

## Enjoy Alaska's great outdoors! ... but please respect our community's resources

There are numerous resources for learning about the etiquette and regulations for harvesting animals on and traveling across lands in Alaska.

Respect for the land is an important value to the Native culture. Before you go, you should be sure you have done adequate research on the resources, lands, weather, and people you may be interacting with on your trip.

If going out, be sure to use the land intelligently:

- ✓ Don't trespass—study maps and know who owns the land and water you will travel on.
- ✓ Hunt for only the fish or game that you can use.
- ✓ Never litter or pollute—pack in, pack out.
- ✓ Learn how to take care of yourself while respecting other's rights and property.
- ✓ Know and follow boating, fishing, and hunting regulations.
- ✓ Learn from an experienced hunter or fisherman.

## For information about hunting, fishing, land ownership, or camping, please visit:

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG)  
<http://www.adfg.state.ak.us>

ADFG Wildlife Conservation  
<http://www.wildlife.alaska.gov>

Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR)  
<http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/>

Bureau of Land Management  
<http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en.html>

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)  
<http://alaska.fws.gov/>

## Or stay indoors ... and enjoy a cultural event!

While living in Alaska you should seize the opportunity to attend a cultural event such as the Festival of Native Arts or the World Eskimo-Indian Olympics. These can be wonderful learning experiences for you and your friends and family. It is a chance for you to experience local dancing, music, sports, crafts and food.

Please be sure, however, to confirm that events are open to the public before planning to attend. Many large cultural events have their own websites and are advertised in the local newspaper. You can also contact the Native Liaison, [elizabeth.a.cook80.civ@mail.mil](mailto:elizabeth.a.cook80.civ@mail.mil) or (907) 361-3002, for more information.

## For more information, visit the following websites:

Alaska Native Knowledge Network  
<http://www.ankn.uaf.edu>

General information about Alaska's Native people  
<http://www.alaskool.org>

Alaska Native Heritage Center, Anchorage  
<http://www.alaskanative.net>

Anchorage Museum  
<http://www.anchoragemuseum.org>

UAF Museum of the North  
<http://www.uaf.edu/museum>

Morris Thompson Cultural & Visitors Center  
<http://www.morristhompsoncenter.org/>

UAF Alaska Native Language Center  
<http://www.uaf.edu/anlc>

The World Eskimo-Indian Olympics  
<http://www.weio.org/>

Festival of Native Arts, Fairbanks  
<http://www.alaska.edu/uaf/festival/>



# Alaska's Native Community

and the

# U.S. Army in Alaska



USARAK  
U.S. Army Alaska

USAG Alaska  
U.S. Army Garrison  
Alaska



# Alaska's Native Community

**History:** It is believed that people came to Alaska, traveling over the Bering Land Bridge, 14,000 years ago—and perhaps even earlier. The populations spread over the state and adapted to their various environments, developing specific technology and skills to thrive. Those adaptations also promoted the growth of different cultures with specialized languages and customs. The first western contact was made in 1741 when Russians arrived in the Aleutian Islands. Western contact spread across the state as trader and missionary traffic increased throughout the 19th century and, later, as gold was discovered.

**Population:** In the 2010 Census, 19% of Alaskans living in cities and villages across the state identified themselves as Alaska Native or Native American.

**Language:** There are 20 Alaska Native languages (see the map below) that distinguish the culture groups in Alaska. Iñupiaq and Yup'ik speakers live along the arctic and subarctic coasts. Unangax (Aleut) and Alutiiq speakers live along the Aleutian chain and the southern coast. Eyak, Haida, Tlingit, and Tsimshian speakers reside in Alaska's panhandle. Athabaskan speakers account for 11 of the languages, covering the entire interior of the State.

English is often a second language for Native people, who may speak with an accent or a different speech pattern. Speaking one's Native language, especially among the young, is often a badge of honor.

**Tribes vs. Corporations:** There are 573 federally recognized tribes in the United States, 229 of which are in Alaska.

The Alaska Native population does not divide itself into *nations* as in the lower 48. Instead people define themselves by the village that their families come from. In most cases, villages equal federally-recognized tribes. Tribes have village councils with a President or Chief or Chairman. These councils govern the tribes and tribal enrollees.

In addition to tribes, which are political bodies, Alaska Natives are shareholders in corporations—village or regional or both.

**Native Corporations:** In 1971, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) was enacted. This law gave the Native people of Alaska 44 million acres of land and \$962.5 million in exchange for aboriginal rights to the land. ANCSA formed 13 regional and 225 village for-profit corporations to manage those resources. Most Alaska Natives are shareholders in one or more of these corporations.

**Land Ownership:** Land is owned by Alaska Natives through regional and village corporations and as individual Native allotments. All these lands are private, so please be considerate of their owners when recreating.

**Reservations:** Alaska now has only one reservation—the Metlakatla Indian Community (the Annette Island Federal Reserve) in southeast Alaska.

**Subsistence:** The Alaska Department of Fish and Game estimates that 50,000 Alaska Natives participate in subsistence activity to some degree.

Subsistence is defined as hunting, fishing and gathering activities which constitute one's economic livelihood. Subsistence users range from those who hunt and fish to fill their freezers while living in a cash economy to those who exist completely off the land—utilizing harvested materials for food, clothing, transportation, and trade.



## Soldier as Ambassador

So where do you fit in this discussion? As a Soldier stationed in Alaska you are a neighbor to the Native community and you are an ambassador of the Department of the Army and your government.

While stationed here, you have the opportunity to experience vast natural beauty and a new culture that may enrich your life.

Things you can do to be a good neighbor:

- ✓ Don't let stereotypes drive your judgment and be tolerant of those who are different than you.
- ✓ Educate yourself about the cultures around you.
- ✓ Utilize local resources respectfully.
- ✓ Understand that different cultures have different priorities and operate on different timelines.

