

Kwigillingok

People and Place

Location

Kwigillingok is on the western shore of Kuskokwim Bay on the Bering Sea, near the mouth of the Kuskokwim River. It is 77 miles southwest of Bethel and 388 miles west of Anchorage. The area encompasses 20.2 square miles of land and 0.1 square miles of water.

Demographic Profile

Kwigillingok is a predominantly Yup'ik Eskimo community. In 2000 there were 338 residents in 73 households; all residents lived in households rather than group quarters. The racial composition of the community was as follows: American Indian or Alaska Native (97.6%), White (2.1%), and two or more races (0.3%). A total of 97.9% of the population recognized themselves as all or part Alaska Native or American Indian. The gender makeup was significantly skewed, at 56.8% male and 43.2% female. The median age was 26 years, much younger than the national age median of 35.3 years. Approximately 66% of residents aged 25 or older had a high school degree or higher level of educational attainment.

History

Yup'ik Eskimos have inhabited this region of Western Alaska since prehistory. The U.S. Census did not record the population of Kwigillingok until 1920, when there were 104 residents. At about the same time, a Moravian Church was established in the community. Today, Kwigillingok maintains a strong sense of traditional culture, as evidenced by the fact that more than 90% of local residents speak their Native Yup'ik language at home.

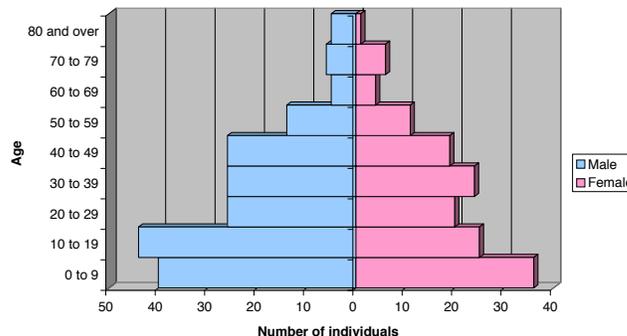
Infrastructure

Current Economy

The economy of Kwigillingok is dominated by commercial fishing, particularly in the herring and salmon fisheries. The other major source of formal employment is the local school district. Most residents rely at least in part on subsistence hunting and fishing.

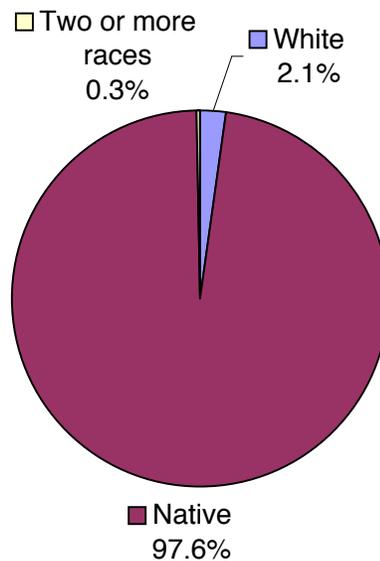
**2000 Population Structure
Kwigillingok**

Data source: US Census



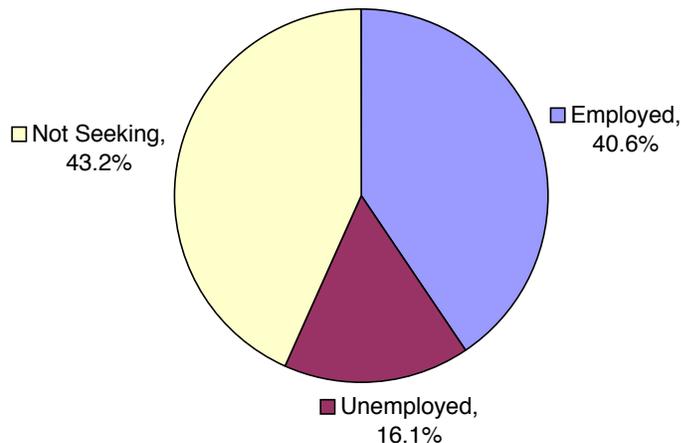
**2000 Racial Structure
Kwigillingok**

Data source: US Census



**2000 Employment Structure
Kwigillingok**

Data source: US Census



In 2000, the median per capita income in Kwigillingok was \$7,577 and the median household income was \$36,250. The unemployment rate was 16.1%, and 43.2% of residents aged 16 years and older were not in the labor force (i.e. not working and not seeking work). The poverty rate was quite high, at 34.7%.

Governance

Kwigillingok is an unincorporated Native village governed by a federally recognized village council. There is also a Native corporation, Kwik Inc., in the village. The village does not belong to a formal borough, but is under the jurisdiction of the Bethel Census Recording District. Kwigillingok is a member of the Coastal Villages Region Fund, a Community Development Quota (CDQ) group, which 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 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 Kwigillingok is by air, via a 2,500 foot state-owned airstrip and a seaplane base. Roundtrip airfare from Kwigillingok to Anchorage, via Bethel, is approximately \$509. There are no dock facilities. There is no piped water in the community. The village council operates a landfill and a diesel-powered electric utility company. There is a local health clinic, 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 (VPSO).

Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

In 2000 there were 14 vessel owners with operations in state-managed fisheries and one vessel owner with operations in federal fisheries who resided in the community. There were 26 registered crew members. There were 37 local residents who held a total of 53 commercial fishing permits. This section contains a detailed breakdown of permits issued to Kwigillingok residents in 2000.

Halibut: Six local residents held a total of seven commercial permits in the halibut fishery. These included: six halibut longline permits for vessels under 60 feet in statewide waters (none fished, and one halibut mechanical jig permit for statewide waters (one fished).

Herring: Nineteen local residents held a total of 20 commercial permits in the herring fishery. These permits included the following: one herring roe gillnet permit for Bristol Bay (none fished), and 19 herring roe gillnet permits for Cape Avinof (7 fished).

Salmon: Twenty-six local residents held a total of 26 commercial permits in the salmon fishery. The permits consisted of: 7 salmon drift gillnet permits for Bristol Bay (8 fished), and 19 salmon set gillnet permits for Kuskokwim Bay (5 fished).

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

Sport Fishing

Sport fishing in Kwigillingok is limited. The ADF&G reported that there were no sport license sales and no registered fishing guides in the community in 2000.

Subsistence Fishing

The ADF&G does not provide detailed information on subsistence activities in Kwigillingok.