

Kokhanok

People and Place

Location

Kokhanok is located on the south shore of Iliamna Lake, approximately 88 miles northeast of King Salmon and 320 miles southwest of Anchorage. The area encompasses 21.3 square miles of land and 0.1 square miles of water.

Demographic Profile

The population of Kokhanok has grown steadily in recent years, doubling between 1970 and 2000. In 2000, Kokhanok had a population of 174 people in 52 households. The racial composition of the community was as follows: American Indian and Alaska Native (86.8%), White (8%), other (1.1%), and two or more races (4%). A total of 90.8% of the population recognized themselves as all or part Alaska Native or American Indian. In addition, 1.1% of residents were of Hispanic ethnicity. The gender makeup was quite skewed, at 58.6% male and 41.4% female. The median age was 29.5 years, significantly younger than the U.S. national average of 35.3 years. In terms of educational attainment, 77.6% of residents aged 25 or older held a high school diploma.

History

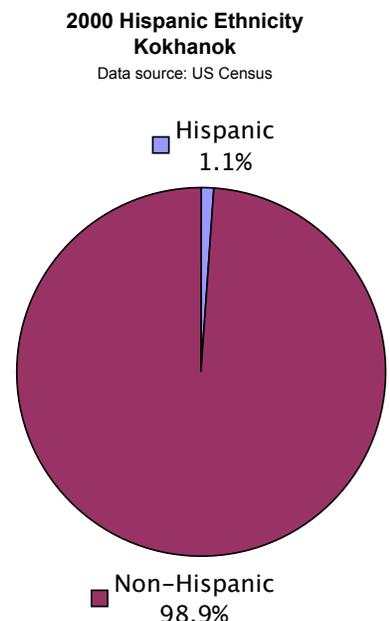
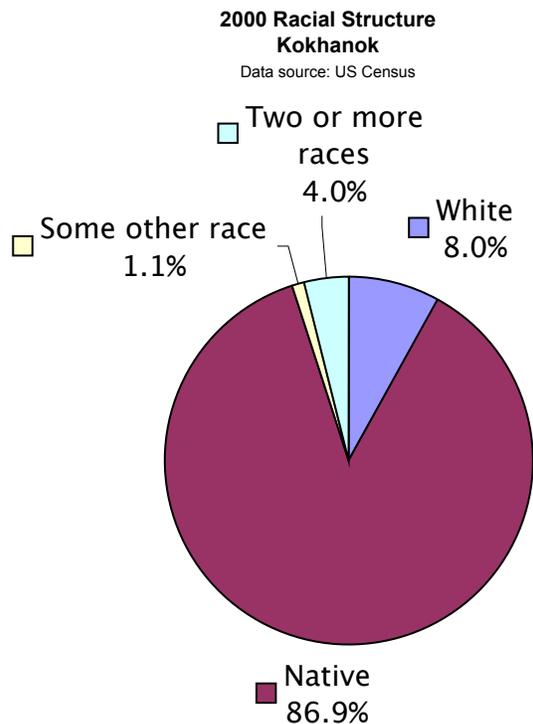
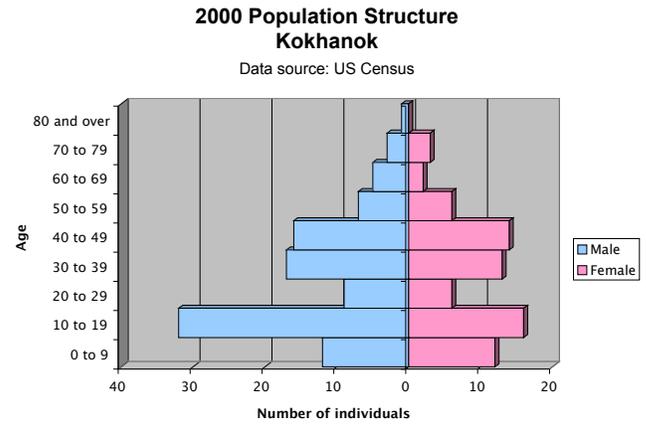
The Lake Iliamna area has been inhabited through the years by Aleut, Yup'ik, and Athabascan peoples. Kokhanok began as a Native fishing village, and was first listed by the U.S. Census in 1890. The community was relocated to higher ground a few years ago when the rising level of Lake Iliamna threatened several community buildings.

Infrastructure

Current Economy

Commercial fishing and subsistence hunting and fishing are the backbone of Kokhanok's economy. Several residents hold commercial fishing permits, most of them in the Bristol Bay salmon fishery. In addition, the local school is the largest source of employment in the community.

In 2000, the median per capita income was \$7,732, and the median household income was \$19,583. The unemployment rate was 4.1% in 2000, and 63.6% of



residents over 16 years of age were not in the labor force (i.e. retired or not seeking work). Approximately 42.6% of residents lived below the poverty level.

Governance

Kokhanok is an unincorporated village under the jurisdiction of the Lake and Peninsula Borough. Kokhanok is governed by a federally recognized Native village council. In addition, Kokhanok belongs to the Bristol Bay Native Corporation, a for-profit corporation, and the Bristol Bay Native Association, a non-profit organization. The nearest U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) office is in Anchorage. The nearest Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) office is located in King Salmon. The nearest NMFS enforcement office is in Homer.

Facilities

Kokhanok is accessible by air via a state-owned 3,400-foot gravel airstrip, and by water via a seaplane base. There are no docking facilities. The village council operates a piped water and sewer system that serves some households. Some households have their own septic tanks. The village council also provides electricity by a diesel-powered generator. There is a local health clinic, owned by the village council and operated by Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation. Police services are provided by a state village public safety officer (VPSO). There is one school in the community, which offers instruction to students from grades K-12. The school has five teachers and 46 students.

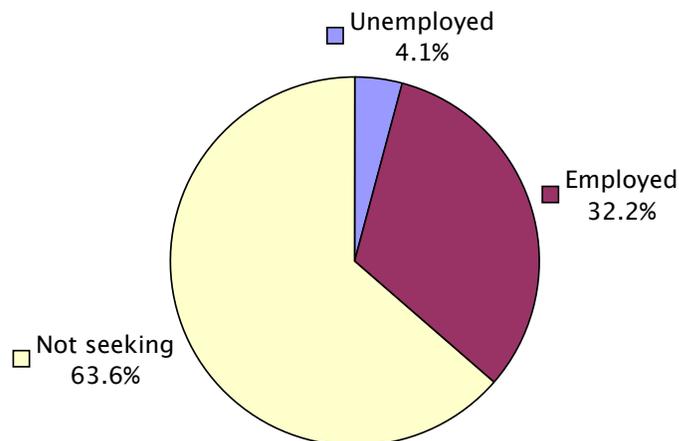
Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

Commercial fishing, primarily in the Bristol Bay salmon fishery, is an important part of Kokhanok's economy. In 2000, there were four vessel owners and 32 registered crew members residing in the community. There were no processing plants and therefore no registered landings. Eight local residents held a total of eight commercial fishing permits, including the following: four salmon drift gillnet permits for Bristol Bay (four fished), and four salmon set gillnet permits for Bristol Bay (three fished).

In 2002 the Lake and Peninsula Borough, in which Kokhanok is located, was granted \$29,832 in federal funds to compensate for fisheries losses due

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



to the protection of Steller sea lion habitat under the Endangered Species Act. In 2003, the Lake and Peninsula Borough was granted \$442,002 in federal disaster funds to compensate for falling salmon prices. A portion of these sums will likely be used for programs that affect Kokhanok.

Sport Fishing

Sport fishing activities are limited in Kokhanok. There were no registered fishing guides or license sales in the community in 2000.

Subsistence Fishing

Subsistence activities are a major part of the local economy of Kokhanok. The ADF&G's Division of Subsistence reports that, in 1992, 97.2% of Kokhanok households used subsistence fish. Approximately 97.2% of households used subsistence salmon (primarily sockeye, but also other species of Pacific salmon), and 91.7% used non-salmon fish species (especially Dolly Varden, trout, grayling, and pike). In addition, 55.6% of households used marine mammals for subsistence (including seals and whales), and 30.6% of households used marine invertebrates (especially clams).

The annual per capita harvest of subsistence foods for Kokhanok in 1992 was an astounding 1013.3 lbs, and was comprised of the following resources: salmon (55.6%), non-salmon fish (10.4%), land mammals (28.8%), marine mammals (0.4%), birds and eggs (2.2%), birds and eggs (0.6%), marine invertebrates (0.3%), and vegetation (2.2%).