

King Cove

People and Place

Location

King Cove is situated on the southern side of the Alaska Peninsula. The community is located 18 miles southeast of Cold Bay and 625 miles southwest of Anchorage. The area encompasses 25.3 square miles of land and 4.5 square miles of water.

Demographic Profile

King Cove has a total current population of 792, with the gender ratio of 59.6% males and 40.4% females. According to census data, the population has grown from 135 residents in 1940 to its current total in only a few generations. The increase in population is due primarily to the continuing success of the fishing industry in King Cove. The racial composition of the population in 2000 included 46.7% Alaska Native or American Indian, 26.8% Asian, 15% White, 1.6% Black, 5.9% 'Other', and 3.8% of the population identified with two or more races. A total of 47.9% of the population recognized themselves as all or part Alaska Native or American Indian. Those who identified themselves as Hispanic made up 7.4% of the population. The median age was 34.9 years which is comparable to the national median of 35.3 years. According to census data 24.5% of the total population was 19 years old or younger, while 11.8% was over 55 years of age. The pattern of this age structure shows a fairly consolidated age structure around working-age people.

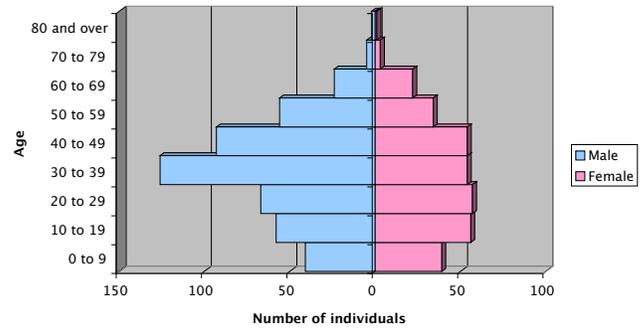
There were 207 housing units in King Cove, 37 of which were vacant, with 24 vacant due to seasonal use. At the time of the 2000 U.S. Census, 37.8% of the population lived in group quarters. About 74.2% of the population had a high school diploma or higher, and 4.2% had a bachelor's degree or higher.

History

Early settlers founded King Cove in 1911, attracted to the newly constructed salmon cannery built by Pacific American Fisheries. The first residents of King Cove were Scandinavian, other Europeans, and Unangan fishermen and their families. In fact, half of the founding families consisted of a European father and an Aleut mother. The cannery operated until 1979 when it was partially destroyed by fire; however, fishing and fish processing have remained

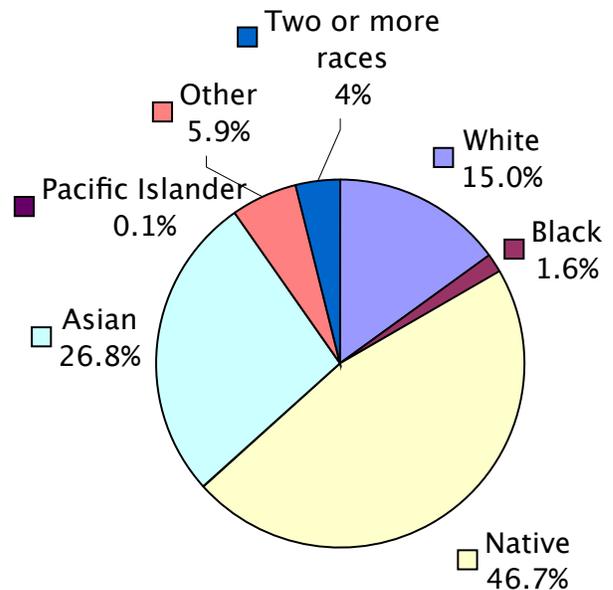
2000 Population Structure King Cove

Data source: US Census



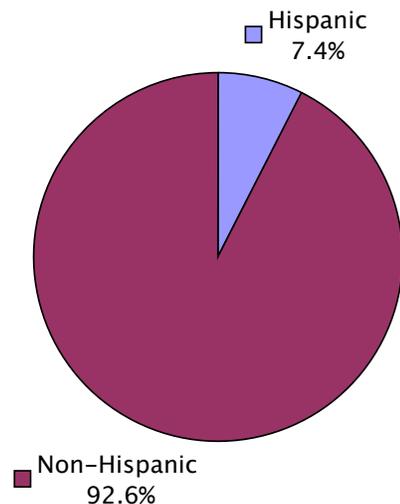
2000 Racial Structure King Cove

Data source: US Census



2000 Hispanic Ethnicity King Cove

Data source: US Census



a significant part of the economy and culture of the town. Peter Pan Seafoods is the successor to Pacific American Fisheries and now claims to be the largest salmon cannery in North America. King Cove’s Scandinavian heritage permeates the town’s history and remains evident in cultural, economic, and social structures. Chinese and Japanese workers brought to the area to work in the cannery made up a significant part of the population before the war, but Asian labor was considered expensive and was discontinued, replaced by Europeans, Native Alaskans, and other North Americans. Most of the Asian population moved away, but some who had intermarried with Natives remained (Black and Jacka 1999: 1-2).

Many of King Cove’s residents came from nearby Belkofski whose population dwindled throughout the early 1900s as the population of King Cove increased steadily. This trend, and others similar to it, was due in part to King Cove’s enduring cannery industry which has outlasted several other endeavors in the region.

Infrastructure

Current Economy

Economically, King Cove is largely dependant on year-round commercial fishing and seafood processing industries. Peter Pan Seafoods is the largest company in the industry in King Cove, and one of the largest processors under one roof in all of Alaska. A total of 63 residents held 137 commercial fishing permits in 2000 according to the Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (ACFEC). Income is supplemented by subsistence activities.

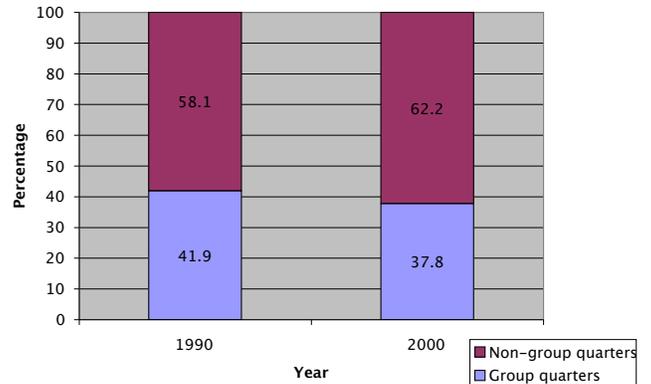
At the time of the 2000 U.S. Census, 68.5% of the potential labor force was employed and 4.7% were unemployed. A total of 26.8% of the population over 16 years of age were not in the labor force and 11.9% of the population lived below the poverty level. The median household income in the same year was \$45,893 and the per capita income was \$17,791.

Governance

The City of King Cove is a first-class city initially incorporated in 1947 as second-class, but able to achieve first-class status in 1974. It is governed locally by a manager as well as a mayor and six-member city council. King Cove is within the Aleutians East Borough. Special taxes in Atka include a 2% raw fish tax mandated by the city, a further 2% raw fish tax

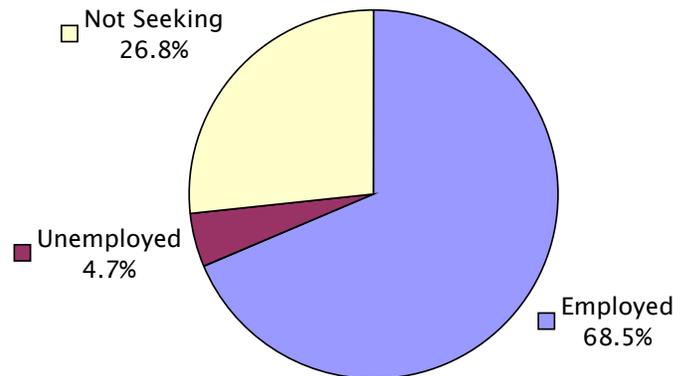
**% Group Quarters
King Cove**

Data source: US Census



**2000 Employment Structure
King Cove**

Data source: US Census



regulated by the borough, and a 3% sales tax. The Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc. (APIA), a federally recognized non-profit tribal organization of the Aleut people in Alaska, contracts with federal, state and local governments and provides services in King Cove including a Village Public Safety Officer and health programs (emergency, elders, behavioral, outreach and advocacy oriented programs). King Cove is a member of the regional for-profit Aleut Corporation under the ANCSA. King Cove Corporation is the local village corporation. The total land entitlement under ANCSA is almost 130,000 acres. The village council, Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove, is a BIA-Recognized Traditional Council which means that they are eligible for funding and services by virtue of their status as a Native tribe. King Cove has organized itself under the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act (IRA), with a constitution and elections as prescribed by the Act.

The Native Village of Belkofski and the Belkofski Corporation also function in King Cove. The nearest National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) regional office is in Unalaska, as is the nearest Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) and the nearest ADF&G office is located in Cold Bay but only open between May and October (a permanent office is located in Unalaska).

Facilities

King Cove is accessible only by air and sea. The cost of a round trip flight from King Cove to Anchorage, via Cold Bay, is \$643 plus the cost of a charter flight between Cold Bay and King Cove (based on the closest available date to 1 September, 2003). A local priority is to construct a 27-mile road to Cold Bay to access their airport; however, the \$14 million road has drawn State and national controversy. The State Ferry operates bi-monthly between May and October. The ferry and marine cargo services use one of three docks owned by Peter Pan Seafoods, and a deep water dock is also operated by the City. A new harbor and breakwater is under construction by the Corps of Engineers and Aleutians East Borough which will provide additional moorage for 60 foot to 150 foot fishing vessels.

Water is supplied by Ram Creek and a \$9 million project to develop a new supply is nearing completion. All residents are connected to the piped water system. A piped sewage collection system connects all homes and facilities to central septic tanks. A hydroelectric power project has recently been completed at Delta Creek. Peter Pan, the largest seafood processing plant operates its own electric system.

King Cove is within the Aleutians East School District and 15 teachers instruct 105 students in grades K-12 at King Cove School. Local healthcare is provided by King Cove medical clinic. Public security is provided by city police and Village Public Safety Officers associated with the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc. Tourism is limited in King Cove, however, there are short term accommodations available.

Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

The fishing industry is the main economic endeavor in King Cove. According to ACFEC figures, 137 permits were held by 63 permit holders (105 fished).

There were 24 vessel owners in the federal fisheries, 35 vessel owners in the salmon fishery, and 201 crew members claiming residence in King Cove.

Commercial fishing permits are issued according to specifications of species, vessel size, gear type, and fishing area. The commercial vessel fleet delivering landings to King Cove was involved in halibut (56 vessels), sablefish (16 vessels), other ground fish (111 vessels), Bering Strait Aleutian Island crab (41 vessels), herring (7 vessels), and salmon (631 vessels) fisheries in 2000. In accordance with confidentiality regulations, data for fish landings in the community are unavailable.

Halibut: There were 15 permits issued for the halibut fishery in King Cove, 13 of which were fished in 2000. Permits for halibut pertained to 8 longline vessels under 60 feet (7 fished), and 7 longline vessels over 60 feet (6 fished). All permits designated for halibut allowed fishing in statewide waters.

Sablefish and Other Groundfish: Permits for sablefish issued in King Cove for 2000 pertained to one longline vessels under 60 feet in statewide waters. There were a total of 42 permits issued in King Cove for the other groundfish industry, 31 of which were fished. These permits pertained to nine miscellaneous saltwater finfish otter trawls, 23 miscellaneous saltwater finfish pot gear vessels under 60 feet (17 fished), 3 miscellaneous saltwater finfish mechanical jigs (none fished), one miscellaneous saltwater finfish pair trawl (not fished), and six miscellaneous saltwater finfish pot gear vessels 60 feet or over (five fished). All permits designated for other groundfish allowed fishing in statewide waters.

Shellfish: Permits for Bering Strait Aleutian Island Crab pertained to one king crab pot gear vessel under 60 feet confined to Bristol Bay (not fished), five king crab pot gear vessel over 60 feet confined to Bristol Bay (four fished), one king crab pot gear vessel over 60 feet confined to Bristol Bay and associated with the Community Development Quota, Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association, and five tanner crab pot gear vessel over six feet confined to the Bering Sea. Additionally, one permit for an octopus/squid pot gear vessel under 60 feet with statewide jurisdiction was issued but not fished.

Herring: Permits for herring roe pertained to four purse seine confined to the Alaska Peninsula (none fished), five purse seine confined to Bristol Bay (three fished), and two permits for herring food/bait

purse seine also limited to the Alaska Peninsula (one fished).

Salmon: Permits relating to salmon in King Cove pertained to one purse seine limited to Kodiak (not fished), 32 purse seine limited to the Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands (23 fished), 10 drift gillnets confined to the Alaska Peninsula (9 fished), 2 drift gillnets confined to Bristol Bay (one fished), 8 set gillnets in the Alaska Peninsula (11 fished), and 2 set gillnets in Bristol Bay.

The Peter Pan Seafoods facility in King Cove is one of the largest cannery operations in Alaska and the largest salmon processor in North America. Employment at the cannery brings up to 500 non-residents to town as needed, thus the seasonal influence of the cannery on the community is extreme. Peter Pan Seafoods has the ability to process salmon, sablefish, other groundfish, herring, halibut, and Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) crab. Bering Pacific Seafoods is also a processor of salmon in King Cove.

It was announced in July 2003 that King Cove would receive \$207,513 worth of federal salmon disaster funds to be distributed to several municipalities statewide which have been affected by low salmon prices in order to compensate for consequent losses of salmon taxes or raw fish taxes. The Aleutians East Borough, in which King Cove is located, has been allocated \$1,101,638. The disbursement of these disaster funds illustrates state and federal responses to communities and boroughs affected by recent falling salmon prices due to competition with foreign aquaculture fish. Communities and boroughs are ultimately responsible for the allocation of the funds. Further disbursements are expected in the future to offset the costs of basic public services for which fish taxes become insufficient. In 2002, the Aleutians East Borough received \$140,062 and the City of King Cove received \$590,781 as part of a federal fund set up in accordance with the Endangered Species Act to offset losses to fisheries and communities due to Steller sea lion protection regulations.

Sport Fishing

There was a total of 32 sport fishing licenses sold in King Cove in 2000, 30 of which were sold to Alaska residents. Three saltwater sport fishing businesses are currently operating in King Cove, two of which are also involved in freshwater sport fishing.

Subsistence Fishing

Numerous social, economic, and technological changes have influenced life in Alaskan fishing communities, and subsistence harvests and practices continue to provide fishing communities with important nutritional, economic, social, and cultural requirements. Data from 1992 compiled on behalf of the ADF&G's Division of Subsistence provides useful information about subsistence practices in King Cove. All 100% of King Cove households participated in the use of subsistence resources including harvesting, sharing, and consuming resources, illustrating the importance of subsistence to life in the community. Just over 97% of the total population used salmon and 89.3% used non-salmon fish (herring, smelt, cod, flounder, greenling, halibut, perch, rockfish, sablefish, sculpin, skates, sole, char, pike, and trout). About 25% of the total population for that year used marine mammals and 94.7% of households used marine invertebrates.

The total per capita harvest for the year was 256.07 lbs. The composition of the total subsistence harvest can be shown by the percentages of the resources which demonstrate the amount of each resource category used by the community relative to other resources categories. The total subsistence harvest breakdown was: 53.41% salmon, 16.67% non-salmon fish, 15.37% land mammals, 0.82% marine mammals, 3.62% birds and eggs, 6.76% marine invertebrates, and 3.34% vegetation. The wild food harvest in King Cove made up 165% of the recommended dietary allowance of protein in 1992 (corresponding to 49 g of protein per day or 0.424 lbs of wild food per day).

In 1999, 52 permits were held by households in King Cove for subsistence fishing of salmon. Sockeye made up the largest proportion of the salmon harvest, followed by coho and chum. Residents of King Cove and members of the Agdaagux Tribe and the Native Village of Belkofski, the two Alaska Native Tribes of King Cove, who hold a valid Subsistence Halibut Registration Certificate (SHARC) issued by NMFS, are eligible to harvest subsistence halibut. 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.