

Eek

People and Place

Location

Eek is located on the south bank of the Eek River, 12 miles east of the mouth of the Kuskokwim River. It is 35 air miles south of Bethel and 420 miles west of Anchorage. The area encompasses 0.9 square miles of land and 0.1 square miles of water.

Demographic Profile

In 2000 there were 280 residents and 76 households in Eek. The community was primarily a Yup'ik Eskimo village. All residents lived in households rather than in group quarters. The racial composition of the community was as follows: Alaska Native or American Indian (95.7%), White (3.2%), and two or more races (1.1%). A total of 96.8% of the population recognized themselves as all or part Alaska Native or American Indian. About 0.4% of the population (one resident) was of Hispanic origin. The gender ratio was significantly skewed, at 54.6% male and 45.4% female. The median age was 24 years, quite young compared to the U.S. national average of 35.3 years. Approximately 64.2% of residents 25 years of age or older had a high school degree or higher level of education.

History

The village of Eek was originally located on the Apokok River, several miles south of its present location. It was moved in the 1930s to avoid the constant problem of flooding. A Bureau of Indian Affairs school and a Moravian Church were constructed shortly after the move. The village's post office was established in 1949, and the village was incorporated as a second-class city in 1970. Today most residents have a subsistence lifestyle, depending on local fish and game.

Infrastructure

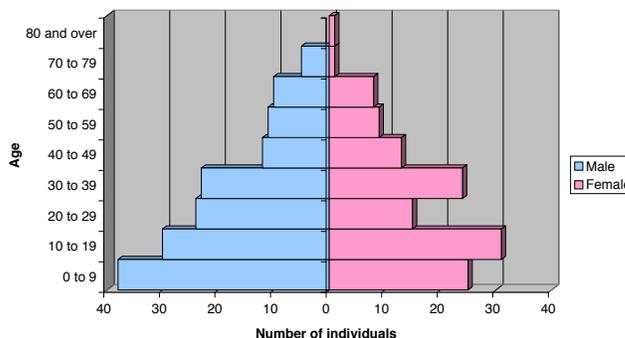
Current Economy

The economy of Eek is a mixture of commercial fishing and subsistence hunting and fishing. Many local residents have commercial fishing permits for Bristol Bay and Kuskokwim Bay fisheries. The median per capita income in Eek is \$8,957 and the median household income is \$17,500. Approximately 7.5%

2000 Population Structure

Eek

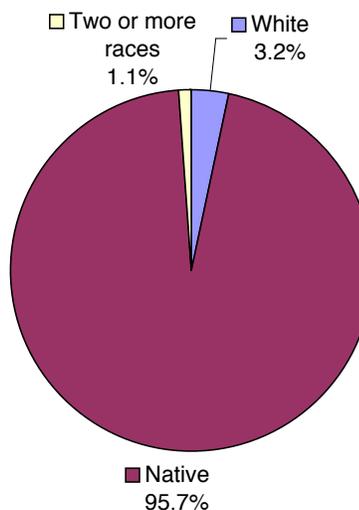
Data source: US Census



2000 Racial Structure

Eek

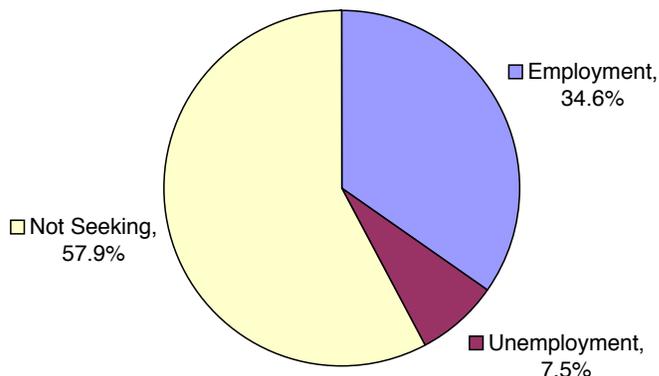
Data source: US Census



2000 Employment Structure

Eek

Data source: US Census



of the local work force is unemployed and 28.8% of individuals live below the poverty level.

Governance

Eek incorporated as a second-class city in 1970. It is classified as “unorganized” (i.e. not under the jurisdiction of a Borough). It has a strong mayor form of government. The city administers a 2% sales tax; it has no property tax or other special taxes. Eek is federally recognized Native community with a village council. Its village corporation, the Iqfijouaq Company, is another important body of local Native governance. Eek is a member of the Coastal Villages Region Fund, a Community Development Quota (CDQ) group that promotes employment opportunities for residents as well as participation in the Bering Sea crab and groundfish fisheries.

The closest office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) to the community is located in Bethel. 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

Eek is accessible by air via a 1,400 foot sand and gravel airstrip. There is also a seaplane base on the Eek River. Roundtrip airfare from Eek to Anchorage, via Bethel, is approximately \$465. Local transportation is by fishing boat, skiff, and snowmachine. Water is from the Eek River and is treated and stored locally. Most houses do not have plumbing. There is a city-operated landfill. Electricity is provided by AVEC and is produced by a diesel generator. The Eek Health Clinic is owned by the city and operates in cooperation with the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation. There is one school in the community, which offers instruction to students in grades K-12 and has a total of 7 teachers and 76 students.

Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

Commercial fishing, particularly in the Bristol Bay and Kuskokwim Bay salmon fisheries, is a vital part of the economy of Eek. In 2000, 45 local residents

held a total of 55 commercial fishing permits, and 43 permits were fished. There were 11 vessel owners with operations in non-federal fisheries residing in the community, and 51 crew members residing in the community. This section contains a detailed description of commercial permits issued to Eek residents.

Halibut: Four total permits were issued, including one halibut hand troll permit for statewide waters and three halibut longline permits for vessels under 60 feet in statewide waters. No permits were fished.

Herring: Seven local residents held a total of seven commercial permits for the herring fishery, and three permits were fished. These included the following: one herring roe gillnet permit for Cape Avinof (not fished), and six herring roe gillnet permits for Goodnews Bay (three fished).

Salmon: Forty-five local residents held a total of 55 commercial permits for the salmon fishery, and 43 permits were fished. These permits included the following: four salmon drift gillnet permits for Bristol Bay (three fished), 39 salmon set gillnet permits for Kuwkokwim Bay (36 fished), and one salmon set gillnet permit for the lower Yukon River (one fished).

In 2000 there were no commercial fish processors in Eek and therefore no registered landings.

Sport Fishing

Because of Eek’s relatively isolated location, sport fishing is negligible. There were no reported sport license sales in Eek for 2000.

Subsistence Fishing

The ADF&G does not have any specific data on subsistence activities in Eek. However, the community has a Subsistence Halibut Registration Certificate (SHARC), which means that residents are entitled to harvest subsistence halibut. In 1999 a total of 67 households held permits to harvest subsistence salmon. 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.