The U.S. Army in Alaska and Alaska's Native Community

Please respect our community's resources and enjoy Alaska's great outdoors...

There are numerous resources for learning about the etiquette and regulations of animal harvest and land use. Respect for the land is an Alaskan value and of high importance to Native culture. Before you go, adequately research the resources, lands, weather, and people you may be interacting with on your trip.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG)	adfg.state.ak.us
Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR)	www.dnr.state.ak.us
Bureau of Land Management	blm.gov/maps
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	alaska.fws.gov

...or stay indoors and enjoy a cultural event!

Seize the opportunity to attend a cultural event such as the World Eskimo-Indian Olympics or Festival of Native Arts. These can be a learning experience and you can often volunteer to help! Experience local dancing, music, sports, crafts and food. Confirm that events are open to the public before planning to attend. Many large cultural events have their own websites and social media presence. Contact the Native Liaison, elizabeth.a.cook80.civ@army.mil for more.

Morris Thompson Cultural & Visitors Center	morristhompsoncenter.org
Morris Thompson Center's Elder Recordings	youtube.com/@MTCVCAK
The World Eskimo-Indian Olympics	weio.org
Festival of Native Arts, Fairbanks	alaska.edu/uaf/festival

BLUF:

Know and follow the regulations.

Learn from experienced Alaskans.

Don't trespass—study maps and know who owns the land and water you will travel.

Learn how to take care of yourself while respecting others' rights and property.

Harvest only the fish or game that you can use.

Pack in, pack out.

For more information, visit the following:

Alaska Native Knowledge Network	ankn.uaf.edu
General information	alaskool.org
Alaska Native Heritage Center, Anchorage	alaskanative.net
Anchorage Museum	anchoragemuseum.org
UAF Museum of the North	uaf.edu/museum

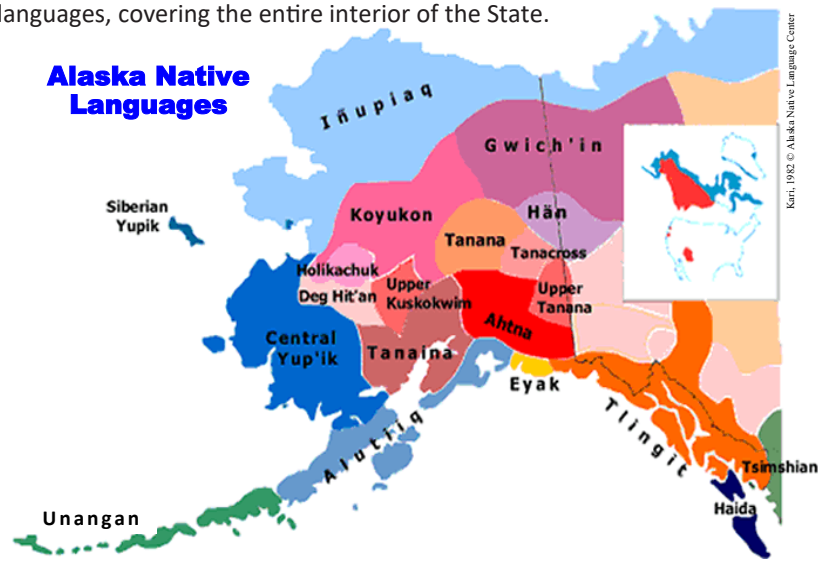
Alaska's Native Community

USAG Alaska respectfully acknowledges that the lands it manages are the homeland to the Tanana people and expresses appreciation to the federally-recognized tribes of the Tanana Valley for their ongoing partnerships, government-to-government relationships, and consultation that continually improves USAG Alaska's stewardship of the resources on those lands.

History: People came to Alaska, traveling through Beringia, 20,000 to 14,000 years ago. The people 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. Traders, missionaries, and gold miners brought western culture throughout the 19th century.

Population: In the 2020 Census, 22% 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 cultures in Alaska. Iñupiaq and Yugtun (Yup'ik) speakers live along the subarctic and arctic coasts. Unangam Tunuu (Aleut) and Alutiiq speakers live along the Aleutian chain and the southern coast. Eyak, Haida, Tłingit, and Tsimshian speakers call Alaska's panhandle homeland. Athabascan speakers account for 11 of the languages, covering the entire interior of the State.



Tribes vs. Corporations: There are 574 federally recognized tribal governments in the US, 227 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. Tribal governments have village councils with a President or Chief or Chairman. These councils govern the governments and citizenry.

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 over 200 village for-profit corporations to manage those resources. Most Alaska Natives people are shareholders in one or more of these corporations.

Land Ownership: Traditional lands may be owned by the Alaska Native community through regional and village corporations, as townsites in villages, or as individual Native allotments. All these lands are private property.

Reservations: Alaska 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 Native citizens 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, 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 from different cultures.
- ✓ Educate yourself about the cultures around you.
- ✓ Utilize local resources respectfully.
- ✓ Understand that different cultures have different priorities, concerns, and ways of living.