than 15,000 comments submitted in relation to our efforts. Thanks to supporters like you who donated \$11,089 and a matching contribution of a full \$15,000, a new shared coalition name, branding, and website will launch soon that will enable us to reach a bigger audience, share communications, and build even more state and national support for protecting the Brooks Range. We are so excited for this development to carry our efforts even further in 2023.

Opposition to the massive Donlin gold mine in the headwaters of the Kuskokwim River increased in 2022, with a transfer of leadership to the Mother Kuskokwim tribal coalition. In their capable hands, the salmon, lands, waters, and people of the Yukon-Kuskokim region have received more national press time, obtained critical meetings with EPA and Dept. of Interior leadership, and taken their fight to the hill in DC, building more and more support for the efforts to keep what would be the world's largest open-pit gold mine out of the salmon-spawning tributaries of the Kuskokwim River watershed.

Locally, Northern supported the development of Save Our Domes, a Fairbanks based committee of community members working to inform area residents about hardrock mineral exploration on the domes and ridges surrounding Fairbanks where many of us live, work, and play. Through hosting public meetings in Goldstream, Ester, and downtown, the group is working to build a strong coalition with the goal of protecting multiple neighborhoods including Ester, Old Murphy Dome Road, Treasure Creek, Amanita, and Golden/Cleary Summit from industrial-scale mineral development. We monitored the Manh Choh project and its proposed transportation plan, participated in public meetings, shared our concerns

about the plan during comment opportunities, and kept our members updated on opportunities to weigh in. We look forward to increasing our support and engagement on these hyper-local projects in 2023, and hope you will join us!

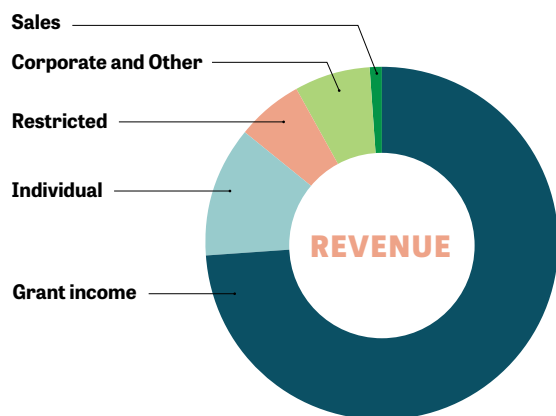
Across Interior and Arctic Alaska, we continue working to protect lands, waters, and people, and keep apprised of and inform the public about mineral development that would threaten the health and well-being of our ecosystems and communities. Thank you for supporting this critical work!



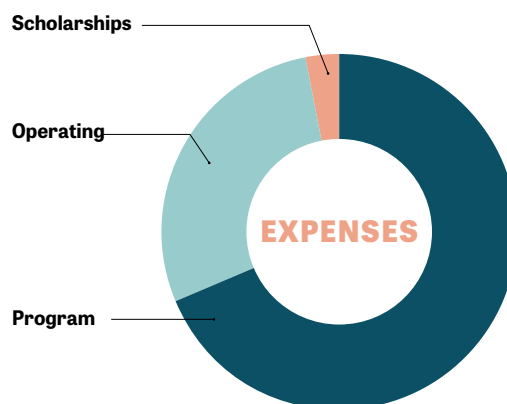
FINANCE

People are our power. Your support ensures that we have eyes on the issues, seats at the table, and well-researched responses to threats to the health of Alaska. Movement building is hard work, and in line with our value of human rights, our employees are paid fairly and provided with generous benefits to get the rest they need and stay sustainable.

Most of our income in 2022 came from grants. We never take grants from government agencies. Unrestricted donations are used on operating costs and allocated to programs with the greatest need. Restricted donations are allocated to the programs for which they were intended, in accordance with the **DONOR BILL OF RIGHTS**.



REVENUE	\$934,837.44
Grant income	\$687,806.72
Individual	\$114,426.09
Restricted	\$58,732.26
Corporate and Other	\$64,807.37
Sales	\$9,065.00
Donations	\$237,525.32
Events	\$9,030.00



EXPENSES	1,078,584.28
Operating	\$302,571.87
Program	\$742,012.41
Scholarships	\$34,000.00

DONOR BILL OF RIGHTS



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Philanthropy is based on voluntary action for the common good. It is a tradition of giving and sharing that is primary to the quality of life. To assure that philanthropy merits the respect and trust of the general public, and that donors and prospective donors can have full confidence in the not-for-profit organizations and causes they are asked to support, we declare that all donors have these rights:

- I. To be informed of the organization's mission, of the way the organization intends to use donated resources, and of its capacity to use donations effectively for their intended purposes.
- II. To be informed of the identity of those serving on the organization's governing board, and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities.
- III. To have access to the organization's most recent financial statements.
- IV. To be assured their gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given.
- V. To receive appropriate acknowledgment and recognition.
- VI. To be assured that information about their donation is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by law.
- VII. To expect that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be professional in nature.
- VIII. To be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of the organization or hired solicitors.
- IX. To have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that an organization may intend to share.
- X. To feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers.

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

Over \$10,000

444S Foundation
Alaska Conservation Foundation
Campion Foundation
Conservation Lands Foundation
Emergent Fund
Fitzgerald, John and Jennine Williamson
NorthLight Foundation
Reichardt, Paul and Terry
Tides Foundation
Tortuga Foundation
True North Foundation
The Wilderness Society

\$5,000 or more

Albright, Joseph and Kunstel, Marcia
Anonymous
Cook, Elizabeth Jane
The Elaine and Vincent Bell Foundation
Fleischmann, Heidi and Scott, James
Mazurek, Sonia and Hagey, John
Mower, Amy
Running Reindeer Ranch
Tabbert, Russell and Barbara

\$1,000 or more

Alaska Center for Energy and Power
Alaska Community Foundation
Anderson, Dick & Margaret
Anonymous
Armstrong, Toni and Richard Spener (Spener Armstrong Family Charitable Fund)
Aspnes, Jane and John
Bird, Charlotte and Charles
Blattmachr, Jonathan
Bookwalter, Eleanor
Brooks, Woody and Felix, Nancy
Camp Denali
Chase, Wendy and McCarthy, Greg
Cox, Leigh
Demuth, Bathsheba
Dixon, Terrell and Linda M Walsh
Eames, Cliff and McHenry, Ruth

Fogarty, Scott and Courtney
Guardianship for June Weinstock
Margaret Irene Hulbert, Mary and Morehouse, Anne
Ignik
Jackson, Barbara A. Jamieson, Ann and Bruce Jorgenson, Torre and Janet Kiely, Don Knight, Kathleen and Tim Kowalsky, Suzanne
Mantell-Hecathorn, Greg and Tara
Marshall, James and Judy Colligan-Marshall Marshall, Philip and Janet Mayo, Gail McGowan, Alan and Rochelle Miller, Charles Keith Miller, Jon
Moore, Richard and Barbara
Network for Good
Norton, Dave and Carol
O'Brien, Ann Wood
Osborne, Rita and Dan
Pendergrast, Don and Tracie
Raynolds, Tako and Sam Dashevsky
Renfro, Ann
Ritchie, Bob and Bobbie
Schulz, Bob and Frances
Schwarber, James
Seifert, Rich and Patricia
Stockton, Richard A. Jr.
Sullivan, Barry
Sutton, Iris
Swearingen, Christin and Karlin
Swift, Daniel and Ann
Teel, Mary and Ronald
Thompson, William
Traverse Alaska
Tundra Travels
UnCruise Adventures
Waterman, Nancy and Bill Leighty
Williams, Frank and Judy
Wright, Max
Yarman, Jeffrey
Zalar, Mary and Whitten, Ken
Zeligman, Bernard

\$500 or more

Adams, Alexandra and Erik
Advance Printing
Alaska Alpine Adventures
Alaska Wildland Adventures
Anderson-Misel household
Barnes, Daudi
Bennon, Rhonda
Benson, Ruth and Carl
Blechman, Ali and Hugh Rose
Bronner, Eric
Burgess, Elizabeth
Campbell, Susan
Chapin, Stuart and Melissa
CSG Inc.
Garrigues, Gayle
Goldstream Group
Gondwana Ecotours
GOOD Cannabis
Hanley, Owen and Anne
Hanrahan, Rebecca
Hunter, Deidre
Kaptur, Terese
Keller, Cary and Sarah
Kolton, Laura (In honor of Adam Kolton)
Kowalski, Louise and Richard Stolzberg
Krier, Donna
Lambert, Pat
Larsen, Lynn and Ron Yarnell
Leistikow, Elmer
Liston, Mary
Matthews, David and Carolyn
Mauer, Fran and Freed, Yoriko
McCarron, Jack and Bette
McElroy, Anduin and Ryan
Miller, Tom
Morton, Don
Pedersen, Sverre and Grace
Robertson, Janet
Schuler, Steven (Schuler Giving Account)
Sierra Club Alaska Chapter
Simmons, Charles and Sheree Dohner
Sisto, Anthony and Deanne Adams
Stan Stephens Cruises, Inc
Stratton, Jim
Sutton, Iris
Watson, Annie Schuab

GREEN CENTURY FUNDS

When you donate to the Northern Center, you are trusting that your donation will be used to further our mission and make a difference for Alaska. We have a responsibility to use your money strategically, and have built up a stable reserve to ensure that the Northern Center is in a position to continue fulfilling its mission far into the future. Part of that responsibility is investing in a fund that will keep up with inflation and grow our reserve to maximize each donor's impact.

We chose to put money in Green Century Funds (GCF). Green Century, Inc. is one of the first mutual fund companies to put environmental values at their core, and was actually founded by environmental and public health nonprofits. They are 100% fossil fuel free. Green Century mostly invests in companies involved in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and sustainable agriculture. GCF also screens out producers of nuclear weapons or nuclear energy, guns or civilian weapons, military weapons, tobacco, or GMOs.

Please accept our thanks if you have supported the Northern Center but are not listed here. For more information on all the ways to support our work, contact Christin Swearingen at christin@northern.org or 907-452-5092. We look forward to hearing from you!



830 College Road
Fairbanks, Alaska
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POSTAGE
PAID



EVENTS & EDUCATION

After a hiatus during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, we returned to hosting events in person while still taking precautions and had a great time seeing you in person. Here are just a few highlights from last year:

- 380 people registered for Run for the Refuge
- Arctic Fest featured 28 events focused on art, science, and culture of Interior and Arctic Alaska culture of Interior and Arctic Alaska, and was attended by over 4,000 people
- 11 short films from Alaska and around the world screened at Wild & Scenic Film Fest (and 6 lbs of popcorn popped)
- Over \$22,000 raised for the Jim Kowalksy Youth Engagement Fund at Night for the North
- Our 2023 Northern Voices Speaker Series is up and running, and we hope to see you all at an event soon!

2023 Event Schedule

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 1/19/23 | Northern Voices Speaker Series: Bonnie Gestring |
| 2/16/23 | Northern Voices Speaker Series: Colleen Fisk |
| 3/21/23 | Northern Voices Speaker Series: Michaela Stith |
| 4/11/23 | Northern Voices Speaker Series: Jill Richie |
| 6/23/23 | Solstice Picnic |
| 7/15/23 | Run for the Refuge |
| 8/25-27/23 | Arctic Fest Pop Up (featuring film screenings, musical acts, and more) |
| 11/17/23 | Night for the North |