

Aleknagik

People and Place

Location

Aleknagik is situated at the southeast end of Lake Aleknagik at the head of the Wood River. The community is 16 miles northwest of Dillingham and is located in the Dillingham Census Area. Aleknagik is made up of 43.8 square miles of land and 7.2 square miles of water.

Demographic Profile

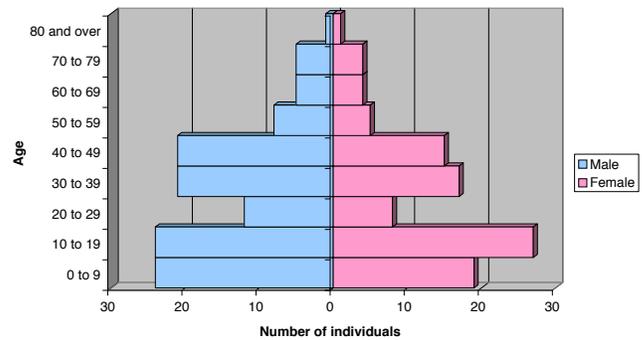
At the time of the 2000 U.S. Census the community of Aleknagik had a total of 221 inhabitants, and of those 54.8% were male and 45.2% were female. Prior to the 1940 census no population was recorded for the community other than in the year 1890 when it was reported that there were 68 inhabitants. Since 1950 the population of the community has fluctuated for the most part between about between 128 and 231 persons living in the community. In 2000 about 81.9% of the residents of Aleknagik were American Indian and Alaska Native, 13.6% were White, 1.4% were classified as “Other”, and 3.2% were of two or more races. When more than one race is taken into account, about 84.6% of the population was at least part American Indian and Alaska Native. Approximately 1.4% of the residents were Hispanic. The median age of the community was 28.3 years, significantly lower than the national average of 35.3 years. There were a total of 107 housing units, 37 of which were vacant and 21 vacant due to seasonal use. No one in the population lived in group quarters. Out of the population of the community age 25 and over about 70.9% had graduated from high school or gone on to further schooling, and 12.7% had obtained a bachelor’s degree or higher.

History

Historically the areas of Wood River and Aleknagik Lake were used as summer fish camps. The name Aleknagik means “wrong way home” because on occasion the Native peoples who were returning to their homes on the Nushagak River would get lost in the fog and end up at Aleknagik Lake after being swept along the Wood River by the tide. According to the 1890 Census there were 68 inhabitants in the village at that time. In 1929 there were 55 people living in the “Wood River village” area, which is located south of Aleknagik according to census data. There were five

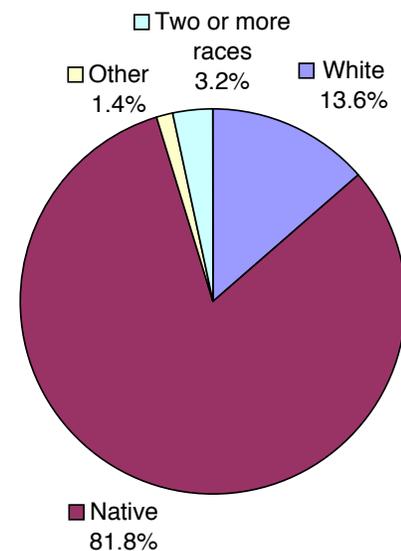
**2000 Population Structure
Aleknagik**

Data source: US Census



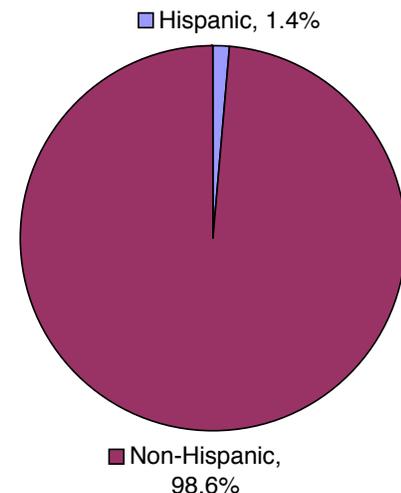
**2000 Racial Structure
Aleknagik**

Data source: US Census



**2000 Hispanic Ethnicity
Aleknagik**

Data source: US Census



families living on the shore of Aleknagik Lake year round in 1930; the Waskeys, Polleys, Hansons, Yakos, and Smiths. In 1933 a log cabin school was built on the shore of the lake and the first teacher was Josie Waskey. Many families relocated from Goodnews, Togiak, and Kulukak to Aleknagik because they were attracted by the school, the other facilities present in the community, and the bountiful timber, fish, and game. In 1937 a post office was built and in 1938 a two-story school was constructed with a teacher apartment.

By the time of the 1940 U.S. Census, the community of Aleknagik had a total of 78 inhabitants, a small sawmill, and over 30 buildings. A Seventh-day Adventist Mission and School were built in the 1940s on the north shore of the lake. A Russian Orthodox Church and a Moravian Church were built in the community in the 1950s and at that time over 35 families lived in the area. A 25-mile road connecting the south shore of the lake to Dillingham was built in 1959. In 1973 the City became incorporated. And in 2000, over 24 additional square miles were annexed to the City.

Infrastructure

Current Economy

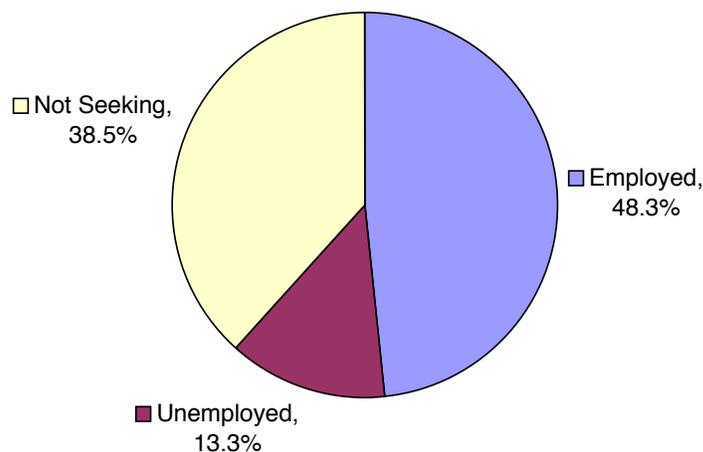
Many inhabitants of Aleknagik are involved in commercial and subsistence activities during the summer months on the Bristol Bay coast. In 2000, 50 commercial fishing permits were issued to residents of the community and 48 residents were licensed as crew members. Since 1997 poor fish returns and falling fish prices have had a major effect on the community. Income is also derived from the sport fishing industry. Another important source of income for community members is trapping. In 2000 of those age 16 years and over in Aleknagik about 48.3% were employed, 13.3% were unemployed, and 38.5% were not in the labor force. Of those which were employed, approximately 47.8% were classified as government workers. The per capita income for residents was \$10,973 in 2000 with the median household income at \$22,750.

Governance

Aleknagik is a second-class city incorporated in 1973 and has a strong mayor form of government which includes a mayor and a seven person city council. The city is not part of any organized borough. The regional Native corporation for the area is the

2000 Employment Structure Aleknagik

Data source: US Census



Bristol Bay Native Corporation and the Native village corporation is Aleknagik Natives Ltd. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) recognized Traditional Council is the Aleknagik Traditional Council. The Community Development Quota (CDQ) group which the city is included in is the Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation. The regional non-profit organization for the area is the Bristol Bay Native Association. The closest office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) to the community is located in Dillingham. A National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) field office is located in Bethel and a main office is located in Anchorage. The nearest Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) office is located in Anchorage.

Facilities

Aleknagik is accessible by air, water, and by road from Dillingham. Regular flights are scheduled to Aleknagik through Dillingham and there is a state-owned 2,070 foot gravel airstrip present in the community. The approximate cost according to Travelocity and Expedia to travel by air roundtrip to Anchorage from Aleknagik is \$424 (price given for date as close to September 1, 2003 as possible). On the north shore is Moody's Aleknagik Seaplane Base which accommodates float planes. Two additional airstrips are located around the community. The north shore of Aleknagik Lake is not accessible by road

and residents must travel by skiffs to the south shore where the town is located. A state-owned and operated 100 foot dock is located on the north shore of the lake. Also on the north shore are a breakwater, barge landing, boat launch ramp, and boat lift. Locals travel by vehicles, skiffs, ATVs, and snowmachines.

Accommodations are available at the Aleknagik Bed and Breakfast. There is one school in the community, Aleknagik School, instructing grades K-8 with 33 students and 5 teachers in 2000. Health care is available at the North Shore Health Clinic and at the South Shore Health Clinic which are owned by the City and operated by the City and by the Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation (BBAHC). Police services are available from the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO). The electric utility is the Nushagak Electric Cooperative which is operated by REA Co-op with the main power source of diesel, although in 2000 about 95.8% of households heated using heating oil and 4.2% heated using wood. There is no piped water system and individuals and the school are the operators of their own wells. Sewage and refuse are disposed of in private septic tanks, and the city operates a septic pumping service. The City operates two landfills, one on the north shore and one on the south shore.

Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

A total of 50 commercial fishing permits were issued to residents of Aleknagik in 2000 and 48 residents were licensed crew members. No vessel owners in the community participated in federal fisheries, although 15 vessel owners participated in the salmon fishery.

Out of the 50 permits issued to community members, a total of 33 were actually fished. One permit was issued for halibut using longline on a vessel over 60 feet statewide, although it was not fished in 2000. A total of 21 permits were issued for the commercial fishing of herring: 4 were issued for herring roe using gillnets in Security Cove (four fished), 7 for herring roe using gillnets in Bristol Bay (5 fished), and 10 for herring spawn on kelp which is dived for or handpicked in Bristol Bay (none fished). Twenty-eight permits were issued for salmon: 19 using drift gillnets

in Bristol Bay (15 fished), and 9 using set gillnets in Bristol Bay (9 fished).

No landings were delivered to Aleknagik in 2000 because no processors were present in the community. The CDQ group in which the community is included, the Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation (BBEDC), was recently granted \$75,026 by the Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference as part of the Steller Sea Lion Mitigation Program “in recognition of the negative economic impacts of federal measures to protect the Steller sea lion” with money which had been allocated by the U.S. government (Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference 2003).

Sport Fishing

Aleknagik Lake is a popular spot for sport fishing and boasts that it carries “all five species of Pacific salmon, rainbow trout, arctic char, Dolly Varden, arctic grayling, lake trout, and northern pike” (CountrySport Limited 2003). According to the ADF&G there were six businesses which were listed as freshwater guide businesses in 2002 in Aleknagik, six full service guiding services businesses, one drop-off service business, and two lodge/resort services businesses. In 2000, 10 sport fishing licenses were sold in Aleknagik to residents of the State of Alaska and a total of 393 sport fishing licenses were sold in the community to non-residents.

Subsistence Fishing

According to the ADF&G, for the most representative year of 1989, 100.0% of Aleknagik households used all subsistence resources: 94.7% used salmon, 94.7% used non-salmon fish (herring, herring roe, cod, flounder, halibut, sculpin, blackfish, burbot, char, grayling, pike, sucker, trout, and whitefish), 81.6% used marine mammals, and 52.6% used marine invertebrates. The per capita harvest for community members was 379.29 lbs for all subsistence resources: 25.07% salmon, 16.18% non-salmon fish, 4.01% marine mammals, 0.83% marine invertebrates, 3.71% birds and eggs, 43.06% land mammals, and 7.14% vegetation. Also according to ADF&G there were 11 subsistence salmon household permits issued in 1999 to residents of Aleknagik for an estimated total of 997 fish harvested. Residents are eligible to apply for halibut subsistence certificates.