

Clark's Point

People and Place

Location

Clark's Point is situated on the northeastern shore of Nushagak Bay in the Dillingham Census Area. It is about 15 miles from Dillingham and 337 miles southwest of Anchorage. It makes up 3.1 square miles of land and 0.9 square miles of water.

Demographic Profile

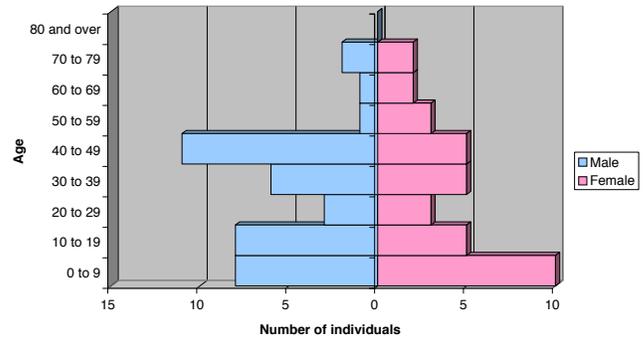
There were a total of 75 inhabitants in Clark's Point according to the 2000 U.S. Census, and of those, 53.3% were male and 46.7% were female. According to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, Clark's Point "is the summer working grounds of about 300 additional people who work the sockeye salmon runs" (p. 152). Since about 1980 the population has remained relatively stable, fluctuating from 60 to 79 residents. Prior to that, the population topped 100 people in the 1950s and 1960s. During 1930s and 1940s the population was only around 12. In 2000, about 90.7% of the residents were American Indian and Alaska Native, 6.7% were White, 1.3% was Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and 1.3% was of two or more races. About 92.0% of the population of Clark's Point identified themselves as all or part American Indian and Alaska Native. No one in the community was Hispanic. The median age of the community was 30.5 years, significantly lower than the national median of 35.3 years. There were a total of 51 housing units, 27 of which were vacant and 22 were vacant due to seasonal use. No one in the population lived in group quarters. Of the population age 25 and over, 76.5% had graduated from high school or a higher level of education and 3.9% had obtained a bachelor's degree or higher.

History

Originally Clark's Point was called by the Eskimo name "Saguyak." There is no evidence that the area of Clark's Point had been settled before the Nushagak Packing Company cannery was established there in 1888. The village of Clark's Point was named after the manager of the Alaska Commercial Company store at Nushagak, John Clark. Prior to the opening of the cannery it is reported that Clark had opened a saltery in the area. The Nushagak Packing Company cannery became a member of the Alaska Packers Association in

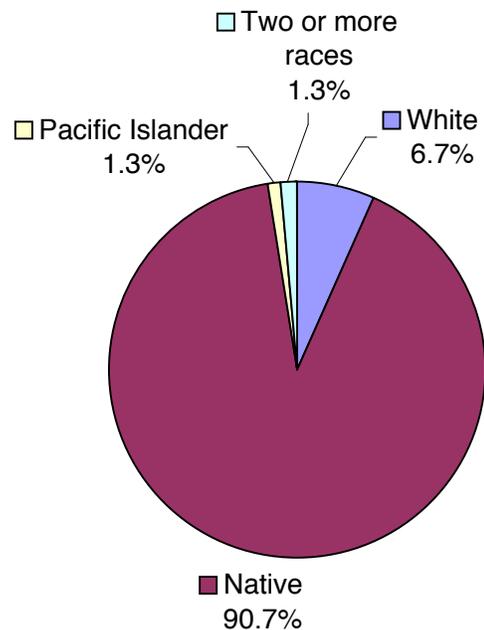
2000 Population Structure
Clarks Point

Data source: US Census



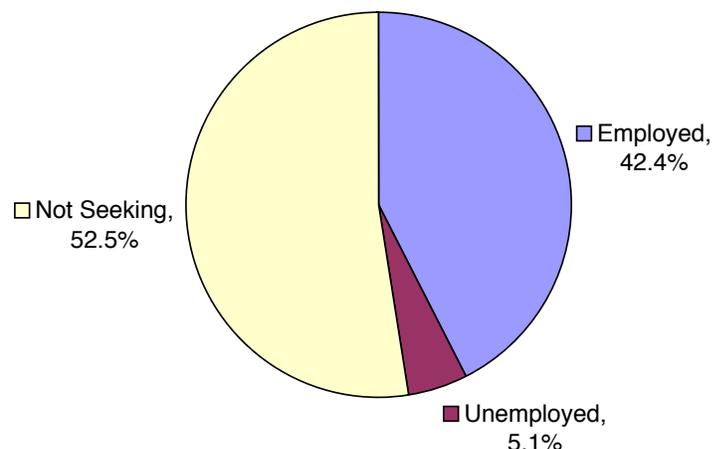
2000 Racial Structure
Clarks Point

Data source: US Census



2000 Employment Structure
Clarks Point

Data source: US Census



1893. A two-line cannery was built in the community in 1901, but during WWII the canning operation ceased and only salting was done. A major flood took place in Clark's Point in 1929. By 1952 the processing plant was shut down permanently and at that time was used as headquarters for the Alaska Packers Association's fishing fleet. In 1971 the City was incorporated. In 1982 a housing project was constructed on the bluff which is both higher and safer ground, as the community has had major problems with erosion and past floods. The processing plant was purchased by Trident in 1987, but there hasn't been any processing at the plant since the 1950s. Since then the plant has "been used mainly as a fish camp, storing boats and providing services, bunkhouse rooms, ice, groceries and meal services" and was put up for sale by Trident at the beginning of 2002 at which time the company said that would be the last summer they would operate the facility (Juneau Daily News Online 2002).

Infrastructure

Current Economy

The economy of Clark's Point is based, for the most part, on commercial fishing. In 2000, 28 commercial fishing permits were issued to residents of the community and there were 30 licensed crew members. All community members are dependent on subsistence to a certain extent and many will travel large distances to acquire resources if necessary. Of the population of Clark's Point age 16 years and over in 2000, about 42.4% were employed, 5.1% were unemployed, and 52.5% were not in the labor force. Of those employed, about 56.0% were listed as government employees. The per capita income in 2000 was \$10,989 and the median household income was \$28,125. About 45.7% of the population lived below the poverty level at the time of the Census.

Governance

Clark's Point is a second-class city which was incorporated in 1971. Clark's Point is not part of an organized borough. The city has a strong mayor form of government including the mayor, a six person city council, a four-person advisory school board, and various municipal employees. There is a 5% sales tax in Clark's Point, but no property tax. The regional Native corporation for the area and is the Bristol Bay Native Corporation. The Native village corporation is

Saguyak Inc., and the traditional council, recognized by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), is the Clark's Point Village Council. The Community Development Quota (CDQ) group in which the city is included 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) 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

Clark's Point is accessible by both the air and water, although air travel is the more common method of traveling to the community. There is a 2,600 foot gravel runway owned by the State and floatplanes are able to land on the Nushagak River. The approximate cost according to Travelocity and Expedia to travel by air roundtrip to Anchorage from Clark's Point is \$399 (price given for date as close to September 1, 2003 as possible). Freight is barged to Dillingham and then transported to Clark's Point. An underdeveloped spit dock owned by the City is the only boat moorage so boats, therefore, land on the beach. Trident Seafoods owns a private dock at their facility. The main means of transportation for locals is either ATVs or snowmachines. There are no visitor accommodations in the community. There is one school, Clark's Point School, which teaches grades K-7 with 17 students and 2 teachers in 2000. Health care is available from Clark's Point Health Clinic which is operated by the Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation (BBAHC) and is owned by the City. The clinic is located in a flood plain and is in need of replacement. There are no police services in the community. The electric utility is the City of Clark's Point with a main power source of diesel. The water system is operated by the City and about 80% of residents are connected to this system. The remaining residents use individual wells. The City also operates the sewer system with the buildings located on the bluff connected to 40% of homes and the school. Those who live below the bluff use septic tanks or pit privies and both the city offices and the clinic use honeybuckets. The City also operates the landfill but refuse collection is not available.

Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

A total of 28 commercial fishing permits were issued to residents of Clarks Point in 2000 and 30 residents were licensed crew members. No vessel owners resident in Clarks Point participated in the federal fisheries, although 10 resident vessel owners participated in the salmon fishery.

Of the 28 permits issued to community members, 22 were fished in 2000. Six permits were issued for halibut using longline on a vessel under 60 feet statewide (none fished). Nine permits were issued for herring roe: four using gillnets in Security Cove (two fished) and five using gillnets in Bristol Bay (four fished). A total of 13 permits were issued for salmon: 8 using drift gillnets in Bristol Bay (11 fished) and 5 using set gillnets in Bristol Bay (5 fished).

There were a total of 87 vessels which delivered salmon landings to the community of Clarks Point in 2000. In accordance with confidentiality regulations, landings data for the community are unavailable. It is not clear why salmon landings are delivered to the community if no processor is in operation in Clark's Point.

The community was recently granted \$174,475 in federal salmon disaster funds. The CDQ group in which Clark's Point 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

Sport fishing does not seem to be much of an attraction for tourists to the community of Clark's Point and the support systems necessary for this industry are currently not available. According to the ADF&G there were no sport fishing licenses sold in the community in 2000 and no sport fishing guide businesses in Clark's Point which were listed for 2002. It is mentioned by ADF&G that king salmon can be caught by sport fishers on the Nushagak River and the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge, which is west of the community "is well-suited for salmon and trout sport fishing" (inAlaska.com 2003).

Subsistence Fishing

All residents of the community are dependent on subsistence to an extent, and exchange relationships are in place with near communities such as the trading of smelt for whitefish with Ekwok, New Stuyahok and Bethel, and the trading of moose for lingcod from Manakotak. According to the ADF&G's Division of Subsistence, in the survey year of 1989 the per capita wild food harvest by residents of Clark's Point was 363.0 lbs. About 94.1% of households in the community used Chinook salmon, 100% used sockeye salmon, 94.1% used smelt, 76.5% used caribou, 41% used Dolly Varden and pike, and 29.4% used herring roe on kelp. The ADF&G reported in 1999 that 15 household subsistence salmon permits were issued to those from the community for an estimated total of 1,218 harvested salmon. Residents of Clark's Point are eligible to apply for halibut subsistence certificates. These allocations are based on recognized customary and traditional uses of halibut. Regulations to implement subsistence halibut fishing were published in the Federal Register in April 2003 and became effective May 2003.