

# Napakiak

## People and Place

### Location

Napakiak is located at the mouth of the Kuskokwim River, 15 miles southwest of Bethel. It is on an island between the Kuskokwim River and Johnson’s Slough. The area encompasses 4.7 square miles of land and 0.3 square miles of water.

### Demographic Profile

Napakiak is a predominantly Yup’ik Eskimo village. In 2000 there were 353 residents in 90 households. All residents lived in households rather than group quarters. The racial composition of the community was as follows: American Indian or Alaska Native (96%), White (1.4%), Black or African American (1.7%), and two or more races (0.8%). A total of 96.6% of the population recognized themselves as all or part Alaska Native or American Indian. In addition, 0.3% of residents were of Hispanic ethnicity. The gender composition of Napakiak was significantly skewed, at 56.7% male and 43.3% female. The median age was 26.2 years, significantly younger than the U.S. national average of 35.3 years. In terms of educational attainment, approximately 62.2% of residents over 25 years of age held a high school diploma or higher degree. The presence of traditional Yup’ik culture is still quite strong, as evidence by the fact that 84.4% of residents speak their Native language in the home.

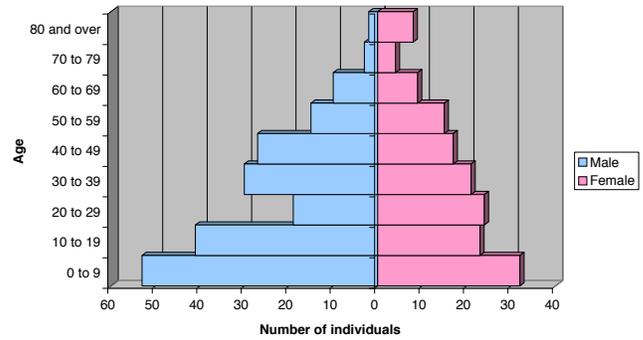
### History

Yup’ik Eskimos have inhabited the Yukon-Kuskokwim area since prehistory. The first European reports of the village of Napakiak were in 1878 by E.W. Nelson, although the village at that time was located downriver at the mouth of the Johnson River. The Moravian Church constructed a chapel in Napakiak in the 1920s.

Napakiak was incorporated as a second-class city in 1970. In 1973, the first airstrip was constructed, enabling year-round access to the community. Napakiak today is predominantly a Yup’ik village with a strong sense of Native identity.

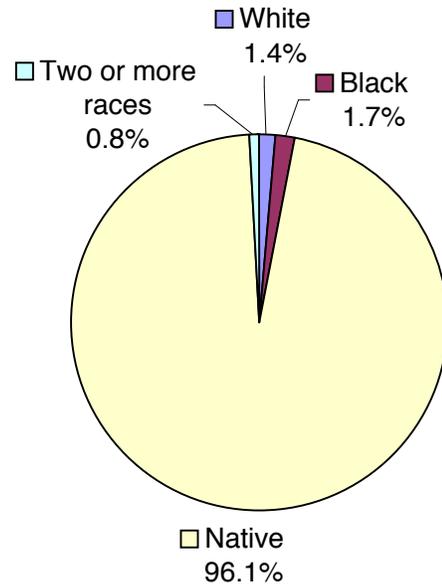
**2000 Population Structure  
Napakiak**

Data source: US Census



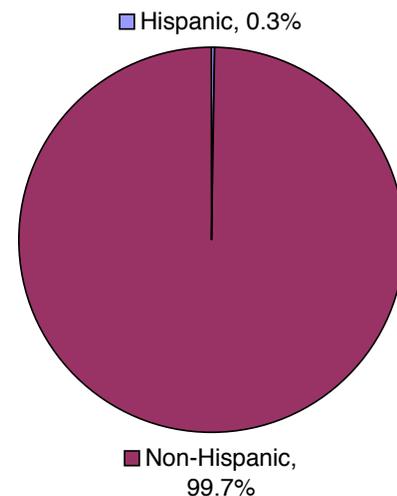
**2000 Racial Structure  
Napakiak**

Data source: US Census



**2000 Hispanic Ethnicity  
Napakiak**

Data source: US Census



## Infrastructure

### Current Economy

Commercial fishing, though highly seasonal, is a major source of employment in Napakiak. Other employers include the school and local government. In addition, the majority of residents rely heavily on subsistence hunting and fishing.

The median per capita income was \$7,319 and the median household income was \$28,750. Approximately 13.1% of the potential labor force was unemployed, and 41.2% of residents aged 16 years and older were not in the labor force (i.e. not working and not seeking work). Approximately 20.2% of residents lived below the poverty level.

### Governance

Napakiak was incorporated as a second-class city in 1970. A 3% sales tax is collected in the city. Napakiak is not located within an organized borough, but is within the Bethel Census Area. A federally recognized Native village council is active in the community. There is also a village corporation, the Napakiak Corporation.

The village is a member of the Coastal Villages Region Fund, a Community Development Quota (CDQ) group that 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) to the community 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.

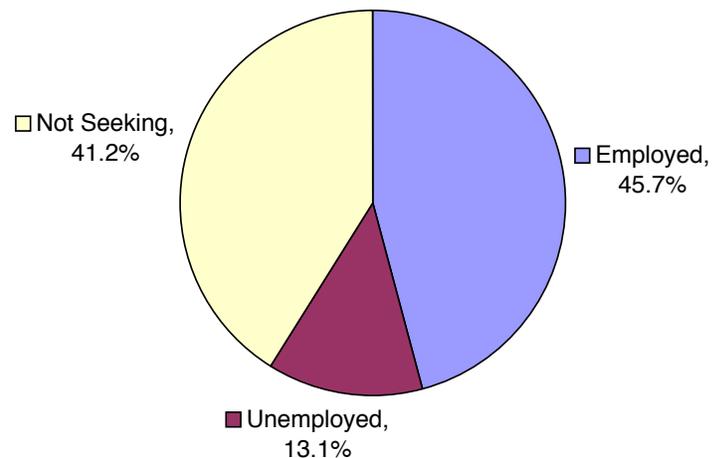
### Facilities

Access to Napakiak is primarily by air; the state owns a 2,150 foot gravel runway in the community. Roundtrip airfare to Anchorage, via the nearby Bethel airport, is approximately \$206. There are no docking facilities, although barges often deliver cargo from Bethel during the summer months, and the Kuskokwim River serves as a transportation thoroughfare.

Water for domestic use is collected from a community well. Electricity is transmitted from Bethel Utilities and purchased and distributed locally by a private company, Ircinraq Power Company. There

2000 Employment Structure  
Napakiak

Data source: US Census



is a local health clinic that is owned by the city and operated in conjunction with the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation. Police services are provided by a village public safety officer. There is one school in Napakiak, offering instruction to students from kindergarten through twelfth grade. There are six teachers and 102 students.

## Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

### Commercial Fishing

In 2000 there were 12 vessel owners residing in the community with operations in state-managed fisheries. Forty-two local residents held a total of 48 commercial fishing licenses, and 35 licenses were fished. There were 47 registered crew members. Napakiak's most significant involvement in commercial fishing is in the Bristol Bay and Kuskokwim Bay salmon fisheries. This section contains a detailed description of commercial permits issued to Napakiak residents in 2000.

*Herring:* Nine residents held a total of nine herring roe gillnet permits for Goodnews Bay. Only three permits were fished.

*Salmon:* One resident held a salmon drift gillnet permit in Bristol Bay (two fished). Thirty-eight residents held a total of 38 salmon set gillnet permits for Kuskokwim Bay (30 fished).

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

### **Sport Fishing**

Sport fishing is not a significant part of Napakiak's involvement in North Pacific fisheries. There were no sport license sales in Napakiak in 2000.

### **Subsistence Fishing**

Most residents in Napakiak use subsistence resources. However, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game does not have detailed information about subsistence harvesting and use in Napakiak.