

NorthernLine

"Behind is a great forest that goes to the Arctic...and here we must draw our line."

~ Gary Snyder, *Front Lines*



A Time for Teamwork

by Paul Reichhardt, Acting Executive Director and Frank Williams, Board President



Brooks Range 2010

There have been some major changes at the Northern Alaska Environmental Center and we, the writers of this letter, are two of them. NAEC has lost three dedicated people who were filling important positions: Lissa Hughes, Legislative Liaison and Local Solutions Coordinator; Dave Arnold, Executive Director; and Jon Miller, Board Chair. In order to keep the center's critical efforts moving forward unabated, we have agreed to provide the needed leadership as Acting Executive Director (Paul Reichhardt) and Board Chair (Frank Williams). We are working hard to build on the accomplishments of Dave, Jon, Lissa and others to strengthen the NAEC's staff, programs and strategic direction.



Our enthusiasm has been heightened by a series of recent events including:

- The governor's omission of funding for the Road to Umiat in his 2015 budget proposal and the Army Corps of Engineers' related suspension of its permitting process and environmental analysis (EIS).
- Shell's announcement that it has dropped plans for drilling in the Chukchi Sea in 2014 (and possibly beyond) in the wake of NAEC and others' victory in a 9th District Court of Appeals ruling that the Department of the Interior's EIS for the associated lease sale was inadequate.
- The invitation for Daniel Lum, NAEC's Rural and Media Outreach Coordinator, to become a regular columnist on environmental issues for both the Arctic Sounder and the Alaska Dispatch.
- The outspoken enthusiasm for maintaining the integrity of the Arctic Refuge exhibited by Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell during her visit to Alaska last summer.

Although NAEC cannot claim sole credit for all of these successes, we played key roles in the campaigns and lawsuit that led to them.

While we celebrate victories, we also look ahead to significant challenges. On the organizational front we are dealing with declines in funding related to difficult economic times as well as associated staff reductions and a search for a permanent Executive Director who can provide both a strong voice on issues and administrative leadership. On the issues front we are: actively opposing the proposed road to Ambler; fighting for the inclusion and protection of wild lands as integral parts of BLM management plans for the Eastern Interior and Central Yukon; working to ensure that any new development projects or management plans follow existing laws and regulations; and demanding healthy air for the Fairbanks area.

There has never been a time when we have been faced with more serious questions about how we build a sustainable future that includes healthy lifestyles and responsible stewardship of this place we love. The two of us are "all in" for the coming battles, and NAEC has a hard-working board as well as a dedicated and enthusiastic staff. But staff and board are not enough.

Continued on next page

Winter 2014 Vol. XXXVI, No. 1

CONTENTS

The Time is Now	2
How Can You Help?	2
Departing Staff	3
Don't Be Fuelish	3
Northern Center Youth Wins Conservation Award	3
Efficient Wood Burning	
First Step toward Clean Air ...	4
House Bill 77	
the Silencing Alaskans Act ...	5
Clean Water and Mining Program: Updates	6
Arctic Successes	8
Protecting the Taiguiq	
Victory in the Arctic Ocean ...	8
Wilderness Act	
Anniversary Events	9
The Wilderness Act at 50 and our Wildest Refuge ...	10
Camp Denali - Our Time at Ginny's Cabin.....	12
Wisdom Walks	13
Recognition of Donors	13
House Party Fundraisers	
Party for a Purpose!	14
It Takes a Village	
to Raise Auction Success...	14
In loving memory	15



Receive Weekly Upcoming Community Conservation Events & News:
Sign Up online @ www.Northern.org

Save the date

MAY 2014



30

FRIDAY

Annual Membership Meeting and Picnic

The Northern Line

*Environmental News of Arctic
and Interior Alaska*

The Northern Line is published by the Northern Alaska Environmental Center (NAEC, 830 College Rd., Fairbanks, Alaska 99701. EMAIL: info@northern.org WEB: www.northern.org Copyright © 2014 by NAEC. All rights reserved. Subscription rate is \$40 annually and includes membership. We encourage submission of letters and articles for publications. We reserve the right to edit all submissions. The Northern Alaska Environmental Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

MISSION: The Northern Alaska Environmental Center promotes conservation of the environment and sustainable resource stewardship in Interior and Arctic Alaska through education and advocacy.

The Northern Alaska Environmental Center has 1600 members.

STAFF

Paul Reichardt,
Acting Executive Director
Lori Hanemann, *Development Director*
Pamela A. Miller,
Arctic Program Director
Jill Yordy,
*Clean Water & Mining
Program Director*
Daniel Lum, *Northern Regions
Outreach Specialist*
Anna Sorensen, *Office Manager*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Frank Williams (President)
Carol Norton, (Treasurer)
Lou Brown, (Secretary)
Don Pendergrast, Sven Grage,
Arthur Hussey, Dan Ritzman

ADVISORY BOARD

Dan Adams, Doug McIntosh, Jim Hunter
Jim Kowalsky, Mary Shields, Susan Grace
Florence Collins, Ray Bane, Frank Keim

JUNIOR ADVISORY BOARD

Bennett Wong, Ana Thayer, Mary
Lou Fagan, Callen Christensen, Chris
Eckerson, Tristan Glowa, Gabriel
Cartagena, Nikki Navio

Edited by Anna Sorensen
Layout by 5th Avenue Design & Graphics, Inc.

The Time for Teamwork *continued from cover page*

We need help: money, advice, and volunteer work. Most of you recently received an appeal for financial support. If you have not yet responded, you can by using the "donate" link elsewhere on this page. If you can give time and/or professional advice, please give one of us or the NAEC office a call. We need you.

The effort to make the future that we want into a reality requires all of us to be "all in." 🌱



Paul Reichardt
Acting Executive Director



Frank Williams
Chair, Board of Directors

The Time is Now

by Lori Hanemann

Our theme for this Northern Line is *The time is now*. Frank and Paul suggested in the above letter, they want all of us to be "all in." What does that mean for Northern Center members? It means we need your help, right now.

The time is now, in this moment, to make a difference in how Northern Alaska looks, forever! The momentous threats to these wild lands are real, they are severe, and they need our local Alaskan organization to watch over them. We need to keep them from being cut open and dug deep, leaving permanent scars, spoiling landscapes and lifestyles; environments and ecosystems - forever.

We must join together to strengthen our Center and remain influential and resilient. The time is now, to make one of those momentous stretch gifts to help our budget stay balanced. The time is now, to host a house party to invite your wilderness lovin', river runnin', mountain climbin' friends to protect where they play - northern Alaska. The time is now, to serve on our Board of Directors or one of our Committees. In the Northern Center's 42 year timeline, you've helped us win epic battles, with the victories being untouched wilderness and protected waters. We want the far north to remain wild and free all the way down the timeline to forever - so it will be much like it is today for future generations. If you can help... the time is now. 🌱

How Can You Help?

Board of Directors – We're looking for a few passionate protectors of wilderness! The Board is a dedicated group who share the common goal of wilderness protection for Interior and Arctic Alaska. This is where policies are set for our important work as well as organizational priorities. If you've been considering getting more involved with the Center call in and make an appointment to meet our Board President.

House Parties – Host a House Party Fundraiser with friends, an effective way to raise money for us without leaving home. See House Party information in this issue.

Event planners - We are in need of members to serve on our Fundraising Committee. Not as big of time commitment as being on our Board, but meaningful hands-on work with a great group of people. Please join us in creating fun and inspiring events in 2014!

Bake for Wilderness - add your name to our list of bakers for special events and weekly treats for the Center.

Educators - We are recruiting two members who can help head-up our Education Committee.

Mailings - Can you come in for 1-2 hours to help fold, stuff, seal, and stamp?

Junior Advisory Board – We're looking for more young adults to serve on our Junior Advisory Board. Lots of networking and professional development opportunities and you get to help with concerts and outdoor races.

General Administrative Help – Just take that brave step forward and ask what you can do, and most likely we can find something we need help with in the office. Short bursts of help are greatly appreciated and help us keep up with important Program work. 🌱



In Recognition of Departing Staff

by Anna Sorensen



Left, Lissa staffing NAEC's booth at Alaska Federation of Natives Convention. Below, Lissa at the U.S. Capitol in Washington D.C.



At the end of January we said farewell to Lissa Hughes, our talented Legislative Liaison and Local Solutions Coordinator. When Lissa joined the NAEC Team in late 2009 she brought with her a cadre of skills ranging from community organizing, project management, and rural outreach. Throughout her tenure she proved herself to be a valuable team member, logging several notable successes such as defeating the proposed road through Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge, educating the public about the hazards of coal ash disposal, collecting support in opposition of House Bill 77 – The Silencing Alaskans Act, and turning out supporters for local air quality hearings. Lissa also spearheaded the organization and growth of the borough-wide *Don't Be Fuelish* program. Over the past three years the number of participating organizations grew 50%, boasted a savings 12,457 gallons of fuel, and prevented the introduction of 256,273 pounds of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere! Here in the office we will miss Lissa's positive, get-it-done attitude and down to earth perspective on life. Thank you, Lissa, for all of your work and dedication to NAEC over the past four years. You are a great conservationist and will be sorely missed. 🌱

2013 Don't Be Fuelish Competition April-September

85,860.2 miles saved | 4,293 gallons of gas saved | \$16,313.44 saved!

Special congratulations go out to the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys for saving the most number of miles per employee and the most miles saved of all participating organizations! To register for the 2014 DBF Competition, visit www.dontbefuelishfairbanks.com 🌱

Northern Center Youth Wins Statewide Conservation Award

by Lori Hanemann

Northern Center Member Madeline Rafferty is the 2013 Alaska Conservation Foundation Denny Wilcher award for young environmental activists. The Alaska Conservation Foundation hosts this award which is created to "acknowledge Alaska high school seniors who have made significant contributions to their communities and who seek solutions to environmental problems and issues. These individuals act as leaders among their peers and have demonstrated, through school and extracurricular activities, their care and deep concern for conserving the environment. The award is named for James D. "Denny" Wilcher, Alaska Conservation Foundation's co-founder, and reflects his lifelong commitment to protecting the wild places on earth."

Madeline had an exceptional 2013 in the Alaska Conservation world during her Senior Year at West Valley High School in Fairbanks. She served as the Chairperson of the Fairbanks Alaska Youth for Environmental Action (FAYEA), currently serves on AYE's Statewide Advisory Group, and served on the Board of Directors for the Northern Center. She did grassroots duty last summer working door-to-door canvassing on important coal work, and inspired many with her advocacy and legislative work in 2013. This University of Alaska Southeast student is a motivated communicator who is passionate about her future in conservation work, and is well deserving of the Denny Wilcher award. I'm sure this is one of many awards to come in her bright green future! 🌱



Madeline Rafferty

Efficient Wood Burning First Step toward Clean Air

by Don Pendergrast, NAEC Board Member

Clean air and clean water—what can be more Alaskan? Almost everyone will agree these are essential for a healthy, thriving community. Yet recently proposed air quality regulations have drawn anger from segments of our borough. Some in Fairbanks hold that individuals have the freedom to burn whatever they want, however they want to heat their homes. Others cry foul and that wood burners are poisoning our air, health, and children.

*The Northern Alaska
Environmental Center
agrees that clean
air is essential for a
prosperous community
and believes there is a
way to bring a divided
Fairbanks together.*

Burning wood is part of the independent Alaska lifestyle, one of the many things we enjoy about living here. It is obvious that wood smoke is a great contributor to the air quality problem. We believe that we can burn wood and have clean air too, if we burn dry, seasoned wood in efficient, modern stoves.

While not the complete solution to our air quality problem it is a large first step that we need to take now. It offers us immediate relief, and the Borough's woodstove exchange program makes using modern efficient woodstoves cost effective. Unseasoned firewood is an inefficient fuel. Green wood will burn, but heat has to drive out the moisture first, and then the fire produces more smoke and soot increasing pollution, creosote, and chimney fires.

Fairbanks has locally manufactured wood pellets, which are less expensive per heat unit than cord wood, and burning pellets is more efficient and less polluting. Those of us who choose

to burn wood in Fairbanks have two excellent options: burning seasoned wood in efficient stoves or switching to pellet systems.

Air quality is a public health problem; we should use public funding to help rectify the situation. The use of incentives to promote efficiency should play a large role in any course of action. Other steps are important in cleaning our air. We all know that the least expensive energy is the energy we don't use. Fuel subsidies literally go up in smoke (not helping our air quality), while every dollar we spend on weatherization and energy conservation keeps paying back for years making our homes, lighting, and transportation more efficient. Energy efficiency saves us money and helps us breathe cleaner air.

If you share the value of clean air, and believe this is a local problem requiring local solutions that are developed and implemented by our community please join in the discussion.

**WORKING TOGETHER,
WE CAN ALL BREATHE EASIER.**



TAKE ACTION

GET INVOLVED

Clean Air Fairbanks
<http://cleanairfairbanks.wordpress.com/>

STAY INFORMED

North Pole Clean Air blog:
<http://northpolecleanair.wordpress.com/>
FNSB Air Quality Division:
<http://www.aqfairbanks.com/>

House Bill 77 – the Silencing Alaskans Act

By Daniel Inulak Lum

One of the biggest threats to Alaska's wildlands, rivers and coasts is the state legislature's HB 77. Alaska's Governor Parnell introduced legislation last year designed to silence Alaskan citizens, Tribes, and organizations in the permitting process for development of natural resources on state lands and along waterways throughout our great state. This legislation would take away our right to submit comments on industrial projects that might affect our wild places, our communities, and our food streams. This bill would also remove our right to appeal, in court, permits that allow pollution along these waterways. In some cases there would not even be notification of the projects!

Suddenly you could have gigantic industrial projects upstream of your property, your fish camp or your hunting areas! You will not be notified about it, you will not have the right to say anything about it in the permitting process, and you will have no remedy in court! You will just have to shut up and deal with



Outreach at AFN Youth and Elders was very successful and NAEC's booth was nearly always surrounded by a crowd! Here, Lissa and Daniel collect signatures for a petition opposing House Bill 77.

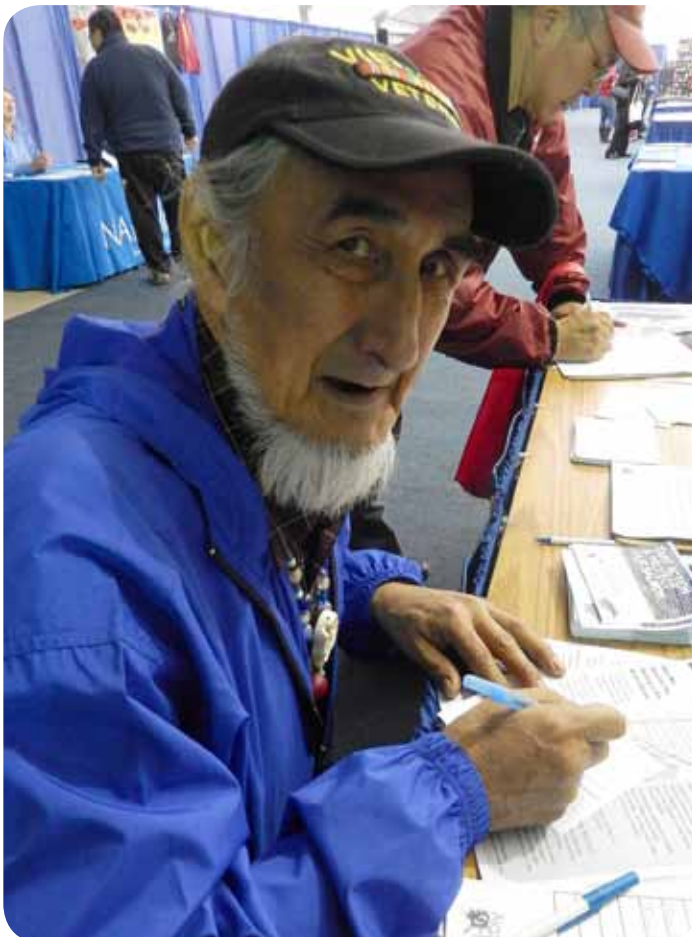
it. Permitting in Alaska would no longer be an inclusive part of free society, but rather a direct corporate assault on Alaska's own citizens through our own lands and waters.

But this is America, and we are Alaskans – we must protect our right to be part of the process, to have a voice to help guide and temper development so that our next generations have these wild places. We must maintain the right to appeal bad development in court. It is hard to understand how this type of legislation could even be legal; this legislation strips away basic rights of the ordinary citizen and refuses any just recourse. I do not believe the Founding Fathers of the United States of America, or Alaska, would support the censoring of its own citizens regarding their lands and waterways.

The Northern Center works with a statewide coalition of Alaska Native, hunting, fishing, and conservation organizations who mount opposition to HB 77 and any other bills that would silence your voice and right to participate in decisions about natural resources in Alaska. While the State House passed HB 77 last year, our opposition kept it from passing the Senate. This year we need every voice of opposition to stand up and be heard!

TAKE ACTION

It is time to act before HB 77 becomes law! We must contact our state legislators regarding HB 77 and explain to them that our voice matters in decisions about our resources! Thank you Northern Center Members for your involvement – please take the time to seek out and talk to your local representative! 🌱



Earl Kingik from Point Hope kneels at NAEC's booth to sign the the HB77 petition.

Clean Water and Mining Program: Updates

by Jill Yordy

BLM LAUNCHES CENTRAL YUKON PLANNING

I teamed up with Pam to take a hard look at the issues at stake as the BLM begins the process of developing its new Resource Management Plan (RMP) for 16-million acres of BLM lands in the Central Yukon area. We attended public meetings in Fairbanks and Anchorage and collaborated with other conservation organizations to submit comprehensive scoping comments in January. These RMPs guide policy and land use decisions for decades at a time so it's important that the conservation voice is heard.

The Central Yukon area includes lands in the Dalton Highway corridor, the Central Arctic Management Area on the North Slope including the 41,000-acre Nigu Wilderness Study Area (WSA), and much of the Interior's Yukon River watershed. This region is blessed with Gates of the Arctic Park nearby, five national wildlife refuges, remote wild rivers, and vast



CWMP ACTION ITEM

Want to volunteer with the CWMP or get more information on these issues? Contact Jill Yordy via email: jill@northern.org or friend her on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/jill.yordy>

wildlands. It supports dozens of Alaska Native communities who rely on healthy land, water and air to provide for them and the fish and animals they depend upon for their cultural integrity.

The plan has big implications for the proposed Road to Ambler since the previous Dalton Highway corridor record of decision kept lands in the corridor that could be used for



The Nigu River flows out of the Brook Range and runs through BLM's only Wilderness Study Area in Alaska. Photo by Jenna Hertz 2011.

the road under federal management rather than opening it to state selection. The Northern Center wants to make sure that land again stays under federal management. We are also advocating no additional lands be opened to mining or oil and gas and to protect the lands around the Nigu River.

ROADS TO RESOURCES UPDATES

Road to Umiat – Good News! The State put this road on hold and the Corps of Engineers suspended its environmental impact statement in December 2013. “I have not heard more opposition to any road to anywhere in my 12 years of being down here on this finance committee,” said Sen. Donny Olson in 2011 in the face of concerns about subsistence and their way of life by Anaktuvuk Pass and other communities.

Road to Ambler – The Clean Water and Mining Program is doing lots of education outreach through presentations, tabling, and print media this spring to build opposition to the proposed Road to Ambler! We expect AIDEA to formally begin the permitting process for the Road to Ambler under NEPA requirements in May. This will kick off the scoping period and the first official opportunity to submit public comments. We need everyone, not just those who live in rural Alaska, to speak out against this road that would forever alter the Northern Alaska landscape.

One of our biggest successes so far this year has been continuing our relationship with the Brooks Range Council, an ad-hoc community group of concerned citizens that came together to fight the proposed Road to Ambler. At the end of January we had a seminar here at the Northern Center where BRC chairman John Gaedeke presented on the fiscal irresponsibility of the road project and community concerns that the BRC has heard from individuals who would be negatively impacted by the road. Governor Parnell proposed an allocation of \$24 million dollars over the next three years with his FY15 budget. If approved this would bring the total state allocation for the road to \$41.75 million since FY11. With 30 people in attendance at the seminar we had a packed house!

The Brooks Range Council is just one of the many groups that we partner with to fight the proposed road. We lead a coalition of conservation-minded organizations and individuals that are committed to stopping the destruction of the Brooks Range that would come with construction of a

road and several open pit mines in the Ambler Region. This working group is gearing up to spread the campaign locally, state-wide, and nationally over the coming year. To help with this ambitious undertaking the CWMP will have a summer intern to help us with campaign outreach and organization!

SUMMER 2014 ROAD TO AMBLER – ACTION ITEM

When AIDEA formally applies for the Road to Ambler right-of-way it will kick off a few short months of scoping. We expect that there will be a scoping meeting in Fairbanks and the Northern Center will need you to attend, testify, or submit written comments about why you want to see this land protected from a 225-mile industrial road stretching west from the Dalton Highway which would cross Gates of the Arctic National Preserve and Kobuk Wild & Scenic River. Keep an eye out for our call to action!

DONLIN GOLD MINE – DEIS EXPECTED FALL OF 2014

The scoping period for the Donlin Gold Mine permitting process wrapped up during the spring of 2013. Now as we head into the spring of 2014 we are awaiting the release of the draft Environmental Impact statement (DEIS) late this year. The Northern Center led a coalition of partner organizations and concerned individuals to submit extensive scoping comments. It looks like all of the concerns that we addressed did make it into the scoping document that was released in August of 2013. This is great news and means we can expect our concerns to be addressed in the DEIS.

During the lull between public comment periods we have an opportunity to spread the word about Donlin – too many people have never even heard of this proposed mine located along the Kuskokwim River. Some say it managed to fly under the radar since it is in the same part of Alaska as the proposed Pebble mine. 🌱



TAKE ACTION

Want to spread the word about Donlin?

Check out the documentary “Where the Heck is Donlin?”

[CLICK HERE](#) and then tell your friends about it!

Arctic Successes

LEGAL VICTORY FOR BEAUFORT SEA

AND COASTS: Trustees for Alaska secured a victory in the Alaska Supreme Court on behalf of NAEAC and others which requires Alaska DNR to address cumulative impacts and provide public review at all stages of oil and gas projects in the Beaufort Sea and surrounding coasts. This is important for protecting the coasts of Arctic Refuge and Teshekpuk Lake and Alaskans' voice.

INTERIOR DEPT. PROTECTS TESHEKPUK LAKE AND UTUKOK UPLANDS IN NEW NPR-A PLAN:

In March, 2013, Interior Secretary Salazar's final NPR-A plan set out strong protections (lands unavailable for leasing and prohibiting infrastructure) for Teshekpuk Lake wetlands and Utukok River Uplands Special Area expansion southern and Colville River headwaters. In a disappointment, the final NPR-A plan allows applications for Chukchi Sea pipelines and permanent infrastructure in Kasegaluk Lagoon and Peard Bay.

Protecting the Taigiuq Victory in the Arctic Ocean

By Daniel Inulak Lum

Four years ago I walked into a Mineral Management Service meeting with my son Joseph at the Westmark Conference Center in Fairbanks, Alaska. I read the public notice in the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* about Lease Sale 193 in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas of the Arctic Ocean and I knew that I had to attend. The idea of massive, unproven development in our pristine (yet dangerous) Arctic Seas was unacceptable to me. I felt compelled to become involved.

I had no prior experience testifying at meetings, I had no background in environmental issues and as I looked around amongst the hundreds of members of industry and labor I felt anxious and alone. My son stayed by my side, sensing the importance of the moment and what it represented to "his" ocean. The marine food stream of my family, my children, is at stake. I want my family to always be able to eat clean Inupiaq foods, much of which comes from the Ocean.

We retreated to the lobby for space and fresh air and, while we waited there awkwardly, Pam Miller from Northern Center's Arctic Program introduced herself. I explained I was there because I wanted to address the issue of oil spill response on the open ocean – that, in reality, there is no spill response and these companies were gambling with our ocean subsistence. She welcomed us as friends while encouraging my son and me to have the courage to speak our hearts. I testified about the complete lack of any real oil spill response so far out on the Arctic Ocean and the dangers of unpredictable ice and weather conditions. My son Joseph simply told the entire room, "Stay out of my Ocean!" That night was a changing point in my life.

Northern Alaska Environmental Center was there that evening to represent the Arctic Ocean and for years has continued the fight for conservation up north. Northern Center employees and members welcomed us into the organization and gave us encouragement to stay involved and active in these issues. It has been a long fight.

Four years later I am an employee at the Northern Alaska Environmental Center, and it is humbling to realize the major victory that has just occurred on the Arctic Ocean! Northern Center, through its coalition of Alaskan conservation groups, has won a major battle in the Arctic. Lease Sale 193 was ruled illegal in the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals and it appears as if industry is retreating for some time from the Chukchi and Beaufort Lease sites.

This is a victory that you Northern Alaska Environmental Center members can also claim! Your membership fees and donations have directly helped to make this possible! I am honored to be part of the team here and we are glad to share this success with our members! You can and DID make a difference! Quyanag Northern Center Members! 🌱

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

THE NORTHERN LINE WINTER 2014

Wilderness Act Anniversary Events

The Northern Center has joined with other groups, agencies, and wilderness enthusiasts to plan events and activities as the Fairbanks Committee for the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Wilderness Act. We welcome new ideas or volunteers. Please join us and others in Alaska and elsewhere in sharing wild inspiration. Learn more about the Wilderness Act at: www.wilderness50th.org.

April 12 Celebrate the Wild... in Wilderness!

7-9 pm, Schaible Auditorium, UAF

Featured Speaker Brock Evans, long-term conservation leader and author. Followed by Speak Out! Your chance to make a brief statement about how you feel about the importance of Wilderness (recorded for the archives).

Save the Date

July 27 Walk for Wilderness Run for the Refuge!

This walking and running race on UAF trails is a fun, family event. The 5 km and 10 km races start at 1 pm at the UAF ski hut. We are looking for volunteers to start race planning in early spring. Contact lori@northern.org.



FOREVER WILD!

**Tuesday,
April 22, 2014
7-9pm,
Pioneer Park Theater
Celebrating Earth Day and
the 50th Anniversary of the
Wilderness Act**

Featuring Susan Grace, the Alaskan Troubadour and the Fairbanks Peace Choir \$12 at the door, \$6 for students, seniors, military.

For more information about these events, contact the Committee for the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Wilderness Act at 479-0780.

Love the White Mountains the way they are? Most people who commented to BLM in their recent Eastern Interior planning process said YES! Hundreds of Alaskans signed our petition and nearly all hearing testimony supported better protections, not new mining. But the scheme to open the White Mountains National Recreation Area (NRA) to mining through a loophole in ANILCA is not dead yet. Nor are plans to open new areas of Steese National Conservation Area to mining and oil and gas in the watersheds of Preacher Creek and Birch Creek Wild River. Over 250 miles of headwaters streams flowing into Beaver Creek Wild River are at stake if BLM chooses mining instead of recreational, fisheries and wildlife values for the White Mountains NRA. We need to keep up the pressure as the agency crafts a new preferred alternative for the final plan due out in August.

The BLM is still preparing its final Eastern Interior Plan.

Show your love for the White Mountains! Share photos from peaceful winter trails or summer's midnight sun to dream on <https://www.facebook.com/ILoveTheWhiteMountainsAlaska>



**I ♥ The
White Mountains**
www.northern.org

The Wilderness Act at 50 and our Wildest Refuge

by Pamela A. Miller

THE WILDERNESS ACT AT 50 AND OUR WILDEST REFUGE

We look forward sometime this year to the release of the final Arctic Refuge Conservation Plan with Wilderness recommendations for the Coastal Plain and other areas, and reflect back on the remarkable citizen accomplishment of the Wilderness Act and how it undergirds today's advocacy for stronger refuge protections. Now, as then, Alaskan voices matter!

Just a few years ago Northern Center celebrated the Arctic Refuge's 50th

birthday and it is no accident that we mark the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act so soon. The landmark establishment of the refuge "for the purpose of preserving unique wildlife, wilderness and recreational values" by President Eisenhower's Interior Secretary in 1960 was a major catalyst in the broader campaign towards the Wilderness Act. The refuge's champions like Olaus and Mardy Murie, Ginny Wood and others in the Alaska Conservation Society fueled the dream for the Wilderness Act "to secure for the American people of present and future

generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness."

On September 3, 1964 President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Wilderness Act. It established the National Wilderness Preservation System for the use and benefit of the American people. The system composed of federal lands designated "wilderness areas" by Congress was to be administered by agencies to leave them unimpaired for future use as wilderness, and to protect the areas by preserving their wilderness character and natural conditions.



Interior Secretary Sally Jewell visited the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in September 2013 where she saw 29 polar bears, visited with Kaktovik residents, and hiked its coastal tundra and mountains. Afterwards said, "It is an extraordinary place... You never look at nature in quite the same way until you've been there." Afterwards, we were part of the Secretary's first meeting with conservation groups held in Alaska in decades. Elder Kay Wallis presented the gift of a caribou antler signed by everyone at Gwich'in Steering Committee's 25th Anniversary celebration in Arctic Village.

Congress initially set aside 9.1 million acres of Wilderness. Over the past 50 years, as a result of Americans' support for wilderness, Congress has added over 100 million acres to this system, about 52% of which are in Alaska.

The 1964 Wilderness Act defines "Wilderness," in contrast with areas where man and his works dominate the landscape, as areas where the earth and its communities of life are "untrammelled," where the primary forces of nature are in control, and where "man himself is a visitor who does not remain." The last phrase invites much discussion in Alaska because indigenous peoples have sustained traditional lands across millennia, and still today, with ecological processes intact. Here "remote" areas are home, and yet such root values are embodied in the Wilderness Act's purposes of sustaining land "the way it is" and inspiring caring for the earth.

In the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) of 1980, Congress modified the application of the Wilderness Act in Alaska so that it recognized traditional and customary subsistence for future generations. In Alaska, wilderness designation gives strong protections to subsistence resources and activities, including hunting, fishing and berry picking. Subsistence hunters can continue to use snow machines and motorboats in these activities in Alaska's refuge wilderness areas, in contrast to the claims of many industrial proponents who wrongly argue that refuge Wilderness would restrict subsistence.

In 1980, Congress designated most of the original Arctic Refuge as Wilderness

but the Coastal Plain (1002 area) was left out. When Congress enacted ANILCA, it specifically incorporated portions of the Wilderness Act into the law and carried over its wilderness

Wilderness holds memory of our origin as creatures of the wild, of how our ancient ancestors experienced and responded to the natural world... Wilderness as a place captures our imagination because it's a remnant of our world that is still natural, wild, and free. Wilderness as an idea is inspiring because it speaks to that remnant of that part of us that still seeks connection, belonging, and rootedness within that world.

Roger Kaye, 2011

review mandate for Alaska refuges. In doing so, the FWS was given broad authority to review areas within Alaska refuges for wilderness suitability and report recommendations for wilderness designation to the President.

In 2010, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service began revising its decades old Arctic Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan "CCP." Back in 1988, the agency had brazenly neglected to do a Wilderness Review for the Coastal Plain

in a political decision to drop it from the Plan while striving to sever the fabric of this land whose remarkable wholeness rooted its values.

This time, the draft Conservation Plan included the first-ever full Wilderness review and recommendation for the Coastal Plain of the refuge as well as other areas not yet designated. The 2011 draft Plan seeks to protect the Arctic Refuge's special values—from the wilderness character of the whole refuge, to ecological protection at the landscape scale, wildlife habitats, rivers, Alaska Native culture and subsistence, and recreation.

"We are glad this plan includes the wilderness review," said Sarah James, Gwich'in Steering Committee Chairperson, as the process began. "For thousands of years, we always used this land, wild land that is still how the Creator made it. We took care of it and left it the way it is, with no trace. We respect the land, the animals, and keep clean land, clean air, and clean water for future generations. Wilderness is to leave the land the way it is, we can still hunt and fish, berry pick and trap like we always did, that doesn't change if the lands are designated wilderness."

The Refuge with its time, freedom, and space along with millennial old cultures rooted in this place offer recurring lessons. This is human value of wilderness is our obligation to pass on. Stay tuned to get involved once the Final Arctic Refuge Conservation Plan and Wilderness Recommendation is out later this year. But get inspired to plan or join Wilderness 50 celebrations now. 🌱

Camp Denali - Our Time at Ginny's Cabin

By Daniel Inulak Lum

Last year, the Northern Center staff had a friendly competition to see who could get the most new members, and the winner would get to spend a few days at Ginny Wood's cabin deep in Denali National Park. In May I was excited to hear that I had won the prize donated by Camp Denali! Working at the Northern Center I have always heard stories about Ginny's cabin and how wild and pristine the area is, so I was pleased to surprise my wife Polly with a trip to the heart of Denali. One weekend in August we packed a few days of clothes, and savored our first real excursion from our six amazing Inupiat children.

After a long and beautiful bus ride down the park road (we saw wolves and bears right out of the bus windows) we arrived at Ginny's cabin and immediately understood why that place is so special. The neat, worn trail to her cabin was lined with thick blueberry bushes in full bloom; the blueberries were so abundant and ripe they seemed to be dripping out of the landscape.

Upon entering Ginny's cabin an immediate sense of history struck us; her rocking chair, the old wood stove and knick knacks from decades ago all remained in this special woman's cabin. Polly and I spent some time that first night reading guestbook entries from so many diverse people humbled to be in her little cabin. We woke every morning to the peaceful chatter of birds and squirrels, and made fresh tea and oatmeal from the spring water right outside the door. The view of the hills and mountains was stunning. It was magical.

The staff at Camp Denali where we shared dinners was amazing. They have a true understanding and respect for the conservation values that Ginny stood for



Polly and I enjoyed some quiet time together picking blueberries. Photo, Daniel Lum

over so many decades and that she had when she first established Camp Denali with Celia Hunter and Woody Wood, at that time just outside the National Park though now surrounded by it. I was grateful to have an opportunity to

make a presentation about the Arctic ecosystem and conservation issues in the high north, and as I concluded my presentation Denali itself finally came out of the clouds and we all took amazing pictures. It is a very special place.

I never got the opportunity to meet Ginny Wood, but I learned a lot about her in Denali National Park. I am honored to be part of a team that carries on her values through our work, and actually going to these wild places helps reinforce why we do what we do. At the end of our stay we signed the guest book and reluctantly left her cabin with a renewed spirit, and a hell of a lot of blueberries. Quyanaq Ginny! 🍓



We saw a mother grizzly bear and her cub munching on berries during our bus ride down the park road. Photo, Daniel Lum

Wisdom Walks

by Lori Hanemann

Wisdom Walks were created at the Northern Center in 2013 when we formed a Junior Advisory Board. Our Advisory Council voted unanimously to include mentoring the Juniors in their official bylaws, and going for a one-on-one walk was a natural first step in getting to know each other. A Council member is partnered with a Junior to take a long walk together, talking and listening. The first half of the walk is for the Council member to tell tales of their history as an activist and tell stories of their life, with the Junior actively listening; the second half is for the Council member to listen as the Junior talks about their life experiences and hopes and dreams for the future. Here is the official description of a Wisdom Walk:

Northern Center Wisdom Walks are memorable one-on-one experiences to honor the wisdom of our founders and the hopes of our juniors. Our founders have decades of experience and wisdom in conservation work to pass on to future generations, and our youth members are ready to pick up the torch, fueled by passion for wilderness protection. The Wisdom Walk is a quest for conversations about conservation – intergenerational walking and talking that matters. The intention is for the process to capture the rich and diverse stewardship knowledge from the past to support the next generation as they step into their potential as activists and protectors of the far North! Only with the shout for change combined with the wisdom of experience can we protect Northern Alaska! 🌱



One of our Founders, Jim Hunter and Junior Advisory Board member, Bennett Wong had the honor of taking the first ever Wisdom Walk together. They walked for several hours through Creamer's Field Migratory Wildlife Refuge on a Fall day, bird watching and storytelling. The new friends had a lot of praise for the experience, recommending it to others with the highlight being the mutual inspiration the experience brings to both the elder and the youth. Photo, Lori Hanemann

Recognition and Appreciation of our 2013 Major Donors

These generous donations are essential to our success each year. Thank you for your meaningful commitment to wild lands in northern Alaska!

John Luther & Cindy Adams
John & Jane Aspnes
Joseph Albright & Marcia Kunstel
Charles & Charlotte Bird
Woody Brooks & Nancy Felix
Merritt & April Crosby
Denali Lodges
Doug Elliott & Cara Haskey
Robert & Elizabeth Elsner
Dan & Jean Failoni
John Fitzgerald
Sven & Laura Grage
Mary Greene
John Hagey & Sonia Mazurek
Barbara Hertz

Ward & Lois Irwin
Franz & Pat Jahoda
Torre & Janet Jorgenson
Stan Justice
Larry Katkin
Karen & Brendan Kelly
David Klein
Bill Leighty & Nancy Waterman
Gail Mayo
Greg McCarthy & Wendy Chase
Douglas McIntosh
Jon Miller & Lou Brown
Keith Miller
Richard & Barbara Moore
Carol & Dave Norton

Dan & Rita Osborne
Don and Tracie Pendergrast
Trusten Perry & Margaret Eagleton
Martha Reynolds
Paul & Terry Reichardt
Carl Roland & Jackie D'Auria
Don Ross
Maggie Sharp
Robert & Doreen Shiro
Ronald & Mary Teel
Danielle Tirrell & Dirk Nickisch
Annie Schaub Watson
Robert & Judith Weeden
Paul Williams
Ken Whitten & Mary Zalar

House Party Fundraisers for the Northern Center – Party for a Purpose!

By Lori Hanemann

You can help by hosting a House Party Fundraiser. It's simple. Invite friends over to your house for a fun party, tell them about the good work of the Center, ask if they will contribute, go party some more, thank them, and then put on your superhero cape because you just helped us out! A good house party does not require a large or luxurious house as its venue; what it does require is an enthusiastic host who believes in the mission of the Northern

Center – wilderness protection for northern Alaska – and someone who's excited to tell their friends their own story about why they support this local grassroots organization.

WHO ARE THE MOST EFFECTIVE HOSTS?

- Eager to open up your home to guests
- Willing to invite your own friends to the party
- Prepared to make all of the attendees feel comfortable and able to make the 'ask'
- Set to take an active role in the planning process and in helping to write thank-you notes after the event is over
- Keen on having a fun evening with friends to support a cause you believe in

This is the most fun way we could think of to ask you to help us raise funds for our work in 2014. We want to keep it uncomplicated and simple – so, if you believe in our work, send us an email or call the office and we'll help you plan a party.

PARTY THEME IDEAS:

Simple dinner party at your house

Arm wrestling party

Chocolate fondue party

Dance marathon party

Ice cream eating contest

Watch a terrible movie

Watch a fantastic movie

Make pancakes party

Birthday or Anniversary party

Music jam session

Knitting party

Jigsaw puzzle

Wine & Cheese party

Microbrew tasting party 🌱



In early March Tako Raynolds hosted a Sunday Tea fundraiser at Ginny Wood's cabin celebrating Alaska's grandmothers of conservation. Photo, Pamela A. Miller

It Takes a Village to Raise Auction Success – You Did It!

By Lori Hanemann

Our members care about youth!! We dedicate a section of the live auction to fundraising for our work with youth, and each year you prove even further just how important that work is to you. We had our best Fund A Youth program ever and raised over \$15,000 for Camp Habitat scholarships, summer interns, and our Junior Advisory Board! Thank you all for your substantial donations and helping us grow young conservationists. We'd also like to thank all of the businesses and individuals who donated items and experiences to this year's fundraiser,

as well as the dozens of volunteers who helped behind the scenes – they made the night look easy and flawless. The Fairbanks Peace Choir and Mary Shields had the entire ballroom on their feet dancing to Abba's Dancing Queen, but with Northern Center lyrics – Dancing Green. Thanks to this entertaining group for all your hard work. We'd also like to shine the gratitude spotlight on this year's Auction Coordinator, Fiona Zachel – we really appreciate the months of hard work she put into creating our fundraising spectacular! Our popular

auctioneer Anthony Mendoza and his two assistants Jennifer Eskridge and John Stowman received much praise from attendees and we are grateful to have such high caliber people help us raise money to protect wild places in the far north!

We're starting the search for Auction donations from corporate suppliers, and could use a few more volunteers to help with this easy task which you can work on from home if you have internet. Email lori@northern.org 🌱

Stan Stephens (1934-2013) - The Keeper of the Sound

By Karl Monetti, former NAEC board Member

When I opened my veterinary clinic in August of 1971, Stan was one of my first clients. I had to make house calls because his St. Bernard was too big to fit in his car! The wound on his dog's leg never healed, but I became a good friend of the family as a result of multiple visits to the Stephens household.

On one of my first visits, Stan told me of his new boat, the Mary Helen, that he wanted to use to take out hunters in the Sound, and in September of 1971 I got to go out with Stan for the first of many times.

On one early trip to Fidalgo Bay, I began to get a sense of the man's toughness. The Mary Helen had an open bridge so when a steady rain began to fall I took a cup of steaming coffee up to him, only to find him sitting there in a soaked knit wool hat, singing. I said, "Stan, it's raining and you're singing?" He said, "Well, it's a dry rain, isn't it?"

Over the years I watched his kids grow up, watched Stan go from a mechanic to sailor and charter operator, a cruise line owner, and a tireless

environmental advocate. Through it all, his wife Mary Helen provided the glue, the support, and the good cooking to hold it all together.

I've known of Stan's remarkable environmental record for years, but I knew him mostly as a friend. So I'd like to include here some comments from Northern Center staff and board, and several others who knew him better as a tireless environmental activist. Stan was a generous and wise man, a great proponent of the things NAEC stands for, and a beacon for all sensible Alaskans who care about our environment. Stan supported not only Prince William Sound but was also a champion of Interior issues such as keeping Tangle Lakes free of mining.

Stan played a huge role in developing and promoting ecotourism in Alaska's most beautiful and wild places, while holding the oil industry accountable after the Exxon Valdez oil spill, from Prudhoe Bay along the whole pipeline to Valdez terminal, and everywhere oil tankers plied the seas. As his friend and former ship's pilot Tim Jones said

about Stan's longevity in the fight for best practices by the oil industry, "Stan saw that the biggest danger was complacency and continued the fight long after it was popular."

Stan has been a beacon of light in my life for 42 years, and his family will always be dear to my heart.

I last saw Stan this past July when we took our sister-in-law on a glacier cruise. Stan had been wracked with pain for several years but he was still full of the fight and passion he was known for. His last words to me were, "You have to pick an issue. Pick an issue you have a passion for and fight for it!"

When I asked the board if we could plant a tree in Stan's memory after his passing in the fall, Don Pendergrast asked "Will mighty oaks grow in our back yard?" I am afraid not, so we dedicated an Alaskan white spruce tree at the Northern Center in Stan's memory. May it remind us of the legacy he left and the work still to be done. We named it, Long Live the Keeper of the Sound. 🌲

LARRY R. MAYO (1938-2013) Long-time conservationist and NAEC member, Larry served as president of the Alaska Conservation Society in 1976. He was an internationally renowned glaciologist. In 1977, he penned an article in the Alaska Conservation Review, *Crude Oil Tankers in Alaskan Waters*, of the perils of calving icebergs to tankers in Prince William Sound. He helped organize Alaska Bird Observatory, Boreal Forest Council, programs at Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge, and was a great promoter of solar power.

JANE N. WILLIAMS (1914-2013) She was an adventuresome camper who brought Youth Hostels to Alaska but said she was "first and foremost, a pacifist, and environmentalist and a conservationist." Her love of science and gifted teaching infused a career with recognition as Alaska biology teacher of the year.



NIILLO E. KOPENEN (1928-2013) Niillo had volunteered in Finland at a Quaker work camp helping WWII refugees in 1948 which ultimately inspired his coming to Alaska. He was a teacher, principal, surveyor, helped organize unions, and grassroots activist with a generous spirit who made a notable difference in our community.

When Niillo served in the Alaska legislature (1982-1992) he was a shining beacon of support for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and Alaska's environment. He

championed human and civil rights, peace, and social causes from Head Start to the Equal Rights Amendment and myriad issues for Alaskans as an "unapologetically liberal legislator." Shari Ppapul, a former legislative aide noted Niillo often said to so many, "if something concerns you, research it, share it with me and let's get something changed or improved." Yes they did! Niillo generously provided a donation through his will to support the work of the Northern Center. 🌲