

# Iliamna

## People and Place

### Location

Iliamna is located on the northwest side of Iliamna Lake in the Kvichak River basin which connects the community with Bristol Bay. The town lies 225 miles southwest of Anchorage. It is near the Lake Clark Park and Preserve. The area encompasses 35.9 square miles of land and 0.6 square miles of water. This is one of the numerous examples of inshore communities which are intimately involved in saltwater fisheries.

### Demographic Profile

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Iliamna had 102 inhabitants. Since the 1980s, and after 40 years of steady population numbers, Iliamna seems to be experiencing a slow but steady increase of population probably related to its consolidation as a recreational fishing location. About 50% of the population was Alaska Native or American Indian, 39.2% White, and 2.9% as belonging to more than two races. A total of 57.8% of the population recognized themselves as all or part Alaska Native or American Indian. The population is a relatively young, with a 31.5 years median age (compared to the national average of 35.3 years) and with a 36.3% of the population under 19 years old. The gender balance is skewed towards males with 52.9% male and 47.1% female. Of 58 housing units, 23 were vacant. Of the population age 25 years and over in Iliamna, 92.1% had completed high school or gone on to further schooling and 28.9% had obtained a bachelor's degree or higher.

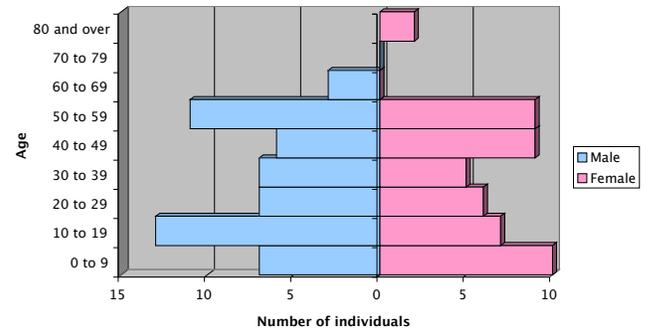
### History

The current village was founded in 1935. Prior to 1935, "Old Iliamna" was located near the mouth of the Iliamna River, a traditional Athabascan village. A post office was established there in 1901, but was moved with the town a few decades later.

Iliamna's current size and character can be attributed to the development of fishing and hunting lodges. The first lodge opened in the 1930s. A second lodge was built in the 1950s. During the 70s and 80s, land lots were made available by the Baptist Church, and additional lodges were constructed. In recent years Iliamna has become a recreational and tourist attraction due to the excellent fishing at Iliamna Lake. The population is mixed, with non-Natives, Tanaina

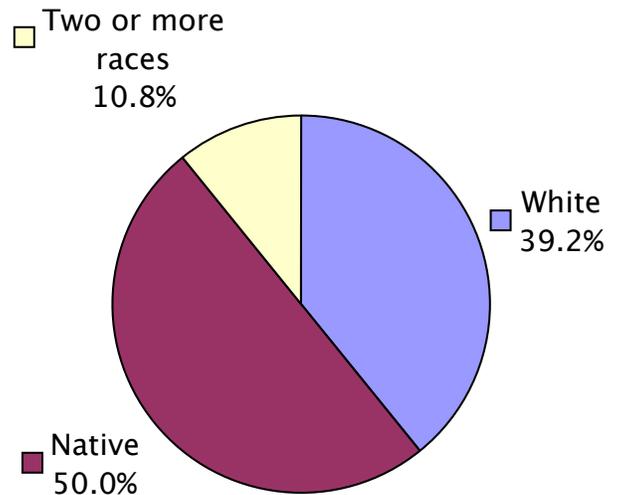
**2000 Population Structure Iliamna**

Data source: US Census



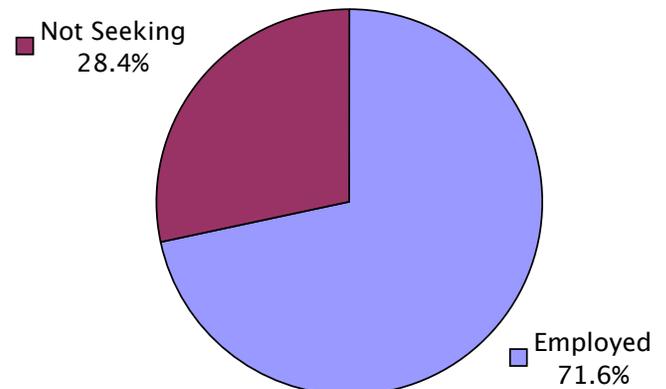
**2000 Racial Structure Iliamna**

Data source: US Census



**2000 Employment Structure Iliamna**

Data source: US Census



Athabascans, Alutiiq, and Yup'ik Eskimos. The sale of alcohol is prohibited in the community, although importation or possession is allowed. Recent mineral discoveries seem to suggest that the socioeconomic future of Iliamna may be very different from what we encounter there today.

## Infrastructures

### Current Economy

The current economic structure of Iliamna revolves around three complementary main activities: commercial fishing, sport fishing, and tourism. Even though Iliamna is an inshore community, 17 residents hold commercial fishing permits and many depart each summer to fish in Bristol Bay. The fresh waters of Lake Iliamna, the second largest lake in the U.S., offer a famous opportunity for freshwater fishing and tourism. The tourism industry though, hires most of its employees from outside of Alaska.

Many residents are dependent on subsistence practices. Northern Dynasty Minerals Ltd. and independent mining consultants have established that the Pebble deposit, 15 miles from Iliamna, is one of the world's largest reservoirs of gold and copper. Presumably the exploitation of these mineral resources will significantly alter the current economic structure. Massive mining may have an impact on existing activities.

The employment structure of the community according to the 2000 U.S. Census showed that 71.6% of the population is currently working while 28.4% of the workforce is not searching for a job. The yearly per capita income in this community is \$19,741 while the median household income is \$60,625. A small total of 3.1% of the population lives below the line of poverty. The government employs 29 members of the community in different capacities.

### Governance

Iliamna is an unincorporated community which lacks of its own managing institution. It is located in the Lake and Peninsula Borough. The village corporation is the Iliamna Natives Limited which manages approximately 73,000 acres of land. The regional corporation is the Bristol Bay Native Corporation. The Iliamna Village Council, known as well as Nilavena Tribal Council, and recognized by the BIA, is also part of Iliamna's institutional structure.

Iliamna is part of the Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation (BBEDC) and receives community development quotas (CDQs) from this organization. This community also benefits from the works of a nonprofit organization, the Bristol Bay Native Association.

The closest regional offices of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) are in King Salmon and Dillingham. Kodiak and Homer have the nearest NMFS offices although Anchorage is also a potential accessible office for the people of this area. Anchorage has the closest Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Service (BCIS) office.

### Facilities

Iliamna is primarily accessible by air and water. It has a large airstrip, legacy from its past as a military base. The town is serviced by 3 daily flights to Anchorage. Heavy supplies arrive by barge up river from Kvichak Bay. There is also a State-owned gravel airstrip, located between Iliamna and Newhalen, with aircraft facilities and three daily flights to Anchorage. In addition, there are floatplane facilities at Slop Lake, East Bay, and Pike Lake, and a private airstrip at Iliamna Roadhouse, as well as a private floatplane access at Summit Lake. The price of a roundtrip ticket by plane from the community to Anchorage early September of 2003 was \$255.

The village has a breakwater, a boat harbor and a dock. In recent years, road connectivity has improved and may keep doing so in the future. An 8-mile gravel road connects Iliamna to Newhalen, and a 22-mile road to Nondalton is under construction. A state-maintained road connects the community with Cook Inlet. Past and future mining activities may have had, and will have, an impact on infrastructure.

The INN Electric Cooperative owns a diesel plant in Newhalen and 50 miles of distribution line to connect three nearby communities. The Tazimina Hydroelectric Project was recently completed, powering Iliamna, Newhalen and Nondalton.

Iliamna has its own State police station (Village Public Safety Officer) that also services Newhalen. Healthcare is provided by the Iliamna Health Clinic, as well as the Iliamna/ Newhalen Rescue Squad. Iliamna though, has no school. The town has a considerable amount of tourist accommodations available. Iliamna residents are using individual water wells and septic systems. A total of 85% of homes are fully plumbed.

A 270 foot well provides water to the community building/village office.

## **Involvement in the North Pacific fisheries**

### **Commercial Fishing**

Although Iliamna is an inland community, it is still deeply involved with the fishing industry. Its characteristics cannot be completely understood without taking into account this inland character which implies involvement with freshwater fishing industries and as well as Bristol Bay's fishing industry.

According to the official records from 2000, Iliamna had 16 commercial permit holders with a total of 16 permits. In Iliamna, 45 individuals were registered as crewmen and there were 12 owners of salmon vessels and no owners of federal fisheries vessels. In 2000, the Iliamna fleet was exclusively involved in the Salmon industry. Due to its geographic location, no landings may be made at Iliamna; therefore, its fleet always delivers elsewhere in Bristol Bay.

Permits are issued specific to species, size of the vessel, type of gear, and fishing area. In 2000, salmon was the only saltwater commercial fishery of Iliamna. It accounted for 16 permits: 8 drift gillnet and 7 set gillnet (both restricted to the Bristol Bay), and one set gillnet restricted to the Lower Yukon River. All permits were fished.

In 2003, the Lake and Peninsula Borough, where Iliamna is located, received an allocation of \$442,001 in federal salmon disaster funds to compensate for losses due to prices plummeting, and \$29,832 to reduce the impact of Steller sea lion protective regulations. The BBEDC also received \$75,026 for this reason.

The funds, added to the general budget of the borough or the CDQ, helped to compensate for the decline of income from fish taxes and to relieve the resulting budgetary tension of the institutions of the area.

### **Sport Fishing**

In 2000, this community issued 1301 sport fishing permits: 93 of them were bought by local and Alaskan residents. In 2002 the village had 14 licensed businesses related to sport fishing as a tourist activity: 13 focused on freshwater activities and one in saltwater fisheries.

### **Subsistence Fishing**

In a survey conducted in 1991 on behalf of ADF&G, Iliamna demonstrated the significance of subsistence practices for most Alaskan communities. All households participated in the use of harvested resources. In relation to the main marine resources: 100% of the households used salmon, 87% other fish (herring, flounder, halibut, grayling, burbot, sucker, pike, white fish, char, and trout), 39.1% marine mammals, and 47.8% marine invertebrates. The results reflect that the inhabitants of the community were harvesting 847.6 lbs per person per year. These statistics emphasize the importance of subsistence for such communities.

In order to understand the relative importance of each resource we have to break down the composition of the harvest: salmon 50.9%, other fish 9%, land mammals 31%, marine mammals 4.9, birds and eggs 1.8%, marine invertebrates 0.4%, and vegetation 2%. In 1999, Iliamna had 34 household with salmon subsistence permits; the catch was mainly sockeye with almost 9000 units.