



# Subsistence Management in Gates of the Arctic



Photo courtesy of Anchorage Museum

## Protecting Subsistence Rights

In 1980, Congress recognized the uniqueness and importance of a subsistence way of life to rural residents by identifying it as one of the purposes of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). Through Title VIII of ANILCA, Congress established a policy that rural residents engaged in a subsistence way of life be provided the opportunity to continue to do so, consistent with sound management principles and the conservation of healthy fish and wildlife populations; that the utilization of public lands in Alaska is to cause the least adverse impact possible on rural residents who depend upon subsistence resources; that the non-wasteful subsistence uses of fish and wildlife be the priority consumptive use; and that in managing subsistence activities, the federal land managing agencies shall cooperate with adjacent landowners and land managers, including tribal governments, Native corporations, and state and federal agencies.

Anaktuvuk Pass residents hunting caribou in 1962.

## Subsistence Resource Commissions

To achieve this complex synthesis of protection and use, Congress felt it was important to formally involve those who have a personal knowledge of traditional subsistence activities and resources on federal lands. For national parks and monuments where subsistence uses were traditional, Subsistence Resource Commissions were established to

make recommendations to the park superintendents, Secretary of Interior, and Governor of Alaska on a hunting program for the park areas.

The Gates of the Arctic National Park Subsistence Resource Commission (SRC) was established in 1982, and has been formally meeting with



## Resident Zone Communities

the NPS since 1984 to provide a sounding board for local concerns and develop a subsistence management program specific to Gates of the Arctic. It was the intent of Congress to limit eligibility for subsistence activities within Gates of the Arctic National Park to local rural residents who have a personal or family history of use of park resources. Hence, 11 communities near Gates of the Arctic National Park were designated as subsistence resident zone communities for the park. Alatna, Allakaket, Ambler, Anaktuvuk Pass, Bettles, Evansville, Hughes, Kobuk, Nuiqsut, Shungnak, and Wiseman were identified as communities with a significant concentration of subsistence users who have customarily and traditionally used park resources and lands.

The SRC is comprised of nine members representing different geographical, cultural, and user diversity for the Gates of the Arctic region. Three members are appointed by the Secretary of Interior, three appointed by the Governor of Alaska, and three appointed by Federal Regional Advisory Councils. The Commission meets at least twice a year to review regulatory wildlife and fisheries proposals and make recommendations which may address major topics such as eligibility, access, harvest monitoring, methods and means of taking, research needs, use of cabins and shelters, trapline management, and timber management.



Photo by Jack Reakoff

Wolverine pelts (right) and wolf hides (reversed) dry outside a home in Wiseman, one of Gates of the Arctic's 11 resident zone communities.



Photo by Heidi Schoppenhorst

Sleds are used to haul a harvested moose home from the field.

For more information on Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve's Subsistence program, contact Marcy Okada at (907) 455-0639 or email her at [Marcy\\_Okada@nps.gov](mailto:Marcy_Okada@nps.gov).

### Gates of the Arctic National Park & Preserve

