

Kipnuk

People and Place

Location

Kipnuk is located on the west bank of the Kugkaktlik River in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, 85 air miles southwest of Bethel, and a few miles inland from the Bering Sea. It is in the Bethel Recording District. The area encompasses 19.4 square miles of land and 0.2 square miles of water.

Demographic Profile

In 2000 Kipnuk was a predominantly Yup'ik Eskimo community of 644 residents in 137 households. All residents lived in households rather than group quarters. The demographic characteristics are typical of a stable, fast-growing Native community; the local population has doubled since 1970. The racial makeup of the community in 2000 was as follows: American Indian or Alaska Native (96.6%), White (2.0%), and two or more races (1.4%). A total of 98% of the population recognized themselves as all or part Alaska Native or American Indian. The gender composition was quite imbalanced, at 56.5% male and 43.5% female. The median age was 20.6 years, much younger than the U.S. national median of 35.3 years. Approximately 60.7% of residents 25 years of age or older held a high school degree or higher level of educational attainment.

History

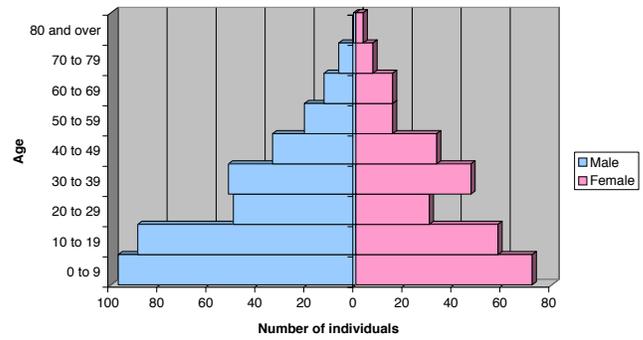
Yup'ik Eskimos have inhabited Western Alaska since prehistory. The earliest record of an established village at Kipnuk was by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which reported that the village was established around 1922. The community was not included in U.S. Census records until 1940, when its population consisted of 144 residents. Kipnuk today maintains its strong sense of traditional culture; more than 90% of local residents speak their Native Yup'ik language at home.

Infrastructure

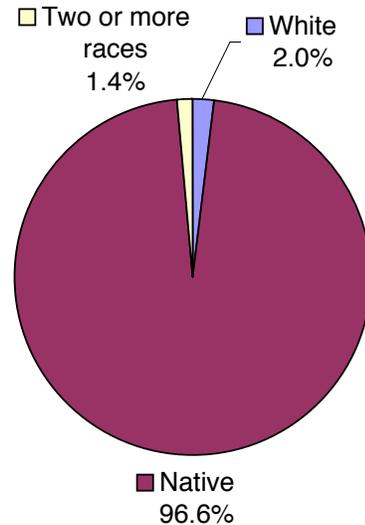
Current Economy

The economy of Kipnuk is a combination of commercial fishing and subsistence fishing and hunting. Most employment opportunities are seasonal.

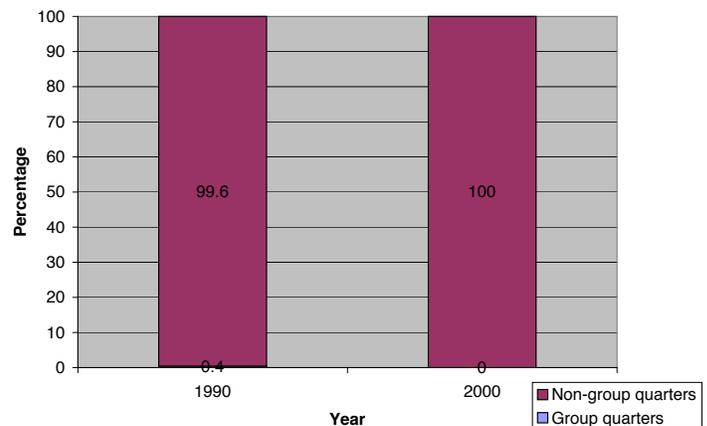
2000 Population Structure Kipnuk
Data source: US Census



2000 Racial Structure Kipnuk
Data source: US Census



% Group Quarters Kipnuk
Data source: US Census



In 2000, the median per capita income was \$8,589 and the median household income was \$34,375. Approximately 20.2% of the total workforce was unemployed, and 40.4% of residents aged 16 and older were not in the labor force (i.e. not working and not seeking work). Approximately 20.9% of residents lived below the poverty level.

Governance

Kipnuk is an unincorporated city located in the Bethel Recording District. It is classified as “unorganized” (i.e. not located within an official borough). The community is governed by the Kipnuk Traditional Council, a federally recognized village council. There is also a local village corporation, Kugkaktlik Ltd. The Coastal Villages Region Fund, a Community Development Quota (CDQ) group, is active in the community and 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) 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.

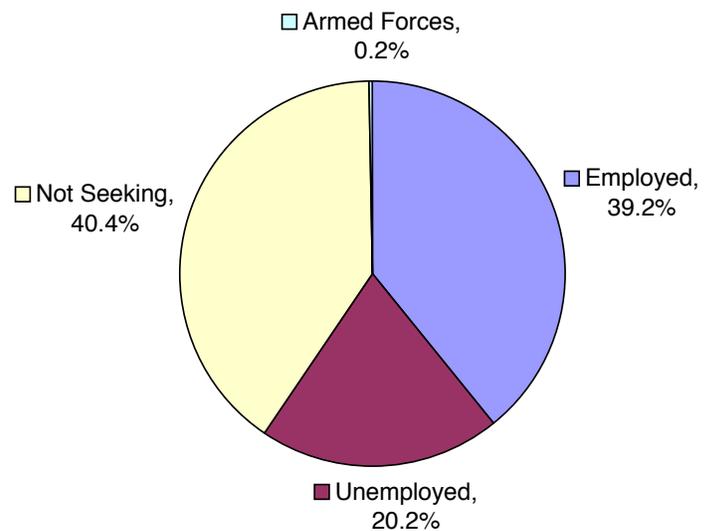
Facilities

Access to Kipnuk is by air; the state owns a 2,120 foot gravel airstrip in the community. Roundtrip airfare from Kipnuk to Anchorage, via Bethel, is approximately \$380. There is also a seaplane base. Boats and skiffs provide local access to the community via the Kugkaktlik River.

A new 210,000 gallon water storage tank, filled by a reservoir, provides water for the community. There is no piped water or sewage, and homes have no plumbing. The village council operates a landfill and electricity, which is produced by a diesel generator. The Kipnuk Health Clinic is owned by the village council and operated in conjunction with the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation. Police services are provided by a village public safety officer.

Kipnuk is within the Lower Kuskokwim School District. There is one school in the community offering instruction to students in grades K-21. There are 15 teachers and 213 students.

**2000 Employment Structure
Kipnuk**
Data source: US Census



Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

In 2000, 7 vessel owners with operations in federal fisheries and 65 vessel owners with operations in state fisheries resided in the community. There were 82 registered crew members. In 2000, 97 local residents held 135 commercial fishing permits; 85 permits were fished. This section contains a detailed description of commercial fishing permits issued to Kipnuk residents in 2000.

Halibut: Twenty-one residents held a total of 21 permits in the halibut fishery, and 7 permits were fished. The permits included the following: 3 halibut hand troll permits for statewide waters (one fished), 17 halibut longline permits for vessels under 60 feet in statewide waters (6 fished), and one halibut mechanical jig permit for statewide waters (none fished).

Herring: Eighty-nine local residents held a total of 89 commercial permits in the herring fishery. All 89 permits were herring roe gillnet permits for Cape Avinof (63 fished).

Salmon: Twenty-five local residents held a total of 25 commercial permits for the salmon fishery, including the following: 10 salmon drift gillnet permits for Bristol Bay (10 fished), and 15 salmon set gillnet permits for Kuskokwim Bay (5 fished).

In 2000 there were no commercial fish processors located in the community and no registered landings.

Sport Fishing

Because of its isolated location, Kipnuk's sport fishing activities are minimal. There were no sport license sales and no registered sport fishing guides in Kipnuk in 2000.

Subsistence Fishing

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game does not have detailed information on subsistence harvesting and use in Kipnuk. Kipnuk has a Subsistence Halibut Registration Certificate (SHARC), issued by NMFS, which allows residents to harvest halibut for subsistence purposes. In 1999, 177 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.