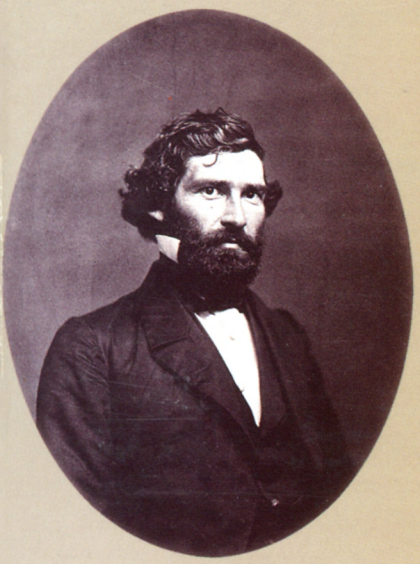
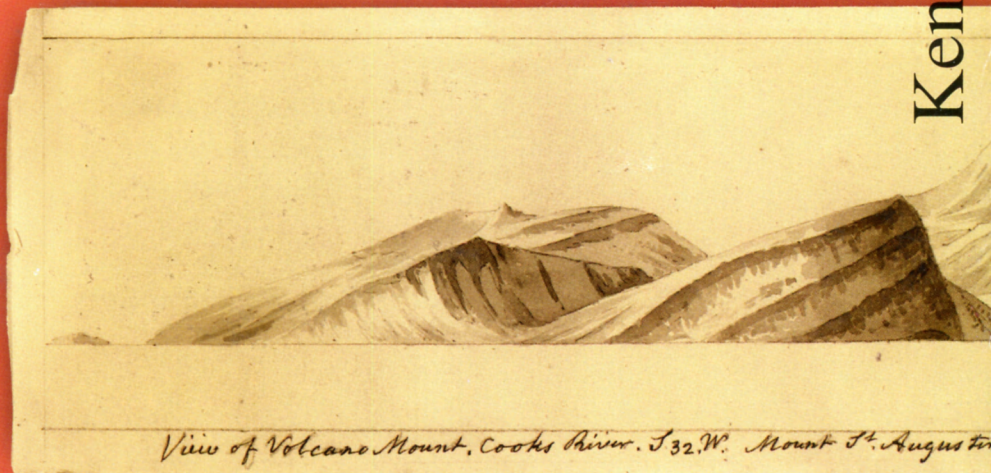
A STERN AND ROCK-BOUND COAST





Kenai Fjords National Park Historic Resource Study

LINDA COOK & FRANK NORRIS

Cover graphics:

(far left) Portrait of George Davidson. Bancroft Library
(top right) In this retouched photo, adventurers explore McCarty Glacier during a 1919 U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey expedition. National Archives
(bottom right) A John Sykes etching of Cook Inlet and environs, 1792. Bancroft Library

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A Stern and Rock-Bound Coast:

Kenai Fjords National Park Historic Resource Study

by

Linda Cook

and

Frank Norris

National Park Service
Alaska Support Office
Anchorage, Alaska
1998

Josephine Sather at her Home Cove residence.
Anchorage Museum of History and Art.

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Illustrations from *Wilderness, A Journal of Quiet Adventure in Alaska*, by Rockwell Kent.

List of Acronyms

ACC – Alaska Commercial Company
ADF&G – Alaska Department of Fish and Game
AEC – Alaska Engineering Commission
AHL – Alaska Historical Library, Juneau
AKSO – Alaska Support Office, Anchorage (NPS acronym)
AMTB – Anti-Motor Torpedo Boat
ANCSA – Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act
ANILCA – Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act
APG – Alaska Planning Group
ARC – Alaska Road Commission
ARO – Alaska Regional Office, Anchorage (NPS acronym)
ARLIS – Alaska Resource Library and Information Services
ASA – Alaska State Archives
AWS – Aircraft Warning Service
BCF – Bureau of Commercial Fisheries
BLM – Bureau of Land Management
BSF&W – Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife
C of C – Chamber of Commerce
DC – District of Columbia
DNR – (Alaska) Department of Natural Resources
EIS – Environmental Impact Statement
EO – Executive Order
F&WS – Fish and Wildlife Service
FES – Final Environmental Statement
FWLB – Fish and Wildlife Library Base (entries at ARLIS)
GLO – General Land Office
GPO – Government Printing Office
HD – Harbor Defense
HECP – Harbor Entrance Control Post
HIKF – Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords (proposed park unit)
HPC – Halibut Producers Co-operative
HRS – Historic Resource Study
IFC – International Fisheries Commission
IPHC – International Pacific Halibut Commission
KEFJ – Kenai Fjords National Park (NPS acronym)
NARA ANC – National Archives and Records Administration, Anchorage
NMFS – National Marine Fisheries Service
NNL – National Natural Landmark
NPS – National Park Service
NRA – National Recreation Area
NRPB – National Resources Planning Board

List of Acronyms (continued)

PLO – Public Land Order
RCR – Cultural Resources Division (NPS acronym)
RD – Regional Director
RG – Record Group
SEL – Seldovia (USGS quadrangle acronym)
SHPO – (Alaska) State Historic Preservation Office
UAA – University of Alaska Anchorage
UAF – University of Alaska Fairbanks
USBF – U.S. Bureau of Fisheries
USBM – U.S. Bureau of Mines
USC&GS – U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey
USGS – U.S. Geological Survey
USO – United Service Organization
WAA – War Assets Administration
WDC – Western Defense Command

Acknowledgments

Research successes throughout this study were frequent, unpredictable, and very rewarding. On several instances local residents provided crucial insight and support. We wish to thank the kindness and hospitality of many Nanwalek residents, especially the efforts of Ms. Sally Ash and her family, who provided perspective on local oral history, personal experiences, and family history. Much of this study's historic mining component draws heavily on the fieldwork of the NPS's mining compliance crews, who visited park sites during the summers of 1989 and 1991. Extensive field notes and sketch maps from mining site surveys assisted and greatly supported documentation of historic properties within the Nuka Bay mining district. Archival research and historical narrative provided by AKSO mining historian Logan Hovis established the basis for the Nuka Bay mining district historic context. Other AKSO contributions include the Placer Creek cabin history by architect Mary Tidlow and architectural historian Katerina S. Wessels's expertise on Russian fort construction. Ms. Wessels also assisted with the research and translation of Russian documents.

Many people generously shared their own knowledge of the outer coast and contributed research information. Seward residents Pat Williams, Margaret Deck, Doug Capra, Joe Stanton, and Lee Poleske and other members of the Resurrection Bay Historical Society spent time talking about experiences and giving an overview of research projects conducted on the coast. In addition, many longtime residents from Seward, Halibut Cove, and Homer generously provided the authors with information about the area's fishing, mining, and homesteading history; former federal and state fisheries officials were helpful as well. The names of all these contributors are listed in the bibliography. Michael Stallings's private bibliography of the region, consisting of hundreds of handwritten index cards, provided the authors with an overwhelming first glimpse of how vast, yet fragmented the search for information on the coast would be. Archeologist J. David McMahan with the Alaska Office of History and Archaeology provided photographs and research on the Sather fox farm.

Kenai Fjords National Park Superintendent Anne Castellina and her staff provided excellent support for this project and graciously arranged for both authors to see the park's resources on a firsthand basis. Special thanks go to Jim and Sue Pfeiffenberger, Bill Stevens, and Tony Chapin. At the Alaska Support Office, thanks first go to Senior Historian Sandra Anderson, who wholeheartedly supported our effort and gave us the time to complete this long-delayed project. We deeply appreciate the careful work of proofreaders Bud Rice, Ross Kavanagh, Doug Capra, and Logan Hovis. And finally, for graphics support, we have relied heavily on the assistance and skills of Frank Broderick. Many thanks to you all.

Preface

A perception of wilderness is easily acquired at Kenai Fjords National Park, located on the Gulf of Alaska in southcentral Alaska. This historic resource study challenges the long-held view that the coast has been uninhabited throughout most of the historic period—that it has been nothing more than a forsaken wilderness.

The piecing together of the history of a place called Kenai Fjords drew on a wide range of peripheral sources. Most of the preliminary research concentrated on efforts to locate descriptive material on village and land use sites in order to document evidence of human activity along the coast. These few early sites acted as a thread through which to string together the development of related Russian and American enterprise, including shipping, hunting, commerce, fox farming, fishing, mining and the business of war. Historic contexts evolved from this research, and historic properties were identified as eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

Settlement and cultural patterns on the stormy, exposed Pacific coast of the Kenai Peninsula developed primarily in response to activity in surrounding areas. For the most part, Russian trading centers and American development centralized in Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound and only briefly at the head of Resurrection Bay. The Kenai coast, located between these larger centers, was a transitory route for ship traffic and to a lesser degree for fur exploitation, whaling, and seabird feather and egg gathering. Interest in the area grew in the early twentieth century with glacial investigations, fox farming, and mining. The process of trying to place the Kenai Fjords within the history of the region became a principal research theme. Using this approach, the region's appearance and its reputation as an isolated cultural backwater became merely one aspect of a more intricate tapestry of history.

The very nature of the outer Kenai coast, including the terrain, geology, environment, and climate, has consistently discouraged habitation and has constrained resource use. This study addressed a number of paramount questions, including the issues of depopulation and the apparent scarcity of original maps, survey information, and documentation. Many historical sources and first hand accounts that described lands within park boundaries have been lost. Others are redundant because often one explorer simply copied the notes of his predecessor. Also, the ever-changing perception of what constituted an "uninhabited" place muddled the picture of the coast. To geology professor Ulysses S. Grant, who spent many summers in Alaska in the early 1900s

with the U.S. Geological Survey, describing a place as uninhabited meant that there were no permanent villages, but not a complete absence of people or activity. In one of his site bulletins he wrote, "aside from these settlements the eastern and southern coasts of the Kenai Peninsula are entirely uninhabited, being visited only by a few prospectors and hunters and by roving parties of Natives during the summer months."[1]

This study is co-authored by National Park Service historians Linda Cook and Frank Norris of the Alaska Support Office, Anchorage. Ms. Cook initiated the study and wrote the first part of the volume through Chapter 4. Mr. Norris then completed the study by writing the last six chapters. Written with two complementary voices, the study develops a broad historic context for the often-overlooked outer coast, its heroes, and their contributions to the region's history.

The volume's title was suggested due to the region's stormy conditions and rugged topography. It is excerpted from the first stanza of the well-known Felicia Hemans poem, "The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in New England," first published in 1826. Ms. Hemans' "rock-bound coast" was the area in and around Cape Cod Bay, Massachusetts; Alaska's southern Kenai coast, however, offers far more challenging conditions than its north Atlantic counterpart. Considering those conditions, it has been remarkable indeed that the Kenai coast has supported such a varied and multifaceted history as has been alluded to in these pages.

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[1] U. S. Grant and D. F. Higgins, *Coastal Glaciers of Prince William Sound and Kenai Peninsula, Alaska*, U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin 526 (Washington, GPO, 1913), 209.

Research Methodology

Purpose and Scope

A Historic Resource Study (HRS) is an NPS management document designed to assess known historic properties and address their eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places, commonly known as the National Register. HRS's also are prepared to meet federal agency requirements set forth in the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and to contribute to and shape park planning, priorities, actions, and decisions that may directly or indirectly benefit, effect, or pose a threat to historic properties. Such a study provides the park with base line historical material on known resources and historic properties, and develops contexts within which these and yet undiscovered resources may have association and meaning. As a result, an HRS integrates cultural resources into the larger scheme of resource management and park identity.

This HRS was researched and written in accordance with the Cultural Resources Management Guideline (formerly known as NPS-28) and sections 101 and 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. It develops historical themes and contexts for the land within Kenai Fjords National Park and shows how these resources relate to the surrounding areas. It also identifies and evaluates National Register eligible properties for purposes of NPS planning, interpretation, compliance, and natural and cultural resource management directives.

All too often, HRS's have consisted of a historical narrative and little else. This HRS, however, has incorporated known site information when possible. This style of document provides synthesis and analysis of both resource and history; it directly associates historic properties with their appropriate contexts. For example, the study states whether determinations of eligibility to the National Register have been made on specific properties. Each chapter is designed as a National Register historic context for a period of history that affected the park, and can be used to nominate known or yet to be discovered resources. As a result, the study has association with resources rather than being limited to a discussion of historical context.

Most of the buildings and structures in the park are associated with the early twentieth century mining context of the lower Kenai Peninsula. Some contexts (i.e., historical themes) have no related National Register eligible properties. The reason for this is twofold. First, environmental and cultural factors have both limited and defined regional settlement. Second,

few existing buildings and other improvements retain the historical integrity necessary for listing on the National Register. Despite the apparent lack of cultural complexity, however, lands in the present park have strong cultural components that tie them into the broader historic contexts of the lower Kenai Peninsula.

Research Methods

Much of the research is based on primary materials. One of the first research venues was the City of Seward Municipal Records room located in the Seward City Hall Building. These records provided information on land use claims, permits, and leases for lands in the park. Most of the permits were related to mining claims at the southern end of the park; also located, however, was a fishing site permit in Aialik Bay and a 1920s-era permit to operate the Nuka Island fox farm. The Resurrection Bay Historical Society and the City Library in Seward provided photographs and a first hand look at historical materials.

The Kenai Fjords National Park headquarters library contained early park memoranda. The internal park correspondence that mentions cultural resources provides information on what properties existed when the park was established.

Archival research concentrated initially on Russian-American Company and Russian Orthodox Church records. Additional Russian language research included the translation of many references to the Kenai Peninsula from the *Russian Orthodox Messenger*, a journal published by the North American Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church in New York. Further research in Russian records should include review of the *Papers Relating to the Russians in Alaska, 1732-1796* in the collections at the University of Washington Library, Seattle. The collection consists of twenty-one volumes and is a typescript of the original, which is located in the Russian Archives. Archival research also included a review of the collections of the Bancroft Library, the National Archives, the Library of Congress, and the University of Alaska's collections at both its Fairbanks and Anchorage campuses.

American period records from the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey,[1] the extensive writings and cartography of George Davidson, and the records of both the Brown and Hawkins Company in Seward and the Alaska Commercial Company contributed to this study. The records of the

[1] In 1878, Congress changed the name of the U.S. Coast Survey to the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey. Donald J. Orth, *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names* (Washington, GPO, 1967), 39.

commercial companies yielded personal information and perspective on individual transactions and gave insight into Native and American hunting practices along the coast in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Several park resource reports were crucial to understanding the history. The "Seabird-Marine Mammal Survey and General Reconnaissance of the Southern Kenai Coast," conducted in 1976, provided one of the first opportunities to assess the proposed park's 600-mile shoreline from Point Adam to Cape Resurrection. In 1983, archeologist Georgeanne Reynolds conducted an archeological survey near the Placer Creek Cabin in the Resurrection River Valley. In 1987, J. David McMahan and Charles Holmes with the Alaska Department of National Resources published a site assessment and documentation for the Sather Fox Farm on Nuka Island. NPS archeologist Dr. Jeanne Schaaf's 1988 report, prepared for the Denton site in Aialik Bay, briefly discussed Russian occupation on the Pacific coast to establish a context for a small collection of post contact artifacts. In 1987 Bud Rice, Kenai Fjords National Park Resource Manager, investigated the history of glacial movement within the park and highlighted the cultural component in his early chapters. The Alaska Native Historic Sites Project, managed under the mandate of Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), surveyed Chugach Alutiiq sites known as 14(h)(1) sites on the outer Kenai Peninsula. These reports provided primarily archeological orientation to the coast, and also incorporated historic resource site information related to Native use.

In 1989, site investigation associated with the *Exxon Valdez* supertanker oil spill contributed to existing NPS, State of Alaska, and Bureau of Indian Affairs site documentation. As a result, more inclusive thematic studies of the cultural history of the region evolved. Site assessment of the Chiswell, Pye, and Nuka Island areas by the Exxon Cultural Resource Program resulted in the analysis of cultural resources. In the summer of 1993, a team of archeologists and other scientists, working as part of the NPS's Systemwide Archeological Inventory Program (SAIP), surveyed areas near the Aialak, Holgate, Northwestern, and McCarty glaciers. Through a collaborative effort between the NPS, the USGS, the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and the Arctic Studies Center, Smithsonian Institution, the survey team developed a new approach to site identification on the coast. The team tied the region's history of glacial geology to likely sites of habitation.

These studies illustrate some of the methods used to document the region's resources. All of these studies contributed to and shaped the research for this HRS.

Many known historic properties were visited to assess National Register integrity and to understand how the setting defined each resource. These properties were identified from mining compliance files, oral histories, conversations with NPS staff, and many other maps and reports that specified the existence of a built structure in the park.

Architect James Creech and historian Bonnie Houston of the Alaska Support Office's List of Classified Structures program accompanied one of the authors on a 1993 reconnaissance of park coastal areas. More specifically, this trip visited Nuka Island and the various Nuka Bay mining properties. Information obtained on this field visit substantiated earlier fieldwork and provided critical information on both resource and setting integrity.

Despite the research devoted to locating existing historic properties, there are many unanswered questions regarding park resources. The evolution of the village site of Yalik, for example, is still unclear. One cabin remnant exists in Harris Bay near Northwestern Glacier; however, little is known of its history. It is possible that the cabin had an association with an earlier or prehistoric village site. In addition, several cabins appear to have vanished without a trace. These include a cabin on James Lagoon and Skeen's cabin in Nuka Bay. An author's visit to James Lagoon failed to locate the remains of a cabin, and extensive mining survey work never found Skeen's cabin. Lost with these cabins are the events and motivations that led to their construction and what happened to both building and occupant. In all probability, other cabin ruins exist in the park that are not addressed in this study.

Historic Contexts

Historic contexts for this study developed from the recurring theme that environmental conditions produced a landscape that resisted many of the patterns of nineteenth and early twentieth century historic resource use and settlement commonly found in Alaska. As a result, the contexts relate the cultural component through environment perceptions--always coming back to the question of how the landscape shapes the manner in which cultural use and occupation occurred in Kenai Fjords National Park. Recognition of the harsh geographical and environmental regime of the outer Kenai Peninsula is an underlying theme.

TABLE A. Historic Contexts and Associated Historic Properties

HRS Historic Contexts	Possible Eligible Properties	Property Types	Ineligible Properties and Sites
The Stern and Rock-Bound Coast			
Native Lifeways on the Outer Kenai Peninsula	Yalik Village	Site	
European Exploration and Russian Settlement Patterns on the Lower Kenai Peninsula	Aialik Bay	cultural landscape	
Shifting Landscape: Demographics, Economics, and Environment on the Kenai Peninsula	Nuka Bay, Yalik and other abandoned village sites on outer coast	cultural landscape	
Developing the Transportation Infrastructure			Moran Camp sign, 1898; McArthur Pass navigation aid; Nuka Pass berm; Summit Creek berm
Living off the Land and Sea	Pete and Josephine Sather Fox Farm, Nuka Island	fox farming landscape, pens, buildings, structures	Mike's Bay moonshine camp; Beauty Bay whiskey still; Bob Evans's cabin at McCarty Lagoon
The Lure of Gold	Nuka Bay Historic Mining District	mines, camps, roads, isolated cabins, landings, scattered equipment	
Resurrection Bay Military Activities	Outer Island Camp	barrack ruins, Kitten Pass stairs, road, iron cart	
Commercial Fish Harvesting and Shellfish			Stream guard station sites at Delight Creek, Nuka Island, Pederson Lagoon, and Beauty Bay
Recreation and Tourism			Spruce Creek trail; Bear Glacier (beginning of 1940 Harding Icefield crossing); Exit Glacier (end of 1968 Harding Icefield crossing)

Introduction

> We could not avoid remarking that the whole of this exterior coast seemed to wear a much more wintry aspect than the countries bordering on those more northern inland waters we had so recently quitted. – George Vancouver, 1794 [1]

In 1967, on a flight between Anchorage and Seward, Bailey Breedlove of the NPS gazed out over the glaciated seaboard of the Kenai Peninsula. The coast reminded him of his World War II missions performed in the terrain of the Norwegian fjords. Moved by the striking resemblance between the two subarctic coastlines, Breedlove collaborated with an associate to pen the name Kenai Fjords.[2] Several years later, in 1972, an NPS photographer was asked to capture on film the "new world" of Kenai Fjords following the passage of ANCSA in 1971. Try as he may, however, the man was unable to find Breedlove's Norwegian-like coast on any map. In his published account of the adventure he demands, "...but where-the-hell is Kenai Fjords?"[3]

By the late 1970s, the definition and boundaries of an actual area called Kenai Fjords had evolved as a planning term for the glacial system of the Pacific coast of the Kenai Peninsula in the Secretary of the Interior's 1977 proposal for the Kenai Fjords National Park. In the words of Don Follows, the NPS "keyman" for the proposal, the contrived name identified a place "that collectively described the peninsulas, bays, island stacks, and deep water fjords between the Kenai mountain platform and the wave beaten coast thrusting into the Gulf of Alaska."[4] Follows scrutinized the coastline with the hope of locating some "place" associated with the fjords. After analysis of both USGS maps and bulletins and bibliographies, Follows

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[1] George Vancouver, *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean* (London: Hakluyt Society), 1266.

[2] Breedlove co-authored several studies with land use planner Richard Stenmark in which the name Kenai Fjords appeared. See Memorandum "Delineation of Kenai Fjords," 9 May 1977 on file in the Kenai Fjords National Park Headquarters library, Seward, Alaska (KEFJ).

[3] M. Woodbridge Williams, "The New World of Kenai Fjords," *Oceans* 6 (July 1973): 26.

[4] In a memorandum to park files, Follows justified the spelling of fjords, "The history of whaling ships and commercial fishermen of Scandinavian descent moving along the Kenai Coast in the last century and still in this one relates to the heritage of those who use the general spelling and scientific spelling of 'fjord'." See Follows memorandum dated 15 April 1978, 2, to Geography files for general interest. Subject heading reads "Use of geologic terms in new area planning and legislation." See also Memorandum, 9 May 1977, to Chief, Professional Services, from Keyman, Harding Icefield Kenai Fjords National Monument (HIKF), Subject: Delineation of the Kenai Fjords, on file at KEFJ.

conceded that he could not find "a single place name there" to generally describe the coastline in this area.

In 1978, President Jimmy Carter conferred national monument status to 652,000 acres of glacial fjord ecosystem on the southeastern flank of the Kenai Peninsula. In 1980 Congress, acting under Section 203 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), Public Law 96-487, established Kenai Fjords National Park as a new unit of the national park system. The park boundaries were drawn to reflect geologic and topographic features resulting from the creation of a glacial ecosystem, and not for any significant archeological or historic resource.[5] Section 201(5) of the law specified that the park be managed "to maintain unimpaired the scenic and environmental integrity of the Harding Icefield, its outflowing glaciers and coastal fjords and islands in their natural state; and to protect seals, seal lions, other marine mammals, and marine and other birds and to maintain their hauling and breeding areas in their natural state free of human activity which was disruptive to their natural processes." The need to protect the area's cultural resources was not specifically mentioned; the presence of humans, as noted above, was specifically cited as being detrimental to the park's goals.

In 1984 the park's *General Management Plan* identified historic resources and created historic zones. As described, these zones "are designated for the preservation, protection, and interpretation of cultural resources." The plan specified the establishment of a historic zone around abandoned mining properties in the Shelter Cove area of Nuka Bay, which constitutes one concentration of historic properties in the park.[6]

Several towns and villages outside the park have long had a role in the use of park resources. Seward is the principal gateway to the park. Located at the head of Resurrection Bay three miles east of the park boundary, the town has approximately 3,100 residents. Situated to the west of Seward on the tip of the Kenai Peninsula are the Alutiiq villages of Nanwalek, formerly called English Bay,[7] and Port Graham. These two villages are close to parklands and have cultural and ancestral affiliation to lands within park boundaries. The village of Seldovia, on the peninsula's western coast, also has historic association with cultural patterns within park boundaries.

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[5] See HIKJ Keyman Memorandum, 9 May 1977, 1, on file at KEFJ.

[6] *Kenai Fjords General Management Plan*, National Park Service, 1984, 55.

[7] Nanwalek is a variation of the Suquestan name meaning, "place with a lagoon." In the late 1780s the summer village site fell under the shadow of the Russian fort Alexandrovsk. Seemingly by error, in 1909 the USGS assigned the original Russian name for neighboring village Port Graham, "Bukh[ta] Anglitskaya" translated English Bay, to Nanwalek. To resolve the misunderstanding, and reclaim the identity of their village, the Village Council requested an official name change from English Bay to Nanwalek in 1992.

The predecessors to the residents of Nanwalek and Port Graham have been living in the area for hundreds if not thousands of years. Relatively little is known of the Unegkurmiut, an independent relation of the Alutiiq Pacific Eskimo, who inhabited the Kenai coast prior to and concurrent with early Russian period contact. At a later date the coast may have been settled by an amalgam of people from Kodiak Island, Cook Inlet, and Prince William Sound, in addition to the original inhabitants at the time of Russian contact.

Archeological evidence of Pacific Eskimo village sites in the outer protected bays of the peninsula indicates a pattern of habitation that was shattered by Russian acculturation and control. The fate of these villages likely followed a pattern of depopulation, disease, consolidation, and relocation that was also inflicted on the coastal village communities of Kodiak Island, the Alaska Peninsula, and Prince William Sound in the early and mid-nineteenth century. In the 1930s, American anthropologist Frederica de Laguna conducted archeological site surveys in the area; most were in Prince William Sound with general reference to the people of the Kenai Coast. In 1954, Danish ethnographer Kaj Birket-Smith collaborated with de Laguna to compile anthropological information on Prince William Sound.

Many sources have suggested that Native inhabitants of lands within the park moved away by the end of the nineteenth century. Others have indicated that the Kenai Mission of the Russian Orthodox Church supported the relocation of the last villages in Nuka and Aialik bays around the turn of the century to the more populated villages of Port Graham and English Bay. This initiative by the Russian Orthodox Church may have been aggravated by a collapse in fur prices and the consolidation of fur companies at Seldovia, English Bay, and on Kodiak Island, requiring hunters to pool resources. But summer and seasonal occupation of village sites, hunting and fishing grounds, and the use of trade routes continued. Local Native place names provide reference to land use areas. The same analogy holds true for Russian, English, Spanish, and American names of sites, landforms, passes, and waterways in and adjacent to parklands.

The exploration of the coast by Europeans is poorly documented. Russian, English, and Spanish mariners regularly shared information on the coastal areas of Alaska, especially those areas that were the most treacherous. As a result, many personal accounts are generalizations of what others had seen. Many who wrote about the outer Kenai Peninsula never actually saw it. Therefore, most accounts have little historical value because the date of a publication usually had little connection to when the information was originally recorded. This practice perpetuated what can only be called myths about the outer Kenai coast. Also, several original reports have

been lost. Russian governor, surveyor, and cartographer Mikhail D. Teben'kov reported in the accompanying *Notes* to his *Atlas of the Northwest Coasts of America* [1852] that of the five Russian surveys conducted of the coast since the 1790s, three had already been lost.[8] These lost surveys may well have had more detail than the larger coastal descriptions that have survived.

In several accounts, rough seas and fog settled in as eastbound ships passed Nuka Island. The fog stayed until Montague Island and the waters of Prince William Sound appeared on the horizon. For those who dared to venture close to shore, hidden rocks seemed to lay in wait, ready to snag the hulls of the large wooden ships. Naturally wary of a coast that was difficult to navigate and formidable in appearance, George Vancouver in 1794 noted that the coast was colder and had a more "wintry aspect" than the surrounding areas.[9]

Settlement along the coast was sparse. The Pacific Alutiiq probably migrated to the area from neighboring regions; few of them, however, settled along the outer coast. The Russians built the Voskresenskii Redoubt in Resurrection Bay only after exhausting other possibilities in Cook Inlet and on Kodiak and Afognak islands.

With no established ports or villages along the coast, and with ice flow from tidewater glaciers a constant threat, Russian, European, and American traders depended on Native crews to hunt close to shore. These crews navigated the coast in fleets of small skin boats. Kodiak Island served as the primary headquarters. Many of the furs obtained from the outer Kenai Peninsula fell into Russian, European, and American hands by barter and trade.

Nineteenth century Russian fort settlements occupied the more temperate climates and harbors of Cook Inlet, and forested islands from Prince William Sound to southeastern Alaska. Although Grigorii Shelikhov's chief administrator, Aleksandr A. Baranov, supervised the construction of a fortified settlement and ship building yard in Resurrection Bay in 1793-1794, subsequent Russian governors ordered the dismantling of the *artel* and moved its residents to a site west of Cook Inlet, near Iliamna Lake. The move, made after 1820, reflected a change

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[8] M. D. Teben'kov, *Atlas of the Northwest Coasts of America from Bering Strait to Cape Corrientes and the Aleutian Islands with Several Sheets on the Northwest Coast of Asia,* 1852 (Kingston, Ontario, The Limestone Press, 1981), 6. The 1852 atlas was engraved and printed in Sitka and bound in St. Petersburg.

[9] George Vancouver, *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean* (London, Hakluyt Society), 1266.

in Russian demographics and economics that favored a more centralized approach to settlement.

Since 1900 the Kenai coast has been influenced by a variety of cultural agents. Americans who traveled to the area in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries endured many of the same challenges faced by the Natives and Europeans. Local traders and hunters, for example, continued to exploit land and marine mammals. In 1903 railroad speculators established the town of Seward, one of the first planned cities in Alaska. Mining and fur farming activities have had an important, if temporary, impact on the open and wild lands fronting the Gulf of Alaska. First in the mid-1850s, and then later in the early twentieth century, geologists and gold miners tenaciously explored the peninsula in the hopes of finding economically productive claims. They found little, however, and by World War II most activity had ceased. After the war, use of the peninsula remained opportunistic, and in many ways sheltered from view. Only in recent years have sport fishers, sightseers, and other outdoor recreationists brought a previously-unforeseen level of exposure to the area's coastal and glacial resources.

Map 1-1 **Kenai Fjords National Park**

Chapter 1. The Stern and Rock-Bound Coast

> The whole coast between Cape Saint Elizabeth in the west and the mouth of Copper River in the east is deeply indented with coves and fiords, and towering peaks rise abruptly from the sea. Nearly every valley and ravine has its glacier, some of the latter being among the most extensive in the world.[1] – Ivan Petroff, 1880

Geographic Overview

Kenai Fjords National Park is a sequestered glacial landscape of ice, tidewater glaciers, deeply chiseled fjords, and jagged peninsulas formed by the forces of the Harding and Grewingk-Yalik icefields as they plunge into the sea. Located on the southeastern or seaward coast of the one hundred and seventy-mile-long Kenai Peninsula, the park abuts the Kenai Mountains to the north and west. These lofty mountains, part of the Chugach and St. Elias ranges, bisect the peninsula close to the southeastern coast and extend to Kodiak and Afognak islands. Only the mountain peaks (*nunataks*) are visible above the permanent mantle of ice and snow of the icefield. Along the coast, the summits of the same mountain range surface as offshore island stacks. As the glaciers recede the fjords deepen, enlarging and exposing peninsulas that indent the coast and disappear into the sea.

The setting is dynamic. The park is located on an active tectonic shelf of the Pacific Ocean Plate that follows the coast from Port Dick (west of Nuka Bay) to Day Harbor (east of Seward) in one of the most seismically erratic regions of the United States. During the 1964 earthquake lands within the Kenai Fjords National Park subsided. The tremor dropped the coastline from three to six vertical feet in most areas and attempted to counterbalance the force by raising it in others. As the shifting plate moves and grates against the continental landmass, the coast submits to the sea. This process is believed to have begun after the last major period of glaciation, 20,000 years ago.

Glaciers and deep fjords in the southwestern portion of the Kenai Fjords radiate from the colossal snow pack of Harding Icefield. In 1950, the USGS officially named the icefield for President Warren G. Harding who died in 1923, soon after the first presidential visit to Alaska (see chapter

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[1] Ivan Petroff, *Report on the Population, Industries, and Resources of Alaska, Reprinted from U.S. 10th Census, Reports* [1880] (Washington, U.S. Census Office, 1884), 27.

10). Ten of the thirty-four tidewater and hanging glaciers that emanate from Harding Icefield are included within the park.[2]

The mile-high Harding Icefield is a glacial vestige of the 10,000-year-old Pleistocene period when an expansive ice sheet blanketed southcentral Alaska. The icefield may also be a remnant of the massive Truuli Icefield, recorded by the naturalist Ilia G. Wosnesenski in 1842 that comprised both the Sargent and Harding icefields. Heavy winter snow loads feed the glaciers at higher altitudes as moist air settles above the mountains. Snowfall occurs primarily in the winter months though summer storms are not uncommon; the icefield accumulates as much as 400 inches of snow annually. Warming winds off the Gulf of Alaska temper winter weather creating a maritime climate. Glacial runoff feeds the streams and lakes that drain into the comparatively milder terrain and lowland component of the peninsula. Glacial till and moraines covered in vegetation constitute most of the low-lying lands. Landing beaches are few. Deep snow on the mountainsides increases the likelihood of avalanches in these lower areas.[3]

The park includes Bear and Exit glaciers in the vicinity of Seward. The parklands then proceed south and west on the Kenai Peninsula to Petrof Glacier west of Nuka Island. The park's northern boundary bisects the Harding Icefield. All coastal areas between Bear and Petrof glaciers are part of Kenai Fjords National Park.

Park boundaries exclude almost all offshore features: open sea, channel water in the fjords, pinnacle rocks, and islands. The signing of ANILCA in 1980, transferred most of the offshore islands to the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge. Significant island groups fall under this category; they include the Pye and Chiswell islands, which are major bird conservation habitats.

In 1867, English-born George Davidson, a geodesist with the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey (USC&GS), supervised what many consider the first American coastal assessment of Alaska under a directive from Congress. Relying heavily on the cartography of Teben'kov and his navigators, other Russian ship captains, and Vancouver, Davidson compiled a descriptive account of coastal positions and natural resources from Sitka to the Pribilof Islands which he submitted to Congress in the 1869 USC&GS annual report. In it, Davidson offered the following introductory description of the vicinity:

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[2] Memorandum from Don Follows to Geography files for general interest, Keyman File, at KEFJ.

[3] Memorandum, from Don Follows to Geography file, 28 September 1979, subject NASA Flight Information, at KEFJ.

> From Cape Puget to Cape Elizabeth the shores have been very well explored by the Russian navigators, searching for good harbors and shelter for the Russian whalers. Their reports show that the line of coast is broken by bays and coves, but none offering good anchorage; there being very close to shore not more than thirty to fifty fathoms of water. The coast is very rocky, steep and mountainous, yet covered with wood, while the ravines and gorges between the mountains contain in many places, glaciers which stretch back from the heads of the bays even to the gorges descending towards Cooks inlet.[4]

Many descriptions of the coast in later years followed Davidson's version; most of them presented an equally rugged portrait of the land and its glaciers.

Historical Geography of the Coast

The outer coast of the Kenai Peninsula contains an extensive cultural landscape that incorporates both those who lived along its icy shores and those drawn to explore and exploit its resources. The coastline provided an intermediary ground for resource use, trade, and travel on the peninsula. Portage Pass, which cuts across the northern edge of the peninsula, offered an easy nine-mile link between Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet.

During the period of Russian occupation, the coast was consistently considered as an extension of surrounding regions, implying that it had nothing of interest to engender a name of its own. Teben'kov referred to the region merely as the "coast from Kenai Bay eastward to Chugach Bay."[5] (Both names were of Russian origin; Kenai Bay referred to the waters of Cook Inlet, and Chugach Bay to Prince William Sound). Given no geographic distinction or name of its own, the coast became a generic no man's land. Hence the margin for error when referring to the area could be enormous, especially when trying to determine population and village location and density, maritime activity, or trade and shipping routes along such a wide stretch of coast.

Russian cartographers and explorers tended to use the terms Kenai Bay and Chugach Bay interchangeably, especially in the area of the park. This practice gave the impression that the outer coast belonged to neither region. The rare descriptions of the Kenai coastline fell within the

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[4] George Davidson Manuscript Collection, Box 504A, Record Group 23, 283, Records of the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, NARA DC.

[5] Mikhail D. Teben'kov, *Atlas of the Northwest Coast of America*, translated and edited by R. A. Pierce (Kingston, Ontario, Limestone Press, 1981), 20.

geographic parameters of Chugach Bay and the glaciers were regarded merely as a preamble to the warmer regions west of Montague Island. These practices further reiterated the post-contact notion that the coast was predominantly a transitional stretch of land. To add to the general confusion of Russian geography, William H. Dall factored in Kachemak Bay, located at the southern end of the Kenai Peninsula, as being part of Chugach Bay.

> The Native name of the bay is Kachekmak, in allusion to the high bluffs of the northern shore; the Natives of Chugach Bay [Prince William Sound] in coming to the inlet made a portage from the Pacific to the head of this bay, and so reached the Russian trading post at Port Graham, so the traders called it the bay of the Chugachi, or Chugachik. The Native name was misspelled on an obscure map without the central "k," and although the Coast Survey in the first and only chart of the bay gave the correct spelling, the Board of Geographic names adopted the incorrect form, which thus becomes obligatory in all Government publications.[6]

Although Teben'kov's atlas included several earlier Russian surveys of the coast, in 1868 Davidson found the information incomplete at best. As he wrote in his first drafts of a description of the coast, "There is not even a small scale map of any part of the coast, or of any harbor which can be counted on more than a reconnaissance or preliminary survey."[7]

In particular, Davidson noted that he had no detailed description of Resurrection Bay, despite the fact the Russians had built and maintained a shipyard at the head of the bay. Davidson relied heavily on the writing of Vancouver, Meares, Portlock, Dixon, and Lisiansky to write his observations.[8]

In a letter to USC&GS Superintendent Benjamin Pierce, Davidson made note that he obtained sixty-eight ship's logs from the Russian-American Company "embracing a large number of years." He recognized the generosity of captains Illarion Arkhimandritov (who later became an agent for the Hutchinson Company) and Paul Lemashafski.[9] Davidson obviously kept close contact with these captains, and recommended that the USC&GS do so as well. He mentioned to Pierce that the captains should be put on the USC&GS mailing list to receive future maps.

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[6] William H. Dall, "Geographical Notes in Alaska," *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society* 27:1 (1896), 14.

[7] Davidson Manuscript, Box 504 A, Item 10, 180.

[8] *Ibid.*, 286.

[9] *Ibid.*, In letter to Superintendent Pierce from Davidson, 3 February 1868, n.p.

Maps from the early twentieth century prepared under the charge of federal scientific expeditions, notably those conducted by the USC&GS, suggested that the outer coast was geographically dynamic. Studies of glacial advancement on the peninsula indicated that after 1900 all glaciers had begun to recede.[10] In 1905, 1908, and 1909, U. S. Grant and D. F. Higgins of the USGS conducted a series of explorations of the glaciers of Prince William Sound and the Kenai Peninsula. Grant began his reconnaissance of the Prince William Sound and southern Kenai Peninsula regions in 1905. Returning three years later with Higgins, Grant spent a week surveying the eastern coast of the peninsula from Port Bainbridge on Prince William Sound to Culross Passage near Whittier. During their 1908 trip, the team examined copper and gold deposits in Resurrection Bay near Seward.

In 1909, Grant and Higgins returned to the Kenai Peninsula to survey the outer coast from Cape Puget on the western edge of Prince William Sound to Nubble Point near Seldovia. They planned to spend most of the field season along the fjords and bays of the outer coast. The team completed the work in three phases: July 3 to 6; July 11 and 12; and the major portion between July 20 and September 8.[11] Following this itinerary, Grant and Higgins set out from Resurrection Bay determined to cross the outer coast in a small boat. Severe rain plagued the survey, forcing the crew to stop and wait out the storms. Despite these setbacks, Grant and Higgins accomplished the four components of their fieldwork for the coast. These included an examination of the geology, a survey of known mineral prospects, a cursory inspection of the tidewater glaciers, and the rough mapping of the coast.[12]

Limiting most of their reconnaissance to the coast with only brief hiking trips inland, Grant and Higgins investigated Northwestern and Holgate glaciers, Harris Bay, and the Pye Islands. Higgins mapped most of the coast with only "a rough graphic triangulation with the traverse plane table and sketching of topography."[13]

In June 1911, Rufus H. Sargent began a topographic expedition for the USGS from Kachemak Bay to Turnagain Arm on the northern portion of the Kenai Peninsula. Leading a party of four, Sargent later crossed the

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[10] Bud Rice, *Changes in the Harding Icefield Kenai Peninsula, Alaska*, Master's thesis (University of Alaska, Fairbanks, 1987), 38.

[11] G. C. Martin, B. L. Johnson, and U. S. Grant, *Geology and Mineral Resources of Kenai Peninsula, Alaska,* U.S, Geological Survey Bulletin 587 (Washington, GPO, 1915), 18.

[12] *Ibid.*, 18.

[13] *Ibid.* The farthest the pair ventured inland was seven miles, to establish geographic locations to set their bearings.

peninsula to investigate the Resurrection River drainage close to Seward.[14] Sargent concluded his survey in October having covered over 3,000 miles. The surveys resulted in the production of 1:250,000 maps with 200-foot contours.[15]

Place names within the park provide many references to history of the region's geography. Access to the region has usually been by sea, the bays and fjords being the best vantagepoints from which to explore the coast and the glacial walls of ice. Portages through the Kenai Mountains have also served as an entry to the coast. As the same photographer who could not find Kenai Fjords on the map poetically observed, the geographic place names of the protected fjord harbors and coves brought to mind sublime retreats with names like Delight Lake, Moonlight Bay, and Desire Lake. These place names are in sharp contrast to others located on the more exposed portions of the Pacific coast. In a stretch of coastline between Harris Bay and McCarty Fjord the names of Thunder Bay, Cloudy Mountain, Wildcat Pass, and Roaring Cove portray a more challenging terrain. Many names have association with local residents including Skeen's Arm in Nuka Bay or Pete's Passage near Matushka Island. Other places have retained Native names including Paguna Arm, meaning black bear, and Taroka Arm, referring to the brown bear. As with many place names in the park, there is an overlay of Native, Russian, Spanish, English, and American experience and assimilation that varies according to the time period and the perspective of research.

Glaciers

The glaciers of Kenai Fjords National Park are an inescapable presence. These rivers of ice formed the focal point for establishment of the park. The glaciers that emanate from the Harding Icefield influence the land and climate.

As recent as the beginning of the twentieth century, some of the fjords were completely filled with tidal glaciers, producing a dramatically different natural landscape. Throughout the course of prehistory, human activity in the area responded to many periods of glacial advancement and retreat. With each glacial stage, the amount of navigable water and land available for exploration and inhabitation dramatically fluctuated, thus creating an ever-changing landscape. In 1905, Grant reported that many of the glaciers had reached terminus positions and had begun to recede. Although other glaciers in the region continued to advance, some researchers speculate that the size of the glaciers in the late 1800s and

[14] *Ibid.*, 19.
[15] *Ibid.*

early 1900s had little resemblance to what they may have looked like one hundred years earlier.

Rice observed that the Dena'ina vocabulary included many words to describe the glacial surroundings. Some of the more pertinent terms are: "ti" for glaciers, "titeh" directly translating to "among the glaciers" or icefield, "tizaq" for crevasses, "tivena" for terminal glacial lake, and "ti tnu" for glacial river. Some of the Dena'ina terms persist in altered form on present day topographic maps. "Dghili" or "Dghelay" means mountain and is printed as Truuli on USGS quadrangles to label the highest peak in the southwest portion of the Kenai Mountains. "Dusdebena ti" translated into English as "peninsula-lake glacier." Currently written as Tustumena Glacier, the name describes the largest land-based glacier that flows northwest from the Harding Icefield.[16]

Two of the park's most spectacular and active glaciers had dramatic retreats in the late 1800s. USGS maps based on 1909 fieldwork documented the McCarty and Northwestern glaciers flowing out the length of the fjord and actively and visibly calving into the Gulf of Alaska.

In the early 1930s the USC&GS reported that McCarty Glacier had retreated about one quarter of a mile in the fifty years prior to 1909. During that period the glacier had reached its terminal position "since the growth of the present trees."[17] By 1927 McCarty Glacier had receded one and one-half miles from its terminus; the most intense calving began after 1925; surveyor Paul Whitney noted that "From 1925 to 1927 the retreat was rapid, the front falling back a full mile in that time."[18] The 1964 *Alaska Coast Pilot* indicated that the glacier had retreated another ten and one-half miles during the ensuing thirty-seven years.

Regarding Northwestern Glacier, Davidson deduced from Teben'kov's 1852 measurements that the glacier was two miles in width and "coming directly into the water."[19] In the mid-1800s Teben'kov's maps depicted the glacier extending far out in the fjord "reaching almost to the sea."[20] Grant and Higgins estimated the end point of the glacier to be one-quarter of a mile

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[16] These places are peripheral to the study area but represent the extent to which Native cultural affected and influenced current place names in the park. For an additional reference see Rice, *Changes in the Harding Icefield*, 25.

[17] Paul C. Whitney, "The Recent Retreat of the McCarty Glacier," *The Geographical Review* 22 (July 1932), 389.

[18] *Ibid.*, 39.

[19] George Davidson, *The Glaciers of Alaska That Are Shown on Russian Charts or Mentioned in Older Narratives* (San Francisco, Cunningham, Curtiss & Welch, 1904), 19.

[20] Grant and Higgins, *Coastal Glaciers of Prince William Sound and Kenai Peninsula*, 60.

past its position in 1909. This maximum advance would have been reached approximately ten to fifteen years before their expedition.[21]

Impressed by the size of Northwestern Glacier, the geologists described it in detail. They wrote, "This glacier is one of the largest ice streams of the Kenai Peninsula and is in full view from the open ocean, forming, with its surrounding lofty peaks, the most striking scenic feature of the southern shore."[22] In 1976 a joint U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NPS survey team observed that Northwestern Glacier had receded a mile or more in the last twenty years.[23] As the ice has receded, Sitka spruce and western hemlock forests have slowly reclaimed the newly exposed land. The glacial retreat has created habitat for many of the park's land mammal species.

Grant and Higgins recorded the majority of local names for glaciers and other features within the park. Between 1909 and 1911 the team concentrated on glacial formation in the region. Among the names they applied was Bear Glacier, at the park's eastern boundary. Located at the mouth of Resurrection Bay near Bulldog Cove, the glacier is oriented to the southeast. It is the only coastal glacier that has yet to form a fjord. Exit Glacier, northwest of Seward and north of Bear Glacier, flows east off the Harding Icefield. In 1968, the first group of climbers to cross the Harding Icefield descended by way of this glacial spur.[24]

The Fjords

Resurrection Bay

Although outside the boundaries of the park, Resurrection Bay served as the principal location for expeditions and settlement in the region. Considered the largest fjord along the coast, it was likely formed by the collective massing of the Harding and Sargent icefields.[25] The Russian geologist Petr Doroshin visited the bay on several gold and coal mining expeditions to the peninsula in the early 1850s. Doroshin described a landscape in which glaciers known by Russian names cascaded down the mountainous entrance to the deep bay.

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[21] See Rice, *Changes in the Harding Icefield Kenai Peninsula, Alaska*, for a more detailed discussion on the recession of Kenai Peninsula glaciers. In Grant and Higgins, *Coastal Glaciers of Prince William Sound and Kenai Peninsula*, the authors remarked that the Northwestern Glacier was visible from the sea, probably meaning the Gulf of Alaska. Their map indicated that the glacier extended to the head of Harris Bay; Northwestern Lagoon was formed after the early 1900s.

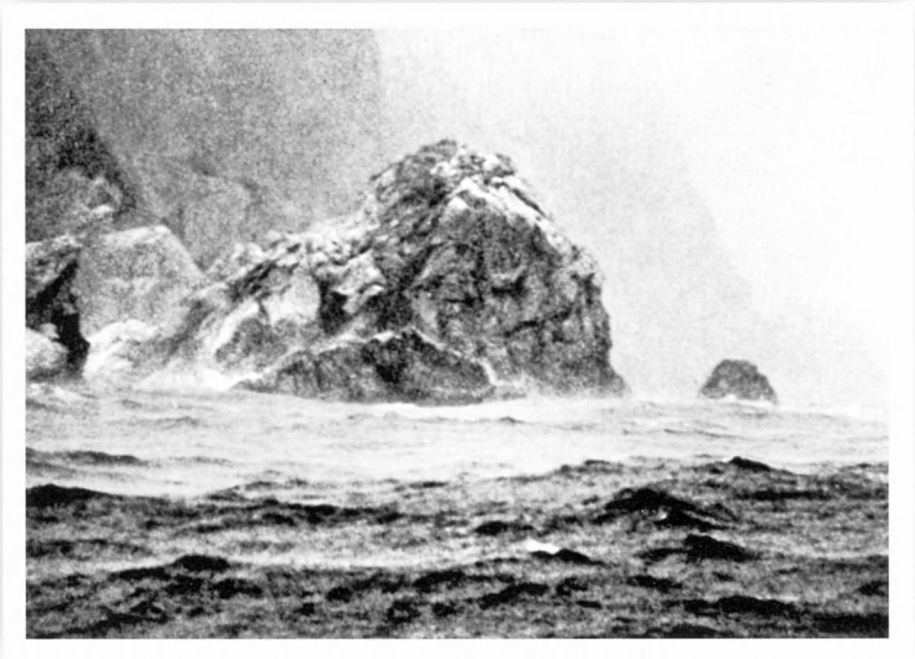
[22] Grant and Higgins, *Coastal Glaciers of Prince William Sound and Kenai Peninsula*, 60.

[23] Nina Faust, "Exploring the Kenai Peninsula," *Alaska* 43 (July 1977), 6.

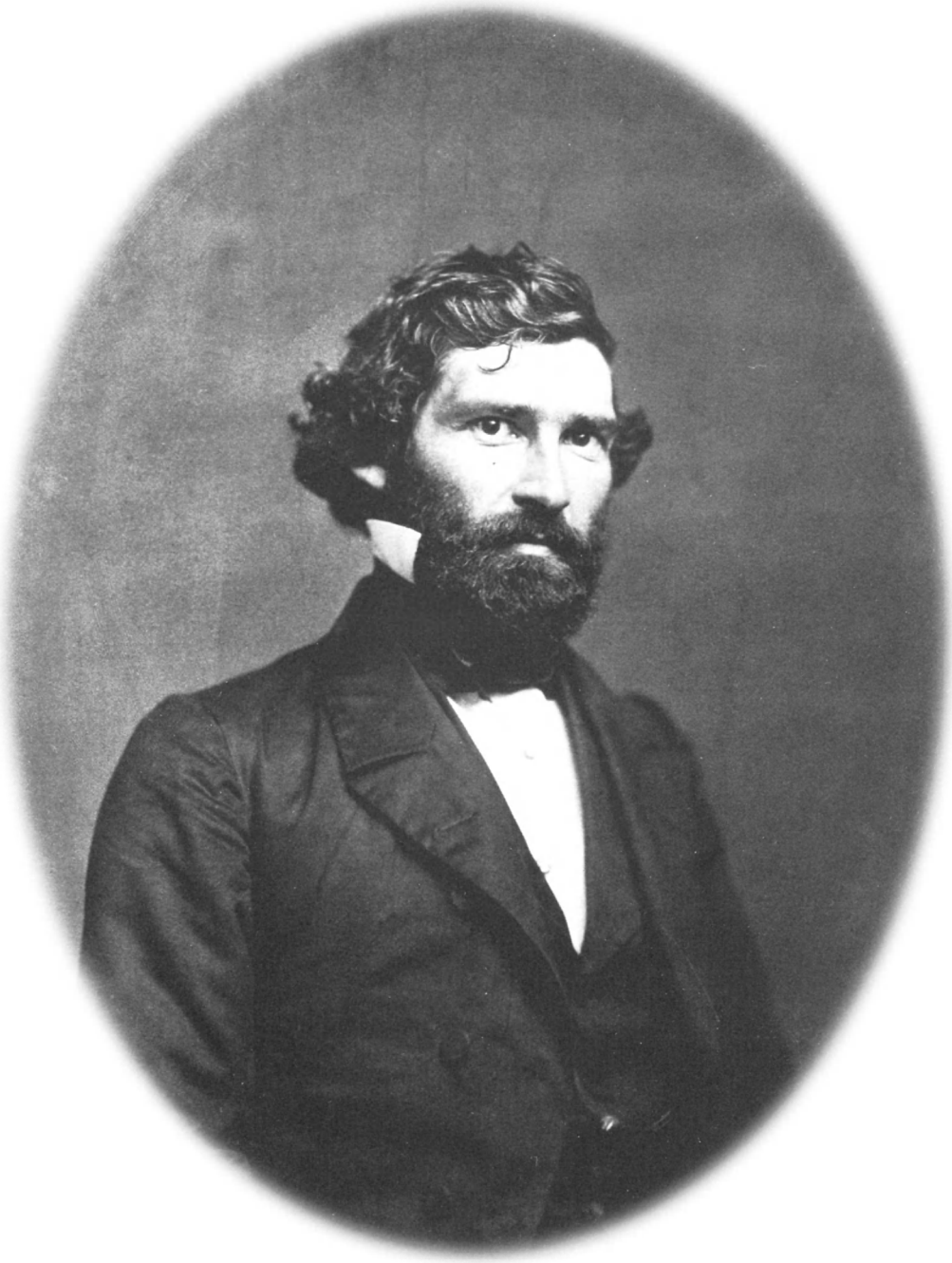
[24] Alan Edward Schorr, *Alaska Place Names*, 3rd ed. (Juneau, Denali Press, 1968), 46.

[25] Don Follows, Memorandum, 9 May 1977, 5, at KEFJ.

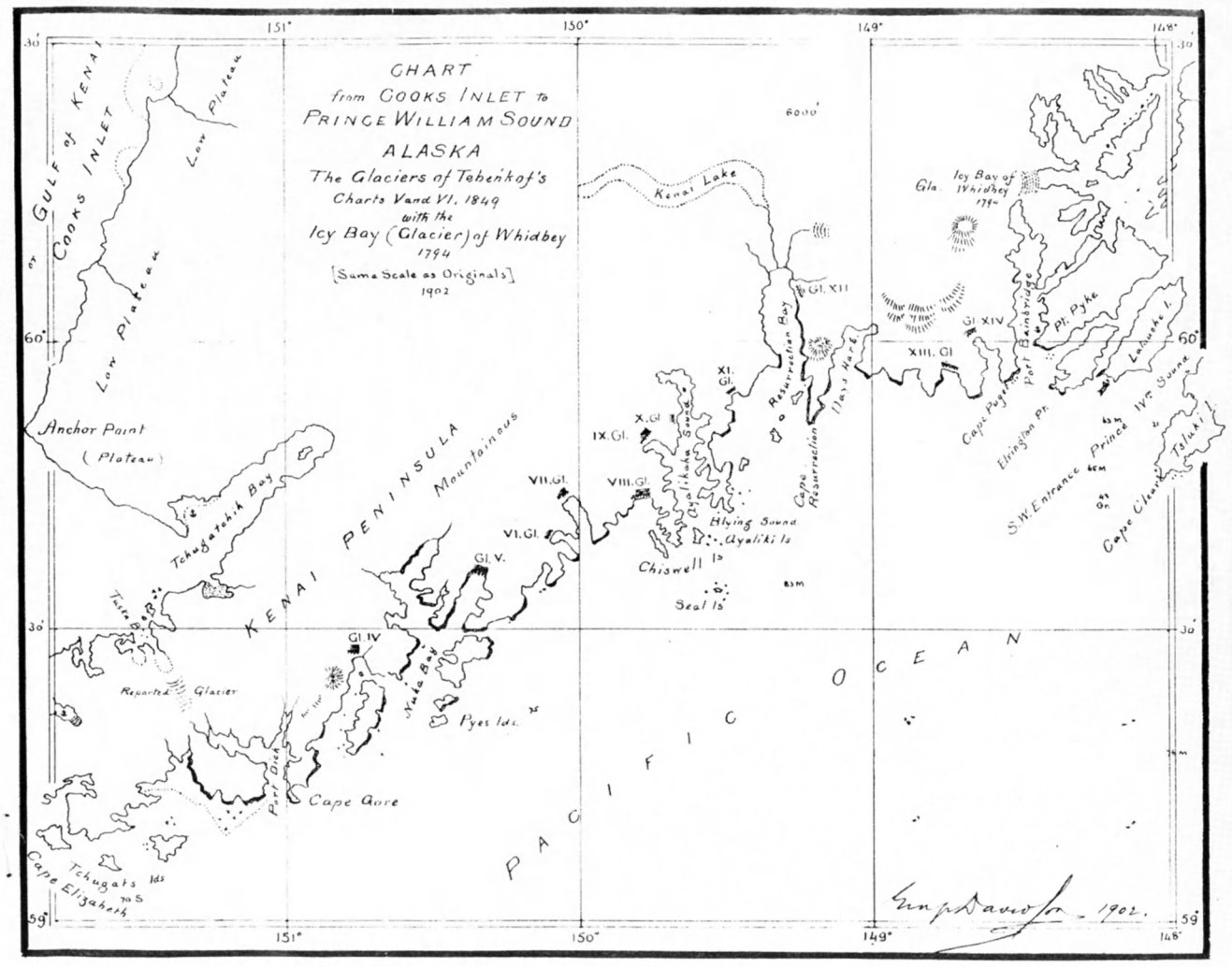
Sea stacks are a common feature along the Kenai Fjords coastline. M. Woodbridge Williams/NPS photo in *Alaska Regional Profiles, Southcentral Region*, July 1974, 36.



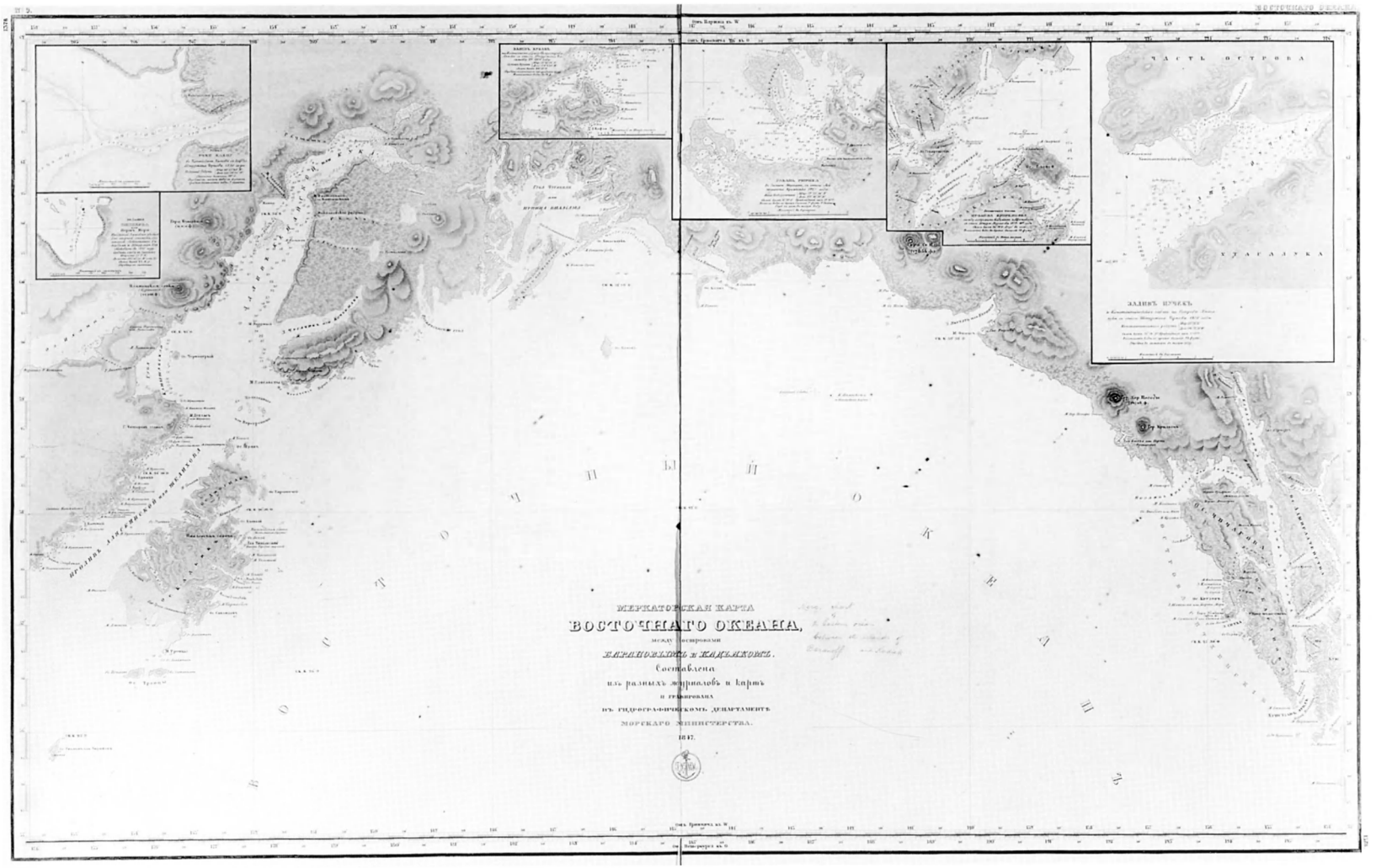
Aialik Cape, and the remainder of the southern Kenai Peninsula coast, are notable for being windswept and stormy. M. Woodbridge Williams/NPS photo in *Alaska Regional Profiles, Southcentral Region*, July 1974, 20.



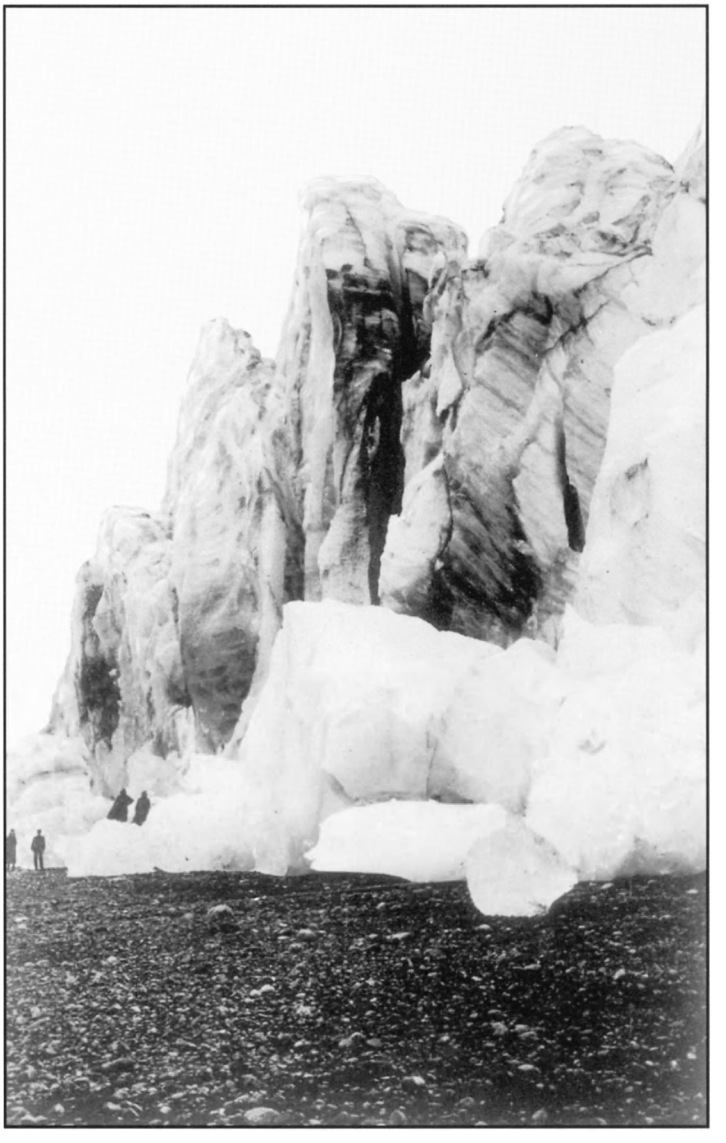
George Davidson portrait. Bancroft Library.



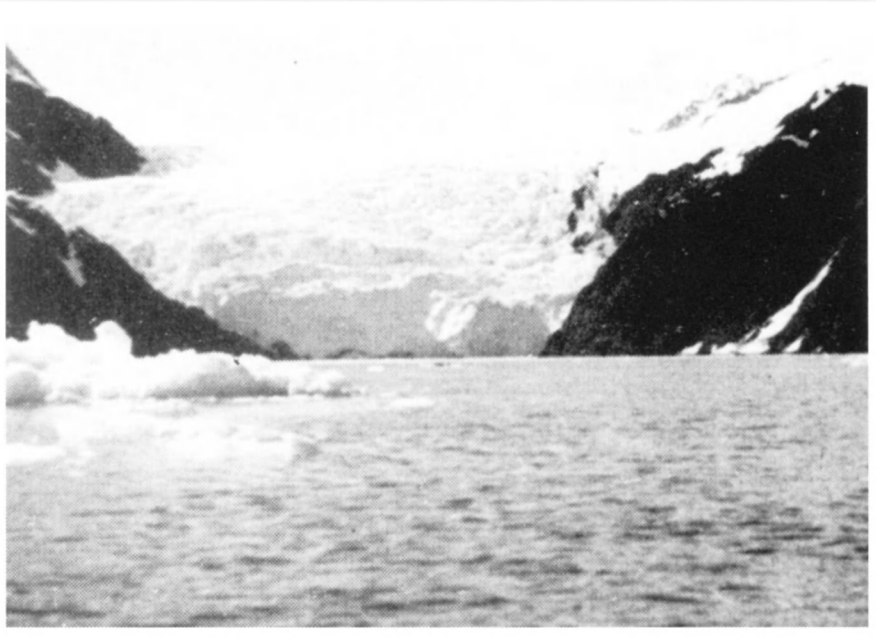
George Davidson's illustration of glaciers on outer coast in 1902. Bancroft Library.



Russian Hydrographic Dept. Chart 1378, 1847. Library of Congress.

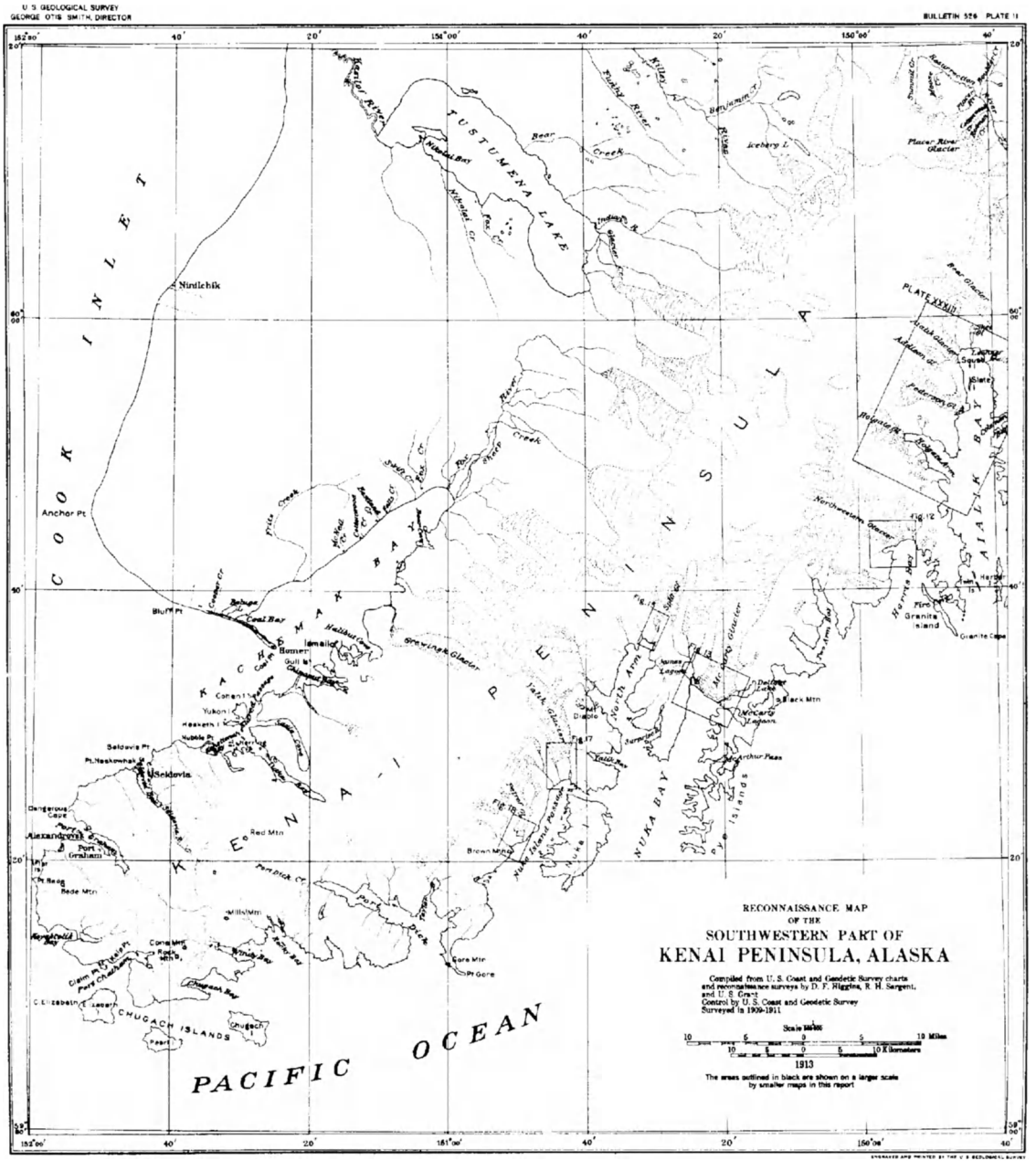


Adventurers explore McCarty Glacier during 1919 USC&GS expedition. National Archives, photo 23-G-IAD-9795.

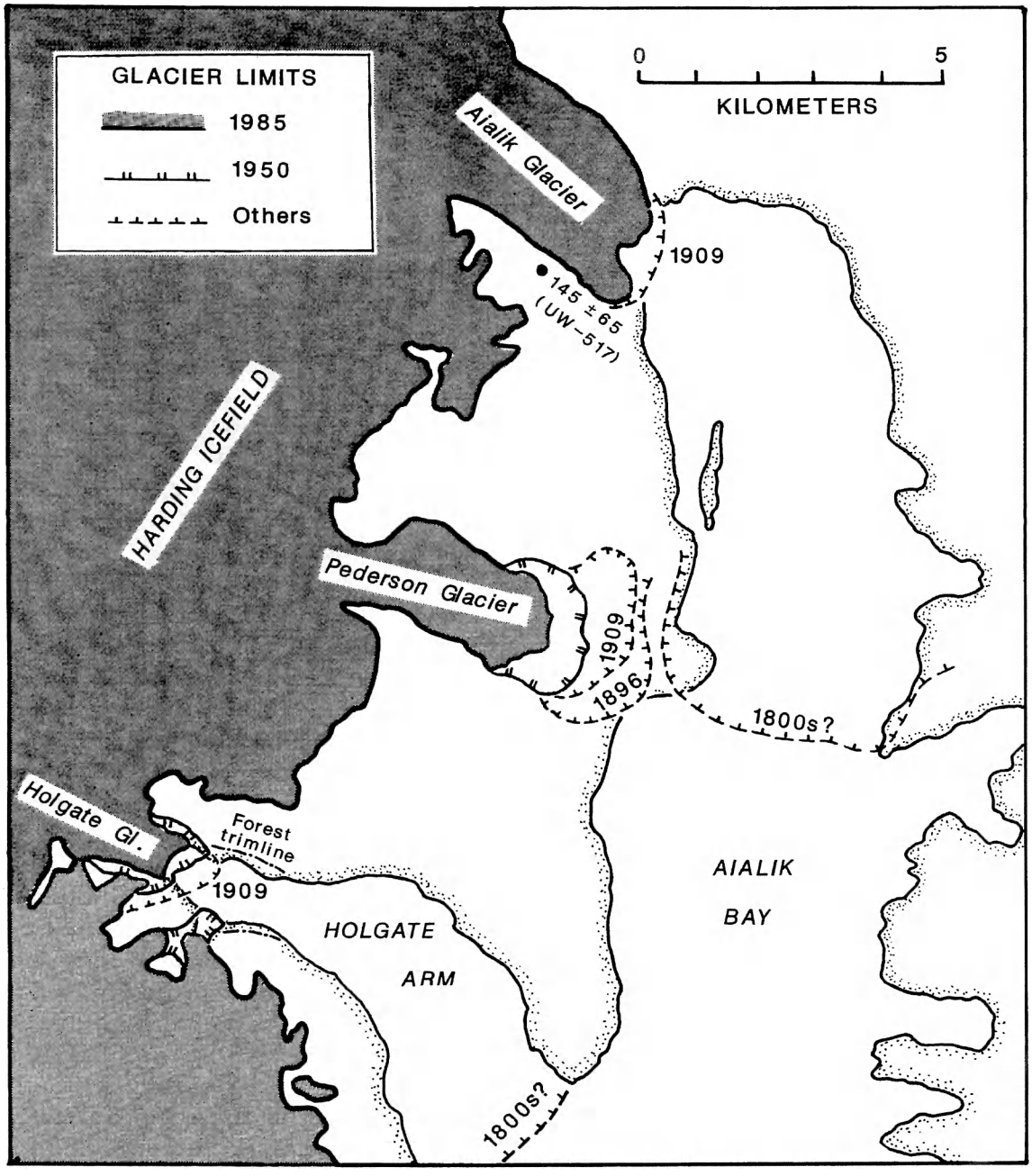


Holgate Glacier, as it appeared in the spring of 1955.
Alaska Sportsman, August 1956, 19.

Northwestern Glacier, as it appeared in the mid-1940s.
Alaska Sportsman, October 1946, 20.



USGS Reconnaissance Map of Grant, Higgins, and Sargent, surveyed 1901-1911.



Glacier limits in the Aialik Bay area. Steven W. Nelson and Thomas D. Hamilton, *Guide to the Geology of the Resurrection Bay-Eastern Kenai Fjords Area*, Anchorage, Alaska Geological Society, 1989, 25.

> At the west side of the entrance to Resurrection Bay a great glacier [Bear Glacier] comes down the mountainside. Its moraines, coming from two sides, connect into one dark stripe down the middle of the glacier. As we advanced into Resurrection Bay we could see more and more of the branch of Nunikofski Glacier on the eastern shore. Streams run from under it as they do from Resurrection Glacier.[26]

George Davidson wrote of the bay in his 1904 article, yet given his tendency to reiterate earlier works and rely heavily on other sources, it is unclear if his description actually corresponded with how the bay appeared in the early 1900s. He wrote, "The head of Resurrection Bay is nearly three miles wide, and on the eastern shore, two miles from the head, is a glacier [Godwin Glacier] one mile wide facing the west and a little back from the shore."[27] Harding Gateway at the entrance to Resurrection Bay was named during the presidential visit to Seward on July 17, 1923.[28]

Aialik Bay

Aialik Bay, a deeply forged inlet formed by the retreat of the Aialik, Pederson, and Holgate glaciers, extends approximately twenty-two miles from the face of Aialik Glacier to the Gulf of Alaska. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, USC&GS surveyor Paul Whitney observed that the Aialik Glacier was unique among Alaska glaciers because it likely left a "bar across the bay centuries ago."[29] In 1908 and 1909 geologists Grant and Higgins named Aialik Glacier and Aialik Cape after Aialik Bay, a name that originated from an "eskimo name obtained by the Russians and recorded as Bukh[ta] Ayalikskaya."[30] The glacier extends four miles from Harding Icefield to Aialik Bay.

Between 1908 and 1911, Grant also named several other features in the bay: Pederson Glacier, Coleman Bay, Holgate Arm, and Holgate Glacier. The derivation of the name Coleman is unknown. Grant named Holgate glacier for Dr. Thomas F. Holgate, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts of Northwestern University.[31] A field geologist during the summer, Grant was also a professor and the chair of the Northwestern University geology

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[26] Lt. P. Doroshin, *A Russian Engineer Prospected for Gold in Russian America*, 1848-1858, n.p., at ARLIS.

[27] Davidson, *The Glaciers of Alaska*, 20.

[28] For a discussion of the features named after President Harding in the vicinity of the park, see Donald J. Orth, *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*, (Washington, GPO, 1967), 406.

[29] Whitney, "The Recent Retreat of the McCarty Glacier," 391.

[30] Orth, *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*, 54.

[31] *Ibid.*, 230, 425.

department. Grant accepted the position in 1899 and remained with the university until his death in 1932.[32] Addison Glacier is located between Pederson and Aialik glaciers. Grant named this glacier for his eldest son, Addison Winchell.[33]

The group of jagged rocky islands at the mouth of Aialik Bay acquired the name Ostrova Ayaliki during the Russian period. Then, in 1786, Captain Nathaniel Portlock visited the site and named them the Chiswell Islands, after a wealthy man named Trench Chiswell.[34] Portlock's name still holds.

Harris Bay

> Northwestern Lagoon is surrounded by high ice-capped peaks with glaciers flowing down the mountains from the top of Harris Peninsula. Upper Northwestern Lagoon has only recently been deglaciated, the glaciers having receded a mile or more in the last 20 years. Arctic terns and mew gulls were the first to colonize islands recently exposed by these receding glaciers.[35] – Nina Faust, 1977

Harris Bay forms at the mouth of Northwestern Glacier and Northwestern Lagoon. In 1908-09 Grant and Higgins named both the bay and the glacier for Abram W. Harris, president of Northwestern University between 1906 and 1916 and a friend of Grant.[36] In 1938 calving ice from the Northwestern Glacier crowded Harris Bay, the lagoon was "shoal and foul," and the entrance was "blocked by rocks, bars, and usually by large cakes of ice."[37]

McCarty Fjord or East Arm of Nuka Bay

McCarty Glacier is believed to have been named after William McCarty of Seward. The USGS reported and recorded the local name in 1911. William McCarty was an entrepreneur and boat builder who owned the McNeily Cafe or Moose Cabin Cafe in Seward during the years 1904-05.

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[32] Patrick M. Quinn, Northwestern University Archivist, furnished this information to Ms. Cook on 27 May 1992. The Northwestern University Archives houses the Ulysses Sherman Grant Papers. These papers include materials relating to Grant's summer work with the USGS in Alaska.

[33] Orth, *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*, 47.

[34] Orth stated that Nathaniel Portlock named the rock after Trench Chiswell; the Russian name was "Ostrova Ayaliki" and may have been Native in origin. Orth, *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*, 213.

[35] Faust, "Exploring the Kenai Peninsula," 6.

[36] In letter from Patrick M. Quinn, Northwestern University Archivist, to the author, 28 July 1992.

[37] U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, *U.S. Coast Pilot: Alaska, Part II, Yakutat Bay to Arctic Ocean* (Washington, GPO, 1938), 107.

In 1913 Alfred H. Brooks of the USGS named the Dinglestadt Glacier, on the fjord's west side, for Konstantin Dingelshtedt, an employee of the Russian-American Company. In 1834 Dingelshtedt and fellow employee Ivan Chernof circumnavigated the west coast of the Kenai Peninsula.[38] Chernof Glacier is located ten miles to the north; both glaciers are part of the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge.

McArthur Pass derived its name from the USC&GS steamer that was commissioned to survey the outer Kenai coast in 1906-07. In 1911, Grant named James Lagoon in honor of Captain James Bettels, a longtime Valdez resident. In 1927 and 1928, the USC&GS named Moonlight Bay and Roaring Cove, respectively, for descriptive reasons.[39]

Nuka Bay (West Arm)

The estuary of Nuka Bay is ten miles wide and divides into two distinct bodies of water or arms. The name of what was originally called East Arm became McCarty Fjord. In 1826 Lieutenant Gavriil Sarychev published an Alutiiq or Eskimo name for the bay. The name Guba Nuka, or Nuka Bay, is derived from "nukaq" which refers to a "young bull caribou."[40] Sarychev had visited the area in 1790 and provided one of the earliest descriptions. His accounts attested to the impressive range of the glacier. He noted that

> Nuka Bay is seven miles and a half broad at its entrance. It extends nine miles in length, having mountainous and woody shores. In the interior shore of the bay, we found in the cleft of a mountain, snow or ice, so high as almost to reach above the tops of the trees.[41]

Nuka Glacier, northwest of the bay, is an outflow glacier from the Iceworm Peak Glacier Complex. It flows into Bradley Lake but is located near the headwaters of the Nuka River.[42] The river is in the park, but the glacier is primarily outside. In 1908 the USC&GS bestowed the name Nuka on the large island to the west of the bay's mouth. Grant and Higgins named

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[38] Orth, *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*, 272.

[39] *Ibid.*, 469, 653, 807.

[40] These Russian and Pacific Alutiiq names are found on Gavriil Sarychev's 1826 map of the region.

[41] Gawrila Sarytschew, *Account of a Voyage of Discovery to the North-East of Siberia, The Frozen Ocean, and North-East Sea*, Vol. II, Translated from the Russian (London, Richard Phillips, 1807), 20-21.

[42] Prior to the 1980s, the water issuing from Nuka Glacier flowed into Nuka River as well as Bradley Lake. For further discussion of this topic, see Chapter 5.

Yalik Glacier for the small settlement of the same name in Yalik Bay, which is part of Nuka Bay.[43]

Split Glacier—so named because a huge boulder has forced the river of ice to follow two paths—is located at the head of North Arm of Nuka Bay. Grant and Higgins noted that the glacier looked like an obvious route for travel and exploration between Nuka and Kachemak bays.[44] Few, however, have followed that route during the decades that have followed their observation.

Portages

Historical accounts of the coast, with the exception of Ivan Petroff's enumeration of the territory for the Tenth Census and Frank Lowell's somewhat confusing account of the relocation of local residents, drew attention to the absence of villages. Evidence of historic land use, and the presence of people and activity along the coast, existed in the description of trails that crossed the peninsula. These trails linked people of the southern Kenai coast with resources and trading partners in Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound.

Henry Elliott, an illustrator and assistant agent to the Treasury Department, also commented on the lack of villages but alluded to the presence of seasonal inhabitants in an 1877 article on Alaska for *Harper's New Monthly Magazine.*

> The vast reach of the coast and country between Sitka and Kodiak, including Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound, is not marked by a single civilized settlement—not a single one—only two or three small trading-posts on the eastern shore of the inlet, and all the rest is as wild as the bear or the grouse found in its dreary solitudes. The Indians sojourning there at wide intervals in small bands are but slightly modified from their condition and habit when first seen by white men a century and a half ago; through the instrumentality of the traders, they have fire-arms and blankets, lead, powder, beads, iron, and tobacco; otherwise the descriptions of Cook, Vancouver, Portlock, and Dixon are as true and vivid of them as our own notes are taken today.[45]

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[43] The Russian word *yalik* means small boat.

[44] Grant and Higgins, *Coastal Glaciers of Prince William Sound and Kenai Peninsula*, 65.

[45] Henry W. Elliott, "Ten Years Acquaintance with Alaska: 1867-1877," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* (November 1877), 804.

Teben'kov had made similar observations about the range and extent of trails on the peninsula:

> This isthmus [Portage Pass] consists of a pass between the mountains, covered by ice, under which streams flow, melting during the summer into sheer ice fields. The boldest of the Natives set out across the isthmus in winter, when the icy passes and the channels of the streams are strewn with snowdrifts.[46]

In the late 1890s the U.S. government and military began to investigate trails on the peninsula. In 1898, Lieutenant H. G. Learnard of the 14th Infantry received instructions to inventory and explore sections of the Kenai Peninsula that interested the military. The army needed first hand information, especially on Native trails and portages, to learn of routes to existing forts and to identify other routes that could be used by miners and prospectors entering the region. Learnard's party consisted of Corporal Young, seven enlisted men, Captain Howe and his son, and Walter C. Mendenhall, a geologist with the USGS. The party first crossed the peninsula from Portage Glacier in Prince William Sound to Turnagain Arm. Their second crossing of the peninsula started at Resurrection Bay. On May 30, 1898, Learnard's orders instructed him to leave Resurrection Bay and scout out a trail north to Sunrise City, on Cook Inlet. Taking only a party of three—himself, Mendenhall, and a civilian named Bagg—Learnard set out on the morning of May 31. Each man carried sixty pounds of gear which included ten days' worth of rations, but no tents.[47] The crew followed a makeshift mining trail that started at head of the bay. After about one-half mile the trail widened into a rough mining road that followed Salmon Creek. A California mining company had cut the road to haul in their gear. Reaching Kenai Lake, Learnard's crew stopped for dinner at a log cabin that miners had recently built. At many points along the route, the party encountered groups of miners. The number of miners attested to the ever-growing interest in the region.

As a member of Learnard's party, Mendenhall became the first geologist to cross the peninsula.[48] His findings resulted in the production of a topographic map of the area and an initial inventory of geological information.

In 1906 geologist Alfred Brooks reported on the use of glaciers and glacial moraines as trails across the peninsula.

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[46] Teben'kov, *Atlas of the Northwest Coasts of America*, 23.

[47] Lieutenant H. G. Learnard, "A Trip from Portage to Turnagain Arm and Up The Sushnita," in *Exploration in Alaska* (Washington, GPO, 1899), 649.

[48] G. C. Martin, B. L. Johnson and U. S. Grant, *Geology and Mineral Resources of Kenai Peninsula, Alaska*, U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin 587 (Washington, GPO, 1915), 16.

> Many large glaciers discharge into the fiords of Prince William Sound of the eastern shore of Kenai Peninsula. Portage Bay, the western arm of Prince William Sound, is connected by a low glacier-filled pass with Turnagain Arm. This gap has long been used by the Natives. A broad valley stretches inland from Resurrection Bay, and its upper end is separated from streams flowing into Turnagain Arm by a pass only 1,000 feet high. Through this natural highway in to the interior a railway is now being built.[49]

In 1914 geologists Ralph Tarr and Lawrence Martin researched the Portage Glacier, and determined that it was free of ice in 1794.[50] These observations are based on Vancouver's writings in which he recounted information learned from Russians. Vancouver described a cross-peninsula trade route near Portage Valley "across which isthmus is the route, by which they [the Russians] state that all their intercourse between the Russian settlements, in this and that extensive inlet [Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound], was now carried on."[51] Only during this century has the glacier advanced and grown.

Knowing that routes existed over the Portage Pass glacier diminishes the idea that glaciers were barriers to communication and trade or that glaciers were walls that isolated both terrain and inhabitants. It also distinguished the people who mastered the trails as bearing hardships that by today's standards seem insurmountable. The geography of Kenai Fjords National Park presupposes any introduction to the region's cultural resources; so bound together are the park's historic resources with its setting.

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[49] Alfred H. Brooks, *Geography and Geology of Alaska,* USGS Professional Paper No. 45 (Washington, GPO, 1906), 57.

[50] Ralph S. Tarr and Lawrence Martin, *Alaska Glacier Studies of the National Geographic Society* (Washington, National Geographic Society, 1914), 362-64.

[51] Vancouver as quoted in Frederica de Laguna, *Chugach Prehistory* (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1956), 2.

Illustration by Rockwell Kent from *Wilderness, A Journal of Quiet Adventure in Alaska*, 1920. The Rockwell Kent Legacies.

Map 2-1 **Historic Sites-Native Lifeways**

Chapter 2. Living on the Outer Kenai Peninsula

> The east coast of Cook Inlet is called the Kenai Peninsula, a land with a backbone of glaciers sliding icy spines into the Gulf of Alaska where Eskimo once occupied the fjords facing the open sea.[1] – Cornelius B. Osgood, 1937

The Chugach and Unegkurmiut

The Kenai Peninsula's earliest inhabitants were a people in transition. Living on a narrow strip of land between the edge of the Kenai Mountains and the surge of the Pacific Ocean, the Natives of the outer coast constituted one of the easternmost groups of Pacific Eskimo. The archeological data suggest that most of the sites known today are about 800 years old.[2] Only some of these villages were still inhabited at the time of Russian contact; even fewer existed until the twentieth century. Many speculate that these coastal people migrated to the coast from Kodiak Island or the Alaska Peninsula and traded along the length of the Pacific coast.

The Native inhabitants of the Pacific coast of the Kenai Peninsula region are called the Alutiiq Chugach. Variants of the name Chugach occur in Russian, American, and European ethnographic studies and is generally inclusive of Pacific Eskimo who lived from Cape Elizabeth to the eastern coastal areas of Prince William Sound. By some historical accounts, the name Chugach is a derivative of the Russian-Eskimo name for Prince William Sound and the Chugach Islands near Kachemak Bay. Traveling between the two regions, the Natives crossed a portage through one of the fjords to arrive in Kachemak Bay near the Chugach Islands. The prolific, though not always reliable, Russian chronicler Ivan Petroff stated that the name "Chugach" was a Russian version of the tribal name of Sh-Ghachit Shoit (the latter word means simply "people").[3] The scientist and naturalist William Dall called them Chugachmiut, placing a "miut" at the end of the word to imply "dwellers of."

Many anthropologists maintain that the Eskimo of the outer Kenai Peninsula, the Unixkugmiut or Unegkurmiut, were a separate people from

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[1] Cornelius B. Osgood, *The Ethnology of the Tanaina* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1937), 17.

[2] Aron Crowell and Dan Mann, "Sea Level Dynamics, Glaciers, and Archaeology Along the Central Gulf of Alaska Coast," *Arctic Anthropology* 3:2 (1996), 20.

[3] Ivan Petroff, "The Limits of the Innuit Tribes on the Alaska Coast." *American Naturalist* (1882), 568.

the nine Chugach subtribes of the larger Prince William Sound island region. It is presumed that the Unegkurmiut's affiliation lay more with the inhabitants of Kodiak Island. The Unegkurmiut are believed to have once inhabited a larger portion of the Kenai Peninsula and may have been one of several other unknown Pacific Eskimo subtribes.[4] Frederica de Laguna, who visited the region in the 1930s and documented a dozen sites, contended that Kenai Peninsula inhabitants, whose range extended from Puget Bay to Cook Inlet, were not tribesmen of the Chugach.[5] Historical references, in part, support this view. Baranov referred to the Natives in his charge at Resurrection Bay as *inovertsy* meaning "men of other faith."[6] Carl Merck, the naturalist on Captain Joseph Billing's 1790 expedition, met local inhabitants in the vicinity of Nuka Bay and learned they were called Chugachi. These inhabitants made a point of warning Merck of other Natives who had the same name.[7] Davydov, who visited the area shortly after 1800, made a connection between the Kenai coastline and the name and territory of the Native inhabitants:

> In Voskresensk (Resurrection) Bay, where the Chugaches live, there is also an *artel*; further on is also one in Chugatsk Bay, or Prince William Sound, on Nuchek Island. From time to time the inhabitants of the Copper River come here in huge boats to see the hostages that have been taken away from them, and to sell the furs and raw copper which they have brought with them.[8]

In the 1830s Ferdinand Wrangell wrote on the ancestral lineage of the Chugach, drawing an association between the people of the outer Kenai coast and Kodiak Island. Wrangell maintained that the Chugach were descendants of the people living on Kodiak Island.

> The Chugach were driven from the island of Kadiak after internal strife there and eventually reached the site of their present settlements on the shores of Prince William Sound

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[4] Donald W. Clark, "Pacific Eskimo: Historical Ethnography," in *Handbook of North American Indians*, edited by William C. Sturtevant, Vol. 5, *Arctic* (Washington, Smithsonian Institution, 1984), 185.

[5] de Laguna, *Chugach Prehistory*, 9.

[6] P. A. Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian-American Company*, Vol. 2, translated and edited by Richard A. Pierce and Alton Donnelly (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1978), 31.

[7] Carl Heinrich Merck, *Siberia and Northwestern America 1788-1792, The Journal of Carl Heinrich Merck*, translated by Fritz Jaensch, Materials for the Study of Alaska History, No. 17, edited by Richard A. Pierce (Kingston, Ontario, The Limestone Press, 1980), 111.

[8] G. I. Davydov, *Two Voyages to Russian America, 1802-1807*, Translated by Colin Bearne, edited by Richard A. Pierce (Kingston, The Limestone Press, 1977), 192.

> and west as far as the entrance to Cook's Inlet. It is certain that they are of the same tribe as the Kadiaks.[9]

Wrangell also noted that the residents of both Kodiak Island and the Gulf Coast had similar clothing in contrast to other Alaska Natives he had encountered. He observed, "they do not dress in reindeer skins, like the other tribes of these regions, but make their parkas (winter garments) from birdskin and their kamleis (summer garments) from the intestines of whales and seals."[10]

The following observations, published in 1836, support Wrangell's views and give insight into what people knew and recorded about the region.

> Two tribes are found, on the Pacific Ocean, whose kindred language, though exhibiting some affinities both with that of the Western Eskimaux and with that the Athapascas, we shall, for the present, consider as forming a distinct family. They are the Kinai, in and near Cook's Inlet or River, and the Ugaljachmutzi (Ougalachmioutsy) of Prince William Sound. The Tshagazzi, who inhabit the country between those two tribes, are Eskimaux and speak a dialect nearly the same with that of the Konagen of Kakjak [Kodiak] Island.[11]

Petroff thought that the origin of the people was evident in their preference for skin boats rather than wooden dugouts. Wood was the technology so preferred by the Tlingits, who were the southern neighbors of the Chugach. Petroff's observations are worded in such a way as to suggest that he reached these conclusions almost by a process of elimination. He noted, "The exclusive use of the kaiak or bidarka in this Alpine region, with dense forests and dangerous beaches, can only be explained by the emigration of the people from other regions devoid of timber."[12]

Finally, Birket-Smith stated that his informant in the 1950s would call himself a name meaning "Eskimo of Prince William Sound", drawing a

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[9] Ferdinand P. Wrangell, *Russian America: Statistical and Ethnographic Information on the Russian Possessions on the Northwest Coast of America*, translated from the German edition of 1839 by Mary Sadouski, edited by Richard A. Pierce (Kingston, The Limestone Press, 1980), 59.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] Albert Gallatin, "A Synopsis of the Indian Tribes within the United States East of the Rocky Mountains, and in the British and Russian Possessions in North America," in *Archaeologia Americana, Transactions and Collections of the American Antiquarian Society* 2 (1836), 14.

[12] Ivan Petroff, "The Limit of the Innuit Tribes on the Alaska Coast," 571. This suggests that Petroff believed the outer coast inhabitants were strongly influenced by the inhabitants of Kodiak Island, where there are no trees on the western portion.

marked distinction between he and those from Seward, Nuka Bay, and points west.[13]

Other anthropologists, however, present a different lineage for the people of the outer coast. Hassen suggests that the Chugach were kinsmen of the Unegkurmiut of Resurrection Bay, Nuka Bay, and Port Graham, implying a marked regional and perhaps ethnographic distinction.[14] There is also the speculation that the Unegkurmiut lived well into the southern portion of Cook Inlet only to be pushed back by the Koniag.[15] At the time of Russian and European contact, the territory of the Dena'ina included all of Cook Inlet except for the southern end of the Kenai Peninsula and outer coast.[16] Captain James Cook met Natives near North Foreland, which lies south of present day village of Tyonek, and there he observed a resemblance to others whom he had encountered on the Gulf of Alaska coast. He noted that "I could observe no difference between the persons, dress, ornaments, and boats of these people, and those of Prince William's Sounds, except that the small canoes were rather of a less size, and carried only one man...."[17]

The above statements suggest that there is little consensus and even less descriptive material on the people who inhabited the remote Kenai coast. Many agree that the Unegkurmiut were an obscure people.[18] Oswalt epitomized what scant information existed by stating, "They were Suk-speaking Eskimos whose roots were shallow and whose success was moderate."[19]

Despite these different viewpoints, many observations can be made about the Kenai coast inhabitants from the records of the Russian, English, and Spanish mariners and traders and the history of the of the Dena'ina, Koniag, Chugach, and Tlingit. Looking at the outer coast inhabitants from the perspective of their neighbors gives an insight into the identity of these people. Most of the ethnographic research for this context is based on the Chugach, for whom there is more documentation. From general prototypes of Chugach land use and subsistence, some inferences can be made about the lifestyle of the Unegkurmiut.

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[13] Kaj Birket-Smith, *The Chugach Eskimo* (Copenhagen, Nationalmuseet, 1953), 19.

[14] Harold Hassen, *The Effect of European and American Contact on the Chugach Eskimo of Prince William Sound, Alaska, 1741-1930* (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 1978), 46.

[15] Oswalt, *Alaskan Eskimos*, 244.

[16] In a letter to Keith Trexler, NPS, Anchorage, from Joan B. Townsend, Associate Professor at the University of Manitoba, 18 September 1974, on file at the NPS, Alaska Support Office, Anchorage.

[17] de Laguna, *Chugach Prehistory*, 34.

[18] See Wendell H. Oswalt, *Alaskan Eskimos* (Scranton, Pennsylvania: Chandler Publishing Company, 1967), 244 and de Laguna, *Chugach Prehistory*, 34-35.

[19] Oswalt, *Alaskan Eskimos*, 244.

A People Few in Number

Alexander Walker, a British soldier and fur trader, provides one of the earliest descriptive accounts of the Chugach.

> The Inhabitants of Prince William Sound are a pensive phlegmatic People, without the least disposition for enquiry. Their countenances express none of their passions, but are full of a kind of unmeaning good natured Stare. Their complexion is Olive. In their Features they much resemble the Inhabitants of Nootka, having broad round faces, high Plump Cheeks, small flattish Noses, large Nostrils, small black Eyes. The Eyes of many of them are sore and watery, which probably arises from the smoke of their Houses and the glare of Snow. Their hair is black, and is generally worn short. Some of them shave or cut their beard, and others allow them to grow long.[20]

Walker's observations, made while on a voyage with James Strange to Prince William Sound in August 1786, supported the claim that the Chugach were few in number.

> This part of the World is either very thinly inhabited, or at the Season, in which we visited it, the greater part of the People had retired to some other place.... For even allowing that a great proportion of the Inhabitants had gone into the interior parts of the Country for the sake of Game, still if Prince William Sound were the residence of many people during the winter, it is likely, that in traversing so many places we would have fallen in with more of their Houses. We did not [altogether] see above one hundred People.... If detected they surrendered their plunder very quietly, but showed no marks of being conscious that their conduct had been improper. We several times discovered them attempting the Ironwork of the Vessels....[21]

The population size of the Chugach at the time of Russian contact is unknown, though Oswalt estimated that by 1800 there might have been only 600 inhabitants on the southern Kenai Peninsula.[22] The number of

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[20] Alexander Walker, *An Account of a Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America in 1785 and 1786*, edited by Robin Fisher and J. M. Bumsted (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1982), 149.

[21] *Ibid.*, 147.

[22] Oswalt, *Alaska Eskimos*, 243.

inhabitants along the coast fluctuated depending on who conducted a census at the time. Russian ethnographic studies, a by-product of the numerous censuses taken in the 1800s by the Russian-American Company and the Russian Orthodox Church, tended to count the Kenai inhabitants as one and the same with the Chugach. Perhaps this tendency represented an association with Chugach Bay or the many variations in name given for the people who traveled along the coast of the Gulf of Alaska. The practice may also have been the result of the relatively low number of inhabitants on the Kenai Peninsula coast in addition to the Russian practice of consolidating peoples and forming large hunting crews from many coastal areas. It may also have been simply a matter of convenience. When Ludwig von Hagemeister, the Russian Navy captain, ordered a census in the early half of the nineteenth century there were 477 Native Chugach and Oughalentse in the Prince William Sound region as compared to 1,471 people along Cook Inlet.[23] Teben'kov reported in the *Notes* to his 1852 atlas that "The Native population of Kenai Bay amounts to 1,000 souls of both sexes, they consist of a separate tribe, belonging to the Chugaches or to the Kad'iaks."[24] This surprisingly high number of inhabitants for the years following the smallpox epidemic is counterbalanced by Wrangell's earlier estimate in the 1830s that the Chugachiks, "as they called themselves," consisted of approximately 100 families.[25]

Late nineteenth century studies conducted under the auspices of the U.S. Department of the Interior also categorized the people of the Prince William Sound area as Chugach. In 1875, Dall enumerated the Chugach and observed that their living conditions were in a state of decline. He noted, "Being in localities where there is less fishing practicable, these tribes live principally by hunting and trapping. These are amiable and harmless, but in a savage condition."[26]

Warfare and Trade

As mentioned above, Wrangell maintained that the people of the outer coast originated in Kodiak. In the early and middle 1700s, prior to Russian contact, intertribal fighting alienated the Chugach faction to

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[23] Michael J. Levin, "Alaska Natives in a Century of Change," *Anthropological Papers of the University of Alaska* 23 (1991), 2.

[24] Teben'kov, *Atlas of the Northwest Coasts of America*, 19.

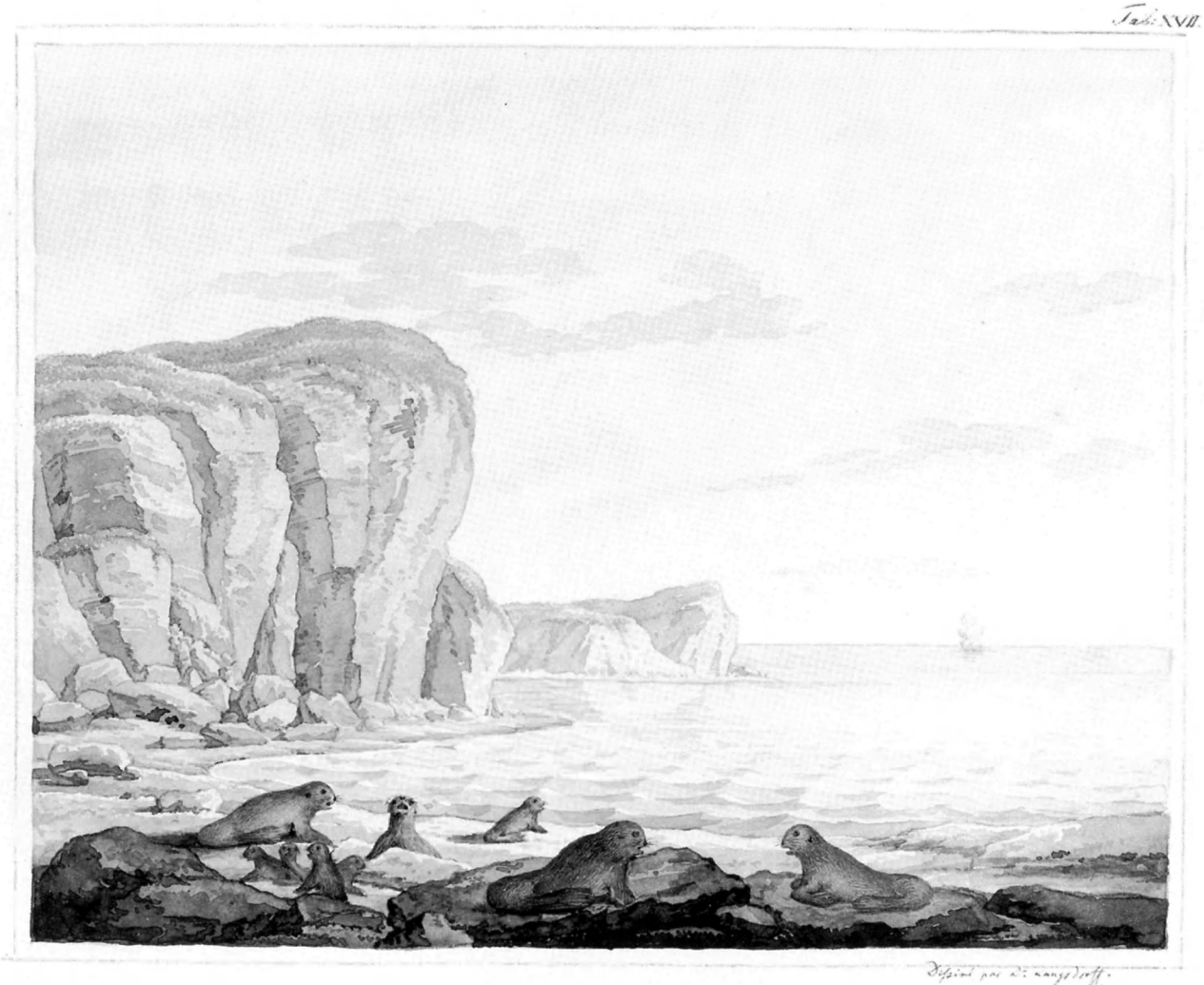
[25] Wrangell, *Russian America, Statistical and Ethnographic Information*, 59.

[26] William Dall, "Southeastern Innuit," in *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (1875), 204. Some of the Interior Department studies defined "Prince William Sound" so broadly that the region extended from the southern end of the Kenai Peninsula to Yakutat.

A woman of Prince William Sound. Alaska Purchase Centennial Commission. Alaska State Library, photo PCA 20-249.

Hunting baidarka. From the collection of Ball, Flamen. Alaska State Library, photo PCA 24-99.

A group of Natives by a barabara, 1901, above Seldovia. Anchorage Museum of History and Art, photo B91-9-142.



View of rocky beach with family of sea otters, from Georg Langsdorff, c. 1805. Bancroft Library.

Native paddlers rest in their baidarkas near Seldovia, c. 1916. Anchorage Museum of History and Art, photo B91-9-143.

Prince William Sound and "west as far as the entrance to Cook's Inlet."[27] This meant that settlement along the fjords on the Pacific coast was relatively recent at the time of Russian exploration. The Athapaskan Dena'ina to the north invaded and occupied the southern and coastal region surrounding Cook Inlet and Kachemak Bay, forcing the Eskimo south. Another theory maintained that the Chugach occupied Prince William Sound prior to Dena'ina settlement in Cook Inlet.[28] There were also territorial pressures from the Koniag on Kodiak Island to the southwest, and the Tlingit and Eyak to the southeast of Prince William Sound.[29]

Many Chugach stories told of conflict with the Koniag and the Tlingit, recounting the intensity and nature of intertribal raids.[30] As Birket-Smith documented in the story "The Fight with the Dena'ina," in the years prior to Russian contact many villages throughout the Kenai and Prince William Sound areas banded together to fend off a common enemy. In one decisive battle, men from the villages of Tatitlek, Nuchek, Chenega, Montague, Day Harbor, and Qutatluq (near Seward) defeated the Dena'ina in Cook Inlet.[31] Another story focused on atrocities committed against the wives of seal hunters on Kodiak.

> When a group of men went seal hunting, they left their wives at Johnstone Point [on Hinchinbrook Island] for safety. A war party from Kodiak Island came. The women, not wanting to reveal that no men were present, donned mustaches of bear fur. One woman leaned over the edge and dropped her mustache, alerting the war party to the women's ruse. The Kodiak Eskimos then climbed the rock and captured or killed the women. Months later the seal hunters successfully avenged the Kodiaks.[32]

Despite enmity and natural geographic boundaries that kept the Athapaskans and Koniag at somewhat of a distance, the Chugach traded extensively with all their neighbors, acquiring caribou skins and copper from the Ahtna and snowshoes, hatchets, and wedges from the Eyak.[33] Intertribal trade with the Koniag, Dena'ina, and Tlingit provided an

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[27] Wrangell, *Russian America, Statistical and Ethnographic Information,* 59.

[28] Hassen, *The Effect of European and American Contact on the Chugach Eskimo of Prince William Sound*, 46.

[29] Oswalt, *Alaskan Eskimos*, 241.

[30] de Laguna, *Chugach Prehistory*, 9.

[31] Birket-Smith, *The Chugach Eskimo*, 139-140.

[32] *Ibid.*, 139.

[33] Hassen, *The Effect of European and American Contact on the Chugach Eskimo of Prince William Sound, Alaska, 1741-1930*, 46.

exchange of sea and land mammal pelts. Kodiak residents also sought dentalium shell beads and spoons from the Chugach.[34]

Villages

The coastal topography of the Kenai Peninsula is similar to that of the Aleutian Islands, Kodiak Island, and Prince William Sound. Travel along the southern Kenai coast was common, as were longer expeditions to Prince William Sound, Kodiak Island, the Barren Islands, and Cook Inlet. Taking advantage of stopping points and layovers in protected coves and passes, the Kenai coast inhabitants managed to access all reaches of the peninsula in a series of stages. For journeys to Kodiak Island, the Barren Islands served as a convenient place to rest and take shelter.[35]

The use of portages, trails, and temporary camps provided an alternate route during stormy seas and inclement weather. Overland *baidarka* portages served as a back door to hunting and trade corridors on the peninsula. As noted in Chapter 1, a series of trails linked the coastal and inland regions of the Kenai Peninsula. Routes linked Prince William Sound and the head of Resurrection Bay with Turnagain Arm. These routes provided year round access to the coast, especially for the Dena'ina who were less adept at navigating in the open waters of the Pacific Ocean.

In general, the Pacific Eskimo identified with individual villages and village groups, rather than one large collective. Oswalt described village makeup and membership as "fluid" with subtribes having affiliation with one or more villages.[36] Archeological investigations in the 1930s by de Laguna and Birket-Smith in Prince William Sound detected small populations and scattered village sites despite an apparently rich resource base. Oswalt attributed sparse village distribution of the Unegkurmiut to a relatively unproductive environment despite the region's resource potential.[37] As noted in "The Fight with the Dena'ina", Chugach raiding parties from Prince William Sound ranged in size from twelve to twenty-eight men per village.[38] Others including Dall maintained that the fishing was sparse, especially in the lands closer to Prince William Sound. Hunting was the main source of food for the Chugach villages.

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[34] Richard A. Pierce, ed., *The Round the World Voyage of Hieromonk Gideon, 1803-1809* (Kingston, The Limestone Press, 1989), 57.

[35] Davydov, *Two Voyages to Russian America, 1802-1807*, 147.

[36] Oswalt, *Alaska Eskimos*, 5.

[37] *Ibid.*, 245.

[38] Harold Hassen, *Chugach Acculturation—An Ethnohistoric Approach*, (unpublished mss., Wichita State University, August 1974), 47.

Like the Koniag, the Pacific Eskimo were master mariners and hunted at sea. To maneuver small boats in open waters demanded a lifetime of skill. It was possible that the Unegkurmiut, like the Chugach, hunted at sea with bows and arrows and pursued whales with darts and harpoons.[39] Whales migrated along the open waters of the rugged coast, and hunters used the high rocky perches to spot the large mammals. In a world oriented primarily towards the sea, the Chugach depended on the open water for subsistence, a haven from enemies, and communication with other villages. Often one village, as in the case of Yalik (in Nuka Bay) and perhaps others, was self-sufficient and independent with its own chief.[40]

The Chugach divided the year and their activities between temporary transient summer camps and permanent winter villages. Surrounded in most areas by the lush growth of coniferous rainforest, the Chugach constructed rectangular-shaped winter dwellings of wooden planking insulated with packed moss. Portlock gave one of the most explicit descriptions of Chugach houses:

> Those I have seen are not more than four to six feet high, about ten feet long and about eight feet broad, built with thick plank and the crevices filled up with dry moss.... The method they use in making plank is, to split the trees with wooden or stone wedges; and I have seen a plank twenty or twenty five feet long, split from a tree by their method.[41]

The Unegkurmiut established village sites on the shores of bays with close access to bodies of water including lagoons, streams, or bays. Given an alternative, land travel was minimal. Sea routes provided easier access to coastal villages. Villages located on elevated shorelines provided commanding unobstructed views and a ready escape route by sea in the event of attack. Higher observation points were used to spot the approach of game and unwelcome strangers.[42] de Laguna contended that the need a for strategic village location outweighed other geographic factors including proximity to salmon streams and shellfish beds typically found at the headwaters of bays. For these reasons as well, the Chugach tended to place villages near the entrances to bays, rivers, and recessed fjords.

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[39] Oswalt, *Alaskan Eskimos*, 246.

[40] de Laguna, *Chugach Prehistory*, 36.

[41] Captain Nathaniel Portlock, *Voyage Round the World; But More Particularly to the North-west Coast of America* (New York, Da Capo Press, 1968), 253; as quoted by Hassen in *The Effect of European and American Contact on the Chugach Eskimo of Prince William Sound, Alaska, 1741-1930*, 33.

[42] James R. Marcotte, "Physiographic Aspects of the Chugach Eskimo Settlement Pattern," paper prepared for The Second Conference on Scientific Research in the National Parks, 26-30 November 1979, San Francisco, p. 2.

Seasonal fish camps were located near streams and rock outcrop islands. These camps and retreats were also located on protected bays. For these short periods of the year, however, more emphasis was placed on making camp near salmon rich streams than on high defensive points.[43] During these months village members moved away from the permanent settlements to fish for salmon and halibut and hunt whale.[44] Chugach summer dwellings varied from bark covered shelters with inverted skin boats for roofs to sturdier multi-family rectangular wooden houses.[45]

Village related structures and land use typically included cache islands for food, burial sites, portages, and offshore island retreats in times of attack. Secondary land use sites included sea otter hunting camps, garden sites, and egg, feather, and timber collecting sites.[46] Burial sites also had association. The Chugach covered the faces of their dead with death masks. In some instances the masks were placed next to the individual. The imagery on the mask depicted "family spirits pictured in animal or human forms."[47]

Other features, notably Sitka spruce trees marked and scarred by the harvesting of slabs of bark, constitute another indicator of cultural land use. Known as culturally modified trees, these trees bear the mark of where Chugach stripped and carved out patches of bark, both as a food source and as building and artisan material.

The number of actual villages that existed at any period in history along the coast is unknown. Determining locations for these villages has historical importance because many of these same sites continued to support both seasonal hunting crews and other resource uses. Site documentation profiled in 1991 for the Chugach Alaska Corporation supported a relationship between the location of earlier village sites and the later use of these areas as a base for seasonal hunting and trapping parties.[48]

While documentation of village sites and names for the outer coast within parklands is sparse and largely unknown, some village locations have been

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[43] See both Birket-Smith, *Chugach Eskimo*, 52, and Marcotte, "Physiographic Aspects of the Chugach Eskimo Settlement Pattern," 4.

[44] Oswalt, *Alaskan Eskimos*, 108.

[45] *Ibid.*, 109.

[46] Marcotte, "Physiographic Aspects of the Chugach Eskimo Settlement Pattern," 7.

[47] As quoted in Hassen, *Chugach Acculturation—An Ethnohistoric Approach*, 46, originally from de Laguna, *Chugach Prehistory*.

[48] See the section on the outer Kenai Coast in the *Report of Investigations for Chugach Alaska Corporation*, Vol. 3, Bureau of Indian Affairs, ANCSA Area Office (Anchorage, Alaska), 1991.

reported and others recorded. Known villages sites along the outer Kenai coast include: an unnamed settlement in Aialik Bay; Yalik Village in Nuka Bay; Nuna'tunaq in Rocky Bay; Kogiu-xtolik in Dogfish or Koyuktolik Bay; Axu'layik at Port Chatham; Chrome, or "To'qakvik" at the entrance of Port Chatham; the summer village of Nanu'aluq near the location of the Russian fort Alexandrovsk; and Palu'vik at Port Graham. The settlement in Aialik Bay may have been near Verdant Cove (south of Verdant Island) or at another point along the coast.[49]

Yalik village located in Yalik Bay is the only village on the coast within park boundaries to survive by name into the historic period, although historically it had other names.[50] Townsend suggests that the villages of Akhmylik and Yalik were one and the same.[51] The village of Yalik appeared in Petroff's 1880 census and is listed as Eskimo. de Laguna referred to the village by name in addition to two other abandoned settlements: one in Aialik Bay and a second known as Nuna'tunaq in Rocky Bay.[52] According to contacts she had along the coast, village residents were called *yaleymiut*, "an independent tribe with their own chief."[53]

Acculturation and Change

Many questions surround the decline of the Chugach and the events that led them to abandon their coastal homes in favor of larger villages. Equally, the fate of the Unegkurmiut is unknown though it is likely that several environmental and social factors common to the Kenai and Alaska peninsulas contributed to the decline in population and loss of villages. Russian influences and acculturation that so altered the Chugach and Dena'ina populations in general, including disease, hostilities, and relocation, directly affected the inhabitants of the outer Kenai coast. As a point of comparison, the Native population of Kodiak Island, which once lived in sixty-five different villages, had been consolidated into just seven by 1841.[54]

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[49] Telephone conversation with Pat Norman, Port Graham Village President, September 1992. Mr. Norman mentioned that a Chugach village existed in Aialik Bay until the early 1900s.

[50] Although this Russian word may conveniently correspond with the name of Yalik village, it is questionable and even unlikely that the Russians named it. The present spelling of Yalik is probably a variation of an earlier Alutiiq name for the village.

[51] Joan B. Townsend, "Journals of Nineteenth Century Russian Priests to the Tanaina: Cook Inlet, Alaska," *Arctic Anthropology* 11:1 (1974): 28.

[52] de Laguna, *Chugach Prehistory*, 15.

[53] Most of the village site information is derived from de Laguna in *Chugach Prehistory*, 35-36.

[54] S. B. Okun, *The Russian-American Company* (New York, Octagon Books, 1979), 202.

Russian expeditions based from settlements in the Aleutians and on Kodiak Island began to penetrate the outer Kenai coastline and Prince William Sound in the 1780s. As Russian *promyshlenniks* pushed eastward, Kenai Peninsula inhabitants fell in the path of hunting parties. Khlebnikov reported that Baranov sent the first hunting crew from Kodiak Island towards Yakutat Bay arriving in 1794. Baranov traveled to Prince William Sound to personally induct several Chugach into the hunting party.[55] Okun noted that the Russian-American Company had less involvement with Kenai and Chugach, rarely calling upon them to trade or work--Russian labor documents typically referred to them as "independent tribes."[56] However, many other references pointed out that the hunting parties leaving Kodiak Island passed along the outer Kenai coast on their way to Prince William Sound. Sarafian, for example, notes that

> In 1792, the Russians first attempted to employ Chugaches to hunt sea otter, but out of fear the Natives ran away and hid. By 1803, the company with the aid of gifts had induced the Chugaches of Chugach Bay to hunt sea otter and every summer thereafter about 60 Chugaches hunted this animal for it. At the end of the season, the company paid them the fixed price for their pelts in beads and tobacco.[57]

Often as many as 500 *baidarkas* participated in the hunting expeditions. Between 100 to 200 *baidarkas* traveled to other parts of the coast of Kodiak Island and along the shore of Alaska recruiting men from among the Kenai and Chugach. The constant shuffling and moving of residents led to the demise of many villages.

Baranov felt uncomfortable with the practice of consolidating villages and accused Shelikhov of "playing politics by asking [him] to hire them to leave their homes and face the unknown in the new settlements."[58] The Russians were very concerned by the drop in population. The number of available hunters decreased in the late 1700s, which Baranov attributed to the constant relocation of villages. Baranov noted that "From their

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[55] K. T. Khlebnikov, *Baranov: Chief Manager of the Russian Colonies in America*, edited by Richard A. Pierce and translated by Colin Bearne (Kingston, Ontario, The Limestone Press, 1973), 12.

[56] Okun, *The Russian American Company*, 206.

[57] Winston Lee Sarafian, *Russian-American Company Employee Policies and Practices, 1799-1867* (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California Los Angeles, 1970), 228.

[58] P. A. Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian American Company,* translated and edited by Richard A. Pierce and Alton Donnelly, Vol. II (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1978), 70, in letter from Baranov to Shelikov and Polevoi, from Paul's Harbor, 20 May 1795.

number, many are killed or drowned, too old or too young, or rotten from disease well known here."[59]

Heiromonk Gideon, a church envoy to the Russian colonies, noted in the early 1800s that hunting crews leaving Kodiak for Prince William Sound and beyond, typically took on recruits from the outer Kenai Peninsula.[60] After stopping at Fort Alexandrovsk near Cape Elizabeth, crews regrouped and traveled southeast along the coast. Near Resurrection Bay, crews awaited envoys from Voskresenskii Redoubt who joined them on route. Once at Nuchek, the leaders sized up the crew, leaving the weaker men to hunt in Prince William Sound. The others headed south. This practice left many villages essentially deserted in the summer.[61]

Heiromonk Gideon recorded the drop in the number of *baidarkas* that made up these hunting parties, pointing out that at one time 800 boats traveled the coast together.[62] By 1799 the number fell to 500 and within another five years only 300 *baidarkas* gathered at the call.

Shelikhov regarded the land on the Kenai Peninsula as rich with an abundance of birds, fish, and timber.[63] The Russians expedited crews from Kodiak Island to trap birds along the coast and on the islands between the mouth of Cook Inlet and Resurrection Bay.[64] These parties included people relocated from the Aleutians as well as Chugach and Kenaitze who were physically unable to participate in the hunting parties.[65] Forts at Kodiak, Nuchek, and Alexandrovsk on the outer peninsula were stopping points for crews gathering bird feathers and for hunters to join hunting parties.

Bird hunting was especially important to the Natives. Russian policy prevented Natives from making fur parkas. The Russians confiscated as many furs as possible for trade, leaving the Natives to fend off the winter cold with bird skin parkas. Davydov observed that "They are in general forbidden to wear clothes made from expensive furs, which they are obliged to give to the company. They are allowed to make clothes from hares, marmots, squirrels, and birdskins."[66] On the return trip to Kodiak, many of the hunters also stopped on the islands near Resurrection Bay to assist

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[59] *Ibid.*

[60] Pierce, ed., *The Round the World Voyage of Heiromonk Gideon, 1803-1809*, 62.

[61] Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian American Company*, 70.

[62] Pierce, ed., *The Round the World Voyage of Heiromonk Gideon*, 63.

[63] Grigorii Shelikhov, *A Voyage to America 1783-1786*, translated by Marina Ramsay, and edited by Richard A. Pierce (Kingston, Ontario, The Limestone Press, 1981), 48.

[64] Pierce, ed., *The Round the World Voyage of Heiromonk Gideon*, 68.

[65] Davydov, *Two Voyages to Russian America, 1802-1807*, 194.

[66] *Ibid.*, 193.

with the bird hunt.[67] Davydov related, "In the spring the Chugach also collected and preserved eggs for Russian consumption; in the winter the Company requested sheep and marmots."[68]

In one account of Russian traders leaving Nuchek Bay, the value of a fur parka is illustrated when a Native couple were obliged to part company:

> ... One of the Natives was persuaded to accompany the ship as guide; the wife of the man was furnished with a quantity of beads to console her for the absence of her husband but when the ship was ready to sail the man took off his only garment a marmot parka and gave it to his wife to keep; the commander then fitted him out with an Aleutian bird skin parka and a canvas shirt.[69]

Smaller, remote villages like those likely to have existed on the Kenai coast had little chance of survival given the demands of the Russian companies. After a grueling summer at sea, many men returned to their villages in the late fall. At that time, food and clothing needed to be stockpiled for the winter months ahead. After a few seasons of this regime, many villages fell into ruin. By the 1830s Wrangell observed that because of extensive intermixing between the people of the Kenai Peninsula, Kodiak Island, and Prince William Sound, their individuality had deteriorated.

Disease further annihilated village structure on the Kenai Peninsula. The first recorded epidemic spread through Kodiak Island and Cook Inlet in 1798.[70] The smallpox epidemics from 1835 to 1840 and the later ones in the 1860s decimated an enormous proportion of the Native population along the Gulf of Alaska coast.

The smallpox epidemic of the 1830s was at its most virulent from 1836 to 1838. It apparently began with the Tlingit and moved west to the Dena'ina.[71] By some estimates one in three died, and many of the survivors were left maimed or blind from the disease.[72] For the survivors, life changed dramatically. Weakened by disease, hunters lacked the strength to provide for the tired and dejected members of their villages. Starvation ensued. The demographics of small village settlement changed as orphaned children and others moved to neighboring villages. Often the

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[67] *Ibid.*, 194.

[68] *Ibid.*, 197.

[69] Extracted from *Journals of the Masters Izmailof and Bocharov*, from Peter Simon Pallas, in *Neue nordische Beytrage*, Vol. 6, n.p. Unpub. mss. at Bancroft Library.

[70] Levin, "Alaska Natives in a Century of Change," *Anthropological Papers of the University of Alaska* 23 (1991), 3.

[71] *Ibid.*

[72] *Ibid.*, 2.

Russian *artels* took in the orphaned children.[73] Entire villages disappeared as survivors fled to live in large villages. By one estimate, the Native population of the villages of Cook Inlet fell by fifty percent between 1836 and 1843.[74]

In the account by Zakahar Tchitchinoff, an employee of the Russian-American Company in the early 1800s, the epidemic of 1836 irrevocably devastated local villages and Native lifestyles on the Kenai Peninsula. The effects of the epidemic on the small, dispersed villages of the outer Kenai Coast can only be presumed through these accounts. Frequently visited for trade and hunting, these insular villages would have little protection against the effects of foreign disease.

> ...During the following winter (1836-37) I traveled continually from village to village in the Kenai District, trading, but it (sic) nearly every place the population had been reduced by at least one-half by the ravages of small pox. In many places the people were still of the opinion that the dreadful disease had been sent among them by the Russians, but a few individuals who had an opportunity to observe the effects of vaccination in Kadiak were of great service to us in assisting to eradicate the prejudice from the minds of the people. Some of the villages presented a terrible spectacle, the well inhabitants all having fled to some other locality while the helpless sick and the dead alone occupied the place—the latter in various stages of decomposition. During the cold weather, the epidemic abated somewhat in violence, but in the spring of 1837 it broke out again as bad as ever.[75]

It is possible that the outer coast villages never recovered from the devastating effects of the epidemics. Some villages were known to exist into the 1880s, but the decreased numbers may have contributed to the eventual relocation and loss of these villages. However, Russian recognition of a continued Native presence and of tribal organization is substantiated by inclusion of the Chugach in the Charter of 1844 that placed Natives under the colonial administration. The charter pertained to settled tribes, including "tribes living on the American coast, such as Kenais, Chugach and others."[76] Doroshin, a Russian mining engineer and

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[73] Zakahar Tchitchinoff, *Adventures of Zakahar Tchitchinoff: An Employee of the Russian American Company, 1802-1878*, in journal as dictated to Ivan Petroff, Kodiak, 1878 (unpublished mss., Bancroft Library), 30.

[74] Levin, "Alaska Natives in a Century of Change," 3.

[75] *Adventures of Zakahar Tchitchinoff*, 30.

[76] *Russian Administration of Alaska and the Status of the Alaskan Natives*, prepared by the Chief of the Foreign Law Section Law Library of the Library of Congress (Washington, GPO, 1950), 17.

geologist who spent several years in the Kenai region, was aware of five Chugach villages in 1852. Doroshin calculated a combined population of 284 persons. These villages fell under the jurisdiction of the Constantine Redoubt on Hinchinbrook Island. Doroshin also noted two additional villages, "Alexandrovskoe and Akhmilinskoe" on the southeastern shore of the Kenai Peninsula.[77] Akhmilinskoe had a population of ten families. In 1860 Golovin determined the Chugach population to be 226 males and 230 females, a total of 456. These estimates were based on the number of people living in the vicinity of the Constantine Redoubt.[78]

Living on the outer coast was difficult for the Chugach and Russians alike. With major Russian settlements to the east and west of the coast, the Native population was torn between the demands of working for the company and sustaining year round villages. This uneasy relationship lasted until the Russians moved farther south to establish a government seat in Sitka. However, the villages never regained the population they once had. Coastal inlets that may have once supported viable villages became stopover points for small boats navigating between Nuchek to the east and English Bay and Kenai to the west.

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[77] Doroshin, n.p.

[78] P. N. Golovin, *The End of Russian America: Captain P. N. Golovin's Last Report 1862* (Portland, Oregon Historical Society, 1979), 25.

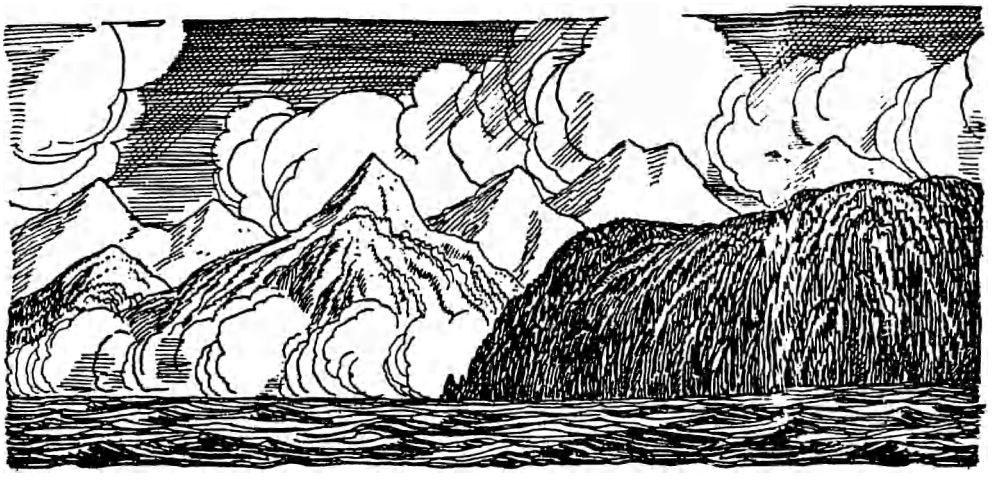

Illustration by Rockwell Kent from *Wilderness, A Journal of Quiet Adventure in Alaska*, 1920. The Rockwell Kent Legacies.

Map 3-1

Historic Sites-European Exploration/ Russian Settlement

Chapter 3. European Exploration and Russian Settlement Patterns on the Lower Kenai Peninsula

> Investigate possible resources, make necessary descriptions and then continue the journey as long as summer makes it possible.... – Grigorii Shelikhov, 1785

In the late 1700s Russian and European interests centered on southcentral Alaska. During this period, outside adventurers pursued economic opportunities on Kodiak Island, Cook Inlet, and Prince William Sound. These regions had comparatively warm microclimates, ice free protected bays, accessible forests, and pasture lands suitable for hunting and agriculture. For the most part, however, they avoided Kenai Peninsula's seaward coast. Tidewater glaciers at the mouths of deep fjords alternating with narrow jetties of rocky mountainous outcrop, as is found along the Kenai Peninsula, had few redeeming features for the development of permanent harbors, trading posts, or settlement. Fort Voskresenskii, the Russian fortified redoubt and shipyard constructed on the lowlands at the head of Resurrection Bay in 1794,[1] was abandoned after the construction of only one vessel. In the early 1800s the Russians relocated their shipbuilding industry to Kodiak and Sitka. By 1820 the Russians had begun to remove Fort Voskresenskii. As Russian investment eventually moved into other regions of Alaska, there appears to have been little regret at leaving the Kenai coast.

European Exploration and Trade on the Kenai Peninsula

By the late 1700s, European interest and trade in southcentral Alaska increased despite Russian settlement and enterprise (see Table 3-1). Surely attracted by Russian commitment to the area's resources, English and Spanish ships entered southcentral waters in search of new routes, fame, and trade. In 1778 Captain James Cook ranked among the most noted of these first explorers.[2]

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[1] The exact site of Fort Voskresenskii is unclear. Sarychev's 1826 map plotted it on the northwestern shore of Resurrection Bay. Now the site of the City of Seward, this area of the coastline has changed. In the late 1980s the Resurrection Bay Historical Society, in Seward, initiated a major inquiry into the history of the shipyard. A file cabinet in the society's museum contains the paper trail of this research, including bibliographies and correspondence with Russian archivists.

[2] In May 1778, Cook arrived in Sandwich Sound [Prince William Sound] and then sailed west along the Kenai Peninsula to Cook Inlet. Cook surveyed the inlet in hopes of finding the Northwest Passage between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

Table 3-1. Chronological Summary of Russian, Spanish, and English Exploration and Survey of the Kenai Coast and Prince William Sound Regions

1741 Alexsei Chirikov on board the *Sv. Pavel,* and Vitus Bering in the *Sv. Petr,* set out on the Second Kamchatka Voyage and the Great Northern Expedition. In August, Chirikov sited the Kenai Peninsula and Kodiak and Afognak islands.

1778 In May 1778 James Cook arrived in Sandwich Sound [Prince William Sound] and then sailed west along the Kenai Peninsula to Cook Inlet. Cook surveyed the inlet in hopes of finding a Northwest Passage between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

1779 The third Spanish expedition set sail to the Northwest under the command of Naval Lieutenant Ignacio de Arteaga with F. Quiros y Miranda of the royal armada. Arteaga performed ceremonies at Port of Santiago on Hinchinbrook Island and at the entrance to Cook Inlet to claim land for Spain. The expedition traded with the Chugach.

1781 Evstratii Delarov, Dmitrii Polutov, and Potap Zaikov explored Prince William Sound. Russia looked to expand fur outposts and hunting expeditions to the Alaska mainland as Aleutian fur resources disappeared. Navigator Stepan Zaikov visited Prince William Sound in the vessel *Aleksandr Nevskii,* belonging to the Lebedev-Lastochkin Company.

1783 Filipp Mukhoplev and Potap Zaikov sailed to Prince William Sound from a trading station on Umnak Island. They remained until 1784 despite attacks from the Chugach.

1785 Grigorii Shelikhov sent a crew of fifty-two Russians and 121 Aleuts and Koniags to Kenai and Prince William Sound on a reconnaissance to "investigate possible resources, make necessary descriptions and then to continue the journey as long as summer makes it possible."

1786 James Strange, joined by William Tipping, anchored in Prince William Sound in search of furs to market in Canton, China. Tipping's ship, the *Sea Otter,* last seen in Prince William Sound, was lost at sea or attacked and destroyed.

Table 3-1. Chronological Summary of Russian, Spanish, and English Exploration and Survey of the Kenai Coast and Prince William Sound Regions (cont.)

1786 John Meares sailed to Chugach Bay from Kodiak via Cook Inlet in the *Nootka* and wintered in Snug Harbor Cove.

1786-7 Nathaniel Portlock and George Dixon traded with Natives at Port Graham and explored Prince William Sound in the ships *King George* and *Queen Charlotte*. Portlock and Dixon had visited the coast eight years earlier as mates on Cook's expedition.

1788 Captain Esteban José Martínez in the ship *Princesa* claimed Montague Island in Prince William Sound for Spain, as Russian and English exploration encroached on Spanish claims in the Pacific Northwest.

Under orders from Shelikhov, Evstratii Delarov instructed Gerasim Izmailov and Dimitrii Ivanovich Bocharov to explore Prince William Sound in the ship *Three Saints*. The navigators surveyed the coast as far south as Lituya Bay, placing plaques and crests at several locations to establish Russian territory.

1789 Gerasim Izmailov surveyed the southeastern coast of the Kenai Peninsula after a voyage to Lituya Bay.

1790 Captains Joseph Billings and Gavriil Sarychev sailed along the southeast coast of Kenai Peninsula on an expedition to assess Russia's possessions. At Nuka Bay they encountered two Natives in a *baidar*. The ship attempted to enter the bay, but was forced to return to open waters before siting a village.

Spanish sea captain Salvador Fidalgo sailed north from Mexico trading for sea otter pelts. He anchored in Prince William Sound and at Port Graham. Fidalgo encountered Russians at Port Graham and later on Kodiak Island.

1791 Alejandro Malaspina and José Bustamente y Guerra visited Prince William Sound on an around-the-world voyage of exploration.

1791 Lebedev-Lastochkin Company seized control of Shelikhov posts at Kenai on Cook Inlet and in Kachemak Bay.

Table 3-1. Chronological Summary of Russian, Spanish, and English Exploration and Survey of the Kenai Coast and Prince William Sound Regions (concl.)

1792 Hugh Moore repaired the British East India Company ship the *Phoenix* (namesake of the Russian-American Company *Phoenix*) in Prince William Sound where he met Aleksandr Baranov.

1792-9 Orekhof Company in operation. Named for a Russian trader in Prince William Sound, the company was a rival of both Shelikhov and Pavel Lebedev.

1793 Lebedev-Lastochkin Company established first trading post in Prince William Sound. It was Fort Constantine, at Nuchek on Hinchinbrook Island.

1794 George Vancouver as commander of the *Discovery,* surveyed Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound en route to Nookta Sound. He had first sailed to Alaska in 1772-1780, with Cook on his second and third voyages.

1797 James Shields, first commander of the *Phoenix*, mapped ship routes along the American coast, 1793-1797, and described Resurrection Bay.

1804 A navigator named Bubnov thoroughly surveyed the eastern coast of Kenai Peninsula to Prince William Sound.

1849 Russian Governor Mikhail Dmitrievich Teben'kov commissioned Illarion Arkhimandritov to survey and map Cook Inlet, the eastern peninsula coastline, and Prince William Sound.

This list is meant to be representative, not conclusive. American exploration and trade are entirely omitted. Also, descriptions of trade and travel along the coast continued after 1849.

When Cook returned to England in 1780, his lucrative trade in Alaska sea otter pelts received no public attention. Mindful that the price sea otter fur brought on the Chinese market would only heighten European rivalry, Britain, then at war with the American Colonies, hoped to keep the news secret until it could afford to monopolize the fur trade. Spain, in turn, attempted to employ a similar tactic of concealment in their land claims north of California. Spain withheld official published accounts of its three expeditions in the 1770s, a move that later undermined the Spanish claims of exclusivity.[3]

The English, who protested the Spanish claims, argued that Native habitation pre-dated Spanish exploration and that the Spanish had made little attempt to establish any type of permanent settlement.[4] According to the accounts of the Russian sponsored expedition of Joseph Billings in 1790, Spanish frigates annually visited villages and forts in the vicinity of Cook Inlet trading hardware, beads, and linens for sea otter pelts.[5] Otherwise, most of the Spanish exploration originating from forts in California ventured only as far northwest as Prince William Sound (see Table 3-1).

Soon after the 1783 Treaty of Paris, British trade routes developed between the northwest American coast and Canton, the only Chinese port open to international vessels. The first expedition of King George's Sound Company, also known as the London Company, navigated along the southeastern shore of the Kenai Peninsula.[6] In July 1786, company representatives Nathaniel Portlock and George Dixon left Cook Inlet, crossed Kachemak Bay and entered the narrow harbor of Port Graham. In search of a route to the Pacific, the captains assumed the harbor was an inland channel and named the small island at the entrance Passage Island. According to Portlock, Russian occupation at Port Graham appeared to be a seasonal and temporary encampment manned by twenty-five Russians and a crew of Natives from Unalaska and Kodiak islands. The Russians slept in a canvas tent while the Native crew took shelter under overturned boats pulled up on shore. There were no signs of trade with local Chugach, and Russian hunters depended on their crews to trap and hunt furs. While scouting the inner shores of the harbor, Portlock and Dixon observed several large Native huts that appeared to be recently abandoned. On the northern shores of the harbor they recorded the

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[3] Spain sponsored a fourth expedition in 1786; see Stuart R. Tompkins, "After Bering: Mapping the North Pacific," *The British Columbia Historical Quarterly* 19 (1955), 30.

[4] Warren L. Cook, *Flood Tide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1973), 3. Cook is an excellent reference on Spanish exploration in Alaska.

[5] Martin Sauer, *An Account of a Geographical and Astronomical Expedition to the Northern Parts of Russia* (London, 1802), 184.

[6] Cook, *Flood Tide of Empire*, 104.

location of two veins of coal on the surface of the rocky hillside. Portlock wrote:

> We landed on the west side of the bay, and in walking around it discovered two veins of kennel coal situated near some hills just above the beach, about the middle of the bay, and with very little trouble several pieces were got out of the bank nearly as large as a man's head.... In the evening we returned on board and I tried some of the coal we had discovered and found it to burn clean and well.[7]

In 1788 the British sea captain John Meares collaborated in a joint trading venture known interchangeably as the Associated Merchants of London and India, the United Company of British Merchants, and the South Sea Company of London. The company concentrated its trading efforts between the Queen Charlotte Islands and Prince William Sound. In 1789, Captain William Douglas received orders to trade as far as the Sound, then to turn back. The land to the west of the Sound, including Kenai Peninsula and Cook Inlet, had less potential as trading zones as "it is so totally possessed by Russians that proceeding there would be only [a] waste of the most valuable time."[8]

In 1790 British naval officer George Vancouver commanded his ships the *Discovery* and *Chatham* to the Pacific Northwest to reconcile British interests at Nookta. Four years later, Vancouver arrived in Alaska from Hawaii and surveyed the waters of Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound. Russian contacts in Cook Inlet led Vancouver to believe that he could bypass the Pacific coast of the Kenai Peninsula through an inland waterway at the head of Turnagain Arm. This waterway supposedly led to the Passage Canal in Prince William Sound. Learning that the waterway did not exist, Vancouver circled the outer peninsula and dismissed a survey of the coast as too time consuming. He preferred to "examine the shores of the peninsula, so far only as could be done from the ship in passing along its coast."[9] Vancouver noted the abrupt mountainous shoreline and long valleys "buried in ice and snow, within in a few yards of the wash of the sea; whilst here and there some of the loftiest of the pine trees just 'shewd' their heads through the frigid surface."[10] From the maps of his ship route, he obviously steered clear of the bays and rocky outcrops

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[7] Nathaniel Portlock, A *Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America* (London, 1789), 108. The term kennel coal, a version of "cannel" coal, is a play on the word candle. Candle coal produced a bright flame.

[8] Derek Pethick, *First Approaches to the Northwest Coast* (Vancouver, J. J. Douglas Ltd., 1976), 143.

[9] W. Kaye Lamb, *The Voyage of George Vancouver 1791-1795* (London, the Hakluyt Society, 1984), 1261.

[10] *Ibid.*, 1266.

along the Kenai coast. He recorded the Pye and Chiswell islands. He described the Chiswells as a "group of naked rugged rocks, seemingly destitute of soil, and any kind of vegetation."[11] Eighty years later, George Davidson proposed that Vancouver mistook the Chiswells for several "islets and the broken and numerous points of the long, low, wooded promontories stretching southward and forming Ayalik [sic] Bay, off which lie the Chiswell Islands."[12]

Thomas Heddington, a midshipman on the *Chatham* and the youngest member of the expedition, was one of three illustrators on Vancouver's voyage.[13] The two others were Henry Humphreys and John Sykes. Heddington prepared several surveys and drawings of the coast between Cape Elizabeth and Prince William Sound. Once back in London, Heddington submitted his work to the Hydrographic Office, but later in 1808 requested that his work be returned. The Admiralty honored the request only to lose all record or trace of the drawings.[14] One, entitled *The Coast from Cape Elizabeth to the Western Entrance of Prince Williams Sound–with Elizabeth Island, Pyes Islands and Chiswells Islands off the Coast*, would have been among the earliest known renderings of the coast.[15]

At Port Dick, a deep bay at the southern tip of the Kenai Peninsula, Vancouver encountered a large party of Natives in two-man boats. The men approached the English ships with a willingness to trade. Their number impressed Vancouver; he estimated a party of over four hundred men. Archibald Menzies, the botanist on board, described the men as being of "low stature, but thick and stout made with fat broad visages and straight black hair ... and their canoes are equally neat having their seams sown so tight as not to admit any water...".[16] In the 1930s, anthropologist Frederica de Laguna explained this encounter as one of the large inter-regional sea otter hunting expeditions that traveled along the coast.[17] Aleksandr Baranov, in a letter to Grigorii Shelikhov, recounted that Vancouver met a 500-*baidarka* hunting fleet of Kodiak and Chugach Natives led by Russians from the Kenai and Resurrection Bay areas in April and later again in Yakutat Bay.[18] The fleet stopped at

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[11] George Davidson Manuscript, Box 504A, 286, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

[12] *Ibid.*

[13] Heddington's fellow illustrators were Henry Humphreys, Master of the *Chatham* in 1794 and John Sykes, Midshipman and Master's Mate. Lieutenant Commander A. C. F. David prepared an annotated list of drawings from this voyage as a result of the Hakluyt Society's 1984 edition of Vancouver's surveys.

[14] Lieutenant Commander A. C. F. David, *A List of Drawings from Vancouver's Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America*, Honeyman Collection Guide, Bancroft Library.

[15] *Ibid.*, 34.

[16] Lamb, *The Voyage of George Vancouver*, 1265.

[17] de Laguna, *Chugach Prehistory*, 34.

[18] Pierce, *Russian America: A Bibliographical Dictionary*, 415. See also P. A. Tikhmenev,

the shipyard in Resurrection Bay to pick up five Russians, including G. Prianishnikov and Konstantin Galaktionov, and arrange for repairs and supplies of cannons, guns, and ammunition for the trip south to Icy Bay.[19]

Henry Humphreys prepared a sketch of the Port Dick encounter. In the margin of the drawing, Humphreys penciled in explanatory notes to the engraver back in England. He directed the engraver to add to the image "many canoes ... going into the Creek [sic] each carrying 2 people ... sight. Indian holding up Skins for traffic ... some going in at that place."[20] The final drawing, unlike Humphreys's original, shows the bay full of Native vessels.

Vancouver had anticipated a layover at the Russian shipyard in Resurrection Bay, but stormy seas and fog set in west of the Chiswell Islands. Apprehensive of the rocky coast and lacking accurate charts, Vancouver cancelled the stop and sailed the *Discovery* past Port Andrews (Blying Sound) into Prince William Sound. The route and the weather probably accounted for the poor delineation of the bay and coast in his atlas. However, his route as traced on his maps shows the wide clearance he gave to the coastline.

Russian Enterprise on the Outer Kenai Coast

By 1786, Russian hunting parties had clearly decimated sea otter populations in Cook Inlet, forcing Native hunters to enter Chugach territory in Prince William Sound and push farther south toward Yakutat. Official estimates calculated a take of 3,340 pelts a year between 1743 and 1799.[21] Desperate to find new fur resources, the Russian began a series of scouting expeditions in Prince William Sound. Evstratii Delarov, Dimitrii Polutov, and Potap Zaikov, who apparently had seen the Sound on a map drawn by Cook, sailed from the Aleutians, past the outer Kenai Coast, to Kayak Island in Prince William Sound (see Table 3-1). The traders alienated and brutalized Natives in the region, a move that resulted in retaliatory attacks by both Kenaitze and Chugach. The Russians spent

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A History of the Russian American Company, Vol. 2, 35 for other accounts of parties led by Egor Purtov in vicinity of Chugach Bay and along the coastline; for an account of this expedition, see pp. 46-52.

[19] The Russian hunters obtained their supplies at Fort Voskresenskii from Ensign Rodionov. This encounter is found in a report from company employees Egor Purtov and Demid Kulikalov, to Baranov, from Paul's Harbor, Kodiak, 9 August 1794, in Tikhmenev, *A History of The Russian American Company*, Vol. 2, 46.

[20] David, *A List of drawings from Vancouver's Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America*, 7.

[21] Frank A. Golder, "A Survey of Alaska, 1743-1799," *The Washington Historical Quarterly* (1913), 92.

the winter on Montague Island at Zaikof Bay and almost half the crew died of scurvy.[22]

Two years later Gerasim Izmailov and Dimitrii I. Bocharov, under instruction from Grigorii Shelikhov, returned to Montague Island. They noted abandoned Native houses and wrote, "the inhabitants of this point were the last of the Oogalakhmutes who lived here in constant war and hostilities with the Kolash [Tlingit]."[23] At Montague Island, the closest island in the Sound to the Kenai Peninsula, the traders met Natives in two-hatch *baidarkas* willing to trade. Izmailov followed the men to a grouping of Chugach dwellings on the shores of a "sheltered channel formed by the island Khligakhlik [Latouche] on the right and the mainland on the left."[24] Here he observed village houses from the boat, but never went ashore.

Accounts by Sarychev and naturalist Carl Merck, of Captain Joseph Billings's "Northeast Secret Geographical and Astronomical Expedition," tell of a meeting with a group of Natives near Nuka Island in 1790. In early July, Billings's ship left Kodiak and headed for Cook Inlet. Forced to turn eastward in the prevailing winds, the ship rounded the peninsula. After four days of mist and fog, the crew caught its first glimpse of the outer Kenai coast and the channel of Nuka Bay. Two Chugach spied the ship and set off from the shore in a *baidar* to welcome the ship. They offered gifts of a river otter, sea otter, seal, and petrel.[25]

The following excerpt recounts Sarychev's version of the chance meeting and his unsuccessful attempt to follow the Chugach into the bay.

> From these Americans, we learned that the bay ahead of us was called Nuka, and the cape that presented itself on its eastern side, belonged to an island, which was separated from the main land only by a strait. They added, moreover, that in this bay were several [more] of an inferior size, with sandy bottoms, which furnished good stations for shipping. Their habitations lay in one of the havens, to which they invited us with much cordiality. Captain Billings ordered the ship to tack, and put into the bay, after which we bore up to the island in question, passing a rock to the left that was about two miles distant from it. On arriving at the bay, Captain

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[22] Stuart R. Tompkins, "After Bering: Mapping the North Pacific," The *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 19 (1955), 29. See also pp. 46-47 in Shelikhov, *A Voyage to America 1783-1786*, for descriptions of reconnaissance voyages during this period between Kodiak Island and Prince William Sound.

[23] From the Journals of the Masters Izmailof and Bocharov, in Peter Simon Pallas, *Neue nordische Beytrage*, Vol. 6, 2, Bancroft Library.

[24] *Ibid.*, 1.

[25] Merck, *Siberia and Northwestern America 1788-1792*, 111.

> Billings found it most prudent not to advance. We accordingly tacked about again, and soon gained the open sea.[26]

Martin Sauer, Billings's secretary on the expedition, recorded an exchange at the mouth of Cook Inlet with a Spanish frigate and later with several Natives off the coast of Cape Elizabeth. The Natives freely traded pelts for beads and tobacco, then returned to the coast with one of the crew. Sauer noted that the Spaniards traded regularly in the region with both Natives and Russians and in part acted as middlemen to supply the Russians with pelts in return for hardware, beads, and linens.[27]

Heavy rains and fog shadowed Billings's ship until it arrived near Montague Island. The only other observances that were made of the coast were references to its fine timber that reached the water's edge and to the deepness of the sea.[28]

Russian enterprise quickly followed these initial scouting trips. Russian traders established temporary posts and fortified redoubts at strategic hunting locations in the Gulf of Alaska. The Shelikhov-Golikov Company established Fort Alexandrovsk at English Bay near Cape Elizabeth in 1786.[29] Farther into Cook Inlet, the Pavel S. Lebedev-Lastochkin Company constructed Fort St. George on the Kasilof River in 1787 and Fort St. Nicholas on the Kenai River in 1791. The company relied heavily on a Kenaitze labor force to build these posts. In a concerted effort to control Native hunters and fur resources, the two companies monopolized territorial influence from Three Saints Bay on Kodiak Island to Prince William Sound and Yakutat. However, in late 1791 open rivalry broke out between the two companies. In 1793, Baranov reported to Shelikhov that he would build a fort complete with barracks, blacksmith, and warehouse at the head of Resurrection Bay to block any move by the Lebedev-Lastochkin Company.

In 1792, Baranov first visited the Chugach region. Driven by the constant need to replenish falling pelt stocks and his own desire to expand Russian holdings and succeed as a manager, Baranov wanted to establish a

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[26] Gawrila Sarytschew, *Account of Discovery to the North-East of Siberia, the Frozen Ocean, and North-East Sea*, Vol. 2 from the Russian (London: Richard Phillips, 1807), 20-21.

[27] Sauer, *An Account of a Geographical and Astronomical Expedition*, 184-185.

[28] *Ibid.*, 186.

[29] H. H. Bancroft described the fort at English Bay in his *History of Alaska, 1730-1885* (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft and Company, 1886), 335, in this fashion: "The Shelikof Company already possessed, near the entrance of the inlet, a fort named Alexandrovsk, which had a more pretentious appearance. It formed a square with poorly built bastions at two corners, and displayed the imperial arms over the entrance, which was protected by two guns. Within were dwelling and store houses, one of them provided with a sentry-box on the roof."

fortified station in Prince William Sound. Traveling in a skinboat, Baranov set out to approach the Chugach in the vicinity of Montague Island.

Baranov described the Chugach as both warlike and savage, but ever frightful of the sight of the Russians and more likely to hide than attack.[30] The Russian naval officer Davydov recounted Baranov's expedition and his meeting with the Chugach.

> When they learnt that Baranov was travelling to Chugatsk Bay they disappeared from their settlements so that none of them was visible anywhere. All that could be seen everywhere were poles with sticks bound to them at right angles. The Russians believed that these sticks indicated the direction of the fleeing villagers had gone - and that they were left as a sign for their comrades who might have been caught out of the village or unawares and would not know what had happened.[31]

In anticipation of an attack by the Tlingit against his men, Baranov traveled in the company of the Chugach and often took hostages. Despite these precautions, his crew fell victim to a Tlingit raiding party while camping on Montague Island. The party consisted of Ugaliagmiuts from Cape St. Elias [on Kayak Island] who in the night mistook the Russian camp for one of the enemy Chugach. Twelve men died in the retaliatory raid.[32] According to one account, the attackers intended to continue raids along the Chugach coast and then proceed to Cook Inlet.[33]

Fort Voskresenskii and the Building of the *Phoenix*

After Baranov's initial expedition, he freely navigated the bays of the outer Kenai coast including Resurrection Bay and Prince William Sound. He possessed sufficient knowledge of the area to choose a site in Resurrection Bay for the construction of a fort and shipyard. The Russian name Voskresenskaia gaven' or guba, chosen by Baranov in 1792, was the literal translation of Resurrection Harbor or Sunday Harbor. Traveling by the bay in early spring close to the date of Easter Sunday on the Julian Calender, Baranov celebrated that visit with the joyous name. Resurrection Bay replaced the earlier Russian name for the bay, Delarov Harbor; in the 1770s, Portlock had named the area south of the bay as Port Andrews, and the name Blying Sound also denoted the waters at the mouth of the bay in the Gulf of Alaska.

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[30] *Ibid.*, 8.
[31] Davydov, *Two Voyages to Russian America*, 170.
[32] Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian American Company*, 30.
[33] *Ibid.*

Like most Russian settlements, Fort Voskresenskii was built on the coast. Proximity to the sea allowed for the easy transfer of stockpiled furs from warehouse to ship. Native trade as well as access to coastal hunting grounds mandated the use of ships and smaller skin boats. As resource needs changed, the Russians eventually dismantled some of their coastal forts. As one researcher observed, "...each of the abandoned [Russian] sites was in a location of little value to later white settlement."[34]

Completed in 1793, Fort Voskresenskii incorporated many military features. A large rectangular stockade constructed of vertical logs encircled interior buildings similar to the design of Siberian forts. Many buildings were braced directly into the stockade. Two watchtowers provided high sentinel posts. Men lived in a large central building that faced the bay complete with a storage area and cellar. In the event of an attack, the crew could draw wooden shutters to seal off the windows. Located outside the principal stockade, the shipyard was protected with *chevaux-de-frise,* a tight wooden barricade made of sharpened posts.[35]

With the fort under construction, Baranov turned his interests to the shipyard. Baranov shared Shelikhov's long-term aspirations for a colony-based fleet of ships. With a supply of trading vessels on hand, Baranov hoped to open Japanese trade routes and to expand the international market for goods from the colony. Shelikhov envisioned the construction of a large frigate, approximately 85 feet long, to transport pelts, supplies, news, and passengers between the Russian forts in America and Okhotsk in Siberia.[36] In 1790 Shelikhov informed Delarov, then his chief manager, of the need for such a vessel and reassured him that necessary supplies would be forthcoming if he secured a carpenter from the Billings Expedition.

Baranov first learned of Shelikhov's shipbuilding plans in 1792 in a hand carried set of instructions from James Shields, a second lieutenant in the Russian Ekaterinburg regiment.[37] Shields, who was fluent in Russian, had been building a ship in Okhotsk for the Shelikhov Company. In 1792,

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[34] Kirk H. Stone, "Some Geographic Bases for Planning New Alaskan Settlement," in *Science in Alaska*, Henry B. Collins, editor (Washington, The Arctic Institute of North America, June 1952), 142.

[35] This description is based primarily on the research of Katerina S. Wessels, NPS. Ms. Wessels generously provided a copy of her article, "Fortified Structures of the Russian American Company." To support the image of an armed fort, see Richard A. Pierce, ed., *Documents on the History of the Russian-American Company,* translated by Marina Ramsay (Kingston, Ontario, The Limestone Press, 1976), 22, which stated that "the company supplies all these fortifications with cannons."

[36] Pierce, *Russian America: A Biographical Dictionary*, 462.

[37] *Ibid.*, 458.

Shields sailed the ship to Kodiak Island with a supply of rigging and hardware for the construction of a new frigate.

While Baranov endorsed the shipbuilding plan, he lacked the essential materials to carry out Shelikhov's instructions. In one letter, Baranov openly balked at the scheme of a ship, proclaiming a hopelessly low inventory of laborers and supplies, among which there were no nails or caulking, only half a flask of pitch, and very little iron.[38] Most of the canvas was too worn and rotten or had been used to make tents and pants for Native hunters.[39]

Baranov's problems were not limited to poor supplies. Shelikhov agreed with Baranov that Resurrection Bay benefited from dramatic changes in tide and that it held promise as a place to launch, moor, and rig ships. As a construction site, however, it was too limited; Shelikhov instead encouraged Baranov to choose a site with more timber. Baranov assured Shelikhov that he had assessed the forested shores of Kodiak and Afognak islands and the Kenai Peninsula; he had settled on the Chugach region, in part, for its proximity to dense timber. He was convinced that local stands of larch trees on an island in Prince William Sound would supply the needed raw logs. He recounted that the ship could be built "very economically from larch trees called in English spruce, more durable and stronger than the wood at Okhotsk, and painted by a composition that I invented."[40] Larch was the wood of choice for the Russian ships built in the colonies and also for those built at Okhotsk.[41] Baranov avoided the use of fir, considering the planks too rigid and scarred with knots for shipbuilding.[42] Shelikhov encouraged Baranov to continue to survey the coast and forego plans for Fort Voskresenskii. To Shelikhov, shipping in logs in from Grekovskii ostrovok (Greek Island)[43]

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[38] Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian American Company*, 30-31.

[39] *Ibid.*

[40] *Ibid.*, 70.

[41] F. P. Wrangell, *Russian America: Statistical and Ethnographical Information*, 9. There is some confusion or general disagreement in many secondary sources on the type of wood used in Russian shipbuilding. Because in some sources the trees were called English spruce, many assume the Russians used Sitka spruce in the vicinity of Resurrection Bay. There is also mention of the use of yellow cedar, which would have been a very hard and durable wood for shipbuilding.

[42] Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian American Company*, 30.

[43] Like many sites throughout the Chugach area, the exact location of Greek Island remains a mystery. Pierce, *Russian America: A Biographical Dictionary*, 1990, speculated that Baranov's Greek Island was Hinchinbrook Island in Prince William Sound. Fort Constantine at Nuchek was located on Hinchinbrook Island. Others have concluded that Baranov referred to Montague Island as Greek Island. In a set of longitude and latitude coordinates for Fort Voskresenskii, Golovnin plotted the shipyard slightly west of Montague but considerably south of Green Island. Teben'kov made the same association between the two islands. Petroff (pp. 79-80) noted the remains of felled trees on Montague Island.

in Prince William Sound was too risky for a long-term ship building operation. As he informed Baranov, "I must conclude that your shipyard is not completely suitable, or that you have not yet had time to find a good location with all advantages."[44]

While Shelikhov continued to focus on the issue of timber, Baranov reminded him that proximity to Kenai and to nearby salmon streams was equally important. Also, as mentioned above, he needed to stop the Lebedev-Lastochkin Company from gaining control of the site.

> They took the best places for getting food supplies, and made the inhabitants prisoners. I chose this bay in order to hinder their communication between Kinai and Chugach over the nearest neck of land.... If we move, only the labor spent building the fort will be wasted; in the meantime, our *artel* is in a place of refuge for the Chugach from the Lebedev men and a barrier for their communication. The Kinai people want to move here to get away from Lebedev's men and are waiting only the permission from me and from Father Archimandrite [Ioasaf].[45]

Baranov insisted that these strategic concerns outweighed the lack of timber and isolation.

Over the next year, Baranov transported approximately one-fifth of the logs on the company ship *Orel.* Supply shortages continued, along with the threat of attack from both Natives and Lebedev-Lastochkin men. (Natives easily outnumbered the Russian construction crews at both Voskresenskii and Kenai.) To improve relations with the Natives, Baranov traded extensively with the Kenai and Chugach to procure both furs and food. To keep a steady supply of food and furs on hand, Baranov used beads to conduct local business and maintain an appealing collection:

> As you know, we have no trading goods here, only beads and even they are of the small size. The large beads are of the kinds for which there is no demand. There are not enough to buy sea otters with, and even our native workers no longer take them in exchange for fox skins.[46]

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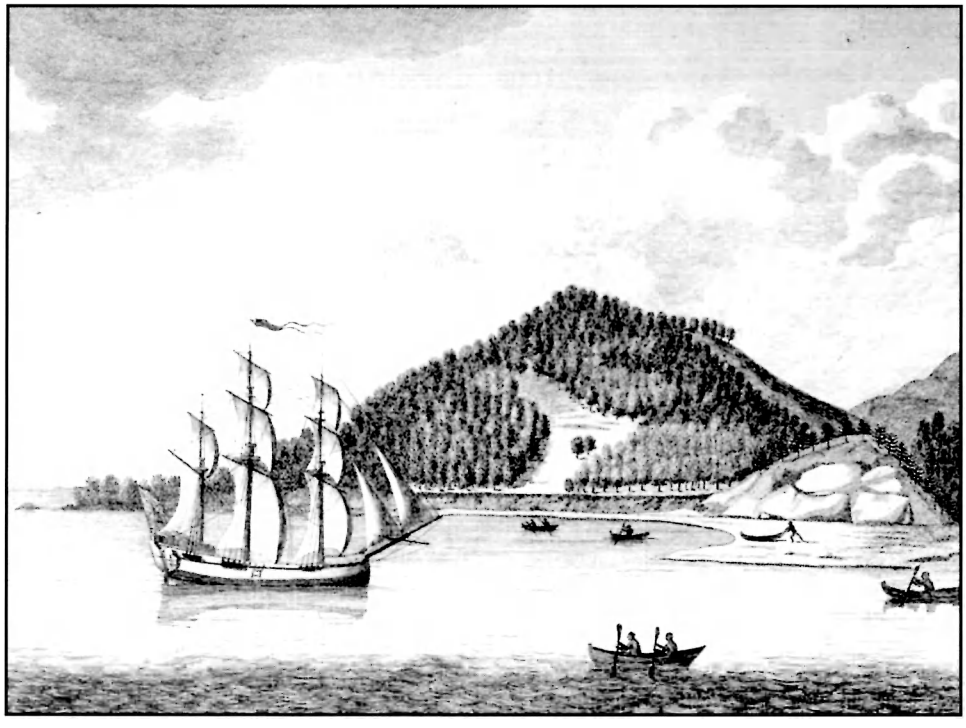
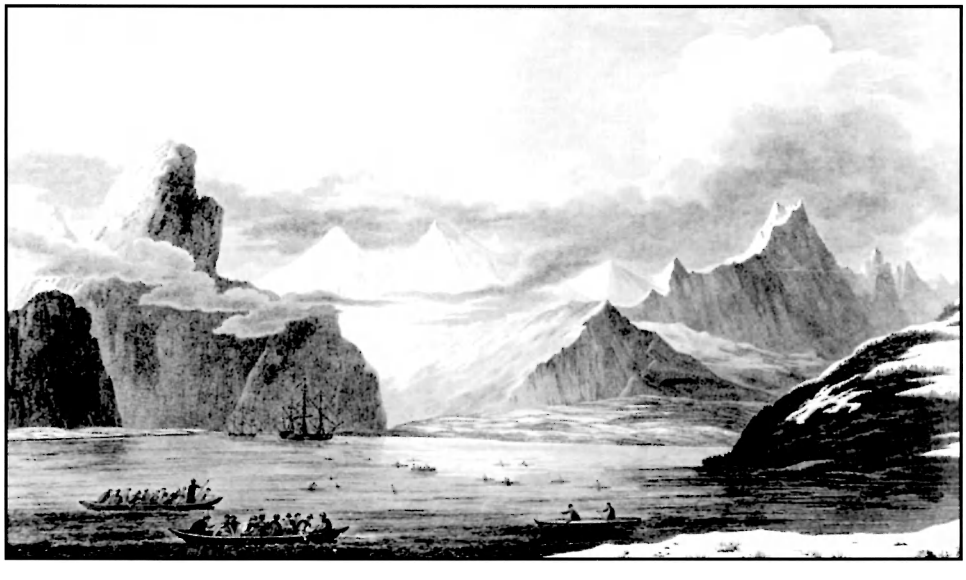
[44] Dmytryshyn, Crownhart-Vaughan, and Vaughan, *Russian Penetration of the North Pacific Ocean*, 443.

[45] Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian American Company*, 66.

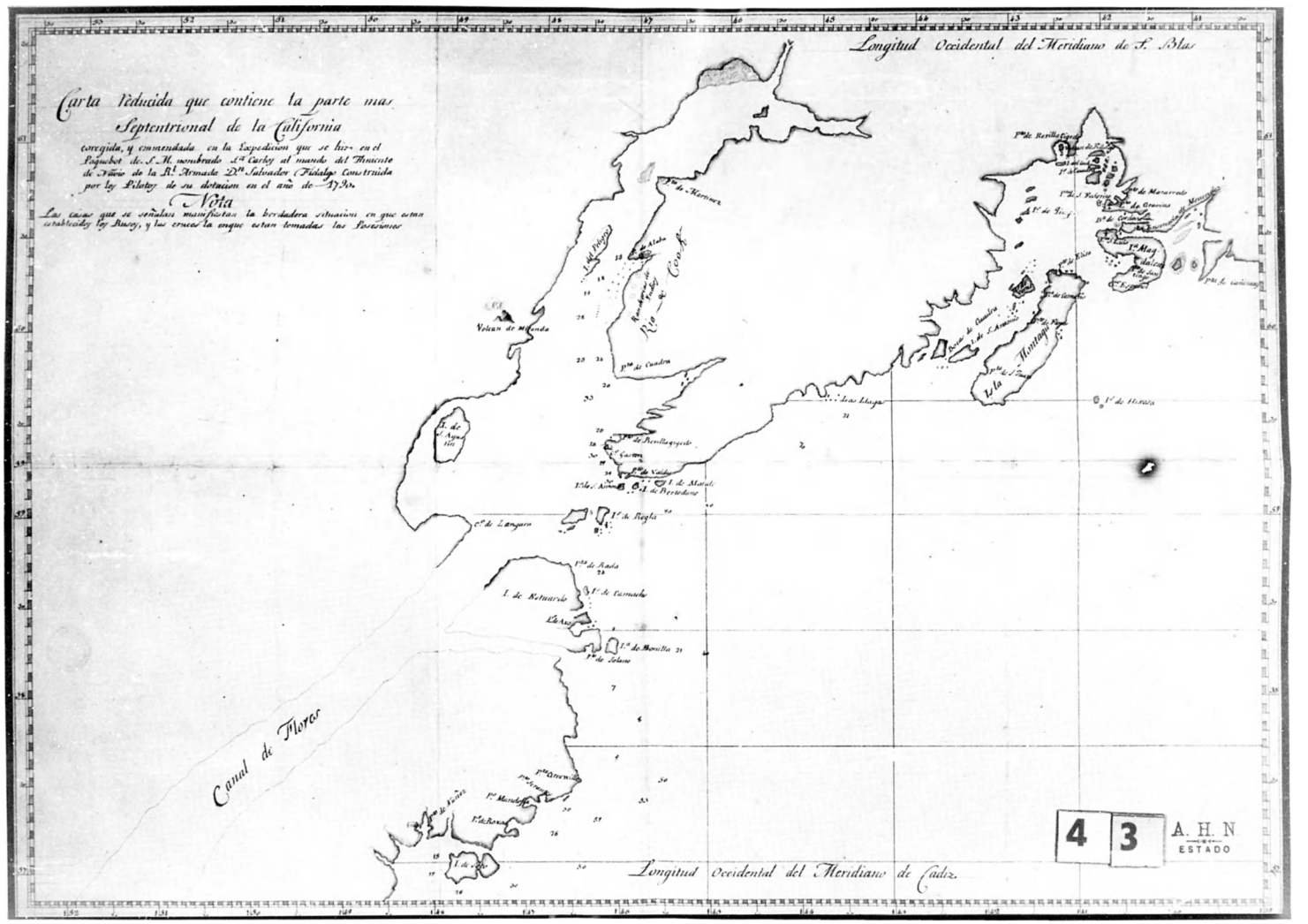
[46] *Ibid.*, 32.



Coal Harbor, near Port Graham, 1786. By Joseph Woodcock, from Portlock voyage. Alaska Purchase Centennial Commission. Alaska State Library, photo PCA 20-101.

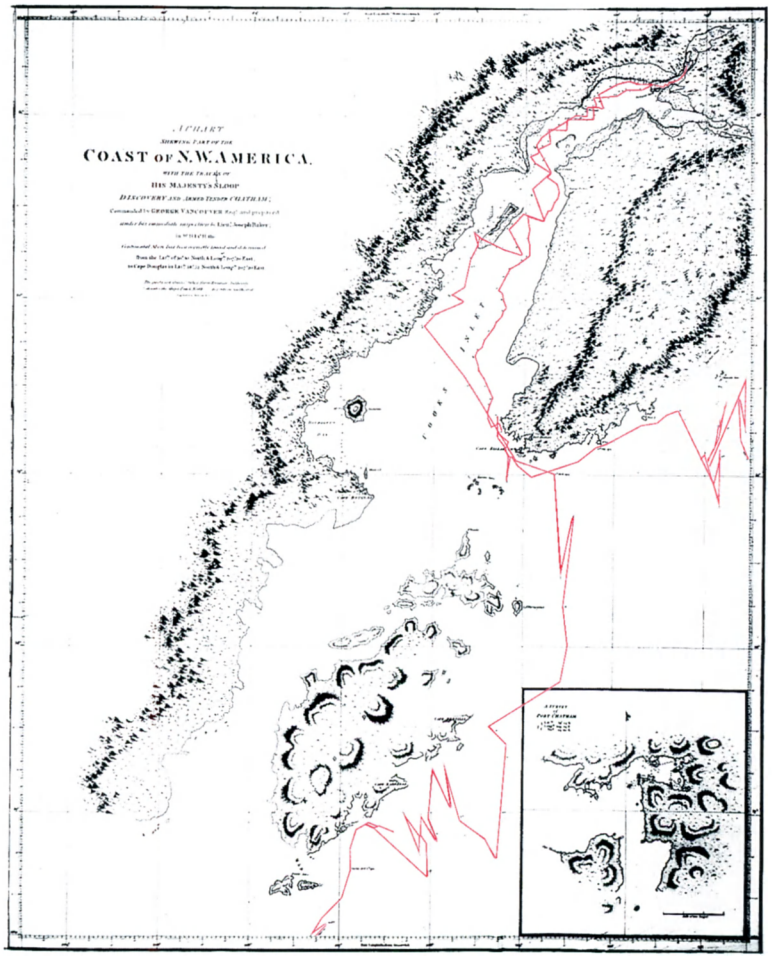


View of Prince William Sound (Snug Harbor) and Captain Cook's ships, 1778. John Webber artist. Alaska Purchase Centennial Commission. Alaska State Library, photo PCA 20-137.

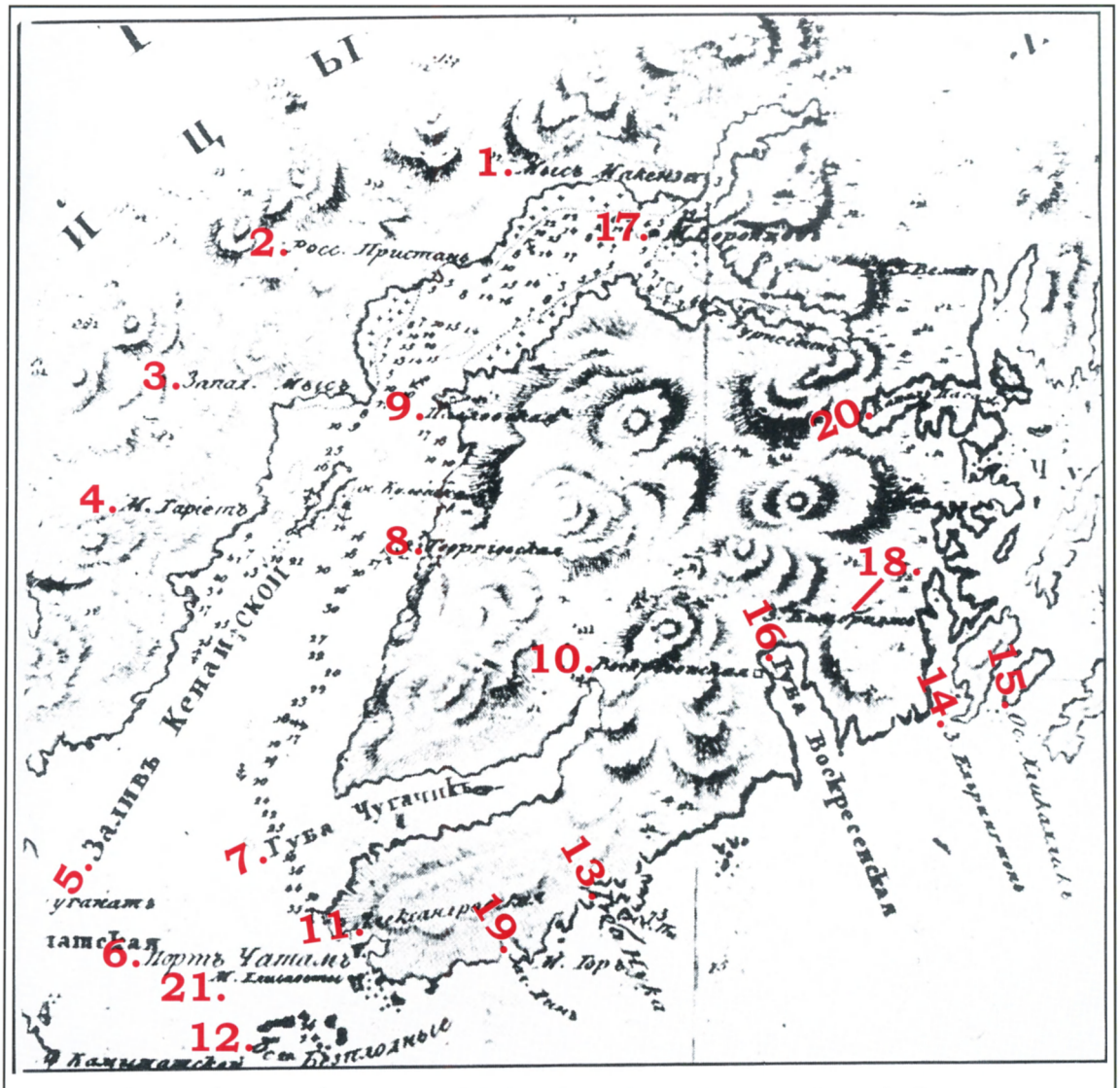


Spanish Map of Cook Inlet and Kenai Coast Region, 1790. Archivo-Historico Nacional. Library of Congress.

Overturned boats typically served as shelter. Bancroft Library.



Tracing of Vancouver's route (in red highlight) around the Kenai Peninsula. Alaska State Library, photo PCA 62-126.

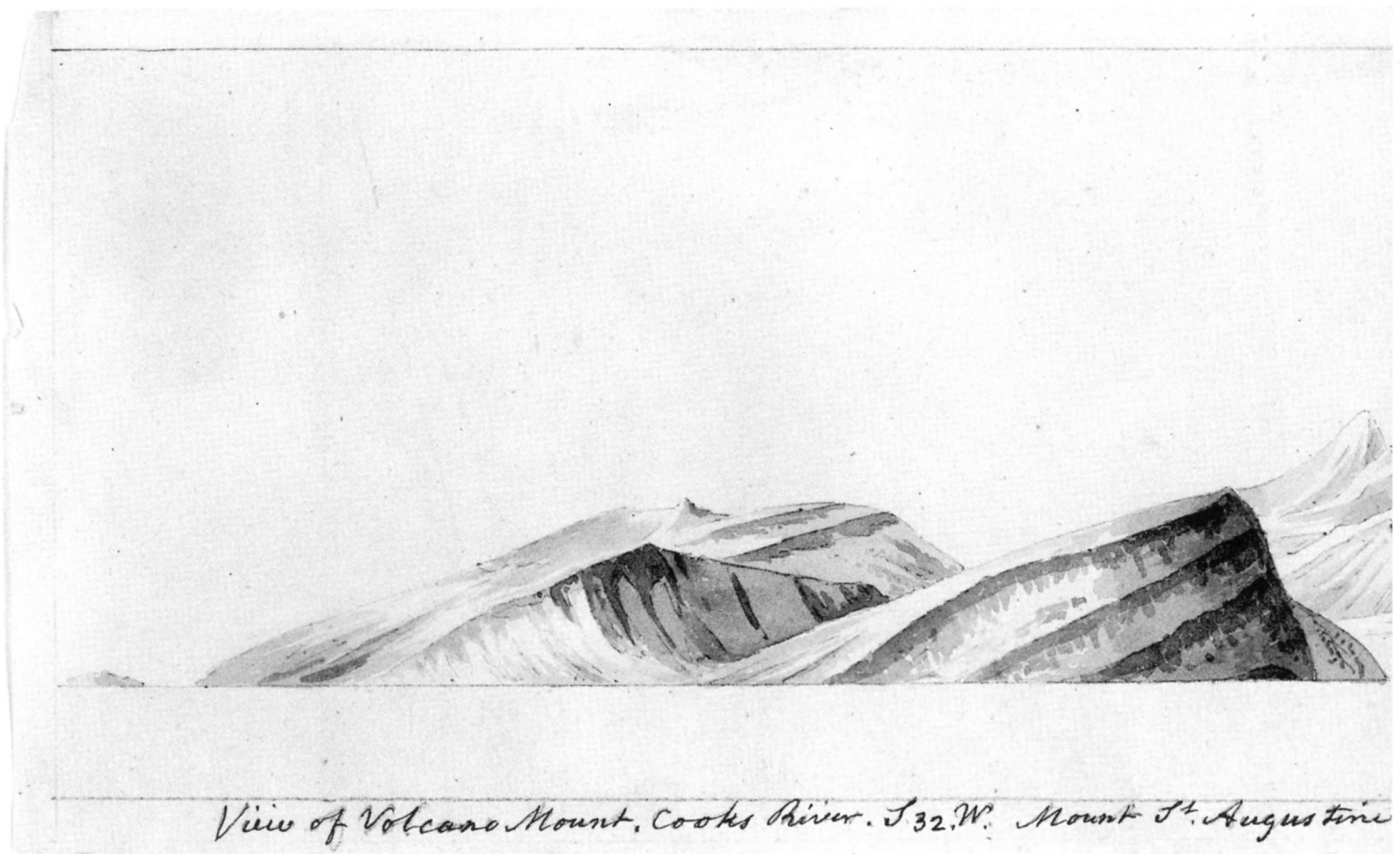


Sarychev Atlas, c. 1826, showing Outer Kenai Coast.

1. **Cape Makenza**
2. **Ross Wharfe**
3. **Zapadnuiy (West) Cape**
4. **Gariet Cape**
5. **Kenai Inlet**
6. **Port Chatam**
7. **Chugachik Bay**
8. **Georgievskaya***
9. **Pavlovskaya (?)***
10. **Voskresenskaya***
11. **Aleksandrovskaya***
12. **Bezplodnuie (Barren) Islands**
13. **Nuka Bay**
14. **El'pington Bay**
15. **Hlikahlak Island**
16. **Voskresenskiy (Resurrection) Bay**
17. **Cape Vorontsov**
18. **Kambridge Bay**
19. **Lin' Bay**
20. **Passage Channel**
21. **Elisaveta Cape**

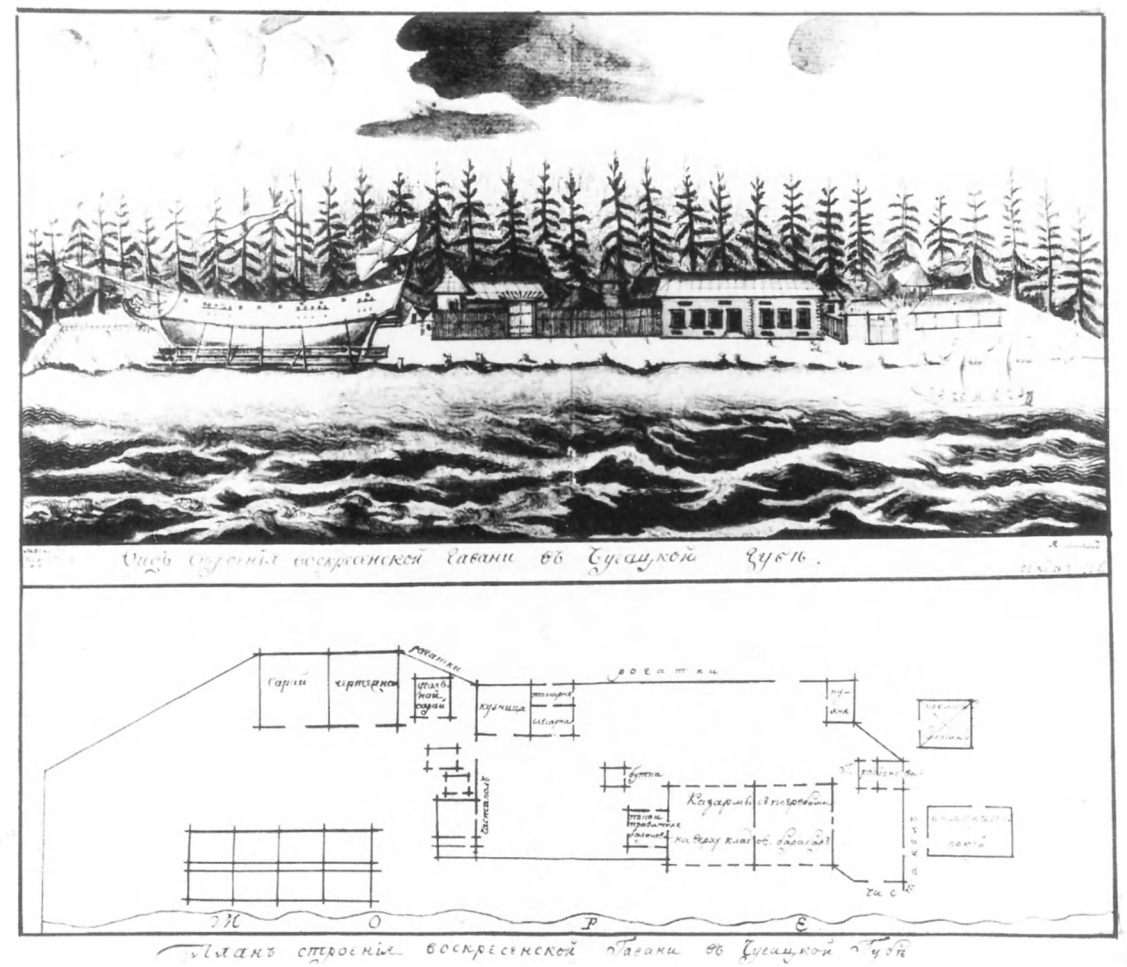
* The Russian ending of these place names suggest their use as "Fort" or "Single man post."

Translation by Katerina S. Wessels, NPS.

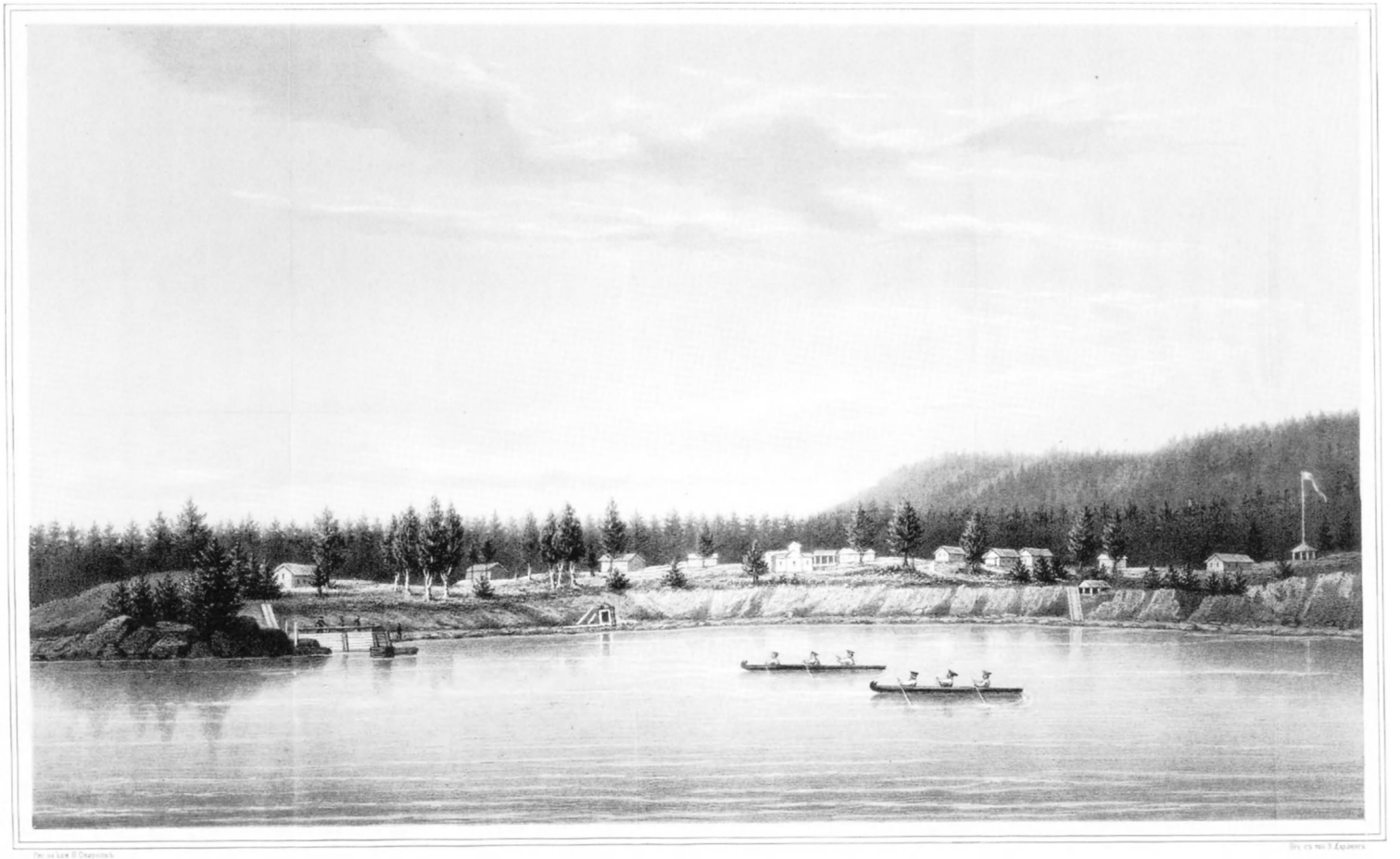


Etching of Cook Inlet and environs, by John Sykes, Bancroft Library. Etching style similar to views that Humphreys produced of Outer Kenai Coast.

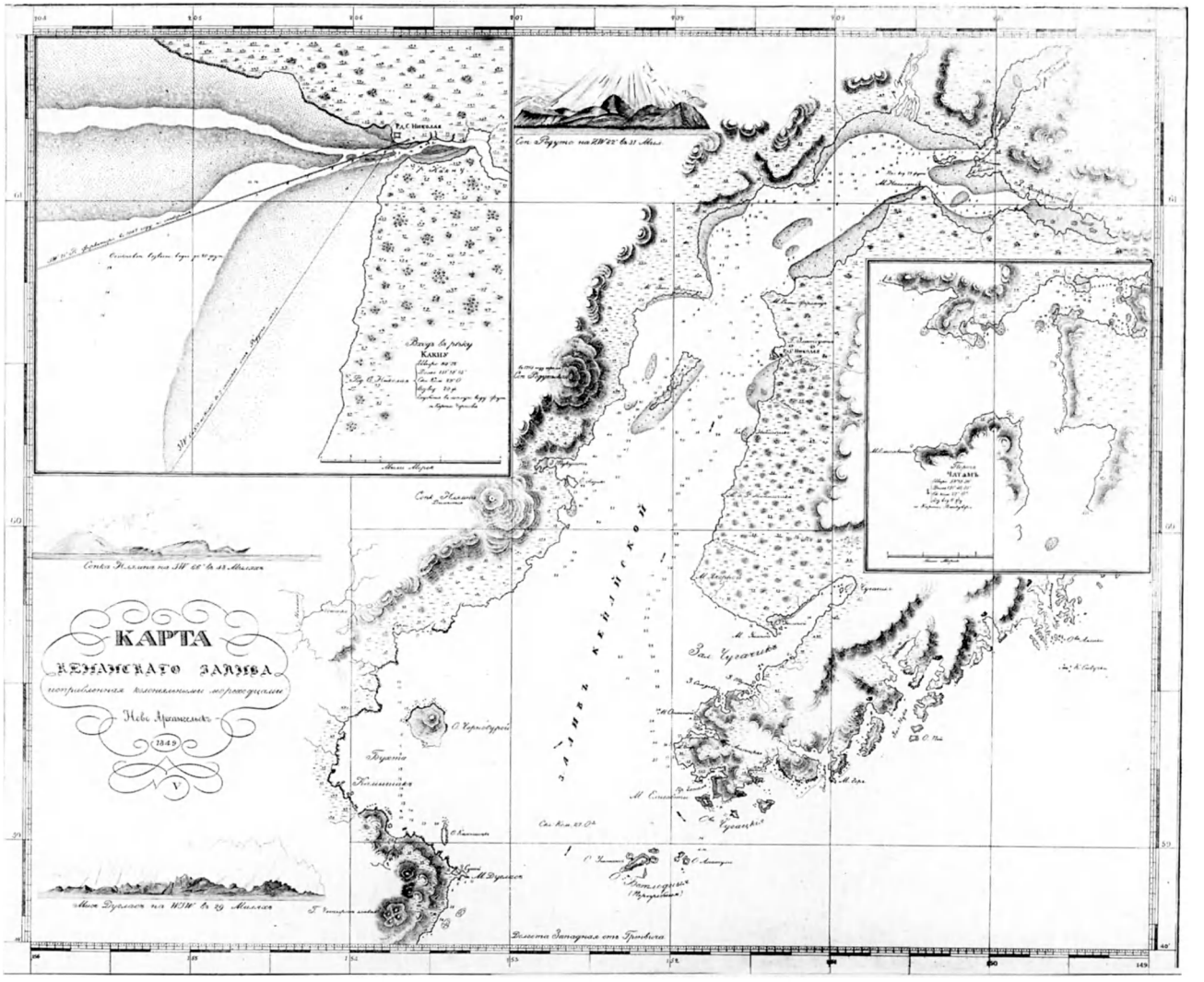
Etching of Cook Inlet and environs, by John Sykes, Bancroft Library. Etching style similar to views that Humphreys produced of Outer Kenai Coast.



Drawings by James Shields of Russian shipbuilding site in Resurrection Bay, c. 1795. University of Alaska, Fairbanks.



Coal Village near Port Graham, c. 1860. Russian-American Company report. Bancroft Library.



Teben'kov Chart #5 showing Outer Kenai Coast, 1849. Library of Congress.

Baranov's need to meet company expectations at whatever cost discouraged his crew. The prospect of living and working more than 260 miles from the familiarity of Kodiak scared Baranov's hired crew. To procure laborers, Baranov enlisted more than half of his 152 men, leaving the rest on Kodiak.[47] Refusing to pay them full wages until they arrived in Resurrection Bay, Baranov managed to lure his reluctant crew to the remote site.

> Had I paid the men on Kadiak Island first I would not have been able to force them to go to Chugach Bay. The men who are free would have quit and the men who are in debt would either have refused to go or would have started a mutiny.[48]

Laborers working for the Lebedev-Lastochkin Company menaced the shipwrights, scaring them with threats of hunger if they ventured into Resurrection Bay.[49] They also harassed and stalked Baranov's men who felled trees on Hinchinbrook Island. Forced to contend with repeated attacks and threats against his men, Baranov finally managed to convince many of Lebedev-Lastochkin's employees to change sides and join his crews.[50]

Morale remained low and during the winter of 1793-94, Baranov's crew made an attempt to kill their supervisor.[51] Unhappy with the daily ration of *iukola* or dried salmon, the crew demanded an allotment of two pounds of flour. Petty rivalry ensued. Communication deteriorated over the winter and fearing they had been forgotten, the men decided to retreat to Kodiak. Problems also escalated on Kodiak Island among the men scheduled to transfer to Resurrection Bay. Taking the threat on his life in stride, Baranov wrote to Shelikhov, "I straightened things out on my return, but the scoundrels made an attempt on my life. However, I will not speak of that. I would not deserve the position of manager if I could not stop troubles in my company."[52]

The use of Native labor supplemented Baranov's crew and fulfilled one of Shelikhov's earlier stipulations. Determined to train a skilled local labor force that could grow within the ranks of the company, Shelikhov had directed Baranov to assign young Chugach apprentices to work with ship artisans.

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[47] *Ibid.*, 60.
[48] *Ibid.*
[49] *Ibid.*, 33, in letter from Baranov to Shelikhov, from Chugach Bay, 24 July 1793.
[50] K. T. Khlebnikov, *Baranov: Chief Manager of the Russian Colonies in America*, 20-21.
[51] *Ibid.*
[52] *Ibid.*

> My only instruction is that you must not fail to have young American Natives study with master shipwrights, carpenters, blacksmiths, artisans and navigators. Generally speaking American Natives make very capable seafarers; all they need is practical experience, especially with the compass which is so necessary; then they can master this.[53]

Baranov began construction of the *Phoenix* in 1793 after completion of the fort barracks and a blacksmith shop. Already delayed by a year because of bad weather and the other problems discussed above, the building of the *Phoenix* proceeded throughout the winter of 1793 and was completed in September 1794.

Baranov likely modeled the ship after a schooner belonging to Hugh Moore. While sailing in the Chugach region in 1792, Baranov encountered the Irishman Moore en route from Bengal. Moore had anchored his ship, also named the *Phoenix,* in Prince William Sound to repair damage to the masts.[54] Baranov spent five days with Moore on his 75 foot, three-mast ship. This gave Baranov ample time to admire its design and construction.

Baranov's *Phoenix* measured 60 feet long at the keel and had two decks and three masts. It was 73 feet in length along the lower deck and 79 feet along the upper. The width of the ship was 23 feet, and at the upper deck the height reached 12½ feet. The ship's total capacity was 180 tons. In Russian texts, the vessel was commonly referred to as a frigate. In an account by Natalia A. Shelikhov, Grigorii's wife, the *Phoenix* carried twenty-four guns.[55] When the finished ship set sail in 1795, it sported a variety of exterior finishes and colored sails.

Baranov's *Phoenix* was a patchwork of local technologies and materials. Iron, which was so critical to the construction, was in short supply. Iron was needed to manufacture an anchor, anchor chains, ring bolts, windlasses, nails and tools. Baranov estimated that he had received only 300 finished nails from Shelikhov, and more than 600 axes needed to be forged or repaired at the shipyard to fell trees.[56] At first, Baranov hoped to salvage enough iron from shipwrecks and second-hand sources. Discouraged by the poor quality and quantity of the metal, however, he decided to construct a local smelting plant. Turning to others for advice,

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[53] Dmytryshyn, Crownhart-Vaughan, and Vaughan, *Russian Penetration of the North Pacific Ocean*, 443.

[54] Moore, like many European captains sailing between Alaska and Asia, traded with Natives along the Chugach coast, professing title to the area based on Captain Cook's voyages to the region.

[55] *Ibid.,* 505. The *Phoenix* was modified once it reached Russia and these guns may have been fitted in Okhotsk.

[56] Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian American Company*, 63.

Baranov consulted Father Juvenal only to realize that the priest's professed expertise with iron pertained to its chemistry and not to its smelting.[57] Relying on local sources of ore collected on the Kenai Peninsula, Baranov requested Shelikhov to send an expert in the field to establish a local factory. Baranov's blacksmith Tsypanov eventually forged his own items from metals that he found.[58]

Baranov, Shields, and his assistants, among them Vasilii G. Medvednikov, concocted a local paint and resin to protect and caulk the ship's hull. After a failed attempt at making turpentine, and having no tar, oakum, or pitch, Baranov sent 500 Native men, a number equal to one complete hunting party, to collect resin in the vicinity of Fort Kenai. The end product consisted of a paint-like substance made from the "entrails and offal of fish mixed with whale blubber."[59] Coated and caulked in stages, the vessel exhibited a variety of paint finishes. Bancroft reported that upon arriving in Okhotsk, the vessel underwent modifications, including the construction of upper decks.[60]

On 5 September 1795 the *Phoenix*, under the command of James Shields, left Resurrection Bay and sailed for Kodiak Island. For the ceremonial launching Shields made a sketch of the event and Baranov threw a party complete with homemade berry and root vodka.[61] Later that year, Gerasim Izmailov took charge of the ship for its first official voyage to Okhotsk. The *Phoenix* proudly carried in its hull a three-year backlog of furs. Baranov sent with Izmailov a plan of the *Phoenix* drawn by Shields.[62] He requested recognition and bonuses for the men who worked at Fort Voskresenskii.

On the *Phoenix*'s return trip from Okhotsk, Baranov learned of Shelikhov's death. In 1795, Shelikhov's widow praised the ship in honor of her husband:

> ...Baranov, instructed by my husband, has experimented in shipbuilding. On this frigate he sailed to Kadiak and from there sent her to Okhotsk as I mentioned above with three years' accumulation of furs.... I have the honor of enclosing the plans of the above mentioned Resurrection Harbor where the frigate and these ships were built. In this manner shipbuilding was started even before the skilled workers

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[57] *Ibid.*, 66.

[58] *Ibid.*, 63.

[59] Dmytryshyn, Crownhart-Vaughan, and Vaughan, *Russian Penetration of the North Pacific Ocean*, 487.

[60] Bancroft, *History of Alaska 1730-1885*, 332-333.

[61] Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian American Company*, 67.

[62] *Ibid.*, 65.

> arrived, justifying the labors and hopes of my deceased husband.[63]

The *Phoenix*, acclaimed as the first Russian ship built and launched in Alaska, made three round trip voyages between Kodiak and Okhotsk from 1795 to 1799, transporting passengers, furs, ammunition, and supplies.[64] On the second voyage in 1797-1798, Gavriil Talin piloted the *Phoenix* to Kodiak.

In 1799, on a return trip to Kodiak Island from Okhotsk, the *Phoenix* hit a May storm in the waters off the Aleutian Islands. All crew and cargo were lost. Within days, debris from the shipwreck began to wash on shore. Over the next year, objects continued to be found on beaches in the vicinity of the Gulf of Alaska. Davydov reported that "[f]lagons of vodka were discovered, bottles of sour wine, wax candles, a samovar, a ships's wheel, upper beams and other articles–in an area extending from Unalashka right down to Sitkha and even further south."[65]

Try as he might, Baranov never learned what happened to the *Phoenix*. In June 1800, he admitted that he still knew few details.

> All this proves that a misfortune occurred. Probably our *Phoenix*, carrying the transport, was wrecked. We investigated on Shuiakh [Shuyak], Afognak, and the Peregrebnye [Wosnesenski] Islands and at Chugach from Nuchek to Kenai but no one there knew anything of a shipwreck.... The uncertainty troubles me.[66]

Eighty-eight crewmembers, including several major personalities in Russian America, lost their lives on the ill-fated voyage. James Shields, so instrumental in the construction of the ship, died as captain of the voyage. Archimandrite Ioasaf, the newly consecrated first bishop of America, Russian Orthodox Church dignitaries, Heiromonk Makarii, Heirodeacon Stephen, and a novice also perished.[67]

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[63] Madam Shelikhov wrote these comments to Count Zubov, Adjutant-General, General-Feldtseikhmeister and representative of the Empress in Crimea, in November 1795. See Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian American Company*, 87.

[64] Lydia T. Black and Dominique Desson, *Early Russian Contact*, Alaska Historical Commission Studies in History No. 191 (Anchorage, the Commission, 1986), 20. The *Phoenix* was the first ship built in Alaska, but it was probably not the first ship built on the Pacific coast of North America. In 1790, John Meares mentioned a ship called the *Northwest American* built in Nootka Sound.

[65] Davydov, *Two Voyages to Russian America*, 119.

[66] In letter from Baranov to Malakhov, Foreman of the Crew at Kenai Bay, 11 June 1800, in Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian American Company*, 105. Wosnesenski Island is south of the Alaska Peninsula, near the present town of King Cove.

[67] Bishop Gregory (Afonsky), *A History of the Orthodox Church in Alaska 1794-1917*

Many suspected that the *Phoenix* faltered off the Aleutians in the vicinity of Umnak Island. Speculation and hearsay surrounded the infamous shipwreck. Shields' inadequacies as ship captain came into question, suggesting that he lacked the experience to master the vessel in rough seas.[68] Others blamed the effects of a deadly outbreak of yellow fever that raged in Okhotsk and Kamchatka at the time that the *Phoenix* set sail.[69] Given the close quarters on board, the fever could have spread quickly – weakening the crew. Whatever the cause, the loss of the *Phoenix* put a temporary hold on local trade and business in the colonies. Baranov wrote of his predicament, lamenting the loss of trade goods needed to carry on local business.

> It is a great misfortune for all of us, not to mention the loss of Company money and of private capital. What is most important, we will not have the supplies we need to keep on friendly terms with people here and to send out hunting and trading parties.[70]

Throughout the late 1790s and early 1800s, Baranov continued to sail between Kodiak and Prince William Sound with Fort Voskresenskii a regular port of call. At the same time, hunting crews frequently stopped at the fort en route to Nuchek. Transport of raw furs between the outer forts and the company warehouses in Kodiak kept up a steady stream of boat traffic along the coast. On one of these trips, in 1800, Baranov still had hopes of expanding and improving the settlement in Resurrection Bay. He had "the intention of visiting Voskresenskii redoubt to see the local Chugach and Kinai natives and to plan a new settlement there...."[71] However, the Russian-American Company had other plans.

Russian Interests Change along the Outer Kenai Coast

In the early 1800s the Russians moved shipbuilding operations to Southeast Alaska, and Sitka became the Russian seat of governmental and economic activity. In 1818, Ludwig von Hagemeister replaced Baranov as chief manager of Russian affairs in the territory. The new manager

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(Kodiak, St. Herman's Theological Seminary, 1977), 29.

[68] Khlebnikov, *Baranov: Chief Manager of the Russian Colonies in America*, 32.

[69] 29 April 1805, "Advice from Main Office to A. A. Baranov regarding the dispatch of three vessels to America ... St. Petersburg," in Pierce, ed., *Documents on the History of the Russian-American Company*, item 16, 165.

[70] In letter from Baranov to Malakhov, Foreman of the Crew at Kenai Bay, 11 June 1800, in Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian American Company*, 105.

[71] Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian American Company*, 108.

brought new direction to the company and change to the outer Kenai coast.

One of Hagemeister's first acts was to consolidate the western forts. He sought to keep only those forts that had high economic potential and return. He did so because sea otter fur, the staple of Russian-American commerce, had virtually died out in the coastal waters of the Kenai Peninsula and Prince William Sound. Even by the early 1800s, Davydov had already noted a dependence on bear and black otter pelts at forts St. Nicholas and Alexandrovsk. After 1817 the Russian population had decreased on Kodiak Island, and Baranov ordered the move of property from economically stagnant Fort Aleksandrovskii on the end of Kenai Peninsula to a new location at Iliamna (now called Old Iliamna).[72] The new fort, which assumed the same name, was eventually built at Nushagak.

The decision to reevaluate and consolidate Russian forts coincided with international events that put the Russian government on the defensive against foreign interests in the colonies.[73] Vasilii Golovnin, convinced that American interests sought to overpower the Russian colonies and challenge the renewal of the Russian-American Company contract in 1819, advised the government to isolate and close the territory to all outside trade.[74] As a result, in the 1820s and 1830s the Russian-American Company diversified its economy to include agriculture, timber, and fish; it also moved to seek out markets in need of these commodities. The Russian government redirected expansion within the territory to the north, a move that realigned the coastal forts. In a parallel attempt to develop and populate portions of the territory that were deemed more profitable, former Russian-American Company employees received encouragement to initiate agricultural settlements.[75] This naturally attracted people to the more temperate regions and away from forts developed solely for hunting, shipbuilding, and fur trading. Some villages on the Cook Inlet side of the Kenai Peninsula, including Seldovia, were established as a result of this initiative.

The Russian reorganization overlapped with an overt move to reduce the number of Native villages. Arvid A. Etholen, governor of Russian America

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[72] Richard A. Pierce, ed., *The Russian American Company, Correspondence of the Governors, Communications Sent: 1818* (Kingston, Ontario, The Limestone Press, 1984), 16.

[73] The 1822 decision prohibited foreign ships from entering the waters of Russian America near Russian *artels*. See Okun, *The Russian-American Company*, 68.

[74] Kushner, *Conflict on the Northwest Coast*, 32.

[75] Fedorova, *The Russian Population in Alaska and California: Late 18th Century - 1867*, 145. Fedorova referred to a "Supreme Command of 2 April 1835 which permitted former employees of the Russian-American Company with families to remain in the colonies permanently and to establish special settlements."

between 1840 and 1845, effected minor reforms in the behavior of Russian employees towards Alaska Natives. Looking to improve services to villages and in order to improve the condition of village life, Etholen directed the merging of villages on Kodiak Island from seventy-five to a mere seven.[76] Although the direct impacts of this decision cannot be assessed on the outer Kenai coast, the implications of this radical reduction were sure have affected neighboring areas.

In 1819, Hagemeister ordered the removal of the *artel* at Resurrection Bay and a consolation of materials and employees. His instructions also specified the need to move the entire settlement surrounding the fort, including the Native crew and their families.

> Transfer the Russians and *Kaiurs* [Native workers] to Iliamna. As there remain but a few aboriginal inhabitants, try to persuade them to move to another more populous place, and it would be best if they were agreeable to moving to Iliamna.[77]

However, many sources indicated that although the Russians had every intention of moving the entire fort, it may have remained partially intact with only parts of it salvaged for iron and other scarce materials. In 1818, Golovnin described the site as a small fort in which "the Company maintains task forces of *promyshlenniks* or *artels* for trading with the natives who trade various furs for needed European goods."[78] Lieutenant Captain Pavel Golovin reported that by 1819 Fort Voskresenskii, along with neighboring Forts Alexandrovsk and Gerogevski, were *odinochka* or "single man" isolated camps or outposts.[79] In 1821, K. T. Khlebnikov described the fort as nothing more than a small building with one resident Russian and some horned cattle.[80] Sarychev's 1826 *Atlas* identified the fort as a single man outpost.[81] However, Tikhmenev reported that between the 1840s and the 1860s Fort Voskresenskii was "abolished." These varied accounts make it difficult to determine an exact date when the fort closed. There may have been an initial move in the 1820s with a smaller station left in place until the mid-nineteenth century as Tikhmenev implied.

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[76] Pierce, *Russian America: A Biographical Dictionary*, 138.

[77] The Russian American Company, *Correspondence of the Governors*, 79 and Fedorova, *The Russian Population*, 136.

[78] V. M. Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka, 1817-1819* (Honolulu, The Hawaiian Historical Society and the University Press of Hawaii, 1979), 306.

[79] Golovin, *Survey of Russian Colonies in North America*, in Congressional Papers, 40th Congress, 2nd Session, Executive Document 177, 111. Another definition of *odinochka* meant a place with no original native settlement, but where a hunter now lives with several *kaiurs* or Native workers; see Davydov, *Two Voyages to Russian America*, 114.

[80] Fedorova, *The Russian Population in Alaska and California, Late 18th Century-1867*, 201.

[81] Map of Kenai Peninsula in Sarychev's 1826 *Atlas*. Katerina S. Wessels translated the place names and descriptions for the present study.

Despite the relocation of Fort Voskresenskii, a Russian presence continued on the outer coast. Mikhail Teben'kov, chief manager of the Russian American Company between 1845 and 1850, conducted a major survey of the Alaska coast, the results of which were published in the 1852 *Atlas of the Northwest Coasts of America*. He assigned the Russian skipper Illarion Arkhimandritov the task of surveying the outer Kenai coast. He referred to several earlier surveys of the coast implying Russian interest and familiarity with this area, though many were lost or unavailable at the time that Teben'kov compiled the *Atlas*. Those who had surveyed Resurrection Bay probably included Captain James Shields (1793-94) and Danilo Kalinin (1806), the latter an employee of the Russian-American Company.[82] In 1804 a Russian navigator named Bubnov conducted a thorough summary of the coast.[83] However, all these surveys, like the English and Spanish maps of the region, were conducted exclusively from the sea with no detailed land descriptions.[84]

In 1849, Arkhimandritov mapped the outer Kenai coast, Kodiak, Cook Inlet, and Prince William Sound. His skillful calculations formed the basis for most of the information on Teben'kov's maps of the region.[85] Davidson later relied heavily on Arkhimandritov's work on the seaward side of the peninsula. Vancouver had made no record the Kenai Coast.[86] Teben'kov deduced from Arkhimandritov's findings that the coast had few redeeming features.

> It can be seen from his description that it is all uninhabited space, consisting of bays and straits, hardly convenient because at the very shore the depth is 30 to 50 *sazhens* [210 to 350 feet].[87] The shore is mountainous, steep and rocky, covered with forests; the gorges and eroded mountains in many places are occupied by glaciers, crossing even into Kenai Bay. The well-known Voskresenskii Bay ... is equally

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[82] Pierce mentioned both a Danilo Vasil'evich Kalinin and a Mikhail Kalianin or Kalinin in his *Biographical Dictionary*. Teben'kov provided no first names; based on Pierce's summary, however, D. V. Kalinin would have been the only one capable of conducting such a survey.

[83] Pierce does not include any biographical material on a Russian navigator named Bubnov in *Russian American: A Biographical Dictionary*. Teben'kov mentions the work of Bubnov.

[84] Teben'kov, *Atlas of the Northwest Coasts of the America*, 20.

[85] Pierce, *Russian America: A Bibliographical Dictionary*, 10. Pierce stated that Arkhimandritov conducted the survey of the region in 1846 rather than 1849,

[86] Davidson, "The Glaciers of Alaska that are Shown on Russian Charts or Mentioned in Older Narratives," 6.

[87] 1 *sazhen* = 7 feet.

> inconvenient. It is has the same severity of climate, wildness of nature and inaccessible bottom.[88]

Aleksandr Kashevarov, described by Teben'kov as a hired skipper, was an experienced navigator in Russian America in the 1830s. He may have accompanied Arkhimandritov or worked independently on yet another coastal survey.

One of Teben'kov's motivations in mapping the coast was the anticipation of the increased presence of Russian whaling fleets in the region. He maintained that whaling ship captains needed precise charts and current surveys to locate safe harbors, both for protection and as layover stations during storms and periods of foggy weather.

Russian whaling operations in the Gulf of Alaska developed in response to an inundation of American whaling ships in the late 1840s. Encouraged by the discovery of coast-right whales and by the high price of sperm and whale oil, American ships dominated the market and pushed the whaling grounds all the way to the Sea of Okhotsk and the coast of Kamchatka.[89] Obviously intimidated and unable to stop the number of foreign ships, the Russian government formed its own fleet. In 1849 the Russian-American Company obtained permission to enter the fishery and instituted its own subsidiary, the Russo-Finland Whaling Company.[90] No match for the American fleet, the Russian company operated only from 1851 to 1854.

Equally interested in the territory's gold deposits, Teben'kov hired Petr Doroshin in 1847 to conduct a five-year survey of mineral resources in the southcentral region. Doroshin was a geologist, a graduate of the Imperial Mining School in St. Petersburg, and a member of the Russian Corps of Mining Engineers. Forced to abandon an investigation of Sitka, Doroshin traveled up the coast to Nuchek and then into Cook Inlet, stopping temporarily to explore gold traces.[91] Returning to the region in 1848 to follow up on his initial finds, Doroshin and his crew stopped at Nuchek and Resurrection Bay in between trips to the interior of the peninsula.[92] He recounted that:

> ... I left Sitka on the first of May and returned on the 4th of October. During this period the laborers under my command were at work only forty nine days, the remainder of the time

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[88] Teben'kov, *Atlas of the Northwest Coasts of America*, 20.

[89] Kushner, *Conflict on the Northwest Coast*, 90.

[90] *Ibid.*, 91.

[91] Pierce, *Russian America: A Biographical Dictionary*, 123.

[92] Lt. Doroshin, *A Russian Engineer Prospected for Gold in Russian America*, 1848-1858, typescript, n.d. n.p., at ARLIS.

> being spent in excursions to Nuchek ... and Voskressensky Bay....[93]

Noting the terrain between Resurrection Bay and the end of the Kenai Peninsula, Doroshin knew that the rugged glaciated coast he had observed and described in Prince William Sound continued. Yet, from his writings it seemed his ship kept a safe distance from the coast. "Between Resurrection Bay and the Peregrehni [Wosnesenski] Islands," he noted, "there are many glaciers but from the sea I could see only three of them."[94]

Working within strict time and weather constraints, Doroshin was unable to locate enough gold to satisfy Russian officials. Directed to turn his attention to coal, Doroshin provided the first reports on deposits at Port Graham as well as Kachemak Bay in the early 1850s.[95] His survey included the eastern end of the peninsula, but stopped before reaching the southeastern coastline. In 1853 he returned to Russia; in 1866, he published notes on his Alaska experience and gold discoveries in a series of articles for the *Russian Mining Journal.*

The Kenai Russian Orthodox Mission

The establishment of a Russian Orthodox mission in Kenai included in its district villages along the outer Kenai Coast and Prince William Sound as well as part of the Alaska Peninsula. Originally part of the Kodiak Mission, the Kenai Mission was founded in 1844. The mission served 150 miles of coastline; the villages of English Bay, Seldovia, and Nuchek were the closest to the outer Kenai coast. Bishop Innokenty, in 1842, noted that:

> In accordance with article 11 of the Ukase of the Holy Synod of January 10, 1841, I intend to separate several villages and settlements from the Kodiak parish, to organize a new mission at Kenai Bay at the first opportunity and to use all means available for the accomplishment of this plan as soon as possible.[96]

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[93] *Ibid.*

[94] *Ibid.*

[95] Pierce, *Russian America: A Biographical Dictionary,* 124.

[96] Report of Bishop Innokenty to the Holy Ruling Synod, #103, April, 22, 1842, in Russian Orthodox Church Records, University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) Archives. The villages researched include the Kenai Peninsula and Chugach areas and included Aleksandrovsk, English Bay, Gronaia Ekspeditsiia, Knik, Ninilchik, Seldovia, Susitna, and Tyonek.

Golovin observed that in 1846, 133 women and 178 men joined the Kenai Mission.[97]

The church formed the new mission to enable priests to travel to outlying villages; under the old arrangement, trips from Kodiak to the Kenai Peninsula proved increasingly treacherous as priests tried to reach as many villages as possible. As was customary, Russian priests regularly traveled in open skinboats accompanied by a song leader and other lay clergy. In 1856 Abbot [Father] Igumen Nicholas, the priest in residence at Kenai from 1845 to 1867, reported that the during one of the trips to the Chugach villages and to Nuchek Redoubt 'to fulfill the needs of the church for the benefit of all the Christians living here,' the *baidarkas* overturned and all the supplies were lost.[98] It may have been several years before Abbot Nicholas returned to Nuchek with new supplies.

Although it is known that Russian priests frequently traveled between the chapels and forts at Alexandrovsk and Nuchek, it is not known how extensively they documented visits to smaller villages along the coast. Kenai, a prominent settlement in Russian America, provided a center for the mission documents and records pertaining to the church and its domain. However, a review of a portion of Russian Orthodox Church records from the period provided limited descriptions of Native villages along the outer coast.[99] Most of the larger villages later had small chapels and lay readers of their own to administer services. Trips to villages occurred on a rotating basis; the Kenai mission's lone priest traveled to opposite corners of the mission in alternate years.

Traveling Russian Orthodox priests arrived in villages prepared to perform baptisms, marriages, and often to intervene as a third party mediator in local domestic and business disputes. Church services consumed the majority of time. Acting on behalf of the Russian-American Company and other local interests, priests also assumed the responsibility of village doctor administering vaccinations as a precaution against future epidemics.[100]

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[97] Golovin, *Survey of Russian Colonies*, 143.

[98] Letter by Abbot Igumen Nicholas, Dean of the Kenai Mission, to the Very Reverend Father Pyotr, Archpriest of the Cathedral, Spri-4, *Russian Orthodox Messenger Records*, UAA Archives.

[99] Research into Russian Orthodox Church Records for the present study included the examination of reels 181 to 203.

[100] James C. Hornaday, editor, *The Native, Russian and American Experiences of the Kenai Area of Alaska,* prepared for the Conference on Kenai Area History (November 7-8, 1974), 57.

Between 1858 and 1860 Abbot Nicholas visited Akhmylik, a Chugach village located between Seldovia and Nuchek.[101] Akhmylik, a possible variation of the name Yalik, corresponded to a village once located in Yalik Bay. On one trip the priest recorded a weeklong stay in Akhmylik village, providing incidental information on the population as well as giving the impression that additional villages existed close by.

> May 22. We came to the Chugach village of Akhmylik. The same day I sent a message to the neighboring settlements, calling the people for prayers, confessions and communion. Giving them two days for fasting, I held services, preached sermons, received confessions, and May 25 gave Holy Communion to forty-eight people. After that I baptized the babies, celebrated one marriage, held requiem service for the dead, investigated the quarrels among the Chugaches, and officiated as peacemaker. On May 29 I sailed farther....[102]

Prior to arriving in Akhmylik, Abbot Nicholas stopped at the mouth of Kachemak Bay to administer services at the Russian coal mining camp. The decision to exploit the coal deposits opposite Port Graham, as originally noted by Portlock and Dixon in the 1770s, and then later by Doroshin, roughly coincided with the establishment of the Kenai Mission. Though these were unrelated events, both brought increased trade activity and Russian influence to the outer coast.

The Kenai Mission remained a permanent institution in Kenaitze, Chugach, and Dena'ina villages after American acquisition of the territory. Its existence increased the independence of village chapels and called for the consolidation of remote villages.

Russian Coal Mining on the Kenai Coast

In 1848, the Russians had established Coal Village near Port Graham to serve as the support and export center for coal exploitation along the northwest coast of the Kenai Peninsula. The settlement catered to the mining crews, providing housing and supplies.[103] Supplies arrived from

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[101] Townsend stated that Akhmylik was probably Yalik; see *Arctic Anthropology* 11 (1974), 28.

[102] From the *Journal of Kenai Missionary*, Abbot Nicholas, September 1858 to December 1860, Alaska History Research Project, Documents Relative to the History of Alaska, 1878-1937, UAA Archives.

[103] Russian sources placed the mining settlement on English Bay in Kenai Bay. The 1860 Russian-American Company Report stated that Aleksandrovskaia, the single-man post that "used to be two miles away from the coal mines in Kenai Bay was abolished." Fedorova maintained the settlement began in the mid-1840s. See Fedorova, 146.

San Francisco via Port Graham on the small ship *Cyane*, an American ship recently acquired by the Russians. By 1859 the operation expanded to include an entire community, by one account rivaling in size both Sitka and Kodiak.[104] Finnish mining engineer Enoch Hjalmar Furuhjelm, who managed Coal Village, openly praised the village as the "best and most practically planned" in Alaska.[105]

Enoch Furuhjelm, Johan H. Furuhjelm's younger brother and the future governor of Russian America between 1859 and 1863, arrived on the Kenai Peninsula in 1855 after purchasing mining equipment and supplies in California. Because the 1849 California gold rush had placed a premium on coal resources, the Russian government hoped to profit from coal exports to California and compete with coal shipped from England, Chile, and Australia. Despite these high expectations, Furuhjelm found himself strapped with both an inexperienced crew and the need to build a usable mine. Furuhjelm improved the mine, and a modest farming operation started up as a side venture. Typically the mining crew included thirty-eight regular workers and eight day laborers hired from the Native labor pool. The mine site included four levels of adits measuring over 1,600 feet in length.

Furuhjelm's first and only load of coal to California left the mine in 1856 after a desolate winter spent in dirt hovels which left most of his crew incapacitated with disease. The shipment delivered to the West Coast could not compete in price with even lesser grades of domestic and foreign coal. The cost of shipping priced Alaska coal out of the market. Also, as with many ventures taken on by the Russian government in Alaska, demand had peaked by the time they decided to enter the market. In the following account by a crew chief at the mine, it is obvious that a sense of hopelessness surrounded the short-lived operation.

> In the year 1858 I was ordered to English Bay or Graham's Harbor, at the entrance of Cook's Inlet, having been attached to the so-called "Kenai Mining Expedition".... My duty was to superintend the Natives and Creoles employed in bring supplies and material to the spot where the coal veins were being developed. The supplies were forwarded chiefly from the

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[104] As of April 1859, the Russian-American Company reported on the following buildings at the mine: chapel, house for the expedition head, house for the commander of the garrison, 2 houses for the head miners, office, apartment for a doctor and a clerk, 2 warehouses, bakery and kitchen, blacksmith shop, sawmill, steam machine, and 9 small worker houses including stables, cattle-yard, barn, and bath. Translated by Katerina S. Wessels from the *Rossiisko-Amerikanskaia Kompaniia - otchet*, 1860, at the Bancroft Library.

[105] Hugo L. Mäkinen, *Alaska's First Coal Mine and the Man Who Opened It*, typescript at AHL.

> Redoubt St. Nicholas [at Kenai] and carried on *baidarkas*. The work progressed very slowly as the men employed were for the most part entirely unacquainted with underground mining and from the very beginning I never had any confidence in the enterprise. I am sure that as early as 1859 Mr. Furnhelm told me confidentially that he had no faith in the coal mines....[106]

Furuhjelm left Alaska in 1862. By 1868 the mine was completely abandoned, as noted in an account by Captain J. W. White of the U.S. Revenue Cutter *Wayanda*:

> Came to anchor off the coal mine (long since abandoned as such, now occupied by an American Fur Company) Captain White with several officers visited the post and examined the premises, found the store house and dwellings locked up, in charge of the Chief, Constantine Kal'iv.[107]

In 1880 William H. Dall toured the mine and offered a candid view of what the mine may have been like twenty years earlier.

> In 1880 I visited the site of the workings and found the tunnel inaccessible from the water, which partially filled it and the caving in due to the rotting of the timbering. The works had evidently been of a primitive kind, as there were no permanent buildings and not even a pier for shipping the coal. Only a few pieces of worn-out, rusty machinery and the tunnel in the bluff at the top of the beach remained to show that any work had ever been attempted here. I have seen statements that an extensive stone pier and costly buildings had been erected here and large sums of money lost in the attempt to utilize the coal, but, apart from the intrinsic improbability of such foolish doings, no evidence of the truth of the statements was furnished by the locality itself at the time.[108]

Russian exploration and enterprise along the outer Kenai coast irrevocably changed Native settlement and brought few economic rewards

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[106] Ivan Petroff recorded this narrative as told to him by Mr. Tchitchinoff in Kodiak in August 1878. Petroff wrote that "[h]e spoke partly from memory and partly from notes and journals kept by him at various times in rather a primitive style. I took his narration down in shorthand and subsequently arranged it chronologically." From the journal entitled *Adventures of Zakahar Tchitchinoff: An Employee of the Russian American Company 1802-1878*, at the Bancroft Library.

[107] Ship's Log, Revenue Cutter *Wayanda*, 1868, National Archives, D.C. as quoted in Robert DeArmond, *Mining in Cook Inlet*, DeArmond Papers (MS 39, 91-10), AHL.

[108] William H. Dall, "Report on Coal and Lignite of Alaska," in the *Seventeenth Annual Report of the USGS, 1895-96,* Part I (Washington, D.C., 1896), 786, as quoted from DeArmond, *Mining in Cook Inlet*, DeArmond Papers, AHL.

to the Russian-American Company. The radical shifting of Native inhabitants led to the demise of smaller villages and encouraged regional consolidation. Most of the Russian endeavors along the coast, however, included and employed local populations. This action supported Russian enterprise and created an intricate historic context for the outer coast in the 1800s.

Map 4-1 **Historic Sites-Shifting Landscape**

Chapter 4. Shifting Landscape: Demographics, Economics, and Environment on the Outer Kenai Coast

> This country is settled by Innuits, who have peopled the east coast of the peninsula, and from there eastward along the mainland nearly to the Copper River. Two of the trading stations in the Kenai district are located among these Innuits at English Bay and Seldovia.[1] – Ivan Petroff, 1884

Abbot Nicholas, the Russian Orthodox priest in residence at Kenai since 1845, died in 1867, the same year that the U.S. government purchased Alaska. With the abbot's death, the Kenai Mission lost its first missionary and priest at a time of transition and uncertainty. Village parishes experienced the same sense of loss. The transfer of Fort St. Nicholas [Fort Kenai] from Russian hands to the U.S. Army occurred in 1869 with little provision for the continuation of services to the villages. In 1870, the Americans abandoned the fort. The closing of Fort Kenai affected trade on the Kenai Peninsula and on Kodiak and Hinchinbrook islands.

The years after 1870, however, brought some positive changes. Once the Alaska Commercial Company (ACC) established itself in southcentral Alaska, a lucrative fur market resumed. In 1881, after years of neglect, the Kenai Mission reinstated a new priest. With this new appointment, a church presence returned to the villages in the Chugach region. These two actions triggered a brief period of prosperity on the outer coast in the late 1870s to early 1880s. When fur prices fell in the late 1880s and the economy of the outer Kenai Peninsula collapsed, the Russian Orthodox Church intervened. The church attempted to stabilize life in the villages, but its success in that endeavor was both incomplete and temporary.

Fur Trading After the Alaska Purchase

Like the Russians before them, the Americans depended on an economy tied to hunting and fur exports. The high price of fur on the American market encouraged Natives and Euro-Americans to hunt along the outer Kenai coast. Initially, the Americans carried out their business from the same stores and warehouses. The newly formed Alaska Commercial Company acquired the Russian trading post at Alexandrovsk (English Bay). The company hired Native crews to hunt between Seldovia and Nuchek. These two trade centers also supported Russian Orthodox

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[1] Ivan Petroff, *Report on the Population, Industries, and Resources of Alaska* (Washington, GPO, 1884), 26.

parishes. As Golovin noted in his 1860 survey of the colony, the placement of Russian Orthodox churches was linked to economic centers. He wrote, "For the most part they have been built in areas where there are many Natives, or in places where the natives dispose of their furs."[2]

Both the Russian Orthodox Church and the rise of American fur companies reshaped village demographics on the Kenai Peninsula in the late 1800s. One observer remarked that "The moment you leave Sitka and steer northward, you enter the realm of the North American Commercial and the Alaska Commercial companies: Kodiak, Nuchek, Kenai, Unalaska, with a host of Native Settlements, are completely in their hands...."[3] Both the church and the commercial companies sought to centralize services in larger villages. The Kenai Mission strategically supported the establishment of local churches in villages that had the potential to serve neighboring areas. In addition, the Alaska Commercial and Western Fur companies, as well as smaller independent companies with regional stations, preferred to buy and warehouse fur pelts from crews of Native hunters that operated from one central location.

The availability of Native crews was critical to commercial success; by law only residents and Natives could hunt for furs in the new American territory. In a reactionary ruling of the new government, Section 6 of the Customs Act of July 1868 originally prohibited the killing of any fur-bearing animals within the waters or territory of Alaska.[4] Within two years, the Secretary of the Treasury revised the law to allow Alaska residents to hunt sea otter.[5] By 1879 only Alaska Natives, or whites with Native wives, had the legal right to hunt animals for furs. In yet another radical turnaround, the law changed again in 1893, banning the taking of pelts within territorial waters. The law also limited the use of larger ships—except Revenue Cutters—for transporting hunters.[6]

This succession of laws directly affected crews trying to reach distant hunting grounds and the villages where they traded. The larger ships replaced the smaller *baidarkas* and *bidars*, a practice that eventually led to dramatic changes in the use of coastal areas. Larger ships avoided the smaller coastal harbors and beach landing sites. They also had no need for temporary layover spots or shelters during storms. Hunters had fewer opportunities to visit the smaller coves and bays. In addition, as fewer

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[2] Paulus Golovin, *Survey of Russian Colonies in North America*, in Congressional Papers, 40th Congress, 2nd Session, Executive Document 177, 53.

[3] *Russian Orthodox American Messenger*, I: 11, 206, at UAA Archives.

[4] Robert DeArmond, *Fur Trade*, DeArmond Papers, MS 39, 9, at AHL.

[5] DeArmond, *Fur Trade*, 9.

[6] Robert DeArmond, *Cook Inlet Shipping*, DeArmond Papers, 11.

boats traveled from village to village, communication decreased, as did populations.

The Alaska Commercial Company at English Bay

Established as a Russian fortified post in 1786, the settlement of Alexandrovsk, like many Russian holdings and stations, became an American trading station. Although it is not known what remained of the original Russian buildings at the time of American acquisition, Hutchinson, Kohl & Company—the founding partners of the Alaska Commercial Company—purchased Russian properties on the Kenai Peninsula. Alaska Commercial Company logbooks indicate that the company operated a trading station at English Bay at least as early as 1872. An inventory of existing buildings in English Bay taken in 1875 showed that the company maintained a storehouse, a dwelling, a barn, and a store, in addition to stores in the villages of Illiada (Iliamna) and Ostrovsky (in Kachemak Bay).[7] A later survey of the property, in 1879, included the same buildings with an assessed value of $300. A second group of buildings existed on the site which included "a store house valued at $100, a dwelling worth $185, and a second store house worth $40."[8] These buildings may have been the property of an earlier station on site established by Tittle & Company in 1869.[9] Like the Alaska Commercial Company, Tittle & Company was headquartered in San Francisco.

By 1892, the Alaska Commercial Company reported that the Kodiak District, which included English Bay and the Kenai Peninsula, had "assistants at stations scattered along the mainland and islands from Chignik Bay on the west to Prince William Sound on the east and the head of Cooks Inlet on the north, having stores in seventeen Indian villages, which are maintained throughout the year."[10] The English Bay station maintained and supported a number of local village stores and warehouses between 1870 and the early 1900s. In 1875 subsidiary stations and holdings of the English Bay station existed in Yalik and Akhmylik, Seldovia Bay, Ostrovsky or Catchikmack, and Illiama. Station manager Maxwell Cohen and agent Oliver Smith maintained the stores at Yalik, Illiama, and Ostrovsky.[11]

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[7] Alaska Commercial Company (ACC) Records, 1868-1913, *English Bay Station*, 1873-1902, Box 10, at UAF Archives.

[8] DeArmond, *Fur Trails to Cook Inlet*, DeArmond Papers, 32.

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] *Annual Report of the Governor of Alaska*, 1892, 32.

[11] ACC Records, *English Bay Station, Accounts, Statement of Affairs, Miscellaneous*, 1875-1899.

The English Bay station traded with stations on Kodiak Island and in Cook Inlet. Through these contacts, the commercial companies provided income to local hunters and controlled fur markets. At the Alaska Commercial Company's English Bay station, the company maintained detailed records and accounts for each hunter. Hunters sold their furs or applied them towards the purchase of hunting gear. The store kept a ready supply of *baidarkas*, hunting equipment, food, and household goods.[12] This arrangement almost guaranteed that hunters would become indebted to the company. By one estimate, each Native hunter or head of the family owed $500 to the Alaska Commercial Company. [13]

The English Bay station also maintained a fleet of schooners. Schooner traffic in Cook Inlet regularly carried parties of hunters, and the same activity occurred along the outer Kenai coast. The open waters of the Gulf of Alaska, and the distance between English Bay and Nuchek, added considerable hardship for the hunters. Historian Robert DeArmond noted that:

> The vessels owned by the fur companies and used principally to supply the trading stations were also used as tenders for Native sea otter camps, moving the hunters from one point to another during the season. Some of these vessels also served as mother ships for otter hunters, carrying the *baidarkas* on deck when they were not in use and serving as living quarters for the men.[14]

Company expenditures show that crews traveled to the Barren Islands, the Gulf of Alaska, and to Nuchek. The schooners carried provisions for sea otter parties, and the crew on board purchased skins directly from the hunters. The following entry documented the arrival of hunters to English Bay from Nuchek.[15]

> Thus, the schooner *Eudora* left English Bay on May 2, 1877, for Chonoborough [Augustine] Island with a hunting party, and at the same station on June 12, 1877, "Arrived, eight bydarkas of Nuchek Indians to hunt otter."[16]

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[12] *Ibid.* Also see DeArmond for a similar analysis of village transformation on the northwestern coast of Cook Inlet in his unpublished manuscript *Fur Trade*, 6, DeArmond Papers.

[13] Robert P. Porter, *Report on Population and Resources of Alaska* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1894), 251.

[14] DeArmond, *Fur Trade*, 15.

[15] Petroff, *Report on the Population, Industries, and Resources of Alaska*, 27. Petroff stated that sea otter hunting grounds existed on the eastern side of Nuchek Island. These hunting grounds supported "two large trading-stores on that island."

[16] DeArmond, *Fur Trade*, 19.

The Nuchek hunters may have arrived independent of any schooner but given the option, passage on the larger ship would have been safer and faster. Hunters looking to take advantage of passage between larger villages and hunting grounds gradually moved away from the smaller, remote villages. Many abandoned villages later served as hunting and fishing camps for crews in transit.

The company incurred overhead costs for private *baidarkas* used by the Native crews. As a rule, the company expected each hunter to pay off the cost of the boat through a personal account. However, it appeared that the company extended more credit to the hunters than it would have preferred. The English Bay station agent, discouraged with the lack of return on this investment, recorded the following situation.

> Natives lost 8 bidarkas since last Fall, 3 of them were brand new, a bidarka costs from $40 to $50, although the natives claim the frame as theirs, the Co. had to pay for them all, and charges each part the price of same, $12 for frame and $10 for putting on the Loftock [skin?], might as well give it to them gratis in the first place, as I am satisfied they will never pay it.[17]

The Yalik Bay Store

The Alaska Commercial Company opened a store in Yalik Bay off the West Arm of Nuka Bay in late 1872 or early 1873 and continued to visit and stock it into the 1880s.[18] Company records specifically identified stores at two locations in Nuka Bay. These included a store at Yalik and one in Akhmylik. Company records indicated that agents made trips to each location as well as kept separate operating accounts and expenses for the two stores. However, as mentioned in Chapter 3, Townsend suggested that the two villages were probably the same. It is probable that the Yalik store was built near the village of Akhmylik; it may have been across Yalik Bay or closer to the bay entrance. References to Akhmylik dropped from company records after the late 1870s, while Yalik continued to appear on the books until the mid-1880s. The name Yalik may have replaced the longer village name and eventually meant any settlement in the Yalik Bay area.[19] Petroff refers to Yalik as a village name in 1884 as does Porter in

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[17] ACC Records, *English Bay Station, Bidarkas at English Bay,* April 1896.

[18] ACC Records, *English Bay Station, Accounts.*

[19] Joan B. Townsend, *Journals of Nineteenth Century Russian Priests to the Tanaina,* 28. Townsend makes the connection between the villages of Yalick or Yalik and Aychmilick [Akhmylik]. The Russian Orthodox Church Records first introduced the name of Akhmylik, and it later appears in the Alaska Commercial Company Records alongside

1890.[20] Given the chance, the government readily used a more anglicized name and thought little of changing local place names. This may have occurred in the case of Akhmylik and Yalik.

The Yalik store probably stocked a portion of the merchandise found at the English Bay station. This included a selection of general dry goods, cloth, shoes, cooking utensils, religious objects, toiletries, specialty items, and all types of hunting and fishing equipment. Employees at the English Bay station regularly made trips to both Yalik and Akhmylik. The purpose of their trips was not evident from the notations made in the station log, but there could have been periodic buying expeditions. The station also paid wages to the village chief on a monthly basis. (Records indicate, for example, that English Bay Chief Constantine Kal'iv received checks from the company.)[21]

In October 1877, the English Bay log showed an expense of $28 for the closing of the Yalik store, with a follow-up entry in the next spring to move a "warehouse in the bay." Although there was no specific reference that this was the Yalik Bay warehouse, this entry indicated that the company commonly reclaimed and moved its buildings; this procedure could have occurred at Yalik Bay. Company involvement and trips to Yalik continued despite the apparent store closing. In 1880, the company recorded an expense of paddles for the store; that April, merchandise on hand at the store totaled $147. The existence of these transactions implies that there could have been some confusion in the records. Perhaps the company meant to document the closure of the Akhmylik store and not the one at Yalik.

Frank Lowell: Hunter, Trader, and Station Manager

Small independent hunters and traders often acted as intermediaries between Native hunters and the established trading stations operated by the Alaska Commercial and the Western Fur and Trading companies on the Kenai Peninsula, on Kodiak Island and at Nuchek. Similar practices supported Native hunters on Cook Inlet and throughout the Dena'ina region of southwestern Alaska.[22] Porter reported in the 1890 census that

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the name for the company store in "Yaleck." By the 1880s the name Akhmylik disappears from the records, while Yalik remains. Concurrent references to a village at the site by Petroff use the name of Yalik, as does Porter in the 1890 census. These are broad conclusions based on this information, but they provide one explanation for the overlapping of names.

[20] Porter, *Report on Population and Resources of Alaska,* 69.

[21] ACC Records, *English Bay Station, Station Expenses 1873-1897.*

[22] Joan B. Townsend, "The Tanaina of Southwestern Alaska: An Historical Synopsis," *Western Canadian Journal of Anthropology: Athabascan Studies*, 1:1 (1970): 12. See also

"the scattered white traders were lavishly supported with 'outfits', comfortable houses, and native hunting parties, all on long credit, in order to secure their trade and custom."[23] On the outer coast of the Kenai Peninsula, Frank Lowell maintained a local hunting and trading network that was for many years affiliated with the Alaska Commercial Company's English Bay station. In 1911 Benjamin L. Johnson, a USGS surveyor, mentioned a second independent trader, a man he only referred to as Kimball, who "handled furs for the Natives..." and "had several trading stores here."[24] Lowell and his extensive family traded and sold furs on the coast for approximately fifteen years.

Frank Lowell was born in Maine and homesteaded on the Kenai Peninsula with his wife, Mary Lowell, a Native of English Bay. In 1906, an article in the *Seward Weekly Gateway* reported that in 1883, the couple moved to the site near the head of Resurrection Bay.[25] Frank Lowell apparently left his wife and family in 1893 but Mary Lowell, who was of both Russian and Native ancestry, remained on the homestead until after the turn of the century.[26] Mary Lowell died on May 20, 1906. Soon afterward, the *Seward Weekly Gateway* ran the following obituary.

> Mrs. Lowell was born at English Bay near Seldovia, on the seaward side of the peninsula. She came to the present site of Seward with her husband 23 years ago and had lived here ever since. Her husband left here around 13 years ago but Mrs. Lowell continued to reside on the old homestead with her children.[27]

In 1898 Walter Mendenhall, the USGS geologist mentioned in Chapter 1, met a group of Natives at the head of Resurrection Bay who were planting potatoes and other vegetables. These people were probably members of the Lowell family. Mendenhall noted four or five houses along the bay. The Lowells provided Mendenhall with a small boat to reach the head of the bay, approximately four miles north of where they docked a steamer ship.[28]

Frank Lowell kept business contacts in English Bay until at least 1895. Benjamin Johnson, the USGS surveyor, suggested that he supported other

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DeArmond, *Fur Trails to Cook Inlet*, 15.

[23] Porter, *Report on Population and Resources of Alaska,* 251.

[24] B. L. Johnson, *Field Notes, Kenai Peninsula, 1911, Notebook, #387*, n.p., at USGS Library, Anchorage.

[25] *Seward Weekly Gateway*, 26 May 1906, 3.

[26] *Ibid.*

[27] *Ibid.*

[28] Captain Edwin F. Glenn, *Report on Explorations in Alaska: Cook Inlet, Susitna, Copper and Tanana Rivers* (Washington, GPO, 1899), 650.

families of his own who also lived along the coast.[29] Census taker Robert Porter, however, stated in 1890 that Frank and Mary Lowell and their children comprised the only residents of the coast.

> The only settlement on this whole coast, extending for 120 miles from Cape Puget to Cape Elizabeth is the place of residence chosen by a native of Maine upon the shore of Resurrection Bay, or Blying sounds. This man who is one of the American pioneers of Alaska, entered the territory almost immediately after its purchase by the U.S., and has never left it. He has named his home Lowell, after himself, and having married a creole wife, has reared a large family of stalwart boys, expert hunters and sailors, who assist their father in his hunting expeditions in a small schooner owned by the family.[30]

Frank Lowell worked as an independent trader and as an Alaska Commercial Company agent. He maintained a long-term relationship with the ACC's English Bay Station. He also worked with Charles Smith at the Western Fur and Trading Company. From 1877 to 1895 if not longer, Lowell kept both personal and business accounts at the English Bay Station. His private accounts reflected a need for a wide range of household supplies in addition to luxury and personal items. These purchases give a glimpse into Lowell's personal life and of the products available on the coast in the late 1800s. Lowell regularly bought silk, guitar strings, children's shoes, cakes of fancy soap, needles, smoking tobacco, tea, sugar, lead, and powder. He also purchased a chinchilla cap, a gold ring, cologne, lace brocade, and teapots.

Lowell also maintained an account for his hunting crew at the English Bay station. Although Native hunters kept individual accounts for both furs sold and goods, Lowell subsidized some crewmembers. He regularly helped hunters who were no longer able to pay their debts, and he often traded on their behalf. Lowell's crew hunted and set up winter camps at many points along the coast between English and Resurrection bays, including Yalik, Nuka, and Aialik bays.[31] The principal furs hunted and

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[29] Johnson, *Field Notes*, n.p.

[30] Porter, *Report on Population and Resources of Alaska,* 68.

[31] These locations are based on information compiled by Ronald T. Stanek in *Patterns of Wild Resource Use in English Bay and Port Graham, Alaska* (Alaska Department of Fish and Game, 1985), 55. Much of Stanek's study references personal communications with Port Graham and English Bay residents Walter Meganack and John Tanape. Stanek reported that "January and February were spent during the 1880s in hunting and trapping camps in Nuka, Yalik, and Aialik Bays." Also, John Tanape stated that "Some men traveled in skin kayaks to the Seward area where they met Seward area residents, some of whom were relatives, and hunted and trapped together during the winter months." Although Stanek provided no time period for when these trips occurred, the

traded were black bear, gray fox, black fox, marten, and mink, along with sea and land otter skins. Another trader named Smith, perhaps the Charles Smith who shared an account with Lowell at the Western Fur and Trading Company, also had Native hunters in his employ with Alaska Commercial Company at English Bay.[32]

The Western Fur Company and the Collapse of Fur Prices

Established in 1879, the Western Fur and Trading Company, another San Francisco based outfit, became the Alaska Commercial Company's principal rival on the Kenai. With trading stations at English Bay, Kenai, Tyonek, and Douglas, the Western Fur and Trading Company managed a large proportion of local trade until the early 1880s. In 1883, the Alaska Commercial Company bought the Western Fur Company for $175,000.[33] The ACC was left with no competition to share the enormous debt and to inflate prices, and fur prices plummeted. As a result, the ACC entered into a period of tighter management. The company closed stores and probably felt less of a need to provide local services in the smaller villages. This move forced the labor force to come to them, rather than the other way around. As a result, a growing number of small private hunters began to cut into the company's profits.

The implications of only one major fur company operating on the lower Kenai Peninsula had a resounding affect on all the villages. The following synopsis of what happened in Seldovia may have been equally relevant for the hunters on the outer coast, especially those who had benefited from unlimited credit at a time of artificially inflated prices. Anthropologist Joan Townsend provides the following chronology.

> [During the 1870s, a] hunter was given advances of food, clothing, hunting equipment and luxury goods with the understanding that he would bring his furs to that company. Hunters again often found themselves in debt to the traders. Fur prices, after the sale of Alaska, began to rise because of the competition of the Alaska Commercial Company, particularly with the Western Fur and Trading Company. Excessive credit was given to good hunters and prices paid for furs were often on par with those paid in San Francisco.... In 1883, the Western Fur and Trading Company went out of business, leaving the Alaska Commercial Company in a monopoly position except for the presence of a few small

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text implies that this activity took place in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

[32] ACC Records, *ACC Outstanding, 1872-1897.*

[33] DeArmond, *Fur Trails to Cook Inlet*, 32.

> independent traders. Prices paid for furs dropped quickly, credit was terminated and the company made efforts to collect outstanding debts.[34]

Between 1881 and 1883 Johan Adrian Jacobsen, a Native Norwegian, toured the Alaska coast as part of a German team sent to collect artifacts for the Royal Museum in Berlin. Passing through Seldovia on his way to English Bay, he noted the fall of fur prices.

> Here we found the dwellings that the sea otter hunters we met the night before had used. This village had been the location of a trading post of the Western Fur Trading Company that had been abandoned in May. Because of this the price of a good sea otter pelt fell from $112 to $35.[35]

Jacobsen noted that Ivan Petroff, while working on the 1880 census, had followed a similar itinerary only a few years earlier. Jacobsen had begun his trip around the peninsula in Kenai. Thinking it best to cut across the peninsula at the northern end of Cook Inlet and take passage on a boat from the Pacific side, Jacobsen changed his plans once he learned that there would be no one to assist or meet him. In his journal, he recounted the advice he received:

> ...But Mr. Wilson [Capt. James Wilson], who best knows the condition of this area, urged me against this, assuring me that I could not get any men on the east side of the peninsula. He had recommended this route to the well-known American traveler Mr. Petroff, who was forced to return. Mr. Wilson suggested as an alternative that I go to Fort Alexander [English Bay] in the southern part of the Kenai Peninsula....[36]

Following the trail of villages from Kenai to English Bay by boat, Jacobsen arrived at the Alaska Commercial Company station in English Bay. There he visited with Maxwell Cohen, originally from Berlin, who had lived in the region for many years and took a great interest in local affairs. As station manager, Cohen was very knowledge of the terrain, routes, and village locations, and Jacobsen relied on his advice and insight about the region.[37]

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[34] Townsend, *The Tanaina of Southwestern Alaska,* 12.

[35] Johan Adrian Jacobsen, *Alaskan Voyage, 1881-1883: An Expedition to the Northwest Coast of America* (Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press), 195.

[36] *Ibid.,* 194.

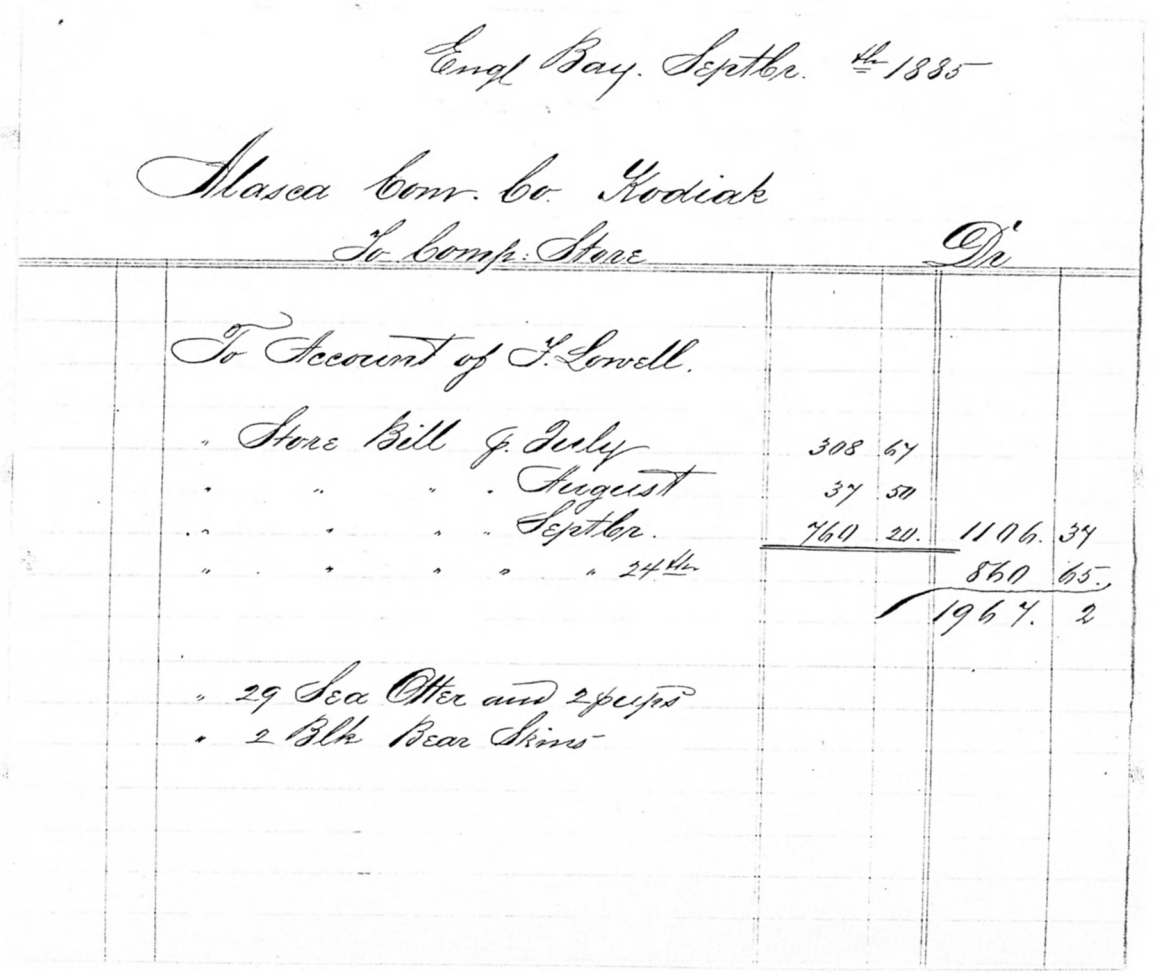
[37] *Ibid.,* 196.

Mary Lowell (second from left) and her children were part of the only family settled at the head of Resurrection Bay before Seward townsite was founded in 1903. Courtesy Resurrection Bay Historical Society.

Before Seward was founded, "Lowell Bay Landing" appeared as shown. Courtesy Resurrection Bay Historical Society.

The Lowell cabin, around which Seward townsite sprang up in 1903. Resurrection Bay Historical Society.

Caines Head was the site of a major World War II camp; a major gun battery was placed on the hill's crest. The site, which overlooked "Almouth Sound" (Resurrection Bay), was named for Capt. E. E. Caine, skipper of the *Santa Ana*, which brought the founders of Seward northward in August 1903. Resurrection Bay Historical Society.



Eng. Bay. Septbr. 4th 1885

Masca Com. Co. Kodiak

In Comp: Store Dr

To Account of F. Lowell.

" Store Bill J. July	308	67		
" " " August	37	50		
" " " Septbr.	760	20.	1106.	37
" " " " " 24th			860	65.
			1967.	2

" 29 Sea Otter and 2 pups
" 2 Blk Bear Skins

Frank Lowell, English Bay Company Store Account, 1885. Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks. ACC Records, Box 8, Folder 104, Accounts-Outstanding-1872-1897.

Engl Bay. Septbr 21st 1885

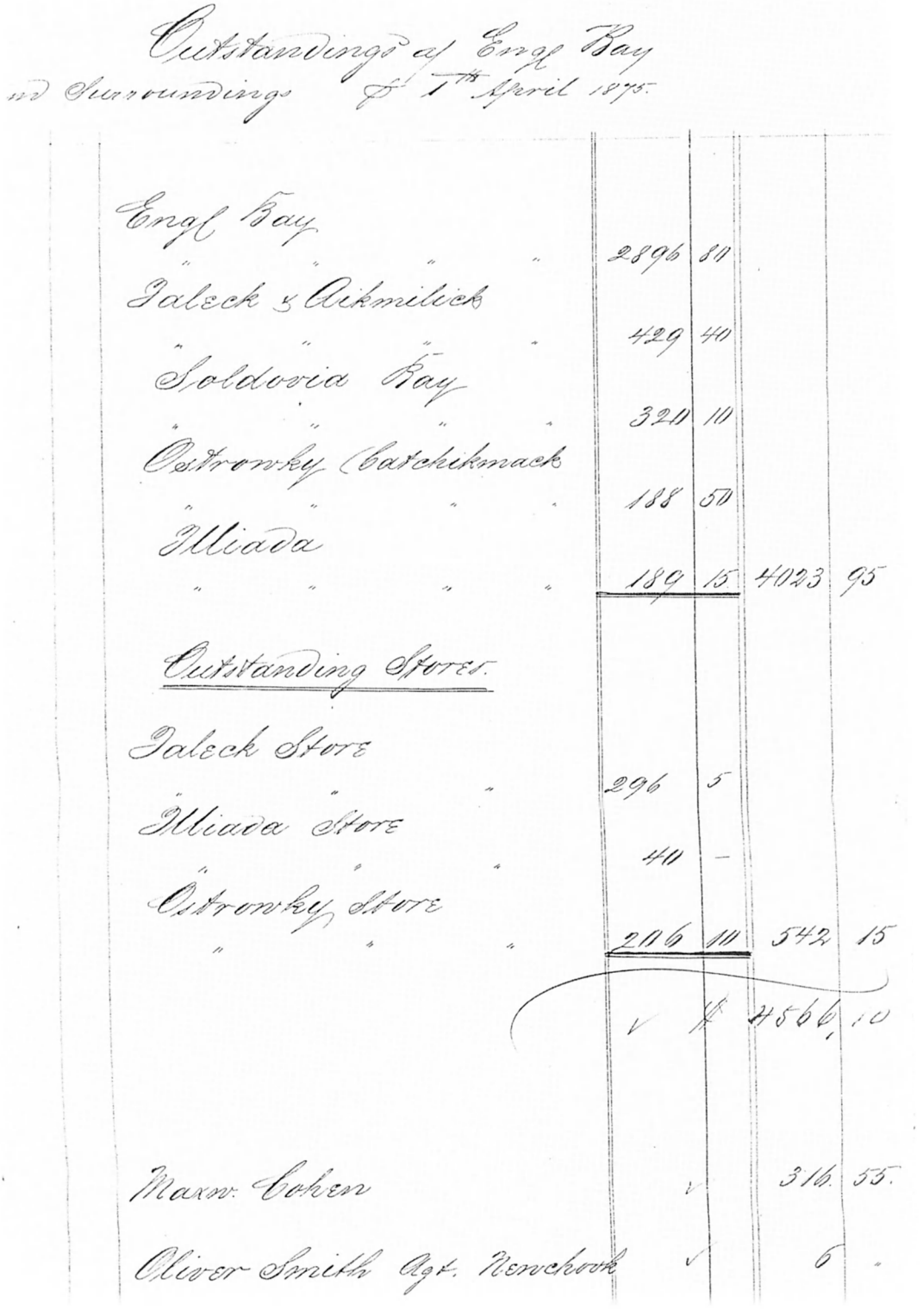
Frank Lowell

To comp. Store

Dr

1	Lantern		2	50
37 3	Oil Pink	20	12	35
35 2	Cardinal Red	25	8	87
57 2	Blue Drill	30	15	45
1	Paint Brush		2	–
2	A Hatchets #3	1 50	3	–
26 2	Gingham	30	7	95
1 pr	Grey Blankets		8	–
2 "	" Economy	5 00	10	–
5	Yds Casimere	1 –	5	–
56 3	" Blea Cotton	25	14	19
26 3	" Red Flanel	70	18	73
13	" Lace Brocade	35	4	55
1	doz Helps		3	60
2	" "	4 80	9	60
3	" Spool Cotton	1 20	3	60
4	Jumpers	1 –	4	–
2	Balm. Shirts	1 50	3	–
2	O. Shirts	2 50	5	
2	Womens Shawls 1/2 on 1/2 50		8	50
3	Misses "	1 50	4	50
4	Wht Army Caps	4 –	16	–
2	" E.B. "	3 –	6	–
2	Agor Teapots	75	1	50
2	Tin Kettels #4	60	1	20
2	" " " 3	50	1	
3	Agate Milk Pans	40	1	20

Frank Lowell, English Bay Company Store Records, 1885. Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks. ACC Records, Box 8, Folder 94-Accounts-Individual & Assorted, 1873-1885, 1 of 2.



Outstandings at Engl Bay
and Surroundings 1st April 1875.

Engl Bay				
" " "	2896	80		
Galeck & Aikmilick				
" " "	429	40		
Soldovia Bay				
" " "	320	10		
Ostronky (Katchikmack				
" " "	188	50		
Iliada				
" " "	189	15	4023	95
Outstanding Stores.				
Galeck Store				
" "	296	5		
Iliada Store				
" "	40	—		
Ostronky Store				
" " "	206	10	542	15
	✓	✓	4566	10
Maxw. Cohen		✓	316	55
Oliver Smith Agt. Newchook		✓	6	"

English Bay Outstanding Accounts, 1875. Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Outstanding Demands per April 1st 1893
English Bay Station

Pavel Abanyngaw	39	
Peter Abangac	74	80
Nicoli Apookokee	36	10
Peter Abankook	47	
Andrea Atuly	33	70
Stephan Apaodook	18	90
Pavel Anangan (with J. Lowell	11	60
Alexy Abarkee	117	25
Tekan Chingakook	105	60
Alexander Calynac	154	60
Peter Charashook	61	95
Stephan Chooluk	12	60
Pavel Chooluaak	104	"
Alexander Kambook	64	90
Evan Kangbak	86	30
Nicoli Kashagak	39	20
Stephan Langevaluk	290	
Tyfym Monin	163	40
Metry Monin	161	40
Denis Malzoff	55	
Nasar (with J. Lowell	40	30
Wasyrion Okew	31	85
Pavel Okew	74	50
Simeon Tanapee	124	25
Stephan Tovchuk	25	50
Egor Tugubin (with J. Lowell	78	60

English Bay Station, Outstanding Accounts, 1893. Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks. ACC Records, Box 8, Folder 104, Accounts-Outstanding-1872-1897.

The Influence of the Kenai Mission after 1867

Jacobsen's visit occurred just before the Alaska Commercial Company closed the Yalik store and the Russian Orthodox Church resumed its customary practice of visiting Native parishes. Following the death of Abbot Nicholas in 1867, Makar Ivanov had temporarily assumed the responsibilities of the Kenai Mission. Of both Russian and Native descent and trained in Nushagak, Makar Ivanov managed the church in Ninilchik and Tyonek as well as Kenai.[38] Devoted to the mission until his death in 1878, Makar Ivanov probably did not travel to the outer coast. In the interim, these villages may have turned to Alexandrovsk for services and to keep in contact with news from Kenai. In 1880, residents at Nuchek, the farthest point east on the coast in the Kenai Mission, had not seen a traveling priest in nine years.[39] Despite the lack of clergy, local communities in the region continued to gather once a year with the hope that a priest would appear. By 1881 Heiromonk Nikita had officially acquired the duties of the Mission. That year he re-established the practice of regular visitation to outlying villages.[40]

Although the new heiromonk resumed travel and contact to villages, his travel log refers to trips only as far south as Alexandrovsk. Acutely aware that the cost of travel prohibited a more extensive itinerary, the Heiromonk criticized the lack of funding and the effect it had on his actions.

> I think the Alaska Ecclesiastical Consistory was unjust in cutting down the travel expenses of the Kenai missionary from $100 to $50, the more so that even $100 was far from being enough for that purpose.... I, being a monk and consequently a single man, willingly sacrificed my own salary without care or thought of the future, but for a married missionary it will be very difficult.[41]

Heiromonk Nikita's travel journal entries documented a period of decline on the Kenai. He wrote of disease, a series of natural disasters, and the collapse of higher fur prices; all of these events were concerns of the church, inasmuch as they affected the livelihood of its parishioners. Dismayed by what he observed, Heiromonk Nikita reported in 1885 that

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[38] James C. Hornaday, editor, *The Native, Russian and American Experiences of the Kenai Area of Alaska* (Proceedings of Conference on Kenai Area History, Alaska Humanities Forum, November 7-8, 1974), 60.

[39] Petroff, *Report on the Population, Industries, and Resources of Alaska*, 28.

[40] Hornaday, *The Native, Russian and American Experiences*, 61.

[41] Russian Orthodox Church Records, Diocese of Alaska. Reel 1, Box 400, 358, at UAA Archives.

> There is so much poverty and need in the mission. In each village one may always see deformed, destitute people, blind, lame, cripples, walking and creeping on the ground, practically naked, in ragged shirts....[42]

In a report dated May 28, 1884, the Heiromonk described an influenza epidemic which claimed the lives of nearly all the children two years old and under in Kenai, Ninilchik, Seldovia, and Alexandrovsk. This tragedy occurred at approximately the same time as the eruption of Mount Augustine, known locally as Chernabura Volcano.[43] The ensuing tidal wave flooded the village of English Bay, causing the residents to flee to higher ground. William Dall described the destruction caused by the volcano.

> The eruption referred to was accompanied by tidal waves and vast clouds of ashes, which were wafted to a great distance. On the west side of the inlet hundreds of square miles of spruce forest was killed by the load of wet ashes, which descended on this occasion.[44]

All of these factors, as well as a Russian Orthodox Church effort to consolidate Native villages and cut travel costs, may have led to the relocation of residents from Yalik and other outer coastal villages. In 1880, the U.S. Census Bureau contracted the first government census of the new territory and hired Ivan Petroff to travel throughout the villages of the Kenai Peninsula. Enumeration of villages for the outer coast was limited. In total, Petroff included eleven villages on the Kenai Peninsula in the census report. He specifically identified the eastern coast of the peninsula as a separate area and included the village of Yalik. Petroff recorded a population of thirty-two Natives, with no resident creole or white inhabitants.[45]

Several sources have indicated that within the next ten years, Yalik residents had moved from their village.[46] Frank Lowell, who was the 1890 Census's special agent assigned to the Kenai Peninsula, noted in his travel

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[42] *Ibid.*

[43] Hornaday, *The Native, Russian and American Experiences,* 63.

[44] Willam H. Dall, "Geographical Notes in Alaska," *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society* (1898), 10.

[45] It is speculation that Petroff actually traveled to Yalik. He may have simply traveled as far as Alexandrovsk and relied on informants there for an estimate of the population. Many factors may have contributed to the number of residents, the primary factors being the time of year and whether local hunters were present.

[46] Porter, *Report on Population and Resources of Alaska,* 69, and *Alexandrovsk 1980-1981: English Bay in its Traditional Way,* Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (April 1981), 3-5.

log that English Bay was the southernmost village on the peninsula that he visited.[47] In the census report, Porter stated the following.

> Ten years ago a settlement of Chagachigmiut existed in Ayalik bay, a few miles west of Blying sound [the mouth of Resurrection Bay], but upon the advice of a monk in charge of the Russian mission on Cook inlet they migrated to the settlement of Alexandrovsk, on English Bay, beyond Cape Elizabeth.[48]

Many unanswered questions surround this possible confusion between the village of Yalik on Nuka Bay listed in the 1880 census and an unnamed village in Aialik Bay.[49] Archeological evidence and oral tradition support the existence of a village or settlement in Aialik Bay at some time in the last century; Porter, however, probably misspelled the name Yalik or a variant of Akhmylik into a word that closely resembled Aialik. The confused geography could also be explained through Porter's (or Lowell's) unfamiliarity with the coast.

Native Labor and the Rise of the Fishing Industry

Changes in the Kenai Peninsula's resource base affected the use and appeal of natural resources on the outer coast as compared to other areas. These changes gradually served to attract people to Seldovia, Port Graham and other villages in Cook Inlet. As hunting proved more challenging and less profitable to American companies and their Native crews, a new economy began to emerge that ultimately replaced the fur trade monopoly. By the late 1880s, commercial fishing and canneries gradually succeeded hunting and fur trading as the major source of local Native income but by 1890, the Alaska Commercial Company's English Bay facility was the only remaining trading station on the Kenai Peninsula.[50] As Porter points out, English Bay and Seldovia were already well established church communities, probably because they had been trading station sites.

> The settlements of Seldovia and Alexandrovsk [English Bay] have small chapels built of logs, one of the residents in each

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[47] Frank Lowell, *Logbook 1890*, Records of the Bureau of the Census, RG 29, National Archives, Washington, D.C. Lowell's notes were very detailed for villages on Cook Inlet, but his description of English Bay was incomplete. Therefore, it is impossible to deduce from his logbook if the population of English Bay had changed significantly from 1880. (Lowell may have taken the census when residents from other villages were visiting.)

[48] Porter, *Report on Population and Resources of Alaska*, 69.

[49] Frederica de Laguna stated that a Port Graham Native told her about a former village in Aialik Bay. See *Chugach Prehistory*, 35.

[50] Porter, *Report on Population and Resources of Alaska*, 251.

> serving as reader, and once or twice during the year the priest from Kenai visits these localities.[51]

The salmon cannery industry began on the Kenai Peninsula in 1882 with the establishment of the Kasilof River cannery. Built by the Alaska Packing Company of San Francisco, this was the first of many canneries to process Cook Inlet salmon.[52] Over the next decade, seventeen out-of-state companies built canneries in central Alaska; during the 1890s, many of these became part of the Alaska Packers Association.

Canneries relied on a seasonal workforce with a highly segregated and hierarchical division of labor. Cannery management, recognizing the limited local population base, brought a white and Oriental labor force north each spring; Native hiring also occurred, though on a relatively small scale. These early canneries may have had an indirect effect on the economies of Seldovia and English Bay by siphoning local labor away. For Native residents, the canneries' impact on the Kenai Peninsula's resources and environment proved overwhelming on an individual and personal level.

Father John Bortnovsky, who presided over the Kenai Mission from 1898 to 1908, observed and recorded how the demise of the hunting-trading system undermined the Kenaitze's environment and the lifeways. As neighbors to the Chugach, the Kenaitze depended upon similar resources; as the people of the coast migrated northward, the two groups invariably faced many of the same economic hardships and influences. Written in 1899, Bortnovsky's account of the onset of change on the Kenai conveyed a sense of loss and isolation for the Natives as outside interests invaded the peninsula.

> The hunting grows poorer. Frequent forest fires caused by American prospectors either exterminate the animals or drive them to safer places. The latter would not have caused too much hardship: the Kenai Indian is accustomed to roaming in the mountains and on the tundras; he can reach the animals anywhere and catch them. But, unfortunately, another scourge fell on them and completely depressed them: the fur prices fell terribly.... The quantity of fish grows smaller each year. And no wonder: each cannery annually ships out 30,000 to 40,000 cases of fish. During the summer all the fishing grounds are jammed with American fishermen and, of

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[51] *Ibid.,* 182.

[52] Lewis G. MacDonald, compiler, "Chronological History of Salmon Canneries in Central Alaska," in the *1951 Annual Report of the Alaska Fisheries Board and Alaska Department of Fisheries*, Report #3 (1951), 72-74.

> course, the poor Indian is forced to keep away in order to avoid unpleasant meetings.[53]

By the early 1900s, salmon canneries ruled the local economy on the Kenai. Cannery operations provided local stores for fishermen and workers that eventually took trade away from the fur company stations. For the residents of English Bay looking to find work in the fishing industry, two canneries opened on the southern end of the peninsula in the early 1900s. Between 1911 and 1915 the Seldovia Salmon Company operated a cannery at Seldovia. Unable to turn a profit, the company defaulted in 1915, and remained closed for a year until the Columbia Salmon Company invested in the buildings in 1916. Within a year, the Northwestern Fisheries Company bought a cannery and kept up the operation for two more years until it closed indefinitely in 1919. At Port Graham, the Fidalgo Island Packing Company built a cannery in 1912. Already established in the southeast market with a cannery in Ketchikan, the Fidalgo Island Packing Company maintained an operation at Port Graham until 1960 if not longer.[54] Other employment could be found at the halibut cold storage plant in Port Chatham that opened in 1915, and at Portlock where a chrome ore mine opened in 1917 on Claim Point.[55]

Port Graham, a settlement with a population of 100 residents by 1910, provided a variety of job opportunities in shipping, fishing, and coal mining. In 1909 the site became a transfer point for local shipping traffic into Cook Inlet. Port Graham had an excellent harbor as compared to neighboring English Bay less than five miles away. The USC&GS reported on the port in 1910, describing it as a secure two-mile-wide harbor with easy access in daylight; the agency further described the port as being located inside Passage Island between Russian Point and Dangerous Cape.[56] As Port Graham (along with nearby Seldovia) prospered and attracted new industry, English Bay remained unchanged. The traditional Native community relied on its strong church and former hunting and trading affiliations to maintain its seasonal population. It is unknown if the shipping industry sought and hired local Native employees; the larger ships anchored in the waters off English Bay did hire Native rowers to shuttle ship passengers to shore.[57]

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[53] Hornaday, *The Native, Russian and American Experience*, 69-70.

[54] John N. Cobb, "Pacific Salmon Fisheries," Appendix XIII of the *Report of the Commissioner of Fisheries, 1930*, 4th ed. (Washington, GPO, 1930), 453, and MacDonald, *Chronological History of Salmon Canneries*, 25.

[55] Orth, *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*, 216.

[56] *Alaska Coast Pilot Notes from Yakutat Bay to Cook Inlet and Shelikof Strait*, 2nd ed. (Washington, GPO, 1910), 37-38.

[57] G. W. Hughes, "Impressed by Port Graham," *Alaska-Yukon Magazine* (March 1910), 225-226.

With the renewed interest in the Port Graham area, investors and miners once again attempted to exploit coal resources along the shores of the bay. W. G. Whorf, who worked with both the cannery and coal mine, in Port Graham procured the government railroad contract to ship coal to Seward.[58] Coal mining continued at least through 1918 in Port Graham under the management of the Port Graham Coal Company.[59] Native crews from the region worked the mines and lived nearby. In 1910 the ruins of the earlier mine were still standing and some activity had already resumed.

> Here Russia had a coal mine ... and sent its criminals there to work it. The mine is abandoned, but there is one nearer the bay. There is an Indian village here and they work in the mine, which is not deep. Here and in other places it is put in sacks. Several thousand sacks of coal were near the mine. The ruins of the Russian buildings were seen, one of them being a large prison, another a church....[60]

Transient work and seasonal occupations shaped a pattern of migration between villages and larger economic centers at the turn of the century. In 1898, Dall reported in the *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society* that residents moved freely between Seldovia and the Port Graham area to find work.

> In the lower bay outside of the harbor is a snug anchorage, Chesloknu of the natives, Seldovia or Herring Bay of the Russians. Here are two trading stations, and most of the inhabitants from Port Graham, where the harbor is less convenient, have migrated to Seldovia village.[61]

By 1898, the church had opened a school in Alexandrovsk and employed Ivan Munin as the first teacher and administrator.

During the last few years of the nineteenth century, American shipping routes from Seattle and San Francisco began to link many villages and towns throughout Alaska. Three of the principal means of transport—ships carrying mail, the Revenue Cutters, and commercial company supply and stock ships—for the most part skirted the outer Kenai coast. Ship traffic later served Port Graham and Seldovia, but the tides within Cook Inlet proved too treacherous for steamer ships, requiring smaller ships to lighter mail and supplies to towns and villages. Larger ships had little incentive to linger along the outer coast, at least not until the initial stages

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[58] *Seward Gateway*, 25 June 1914.

[59] G. C. Martin, et al., *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1918,* USGS Bulletin 712 (Washington, GPO, 1919), 25.

[60] Hughes, "Impressed by Port Graham," 225-226.

[61] Dall, "Geographical Notes in Alaska," 15.

of reconnaissance and construction of the town of Seward in 1902-03 as the terminus of the Alaska Central Railroad. By 1911, the Alaska Steamship and Alaska Commercial companies were serving Seward with mail six times a month.[62]

This period of transition along the coast, as people moved between villages and new industries evolved, changed local economies and village life. In 1902, Mary Lowell sold the rights to her family's homestead at the head of Resurrection Bay to John Ballaine as part of the development of the Alaska Central Railroad and the establishment of Seward. As more industry and transportation centered in Seldovia, Port Graham, and Seward, the coast continued to serve as a seasonal hunting grounds until fur farming and gold mining developed in the 1920s.

[62] Johnson, *Field Notes*, n.p.

Map 5-1 **Historic Sites-Transportation Development**

Chapter 5. Building the Transportation Infrastructure

During the mid-to-late 1890s, a series of interconnected events—the Hope and Sunrise gold strikes, the Klondike gold rush and U.S. Army Capt. E. F. Glenn's expedition—brought dramatically increased attention to Alaska in general and the Kenai Peninsula in particular. The prosperity brought on by the gold rush, moreover, spawned scores if not hundreds of proposed railroad lines. Of those, the only major line that was actually constructed was the White Pass and Yukon Route, built from Skagway, Alaska to Whitehorse, Yukon Territory from 1898 to 1900.

The Alaska Central Railroad and the Founding of Seward

As the twentieth century dawned, the vast interior region of Alaska remained inaccessible. Even though the interior was still largely devoid of non-Native settlement, a number of dreamers were convinced that the interior would grow and prosper if a railroad route could be constructed there. Several of these entrepreneurs organized development companies. Between 1900 and 1903 a total of nine railroad companies selected Valdez, at the northeastern end of Prince William Sound, as their ocean terminus; several of these companies, including the prominent Morgan-Guggenheim syndicate, backed up their plans by sending in survey crews.[1] Other development interests trumpeted the advantages of rival ports including Katalla, Nelson (later Cordova), and Portage Bay (later Whittier). Off to the west, activity centered around Iliamna Bay, on the west side of Cook Inlet. The Trans-Alaska Company, led by a Seattle engineer named Norman R. Smith, laid out a sled trail (a predecessor to a railroad) from Iliamna Bay to Nome during the winter of 1901-02. Three years later, the Alaska Short Line and Navigation Company surveyed a route from Iliamna Bay to Anvik. Several of the companies aiming toward Alaska's interior went so far as to grade several miles of right-of-way; inland from Katalla, rails were actually laid for a short distance. But none of these companies was successful in building an intercity railway.[2]

The Alaska Central Railroad Company was different. It was the brainchild of Seattle businessman John Ballaine, who had had a long political and military career in Washington state. In 1900, Ballaine began to study ways to develop a railroad on a new frontier, and in that pursuit he searched for "an all-American route through all-American territory to develop all of Alaska." He concluded that the easiest route for a railway

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[1] Merle Colby, *A Guide to Alaska, Last American Frontier* (New York, Macmillan, 1950), 234; Lone E. Janson, *The Copper Spike* (Anchorage, Alaska Northwest, 1975), 14, 21.

[2] Harlan Unrau, *Lake Clark National Park and Preserve, Historic Resource Study* (Anchorage, NPS, 1994), 202-09.

connecting an ice-free port and the interior lay across the Kenai Peninsula and up the Susitna Valley to the Tanana River valley. His search for a harbor led him to the future site of Seward. In March 1902, he helped organize a company to further his goals, and three months later he sent two survey parties to the area to reconnoiter the proposed townsite and right-of-way. After their return, Ballaine wrote that "Resurrection Bay alone, opening directly to the ocean on the south side of the Kenai Peninsula, answered all my requirements to perfection."[3]

A year later, Ballaine proceeded to put his plans into action. The company purchased Mary Lowell's homestead (the only private land in the area) and filed a townsite plat in order to gain title. Company officials then began constructing a dock and roughing out a street grid. That summer, Ballaine and his settlement party left Seattle on the steamer *Santa Ana*, piloted by Capt. E. E. Caine. On board were 25 company employees, 35 other passengers, 14 horses, a pile driver, a sawmill, and tons of provisions. The ship arrived at the new townsite on August 28, 1903—a date that has since been celebrated as Seward's founding date—and the party began to improve the area. The following April, company officials met on the dock and drove the first spike for the newly christened Alaska Central Railroad. By July 4 of that year, rails had been extended seven miles to the north.

Construction proceeded by fits and starts. By the end of the 1904 construction season, tracks extended 20 miles north of Seward, and a year later, tracks had been built into Placer River valley, another 25 miles up the line. (By August 1905, work had progressed to the point that steamers were being employed to move men and materials between Seward and Turnagain Arm.[4]) But after the 1905 season, work slowed due to the physical and financial difficulties involved in constructing the bridges and tunnels that constituted the so-called "Loop District." Two other events compounded Ballaine's difficulties: first, President Theodore Roosevelt's November 1906 decree withdrawing Alaska's coal lands from development, and second, the financial panic of 1907. Despite those blows, construction proceeded apace, and by November 1909 rails had been completed to Kern Creek (near present-day Portage), 71.5 miles north of Seward.[5]

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[3] n.a., "Ballaine Pioneered Rail Route to Gold," *Seward Visitors Guide*, 1992, 20.

[4] *Seward Gateway*, issues of August 7, 1905; September 11, 1905; September 27, 1905; and October 6, 1905.

[5] Mary J. Barry, *Seward, Alaska; a History of the Gateway City, Volume I: Prehistory to 1914* (Anchorage, the author, 1986), 65-73. (Hereafter referred to as "Barry, *Seward History, I.*")

By then, Ballaine's luck had run out. A year before, in September 1908, the railroad had gone into receivership, and without prospects for an immediate financial turnaround, the company was sold during the winter of 1909-10. The new Alaska Northern Railroad, however, was even less successful than its predecessor had been. The new owners, hoping to cut their losses, built no new track; they offered minimal service and allowed the line to deteriorate.[6] Seward's economy during its first decade of existence was almost completely dependent upon railroad construction activities and ancillary port functions. The town, built on speculation, was thus healthy and growing during its first several years of life. After the railroad went into receivership, however, dull times predominated for the next several years.

Seward's fortunes were revived in August 1912, when the U.S. Congress passed the so-called Second Organic Act for Alaska. Among its provisions, the bill created an Alaska Railroad Commission to investigate the railroad situation. Five months later, the commission concluded that a system based on private capital combined with government land grants was an unworkable way to construct a railroad into the Alaskan interior. (This system had been highly successful in the development of railroads in other western territories. Grim experience, however, showed that it fell short in areas where population and resources were largely absent.) The commission, therefore, recommended that the government purchase the existing Copper River and Northwestern Railroad (which ran from Cordova to Chitina and on to Kennicott), then construct a railroad from Chitina north to Fairbanks. But before that plan could be carried out, Woodrow Wilson defeated incumbent William Howard Taft and another challenger in the 1912 presidential election.

Shortly after Wilson took office in March 1913, he appointed a new team, called the Alaska Engineering Commission, to study the Alaska railroad problem. While the Commission was deliberating, Congress passed a bill, in March 1914, which authorized the construction of a railroad connecting interior Alaska to an ice-free port. No decision had yet been made regarding what route would be chosen, however, and for the next year speculation was rampant over that question. Although four routes were ostensibly being considered, the two serious contenders were an eastern route that would have ascended the Copper River valley and a western route that would have tapped the Matanuska and Susitna valleys. The three AEC commissioners, lured by the possibility of gaining access to the agriculture and minerals of the Matanuska and Susitna valleys, focused most of their attention on the western route. Thus it was not altogether

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[6] Joan M. Antonson and William S. Hanable, *Alaska's Heritage* (Anchorage, Alaska Historical Commission, 1985), 367-69; Barry, *Seward History, I,* 70, 72.

surprising when, in April 1915, President Wilson announced his choice of the route connecting Seward and Fairbanks. By adopting this choice, the government agreed to purchase two bankrupt railroads: the Alaska Northern route, north of Seward, and the Tanana Valley Railroad, in the Fairbanks area.[7]

Seward, as a result of that decision, entered a new period of prosperity. For the next several years, hundreds of workers invaded town as the old Alaska Northern tracks were upgraded and, in places, rerouted. Economic activity remained high until the line was completed in the early 1920s. (Track laying was finished by February 1922, but the line was not open to through traffic until February 1923.) Early in the construction period, in November 1916, the AEC dampened Seward's economic spirits by moving the railroad's headquarters from Seward to Anchorage. Even so, the railroad remained a vital part of town life. Until the advent of World War II, Seward's economy continued to rely on two primary activities: the railroad and the port.[8]

Shipping Activities Along the Kenai Coastline

Prior to 1900, little commercial shipping took place along the southern Kenai Peninsula coast. Between 1900 and 1920, the only significant non-Native population cluster was located in Seward, where economic activities centered on railroad construction. As a result, much of the shipping that took place along the Kenai coast centered around the movement of railroad workers and supplies. After the railroad was completed, coastal shipping served a variety of economic activities. Both ocean liners and smaller boat service connected Seward with various Cook Inlet communities, Kodiak Island communities, and points "to the westward:" the Alaska Peninsula, Aleutian Islands and Bristol Bay. Most of the traffic along the southern Kenai coastline was going to or from Seward. On occasion, however, ships sailing more distant routes sought out the shelter of the Kenai's bays and coves during stormy periods, and some of those ships anchored there for fairly extended periods.

Ships have likely ridden out storms in refuges along the Kenai coast for hundreds of years; Natives, Russians, and perhaps other European

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[7] William H. Wilson, *Railroad in the Clouds; the Alaska Railroad in the Age of Steam, 1914-1945* (Boulder, Colo., Pruett, 1977), 23-24, 28-29; Antonson and Hanable, *Alaska's Heritage*, 369-70.

[8] Mary J. Barry, *Seward, Alaska; A History of the Gateway City, Vol. II: 1914-1923, The Railroad Construction Years* (Anchorage, the author, 1993), 19-20, 27. (Hereafter referred to as "Barry, *Seward History, II.*")

explorers have all doubtless taken advantage of the many irregularities along the coast for that purpose. Perhaps the first recorded instance of shelter-seeking took place in 1896, when a party of miners, one of whom was George Stinson, was blown off course on its way to the Hope and Sunrise gold camps. A news report, printed years later, noted that on a westbound trip from Kayak Island toward the gold camps, the miners became so seasick that they decided to hove-to in Nuka Bay and rest for a few days. Rich-looking float[9] was picked up on the beach, but the miners were more interested in the rich Hope placer diggings, so little attention was paid to their find.[10]

During the Klondike gold rush of 1897-98, one of the major routes that took stampeders to the gold fields was the so-called "rich man's route" that connected Seattle to St. Michael by way of Unalaska. Some of the ships that plied this route followed a more-or-less direct line between Seattle and Unalaska, and this route took stampeders hundreds of miles away from the Kenai coastline. But during the summer of 1897, when the gold-rush frenzy was at its highest, a number of vessels which were clearly unseaworthy were hauled out of retirement for the voyage north; many of these craft, for reasons of safety, took a more circuitous coastal route.[11] That winter, the Moran Brothers Company began constructing twelve nearly identical riverboats in its Seattle shipyards. They were completed in May 1898, after which the company attempted to sail them to St. Michael for use along the Yukon River. The shallow-draft boats were unprepared to travel in the stormy seas of the Gulf of Alaska, so they skirted the coast as much as possible.[12] Despite their caution, a storm on June 23 forced the fleet to retreat to an unknown cove in Nuka Bay. As noted in the diary of an unidentified carpenter who sailed on the steamer *Seattle*,

> Thursday, June 23. The signal was flying on board the *Pilgrim* "make for shelter," and the fleet turned off of the course it was taking. About an hour and half's run carried us to a snug little harbor called Nuka Bay. At 4:30 p.m. it commenced raining.

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[9] "Float," in the mining lexicon, is a piece of ore-laden rock which has broken off from its parent material.

[10] *Seward Daily Gateway*, November 18, 1925, 8.

[11] See, for example, the fitful voyage of the *Eliza Anderson*, as noted in Pierre Berton's *Klondike Fever* (New York, Knopf, 1958), 141-45.

[12] Robert F. Hogg, *Ambition and Ability; A History of the Moran Brothers Company, with an Emphasis on its Role in the Klondike Gold Rush* (unpub. mss., Seattle-Pacific University, July 28, 1986), 6-13.

> Friday, June 24. [After filling the water barrels and repairing faulty hog chains,] some of the men went on shore with paint and brushes and painted on a large rock in big letters "Moran's Fleet Harbor, June 23, 1898."
>
> Saturday, June 25. The *Seattle* went along side the *South Coast* and took on fifty tons of coal.
>
> Sunday, June 26. Left Nuka Bay at 5:30 a.m. Steaming against the light head-wind which kept increasing until we again had to hunt a sheltered spot. We put in behind Chugach Island in a place called Port Dick, dropping anchor at 11 a.m.[13]

Since that time scores if not hundreds of ships have unintentionally visited the coves and bays of the present park, some for several days at a time. These have included crab boats sailing along the coast, halibut and cod boats escaping from Portlock Bank, coastal steamers, tourist craft, and state ferries traveling between Seward and Kodiak. As Josephine Sather, a longtime Nuka Island resident, noted, "Many boats came into Nuka Bay, some simply to visit us; some seeking shelter from a storm or a dark night; a few in tow with their engines broken down."[14]

After the founding of Seward, much of the coastal shipping for the next several years supported railroad construction activities. The Alaska Central laid tracks for approximately 70 miles north of Seward. Beyond the end of track, grading crews worked for several miles more and company surveyors canvassed the entire 350-mile route to Fairbanks. In order to expedite track-laying activities at the northern end of the Kenai Peninsula, many ships (as noted above) circled the western end of the Kenai Peninsula during the first decade of the twentieth century. These coastal shipping activities continued, first by private firms and then by the Alaska Engineering Commission, until the Alaska Railroad was completed.[15]

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[13] n.a., "Log Book of Twelve Yukon Steamers on Trip from Seattle, Wash. to St. Michaels, Alaska, Built by Moran Bros. Company," *The Sea Chest - Journal of Puget Sound Maritime Historical Society* 23 (1989), 28; also in John F. Moran Collection, Seattle Museum of History and Industry.

[14] Donald S. Follows, "The Role of Nuka Island in a Kenai Fjords National Park Proposal," unpub. mss., December 12, 1977, 12; Joel Moss interview, March 7, 1997; Clem Tillion interview, April 2, 1997; David Spencer interview, April 3, 1997; Josephine Sather, "The Island," *Alaska Sportsman* 12 (July 1946), 43.

[15] Barry, *Seward History, II,* 18.

Long before the frenzy of railroad construction died down, shipping traffic based on other needs surfaced. As early as 1903, ships from Seattle regularly served Seward. Companies that served Seward during its first decade of existence included the Alaska Steamship Company ("Alaska Steam"), Northwestern Steamship Company and Alaska-Pacific Navigation Company. All three firms at one time or another owned the *Dora*, a workhorse craft that had first visited Resurrection Bay in 1896. The *Dora* remained in the area for many years thereafter, connecting Seward with points on Kodiak Island, the Alaska Peninsula, the Aleutian Islands, and Bristol Bay.[16]

In 1912, growth in what was then known as "southwestern Alaska" convinced the Alaska Steamship Company to begin serving Cook Inlet points. Two years later, the government's decision to construct a railroad bolstered traffic volumes. Then, in 1916, the Pacific Steamship Company ("the Admiral Line") began competing against Alaska Steam. The two companies brought both residents and tourists into the area; they continued to compete for traffic until the Admiral Line faded away in the spring of 1933. Both carriers featured Seward on their itineraries, and both sailed around the Kenai into Cook Inlet as well. The Admiral Line engaged in local service shipping in Cook Inlet throughout this period, typically serving Seldovia, "Ninilchick," and Anchorage. Alaska Steam, however, discontinued its regular Cook Inlet operations after the 1916 season, probably because the railroad had been completed from Seward to Anchorage that year.[17] No major carriers are known to have plied the waters of Cook Inlet after 1933.

Local newspapers provide specifics about the Admiral Line and Alaska Steam ships that provided Seward-Seldovia service between the two world wars. In 1919, the *Admiral Watson* sailed between the two points,[18] but during the early 1920s both the *Admiral Watson* and the *Admiral Evans* ships plied the route.[19] By 1927, both the *Watson* and the *Evans* remained on the route, but only on an intermittent basis, and by 1929, only the *Watson* remained.[20] The only known Alaska Steam vessels

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[16] Frank Norris, *Gawking at the Midnight Sun; The Tourist in Early Alaska* (Anchorage, Alaska Historical Commission, June 1985), 36; Mary J. Barry, *History of Seward, Alaska; A History of the Gateway City, Vol. III: 1924-1993, Growth, Tragedy, Recovery, Adaptation* (Anchorage, the author, 1995), 92. (Hereafter referred to as "Barry, *Seward History, III.*")

[17] Norris, *Gawking at the Midnight Sun*, 36-37, 60.

[18] *Seward Gateway*, April 14, 1919, 1, and June 5, 1919, 4.

[19] *Seward Gateway*, April 9, 1921, 1; June 18, 1921, 1; June 14, 1923, 1; June 28, 1923, 1; July 26, 1923, 4.

[20] *Seward Gateway*, May 7, 1927, 6; May 11, 1927, 6; and May 17, 1927, 6; June 4, 1929, 2.

serving the route during this period were the S.S. *Redondo* and the S.S. *Curacao*, which made occasional trips to supply area canneries.[21]

Those who lived and worked in Cook Inlet, however, demanded transportation to more than two or three ports. In order to service a broad spectrum of destinations (including destinations within the present-day park), several ships, most of which were based in Seward, carried passengers and freight. The S.S. *Starr*, owned by the San Juan Fishing and Packing Company (which operated a Seward cannery from 1917 to 1930), provided service to the Alaska Peninsula and the Aleutian Islands, with occasional stops in Cook Inlet and Kodiak Island, from 1921 to 1938.[22] In 1923, Seward-based guide Charles Emsweiler began serving Nuka Bay with the gasboat *May*; in 1925 he still served the area with the gasboat *Chase*.[23] In 1927, Capt. Heinie Berger commenced serving the area with the motor ship *Discoverer*. He provided service to Nuka Bay and Cook Inlet for the next two years.[24]

Berger discontinued service to Nuka Bay after the 1928 season, but by the following summer Capt. Pete Sather (known to locals as "Herring Pete") was offering twice-monthly service to the bay. During the early and mid-1930s he and his gas boat *Rolfh* operated as the Nuka Bay Transportation Company, and from the late 1920s through the 1940s he offered the only consistently-available passenger, freight, and mail service between Seward and Nuka Bay.[25] Berger, with the *Discoverer* and a sister ship, the *Kasilof*, continued to provide occasional service to Cook Inlet points until World War II, and several competitors also provided service during this time. When the war began, however, some of the Cook Inlet fleet was commandeered for war purposes.[26] After the war, the increasing

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[21] Rockwell Kent, *Wilderness; a Journal of Quiet Adventure* (New York, Halcyon House, 1920), 188; *Seward Gateway*, June 16, 1927, 8; July 8, 1929, 2; April 27, 1935, 2.

[22] *Seward Gateway*, January 9, 1922, 1, and November 30, 1925, 7; June 14, 1927, 5; June 18, 1929; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 99-102.

[23] *Seward Gateway*, July 3, 1923, 3, and December 5, 1925, 22.

[24] *Seward Gateway*, May 7, 1927, 6; May 18, 1927, 5; August 3, 1929, 2; May 16, 1929, 5; June 3, 1933, 2; April 20, 1935, 1; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 97-98.

[25] *Seward Gateway*, July 25, 1929, 7; April 18, 1932, 6; June 3, 1933, 4; May 9, 1935, 8. Local miners relied on Sather for mail delivery, inasmuch as Nuka Bay never supported a post office. Melvin Ricks, *Directory of Alaska Postmasters and Postoffices* (Ketchikan, Tongass Publishing, 1965). Sather had several boats called the *Rolfh* (often spelled *Rolf*, *Rolfe*, or *Rolph*). During the same period, however, another captain operated a halibut boat called the *Rolf*. *Seward Gateway*, June 2, 1927, 8. Most authors have stated that all of his boats had the same name, but in 1929 he owned a schooner called the *Nuka*. *Seward Gateway*, July 8, 1929, 6.

[26] *Seward Gateway*, April 9, 1932, 2; April 20, 1935, 1; April 25, 1935, 1; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 98-99; National Resources Planning Board, Alaska Office, "City of Seward, Survey of Conditions and Suggestions for a Public Improvement Program,"

popularity of aviation and the completion of highways connecting Anchorage with the various Kenai Peninsula communities diminished the demand for such services. In addition to these common-carrier vessels, commercial fishing boats—particularly those plying the waters between Prince William Sound and Kachemak Bay—sailed along the Kenai Peninsula's southern coast on a fairly consistent basis beginning in the 1920s, perhaps earlier.[27]

Two primary shipping lanes, both of which had been described by 1910 in the *Alaska Coast Pilot Notes*, followed the Kenai coastline for those who traveled between Seward and Cook Inlet ports. The larger craft—the Admiral Line ships, Alaska Steamship vessels, and others who did not need to make way stops—left Resurrection Bay and headed south past the Chiswell Islands. They then turned right; some passed between Lone Rock and the more distant Seal Rocks, while others continued beyond Seal Rocks before turning. They then paralleled the coastline, passing to the south of the Pye Islands and Nuka Island, and circled around the southwestern tip of the peninsula after passing between the Chugach and Barren Islands.

Smaller boats proceeding between Seward and Cook Inlet stayed closer to the coastline. These boats, after leaving Resurrection Bay, typically turned right immediately after passing Aialik Cape. They then used one of two passes to navigate through the Harbor Island-Chiswell Island group. Some mariners maneuvered through a passageway that lay just north of Beehive Island, while others used the pass that lay immediately south of Harbor Island. Boats then proceeded through fairly open sea to McArthur Pass (a narrow sea lane between Ragged Island, the northernmost of the Pye Islands, and the mainland). After crossing Nuka Bay, boats maneuvered through Nuka Passage and continued south to Gore Point.[28]

Establishing a Network of Navigation Aids

Prior to 1900, the southern Kenai coast had been imperfectly mapped; what was known about the coastal topography, in fact, was virtually unchanged from what had been provided by Russian skipper Illarion Arkhimandritov, who had surveyed the outer Kenai coast during the 1840s. The founding of Seward and the consequent railroad construction

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unpub. mss., May 1942, 3, in "Seward-Programming" file, Box 26, RG 187 (National Resources Planning Board), NARA ANC.

[27] Clem Tillion interview, April 2, 1997.

[28] U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, *Alaska Coast Pilot Notes from Yakutat Bay to Cook Inlet and Shelikof Strait*, 2nd edition (Washington, GPO, 1910), 32-34.

activity, however, created a demand for navigational information by those who sailed in and out of the new port.

As noted in Chapter 1, the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey conducted a hydrographic and topographic survey of the coastline from the Barren Islands (at the mouth of Cook Inlet) to the Chiswell Islands during the summer of 1906. The Nuka Bay coast was surveyed from August 26 to August 31 of that year.[29] Six years later, a USC&GS boat returned to the area, and shortly afterward the agency published a nautical chart for Aialik Bay.[30] Mariners appreciated the improved charts; in addition, increasingly detailed *Coast Pilot* editions were published in both 1910 and 1916. Even so, mariners remained worried because of the lack of navigation aids.

Resurrection Bay was widely considered to be the finest anchorage along the southern Kenai coast. Entering the bay, however, could be fraught with danger. Toward the north end of the bay, Caines Head jutted out along the west side, and the shore north of Thumb Cove presented an additional danger on the bay's east side. To those entering the bay from the southwest, few islands or other impediments hampered ship progress. Most traffic, however, came from the east or southeast, and ships from that direction faced three steep protrusions: Renard (Fox) Island, Hive Island, and Rugged Island. The passage between Renard Island (the northernmost of the three) and the bay's eastern shoreline was considered narrow and impracticable. Mariners, therefore, navigated through one of the two passages that separated the islands, most choosing the passage between Renard and Hive islands. A preponderance of fog and rough waters, however, made the passage often unsafe. Complicating the situation was a fourth island, Barwell Island, at the bay's eastern entrance. Though smaller than the other islands, Barwell lay close to the prevailing navigation lanes and also worried those who sailed into the bay.

In order to provide a suitable navigation aid, Alaskan officials pressed Washington for help. Beginning in 1904, Governor John G. Brady, with the assistance of Alaska Central Railroad officials and local mariners, lobbied Congress for a lighthouse at the entrance to Resurrection Bay. During the three decades that followed, these requests were made many times. The U.S. Light-House Board, recognizing that the new railroad substantially increased area marine traffic, generally concurred with these

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[29] U.S. Department of Commerce and Labor, *Report of the Superintendent of the Coast and Geodetic Survey* (Washington, GPO, 1907), 15, 178-79; Log of the *McArthur* (Box 2024), August 1906; Ship's Records (Series 102), RG 23 (Coast and Geodetic Survey), National Archives, DC; *Seward Weekly Gateway*, October 20, 1906, 1.

[30] See National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Chart H-3412.

requests; one official noted that "the need for a lighthouse and fog signal ... was imperative." Ship captains serving Seward also lobbied for a lighthouse. Congress, however, provided few funds to the Light-House Board, and although repeated requests for a lighthouse were made over the years (the last known request was in 1935), Congress never authorized such a project. Instead, Congress opted to fund less costly navigation aids such as beacons and buoys.[31]

In 1910, the U.S. Bureau of Lighthouses (which was then part of the Commerce and Labor Department) acted to ease access into the bay when it established an acetylene light atop Caines Head.[32] Four years later the bureau, now part of the new Commerce Department and with access to more funding, placed additional lights on Pilot Rock (at the southwestern entrance to the bay) and the north end of Rugged Island. Then, in June 1916, the increase in vessel traffic brought about by the construction of the government railroad resulted in the installation of a light at Seal Rocks, located five miles south of the Chiswell Islands.

Each of these acetylene lights, as noted on a U.S. Lighthouse Service specification sheet, was similar. The layout was as follows:

> The lantern is mounted on top of a wooden accumulator house, painted white, the dimensions of which are 4' by 4' in plan and about 6 feet 6 inches in height. The house is erected on a concrete foundation having an average depth of 17 inches.

These lanterns typically flashed a white light every 3 to 6 seconds and had a candlepower ranging from 130 to 310. The cost of construction materials ranged from $1000 to $2000; annual maintenance costs ranged from $30 to $50.[33]

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[31] In December 1923, for example, Alaska Delegate Dan Sutherland submitted a bill to "erect and maintain a lighthouse and fog signal" at "Harding Entrance to Resurrection Bay, Alaska." The bill would have authorized $100,000 for construction costs. The Superintendent of Lighthouses, however, estimated that "somewhere near $200,000" would be needed. Congress blanched at such a figure and instead opted for acetylene lights, which cost less than $2,000 to install. Also see Brown (below) and *Seward Gateway* for June 25, 1923, 2, and July 30, 1929, 1, 5.

[32] Charles M. Brown, *Aids to Navigation in Alaska History* (Anchorage, SHPO, c. 1979), 8-10.

[33] Most of the information in the next several paragraphs came from files for individual navigation lights. These are included in Records of the Lighthouse Service (District 16), 1910-1938.

No further lights were added in the area until the mid-1920s, when a request was made to install a light on Hive Island in Resurrection Bay. A decade earlier, officials had considered constructing a light either here or on nearby Renard Island, because the primary shipping lane for traffic to and from Seattle was located between them. However, the officials had found it "impracticable to place a light on either of these two islands in such a position that it would be favorably located for guiding vessels through the passage." But in 1923, the agency reconsidered the idea, and the following summer it installed a light on the north side of Hive Island. At the same time, it eliminated the decade-old light on Rugged Island, the location of which was ill suited to either westbound or eastbound traffic leaving Resurrection Bay. Also installed in 1924 was a so-called gas and whistling buoy in the waters just south of Barwell Island. (Barwell was another location that had been proposed—and rejected—as a site for an acetylene light.)[34] The precipitous topography of the island, and the frequent fogs that surrounded it, resulted in the establishment of a sea-level buoy rather than a light perched atop a high rock.

During the 1930s, two more navigation aids were established. In 1934, an acetylene light was installed on the north side of McArthur Pass; it was the only navigation aid established in present-day Kenai Fjords National Park. Four years later, a number of Alaska Steamship Company ships' officers petitioned the Lighthouse Service for an acetylene light on the bluff just north of Thumb Cove. That request was granted, and the light was installed in September 1938.

During the past 60 years, several changes have been made to Seward area navigation aids. The buoy near Barwell Island was replaced by "a light 412 feet above the water ... shown from a small white house" during the 1930s; then, in the late 1950s or early 1960s, the light was removed. A light was re-installed on Rugged Island in 1956 or 1957; and throughout the area, the wooden houses that previously encased the lights were largely replaced by diamond-shaped dayboards during the 1960s and 1970s.[35]

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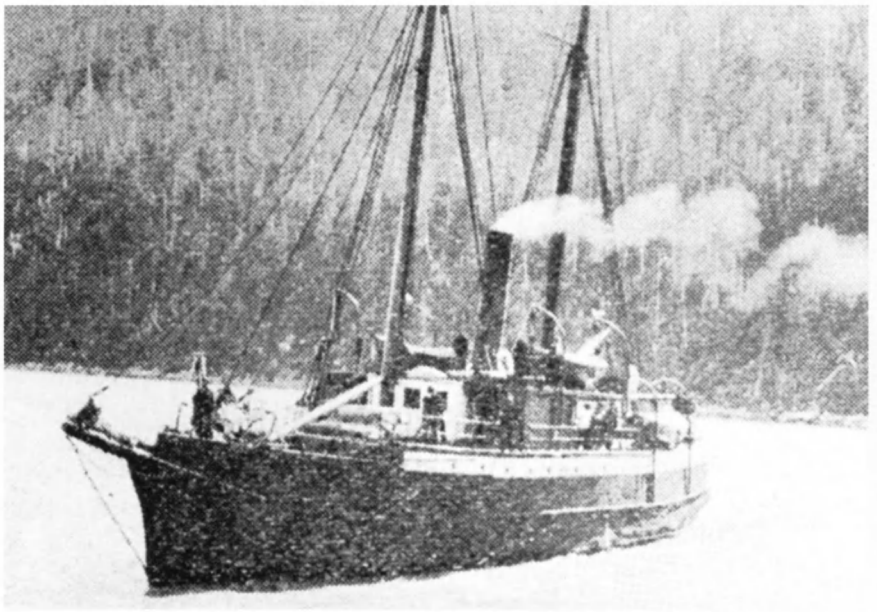
[34] A light on Barwell Island had been proposed in 1910 and again in 1913. See *Seward Weekly Gateway*, June 4, 1910, 3, and individual lighthouse files (see following reference).

[35] U.S. Lighthouse Service, *Local Light List, Washington to Alaska* (Washington, GPO), various years, 1920-1938; U.S. Coast Guard, *Light List, Volume III: Pacific Coast and Pacific Islands* (Washington, GPO), various years, 1940-1988; U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, *United States Coast Pilot, Alaska; Part II, Yakutat Bay to Arctic Ocean*, 1st through 5th editions (1916-1947); U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, *United States Coast Pilot 9, Alaska, Cape Spencer to Arctic Ocean*, 6th through 13th editions (1954-1987).

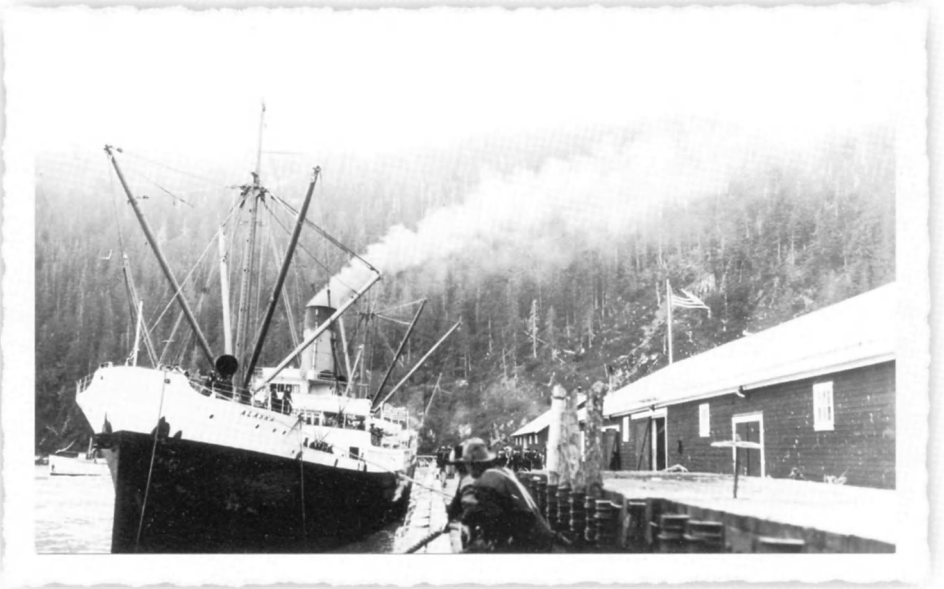


The steamer *Dora* sailed along the Kenai Peninsula's southern coast, and to "westward" points, during the late 19th and 20th centuries. *The Pathfinder*, May 1920, 3.

The steamer *Starr* was another fixture along the southern Kenai coast, in Cook Inlet, and points west during the early twentieth century. Neville Public Museum, photo 5671.11.

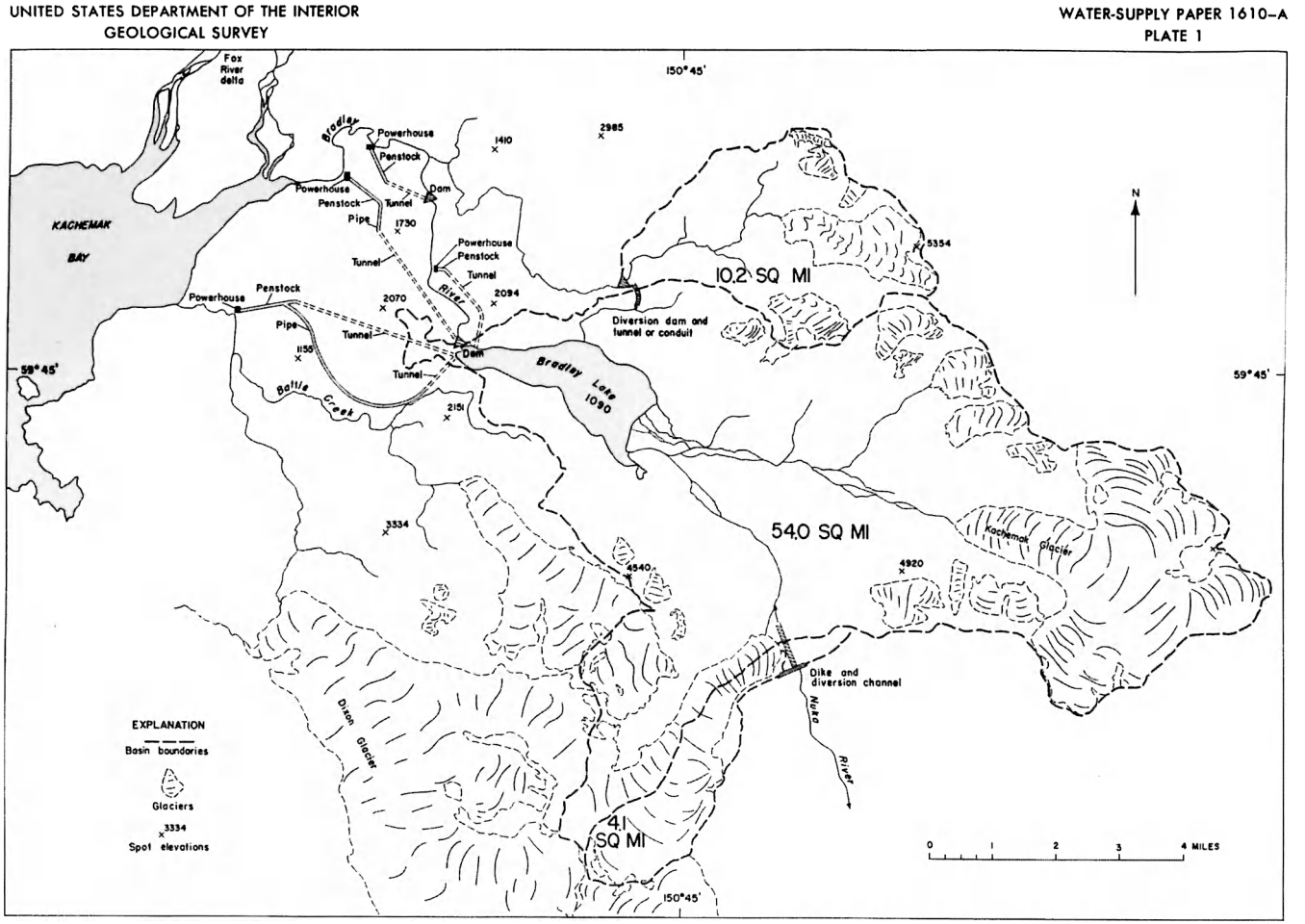
Seward, as it appeared circa 1923. The railroad dock is at bottom right; the San Juan dock is in the center of the photograph. Neville Public Museum, photo 5671.10.

The first road out of Seward went to Kenai Lake. It was completed in 1923. This photo, taken along the road, likely dates to 1919. *The Pathfinder*, May 1920, 2.



Ships such as the Alaska Steamship Company steamer *Alaska* brought tourists from Seattle to Seward and other Alaska points during the 1920s and 1930s. Neville Public Museum, photo 5670.10.

The Summit Creek dike, taken in 1958, looking southwest. The Fish and Wildlife Service created the dike a year earlier. USF&WS, *Cook Inlet Annual Management Report*, 1958, 43.



The Bradley Lake Project as proposed in 1961. It was built from 1986 to 1991. Note the dike and diversion channel. F. A. Johnson, *Waterpower Resources of the Bradley River Basin.*

In February 1921, the U.S. General Land Office established lighthouse reservations for the existing area lights. These included sites at Caines Head, Pilot Rock, and Seal Rocks. Lighthouse reservations were also inexplicably established for Barwell Island and Hive Island, even though neither location possessed a light at that time. As a further irony, the GLO in May 1925 created a reservation at Rugged Island, even though its light had been removed the year before. All six of these lighthouse reserves, which ranged in size from a single acre (for Pilot Rock) to 600 acres (for Rugged Island), remained in effect until November 1965, when at the State of Alaska's behest reservations were eliminated on Barwell, Hive, and Rugged islands. The Caines Head reservation was revoked in June 1968 for similar reasons. Lighthouse reservations remain at the other two sites.[36]

As noted above, the only navigation aid established in the park was the McArthur Pass light, installed in 1934. Lights were not installed elsewhere along the coast, primarily because few of the ships that plied the route between Seward and Cook Inlet stayed close to the coast. Those that did sail close to the fjords and headlands were smaller craft, owned by individuals rather than corporations. When accidents did occur, therefore, they were less likely to result in pressure for navigational improvements than in a higher-volume traffic situation.

The Coast and Geodetic Survey, of which the Bureau of Lighthouses was one agency, regularly maintained its network of navigation lights along the Alaskan coast. Scattered references in the *Seward Gateway* indicate that the various Seward-area lights were visited and serviced on a fairly regular basis, usually by the lighthouse tender *Cedar*. On occasion, such as during the summers of 1930 and 1931, Coast and Geodetic Survey ships were based in Seward for extended periods.[37]

The waters along this stretch of coastline are fabled for their storminess. Given that situation, the number of accidents over the years has been few indeed. On February 4, 1946, the S.S. *Yukon* of the Alaska Steamship Company foundered on the rocks of Cape Fairfield (on the west side of Johnstone Bay), 30 miles southeast of Seward. More than 500 passengers were aboard her when the ship hit the rocks and began taking on water. Miraculously, only eleven lives were lost.[38]

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[36] Executive Order 3406, February 3, 1921; EO 4223, May 11, 1925; Public Land Order 3881, November 22, 1965; PLO 4335, June 4, 1968. The BLM bowed to the wishes of the State of Alaska, which was selecting lands for its statehood allotment.

[37] See, for example, notes in the *Gateway* for June 25, 1923, 2; July 3, 1923, 4; August 13, 1923, 1; July 6, 1929, 3; Barry, *Seward History, II*, 82.

[38] "From Ketchikan to Barrow," *The Alaska Sportsman* 12 (April 1946), 24-25; Barry,

In the waters southwest of Seward, historical accounts tell of at least four parties local residents (either hunters or fishermen) who sailed off, never to be seen again. The most notable of these incidents resulted in the disappearance of "Herring Pete" Sather, who was lost and presumed drowned in late August of 1961.[39] Others had their boats wrecked in storms and were marooned on islands—sometimes for weeks—until saved by a passing vessel.[40] In recent years, the advent of radar and new boat construction materials has reduced the danger of coastal navigation to some extent; the rough seas, however, still endanger many who venture into these waters.

Roads and Road Proposals

Within a few years of its founding, Seward had become the Kenai Peninsula's largest town, and although Seward was built as a railroad town, its citizens demanded roads as well. Seward development interests began to lobby for a road network connecting the port with its hinterland, recognizing that a well-developed road system emanating from Seward ensured the town's commercial hegemony.

To some extent, a road network had been established before the town had been founded. The Hope and Sunrise areas, the site of a minor gold rush during the early to mid-1890s, was largely inaccessible by water; ice closed Cook Inlet during the winter, and during the summer the mud flats and the enormous tidal range made access difficult. Land access from the east was similarly difficult because Portage Pass was surrounded by a dangerous snowfield. As a result, miners hoping to access an ice-free port headed south to Resurrection Bay. They cut a pack trail from Sunrise to the foot of Kenai Lake. South of the lake, a trail led south to Salmon Lake (Bear Lake). Between there and the head of Resurrection Bay, a California mining company opened up a road to the head of Resurrection Bay "at the expense of a great deal of time and labor." The Mendenhall party that

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Seward History, III, 192-201.

[39] *Petticoat Gazette*, August 31, 1961, 1-2. Other known shipwreck fatalities concerned William G. Weaver and Benjamin F. Sweazey, whose overturned boat was found near Bear Glacier in October 1917; the *Tom and Al*, which sank with all hands aboard off Cape Aialik in October 1924; and a shipwreck-related fatality in Aialik Bay due to the Good Friday Earthquake of 1964. Barry, *Seward History, II*, 84, 192; Evert E. Tornfelt and Michael Burwell, *Shipwrecks of the Alaskan Shelf and Shore* (Anchorage, Minerals Management Service, 1992), T2-36, T3-22, and T4-21.

[40] Sather himself was shipwrecked at least once, in February 1934, as noted in Barry, *Seward History, III*, 97. Other mishaps are noted in the *Seward Gateway* for May 19, 1927, 3; July 13, 1927, 1; and April 8, 1929, 1.

traveled north from Resurrection Bay in May 1898, however, found that the mining company's route soon "developed into a very poor road;" the road (and the survey party) crossed Salmon Creek several times on their way north.[41]

Topography and the existing wagon road suggested that the first Seward-area trunk road would parallel the Alaska Central tracks. In 1907, local residents and the newly formed Alaska Road Commission (ARC) pooled their efforts and completed a seven-mile road from Seward north to the agricultural settlement of Bear Lake. The ARC, in those early days, expended few funds outside of the Richardson Highway corridor and the Fairbanks and Nome mining areas. Even so, the commission in 1912 funded a six-mile extension to the Snow River. That road quickly deteriorated, however, and in 1916 the ARC began a new 5-mile road north from Seward that paralleled the railroad tracks. In 1920, Seward-area roads received a shot in the arm because of an agreement that transferred road administration to the Bureau of Public Roads, the agency in charge of National Forest roads. Perhaps as a result of the new funding source, the road was gradually extended north, and in November 1923 the road was finally completed to the southern end of Kenai Lake.[42]

During the same period that the Seward-Kenai Lake road was being built, construction was taking place at the north end of the Kenai Peninsula that would affect the future of roadbuilding in what is now Kenai Fjords National Park. In the summer of 1907, the ARC improved upon the decade-old pack trail and built a 37-mile wagon road that connected Sunrise with the Alaska Central Railroad. That wagon road followed up the Sixmile Creek drainage to its confluence with the creek's East Fork. It then headed up that fork and continued on into the Bench Creek drainage to the Johnson Creek Summit. South of the summit, the trail continued until it reached the railroad right-of-way at Milepost 34, at the northeastern end of Upper Trail Lake.[43]

The Sunrise road remained the only other ARC-sponsored road on the Peninsula for the next several years. But in 1909, the ARC constructed a 14.5-mile sled road that ran northwest from the railroad community of Moose Pass to the Johnstown (later Gilpatricks) mining camp, which was located in the upper reaches of the Quartz Creek drainage (near today's

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[41] Robert N. DeArmond, "Gold on Cook Inlet," unpub. mss., p. 14, at AHL; Lt. H. G. Learnard, "A Trip from Portage Bay to Turnagain Arm and Up the Sushitna," in *Report on Explorations in Alaska* (Washington, GPO, 1899), 650-51.

[42] Alaska Road Commission, *Third Annual Report* (1907), 142; *Report to the Board of Road Commissioners, Alaska, 1912*, 14; Barry, *Seward History, II*, 134-37, 204.

[43] ARC, *Third Annual Report* (1907), 118, 142; ARC, *Fourth Annual Report* (1908), 113.

Summit Lake Lodge). By 1911, the sled road had been extended 10 miles into the Canyon Creek drainage, and in 1913 it was extended again to the point that it joined with the 37-mile-long wagon road that had been built six years earlier.[44] By this time, traffic had begun to thin out on the road because of the decline of the Hope-Sunrise placer mines. As that trend continued, the old wagon road began to fall into disrepair. But the Moose Pass-Canyon Creek route, where mining remained active, was upgraded in 1917 to a wagon road. By the early 1920s the ARC had abandoned most of the old (1907) wagon road, but on the other route, a 1923 *Seward Gateway* report noted that "a fine road is now being built from Moose Pass to Hope." The new route became the only ARC-designated route between the Hope-Sunrise areas and the new government railroad.[45]

By the time the ARC was upgrading the Moose Pass-Canyon Creek sled road, several families had moved into the Cooper Landing area. In 1919, therefore, the agency stated that it planned to open up a new route from Mile 8 on the Moose Pass-Canyon Creek Road west to the Kenai River-Russian River junction. It hoped that, by doing so, it would "open up a potentially [rich?] farming country." This sled road was built in either 1920 or 1921. The agency's 1919 proposal may have been the first step in a plan to improve its 60-mile trail connecting Kenai Lake with the Cook Inlet settlement of Kenai. Soon afterward, the Bureau of Public Roads announced the proposed road plan to local residents.[46]

The plan to create a sled road connecting Moose Pass and Kenai was not well received by Seward's business leaders. In their view, any roads going west to Kenai should go directly from Seward (and not via Moose Pass). Sewardites, therefore, championed a route that connected the Seward and Cooper Landing areas via the Resurrection and Russian river valleys. As noted in a February 1922 issue of the *Seward Gateway*, they made their voices heard in a petition sent to the Bureau of Public Roads. That petition noted that

> the natural obstacles to be overcome in the construction and maintenance of this road ... are very few. There is a perfect water grade from Seward up the Resurrection River to [Upper] Russian Lake and down the Russian River to the Kenai. The cost of construction of this road to this point would be so low

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[44] ARC, *Fifth Annual Report* (1909), 26; *Report to the Board of Road Commissioners* for 1911, p. 27; 1912, p. 16; and 1913, p. 24.

[45] ARC, *Report to the Board* for 1912, p. 15; 1917, pp. 23-24; and 1921, p. 33; *Seward Gateway*, August 24, 1923, 1.

[46] ARC, *Report to the Board* for 1919, p. 2100; 1920, p. 64; and 1921, p. 33; Barry, *Seward History, II,* 135-36.

that the cost of a substantial bridge across the Kenai River would not bring the general cost per mile of the road up to an excessive figure.... The present road plans of the Bureau in Kenai Peninsula do not correspond with these proposed plans and in the minds of those thoroughly familiar with the country are not as feasible.

The advantages of the proposed system of roads are many and very important. The road from Mile 3-1/2 to the mouth of the Russian River in itself would work great good. It would open up a large tract of some of the finest timber on Kenai Peninsula. Russian Lake, which has been recommended as a hatchery site by the Territorial Fish Commission, would be made accessible.... In addition to this the road will pass through a country with great mineral possibilities. There are three very promising properties now in this section which are in need of such transportation as this road would afford. At Mile 18 there is the Dubriul [Dubreuil] placer property and further on there [is] the Tecklenberg and Stotko quartz properties and the Russian Pass district is considered to have many good quartz discoveries.... The extension of this proposed road [to Kenai] would open up one of the richest sections of Alaska in agricultural and grazing possibilities....

The proposed route would shorten the winter travel between the towns of Kenai and Seward about twenty-five miles.... This would mean better mail service to the towns on Cook's Inlet, and would provide a means of transportation to farmers, fishermen, fox ranchers and oil men when transportation is closed on Cook's Inlet [and] would take the hunter and tourist to the center of the greatest moose and sheep.

The request to the Bureau of Public Roads to drop its present plans and recommending the construction of the Resurrection River road is not in the way of criticism of the splendid work carried out by the Bureau but is intended as advice in the most friendly spirit....[47]

[47] *Seward Gateway*, February 6, 1922, 1. During the fall of 1919, citizens had made their first request for a road in that area when they petitioned the ARC for a 2¼-mile road that would have headed northwest from the Seward-Kenai Lake road toward the Resurrection River mining district (see Chapter 7). The ARC turned down that request on financial grounds, noting that "we are unable to maintain in passable condition all roads we now have constructed." W. H. Waugh to H. A. MacPherson [sic], in McPherson Road File (13/44), Box 21, Bureau of Public Roads Program Planning and Research Correspondence, RG 30 (Alaska Road Commission), NARA ANC.

The Bureau, in response to the petition, stated that it hoped to survey the Resurrection River route in the summer of 1922. The survey apparently took place as promised, but the agency's position toward proposed road locations did not change. The Bureau, in fact, was squarely against Seward's plan because such a road threatened to divert traffic away from the railroad. With the government now operating a subsidized railroad, all federal agencies acted in concert to minimize the line's losses. As stated in an ARC annual report, "an especial effort has been made within this [southwestern] district to furnish adequate roads, sled roads or trail to all points of development in order that traffic may be developed for the Alaska Railroad."[48] Consistent with that policy, the Bureau in 1924 began upgrading and improving the Moose Pass-Kenai trail into a widened, improved sled road, a task that took the Bureau and the Alaska Road Commission portions of the next three seasons. By the advent of World War II, the route between Cooper Landing and Moose Pass had been improved from a sled road to a wagon road.[49]

The road builders, however, did not entirely ignore the Resurrection River valley. In early 1923, ARC Superintendent Anton Eide announced, as part of the summer's work plan, that the agency would work on a sled trail connecting Seward and Kenai, the work to be paid for with territorial funds. (An ad hoc trail already existed along portions of the route because, as noted above, several mining claims were located in the upper Resurrection River valley.) The agency began graveling portions of the route that summer, but it is not known how much work was completed. ARC maps dating from the 1920s and 1930s show that a designated trail, suitable for dog teams, wound along the Resurrection River-Russian River route. The agency, however, ignored the trail in its annual reports, and the low levels of activity in the valley suggest that the trail had faded back into the forest before World War II.[50]

As noted above, a wagon road connecting Moose Pass with the old Sunrise mining camp had been completed in 1921; two years later, a road was completed connecting Seward with Kenai Lake. As soon as the Seward-Kenai Lake road was completed, Seward citizens began to demand that the various road building authorities construct a seven-mile-long "missing link" connecting the Kenai Lake road terminus with Moose Pass. But steep topography along the Kenai Lake shoreline, a lack of funds, and the

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[48] ARC, *Report to the Board*, 1925, 86.

[49] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 136; vol. III, 253; ARC, *Report to the Board* for 1924, p. 117; 1925, p. 89; and 1926, p. 77; National Resources Planning Board, "City of Seward, Survey of Conditions," 26.

[50] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 136, 201.

ARC's attitude toward roads that competed against the railroad meant that the "missing link" was not completed until 1938.[51]

The remainder of the Kenai Peninsula's primary road network was not completed until the decade that followed World War II. In 1946, the peninsula road system was the same as it had been in 1938; it consisted of a gravel road extending northward from Seward to Hope, and a branch road reached westward to Quartz Creek to the Kenai River-Russian River confluence. But construction beginning that June pushed the road west from the Russian River, and by June 1947 a "pioneer road" had been roughed through to Kenai. The extension of the Sterling Highway from Kenai south to Homer was put through in rough form in December 1949 and completed to ARC standards in 1950. (The route was named for Hawley Sterling, a longtime road-commission superintendent, who had died in September 1948.) Plans were also made to construct a road from Moose Pass north to Anchorage. A route survey had been completed in 1945, road construction south from Anchorage began in 1948, and during fiscal year 1949, bids were let to construct a road between the Anchorage area and the Canyon Creek-Sixmile Creek confluence (today's Hope Junction). Work on that project began during the summer of 1949, and a road linking the Kenai Peninsula and Anchorage was completed and dedicated in October 1951.[52] No intercity roads have been built on the Kenai since that time.

Although Sewardites failed in their 1922 attempt to have a road constructed up the Resurrection River valley to the mouth of the Russian River, they continued to press authorities to have the road built. Their second attempt took place in the fall of 1925, when the local press reported that

> the proposed Resurrection river road to the lower Kenai peninsula regions was the main topic of business confronting the local Chamber of Commerce at its regular weekly meeting.... All members were pledged to get behind the movement and individually write letters to those in authority advocating the construction of the road. Residents of the Kenai district have sent in petitions for the road and it is

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[51] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 204. See *Seward Gateway*, September 18, 1923, 3; July 22, 1927, 1; and August 21, 1928, 4 for Seward road lobbying activities.

[52] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 190, 203, 206, 215, 253; ARC, *Summary of Activities, 1946*, 9; ARC, *Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1947*, 7; ARC, *Annual Report, 1948*, 7; ARC, *Report of Operations of the Alaska Road Commission for the Fiscal Years 1949, 1950 and 1951*, 6, 10-11, 14, 19, 32.

> confidently believed that with united effort it will be constructed.[53]

Undercutting the efforts of road boosters, however, was the slow construction and improvement of a route headed westward from the Moose Pass railroad station. By the early 1940s, a government report noted that the existence of a good road from Moose Pass to Cooper Landing obviated the need for a route up the Resurrection River valley.[54]

In 1957, perhaps in response to the new Swanson River oil discoveries (see Chapter 10), Seward citizens and the Chamber of Commerce made a renewed effort for such a road. They argued that constructing such a road would shorten the distance between Seward and the communities of the western Kenai and relieve some of the traffic on the Anchorage-Kenai highway. In 1959, the advent of statehood raised hopes that the new, more independent government would move to construct the road. Neither of these efforts, however, moved highway department officials to seriously consider a road in the Resurrection-Russian River corridor.[55]

In 1967, the City of Seward issued a Comprehensive Development Plan that "strongly recommended" a road from Seward to Cooper Landing. The document noted that the road would serve three purposes: provide a more direct route between Seward and the western Kenai population centers, open up lands for recreation use, and "provide an alternate tourist route through spectacular country."[56] By this time, Herman Leirer and other local citizens (as noted in Chapter 10) had already begun pioneering a road between Seward Highway and "Resurrection Glacier" (today's Exit Glacier). Lehrer's goal was a recreational road that would provide a scenic diversion for tourists; he had no interest in going farther up the Resurrection River valley.[57]

In its 1973-74 comprehensive plan, the Kenai Peninsula Borough reiterated the need for such a road; the Alaska Department of Highways also recommended such a road during hearings held in April 1974 by the Joint Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission.[58] Those plans,

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[53] *Seward Gateway*, November 18, 1925, 6, and December 5, 1925, 22.

[54] National Resources Planning Board, "City of Seward, Survey of Conditions," 26.

[55] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 252-53, 346.

[56] Barry, *Ibid.*, 298; City of Seward, *Comprehensive Development Plan*, 1967, 67. The plan also urged the construction of a road from Seward south to Caines Head.

[57] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 41-42, 346-53; Herman Leirer interview, December 17, 1996.

[58] Kenai Peninsula Borough, *Comprehensive Plan, Goals and Objectives, 1973-1974*, 16, 19; Alaska Planning Group, *Proposed Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Monument, Alaska, Final Environmental Statement* (Washington, NPS, 1975), 98-99.

however, were not implemented. Since that time, the likelihood that this road will be built has significantly decreased, due both to the establishment of Kenai Fjords National Park and because of the Forest Service's decision, in the early 1980s, to construct a recreation trail through the proposed road corridor.

The rugged topography typical of the southern Kenai Peninsula, and the existence of the Harding and other nearby icefields, have precluded serious proposals for any other long-distance transportation routes in the vicinity of Kenai Fjords National Park. Those factors, however, did not prevent two men from lobbying the Alaska Road Commission for a trail connecting Seldovia with the head of Nuka Bay. That request, in November 1933, met with a blunt, unambiguous denial. ARC official Hawley Sterling told the petitioners that the trail was "neither feasible nor practical or that it would ever be used as a through trail." A road was later built from Seldovia southeast to Rocky and Windy bays, but no serious, long-distance road or trail proposals have been located in the Nuka Bay vicinity or elsewhere in the present park.[59]

Aviation Facility Development

Aviation came of age in Alaska during the 1920s, an era dominated by bush pilots such as Noel Wien, Russell Merrill, and Carl Ben Eielson. Communities across the territory carved out airfields. Seward, which witnessed its first airplane landing in 1925, constructed an airfield between May 1927 and May 1928. Russell Merrill, who was based in Anchorage, took several passengers on a "short flight over the bay and mountains" during the summer of 1928; that same summer, he made several other flights in and out of town with trappers, game guides and their equipment. By the end of the decade, maintained and dedicated airfields had also been laid out at Kenai, Ninilchik, and Kasilof.[60]

During the 1930s, sporadic service in and out of Seward continued. Early in the decade, service was advertised between Seward and the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes. In both 1933 and 1934, Art Woodley offered excursions over Seward, Resurrection Bay and the Harding Ice Field at $10 for short flights and $15 for longer ones. He charged fishermen $15 for round-trip flights to the Russian River; that flight probably ascended

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[59] Hawley Sterling to Mr. Griffin, November 28, 1933, in "SP-1 Seldovia-Nuka Bay" file, Box 36, Program Planning and Research Correspondence, Petitions and Surveys, 1894-1959, RG 30 (Bureau of Public Roads), NARA Anchorage.

[60] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 210, 212; ARC, *Annual Report* for 1928 (pp. 61, 67) and 1929 (pp. 99, 112).

the Resurrection River valley. In 1937, and again in 1939, two different companies named Seward Airways set up shop. These firms lasted only a short time, however. The demand for air travel was so low that scheduled flights were not offered to or from the Kenai Peninsula until after World War II.[61]

Several civilian air carriers, serving both residents and tourists, sprang up during the postwar period. In May 1945, two area residents started the Kenai Air Service, which planned to connect Seward by air with Homer, Seldovia, Valdez, and Cordova. A year later, Safeway Airlines commenced service, offering to take passengers and freight to a variety of Kenai Peninsula and Prince William Sound points. And in 1949, Alaska Airlines began serving Seward as well. All three of these carriers offered flights between Seward and Homer and thus gave passengers the opportunity to view the Harding Icefield, the fjords southwest of Seward, and other areas within today's park boundaries.[62] These carriers, and others that replaced them, have continued to provide occasional service to the southern Kenai Peninsula since that time.

Two airfields have been built in the immediate vicinity of the park. In 1965, miner Don Glass constructed an airstrip along the beach at Beauty Bay and used it in conjunction with operations at the Glass and Heifner mine (see Chapter 7). The other airstrip was a small, ad hoc affair located on the right (southwest) bank of the Resurrection River approximately one-half mile below its confluence with Placer Creek. This so-called "T-grass strip" was bulldozed during the 1950s, probably by hunter Jon Andrews, Sr. By all accounts, the strip was seldom used; perhaps the only user was Mr. Andrews, who flew his Taylorcraft in and out of the area until it crash-landed at one end of the strip in 1978. Since that time, the Resurrection River has reclaimed most of the airstrip, and today most of it is no longer visible.[63]

Dams and Diversion Projects

The Kenai Fjords area, which is primarily composed of icefields, cliffs, islands and seacoast, would appear to be a poor location for dams or

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[61] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 214-16.

[62] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 187, 203, 217-18, 247.

[63] Max Heifner interview, December 16, 1996; Georgeanne Lewis Reynolds, *An Archeological Reconnaissance of the West Side of the Resurrection River Valley, Kenai Fjords National Park, 1983* (Anchorage, NPS, 1987), 47, 55; Bob White interview, December 17, 1996; Kerry Martin interview, December 17, 1996.

diversion activity. But drainage management activities have taken place at both ends of the present-day park.

At the southwestern end of the park, northwest of Nuka Bay, the Bradley River and its tributary, Kachemak Creek, emerge from the Nuka and Kachemak glaciers, respectively. For thousands of years these waters flowed into Bradley Lake, and continued down to the head of Kachemak Bay. Few paid any attention to this drainage system until the late 1940s, when the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation surveyed potential Alaska dam sites. The Bureau gave the site positive reviews. Then, in January 1950, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers report noted that the Bradley Lake area was one of the most favorable sites for hydroelectric development in southcentral Alaska. Four years later, Governor Frank Heintzleman ordered further study of the site. In 1955 the Corps studied the site in more detail, and at its behest, the Bureau of Land Management that August withdrew some 10,000 acres from entry. That withdrawal included much of the Bradley River drainage system. The Corps continued to gather data on the project for the remainder of the decade.[64]

By 1960, power-development advocates had become convinced that Alaska was on the verge of a power shortage; in order to avoid that scenario, they urged lawmakers to construct the Rampart Dam (on the Yukon River) to provide long-term needs and the Bradley Lake Project as an intermediate facility.[65] Based on those needs, Congress authorized Bradley Lake as part of the Flood Control Act of October 1962; it was the only hydroelectric project in Alaska to be so designated, and it remained in that position for years afterward. The following year the Army Corps applied to withdraw the land for construction purposes, and in 1966 the BLM issued public land orders granting the proposed withdrawal. By this time, however, new low-cost thermal generation had made Bradley Lake less competitive, and as a result, the project languished until the economics of hydropower once again proved advantageous.[66]

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[64] BLM, Power Site Classification #436, August 29, 1955; F. A. Johnson, "Waterpower Resources of the Bradley River Basin, Kenai Peninsula, Alaska," *USGS Water-Supply Paper 1610-A* (Washington, GPO, 1961), 2-3.

[65] U.S. Congress, *Hydroelectric Requirements and Resources in Alaska; Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Irrigation and Reclamation of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, U.S. Senate, 86th Congress, 2nd Session* (Washington, GPO, 1961), vii, x, xvii, 5-6, 13-14, 16, 202.

[66] Flood Control Act of 1962 (76 Stat. 1193), October 23, 1962; PLO 3953, March 15, 1966; PLO 4056, July 18, 1966; Alaska Power Administration, *Water Power Aspects of the National Conservation System Study Areas Under Section 17(d)(2) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act*, July 1973, B-21, B-22.

Most of the Bradley Lake project history is beyond the scope of this study, both geographically and temporally. Most of the project area is several miles away from the park boundary; as to time, the majority of the environmental studies were conducted in the late 1970s and early 1980s, project construction began in 1986, and the dam's power plant began generating electricity during the summer of 1991.[67] The high-water level of Bradley Lake, moreover, lies more than three miles away from the park boundary. What makes the dam's construction activity germane to this study, however, is that project engineers decided to divert a portion of the Nuka River's flow into the Bradley River drainage in order to maximize Bradley Lake's hydroelectric potential. The engineers learned, in the early stages of project planning, that the tongue of nearby Nuka Glacier lay astride a drainage divide, locally called Bradley Pass. Four-fifths of Nuka Glacier's outflow went into the Nuka River during low-flow periods, but during high-flow periods, four-fifths of its outflow went into Bradley River. In order to maximize the flow going into Bradley River, the engineers decided to build a 5-foot dike on the south side of Nuka Pool, which is located at Bradley Pass. The Park Service, appraised of the proposed action, approved the project in April 1985. The agency took that action because studies showed that the diversion would have a minimal effect on the spawning potential of the Nuka River's pink, coho, and chum salmon populations because other tributaries comprised the bulk of Nuka River's flow.[68]

The park's northeastern border is the site of a long-planned hydroelectric project. Soon after World War II, water-development interests recognized that the Resurrection River, a mile or so below its confluence with Paradise Creek, was a potential dam location. In March 1950, therefore, the U.S. Geological Survey declared the area a potential power site and withdrew "all land adjacent to Resurrection River and tributaries below an elevation of 500 feet" upstream from the proposed Resurrection Dam. Land in the Resurrection River valley was thus withdrawn up to a point beyond today's park boundary, near the river's confluence with Moose Creek. During the years which followed, scores of sites (including Bradley Lake, as noted above) were touted by federal agencies, the Alaska Power Authority, and local utilities; none of these entities, however, provided sustained backing for a project in the Resurrection River valley. By 1970, the high cost of developing hydroelectric potential, coupled with the unfavorable findings of more detailed studies, had made the project impractical, so the U.S. Forest Service that year recommended that the

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[67] *Anchorage Daily News*, December 21, 1986, D-1, and September 1, 1991, B-1.

[68] Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, *Bradley Lake Project, FERC #8221, Alaska, Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement*, September 1985, pp. 3-5, Attachment A, B-6, and B-27.

classification be revoked. That was never done, but the USGS did not protest the establishment of Kenai Fjords National Park. Today, any chance for hydroelectric development along the Resurrection River is remote.[69]

Soon after the USGS unveiled plans for a Resurrection Dam, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service undertook a small diversion project to restore historical flow levels to the Russian and Resurrection River systems. For scores if not hundreds of years, Summit Creek (just beyond the park's northern boundary) had served as the primary headwaters of the Resurrection River system. But sometime during the early 1950s—probably during the fall of 1951 or the spring of 1952—a flood sufficiently shifted the creek bed that the creek waters started flowing into the upper Russian River system. The creek, which flowed from a glacial tongue, carried a large sediment load and was "seriously polluting" the Russian River, which is a major red salmon stream. The Fish and Wildlife Service, which managed the Russian River fish runs, was concerned about the "increasingly serious" situation. In late 1957, therefore, agency workers drove a D-7 and a D-4 Caterpillar tractor to the area from Seward. They created a dike and diverted Summit Creek back to its former course. After the work was done, the agency left the larger tractor near the dike in case further repairs were needed; the smaller tractor was brought back to Seward. So far as is known, Summit Creek has remained part of the Resurrection River drainage system ever since, and the D-7 "cat" is still at the site.[70]

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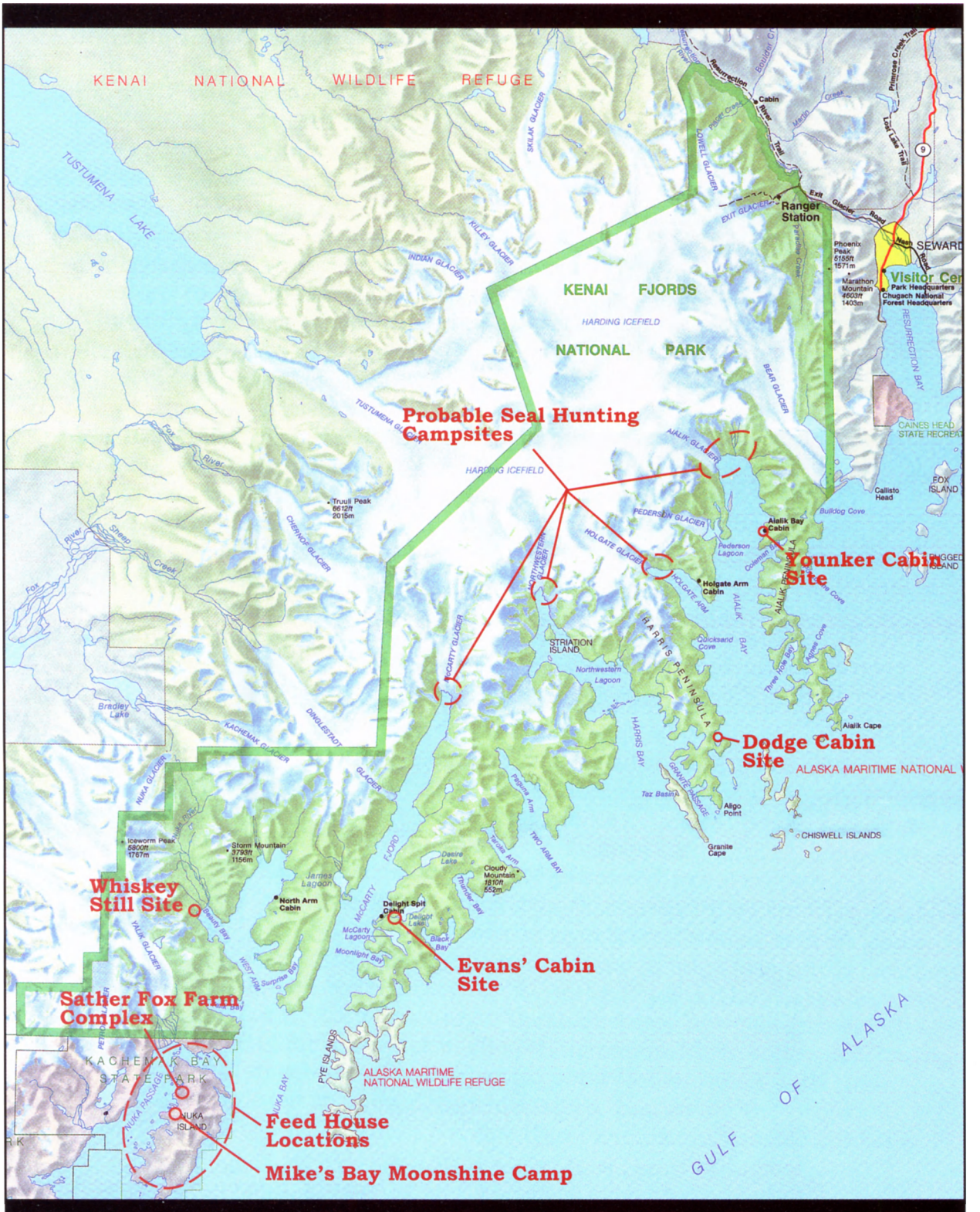
[69] Geological Survey Order, Power Site Classification 403, March 29, 1950; n.a., "Areas of Conflict, Questions & Answers on Kenai Fjords," c. 1977, in KEFJ Keyman Files, NPS Collection, NARA Anchorage.

[70] U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "Cook Inlet Annual Report" for 1958 (pp. 43-45) and 1959 (p. 1) in Box 9, Fisheries District Annual Reports, ca. 1925-56, BCF/NMFS (RG 370), NARA ANC; Mike Tetreau to Norris, email, May 29, 1998.



Map 6-1 **Historic Sites-Fox Farming/Homesteading**

Chapter 6. Living Off the Land and Sea

Traditional Use Activities

As Chapters 3 and 4 have noted, a combination of factors—disease, the lure of commercial fishing, and the encouragement of the Russian Orthodox clergy—resulted in the elimination of permanent human settlement from the present-day park during the 1880s.

Human usage of the area, however, continued. Natives from English Bay[1] and Port Graham traveled east of Gore Point where they hunted and trapped for subsistence purposes in various portions of the present park. Nuka Island was a favored location for fall hunting camps, while winter and spring hunting camps were established at sites in Nuka, Yalik, and Aialik bays. Natives frequently traveled along the entire coastline of the present-day park; Natives from Tatitlek (on the eastern side of Prince William Sound) as well as Seward and English Bay met at the hunting camps; in other instances, English Bay residents traveled to Seward to meet other hunters.[2]

The hunters left many evidences of their passing. Semi-subterranean houses (*barabaras*) served as shelters in Nuka Bay and perhaps elsewhere as well. In the early 1900s, trappers primarily used steel leg-hold traps. Several traditional methods were also used: a stone trap was used to take weasel and mink, and a log trap was used on otters and other larger animals.[3]

Non-Natives recorded the evidence of past trapping activities. As Josephine Tuerck (later Josephine Sather), who with her husband settled on Nuka Island in 1921, noted,

> When we first came here we found all sorts of old contraptions set up in the trails and close to dens, their purpose having been to catch land otters. On the trails of the mainland and the nearby islands were decayed death-falls by the hundreds. We found little box-like houses built with sticks, in which to

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[1] In 1992, the residents of English Bay voted to change the village's name to Nanwalek. In this study, the former name will be used, except in reference to activities that took place after the name change.

[2] Ronald T. Stanek, *Patterns of Wild Resource Use in English Bay and Port Graham, Alaska*, (Anchorage, Alaska Department of Fish and Game Division of Subsistence Technical Paper No. 104, 1985), 54-57, 70. Stanek interviewed two elderly men (Joe Tanape and Walter Meganeck) who "described going to hunting camps in the Port Dick, and Windy Bay and Nuka Bay areas in 1917 and the 1920s."

[3] *Ibid.*, 57, 70-71.

> set steel traps for minks; all manner of spring poles; plenty of other evidence of the ingenuity of man in his effort to outwit every living thing that walked on legs.... Everything pointed to the cleverness of our predecessors on Nuka Island.

She and her husband did not trap during their first several years on the island, but in 1925, Pete and Josephine Sather set some traps for land otters on the "rocks and little islands" near Nuka Island. Their trapping thereafter, however, does not appear to have been either widespread or long lasting.[4]

Other non-Natives engaged in trapping as well. Mary Barry, the author of a multi-volume history of Seward, provides one indication of the extent of that activity:

> In December 1924, Joe Schulte and Heinie Berger, pioneers of Valdez, arrived in Seward on their gasboat *Arcturus* while on a trapping trip. Schulte ... stayed in Seward while Berger and Captain Louis Clark took the boat to the vicinity of Nuka Bay for the trapping season. Schulte, Berger and Clark continued to go in and out of Seward that winter on trapping expeditions.[5]

During the same period, John Colberg of Seldovia and perhaps other area residents trapped up and down the southern Kenai coastline; Colberg himself trapped as far away as Rugged Island in Resurrection Bay.[6]

Hunting and trapping within the present-day park continued, to some extent, until the 1940s. It largely died out after that time.[7] Subsistence fishing, as noted below, continued for another decade because pink salmon in and around Nuka Bay supported the Sathers' fox farm. In 1951, the Fish and Wildlife Service began keeping data on Cook Inlet area subsistence fishing activities. (During the 1950s and early 1960s, it was called the "personal use fishery.") The state, when it took over management of the fisheries resource, continued the practice. Annual tabulations confirm that in the Eastern District (i.e., Resurrection Bay),

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[4] Josephine Sather, "Our Glorious World," *Alaska Sportsman* 12 (October 1946), 41-43. Christopher Wooley, in a historical overview of the region (*Final Report of the Exxon Cultural Resource Program*, unpub. mss., c. 1992, p. 82), notes that the traps implied evidence of "intensive trapping in the area, probably during the mid-to-late 1800s."

[5] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 97.

[6] Clem Tillion interview, April 2, 1997; *Seward Gateway*, June 22, 1933, 1.

[7] Stanek, *Patterns of Wild Resource Use*, 48, 52; Clem Tillion interview, April 2, 1997.

subsistence fishing (primarily for red salmon) took place during most years; the most active year was 1969, when subsistence permittees caught 929 salmon. At no time from the early 1950s through the early 1970s, however, did either Territorial or State authorities receive subsistence permit applications for Outer District salmon fishing. There was, apparently, little or no interest during this period—by either Natives or non-Natives—in fishing for subsistence purposes in park waters.[8]

When the National Park Service began to get involved in the area, it issued conflicting messages about existing subsistence activities. In its December 1973 master plan, the ad hoc Alaska Planning Group stated that

> at least some subsistence fishing for salmon, shellfish, and herring roe takes place in the coastal areas of the Barren, Pye, Granite and Chiswell Islands and the Aialik Peninsula [by] the people of Port Graham and English Bay. Hair seal and mountain goats are hunted in the Chiswell Islands....

But in late 1977, NPS officials declared that "there presently is no documented record of subsistence use in [the] Kenai Fjords National Park proposal, although the Interior Department is recommending the park be open to subsistence use."[9] Neither President Carter's proclamation creating Kenai Fjords National Monument in 1978, nor the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980 establishing Kenai Fjords National Park, provided language that authorized hunting, trapping or other subsistence uses. Specific data concerning where trapping traditionally took place prior to the park's establishment, and usage levels within those areas, have been investigated by others[10] and will not be repeated here.

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[8] Donald M. Stewart (ADF&G), "Annual Management Report, Cook Inlet-Resurrection Bay Area," 1969, 61; ADF&G, "Cook Inlet Annual Management Report" for 1971 (pp. 98-100) and 1972 (pp. 97-108).

[9] Alaska Planning Group, *Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Monument, Alaska; A Master Plan*, December 1973, 47; NPS, "Areas of Conflict, Questions and Answers on Kenai Fjords," p. 1.

[10] In 1994, the NPS contracted for an anthropologist, Mike Galganaitas, to conduct ethnographic recordings of Native use in the park among Port Graham and English Bay residents. That study was not completed; in its stead, the NPS threw its support behind the continuing efforts of Ron Stanek, a subsistence specialist with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, who has long been involved with researching the ethnographic history of the Port Graham and English Bay areas. Some of his earlier research had been summarized in *Patterns of Wild Resource Use in English Bay and Port Graham, Alaska*, (Anchorage, Alaska Department of Fish and Game Division of Subsistence Technical Paper No. 104), 1985. More recent research of his has been exhibited in *Ethnographic Overview and Assessment for Port Graham and Nanwalek*, a multi-volume effort currently

Fox Farming

The area both within and surrounding the present-day park is hostile to most forms of permanent settlement. Owing to poor soils and the scarcity of level land, the area is not conducive to agricultural, horticultural, industrial or most other activities.

Despite those restrictions, the park area has hosted a variety of activities, one of the most persistent being fox farming. Fox farming, an activity once practiced in many parts of Alaska, traces its roots to the Russian explorers. Some of the earliest explorers discovered foxes living on various of the Aleutian Islands, and by 1746, Russians were both harvesting foxes and transplanting them to other islands in the chain. To the Russians, foxes were not nearly as important as sea otters and fur seals; fox pelts were, however, sufficiently valuable that the Russians eliminated the populations of inferior fox species on several islands in order to specialize in so-called blue foxes.[11] The Russians continued to harvest wild foxes during their 125 years of commercial hegemony; during that time, hunters collected hundreds of thousands of fox skins and had them shipped to markets in Russia or China. Hunters did not deplete the islands' fox populations, and the supply was generally plentiful. The number of foxes in a given year, however, was highly variable due to a number of factors. For the same reasons, fur quality often suffered.

In order to avoid the unpredictability and variable fur quality inherent in wild fur harvesting, and to expand the geographical range in which foxes might be grown, several entrepreneurs decided to farm foxes commercially. The first Alaska fox farm began in the Semidi Islands (southwest of Kodiak Island) in the 1880s.[12] The practice spread. By the mid-1890s, an operation had been established on Long Island, near Kodiak, and on various islands in Prince William Sound.[13] Fox farming, at

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being prepared for the National Park Service.

[11] Lone Janson, *Those Alaska Blues; a Fox Tale*, Alaska Historical Commission Studies in History 168 (Anchorage, the Commission, 1985), 1:2. As Frank G. Ashbrook and Ernest P. Walker noted in "Blue Fox Farming in Alaska," *U.S. Department of Agriculture Department Bulletin No. 1350* (Washington, October 1925), page 3, "the blue fox is a color phase of the Arctic or white fox." The white fox's "normal winter coat is white, while the summer pelage is brown and tawny," but the blue fox is "dark bluish in winter and tends toward brownish in summer." Because the dark bluish color commanded the highest prices, harvesting normally took place in November or December. Janet R. Klein, "Farming for Fur; Alaska's Fox Farming Industry," *Alaska Journal* 16 (1986), 105; Sather, "Our Glorious World," 36.

[12] Janson, *Those Alaska Blues*, 3:1-2.

[13] *Ibid.*, 4:1-2; 8:1.

this time, was a rare if not nonexistent activity south of the forty-ninth parallel.

By the turn of the century, fox farms were increasingly common in southcentral and southeastern Alaska; in 1900, 35 islands were being leased from the government. Beginning in 1903, however, fur prices bottomed out and many islands were abandoned. Prices remained low for a decade; during this early period, many raised foxes as breeding stock and began selling them to newly established fur farms in the United States. In 1913, the popularity of furs (and the prices that they garnered) started to rise.[14] For the next fifteen years fur farms—particularly those that raised blue foxes—became increasingly popular. The height of popularity was reached in 1930, when 485 Alaska fur farm licenses were issued. Though fox farming was carried on in many parts of Alaska, it was most common in the coastal areas, where salmon, harbor seals, porpoises, whales and other marine food sources were available. The best fox farming sites were small offshore islands, where pens and feed houses were largely unnecessary.[15]

On the Kenai Peninsula, the first fox farm was established on Perl Island (one of the Chugach Islands group) in 1894. By 1900, new farms had been located on Elizabeth Island (four miles west of Perl Island), on East Chugach Island, and on Yukon and Hesketh islands in Kachemak Bay. The Kachemak Bay farms were apparently successful, long-term enterprises but the Perl and Elizabeth Island operations were not. A second attempt was made to farm the island in 1915, and by 1919, both Perl and East Chugach islands were being leased as fox farms.[16]

In Resurrection Bay, several fur farm operations were active, all on appropriately named Renard (Fox) Island. Alfred and Billy Lowell established the first farm in 1901. Starting with three pairs of blue foxes, the population grew dramatically, and by September 1905, the island had more than 400 foxes. The brothers built a dwelling and three feed houses

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[14] Janet Klein, *A History of Kachemak Bay,* Alaska Historical Commission Studies in History 53 (Anchorage, the Commission, 1982), 59; U.S. Dept. of the Interior, *Annual Report of the Governor of Alaska* (Washington, GPO, 1900), 40.

[15] Janet Clemens, "Fur Farming," unpub. mss., Alaska Office of History and Archaeology, c. 1989, 2, 4; William Wagner, "Blue Fox Industry of Prince William Sound," *Pathfinder of Alaska* 3 (May 1922), 1; Ashbrook and Walker, "Blue Fox Farming in Alaska," 20; *Seward Gateway,* February 10, 1923, 4; Robert N. DeArmond, "Fur Trails to Cook Inlet," unpub. mss., n.d., p. 64, AHL.

[16] U.S. Congress, "Report of the Special Agent for the Protection of the Alaska Salmon Fisheries," U.S. Senate Hearing, June 24, 1900 (56th Congress, 1st Session, Document 153), 57; Janson, *Those Alaska Blues,* 7:4-5; U.S. Congress, *Annual Report of the Department of the Interior,* 1903, 282.

on the island. But they had a hard time selling the foxes, so they put the farm up for sale. Lacking a buyer, they soon abandoned it. In 1907, two brothers named Phillips invested in the island, hoping to grow marten there; it is unknown, however, if they did so.[17]

Nine years later, Lars Matt Olson (in partnership with Seward storeowner Thomas W. Hawkins) made another attempt to farm furs on the island. In 1915, Olson filed a location notice for the island; by year's end he was living in a cabin on the bay (so-called Northwest Harbor) at the island's northern end and was raising angora goats and blue foxes. A year later, in July 1916, he filed for a homestead entry on the island. The General Land Office quickly rejected the claim (a December 1911 executive order had withdrawn the island from settlement, along with most of the land in and around Resurrection Bay), but Olson soldiered on. He remained on the island until June 1920, when illness forced him to move Outside. The island gained fame because in August 1918, Olson invited artist Rockwell Kent and his son to live in a nearby cabin (see Chapter 10). Father and son remained on the island for more than six months; then, in 1920, the artist published a popular book about his sojourn. Entitled *Wilderness, A Journal of Quiet Adventure*, it was Kent's first full-length book. The book, illustrated with the artist's distinctive woodcuts, helped publicize both Alaska and Seward.[18]

Before long, others took over where Olson had left off. In 1921, Tom Tessier moved to the island; he too raised furs and remained there for the next several years. Decades later, in October 1958, William C. Justice leased the island for fur farming purposes. He apparently made no steps to either live there or raise furs, and in January 1965 his lease expired.[19]

West of today's park, fox farmers pursued their craft in Seldovia and on Passage Island (between Port Graham and English Bay), as well as on the various Chugach islands. Area fox farms continued to operate, either on islands or in pens, as late as the 1940s.[20]

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[17] Barry, *Seward History, I*, 27-28; U.S. Congress, *Annual Report of the Department of the Interior; Report of the Secretary of the Interior, Report of the Commissioner of the General Land Office*, 58th Congress, 2nd Session, House of Representative Document No. 5 (Washington, GPO, 1903), 283. One or both of these operations had facilities at Sunny Cove; in March 1919, Rockwell Kent visited the site, where he found "the moldering ruins of an old feed house for the foxes, gruesome with the staring bones of devoured carcasses." Kent, *Wilderness*, 206, inside cover maps.

[18] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 126; Douglas R. Capra, "Pets and Paradise," *The Kent Collector* 12 (Fall 1985), 9-12.

[19] BLM Case File A 046257, Alaska State Office, Anchorage.

[20] Klein, *A History of Kachemak Bay*, 57, 59; U.S. Bureau of Biological Survey, "Island Blue Fox Ranchers of Alaska, Stocked January 1, 1923," unpub. mss., June 1923, 4,

North of the park, in the peninsula's interior, a number of farmers were active with pen-raised foxes. Beginning in 1914, a man named Deegan ran a fox ranch at Kenai Lake, and by 1918, F. E. Whelpley owned a fox farm in the area and partners William Kaiser and Henry Lucas ran a farm on Skilak Lake. Lucas and Kaiser kept their operation going until 1923, if not longer. During this period, two other fox farmers set up shop: Mrs. L. W. Bishop (along the Russian River) and James Paulson. In 1925, a man named Newman went into business at Kenai Lake and remained there until 1928, possibly longer. Bishop's or Newman's operations may have continued into the early 1930s, but the others faded away and no new fur farms re-emerged.[21]

The Nuka Island Fox Farm

The only fox farm within the present park boundaries, and the best known fox farming operation along the Kenai Peninsula's southern coast, was located on Nuka Island, at the southwestern edge of the present-day national park.

Edward Tuerck and his wife, Josephine, established the fox farm in the spring of 1921.[22] A year previously, the couple was living in Cordova when Joe and Muz Ibach arrived in town from their Middleton Island fox farm and sold furs worth $17,000. That sale, coupled with a $10,000 fur harvest a year earlier, caused a sensation in Cordova.[23] As Josephine

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AHL; Alaska Game Commission, "Fur Farmers of Alaska Holding Licenses Under the Alaska Game Law for the Year Ending June 30, 1941," in "Fur Farming" folder, KEFJ HRS Collection; *Seward Gateway*, May 11, 1927, 6.

[21] R. L. Polk & Co., *Alaska-Yukon Business Directory, 1917-18*, 866; R. L. Polk & Co., *Alaska-Yukon Gazetteer, 1923-24*, 554-55; *Seward Gateway*, June 11, 1923, 2; Capra, "Pets and Paradise," 10; James C. Haggerty, et.al., *The 1990 Exxon Cultural Resource Program; Site Protection and Maritime Cultural Ecology in Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska* (Anchorage, Exxon Shipping Co. and Exxon Co., Alaska, 1991), 287-290; *The Pathfinder of Alaska* 1 (May 1920), 16.

[22] Ed Tuerck, who was also known as Tom Hunter (perhaps because of the anti-German sentiment that prevailed during and after World War I), was Josephine's second husband. Born Josephine Maier, she and her first husband, Balthauser Angerman, had emigrated from Europe to Massachusetts in 1911. Soon afterward the couple moved to Kennicott, Alaska. Their marriage was annulled in November 1915. Barry, *Seward History, II*, 75.

[23] Josephine Sather, "The Island," *Alaska Sportsman* 12 (July 1946), 7; *Valdez Miner*, February 1, 1919, 7. Cordova was not the only Alaska town swept with successful fur-farming stories during the early 1920s. In 1920, it was widely reported that a Prince William Sound fox farm "sold ten pair of foxes for $6,000 to the Japanese syndicate on Green Island," and a year later, a farmer near Petersburg sold a pair of blue foxes for

later recalled, "the fox ranching industry became the prevailing topic of the day, and the question of where one could find an island suitable for the purpose, the main topic of discussion." Mr. Tuerck then discussed the idea with Charles Dustin, and the two set about looking for an appropriate island for raising foxes. On April 6, 1921, Tuerck chartered a boat, loaded it with lumber, and set out for the Pye Islands. He soon discovered, however, that the islands were exposed, steep and utterly lacking in a suitable harbor, so the boat continued west to Nuka Island where a "natural harbor" was located.[24] Tuerck liked the site, so he posted a location notice and helped haul the boatload of lumber ashore. They then sailed back to the copper mining community of Latouche, which was, in the recollections of Tuerck's wife, "the nearest town from which they could communicate with the Land Office in Juneau." On April 12, they notified that office.[25]

Development of the site proceeded quickly thereafter. In May, Tuerck and Dustin, acting as partners, returned to the site and began building a house. Construction of the small, rectangular residence proceeded slowly. In mid-July Tuerck's wife joined them, and within weeks the structure had been completed along with a hen house, storehouse, and a 3,000-foot water line connecting the house to a nearby creek. In early September, six pairs of blue foxes arrived, the beginnings of their fur farming operation. Soon afterward, Dustin moved to Seattle and his role in the operation became less active.[26]

The fox farm, known in business circles as the Dustin & Tuerck Fur Company,[27] appears to have been economically successful, and the fox

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$3600. *The Pathfinder of Alaska* 1 (February 1920), 24; Alfred M. Bailey, "Notes on Game Conditions in Alaska," unpub. mss., 1921, 16, in "Fur Farming" folder, KEFJ HRS Collection, NARA ANC.

[24] Sather, "The Island," 7, 8, 43. Josephine called the embayment near their residence Home Harbor, but in more recent years it has become known as Herring Pete's Cove. McMahan and Holmes, "Report," 16, 34-35.

[25] Sather, "The Island," 8; J. David McMahan and Charles E. Holmes, *Report of Archaeological and Historical Investigations at Nuka Island and the Adjacent Kenai Peninsula, Gulf of Alaska*, [Alaska] Office of History and Archaeology Report Number 5 (January 1987), 34. Josephine's statement that La Touche had the nearest communications facility appears to be in error, inasmuch as Seward had a telegraph office at that time. McMahan and Holmes (p.15) note that Tuerck and Dustin "requested and received a 10 year lease" from the Juneau GLO office, and cite Mrs. Sather as a reference; Sather's 1946 articles, however, do not mention such a lease.

[26] Sather, "The Island," 11, 42; McMahan and Holmes, "Report of Archaeological and Historical Investigations," 34. As noted in the February 6, 1923 issue of the *Seward Gateway*, additional construction may have taken place at the fox farm in 1923.

[27] U.S. Bureau of Biological Survey, "Island Blue Fox Ranchers of Alaska, Stocked January 1, 1923," AHL.

population proliferated on the island. The foxes were given a varied diet. To save on feed costs, they were provided as many locally caught products as possible; humpback salmon was a staple, supplemented by the meat of seals, sea lions, and even whales when they could be procured. When fish and marine mammals were scarce, the foxes were fed a cooked compote of rolled oats and rolled wheat, mixed together with soaked-out fish, seal oil, and cracklings. Josephine occasionally made the foxes hotcakes and provided eggs from the nearby hen house.[28]

One of the foxes' only natural predators was the bald eagle. Mrs. Sather noted that "our island swarmed with eagles," and she quickly learned that they ate ducks, porcupines, minks, fish, and birds' eggs. Considering herself a nature lover, she deplored the eagles' dietary habits; what really angered her was the discovery of young fox hides, torn to rags, near the eagles' nests. The terms of her fur farm lease expressly forbade the killing of "any game animals or birds ... and to exercise all reasonable precaution to conserve game and wild birds on the land covered by this lease." Mrs. Sather, however, felt that "these predatory eagles were a menace to our fox-raising enterprise." Because of the perceived "menace" to the fox population, because enforcement of the fish and game laws was minimal, and because of the additional incentive of an eagle bounty—$2 for each pair of talons—she shot several hundred eagles during her stay on the island.[29]

One of the primary reasons that the couple settled on Nuka Island was that Ed Tuerck "had not been well for some time" and that "a change might be the very thing he needed." After settling on the Nuka Island, Tuerck's health initially improved. In the early summer of 1923, however, he was taken seriously ill, and on July 24 he left the island in order to get medical attention. He was examined in Anchorage and was told that his sickness—stomach cancer—was incurable. He returned to Seward, where he died on August 26.[30]

Josephine spent the following winter on the island with Edward's daughter and son-in-law.[31] She quickly concluded that she loved her

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[28] Sather, "The Island," 43; Sather, "The Foxes," *Alaska Sportsman* 12 (August 1946), 28-30; Sather, "The Birds and the Bears," *Alaska Sportsman* 12 (September 1946), 18-19, 24.

[29] Sather, "The Island," 43; U.S. General Land Office, "Lease of Lands for Fur Farming Under the Act of July 3, 1926," in Record Book 10, pp. 132-33, Seward Recorder's Office.

[30] Sather, "The Island," 7, 43-44; *Seattle Times*, November 1, 1959, 2; *Seward Gateway*, July 26, 1923, 4; August 16, 1923, 4; August 27, 1923, 2; September 1, 1923, 6; September 4, 1923, 4.

[31] *Seward Gateway*, September 5, 1923, 4; September 11, 1923, 3; September 18, 1923, 4.

home and the fox-farming lifestyle. She was, however, unable to run the business on her own, and by the following spring she was heavily in debt. She was given an offer to sell her half of the fur company, but instead vowed that she would not leave Nuka Island. So as she later noted, "Consequently there was only one thing for me to do—marry a man who took the same delight in Nature that I did, and who would be capable and willing to take care of the fur business." That man was Captain Peter P. Sather, "a man whom [Edward] and I had always had the highest respect and regard."[32] Seward's U.S. Commissioner wed the two on May 5, 1924. Their union, a marriage of convenience, continued until his death in the early 1960s.[33]

Much has been written about "Herring Pete" Sather over the years, and many old-timers from Seward, Seldovia, Homer and vicinity fondly recall his personality and eccentricities. (One reporter hailed him, late in life, as a man "known the length and breadth of the rugged 49th state as a man who can't stand dry land."[34]) Most remember him as warm-hearted and generous, if a bit quirky. Because he and his wife were the only long-term permanent residents who lived between Caines Head and Portlock during the twentieth century, many recognize that the two were the most important single elements unifying human activity in the fjords country from the mid-1920s until the early 1960s. Pete was well known because

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[32] Sather, "The Island," 44. Pete Sather was born Peter Petersen (other accounts say his surname may have been Peterson or Pederson) in Norway on or about May 29, 1895. *Seward Gateway*, May 31, 1933, 2. He immigrated to the U.S., probably in the summer of 1920, and began fishing for herring in Kachemak Bay. (The date 1920 is approximate. It is known that he immigrated because of the local herring trade, which began booming in 1918, but his name was not recorded in the 1920 U.S. Census for Alaska. By 1922, however, he was well known in the area, and he owned his own boat.) The cannery where he worked already had several men named Petersen on the payroll, so he took the name of his birthplace, Seter (the first vowel of which is pronounced as a long "a"). A cannery clerk inadvertently added the "h" and his surname was Sather from then on. *Seattle Times*, November 1, 1959, 2; repeated in the *Petticoat Gazette*, October 22, 1964, 2. Research with guidebooks and a Norwegian resident has revealed that although there are at least five Norwegian communities called "Seter" or "Saeter," he probably came from the Säterdal (also known as the Sæterdal and now known as Setesdalen), a valley that extends north from the port of Kristiansand. Karl Baedeker, *Norway, Sweden and Denmark with Excursions to Iceland and Spitzbergen* (Leipzig, the author, 1912), 171; Gunnar Berg and Mette Berg, *Naf Veibok* (Oslo, Norway, Norges Automobil-Forbund, 1982), 18, 29, 36, 51, 54, 58, 59; Forlaget Det Beste, *Norge Sett Fra Luften* (Oslo, the author, 1980), 159; Rune Bjornsen to author, email, July 8, 1997.

[33] *Seward Gateway*, May 6, 1924, 2. Page 3 of the *Gateway's* May 7 issue noted that "Peter Sather and bride left Seward yesterday on the gasboat *Rolph* [sic] for their home near Nuka Bay, where he will conduct a fox farm."

[34] *Petticoat Gazette*, October 22, 1964, 1-2. As Elsa Pedersen notes in "I Remember Herring Pete," *Alaska* 40 (July 1974), 28, he reportedly earned his nickname during the early 1920s when he fell overboard into a purse seine full of herring.

he was a jack-of-all-trades. He owned and worked at two different Nuka Bay mines; he was a commercial halibut fisherman and caught salmon for both commercial and subsistence purposes; he transported miners, hunters, sightseers, mail, and freight between Seward and Nuka Bay; and he, along with Josephine, operated a successful fox farm. Because the couple was involved in so many activities, many consider them the pre-eminent historical figures associated with Kenai Fjords National Park.

Two activities quickly followed the Sathers' marriage; one related to business rights, the other to site development. In July 1925, Josephine Sather acquired the other half of the fur farming business from her partners. Charles Dustin, now living in Seattle, and Robert Mooney, a Kennicott resident, were apparently no longer interested in remaining active in the operation.[35] So in exchange for 40 pairs of foxes, they gave up their interest in fox farming and also agreed to repay a debt that the Tuercks owed to a Seward merchant. Shortly thereafter, in July 1926, Congress passed a fur farm leasing act, an action that finally allowed Mrs. Sather, and fur farmers throughout the territory, the opportunity to gain a legal right to their properties. For years thereafter, she retained her fox farm lease by paying $50 per year to the General Land Office. Although Alaska Game Commission and other government records show Pete as the fox farm's operator, Josephine remained the sole possessor of the fox farm lease.[36]

During the mid- to late 1920s, Pete made a number of improvements to the fox farming operation. He added a number of rooms to their residence, including a bedroom, pantry, woodshed, sun room, and combination skinning room and bathroom. In addition, he constructed a cookhouse for preparing fox feed; a 16' x 32' breeder shed; a machine shop; and several cement tanks, for salting fish. He also built 32 6' x 8' feed houses,[37] each complete with a tunnel and trap door. The feed houses were scattered all over the island, each within easy walking distance of the ocean in order to allow easy access. And to improve boat

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[35] By this time, Dustin had sold Mooney a one-sixteenth share of the business. U.S. General Land Office, "Conditional Bill of Sale, Charles Dustin and Robert Mooney to Mrs. Peter Sather," June 21, 1926, Record Book 9, pp. 301-02, Seward Magistrate's Office.

[36] U.S. General Land Office, "Lease of Lands for Fur Farming Under the Act of July 3, 1926," March 1, 1928, in Record Book 10, pp. 131-34, Seward Magistrate's Office. Prior to 1926, fur farmers had no legal right to use their land. As Ashbrook and Walker noted in USDA Bulletin No. 1350, published in 1925 (pp. 6-7), that there was "no legal authority existing for leasing or granting title to these [GLO] lands.... Many islands of this class are occupied for fur farming under the belief that those in possession will have their occupancy recognized should Congress pass the necessary law authorizing the issuance of leases or permits for them."

[37] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 77, notes that there were 70 feed houses.

access to his residence, he built a dock and float. Pete was no carpenter; as Josephine once wrote, "Pete is not long on patience when it comes to building, and never takes the pains to line one up just right before he starts. Consequently not a piece from beginning to end fits as it should." Despite that characteristic, much of his handiwork from that period has remained to the present day.[38]

The operation, and the Alaska fur farm industry, showed increasingly bright prospects during the 1920s, and the number of Alaska fur farms increased from 146, after the 1922 season, to 262 in 1926. The year 1929 was particularly prosperous with high pelt prices, unprecedented production levels and a flamboyant fur market; Alaska had 384 fur farms that year. On October 29, however, "Black Tuesday" on Wall Street ushered in the Great Depression, a period that had a catastrophic effect on the industry because fur garments were luxury items. Within a year after the stock market crash, the value of Alaskan fur exports had experienced a sharp decline; blue fox pelt prices, for example, dropped from $99 to $62. Soon afterward, the bottom dropped out of the market: pelt prices fell to $28 in 1931 and to $21 in 1932. One Kachemak Bay fur farmer, Steve Zawistowski, recalled that in 1930 he received an average of $100 per pelt. But by 1932, similar pelts brought only $11—a price, Zawistowski wryly noted, "that put us out of business right there." Unfavorable market conditions forced many Alaskan fur farmers out of business. By 1933, only 310 fur farms remained in operation, compared with 476 farms in 1930.[39]

The remainder of the decade brought mixed fortunes to the fur farming industry. In 1933, the price of blue fox pelts rose for the first time since 1929, but they remained well below the prices that had been garnered during the 1920s, and they never again rose above $35. Even so, blue fox production remained as high as it had been during a decade earlier.

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[38] McMahan and Holmes, "Report," 34-48; Sather, "The Birds and the Bears," 18; Sather, "Our Glorious World," *Alaska Sportsman* 12 (October, 1946), 34. The cabin noted on the east side of Nuka Island on the U.S. Geological Survey's "Seldovia B-2" 1:63,360 Quadrangle (1951) was probably a feeding house for foxes; park employee Bud Rice (December 18, 1997 interview) unsuccessfully searched for the cabin during the mid-1980s.

[39] Klein, "Farming for Fur," 104; Sheila T. Evans, "An Historical View of Selected Alaskan Natural Resources," Alaska Historical Commission Studies in History No. 48 (Anchorage, the Commission, February 1981), 75-76. Most of Alaska's furs were sold in London; as a fox farmer observed in 1922, "It is apparent that the American ladies do not yet appreciate the beauty of the blue fox. [Many wear] the cheaper fox furs and several the more expensive silver or black fox, but very few blue fox furs were observed.... This is quite the reverse in the European cities, and particularly so in London and Paris." William Wagner, "Blue Fox Industry of Prince William Sound," *The Pathfinder* 3 (May 1922), 2.

Depressed prices forced many other fox farmers to abandon the business, and by 1939 only 220 farms remained in the territory.[40] The poor price structure meant less revenue for the Sathers, along with other Alaskan fox farmers. The Sathers, however, were able to remain in business throughout the decade. As noted in other chapters, "Herring Pete" was able to supplement his fur farming income by transporting people, mail, and freight between Seward and the various Nuka Bay mines, and by engaging in commercial fishing as well.

The decades that followed were even harder on fox farmers than the 1930s had been. The advent of World War II reduced the demand for furs and other luxuries, and the postwar years brought increased economic opportunities that lured fox farmers into other lines of work. Consumers, moreover, increasingly preferred coats made of mink rather than blue fox, so pelt prices remained low. As a result of these and other factors, the number of Alaska fox farms continued to decline from 220 in 1939 to 87 in 1944; to 62 in 1947; to 24 in 1950; to 15 in 1957; and to only 4 in 1966.[41]

Despite these increasingly gloomy trends, the Sather fox farm continued to operate, a hardy survivor in an industry that was quickly becoming a shadow of its former self. In its 1947 edition, the *U.S. Coast Pilot* warned passing ships that "Nuka Island is used as a fox farm. Numerous 'No Trespassing' signs are on prominent points and islands along the northern and western shores of the island." Soon afterward, however, the Sathers stopped renewing their annual fur farm license, and by 1954 the *Coast Pilot* described Nuka Island as containing "the remaining buildings of what was once a fox farm." Even so, Pete and Josephine continued to live at their Nuka Island residence.[42]

What happened to their foxes, now essentially valueless, is not entirely clear. For the first several years after the couple abandoned their business, Pete continued to hunt and fish for the foxes; he did this because of the couple's fondness for wildlife, foxes included. The Sathers

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[40] Evans, "An Historical View," 77.

[41] *Ibid.*, 78, 80-82; Karen Cantillon, "Fur Farming in Alaska," *Alaska Fish Tales & Game Trails*, Fall 1982, 6-7.

[42] U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, *United States Coast Pilot, Alaska, Part II; Yakutat Bay to Arctic Ocean*, fifth edition (Washington, GPO, 1947), 143; U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, *United States Coast Pilot 9, Pacific and Arctic Coasts, Alaska, Cape Spencer to Beaufort Sea*, sixth edition (Washington, GPO, 1954), 149. Bill Miller, a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service stream guard, worked at both Nuka Island and Beauty Bay during the summer of 1956. During a March 24, 1997 interview, he noted that the fox farm was abandoned by the time he worked there.

continued to feed some foxes as late as the summer of 1961.[43] But beginning in the late 1950s, the couple may have taken a cue from various Aleutian Islands farmers and simply left most of their remaining foxes to fend for themselves. Arctic foxes, after all, have been known to survive, unattended, on large islands by scavenging the beaches and bird rookeries for food. On one of the Barren Islands, a farmer abandoned her farm in 1930; she returned seven years later to find a healthy fox population, even though poachers had been active.[44] On Nuka Island, the chances for survival were diminished because small game and rodents had long since been eliminated and because readily available marine life was scarce as well. Even so, however, a number of foxes were apparently able to adapt to the new regime; a woman who resided on the island in the early 1980s has definite recollections of foxes (and mink) on the island.[45]

During the postwar years, the Sathers continued to live at their Nuka Island home, Pete earning most of his income by fishing. By the mid-1950s, as noted above, the continuing decline in fur prices caused the couple to lose their enthusiasm for fur farming. Because Pete was off fishing for long periods, Josephine, now in her mid- to late 70s, became concerned about her isolation. In August 1959 she moved to Seattle, only to move back again the following spring.[46] Then, in late August 1961, tragedy struck. On the way back to Nuka Island from a trip to Seward, Pete's boat was lost in a storm, and he was never seen again. The following July, Josephine left the island, returned to her home town of Ellmau, Austria, and began living with her niece. She died there, at the age of 82, on October 13, 1964.[47]

After Josephine left the island, a family named Johnson moved there; exactly who lived there, however, is under some dispute. One source notes that Chuck and Sherry Johnson bought the lease. A longtime resident, however, states that Mike Johnson was living at the site before

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[43] Pedersen, "I Remember Herring Pete," 29, 53; *Petticoat Gazette*, August 31, 1961, 1-2.

[44] In 1958, Fish and Wildlife Service stream guards noted the presence of Nuka Island foxes in the agency's annual report; see John B. Skerry, "Cook Inlet Annual Report, 1958," p. 116, in Box 9, Fisheries District Annual Reports, ca. 1925-56, BCF/NMFS (RG 370), NARA ANC. Also see Klein, "Farming for Fur," 104; Kay Barker, "Voluntary Exile," *Alaska Sportsman* 5 (November 1939), 8.

[45] Marge (Margaret) Tillion interview, April 9, 1997.

[46] Pedersen, "I Remember Herring Pete," 53; *Seattle Times*, November 1, 1959, 2. At least one source also noted that she lived at the Sitka Pioneers' Home for awhile; records at the Home, however, give no indication that she ever lived there.

[47] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 77-78; *Petticoat Gazette*, October 22, 1964, 1-2. Ellmau (also referred to as Ellamar) is located in the Tyrolean Alps, approximately 50 miles east of Innsbruck and 10 miles from the German frontier.

the March 1964 earthquake, and land records show that Ms. Billie June Wiles Johnson obtained a ten-year fur farm lease beginning on April 1, 1963.[48] The Johnsons, moreover, were not the only ones to live on the island. In 1966, the Suddath family (of Seward) lived there, and others apparently did as well between the mid-1960s and the early 1970s.[49]

In July 1966, the State of Alaska applied for title to Nuka Island along with adjacent acreage on the mainland, all of which was federally owned at that time. The BLM reacted to the state's 75,521-acre application, which was part of its 104 million-acre statehood allotment, by incrementally reducing the size of Billie Johnson's lease. In 1973, Johnson applied to the BLM for a new lease, which was set to expire on September 1 of that year. By that time, however, the state's application was well underway, and a BLM official informed her that her lease would be canceled once the agency gave tentative approval to the state's application. Johnson fought the ruling, but on October 1, 1973 the agency issued a decision denying the lease renewal.[50] Johnson was invited to apply to the state's Division of Lands for a new lease. Either she or her husband apparently applied for, and were granted, a mining lease. That lease remained in effect for the remainder of the decade.[51]

Homesteading

Developers over the years have long considered the Kenai Peninsula as an agricultural area. Russian colonists, as noted in Chapter 3, planted crops in various sites along the eastern side of Cook Inlet; then, during the 1920s and 1930s, homesteaders trickled into the area surrounding Kenai, Homer and other coastal communities.[52] Homesteaders settled in the

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[48] Kristel Nelson, "'Herring Pete' Sather, An Alaskan Fishing Legend," unpub. mss., 1994, in Swetmann Report file, Seward Public Library; Marge Tillion interview, April 9, 1997; Case files AA 114 and A 056797, Bureau of Land Management, Alaska State Office, Anchorage. The Johnsons appear to have begun living on the island in March 1962.

[49] McMahan and Holmes, "Report," 18, 44. The Sathers' 30-year-old fur farm lease expired on December 23, 1959. Just six weeks later, on February 1, 1960, a Willow, Alaska resident named Shirley W. Towne applied for a new Nuka Island fur farm lease. Ms. Towne, however, does not appear to have settled on the island, and her lease expired in May 1962. Inasmuch as her BLM case file (A 51147) has been destroyed, no other details of her case are known.

[50] Bureau of Land Management, Case files AA 113, AA 114, AA 207, AA 58984 and A 056797, Alaska State Office, Anchorage.

[51] BLM case file AA 114; Marge Tillion interview, April 9, 1997. The Sathers' residence was occupied in 1981 by Will and Marge Tillion and their children, but they were forced to vacate the premises in November 1984. The island was officially conveyed to the state in October 1989.

[52] Walt and Elsa Pedersen, *A Larger History of the Kenai Peninsula* (Sterling, the

Seward area as well during the first two decades of the twentieth century, and by 1915 an uneven line of homesteads connected Seward and Bear Lake (seven miles to the north). No homesteads, however, were located more than two miles west of the Alaska Central tracks; thus all were located several miles east of the present park boundary.[53] The rest of the peninsula's southern coast, moreover, was inimical to agricultural settlement because of poor soil development and a paucity of level land.

Despite those drawbacks, various would-be settlers have been attracted to the southern Kenai Peninsula coast during the twentieth century. Few of these people attempted to homestead land in the narrow sense; because the area was not agricultural, it attracted people that were drawn to the area's remoteness and isolation. Those were the same qualities, however, that proved inimical to long-term settlement.

The first area homesteaders were "moonshiners," who settled in the area shortly after Prohibition became law in Alaska. On a national level, the eighteenth amendment to the U.S. constitution, which mandated Prohibition, was submitted to the states for ratification in late 1917, and it became effective in January 1920. But in Alaska, action against the liquor industry proceeded more quickly. An act of the 1915 legislature demanded a vote "as to Whether or Not Intoxicating Liquors Shall Be Manufactured or Sold in the Territory." In the November 1916 general election, Alaskans approved this measure by almost a 2-to-1 vote. Alaska's congressional delegate, James Wickersham, responded to the vote by introducing a bill in the House of Representatives in January 1917 that implemented its provisions. The bill quickly passed Congress, and on February 14, President Woodrow Wilson signed the so-called "Alaska Bone Dry Law." This law, which was considered drastic even by the standards of Prohibition advocates, became effective on January 1, 1918. It remained the law of the land in Alaska until April 13, 1934, more than four months after Prohibition was repealed on the national level.[54] It should be noted that the sentiments of Seward citizens largely paralleled those in the rest of the territory; in April 1915 and again in June 1916, city-wide votes showed the residents were strongly in favor of allowing liquor licenses to be issued, but in the November 1916 election, Seward

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authors, 1983), 25-29, 124-34.

[53] BLM, Historical Index sheets for T1N, R1W, SM, at BLM, Alaska State Office, Anchorage. Frank G. Carpenter, the author of *Alaska, Our Northern Wonderland* (Garden City, Doubleday, 1923) was thus incorrect in his statement (on p. 254) that "For ten miles up the valley of Resurrection River, men have taken up homesteads."

[54] Catherine Holder Spude, et.al., *Father Turnell's Trash Pit, Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, Alaska; Archeological Investigations in Skagway, Alaska, Volume 4* (Denver, NPS, August 1993), 90-99.

elected to go "dry" by a lopsided 271 to 160 vote. Seldovia voters also supported Prohibition.[55]

Alaskans, along with other westerners, earnestly hoped that Prohibition would succeed in eliminating a host of social ills tied to liquor consumption. Alaskan officials, most of whom were "dry" advocates, were initially optimistic that the Bone Dry Law would be successfully implemented and enforced. It was not long, however, before Alaskans began to honor the law in the breach. In order to obtain alcoholic beverages, smuggling and the manufacture of "moonshine" became increasingly popular.

Both of these activities took place in the area surrounding the present-day park. As noted in the records of the magistrate as well as in local newspaper articles, smuggling (and occasional arrests) took place through the Port of Seward. The making of moonshine was more widespread. Several incidents of liquor manufacture were reported inside of Seward residences—one part of town was known for years afterward as "homebrew alley"—but others took place outside of town. Charles Emsweiler, a Seward police patrolman, maintained some stills of his own down the bay; Gus Wyman, a local old-timer, set up a distilling factory at Caines Head.[56] Another party set up a still near the mouth of Fourth of July Creek. Renard Island resident Rockwell Kent noted that in early 1919, a gasoline boat just offshore was "doubtless out dragging somewhere for a cache of whiskey. Lots of whiskey has been sunk in the bay."[57]

"Moonshine" whiskey was reportedly manufactured in several places in or near the present park. One such site was on the western side of Nuka Island. Three men—George Hogg,[58] "Smokehouse Mike," and a man known only as Jack—lived at a camp about two miles south of Herring Pete's Cove. As Josephine Sather noted in a 1946 article, [the camp] "was in a hidden nook, and a thirty by thirty-six warehouse stood on a grassy bank. A sixty-foot gas boat, resting on the mud at low tide, was tied to the dock." Elsewhere on the island, at an unknown location, was located "a building about twenty feet square." Inside the building, "standing on benches three feet high all around the walls were fifty-gallon mash

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[55] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 238.

[56] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 237-43; *Seward Gateway*, September 17, 1921, 4.

[57] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 240; Kent, *Wilderness*, 199.

[58] Rockwell Kent, who lived on Renard Island during the winter of 1918-1919, noted that an Englishman named Hogg lived "on the west side of Resurrection Bay south of Seward." It is unknown if, at that time, he was manufacturing liquor. Kent, *Wilderness*, 27, 183, 195.

barrels.... In one corner stood a thirty-gallon still, going full blast. The 'mountain dew' was running in a crystal-clear stream the thickness of a good-sized sewing needle." The operation, which may have begun as early as 1918, was shut down in 1921 at the Tuercks' request. The trio had no legal claim to the island; besides, both Edward and Josephine were teetotalers.[59]

Because the shorelines of the present park were both isolated and unpopulated, moonshiners often visited the area on clandestine business. Longtime Sewardites Bart Stanton and Virginia Darling, for example, recall that bootleggers worked out of Nuka Bay during Prohibition days; Stanton worked at a Nuka Bay mine during the 1930s, and Ms. Darling, who has long been associated with the Brown and Hawkins store, remembers selling materials for stills that were being assembled in that area. Another longtime resident, John Paulsteiner, noted that "Nuka Bay was also a favored location" for moonshine stills and that Sam Romack and his brother, Tony Parich, "had stills in a good part of the Peninsula." Concrete evidence of area activity was revealed during the 1960s, when geologist Donald Richter found a 30-gallen whiskey still in a secluded cove in Beauty Bay.[60]

So far as is known, only one man lived in the present-day park prior to World War II who was neither a mineral claimant nor a fur-farm lessee. Bob Evans, a veteran of World War I, built and lived in a cabin near McCarty Lagoon. Josephine Sather recalled that "his poor body was a wreck;" he had cancer of the throat, bad lungs, and impaired hearing. Even so, he worked in the area for years. He first did mining assessment work for others; he later hunted seals and finally did some prospecting on his own. The setting for his cabin was scenic, but because it was located near the face of McCarty Glacier,[61] tides and drift ice often made access impossible. The lack of access may have had tragic consequences; Evans shot himself in May 1941, apparently from depression brought on by complications after a fairly minor injury.[62] The cabin was never occupied again.[63]

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[59] Sather, "Our Glorious World," 38-39; Sather, "The Island," 43. One of the two buildings was doubtless located in Mike's Bay. Dave McMahan and Charles Holmes, on page 16 of their 1987 Nuka Island report, stated that Mike's Bay was the location of the first (30' x 36') building.

[60] Bart Stanton, interview by Linda Cook, July 13, 1992; John Paulsteiner, *Seward, Alaska; the Sinful Town on Resurrection Bay* (n.p., the author, 1975), 18; Donald H. Richter, "Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits of the Nuka Bay Area, Kenai Peninsula, Alaska," *USGS Professional Paper 625-B* (1970), B3.

[61] Since the 1930s, McCarty Glacier has receded more than 15 miles (see Chapter 1).

[62] Longtime resident John Paulsteiner, author of *Seward, Alaska; the Sinful Town on Resurrection Bay* (page 32) disagrees with this account; he noted that Evans "shot himself

Pete and Josephine Sather on board their gas boat, the *Rolfh III*. *Alaska Sportsman*, September 1946, 19.

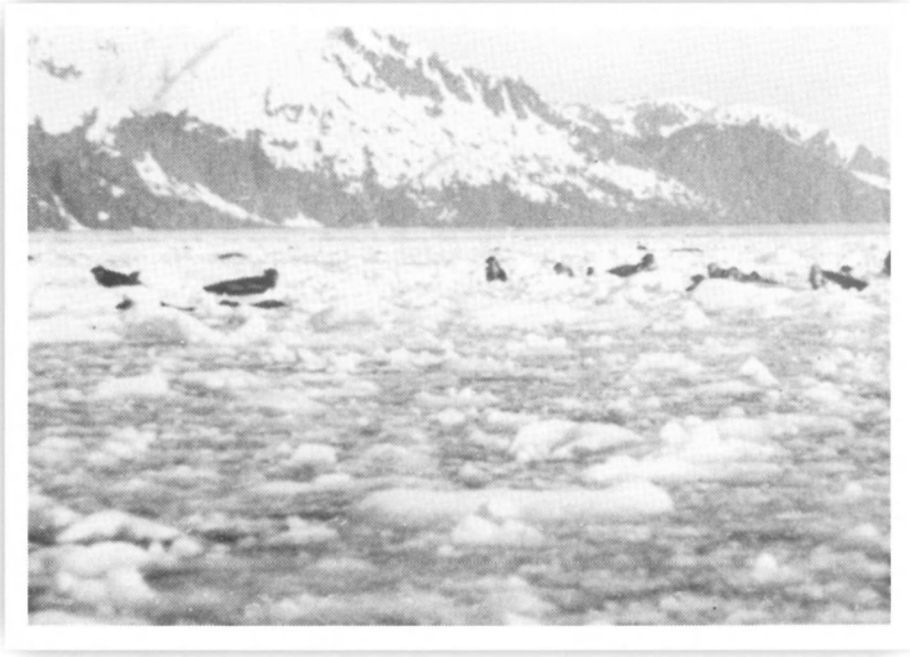
The Sathers, and a young friend, as they appeared in the late 1930s. Hans Hanson photo, from *Alaska Magazine*, July 1974, 29.

The Sather family homestead, as it looked in 1938. *Alaska Sportsman*, October 1946, 21.

Photo of the Sather homestead, c. 1985. McMahan and Holmes, *Report*, January 1987, 36.

During the 1920s and 1930s, hundreds of offshore islands, along with some mainland sites, housed fox farms. *Alaska Magazine*, July 1946, 9.

"Herring Pete" and Josephine Sather built several dozen feed houses on Nuka Island. Several of these structures may still stand. M. Woodbridge Williams photo, NPS/ Alaska Area Office print file.



Hunters found harbor seals to be easy targets; if hit in the wrong place, however, the seals sank from sight. *Alaska Sportsman*, August 1956, 19.

Longtime Seward seal hunter Pete Kesselring at his Aialik Bay seal-hunting camp, 1955. The camp was set up in early May, just above the high tide line. *Alaska Sportsman*, August 1956, 18.

Pete Kesselring processing a newly-killed harbor seal. *Alaska Sportsman*, August 1956, 21.

In order to feed their foxes, the Sathers and other fur farmers sometimes relied on bounty hunters to provide them with seal carcasses. *Alaska Sportsman*, September 1946, 19.

Bill Younker hunted for harbor seals during the 1950s. In July 1957, he filed for the Aialik Bay homestead that was later awarded to William F. Hart, Jr. *Alaska Sportsman*, August 1956, 21.

Steller sea lions were occasionally harvested along the Kenai coast because of their purported salmon-based diet. M. Woodbridge Williams/NPS photo, *in Alaska Regional Profiles, Southcentral Region*, July 1974, 154.

After the war, others came to the southern coastline hoping to settle. Most of those who arrived prior to 1960 stuck it out long enough to overcome the obstacles to land ownership. Those who came afterward, however, remained for only a short time and were largely unsuccessful in their pursuit; they were driven out by the weather, by poor economic opportunities, or by prior, conflicting land claims.

The first person during the postwar period to announce an intention to settle within the boundaries of the present park was Alma Dodge, a mixed-blood Aleut. Dodge and her husband Jack lived in Seward during the 1950s; beginning in 1956, they apparently began to visit Harris Peninsula, and showed a particular interest in a stretch of coastline just west of Verdant Island. According to a friend, the couple "sought the use of this land for the abundance of wild berries and game animals, including both seal and otter for food and pelts and for the fish available in adjacent waters." Another friend noted that the Dodges "used bear, goat, seal, clams, fish and berries they brought from [the peninsula]. They also trapped otter and wolverine."[64]

Before long the couple moved to Palmer, and in late August 1968, Ms. Dodge filed for two parcels on the peninsula—one of 80 acres and another, of 40 acres, two miles to the south—in accordance with the Native Allotment Act of 1906. (The parcels contained some land that sloped gently to the shoreline, but the coastline between the two parcels was steep and uninhabitable.) She claimed, at the time, that she had just begun using the parcels (a claim that was later revised) and that she used the parcels "for subsistence purposes in the traditional Native manner." The couple built a 24-foot Quonset hut that summer on the 40-acre parcel; a cache, tent, fire pit, boat rack, fuel cache and other improvements were also constructed at the site.

The couple continued to visit the site on a regular basis until 1969, then again in 1972 and 1973, but did not return after then due to illness. They moved to Bremerton, Washington and later to Silverdale, Washington

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at Nuka Bay. He had incurable cancer."

[63] Sather, "Our Glorious World," pp. 20, 40. The exact location of Evans' cabin is uncertain. Based on the photograph on page 20, it was most likely on the northern side of McCarty Lagoon, where remains of a largely-disintegrated cabin have been located. Less likely, it was at the north end of James Lagoon. A 1953 USGS map, which was based on a 1951 aerial photograph, identified a cabin at this location. Nothing, however, remains of the James Lagoon cabin, which may have been a casualty of the 1964 earthquake and tidal wave.

[64] Betty J. Bradford to BLM, April 2, 1983; John C. and Martha Eads to BLM, April 29, 1983; both in Casefile AA 3236, BLM Alaska State Office, Anchorage.

where, during the early 1980s, they conducted a spirited correspondence with BLM officials about the adequacy of their claim. BLM personnel, upon visiting the site, claimed that there was no evidence that the Dodges were entitled to ownership of the northern parcel. A 1985 survey, however, resulted in the agency reversing its decision, and in May 1988 the BLM issued a Certificate of Allotment awarding the two parcels to the claimant. Ms. Dodge, however, had died of cancer in June 1983, so the property was transferred to her estate.[65]

Another person who showed an interest in land within the present park's boundaries was Seward resident Bernard W. (Bill) Younker. A longtime seal hunter in the fjords, Younker occupied a site in early July 1957 on the east side of Aialik Bay; the site was half a mile north of Coleman Bay, near Aialik Glacier's terminal moraine. By mid-July, he had constructed an 11' x 14' one room cabin, a tent frame, and a gas and oil locker. He decided then to apply for a five-acre headquarters site, hoping to use it as a base camp from which to guide hunting parties and hunt harbor seals, both on a commercial basis. In November 1959, Younker sold his improvements to William F. Hart, Jr. of Anchorage, who intended to hunt and trap in the area. The following summer, several people used the cabin; based on that and other qualifying information, a BLM official noted in February 1963 that "Mr. Hart has earned title to the subject land." A Native protest, made in January 1967, suspended further action on the land claim, but in March 1972, just three months after passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, Hart was awarded title to the 4.86-acre parcel.[66]

During the years that followed, the fjords attracted several settlers who, for one reason or another, did not remain in the area for long. In July of 1959, for example, Raymond W. Gregory of Spenard occupied a site at Bulldog Cove, just south of Bear Glacier on the west side of Resurrection Bay. A month later, Gregory applied for an 80-acre trade and manufacturing site and stated his intention of establishing a fishing lodge. But he made no improvements at the site, and his claim eventually expired. In March 1963, Ralph Grosvold, Jr. of Kodiak filed for a 135-acre Native allotment, also in Bulldog Cove. Two years earlier, however, the BLM had withdrawn 900 acres in that area for recreation and public purposes under the Act of June 14, 1926. The agency, therefore,

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[65] Casefile AA 3236, BLM Alaska State Office, Anchorage.

[66] Casefiles A 034821 and A 050530, BLM Alaska State Office. Seward Shea, in a March 7, 1997 interview, noted that the March 1964 earthquake "took out" the cabin that Younker had built. There are no standing permanent structures currently on the parcel.

immediately rejected his application and Grosvold made no further attempts to obtain land in the area.[67]

On January 6, 1967, the land ownership pattern of the present-day park was forever changed when the Native villages of English Bay and Port Graham laid claim to most of the southern Kenai Peninsula. Earlier, several Native entities east of the Kenai Peninsula—the Native village of Tatitlek, the Chugach Tribe, the Chugach Native Association and the Eyak Tribe—had filed a claim for millions of acres of land and water between Prince William Sound and Malaspina Glacier, and the January 6 action had the practical effect of extending that claim to the west. The Native leaders responsible for filing the huge claims made it clear that they had no intention of stopping all new developments within their claim area; village leaders in English Bay and Port Graham, in fact, noted that "We are not protesting against coal prospecting permits, small tracts and homesites." The Natives' primary concerns were the continued issuance of oil and gas leases.[68]

Despite the village leaders' conciliatory tone, the practical effect of the January 1967 Native land claim was to freeze action on existing claims until the Native lands question could be resolved. Their action also prevented the consideration of any new non-Native claims. Three people, in fact, stepped forward to claim land between January 1967 and the passage date of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (in December 1971). BLM officials thwarted each attempt. Daniel M. Pollachek of Seward, in July 1967, staked out a five-acre homesite on the south shore of Paradise Cove, at the southeastern end of Aialik Bay. That same month, Lyda A. Scott of Spenard filed for property near Hoof Point, at the east end of Ragged Island (part of the Pye Islands); she hoped to "raise animals [specifically rabbits] for fur and meat," operate a boat fuel stop, and make handicraft items. Finally, Theodore W. Jackson of Anchorage, in March 1968, hoped to establish a fishing and seal-hunting site on Granite Island. So far as is known, an array of survey stakes were the only known improvements on the three claims.[69]

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[67] Casefiles A 049836 and A 058875, BLM Alaska State Office. The R&PP withdrawal, made on July 28, 1961, was one of more than fifty the agency made that day. (Another withdrawal within the present-day park, of 80 acres, was made on the east side of Aialik Bay.) The BLM evidently hoped to lease or sell the two parcels for specific public purposes. But no further action took place at either site, and in January 1969 both withdrawals were terminated.

[68] Casefile AA 648, BLM Alaska State Office.

[69] Casefiles AA 1081, AA 2070, AA 2950, BLM Alaska State Office. No other private, individual land claims have been patented within the park except for the Dodge and Hart claims, as noted above. Just southwest of the park, between Petrof Lake and Nuka Passage, the State of Alaska held a land lottery in the fall of 1984. Sixty five-acre

Harbor Seal Harvesting Prior to 1960

The southern Kenai Peninsula coastline is generally rocky and precipitous with numerous deep-water fjords. These conditions are highly attractive to harbor seal populations, and seals are particularly drawn to areas near calving tidewater glaciers. Not surprisingly, therefore, there are "high densities" of harbor seals in Resurrection Bay, Aialik Bay, Holgate Arm, Harris Bay, the Twin Islands (near Aligo Point), McCarty Fjord, Moonlight Bay, Beauty Bay, and the west side of Nuka Island. Several hundred seals live in the vicinity of each of the area's tidewater glaciers, and a biologist in a 1976 survey counted 2,233 harbor seals in park waters. As noted in the paragraphs below, many of these areas have witnessed seal harvests over the years, but so far as is known, these harvests have had no appreciable effects on the long-term viability of harbor seal populations.[70]

During the early twentieth century, the seals in the present-day park were for the most part ignored. Natives from English Bay and Port Graham did not, as a rule, harvest seals as part of their subsistence lifestyle, and the few non-Native miners and fishermen who lived in and around the present park had little interest in them.

That situation changed in 1927, when the territorial legislature passed a bill creating a bounty for hair seals.[71] That situation grew out of a general attitude among Alaska residents, many of whom hunted or fished. Alaskans, along with Lower 48 residents at the time, drew a sharp distinction between "desirable" (edible or commercially valuable) and "undesirable" game and fish species, and few Alaskans had qualms about manipulating game or fish populations in order to increase the harvests of desirable species. As a result of those attitudes, the territorial legislature passed a law in 1915 creating a bounty on wolves, because of their effect on caribou populations. Two years later it instituted a bounty on bald

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homesites were offered for sale in the lottery, but during the next five years only three parties had constructed cabins, and only one family lived in the area on a full-time basis. Bruce Davies interview, January 29, 1997.

[70] Donald G. Calkins, Kenneth W. Pitcher and Karl Schneider, "Distribution and Abundance of Marine Mammals in the Gulf of Alaska," (Anchorage, ADF&G Div. of Game, July 31, 1975), p. 54 and maps HS-6 and HS-7; Edgar P. Bailey, "Breeding Seabird Distribution and Abundance Along the South Side of the Kenai Peninsula, Alaska," National Park Service/Fish and Wildlife Service, December 1976, at ARLIS.

[71] "Hair seal" is a generic term that includes the harbor or spotted seal (*Phoca vitulina*), ringed seal (*Pusa hispida*), bearded seal (*Erignathus barbatus*), and ribbon seal (*Histriphoca fascita*). Harbor seals are found along thousands of miles of coast from southeastern Alaska to Bristol Bay. Ringed and bearded seals are found primarily in northwestern Alaska, and ribbon seals are uncommon in Alaskan waters. "Seal Biology and Harvest Studies" for July-December 1963, p. 44, in "Game Harvest/Misc." binder, ADF&G Library.

eagles, because it was thought that salmon constituted a major portion of their diet. Other laws subject to bounty were coyotes (beginning in 1929), Dolly Varden trout (1933), and wolverines (1953).[72]

Agitation to pass a hair seal bounty apparently began in 1925, when a government study concluded that the diet of hair seals, which lived near the coast, was rich in salmon. (But fur seals, that inhabited deeper waters, were less prone to ingest them.) That study reinforced the attitudes of many Alaskans; one wildlife agent noted that "according to popular belief, there were anywhere up to a million sea lions and double that number of harbor seals in Alaskan waters, each one making catches of food greater than the average fisherman could produce."[73] Perhaps in response to the study, Alaska state senators John W. Dunn and Charles W. Brown (both on the Fisheries, Game and Agriculture Committee) introduced a measure on March 28, 1927 mandating a $2 bounty. On April 20, the bill unanimously passed the Senate. Soon afterward it sailed through the House, and on May 3, Governor George Parks approved the bill and it immediately went into effect.[74] The bounty was applicable for all seals harvested "adjacent to the southern coast of Alaska and east of the 152nd meridian," which included southeastern Alaska and all of south central Alaska east of Cook Inlet. In order to obtain the bounty, hunters were asked to show the face of the seal skin, including both eye holes and both ears, to any U.S. Commissioner, postmaster, or notary public. They also had to fill out a certificate showing where, when and how the animals were killed.[75]

Alaskans responded to the law with a modest degree of enthusiasm. For the next twenty years, the number of seals harvested each year seldom exceeded ten thousand per year. Several reasons accounted for the limited amount of activity. First, both seal meat and seal hides had little value. Second, the bounty was insufficient to provide a living to anyone but the most dedicated hunters. Finally, seal hunting required both a rugged, sea-going boat and a skiff, articles that most residents did not possess. As a result, a federal official noted in 1946 that

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[72] Calvin J. Lensink, "Predator Control with the Bounty System," in Alaska Department of Fish and Game, *Annual Report for 1958* (Juneau, the author), 94.

[73] *Seward Gateway*, November 25, 1925, 6; June 4, 1927, 6; Frank W. Hynes (Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Juneau) to Clarence Cottam (Chief, Div. Of Wildlife Research, F&WS), March 6, 1946, in "Hair Seals, 1945 to -" file, Director's Correspondence, 1944-79, Box 19, RG 370, NARA ANC.

[74] Territory of Alaska, *Session Laws, Resolutions and Memorials*, 1927, 86-89; Alaska Territorial Legislature, *Senate Journal of Alaska*, 1927, 324.

[75] *Seward Gateway*, June 4, 1927, 6.

> There is no organized hunting of these sea mammals by bounty hunters; they are generally taken coincidentally with fishing operations or by Natives seeking their pelts for the manufacture of moccasins & parkas, both of which items are sold in considerable quantity to tourists.

He further noted that the number of pelts harvested was negatively related to the health of the economy; that is, when the economy was poor the annual pelt harvest tended to rise, and vice-versa.[76]

The Alaska legislature was not particularly concerned, in its bounty bill, with seal predations on the Kenai Peninsula; most of the commercial fishing took place along the peninsula's western coastline, while the only significant seal populations lived along the southern coast. Even so, peninsula residents were quick to take advantage of the new law. Several Port Graham and English Bay Natives found new sources of wintertime cash by collecting seal bounties. In Seldovia, seal hunting was also active. Graduate student Richard Bishop concluded that the activity was "kind of universal along the coast." There were "a number" of coastal seal hunters, who together comprised "a steady, small-scale industry." It is not known, however, if residents of English Bay, Port Graham, or Seldovia ever hunted seals within the present park boundaries.[77]

Non-natives living in Seward also responded to the law and began hunting seals in the various bays and fjords southwest of town. According to Richard Bishop, who spoke to several seal hunters during the early 1960s as part of a graduate research project, the activity was "a long standing practice" both in Aialik Bay and in the East Arm of Nuka Bay.[78]

Perhaps the most avid local seal hunter was Pete Kesselring. Although he earned money as a game guide and also hunted and trapped for food, seal hunting was an important part of Kesselring's income for a number of years. When he began hunting is uncertain, perhaps as early as the mid-1930s, but by the mid-1940s he was making yearly expeditions to the various bays and fjords south of town; favorite locations were Aialik and Harris bays.[79]

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[76] Frank W. Hynes (RD, F&WS, Juneau) to Victor Wheeler, Bremerton, Wash., March 6, 1946, in "Hair Seals, 1945 to -" file, Director's Correspondence, 1944-79, Box 19, RG 370, NARA ANC.

[77] Stanek, *Patterns of Wild Resource Use*, 1985, 55; Richard H. Bishop interview, March 25, 1997.

[78] Richard Bishop interview, March 25, 1997.

[79] Al Burch interview, April 2, 1997; Bill Younker, "The Scalp Hunters," *Alaska Sportsman* 22 (August 1956), 18-19; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 272; Casefile A 050530, BLM Alaska State Office; Seward Shea interview, March 7, 1997; Richard Bishop

Another seal hunter was Bernard W. (Bill) Younker, who arrived in Seward in the early 1940s and began hunting seals soon afterward. Younker, who was also a big game guide, hunted seals each year; as he noted in an *Alaska Sportsman* article, he typically left Seward in early May and returned in mid-July, when the seals began migrating away from the fjords. A 1955 hunt with Pete Kesselring, to Aialik Bay and Holgate Glacier, resulted in a harvest of almost 800 seals; they earned money from both the bounty and from the sale of seal livers (to markets in Seward) and hides. He noted that "we're bounty hunters, and although [the bounty] isn't going to make millionaires out of us, along with a few 'bucks' for livers and hides we manage to keep beans in the pot, and we have a lot of fun doing it."[80]

Other local residents who commonly hunted seals prior to 1960 were Pete Sather, the Nuka Island fox farmer, who (as noted above) often harvested seals for fox food, and Bob Evans, the homesteader who occupied the cabin on the east side of McCarty Fjord during the 1930s and early 1940s. William F. Hart, who homesteaded the site just north of Coleman Bay (near Aialik Glacier) in 1959, hoped to use the site to hunt seals; there is, however, no evidence that he ever did so.[81] Longtime resident Seward Shea noted that Harold Cedar, Cecil Torgramson, Hank George and Ralph Grosvold—the latter a Kodiak resident—also hunted seals during this period. Shea also felt that "perhaps 10 to 20" others (beyond the four just mentioned) hunted seals, although some of that number hunted in areas southeast of town, such as Bainbridge Passage.[82]

Some locals, with the help of Pete Sather, engaged in wintertime seal hunting. As Josephine Sather explained in 1946,

> In the winter, when work was scarce, some men would go seal hunting for the bounty.... To hunt seals you need a power boat to get to their grounds, and a skiff. Since few bounty hunters had either, [Pete] would take them and their camping outfits to some glacier on salt water; let them use one of our skiffs; and carry their mail and supplies to them. In return, they would give us the seals after they had been scalped. We often obtained as many as two hundred seals in a season. In

interview, March 25, 1997.

[80] Younker, "The Scalp Hunters," 18-20.

[81] Sather, "The Birds and the Bears," 18; Sather, "Our Glorious World," 40; Casefile A 050530, BLM Alaska State Office.

[82] Seward Shea interview, March 7, 1997.

> the winter the seals are extremely fat, the largest of them having as much fat on their bodies as a good, fat hog.[83]

Alaska's legislature, as time went on, evidently felt that the bounty was an increasingly effective seal management tool. In order to increase the harvest, it increased the bounty in 1939 from $2 to $3; ten years later, it was briefly raised to $6 before being reduced again to $3 in 1951. The legislature also toyed with the area in which seals were bountied. In 1949, for example, the boundaries were extended to cover the entire territory; in 1951, it was reduced to include the former (1927) boundaries, plus Bristol Bay, Norton Sound and Kotzebue Sound; and in 1962, the boundaries were once again extended to cover all of Alaska's coastline. Throughout this period, the bounty remained in effect for seals harvested off the Kenai Peninsula.[84]

The legislature was bullish on the bounty program, both in response to citizen concerns and because its members felt that salmon constituted an important part of the harbor seals' diet. Those assumptions, however, began to slowly unravel during the 1940s and 1950s. Of the six species for which the legislature offered bounties, two species had their bounties eliminated during this period: the Dolly Varden in 1941 and the bald eagle in 1953.[85]

Meanwhile, a growing body of science was questioning the scientific assumptions behind the harbor seal bounty. Acting on a March 1944 complaint "about the seal herd at Cordova," the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service decided to study the feeding habits of both seals and sea lions in Alaskan waters. Frank W. Hynes, who headed the agency's Alaska office, had heard that "the Seward area and to the westward" had major sea lion depredation areas, so he contacted Roy L. Cole, the longtime skipper of the patrol boat *Teal* about the matter. Cole, in response, urged that the proposed study take place at the Seal Rocks, near Seward, inasmuch as the sea lions there were relatively easy to study. In the spring of 1945, therefore, Hynes dispatched Ralph W. Imler to the field. Imler, as suggested, visited the Seal Rocks and estimated that 400 to 500 sea lions inhabited them, but owing to rough seas, he was unable to work there without a large boat. Imler spent much of the summer on the study, which was conducted at the Copper River mouth, at the Chiswell Islands, and elsewhere. By the spring of 1946 the study was complete; its

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[83] Sather, "The Birds and the Bears," 18.

[84] Alaska Department of Fish and Game, *Annual Report for 1958* (Juneau, the author), 103.

[85] Calvin J. Lensink, "Predator Control with the Bounty System," in ADF&G, *Annual Report for 1958*, 95.

conclusions debunked the prevailing attitudes by showing that salmon were a minor part of the harbor seals' diet. Most of their diet consisted of "oolachon" [eulachon] and other species. According to one agency official, "it is not believed that the hair seal is a factor to be concerned about in the conservation of the salmon runs. No federal control measures are believed necessary."[86]

An agency official followed up Imler's study by observing harbor seal predations at the Stikine River mouth, near Wrangell. He concluded that the present bounty should be continued and that seals were "a costly nuisance" to several of the area's gill net fishermen. Losses here, as well as at the Taku and Copper River mouths, were estimated at "from 2 to 10 per cent of the fish caught [by commercial fishers] or even more."[87]

The Alaska Territorial Department of Fisheries, which was organized in the late 1940s, recognized that the bounty—even when set at $6 per seal, as it was in 1949 and 1950—was an ineffective way to control seal populations and thus reduce damage to the territory's fish runs. It therefore responded to area-specific complaints by instituting a small-scale program of seal control. In 1951, a summertime employee was stationed at the mouth of both the Stikine and Copper rivers, where rifles were used to dispatch harbor seals. The program was judged successful. The following year employees returned to those sites, and a third employee was stationed at the mouth of the Taku River. The program continued until 1958; at the end of that season, officials proudly noted that since its inception 36,163 harbor seals had been killed: 30,250 at the Copper River, 4,999 at the Stikine River, and 914 at the Taku River.[88]

Territorial officials never had any illusions that hired hunters would eliminate the "seal problem" in those areas. They were glad to note, however, that they had made a "large impact" on certain of those populations. By 1957, however, they readily admitted that the program might have been misdirected and that "seals eat more than just salmon." They agreed that the problem was complicated and that it needed further study.[89]

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[86] "Hair Seals, 1945 to -" file, Director's Correspondence, 1944-79, Box 19, RG 370, NOAA/ANC.

[87] Hosea R. Sarber to Ralph H. Imler, October 22, 1946, in "Hair Seals, 1945 to -" file, Director's Correspondence, 1944-79, Box 19, RG 370, NARA ANC; Lensink, "Predator Control with the Bounty System," 97.

[88] Calvin J. Lensink, "Predator Investigation and Control," in ADF&G, *Annual Report for 1958*, 92.

[89] Alaska Department of Fisheries, "Predator Control Report, Copper River Delta, 1953;" ADF&G, *Annual Report for 1957*, 53.

During the 1958 season, territorial biologists did indeed study the problem in greater depth. They found that while a number of seal that were harvested from the Copper, Taku, and Stikine River mouths had salmon in their stomachs, none of those caught elsewhere in the territory showed evidence of salmon ingestion. This conclusion cast a strong doubt on the value of a bounty as a territory-wide management tool. The agency further concluded that "the bounty system is not providing adequate protection from depredations by ... seals, and that planned programs [such as those at the three river mouths] can do the job with smaller expenditures." "In other areas," a report noted, "seals may actually be a benefit to the salmon fishery." The report made the somewhat startling conclusion that "hair seals also have value in themselves and should not be destroyed where it is unnecessary."[90] The implication was clear; the bounty system should be eliminated, and area-specific control methods were the only ones that worked. The year 1958, however, brought congressional passage of a statehood bill. Once statehood was attained, site-specific predator control at the three river mouths was abandoned and the $3 harbor seal bounty remained in place.

Harbor Seal Harvesting, 1960 to Present

During the early 1960s the harvesting of harbor seals, both along the Kenai Peninsula and elsewhere in Alaska, continued at a low level (less than 20,000 per year statewide), and the prices garnered for seal pelts likewise remained low ($10 or less per pelt).[91] Then, in the fall of 1962, the demand for seal pelts began to increase because of changes taking place thousands of miles to the east. During the 1950s and early 1960s, the commercial seal market—particularly the huge Scandinavian market—had depended on seals that were harvested in the North Atlantic and Arctic oceans. (Europeans, and to a lesser extent North Americans, used seal pelts for a variety of clothing and accessory items, including shoes, purses, coats, hats, and other items of over-clothing.) By 1962, however, overharvesting in the traditional hunting areas had reduced the available supply. European fur processors, which were located primarily in Norway and West Germany, began to look elsewhere for seal pelts.[92]

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[90] Lensink, "Predator Control," in ADF&G, *Annual Report for 1958*, 96-98.

[91] The value of furs during this period can be ascertained from a 1956 price list offered by Louis Steiner, who was the "largest raw hair seal buyer from the Seattle Fur Exchange and other sources...." For dry, stretched spotted hair seals, with fair to good coloration, Steiner paid $7 to $10 for large and extra large pelts, $4 to $6 for medium pelts, and $3 to $5 for small pelts. Steiner to Commissioner, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, April 19, 1963, in "Hair Seals, 1945 to -" file, Director's Correspondence, 1944-79, Box 19, RG 370, NARA ANC.

[92] "Seal Biology and Harvest Studies" for July-December 1963, p. 44, in "Game

Many fur buyers eyed the huge Alaskan fur resource. Between the fall of 1962 and March 1964, the value of both spotted [harbor] and ringed seal pelts more than doubled; in response, there was a "tremendous increase" in seal—mainly harbor seal—harvests beginning in 1963. (It had a "considerably less effect" on the take of bearded and ringed seals, which are a dietary mainstay of northwest coastal residents.) The value of seal pelts continued to rise until 1965. By the mid-1960s, black harbor seals (with large, black hides and definite spots) were worth $60, while young plain grays brought $15 to $20. The annual pelt harvest, which before 1962 had exceeded 20,000 only thrice—in 1907, 1949 and 1950—shot up to 30,000 in 1963, to 40,000 in 1964, and to 60,000 in 1965. After reaching that high point, prices decreased again, though not to former low levels, and the harvest declined as well.[93]

The "bubble" in fur prices brought increased harvesting activity to the southern Kenai Peninsula as well as to other parts of the state. In Aialik Bay, for example, 649 seals were harvested in 1964, and in Harris Bay, 946 were harvested in 1964 and 596 in 1965. In Nuka Bay, more than a thousand seals were taken per year during the mid-1960s; a total of 3,420 were taken between 1964 and 1966, inclusive. These numbers, though impressive, constituted only a small percentage of the estimated 145,000 harbor seals harvested in Alaska during the 1964-66 period. Most of the state's harvest took place in Prince William Sound, the Alaska Peninsula, the Aleutian Islands, and the Kodiak Island archipelago; the state's largest specific harvesting sites were at Tugidak Island (south of Kodiak Island), Port Moller (on the north side of the Alaska Peninsula), and Port Heiden (near Port Moller).[94]

Several of the Seward-area residents who had hunted seals in the area prior to 1960 continued to do so, but others (including Pete Kesselring and Pete Sather) did not. The increased prices, moreover, attracted new hunters. Two were the Burch brothers, Al and Oral, Seward fisherman who supplemented their income by hunting seals near Aialik and Holgate glaciers from October until February. Two brothers from Homer were also "real serious hunters." Pete Elvsaas of Seldovia hunted "all along the outer coast," and hunters also came to the area from Prince William

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Harvest/Misc." binder, ADF&G Library.

[93] Alan Courtright, "Game Harvests in AK" (Juneau, ADF&G, June 1968), p. 17, in "Harvest/Misc" binder, ADF&G Library.

[94] Donald G. Calkins, Kenneth W. Pitcher and Karl Schneider, "Distribution and Abundance of Marine Mammals in the Gulf of Alaska" (ADF&G Div. of Game, July 31, 1975), 55; *Alaska Sportsman*, June 1967, 40. The 649 seals taken at Aialik Bay in 1964 was actually a decrease from the "almost 800" seals that Pete Kesselring and Bill Younker (as noted above) had harvested there in 1955.

Sound. Other Seward seal hunters included Jesse Hatch and his brother Ralph, Roy and Lloyd Cabana, Martin Goreson, Ben Suddath, Irving Campbell, Fred Moore, Bill Johnston, Frank Woods, and Ed ("Beetle") Bailey.[95]

An estimated 300 Alaskans during this period derived some income from seal hunting. Bounty records for 1965 tabulated 168 hunters in south central Alaska, and according to researcher Richard Bishop, perhaps 20 to 25 people each year hunted southern Kenai Peninsula seals during the mid-1960s, when prices were at their peak. Some Seward-area hunters apparently took seals just for the bounty; most, however, sold the hides as well.[96] They sold them either to itinerant buyers who traveled through Alaska or to fur buyers in Seattle. A third outlet was Victor ("Vaughn") Reventlow, the manager and director of the Alaska Tanning and Dressing Division of the Pacific Seal Corporation. By 1966, the firm was said to handle "the lion's share of hair seal coming out of Alaska." Reventlow, a West German living in Anchorage, often drove to Seward and spent a day grading the pelts before buying them.[97]

With the rise in pelt prices, the bounty became less important as an incentive to hunt seals than it had in former years. Alaska legislators, who had not acted when confronted with the program's inefficiency and misdirected expense, moved to cut back on the bounty program when shown that the $3 bounty was far less than the value of the seal pelts. (The legislators made no attempt to eliminate the bounty statewide, because they recognized that in western and northwestern Alaska, the seals were a major food source and that the bounty was "more of a welfare measure than an attempt at controlling seal populations").[98] Bills intended to eliminate the bounty had first been introduced in 1964; HB 381 that year had been sponsored by the House Finance Committee, while SB 244 was sponsored by Sen. Harold Z. Hansen, a fisherman who chaired the Resources Committee. On March 10, HB 381 passed the House, but the following day Robert Blodgett, a Teller Democrat, changed

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[95] Al Burch interview, April 2, 1997; Richard Bishop interview, March 25, 1997; David Spencer interview, April 3, 1997; Tom Schroeder interview, April 18, 1997; M. Woodbridge Williams, "Kenai Fjords: Treasure Unveiled," *National Parks and Conservation Magazine* 51 (September, 1977), 5.

[96] Al Burch interview, April 2, 1997; Richard Bishop interview, March 25, 1997; *Alaska Sportsman*, June 1967, 40; Edward Klinkhart, "Hair Seals," 1966, 20, in "Marine Mammals" binder, ADF&G Library.

[97] Richard Bishop interview, March 25, 1997; Al Burch interview; R. L. Polk & Co., *Polk's Greater Anchorage Area City Directory*, 1967 (Kansas City, Mo., the author, 1968), 14, 493; *Alaska Sportsman*, June 1967, 40.

[98] John Vania, "Seals, Friend or Foe?" *Alaska Fish Tales and Game Trails* #22 (January-February 1971), 13-14.

his vote and the House voted down the bill on a reconsideration vote. The Senate bill did slightly better; it passed the Senate on March 17, then was referred to the House Finance Committee. That bill quietly died because Harold Strandberg, an Anchorage Republican and the committee's chair, failed to act on it.[99]

Three years later, after Walter Hickel became governor, the Rules Committee of the Alaska Senate, at Hickel's request, submitted SB 131, a bill that, like the 1964 effort, would eliminate the hair seal bounty. The 1967 bill was introduced on February 21. On March 24, it failed to pass the Senate, but a day later, Sen. Brad Phillips changed his vote and the bill passed. Nine days later, it passed the house with 13 dissenting votes, and Governor Hickel signed the bill on April 6. The bill, which immediately became law, eliminated the bounty for all seals harvested in the waters of Kenai Peninsula and many other parts of Alaska.[100]

The repealing of the bounty slightly reduced the financial incentive for Kenai Peninsula seal hunters. A more important factor in reducing seal harvests was a drop in the price of seal skins. Because of the publicity surrounding the clubbing of seals by Canadian harvesters, Europeans organized a boycott on products made of seal skins. By 1966, therefore, seal skins were worth anywhere from $4 to $30, their value averaging about $13. In later years, the value of seal skins continued to slide, and by 1972 there were "depressed prices in the hair seal market."[101]

If the dual blow of the bounty removal and the slide in prices were not bad enough, seal hunters after 1965 recognized, for perhaps the first time ever, clear signs of seal overharvesting. Hunters found fewer seals and in less accessible locations, and because most had simple equipment, it took more work to locate them. Not surprisingly, therefore, the number of seals harvested from southcentral and southeastern Alaska waters dropped from more than 50,000 in 1965, to 27,000 in 1966, and to between

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[99] Legislative Reporting Service, *Report* (1964), 122, 198, 218, 232, 238.

[100] Legislative Reporting Service, *Fifth Alaska State Legislature, First Session (1967) Digest* (Juneau, the author, 1967), 42-43; *Alaska Sportsman*, June 1967, 40. The specific area in which bounties were retained included inland and coastal waters west of 159° W. or north of 69° N., but not south of 58° N. The only area retaining the bounty, therefore, was the western and northern Alaska coastline, all the way from Cape Constantine (on the northern side of Bristol Bay) north and east to the Alaska-Yukon border on the Beaufort Sea.

[101] *Alaska Sportsman*, June 1967, 40; *Alaska Magazine*, July 1972, 35; ADF&G, "Annual Report of Survey & Inventory Activities, Part II: Caribou, Brown Bear, Sheep, Furbearers, Marine Mammals, Bison, Goat, Wolf & Black Bear," editions of June 1970, p. 75 (for 1969 harvest); 1971, p. 107 (for 1970); 1973, p. 128 (for 1971); and 1974, p. 257 (for 1972 harvest).

15,000 and 20,000 in 1968. By 1969, harvests had leveled off; for the next four years, hunters harvested between 6,000 and 12,000 skins annually. Given the falling harvest levels, the number of hunters fell as well; in just a single year, the number of southcentral area hunters dropped from 168 (in 1965) to 90 (in 1966). Within the present park boundaries, hunters continued to utilize the seal resource. Neither the number of hunters nor the size of the harvest during this period is known, although the level of activity was doubtless less than it had been during the mid-1960s.[102]

A far more dramatic action affecting the seal harvest, both on the Kenai Peninsula and elsewhere in Alaska, was the passage of the Marine Mammal Protection Act. This act, which was signed by President Nixon on October 21, 1972 and went into effect two months later, nullified all state laws relating to the taking of all marine mammals (including seals) and placed the authority for regulating the take of seals under the U.S. Secretary of Commerce. The law prevented non-Natives from taking seals. Section 101(b) of the act allowed Alaska Natives to do so without limit, so long as such taking was either for subsistence or handicrafts purpose and was not done in a wasteful manner.[103]

So far as is known, most Alaska seal hunting ceased after the passage of this act. In 1971, the statewide harvest had exceeded 25,000 seals, but in 1973, the harvest "probably did not exceed 1,000 animals." Within the present park boundaries, a 1975 Interior Department planning document noted that "Hair seal ... are hunted in the Chiswell Islands" and that "Some seal hunting may be done for the sale of furs." This statement, if accurate (it may have been based on data collected prior to the passage of the Marine Mammal Protection Act), was based on Native activity from residents of either Seward, Port Graham, or English Bay.[104] As to more recent activity, harvests appear to have been minimal. When Seward's 410 Native residents were interviewed in 1991, 20.5% of Native households reported using harbor seals, although only 2.6% of the Native households harvested them. A year later, the percentages were far lower;

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[102] Edward Klinkhart, "Hair Seals," 1966, 20; Klinkhart, "Harbor Seals," 1967, abstract page; Klinkhart, "Harbor Seals," 1968, 9; in "Marine Mammals" binder, ADF&G Library; Carl Divinyi, "Harbor Seal Survey," *Alaska Fish Tales and Game Trails* #26 (September-October 1971), 17.

[103] ADF&G, "Annual Report of Survey & Inventory Activities, Part II: Caribou, Brown Bear, Sheep, Furbearers, Marine Mammals, Bison, Goat, Wolf and Black Bear," 1974, 257; "Hair Seals, 1945 to -" file, in Director's Correspondence, 1944-79, Box 19, RG 370, NARA ANC.

[104] Alaska Planning Group, *Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Monument, Alaska, Final Environmental Statement*, 1975, 88; ADF&G, "Annual Report of Survey & Inventory Activities," 1975, 41.

only 0.8% of Seward Native households used harbor seals, and no households (0.0%) harvested them.[105]

Sea Lion Harvesting

Rookeries of Steller's sea lions (*Eumetopias jubata*) inhabit several areas in and near the present park. Their primary habitat is the most exposed islands, and the area's two largest rookeries are the Chiswell Islands, at the southwestern entrance to Resurrection Bay, and the Barren Islands, near the southwestern tip of the Kenai Peninsula.

Sea lions, along with fur seals, elephant seals, and sea otters, were subjected to an enormous amount of commercial hunting pressure during the 19th century, and by 1905 a government fisheries expert noted that sea lions were "almost extinct." The Alaska Game Law of 1908, however, prohibited their "wanton destruction" and decreed that no one could legally kill more than one sea lion per year.[106] The new law brought hardship to certain Alaska Natives (such as those at Akutan), who were deprived of "their only trade and occupation." The law was also looked upon with disfavor in Seward, which was beginning to acquire a fishing industry. Residents there fought the law because it protected sea lions which, as noted in a previous section, were popularly believed to be both numerous and possessed of gargantuan, salmon-based appetites. By 1916, Seward's Chamber of Commerce had a Sea Lion Committee that sent a letter to both Alaska Delegate James Wickersham and Secretary of Agriculture David F. Houston. In that letter, it "was set forth that the seals [sic] at the entrance of Resurrection Bay were a menace to the fishing industry and asking that the game laws be amended to the extent that these animals could be destroyed or dispersed."[107]

Despite the Federal government's prohibitions, local residents harvested sea lions from time to time. Shortly after Pete Sather began living on Nuka Island, he started feeding sea lions (as well as seals) to his foxes. In

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[105] Robert J. Wolfe and Craig Mishler, "The Subsistence Harvest of Harbor Sea and Sea Lion by Alaska Natives in 1993," Technical Paper #233, Part I (Juneau, ADF&G Division of Subsistence, July 1994), 22; Wolfe and Mishler, "The Subsistence Harvest ... in 1992," 94-95.

[106] Alaska Game Law, May 11, 1908, in *U.S. Statutes at Large*, Vol. 35, pp. 102-03.

[107] Briton Cooper Bush, *The War Against the Seals; a History of the North American Seal Fishery* (Kingston, Ont., McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985), 204; John N. Cobb, *The Commercial Fisheries of Alaska in 1905*, Bureau of Fisheries Document 603 (Washington, GPO), 34; E. Lester Jones, Bureau of Fisheries, *Report of Alaska Investigations in 1914* (Washington, GPO, 1915), 114; Seward Chamber of Commerce, Meeting Minutes, February 16, 1916, in Brown and Hawkins Collection, UAF.

regards to the sea lions' feeding habits, the opinions of his wife, Josephine, were fairly typical of Alaska fishers;

> On his frequent trips to Seward in the spring, Pete often brings home a sea lion.... And what a lot of fish they do eat! We have found as much as seven salmon in the stomach of one sea lion.... In spite of their large numbers and their proximity to us, sea lions are hard to get. They sink if shot in the water [and] the jagged cliffs ... make landing [them] in a skiff exceedingly hazardous.... Sea-lion killing is against the law, except when they interfere with commercial fishing. We can hardly understand why.... Halibut fishermen often have to leave good fishing grounds because they cannot get a whole fish to their boats.[108]

During World War II, the area's sea lions faced a new danger: bored soldiers. Military men, as noted in Chapter 8, were stationed on Outer Island, Rugged Island, at Caines Head, and elsewhere in the immediate area. As Josephine Sather explained it,

> During the war, the service men stationed in Alaska found that sea lions made excellent practice targets. All they had to do was bring the boat up close to a rookery, then make believe they were fighting Japs. Since the fellows had plenty of ammunition at their disposal, hundreds of sea lions became feed for the fishes. Hundreds of others drifted up onto the beaches, where they made feed for birds, coyotes, and bears.

In retrospect, Alaska residents had the same attitude toward sea lions as it had toward harbor seals—that they were a costly nuisance because they were believed to eat salmon. Based on those attitudes, Congress passed the Act of June 16, 1934 that relaxed most former prohibitions on sea lion harvests, and in 1949 the Interior Secretary allowed them to be killed anywhere in Alaska except on Bogoslof Island, near Unalaska.[109] If the 1908 prohibition on excessive sea lion hunting had not been imposed, Alaska legislators may well have placed a bounty on sea lions as well as harbor seals. Given that prohibition, no such bounty was ever enacted.

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[108] Sather, "The Birds and the Bears," 18-19, 24.

[109] U.S. Senate, *Compilation of Federal Laws Relating to the Conservation and Development of Our Nation's Fish and Wildlife Resources*, 89th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, GPO, 1965), 196; Arthur D. Little, Inc., *Feasibility of a Commercial Sea Lion Operation in Alaska*, Bureau of Indian Affairs study (n.p., the author, May 1964), 18; *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, April 2, 1934, 1.

When Alaska became a state, it became free to regulate the take of sea lions and other marine mammals, and the federally-mandated stricture against hunting them no longer applied. They were free to impose a bounty, too; the era of new bounties, however, was long past. State officials allowed sea lion hunting throughout the state; the taking of sea lions for commercial purposes, however, was permitted only under the terms of a permit issued by the Commissioner of Fish and Game. That permit specified which areas would be open to sea lion harvesting. The Barren Islands, southwest of the Kenai Peninsula coastline, were included as a commercial harvesting area.[110]

Under that system, a recorded total of 45,808 sea lion pups were harvested from Alaskan rookeries from 1959 through 1972. The same trend which created an increased harbor seal take carried over to sea lions as well; sea lion pups were harvested for their pelts, and there was an experimental harvest of adults for meat. (Commercial interests hoped to sell meat and liver as pet food or to fur farms, and Japanese interests hoped to find protein for human consumption. High costs, however, precluded further development of the resource.) Hunting locations were highly localized; 31,070 of those sea lions—more than two-thirds of the total—came from either Marmot Island, near Afognak Island, or from Sugarloaf Island, in the Barren Islands. Much of the remainder came from either Akutan or Ugamak islands, both of which are located just east of Unalaska in the Aleutian Islands.[111]

Along the Kenai Peninsula coast, a commercial take has never been allowed within the park boundaries; outside the park, as noted above, commercial permits have been issued for the Barren Islands, but not for the Chiswell Islands. Quite a few local residents attempted to harvest sea lions in park waters, particularly during the mid-1960s when pelt prices were high; they all quickly learned, however, that the proposition was uneconomical and they abandoned the practice.[112]

The harvest of sea lions, like that of hair seals, was drastically reduced when the Marine Mammals Protection Act was passed in late 1972. Since then, few if any sea lions have been harvested in park waters. The only group legally allowed to harvest them has been Alaska Natives. Local

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[110] Alaska Department of Fish and Game, *Commercial Fishing Regulations Summary*, 1961 through 1964 editions.

[111] Chris Wooley, *Final Report of the Exxon Cultural Resource Program* (draft), unpub. mss., c. 1992, 104; Alan Courtright, "Game Harvests in Alaska" (Juneau, ADF&G, June 1968), 17-18; ADF&G, "Annual Report of Survey and Inventory Activities, Part II," reports for 1970, p. 76; 1971, pp. 103-04; 1973, pp. 130-31; and 1974, pp. 259-60.

[112] Jim Rearden interview, February 25, 1997; Al Burch interview, April 2, 1997.

Native groups, however, avoid them; a series of three annually-administered subsistence harvest surveys, conducted during the early 1990s, revealed that Seward's Native population neither harvested nor consumed sea lion.[113]

[113] Robert J. Wolfe and Craig Mishler, "The Subsistence Harvest of Harbor Sea and Sea Lion by Alaska Natives in 1993," Technical Paper #233, Part I (Juneau, ADF&G Division of Subsistence, July 1994), 34; Wolfe and Mishler, "The Subsistence Harvest ... in 1992," 94-95; Interview with Kathy Crossit (ADF&G, Fairbanks), March 25, 1997.

Illustration by Rockwell Kent from *Wilderness, A Journal of Quiet Adventure in Alaska*, 1920. The Rockwell Kent Legacies.

Map 7-1 **Historic Sites-Gold Mining**

Chapter 7. The Lure of Gold

Most of the Kenai Peninsula exhibits little evidence of mineralization, and mines on the peninsula, while numerous, have contributed only a minor portion of the state's mineral output. Few economically viable mines have been established on the eastern or western part of the peninsula. Extending in a generally north-south direction across the peninsula's central portion, however, is a belt of country rock consisting of alternating beds of slate and graywacke. Igneous dikes that are currently referred to as greenstones have locally intruded that rock mass. The dikes occupy fractures of irregular form and moderate extent; free gold is the primary mineral with economic importance, though sulfides are by no means uncommon. (The dikes also contain minor quantities of silver, copper, lead, and zinc.) Those dikes are found in an irregular belt that extended from the Hope and Sunrise areas south to Kenai Lake, while others are found along the North and West arms of Nuka Bay. Other mineralized areas on the peninsula are found on both the eastern and western slopes fronting on Resurrection Bay, along the Resurrection River, and additional sites scattered across the peninsula.[1]

Early Kenai Peninsula Exploration

As noted in Chapter 3, the first known mine on Kenai Peninsula was started at the behest of Peter Doroshin, a Russian mining engineer who visited the American colonies in search of potential mineral resources. In addition to the Port Graham coal deposits (which were mined during the 1850s and 1860s), Doroshin also found minor gold deposits along both the Kenai and Russian rivers. Little additional prospecting took place until the early 1880s, when Joseph M. Cooper sought gold near present-day Cooper Landing. In 1889, coal was extracted near present-day Homer, and the following year gold was obtained near Anchor Point. Both endeavors were commercially unsuccessful.[2]

More promising gold deposits were found along the peninsula's northern shore. A man named King discovered gold near present-day Hope about 1888, and shortly afterward, Charles Miller staked a gold claim on

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[1] Philip S. Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1932,* USGS Bulletin 857 (Washington, GPO, 1934), 20; Philip S. Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1936,* Bulletin 897 (Washington, GPO, 1938), 26: J. G. Shepard, "The Nuka Bay Mining District, Kenai Precinct," U.S. Bureau of Mines report MR 104-1 (September, 1925), 1, at ARLIS.

[2] Barry, *Seward History, I,* 20-21; G. C. Martin, B. L. Johnson, and U. S. Grant, *Geology and Mineral Resources of Kenai Peninsula, Alaska,* USGS Bulletin 587 (Washington, GPO, 1915), 15.

Resurrection Creek. The area remained fairly quiet, however, until 1893 when the creek witnessed new discoveries. Increasing numbers of miners arrived in 1894, and a remarkable find in July 1895 by John Renner and Robert Michaelson brought a major rush—perhaps 3,000 men and women—to the shores of Turnagain Arm the following year. Scores if not hundreds of claims were made in the Sixmile and Canyon creek drainages as well as within the Resurrection Creek drainage system. The towns of Hope and Sunrise boomed for the remainder of the decade, both diminishing in importance in later years. By 1911, Sunrise was practically deserted and by the 1930s most of the buildings had vanished.[3] Hope lost most of its population, too, but unlike Sunrise, Hope never "ghosted."

By the early twentieth century, prospectors had begun locating minerals in the southern peninsula as well. This may have been a result of the Hope-Sunrise excitement; the commencement of a large copper mine on nearby Latouche Island may have played a role; and the establishment of Seward in 1903 doubtless encouraged local mineral prospecting. Regardless of the reason, two claims had been staked in the Seward area by October 1904; both were located in Sunny Bay (present-day Humpy Cove) on the east side of Resurrection Bay. During the next several years, copper was found at a number of Resurrection Peninsula sites, and a minor (if well-publicized) copper rush ensued. Although the early reports on the copper claims appeared promising, no development occurred to compare with the copper mines of Latouche Island, and copper miners turned their interest elsewhere. Gold was also found in the area, most notably the Gateway Group along Tonsina Creek, but little if any production took place. By 1910, all development work for both copper and gold had ceased.[4]

Prospecting also took place during this period at the Kenai Peninsula's southwestern tip. A 1909 report noted that gold and other prospects had been located (probably since 1905) both at the west end of Windy Bay and near Port Dick. Ore quantities, however, were insufficient to justify production.[5]

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[3] Mary Barry, *A History of Mining on the Kenai Peninsula* (Anchorage, Alaska Northwest, 1973), 124, 134.

[4] Barry, *Seward History, I,* 22-23, 31; U. S. Grant, "The Southeastern Coast of Kenai Peninsula," in USGS Bulletin 587 (1915), 229; U. S. Grant and D. F. Higgins, Jr., *Reconnaissance of the Geology and Mineral Resources of Prince William Sound, Alaska,* USGS Bulletin 443 (Washington, GPO, 1910), map after p. 10.

[5] Grant, "The Southeastern Coast of Kenai Peninsula," in USGS Bulletin 587 (1915), 228, 230-31.

Of particular interest to both prospectors and government geologists were the chromite (chromic iron) deposits west of Port Dick. Two deposits were known: one at Chrome Bay, near the mouth of Port Chatham, the other on the north side of Red Mountain, southeast of Seldovia. These deposits were known prior to 1910, but the Port Chatham deposit became of commercial interest only in 1917, when the price of ore rose because of wartime needs.[6] Whitney and Lass produced about a thousand tons of ore both that year and in 1918. By 1919, a "considerable plant investment" had been made, resulting in the production of "chrome of good quality." The company, however, mined no ore that year due to a return to prewar price levels. The plant soon closed and did not reopen.[7] At Red Mountain, commercial development did not take place until World War II. The mine operated from 1942 to 1944, and again from 1954 to 1957.[8]

Nuka Bay Gold Mining: A Chronology

Government geologist U. S. Grant noted, after traveling through the area in 1909, that the outer coast was "entirely uninhabited." Prospectors, however, had previously visited the area. As noted in Chapter 5, George Stinson may have been one of the present-day park's first prospectors, in 1896. A group of miners were heading up the coast to the Hope-Sunrise diggings that year when a storm forced them to retreat to Nuka Bay. Stinson was intrigued by "rich-looking float" he found on the beach. The find, however, did not deter him from continuing on to Turnagain Arm, and the incident was soon forgotten.[9] Several years later, other prospectors (as noted above) located claims at Windy Bay and Port Dick and doubtless searched in many other locations.

Grant's report noted that prospecting parties had made gold claims in two general areas within the present park. One area was Two Arm Bay. It stated that on the mountain at the head of Taroka Arm, John Kusturin and Gus Johansen had staked nine claims on three quartz veins.[10] Development work had been limited to "some small stripping" of the veins. Grant also wrote that the east side of nearby Paguna Arm had "a few

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[6] *Ibid.*, 228; *Seward Gateway*, October 27, 1919, 3.

[7] *Annual Report of the Governor of Alaska* for 1917 (p. 38) and 1919 (p. 16); G. C. Martin, "The Alaska Mining Industry in 1918," in G. C. Martin and others, *Mineral Resources in Alaska, 1918,* USGS Bulletin 712 (Washington, GPO, 1920), 34.

[8] Barry, *A History of Mining on the Kenai Peninsula,* 179-80; Philip W. Guild, "Chromite Deposits of Kenai Peninsula, Alaska," USGS Bulletin 931-G (Washington, GPO, 1942), 2.

[9] *Seward Gateway*, November 18, 1925, 8.

[10] Johansen mined elsewhere before prospecting here; in 1906, he discovered a gold deposit on Popof Island, near Sand Point. *Seward Weekly Gateway*, May 26, 1906, 1.

small quartz veins," an assay from which showed no gold. Near the head of Paguna Arm were seen "a few granite dikes." An assay from that deposit showed $1.80 per ton in gold, an amount that was insufficient to justify development work. This activity appears to have taken place between 1907 and 1909. The claims soon lapsed, and the area has remained idle ever since.[11]

The other area that had incited the interest of early prospectors was Nuka Bay. During the first decade of the twentieth century, the bay's East Arm (McCarty Fjord) was relatively short—McCarty Glacier extended some fifteen miles farther south than it does today—and the glacier's face reached from the southern end of James Lagoon to the mouth of McCarty Lagoon. A four-man prospecting party—Daniel Morris, James Sheridan, George W. Kuppler, and John H. Lee—located three deposits in 1909, two on East Arm and a third on North Arm.[12] One of the East Arm deposits was on the flat at the west side of the McCarty Glacier face; a "number of pieces" of float quartz were found, but no vein was located. The party also found a broken quartz vein "near the south point of the first ridge" west of McCarty Glacier. The vein, which was approximately 300 yards from the ice in July 1909, was opened for only two or three feet. On Nuka Bay's North Arm, they discovered a third deposit, located near the center of the arm's west side. The party did not engage in development work. Since that time, the East Arm sites have probably lain fallow, but the North Arm deposit was later relocated and became part of the Rosness and Larson prospect.[13]

U. S. Grant, the geologist who visited the area in 1909, took samples of several of the area's quartz-arsenopyrite veins. He later assayed the samples but found that "the results of these assays ... is not encouraging." His report, which was published in preliminary form in 1910 and in final form in 1915, may have put a damper on area prospecting, inasmuch as no known deposits were discovered along the park's coastline between 1909 and 1917.[14]

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[11] Grant and Higgins, "Preliminary Report," in USGS Bulletin 442-D (1910), 173; Grant, "The Southeastern Coast of Kenai Peninsula," in USGS Bulletin 587 (1915), 229.

[12] Sheridan was a government lawyer, "Judge" Kuppler was the U.S. Commissioner in Seldovia, and Lee was a miner. *Seward Weekly Gateway*, November 10, 1906, 2; November 13, 1909, 4; October 29, 1910, 2. The deposits were discovered in 1909, inasmuch as that was the year that Kuppler moved from southeastern Alaska to "the [Cook] inlet country."

[13] Grant and Higgins, "Preliminary Report," in USGS Bulletin 442-D (1910), 176; U. S. Grant, "The Southeastern Coast of Kenai Peninsula," in Bulletin 587 (1915), 229-30. Former park employee Bud Rice suggests that local resident Bob Evans (see below) may have prospected the East Arm sites during the 1920s or 1930s.

[14] Grant and Higgins, "Preliminary Report," in USGS Bulletin 442-D (1910), 177.

When gold was next discovered in the area is open to some dispute. A government report written in 1918 noted that "a quartz lode carrying free gold discovered on Nuka Bay in 1917 has attracted some attention, and it is reported that this lode was being developed in 1918." But another such report, written years later, said that Nuka Bay gold had been discovered in 1918 by Frank Case and Otis Harrington. The gold discovery, regardless of when it happened, took place at the Alaska Hills deposit, two miles up the Nuka River from Beauty Bay.[15]

Additional claim filing apparently followed these early discoveries, and by the spring of 1920, a bullish article in *The Pathfinder* stated that

> Nuku Bay [sic], about eighty miles distant from Seward, is a quartz mining district. Although only discovered a few years ago, three large plants are operating continuously, and the average values are very high. This district is attracting considerable attention.[16]

The Alaska Hills deposit was probably one of the three "plants" in operation that spring. The identity of the remaining mines, however, is unknown, and it is doubtful if more than rudimentary excavations took place at those sites during this period.

Area mineral activity began to revive in 1922 when Charles Emsweiler, a Seward-based game guide and policeman, located a vein of free milling gold at the head of Beauty Bay. Emsweiler, working alone, mined one thousand pounds of ore from the outcrop of his find and packed it on his back to tide water. He took it to Seward and then transshipped it to the smelter at Tacoma. The shipment netted $80. The ore doubtless increased interest among some area miners, but the area received little additional publicity.[17]

Frank P. Skeen, who had been prospecting in the area for more than 15 years,[18] then relocated the veins—350 feet southeast of the Emsweiler

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[15] Martin, *Mineral Resources in Alaska, 1918*, USGS Bulletin 712, 34; Earl R. Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," in B. D. Stewart, *Mining Investigations and Mine Inspection in Alaska..., Biennium Ending March 31, 1933* (Juneau, Territory of Alaska, 1933), 46.

[16] "A Few Facts About Seward, Alaska," *The Pathfinder* 1 (June, 1920), 3.

[17] Robert C. Heath, "Nuka Bay Mining District," unpub. mss., May 1932, p. 1, in Skinner Collection, UAF. Heath noted that the discoverer was "a man by the name of Amesweller;" his description, however, fits that ascribed to Charles Emsweiler, one of the few in Seward who had a gas boat and knew the coastline. Heath incorrectly notes, however, that Emsweiler discovered the deposit that led to the Alaska Hills mine.

[18] Skeen moved from the Nome area to Seward in June 1905 and began prospecting

deposit—that Case and Harrington had discovered five years earlier. Skeen's "discovery," which took place in late June 1923, made front-page headlines in the July 2 issue of the *Seward Gateway*:

RICH STRIKE MADE BY FRANK SKEEN AT NUKA BAY

Vein Two and a Half Feet in Width
and Fairly Plastered with Gold

> Frank Skeen returned from Nuka Bay last evening with two hundred pounds of the richest gold-bearing quartz ever shown in this vicinity. So rich is the rock in gold that it fairly glitters with the precious mineral, and old timers who have seen the samples state they are better than have been shown in Alaska for many a day.
>
> The vein, which is two and a half feet wide at the surface, was found by Mr. Skeen while burning off the grass around a property held by him at Nuka Bay. A piece about as large as one's fist was discovered sticking out of the ground, and upon examination the larger vein was found. Mr. Skeen stripped the vein for fifty feet and it showed the same high values at all points with no diminution in width. The vein is in block slate formation similar to the deep mines of California, and has every sign of permanency.
>
> The new strike is about a mile and a half from salt water, on the Nuka River, and at about 500 feet in elevation. A wagon could be driven from the saltchuck to the mine.[19]

Skeen soon returned to Nuka Bay to develop his property, and before long he brought back to Seward further proof of the claim's wealth. In late August, he exhibited a half ounce of gold that had been washed out from ten ounces of rock, and he also announced, based on recent assay results, that he had specimens showing values of more than $3000 per ton. These yields, according to newspaper reports, "caused considerable excitement among the old timers of this vicinity, and a number of prospectors and

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immediately. Two years later, he and two partners located mining claims on Tonsina Creek, south of Seward. He also "struck it rich" due to a discovery along Falls Creek, near Lawing, which caused a 1923 reporter to note that "Mr. Skeen has made one fortune already out of his discoveries, and indications are that he has another at hand." Barry, *Seward History, I*, 22; Barry, *History of Mining*, 123; *Seward Gateway*, August 14, 1905, 1; June 4, 1921, 2; August 13, 1921, 1; August 27, 1923, 1. Searches of the *Seward Gateway* for the spring and summer of both 1919 and 1921 revealed no articles about prospecting activity along the park coastline.

[19] *Seward Gateway*, June 19, 1923, 2; July 2, 1923, 1.

their outfits have taken gas boats for the scene of the strike."[20] A minor rush ensued, with Anchorage as well as Seward residents taking part; by early September, there were "some 65 miners and prospectors at the scene of the strike." One visitor to the claim announced that the strike "was all that it was reported to be, and more. Mr. Skeen has a wonderfully rich property there."[21]

The Pathfinder of Alaska gave an enthusiastic, detailed account of Skeen's discovery:

> A sensationally rich gold quartz strike has been made in the Nuka Bay section, a short distance from Anchorage. Samples taken from the lead, which is exposed on the surface for a hundred or more feet, are said to go into the hundreds and even thousands of dollars. The silver content goes about $50 per ton, according to the assays.
>
> The find was first made in June by Frank P. Skeen, an experienced hard-rock man of 25 years' residence in the north. The discovery was made as a result of finding a piece of quartz that was literally alive with gold, according to Skeen. Using his prospector's pick he began to dig around in the grass covered ground near the spot where the float was found and luckily encountered the vein. Skeen uncovered it for about 20 feet, enough to show that he had found a wonderful prospect. The vein at this point was about 20 inches in width and is what is termed a true fissure vein, crosscutting the formation. There is a sort of gouge in both walls, Skeen says, from which he picked out pieces that appeared to be plated with gold. Gold, he says, can be seen in much of the quartz, although there is a heavier concentration along the walls.
>
> Subsequent development has revealed an ore body estimated to contain approximately $200,000 in what can be seen of it. The formation of the district is a black slate, occurring in blocks, and acidic and porphry [porphyry] dikes running through the country which are said to give encouraging prospects.[22]

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[20] *Seward Gateway*, July 30, 1923, 3; August 25, 1923, 3; August 27, 1923, 1.

[21] *Seward Gateway*, September 1, 1923, 6; September 10, 1923, 4; September 25, 1923, 1. It is not known why Case and Harrington's earlier discovery went unheralded while Skeen's find resulted in a rush. The *Gateway's* choice to publicize the 1923 find may have played a role. Another factor may have been that the earlier find took place during the World War I era, when the labor force was fully occupied, while in 1923, poor economic conditions and the recent completion of the Alaska Railroad resulted in a large available labor pool.

[22] "Strike on Nuka Bay," *The Pathfinder of Alaska* 4 (April 1924), 51.

The prospectors who invaded the area on the heels of Skeen's strike doubtless investigated the area surrounding his claims. Finding little, they fanned out across Nuka Bay and beyond, and scores registered claims. (Most claims were located near either the North Arm or West Arm of Nuka Bay, but some were made as far south as Tonsina Bay or as far north as Aialik Bay.)[23] By the summer of 1924, development work had taken place on at least six prospects, and work began on perhaps a dozen others as the decade wore on.[24]

Prospecting continued in the Nuka Bay area throughout the 1920s, but well before the end of the decade it became increasingly obvious that paying properties would be few and far between. As government geologist J. G. Shepard noted in a 1925 report, "it is not likely that the District will ever be an important producer, although small tonnages of commercial ore will probably be worked from time to time."[25] Factors such as remoteness, poor transportation, snowslides, and late-spring snow accumulations doubtlessly retarded progress. Another retarding factor, common to small-scale operations, was poor management. As geologist Robert Heath noted in 1932 after a visit to the area,

> The greatest obstacle seems to be lack of men who understand the business and technique of mining. There have been many expensive mistakes made in the past by the pioneer operators that could be avoided by a new company just entering the field.... Practically all of the attempts at mining have been promoted and conducted by men who were trained in other kinds of work.

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[23] Mary Barry, in Volume III of her *Seward History* (p. 207), describes a 1920s-era mine on Spruce Creek, south of Seward; Alaska Heritage Resources Survey form number SEL-210 describes a mine and cabin on Tonsina Bay, which dates from the 1920s or 1930s; a Seward Chamber of Commerce map drawn in late 1932 (in Box 1, Chamber of Commerce Collection, Seward Library) shows that George Beck had a mining claim at the north end of James Lagoon, on the west side of East Arm. Beck's claim is probably related to a cabin that was identified on the 1953 USGS topographic map of the area. (According to Bud Rice, a former park employee, the cabin is now gone, perhaps a victim of the 1964 earthquake. Only a post—perhaps part of a dock or boat-anchoring device—remains at the site.) The registry of mining claims in the Seward magistrate's office shows more than a hundred claims that were located in either Nuka or Aialik bays. Most of those claims, in all likelihood, were never developed.

[24] Harry H. Townsend, "Brief Narrative Report on Prospects in Alaska Examined in 1924," U.S. Bureau of Mines Report IR-195-47, 4-7, at ARLIS.

[25] Philip S. Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1928*, USGS Bulletin 813 (Washington, GPO, 1930), 17; *Seward Gateway*, June 1, 1929, 4; J. G. Shepard, "The Nuka Bay Mining District, Kenai Precinct," U.S. Bureau of Mines report MR 104-1 (September 1925), at ARLIS.

Primarily, however, the area's lack of development was due to a lack of economically extractable gold.[26]

During the 1920s, relatively few properties had sufficient ore to justify production. Two mines produced gold: the first, beginning in 1924, was the Alaska Hills Mine, which had been "rediscovered" by Frank Skeen just the year before. Four years later, the Sonny Fox Mine, at the head of Surprise Bay, was the second Nuka Bay mine to commence production. That so few properties were able to operate during the 1920s was, in large part, due to conditions that prevailed throughout the Territory; gold production in general, and lode gold production in particular, dipped to its lowest level in more than a decade.[27]

The Great Depression years of the 1930s were poor for the nation's business, but judging by production figures, they were relatively favorable for the Alaska gold mining industry. Gold production rose gradually during the early 1930s. Then, in January 1934, gold mining received a further boost when the U.S. government (which was the only legal gold buyer) raised the price of gold from $20.67 to $35 per troy ounce. In the Nuka Bay area, production rose and new properties began milling gold. The Rosness and Larson mine, on the west side of North Arm, began operating in 1931; the Goyne Prospect, on Surprise Bay, sent out its first ore the same year; and in 1934, the year gold prices rose, the Nukalaska Mine commenced production.[28]

A government report published in 1931 was bullish about the district. It noted that the Sonny Fox mine, in operation since 1926, was the area's top producer. In addition,

> there are more than a dozen other properties in the district on which development work was in progress, and of these at least three shipped some ore or concentrates to smelters in the States for treatment. The properties at which work was in progress are widely distributed through the district, indicating that the mineralization is not localized at a few points. The

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[26] *Seward Gateway*, August 8, 1928, 3; June 4, 1935, 3; Philip S. Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1933*, USGS Bulletin 864-A (Washington, GPO, 1934), 22; Heath, "The Nuka Bay District," 1932, 18.

[27] Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits*, USGS Professional Paper 625-B (1970), B3; Philip S. Smith, *Mineral Resources in Alaska, 1940*, Bulletin 933-A (Washington, GPO, 1942), 9, 12-13.

[28] Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits*, USGS Professional Paper 625-B (1970), B3; Smith, *Mineral Resources in Alaska, 1940*, Bulletin 933, 9, 12-13.

> success that already attended the operations of the Sonny Fox mine and the samples that have been assayed from many of the other properties give assurance that the mineralization in many places has produced ores that, if skillfully mined and milled, are of commercial grade.[29]

By 1933, however, optimism about the district had begun to dim. A U.S. Geological Survey report noted that "on the whole, small-scale prospecting does not appear to have been so active during 1933 as in the preceding year," and prospecting continued to decrease in 1934. Even the local chamber of commerce, which had been publicizing its potential just two years earlier, chose not to recommend the area as a potential mining area in a December 1934 letter.[30]

During the late 1930s, interest in the Nuka Bay mines continued to subside. The Geological Survey's 1937 report on Alaska mining noted that "mining was carried on at a somewhat slower rate than formerly." There were three producing properties—Nukalaska, Sonny Fox, and Alaska Hills—but "at none of the other mines were any notable new developments in progress, and no new prospecting enterprises are reported to have been started during the year." The following year's report stated that

> perhaps half a dozen properties on which some work was done during the year, but the wave of interest that brought this camp to notice a few years ago seems to have subsided, so that many of the early comers have drifted away and mining has dropped to a low stage.

The 1939 report noted that work continued on six properties, "but at only three of them [the same three noted above] was the work much more than casual prospecting."[31] By the end of 1941, production had ceased throughout the district; the area remained idle until after World War II.

Between 1924 and 1941, a total of five mines produced and shipped gold ore. Two of the five (the Sonny Fox Mining Company and the Alaska Hills

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[29] Philip S. Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1931*, Bulletin 844-A (Washington, GPO, 1933), 20.

[30] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1933*, Bulletin 864-A, 22; Philip S. Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1934*, Bulletin 868-A (Washington, GPO, 1936), 23; Earl Reisner to Axel Haigrinen, December 31, 1934, in Box 4, Chamber of Commerce Collection, Seward Public Library.

[31] Philip S. Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1937*, USGS Bulletin 910-A (Washington, GPO, 1939), 29; Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1938*, USGS Bulletin 917-A (Washington, GPO, 1939), 28; Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1939*, USGS Bulletin 926-A (Washington, GPO, 1941), 25.

Mine) operated for ten or more years; one mine (the Nukalaska Mine) operated for five to nine years, and the final two (the Rosness and Larson Mine and the Goyne Prospect) produced gold for fewer than five years. Most of the mines were small in scale, with a crew numbering six or fewer, and in almost all cases the operations were seasonal, usually lasting from late April or early May until September or October.[32]

Little if any gold production data was ever published from these mines.[33] In the 1960s, however, geologist Donald Richter estimated production quantities based on mill capacities, gold values, yields per ton and scattered unofficial reports. On that basis, he estimated that the district produced perhaps $166,000 in gold between 1924 and 1940. The largest producer, the Sonny Fox Mine, yielded some $70,000 in gold. Production from the Alaska Hills Mine was $45,000; from the Nukalaska Mine, $35,000; and from the Rosness and Larson Mine, $15,000. (All figures are approximate.) The Goyne Prospect yielded an insignificant amount of gold—less than $1,000, according to Richter's estimate.[34]

By any measure, the yields from the Nuka Bay district were minor. The district yielded an average annual total of $10,000 in gold during the 1924-1940 period.[35] During those 17 years, however, the annual total of lode gold production in Alaska ranged from $2.7 million to $8.3 million, and the annual total of Alaska gold production (from both lode and placer mines) ranged from $5.9 million to $26.2 million. Using the most conservative measurement, therefore, the Nuka Bay mines do not appear to have ever contributed more than one percent of Alaska's lode production, and they consistently produced less than 0.3% of Alaska's

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[32] Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits,* USGS Professional Paper 625-B (1970), B3; Earl Reisner to Axel Haigrinen, December 31, 1934, in Box 4, Chamber of Commerce Collection, Seward City Library. The Nukalaska Mine was exceptional in that, during the 1936-1939 period, it kept a crew of 19 or 20 busy for six months each year. Prospectors who ran their own operations occasionally worked their mines all winter long. In addition, several operators during the first few years following Skeen's find worked an all-year schedule. See *Seward Gateway,* December 4, 1925, 8.

[33] Robert Heath, in 1932, noted that "exact data on the quantity produced are not available, for the operations have not been systematic, and few, if any, books have been kept by those in charge of the mines." Six years later, a government report stated that "It has not been considered advisable to publish the distribution of lode-gold production among these different areas, as to do so would reveal confidential information, and the available records are not detailed enough to afford an accurate basis for such separation." Heath, "The Nuka Bay District," 18; Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1938,* 198-99.

[34] Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits,* USGS Professional Paper 625-B (1970), B3.

[35] Based on the number of mines operating, production levels were probably highest during the 1931-34 period, but it is doubtful (based on admittedly sketchy data) that annual yields ever exceeded $20,000.

total gold production.[36] Based on those yields, it is not surprising that the Nuka Bay mines (and other Kenai Peninsula gold mines) were consistently described in the "other districts" section of the U.S. Geological Survey's annual reports.

Mining on the Kenai Peninsula, as elsewhere in Alaska, revived slowly during the postwar years. Economic prosperity brought more jobs and rising wages, luring miners to the cities. The prices of mining equipment, moreover, increased along with other products. The price of gold, however, held steady at $35 per ounce.[37]

Because of those obstacles, and because the most promising veins had already been tapped, the level of Nuka Bay mining activity was far less than it had been before World War II. Sometime during the postwar period, the Golden Horn group unsuccessfully attempted to reopen the Goyne prospect on Surprise Bay. In July 1951, Wyman Anderson and B. C. Rick expressed an interest in the old Sonny Fox mine; they transferred the property to the Alaska Exploration and Development Corporation, which held the property for the next several years. Sometime in the 1950s a group from Hawaii, locally known as the Honolulu Group, unsuccessfully attempted to reopen the Nukalaska Mine but the venture was apparently short-lived. In 1959 and 1960, several Seward residents conducted development work at the Little Creek (Glass and Heifner) prospect, near the head of Beauty Bay. None of these attempts resulted in commercial production, however, and after a 1967 visit, geologist Donald Richter noted "today the area has been virtually forgotten."[38]

The dramatic rise in the price of gold, beginning in 1968, favorably affected gold mining operations throughout the United States. Perhaps as a result, at least one recently active Nuka Bay mine has produced commercial quantities of gold, and small-scale activity has taken place elsewhere. In 1965, a group from Jamestown, Ohio, acquired the former Little Creek prospect; soon afterward, they constructed a small mill and mined "a limited amount" of ore. The pair operated on an intermittent, small-scale basis until the early 1980s; since then, others have extracted ore from time to time. At the Sonny Fox mine site, the ground was re-staked in 1968 and it remained an active claim site for more than twenty

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[36] Smith, *Mineral Resources in Alaska, 1940*, USGS Bulletin 933, 9, 12-13.

[37] Barry, *A History of Mining*, 168.

[38] Donald H. Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits*, USGS Professional Paper 625-B (1970), B1, B3, B11; Barry, *A History of Mining*, 151; Martin W. Jasper, *Property Examination Report, Surprise Mine, Alaska Exploration and Development Corporation, Gold-Quartz Property, Nuka Bay, Kenai Peninsula*, Territory of Alaska, Department of Mines, Report PE 104-4 (April 1954), 3.

years thereafter. Other active development work in recent years has taken place at the old Goyne-Golden Horn prospect. During the early 1970s, there was also a purported barium deposit on the east side of Harris Bay. The four claims that encompassed that deposit, however, lapsed before the end of the decade.[39]

Nuka Bay Mining Sites: Beauty Bay

Alaska Hills Mines Corporation

The first gold known to be discovered in the area surrounding Beauty Bay took place at the Alaska Hills deposit, two miles up the Nuka River from Beauty Bay. When the discovery took place is open to debate. As noted in the section above, a government report written in 1918 stated that "a quartz lode carrying free gold discovered on Nuka Bay in 1917 has attracted some attention, and it is reported that this lode was being developed in 1918." But a similar report, written during the mid-1930s, said that the gold discovery, by Frank Case and Otis Harrington, took place in 1918.[40] Additional claim filing may have followed that discovery, but no development work immediately ensued, and by the early 1920s, Case and Harrington had either relinquished or sold their claim.

Mineral activity in the area remained quiet until the early 1920s. As noted above, one source notes that gold was discovered nearby, in 1922, by Charles Emsweiler, a Seward-based game guide and policeman. Emsweiler apparently extracted a half ton of ore and sent it to Tacoma for smelting.[41] Then, a year later, the Case-Harrington claim was rediscovered by Frank P. Skeen, a prospector who had been living and working on the peninsula since 1907 if not before. Skeen had apparently acquired Case and Harrington's claim and, as noted above, was "burning off the grass" around his property in late June 1923 when he located a quartz vein that was "two and a half feet in width and fairly plastered with gold." Skeen stripped the vein for fifty feet and found it to be consistently rich; he then extracted two hundred pounds of ore and took it back to Seward for assaying.[42]

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[39] Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits*, 1970, B3; Max Heifner interview, December 16, 1996; Mining Claim Location Notices, July 4, 1968, in RPR files, AKSO; Alaska Planning Group, *Harding Icefields-Kenai Fjords National Monument, Alaska; A Master Plan* (December 1973), 13; NPS, *General Management Plan, Kenai Fjords National Park* (Denver, the author, July 1984), 33.

[40] Martin, *Mineral Resources in Alaska, 1918*, USGS Bulletin 712, 34; Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 46.

[41] Robert C. Heath, "Nuka Bay Mining District," 1932, 1.

[42] *Seward Gateway*, July 2, 1923, 1.

Table 7-1. Elements Comprising the Nuka Bay Mining District

Mine Area and Name	Years of Commercial Operation	Identified Historical (pre-1948) Elements	National Register Eligibility
Beauty Bay:			
Alaska Hills Mining Corp.	1925-28, 1931, 1937-41	mill, adits (4), improved trail, tramway, log bunkhouses (2)	not evaluated
Nuka Bay Mining Company (Harrington Prospect)	[none]	adits (2), open cuts, small mill, trail, upper camp, lower camp [cabin?]	not evaluated
Nukalaska Mining Company	1934-38 (+1939-41?)	road, tramway (2), mill (old and new), machine shop; camp buildings (4) and tents (2); bunkhouse/ore bin/tram terminal at adit #1; compressor shed at adit #2, tents (2); cabin and storehouse at beach	yes, 1991; SHPO concurs
Glass and Heifner Mine (Earl Mount/Little Creek Prospects)	1965-85?	Open cuts, adit, camp, shaft, raise (all probably obliterated by 1965-85 work)	not evaluated
Miscellaneous Sites	[none]	adit, cabins (2)	not evaluated
North Arm:			
Rosness and Larson Property	1931-33	surface trenching, bulkhead, hoist, adits (3), winze, mill, log cabin, tents (2)	not evaluated
Kasanek-Smith Prospect	[none]	adit, surface trenches; cabin at nearby cove	not evaluated

Table 7-1. Elements Comprising the Nuka Bay Mining District (cont.)

Mine Area and Name	Years of Commercial Operation	Identified Historical (pre-1948) Elements	National Register Eligibility
North Arm (cont.):			
Robert Hatcher Prospects	[none]	open cut, adits (4), cabin	not evaluated
Charles Frank Prospect	[none]	adit, cabin	not evaluated
Surprise and Quartz Bays:			
Sonny Fox Mine (Babcock and Downey Mine)	1928-40	trail, mill (old and new, surface tram, aerial tram, dock, adits (6), open cuts, camp buildings (5)	yes, 1991; SHPO concurs
Skinner Prospect #1	[none]	adit	not evaluated
Johnston and Deegan Property	[none]	surface trenches, cabins (2), trails	not evaluated
Goyne Prospect (Golden Horn Property]	1931-34	tunnels (2), shallow pits, cabin, trail; bunkhouse?	not evaluated
West Arm and Yalik Bay:			
Lang-Skinner Prospect	[none]	open cuts, tunnels (4), frame house, log cabin; another cabin at "Lang's Beach"	unable to locate
Blair-Sather Prospect	[none]	adits (2), frame house	not evaluated

Skeen soon returned to Nuka Bay to develop his claim. In late August, he exhibited a half ounce of gold that had been washed out from ten ounces of rock, and he also announced that he had specimens showing values of more than $3000 per ton. These yields, as noted above, "caused considerable excitement among the old timers of this vicinity" and caused a minor rush to the area; "some 65 miners and prospectors" had flocked to the area by early September. One visitor to the claim announced that the strike "was all that it was reported to be, and more. Mr. Skeen has a wonderfully rich property there."[43] Skeen called his claim the Paystreak.

Whether Skeen was the sole claimant at the time of his discovery is unknown, but by late August he had acquired several partners, including Earl W. Barnett and J. D. Andrews.[44]

During the winter of 1923-24, Skeen and his partners organized the Alaska Hills Mines Corporation. By the following summer, people working for the company had begun to dig two tunnels: an upper tunnel, at 570 feet above sea level and located on the vein, and a lower tunnel, 495 feet above sea level with drifting on the vein. Also under construction that summer was a mill, located at 40 feet above sea level and adjacent to left bank of Nuka River. The mill building contained a small Blake jaw crusher; a Worthington overflow-type, 5' x 5' ball mill; a drag classifier; amalgam plates; and a concentrating table. Its capacity was 40 tons per 24 hours. A 1,605-foot jigback aerial tramway, completed that year, connected the lower tunnel entrance with the mill, and "substantial camp buildings" (which probably consisted of two log bunkhouses) were also constructed. A two-mile trail connected the mill and adjacent camp with Beauty Bay, but it was so narrow that all the supplies for the mine had to be brought up the Nuka River on a barge. The mill was finally completed in November; a test run of ore was then processed, apparently with favorable results.[45]

In 1925, both the Paystreak Mine and the mill were active from May until November. By year's end, a tunnel (probably the upper tunnel) had been dug 200 feet into the hill and was following a vein 2 feet wide. The mill that year produced, in the opinion of government geologists, "a substantial

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[43] *Seward Gateway*, September 1, 1923, 6; September 10, 1923, 4; September 25, 1923, 1.

[44] *Seward Gateway*, August 25, 1923, 3; August 30, 1923, 4; September 10, 1923, 4; and September 29, 1923, 1. Newspapers referred to Barnett variously as E. W. Barrett, E. W. Bennett, and Earl Barnette.

[45] Harry H. Townsend, "Brief Narrative Report," U.S. Bureau of Mines Report IR-195-47, 4-5; Philip S. Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1924,* USGS Bulletin 783 (Washington, GPO, 1926), 8; Seward *Gateway*, December 5, 1925, 9, Heath, "Nuka Bay Mining District," 11.

production of lode gold;" the local newspaper reported that "about $12,000 in bullion" was produced.[46]

Based on that activity, the Alaska Road Commission agreed to improve the trail to the mine. The trail was "cleared, grubbed and graded 1¼ miles for an average width of 7 feet." The grading included the blasting away of 1,507 cubic yards of solid rock, much of it along a narrow ledge; in addition, 200 linear feet of corduroy was laid and five timber culverts were constructed. By summer's end, the trail, which cost some $4,300, was "suitable for pack horses or double enders." The local newspaper editor judged the new trail to be "splendid."[47]

The Corporation held a stockholders' meeting in Seward in October and declared its first dividend. The directors had high hopes; they envisioned a post office and "a port for ocean-going steamers." Skeen was no longer part of the company; the primary participants at this time were J. D. Andrews and E. W. Barnett (who had been Frank Skeen's partners in 1923), who now served as the corporation's vice-president and secretary-treasurer, respectively. Other members of the board of directors included Dennis Hurley (president and general manager), Otis E. Harrington and John H. Rice. Miners included Jack Coffey and Jim Foster.[48]

The operation, however, was not without its problems. One major difficulty was an improperly designed mill. Noted one observer, "a great deal of gold has been lost in the tailings [because of the] failure of the concentrating tables to recover all of the sulphides in the ore." A properly designed flotation plant was recommended. Another visitor, moreover, criticized the extraction operation. Geologist J. G. Shepard noted that "the mine was poorly worked, no attention [having] been given to either chutes or manways."[49] In a late 1925 newspaper article, the company admitted that the mill had "been giving the company more or less difficulty during the first year's operations." They confidently stated, however, that it was "now doing much better and little future trouble is anticipated," and went on to describe that a cyanide plant, which had been recently installed, had "started up immediately and from last reports the recovery

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[46] Fred H. Moffit, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1925*, USGS Bulletin 792 (Washington, GPO, 1927), 11; *Seward Gateway*, December 5, 1925, 9.

[47] Alaska Road Commission, *Annual Report, 1927*, 64, 85; ARC, *Annual Report, 1926*, 78.

[48] *Seward Gateway*, November 27, 1925, 2; J. G. Shepard, "The Alaska Hills Mining Co., Nuka Bay," in *The Nuka Bay Mining District, Kenai Precinct*, U.S. Bureau of Mines, Report MR 104-1 (1925); Heath, "Nuka Bay Mining District," 11.

[49] J. G. Shepard, "The Alaska Hills Mining Co." in USBM Report MR 104-1 (1925), 2-3; Heath, "Nuka Bay Mining District," 11.

has been extremely gratifying."[50] Milling efficiency, however, continued to lag for the next several years.

Underlying the operation's difficulties was a lack of experience in commercial mining by company managers. E. W. Barnett, for example, was an engineer with the Alaska Railroad, and Otis Harrington, John Rice, and J. D. Andrews were all known to be prospectors. Given that background, J. G. Shepard roundly criticized the operation, noting that

> The management of this property has been very inefficient. Nothing was known as to the value to the ore milled. The value of the tailings was an unknown quantity. A total lack of knowledge of the principles of mill operation was displayed. Mining was poorly done. In short it has been an operation such as might be expected, of men who had no conception of current mining practice.... [A] haphazard operation, such as [has] been carried on in the past, is bound to be a failure.[51]

Robert Heath, who visited the site in 1932, made a similar assessment, which pertained both to the Nuka Bay area generally as well as to the specific operation at Alaska Hills. He noted the following:

> The greatest obstacle seems to be lack of men who understand the business and technique of mining. There have been many expensive mistakes made in the past by the pioneer operators that could be avoided by a new company just entering the field.... Practically all of the attempts at mining have been promoted and conducted by men who were trained in other kinds of work.[52]

Despite those difficulties, the Alaska Hills Mines Corporation continued to produce commercial quantities of gold for the next several years. The U.S. Geological Survey's annual report for 1926 noted that

> the only [Nuka Bay] mine from which any considerable production of gold was reported was on the Paystreak claim of the Alaska Hills Mines. This mine increased its output considerable over the preceding year and appears to have had an especially successful season, being enabled to run

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[50] *Seward Gateway*, December 5, 1925, 9.

[51] J. G. Shepard, "The Alaska Hills Mining Co., Nuka Bay," in USBM Report MR 104-1 (1925).

[52] Heath, "Nuka Bay Mining District," 18.

> practically without interruption from early in May until November.[53]

The mine remained active in 1927 and 1928; the *Seward Gateway* during that period faithfully reported the travels of Barnett, Coffey, and others involved with the company. In the spring of 1927, Territorial Highway Engineer R. J. Sommers visited the mill. Shortly afterwards ARC personnel were undertaking "small improvements ... desired by the operators in that district" to the two-year-old trail that connected the mill with tidewater.[54]

By 1928, the Alaska Hills operation was no longer the chief Nuka Bay producer, having been surpassed by the Babcock and Downey (Sonny Fox) mine in Surprise Bay. Production at Alaska Hills that year closed early owing to a snowslide that destroyed "several of the buildings." Perhaps as a result of the slide, "only the usual assessment work was done" in 1929. The following year, the mine apparently continued to be unproductive.[55]

By the summer of 1931, however, the damaged buildings had been either restored or replaced, and the Alaska Hills mine was one of two area mines "producing in a small way," the other mine being the Babcock and Downey outfit. Engineer Earl Pilgrim that year made a thorough investigation of the property for the Territorial Bureau of Mines. He noted that the property consisted of five mining claims: Pay Streak No. 1, Pay Streak No. 2, Pay Streak Extension, Pay Streak Fraction, and Fairweather. Four tunnels were dug on those claims: an upper tunnel, now 125 feet long; a lower tunnel, now 550 feet long; a crosscut tunnel (280 feet northwest of the lower tunnel and at a 370-foot elevation) which was 165 feet long; and a fourth tunnel, at the Emsweiler vein, which was 75 feet long. Pilgrim noted that a crew of three was working at the site that summer; they milled 267½ tons of gold ore and reported a profitable operation. John H. Rice and E. W. Barnett, both of whom had been with the company since the mid-1920s, were the principal company officers.[56]

Production lapsed again after the 1931 season. In 1933, the USGS's annual report noted that "the principal producing mines in the Nuka Bay District" included "the Alaska Hills mine, under the management of E. W.

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[53] Philip S. Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1926*, USGS Bulletin 797 (Washington, GPO, 1929), 12.

[54] *Seward Gateway*, May 5, 1927, 7; May 21, 1927, 5; May 25, 1927, 3; May 27, 1927, 2; June 1, 1927, 7; June 25, 1927, 5.

[55] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1928*, USGS Bulletin 813, 17; *Seward Gateway*, May 21, 1929, 5; Philip S. Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1929*, USGS Bulletin 824 (Washington, GPO, 1932), 21.

[56] Heath, "Nuka Bay Mining District," 2; Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 46.

Barnett." But little, apparently, was produced that year, inasmuch as Stephen Capps's 1936 report stated that "only a small amount of mining" had been done since 1931; work in 1936, moreover, was limited to assessment work.[57] For the remainder of the decade, U.S. Geological Survey officials provided bullish (if vague) statements about the mine's activity; in 1937, Alaska Hills was listed as one of three "principal producing properties" in the Nuka Bay area, and in 1939, it was listed as one of the three Nuka Bay properties where "more than casual prospecting" had taken place that year.[58]

The summer of 1940 again witnessed a minimum of activity. That October, however, the property was leased to partners Dave Andrews and John Coffey who, with two others, conducted gold mining and milling operations until late July 1941. The lessees, during that period, milled 160 tons of ore. Inasmuch as the two upper tunnels had caved in, the partnership worked in the two lower tunnels and operated a 1200-foot, two-bucket tramway between one of the tunnel openings and the top of the mill building. The mill, at this time, had a Blake type crusher (as before) but a Union Iron Works ball mill; its capacity was one ton per hour, some 40 percent less than the 1924-era Worthington ball mill had offered. Three men operated at once, two in the mine, the other doing the tramming and crushing.[59]

When Andrews and Coffey ceased operations, mining at the site had been taking place, off and on, for almost 20 years.[60] The property boasted some 900 feet of underground workings, and an estimated $45,000 of gold ore had been extracted, milled, and shipped. After July 1941, however, no known mining operations took place at the site. (The claims were soon relinquished, and unlike many Nuka Bay properties, no new claimants attempted to develop the property during the postwar period.) The site slowly decayed, and by June 1967, the mill had been "dismantled and burned and all the camp buildings were collapsed." Donald Richter, the geologist who investigated the property that year, was able to find just one of the four tunnel entrances (the others were either caved in or covered

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[57] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1933*, USGS Bulletin 864, 21; Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1936*, Bulletin 897, 29.

[58] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1937*, USGS Bulletin 910, 29; *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1939*, Bulletin 926, 25.

[59] J. C. Roehm, "Summary Report of Investigations in the Nuka Bay District, Kenai Precinct, July 18 to 28, 1941," U.S. Bureau of Mines, Report IR 104-2, pp. 7, 9. John Coffey and Dave Andrews were doubtless related to Jack Coffey and J. D. Andrews, active in mine operations in the 1920s; Jack and John Coffey may have been the same person.

[60] Donald Richter (*Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits,* p. 1) estimated that Alaska Hills produced gold between 1924 and 1931. Further research has shown, however, that the mine produced commercially from 1925 to 1928, in 1931, and from 1937 to 1941.

with snow), and the mid-1920s ARC trail along the Nuka River had been abandoned.[61]

In July 1991, National Park Service personnel visited the property's mill area and main camp as part of the agency's Mining Inventory and Monitoring Program. They made a detailed reconnaissance, spending two days at the site. At that time, the mill consisted of "rusted machinery and artifacts that are partially covered by lumber and metal remains of the collapsed walls and roof of the mill building. Much of the mill machinery is apparently missing." The nearby camp consisted of a log cabin ruin, specifically "sill logs covered with collapsed corrugated metal roofing. Very few artifacts were observed around the camp structure." Agency personnel made no attempt, as a result of the site visit, to nominate the property to the National Register of Historic Places.

Nuka Bay Mining Company (Harrington Prospect)

Shortly after Frank Skeen found gold at what became known as the Alaska Hills Mines Corporation site, Otis Harrington located gold at a site two miles south of Skeen's find. (Harrington was no newcomer to the area; he, along with Frank Case, had claimed the Alaska Hills site in 1917 or 1918 but had subsequently abandoned it.) The new deposit was located 1,470 feet above the waters of Beauty Bay, near the crest of Storm Mountain's southern ridge. Harrington located the quartz vein, thereafter called the Harrington prospect, in either late 1923 or early 1924.

Inasmuch as Harrington apparently worked alone, development proceeded slowly. When geologist H. H. Townsend visited the site in 1924, the deposit sported several open cuts and one timbered shaft. During the year that followed, "very little development work" took place at the so-called "Nuka Claims;" the only improvement was a 20-foot tunnel. Harrington, by the summer of 1925, had taken a partner and was planning to install a small mill that winter. (News reports at the time noted that an Ellis ball mill was on its way to one of the area's mines; it may have been headed for Harrington's property.) The geologist that visited the property, however, told him that there was "not sufficient ore of a rich value in sight to warrant this expenditure." Perhaps on the basis of that advice, no mill was installed.[62] Harrington soon turned his interest in the property over to Denis Hurley. Hurley's interest in the site,

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[61] Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits*, USGS Professional Paper 625-B (1970), B3, B9.

[62] Harry H. Townsend, "Brief Narrative Report," U.S. Bureau of Mines Report IR 195-47, 4; J. G. Shepard, "The Nuka Claims (Harrington)," in U.S. Bureau of Mines, Report MR 104-1 (1925); *Seward Gateway*, December 5, 1925, 9.

however, was brief; that October, he relinquished all rights at the property to Calvin M. Brosius.

Brosius, a prominent Seward resident, was a lumber and building materials dealer. He had no direct interest in mining. Having supplied many area miners, however, it is not surprising that he became active in mining operations. In addition to the Nuka Bay property, he and partner Bill Knaak also had interests in mines at Crown Point (near Lawing, north of Seward) and on Stetson Creek (just south of Cooper Landing). Knaak was a miner by profession; he did most of the development work, while Brosius's support appears to have been primarily financial.[63]

The Nuka Bay property lay idle until 1928, when "some work" took place there. By the following year, Brosius and his associates had established the Nuka Bay Mining Company. Brosius let a contract to Alec Erickson to dig 100 feet of tunnel at the site. Another worker soon joined him. By year's end, "about 95 feet of tunnel was driven" and a mill (probably a "small gasoline-driven Gibson mill") had been delivered to a location "near the portal of the tunnel," but the mill was never operated. Access to the site was via the ARC trail for about three-quarters of a mile north from Beauty Bay; at that point stood a Nuka Bay Mining Company-owned log cabin, from which a 3,400-foot trail led eastward (and up a steep slope) to the mine.[64]

Development work appears to have continued at the mine for the next two years. By the summer of 1931, Earl Pilgrim noted that the "principal owners" of the "Nuka Bay Mines Company" were Brosius and Mrs. E. B. Weybrecht. The mine site consisted of three lode claims: Nooka, Nooka Extension, and Nooka No. 1. The complex consisted of the now-abandoned upper tunnel, at elevation 1,470 feet, where Harrington had carried on his early work; a lower tunnel, nearly 400 feet long, at elevation 1,140 feet; and an open cut at elevation 1,240 feet. An upper camp was located at elevation 1,200 feet. (A lower camp was not mentioned, but it probably consisted of the log cabin, and perhaps ancillary buildings as well, at the ARC trail junction.) The mill was situated at the mouth of the lower tunnel, where most of Brosius's activity appears to have taken place, but according to a 1936 report, the mill was probably never used.[65]

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[63] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1928*, Bulletin 813, 17; Paulsteiner, *Sinful Town*, 86; *Seward Gateway*, June 24, 1929, 2; Deed Book 7, p. 192, Magistrate's Office.

[64] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1928*, Bulletin 813, 17; *Seward Gateway*, June 24, 1929, 2; *Seward Gateway*, July 5, 1929, 4; Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1929*, Bulletin 824, 21; Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 48.

[65] Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 48; Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1936*, Bulletin 897, 30. A handmade map, drawn in late 1932 by a representative of the Seward Chamber of Commerce, noted the "C. M. Brosius" mine at the Nuka Bay Mining

After 1931, the operation lapsed into idleness. In 1933, Charles Goyne may have spent time at the site (his Surprise Bay property was being worked by others that year), and plans were also announced to have miner John Soble drive a 30-foot tunnel there. The tunnel, however, was apparently never begun, and no further development work took place at the site. Brosius, who still controlled the property, continued to perform annual assessment work until 1941. The following year, Brosius was killed in an accident at his lumber store, and the claims were apparently relinquished soon afterward.[66] In 1968, two new mining claims (North Beauty No. 1 and No. 2) were made at the property, and the following year the Snowlevel claim was located, possibly at the same site as the North Beauty claims. The owners, all of whom held other area claims, were Donald Glass of Jamestown, Ohio; Martin L. Goreson of Seward; J. L. Young of Kenai; and Ray Wells, address unknown. No development work took place as a result of these claims. The two North Beauty claims were abandoned, and by the early 1980s the Snowlevel claim had been relinquished.[67]

The camp, last actively used in 1931, deteriorated quickly. In 1936, the mill was "exposed to the weather and in bad condition." By 1967, Donald Richter noted during a site visit that "no buildings remain standing in the prospect area, and the tailing pile at the portal of the [lower] exploration tunnel is largely grown over with alder." The portal of the tunnel, with its "410 feet of underground workings," was still open and accessible. The trail from the ARC trail to the camp, however, was "almost completely covered with growth" and the cabin where the trail commenced was in a collapsed state.[68]

In July 1991, the mine and camp were visited by National Park Service personnel as part of the agency's Mining Inventory and Monitoring Program. As part of their detailed reconnaissance, they noted that "the site consists of a large concentration of mining equipment and machinery,

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Company site; in addition, it noted the "Brosius Cache" about two miles south of the mine. This notation may have depicted the so-called lower camp, or it may be a feature not elsewhere identified. The map is located in Box 1, Seward Chamber of Commerce Collection, Seward Public Library.

[66] Barry, *History of Mining*, 151; *Seward Gateway*, July 14, 1933, 3; July 15, 1933, 2; July 16, 1933, 2; Roehm, "Summary Report of Investigations," 1941, 11; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 179.

[67] George A. Moerlein, "Mining Claim Appraisals, Proposed Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Monument," Contract No. 8000-6-0038 (San Francisco, NPS, July 1976), 3, 9-10, in Logan Hovis files, AKSO-RCR.

[68] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1936*, Bulletin 897, 30; Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits*, 1970, B3.

an adit with associated ore cart track, a large spoil pile, and two prospect pits." No buildings were found, and artifacts were "composed mainly of tool fragments and industrial debris." This group, like Richter 24 years earlier, was unable to locate the upper tunnel. A few days later, members of the group visited the collapsed log cabin, at the base of the trail, that may have served as the lower camp. They found that "some courses" remained on all four walls; no roof existed, however, and the logs were "punky and sodden." A few associated artifacts were found nearby. Agency personnel made no attempt to nominate either property to the National Register of Historic Places.

Nukalaska Mining Company

The Nukalaska Mine, located on a near-vertical, north-facing slope high above Beauty Bay, was the last significant prospect in the Nuka Bay area to be located, and also the last to be commercially developed. Al Blair, who had previously developed the Blair-Sather prospect in Yalik Bay, discovered the vein and made three mineral claims in 1926. He appears to have remained active at the site through the summer of 1927.[69] Soon afterward, however, he lost interest in the area. In September 1931, veteran prospector Robert Hatcher (who was also active elsewhere in Nuka Bay) and fellow Sewardite T. S. McDougal claimed the vein but did little if any site work.[70] Hatcher apparently hired Ray Russell, who developed the site sufficiently to interest mining developer M. B. Parker from Hollywood, California, along with Edward P. Heck of Fellows, California and F. G. Manley of San Francisco. The group bought the property in early 1933. By the end of that year, a government geologist was probably referring to this site when he noted that "rumors were afloat of a number of deals pending with a view to the undertaking of more intensive work."[71]

By early 1934, Parker had formed the Nukalaska Mining Company. Commercial development proceeded immediately. Geologist Stephen Capps noted that the improvements included:

> the construction of 1¼ miles of road from the beach to the camp and thence to the lower terminal of the tramway, 2,000

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[69] *Seward Gateway*, June 25, 1927, 5; July 5, 1927, 3.

[70] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1936*, Bulletin 897, 28. Pilgrim ignored the site and did not mention either Blair's or Hatcher's efforts. He did, however, note that "late in the season of 1931 two veins were discovered in Shelter Cove by Frank Skinner. These veins were said to lie 20 feet apart...." These veins were probably of little economic value and were unrelated to the Nukalaska property. Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 50.

[71] Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits*, 1970, B8; Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1933*, Bulletin 864, 22; *Seward Gateway*, July 15, 1933, 2; May 11, 1935, 4; Deed Book 9, p. 349, Seward Magistrate's Office.

> feet upstream from the mill; a 3,500-foot 2-bucket 7/8-inch cable gravity tramway from the mine to the lower terminal...; and a mill, office, bunk houses, cook house, and blacksmith shop. The [flotation] mill is equipped with jaw crusher [and] ore bin, with a capacity of 1 ton an hour....[72]

The original or western quartz vein, according to Capps, "crops out on the crest of a high, rugged ridge" at elevation 2,280 feet and "is so steep as to be difficultly [sic] accessible." To mine it, an adit (or tunnel) was driven into the cliff face 200 feet below the outcrop. Workers found the vein after digging into the mountain for 230 feet; once encountered, they began crosscut tunnels that, by August 1936, had been driven 175 feet to the west and 200 feet to the east. Active stoping was also carried on; in one section, stopes reached 80 feet above the adit level. At the mine portal stood a bunkhouse, ore bin and tram terminal, with an enclosed blacksmith shop.[73]

Development proved so promising that in 1935, the company staked 15 additional mining claims. The size of the crew also increased; in 1934, the crew was evidently fairly small, but by 1936 the company had 20 workers at the site, enough for one daily shift in the mine and three shifts in the mill.[74] Workers in 1935 included Don McGee and Amos Buffin; company managers included Parker, his assistant Z. N. Marcott, and Ray Russell.[75]

During 1936 and 1937, good news prevailed at the Nukalaska Mine. After an August 1936 visit, for example, geologist Stephen Capps noted that "the material milled was yielding about $100 to the ton in gold, notwithstanding the fact that about two-thirds of it was country rock that had to be mined along with the vein quartz." Based on such promising results, a crew numbering either 19 or 20 people (including one woman) worked a six-month season, from May to November.[76]

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[72] *Seward Gateway*, April 13, 1935, 1; Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1936,* Bulletin 897, 28. The mill's capacity was far larger than most of the Nuka Bay area mills, but it was somewhat smaller than that of the Alaska Hills mill. The road was apparently built entirely with private funds; available records show no involvement by the Alaska Road Commission.

[73] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1936,* Bulletin 897, 28; J. C. Roehm, "Summary Report of Investigations," 1941, Report IR 104-2, 6.

[74] *Seward Gateway*, April 13, 1935, 1; Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1936,* Bulletin 897, 28.

[75] *Seward Gateway*, May 11, 1935, 4; May 14, 1935, 1; May 16, 1935, 4.

[76] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1936,* Bulletin 897, 29; *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1937*, Bulletin 910, 29; B. D. Stewart, *Report of the Commissioner of Mines to the Governor for the Biennium ended December 31, 1936* (Juneau, n.p., 1937), 52.

Despite the company's success, managers recognized that the existing system of ore removal needed to be changed. Snowslides each year destroyed the 2,000-foot road that connected the camp with the lower tramway terminal; nearly every year, moreover, snowslides swept the towers away from the tramway that connected the mine entrance to the road terminus. The destruction caused by those events limited the milling season to three months annually.[77] In order to circumvent those problems, managers by the end of 1937 unveiled plans to drive a new, eastern tunnel "on the opposite side of the creek from the old workings."[78] Work both that year and in 1938, however, was limited to the western workings.

In June 1938, a fire "destroyed part of the buildings comprising its surface plant;" the milling plant (perhaps the only building involved) was "completely destroyed." The company, as a result, gained new management; the new managers, who resided in Los Angeles, included W. V. (Vince) Conley, President; W. R. Foster, Treasurer; and J. S. Mathews, Secretary. Mining was suspended for the remainder of the year.[79]

That winter, another tragedy struck as "heavy snow slides ... damaged some of the surface equipment at the Nukalaska property." The twin disasters forced the company to lay off two-thirds of its workers. The remainder of the work force soldiered on, however, and "in spite of the delays required for these repairs, the operators [in 1939] were able to extend the long crosscut they had been driving about 350 feet." By year's end, the length of the crosscut tunnels that branched off the main, 230-foot tunnel reached 200 feet (to the west) and 490 feet (to the east). The western tunnel was abandoned thereafter.[80]

On June 1, 1940, the company began to develop the long-planned eastern or lower tunnel, the portal of which was at elevation 1,300 feet. Work on

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[77] J. C. Roehm, "Summary Report of Investigations," 1941, Report IR 104-2, 1.

[78] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1937*, Bulletin 910, 29. The company proposed an east tunnel "primarily on the strength of [geologist Stephen] Capps' statement as to continuation of the ore in depth." Capps had visited the site in August 1936. Roehm, "Summary Report of Investigations," 1941, Report IR 104-2, 5.

[79] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1938*, Bulletin 917, 28; Roehm, "Summary Report of Investigations," 1941, Report IR 104-2, 6; Hulda Hanson interview, April 2, 1997. Hanson recalled that Conley came from Salinas, not Los Angeles.

[80] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1939*, Bulletin 926, 25; B. D. Stewart, *Report of the Commissioner of Mines to the Governor for the Biennium ended December 31, 1940* (Juneau, n.p., 1941), 85; Roehm, "Summary Report of Investigations," 1941, Report IR 104-2, 1.

the new tunnel continued all summer and by early September, 1,250 feet had been dug.[81]

By the following July, 90 feet had been added to it. At its portal stood a compressor shed; between there and the mine camp stretched a 2200-foot aerial tramway with a single ⅝" cable and a ⅜" carrier cable. A 1941 visitor to the camp noted that "safety conditions are none too good: the men ride to and from work on the power tram on a two-wheel carrier, which almost touches the ground in two places, and the carrier cable drags on bedrock in several places forming grooves." The tram to the mine's western tunnel workings, described as a 3,700-foot aerial tram with a double ⅞" cable, was no longer used but had not been removed.[82] The camp and the surrounding area had changed little since the mid-1930s. The main camp consisted of three wooden buildings—the office, a bunk house, and cook house—plus two tents. A machine shop was located 300 feet above the camp; at the beach, 1¼ miles northeast of the main camp, stood a cabin and a small storehouse. Miners lived in the bunkhouse, the tents, and the beach cabin; the crew in 1940 numbered 12 to 15 people, which included a tram operator, a blacksmith, and site manager Vince Conley. Two men lived with their wives, and one of the couples had their two young children in residence.[83]

During the summer of 1941, mining was concentrated on a western extension of the eastern workings. According to a mine resident, however, production had to be curtailed because of falling rocks and because so much water was encountered that fuses could not stay lit. After that season, production shut down for a decade or more. During the 1950s some Hawaiians, locally called the Honolulu group, tried to rework the mine but the venture was apparently short-lived.[84] The site appears to have lain idle until 1969, when J. L. Young, V. J. Wright, and Ray Wells claimed the property as the Lucky Devil Mine. No known production took place there, however; they last performed assessment work on the property in 1971, and there have been no mining claims on the property since then. In 1976, the property was assessed at a rock-bottom valuation of $250.[85]

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[81] J. C. Roehm, "Summary Report of Mining Investigations in the Bethel, Otter, Innoko and Kenai Precincts and Itinerary, August 19 to September 5, 1940," Report IR 195-29, 15.

[82] Roehm, "Summary Report of Investigations," 1941, Report IR 104-2, 6.

[83] Hulda Hanson interview, April 2, 1997; Roehm, "Summary Report of Investigations," 1941, Report IR 104-2, 6. Hanson recalls only one tent at the camp.

[84] Hulda Hanson interview, April 2, 1997; Roehm, "Summary Report of Investigations," 1941, Report IR 104-2, 4-5; Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits,* 1970, B3, B8.

[85] Moerlein, "Mining Claim Appraisals," July 1976, 6.

The Nukalaska Mine, in retrospect, was one of the largest mines in the Nuka Bay area. Although activity took place at the site off and on between 1926 and the 1950s, it appears to have operated commercially only from 1934 until 1938. (No commercial production took place after 1938 because no mill was in place.) During that time, two widely varying estimates have emerged of its gold yield. J. C. Roehm, in 1941, reported that "the total production ... was reported at 2,320 tons of ore milled" and a "total production figure of $116,000." But Donald H. Richter, who based production figures solely on years of activity and an assumed volume of 200 tons of gold ore per year, estimated the mine's yield to be approximately $35,000. Based on the size of the crew, the length of the workings, and (admittedly anecdotal) descriptions of the ore's value, Roehm's yield appears to be the more accurate of the two.[86]

This property, along with most sites in the Nuka Bay area, has significantly deteriorated over the years. When Richter visited the site in June 1967, he wrote that the

> road from Shelter Cove to the mill & camp ... was obscured by vegetation, and the mill equipment and camp buildings had been destroyed by man and weather. An aerial tram, however, was still standing; it has a vertical drop of about 1,900 feet and extends from the mine adit to a terminus three-eighths of a mile west of the mill. Southwest of the mill the remains of another aerial tram, or possibly one that was under construction in 1940, extends up the east face of the mountain.... The mine workings were inaccessible owing to caved timbers at the portal. Four hundred feet west of the mine ... a small bunkhouse still stands cabled onto a narrow ledge.[87]

Despite its relatively advanced state of decay, the remaining site evidence has intrigued visitors. By the early 1980s, a National Park Service report noted that "the access road to the complex is extremely overgrown, and the effects of past mining activities are not readily visible." Even so, archeologist Harvey Shields called the site a "Jewel in the Jungle." At the old camp, he noted that

> Because of the underbrush and overgrowth it was difficult to get a truly accurate idea of what was there. However, several collapsed buildings were seen along with many pieces of large

[86] Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits,* 1970, B3, B8; Roehm, "Summary Report of Investigations," 1941, Report IR 104-2, 7.

[87] Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits,* 1970, B8.

> equipment such as generators, a possible flotation cell, a Model A Ford, and an assay office. This was in addition to many smaller tools and household items.... Cables could still be discerned high overhead that relate to the system bringing ore down from the mine. The actual shaft was not located but local knowledge suggests that it was intentionally sealed off with a great deal of equipment stored inside. [The complex] has a great deal to offer the National Park Service and the nation. Most obviously it is a time capsule for understanding early to mid-twentieth century mining in Kenai Fjords.

The property's value was reflected in Kenai Fjord National Park's *General Management Plan*, issued in July 1984. The plan noted that "the abandoned mine facility at Shelter Cove is an excellent representative of the type of mining operation which occurred in the Nuka Bay area."[88]

In 1989, a team from the NPS's Mining Inventory and Monitoring Program visited the mill and camp area. The description of the area is more accurate, if perhaps less dramatic, than that provided in 1983:

> The Nukalaska mill and camp location consists of several collapsed structures with a large inventory of associated, in-place artifacts dating from the 1920s and 1930s. Buildings, for the most part, are in a state of total ruins. Several structures appear as diffuse lumber scatters with foundation remnants. Distinct but collapsed structures include three plank-framed cabins, a plank-framed cookhouse, a powerhouse/blacksmith shop, and a mill building. Associated with these last two features is a huge inventory of in-place artifacts and equipment associated with the processing of gold-bearing ore materials. Other associated features include a collapsed shed, an equipment scatter, a stationary engine, and a barrel scatter. Although the structures are in poor condition, site integrity is exceptional.[89]

Personnel spent several days making a detailed description of the property. In the evaluation that followed that visit, agency personnel noted that the site was "probably eligible" to the National Register of

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[88] NPS, *Kenai Fjords National Park, General Management Plan*, 30, 60; Harvey M. Shields, "Historic Mining Site Evaluation in Kenai Fjords National Monument, 1983," in "ARO Site Files, KEFJ" folder, Mining Inventory Program Collection, AKSO-RCR.

[89] Logan Hovis and Mike Elder, "National Park Service, Mining Inventory and Monitoring Program, Cultural Resource Site Inventory Form," KEFJ-89-003, August 11, 1989, in SEL-177 folder, Mining Inventory Program Collection, AKSO-RCR.

Historic Places. A year later, historian Logan Hovis wrote a "Determination of Eligibility" report in which he concluded that the mine and camp was eligible for listing on the National Register under criteria A, C, and D. That report was forwarded to Alaska's State Historic Preservation Officer, Judith Bittner. On April 24, 1991, Bittner agreed, noting that "we concur that [the site is] eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under the stated criteria."

During the summer of 1991, NPS personnel returned to the area and visited the Lucky Devil Mine (i.e., the west workings of the Nukalaska Mine). The site included a collapsed cabin with associated artifacts, a pit of unknown function, an unrecorded adit, and a nearby cable tram. It has not yet been evaluated for National Register eligibility.[90]

Glass and Heifner Mine (Earl Mount and Little Creek prospects)

In September 1923, shortly after Frank Steen's "discovery" attracted scores of miners to the area, Eric Burman and H. Carlson found four promising quartz veins near the head of Beauty Bay and dubbed it the Little Creek property. The site of their find was along Ferrum (Iron) Creek, just 0.9 miles from tidewater and less than three miles away from Frank Steen's Alaska Hills claim. The pair began developing their property that summer; they excavated a large number of open cuts, dug a 20-foot tunnel, and roughed out a trail between the claim and the bay.[91]

Carlson soon lost his interest in the property, and in June 1928 Burman sold his rights at the site to Earl Mount, a longtime Seward resident and proprietor of the Seward Leather Works.[92] In the summer of 1929, Mount hired a miner to help develop his property. The claimant periodically visited the prospect but probably spent little time there.[93]

By 1931, Mount had staked two claims—Little Creek No. 1 and Little Creek No. 2—and either he or his employees had performed development work on four of the property's quartz veins. On the vein that had been developed in 1924, a tunnel had now been extended another 30 feet. The other three veins, located to the south of the tunnel, featured open cuts

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[90] Frank Broderick and Cassie Flynn, "National Park Service, Mining Inventory and Monitoring Program, Cultural Resource Site Inventory Form," KEFJ-91-003, July 21, 1991, in SEL-177 folder, MIP Collection, AKSO-RCR.

[91] Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 44; Record Book 8, p. 305, in Seward Magistrate's Office. The claim was 200 feet above sea level.

[92] *Seward Gateway*, July 13, 1927, 8; Deed Book 8, p. 192, in Seward Magistrate's Office. The 1920 U.S. Census listed Mount as the proprietor of a Seward repair store.

[93] *Seward Gateway*, July 5, 1929, 4; July 8, 1929, 7; July 16, 1929, 2.

and trenches. A small camp (of unspecified composition) had been established not far northeast of the tunnel.[94]

By the following year, Mount had staked an additional claim. Geologist Stephen Capps, who investigated the property in 1936, noted that Mount began leasing the property to others in 1932; either he or the lessee sank a 15-foot shaft that year.[95] For the next two years, Jack Morgan, Guy Kerns and other lessees extended the existing tunnel another 400 feet and completed a raise that extended to the surface. The lessees, however, failed to find enough gold to justify the purchase of a mill, and in 1934 they abandoned their lease. For years afterward, Mount continued to hold the property but limited his involvement to annual assessment work.[96] The claim was eventually abandoned.

In 1958, Seward residents William Knaak and Frank Cramer relocated the property, calling it the Beauty Bay Mine. They erected a cabin, built an arrastra, and treated 500 to 600 pounds of ore to determine its value. Cramer, a barber, and Knaak, a World War I veteran, carpenter, and longtime miner, attempted to develop it for the next few years. Knaak reportedly found several more ore bodies and remained active with development work until 1962, but the partners did not commercially develop the property.[97]

In 1965, two men from Jamestown, Ohio, geologist Don Glass and pharmacist Max Heifner, agreed to purchase the property for $52,500. They began making payments that year, and in 1968 they completed the purchase and secured a warranty deed from the former claim owners. Glass visited the property every year for more than a decade. Beginning in 1965, Glass worked the Beauty Bay claim. Then, in 1968, he staked the Glass-Heifner No. 1 and No. 2 claims.[98]

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[94] Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 45-46.

[95] Heath, "Nuka Bay Mining District," 5.

[96] *Seward Gateway*, June 19, 1933, 3; April 23, 1935, 2; May 16, 1935, 4; Smith, *Mineral Resources in Alaska, 1936*, Bulletin 897, 32; Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits*, 1970, B8.

[97] Barry *Seward History, III*, 299; Barry, *A History of Mining*, 151, 164, 169. The Alaska Department of Natural Resources, in its annual reports, noted (perhaps erroneously) that the new claimants were William Knaack and Cecil Kramer. Knaak, according to Barry, had been mining since the early 1930s; he had mined along Mills Creek (in the Canyon Creek drainage), on Stetson Creek (south of Cooper Landing), and at the Victor antimony mine on Kenai Lake. Alaska DNR, *Report of the Division of Mines and Minerals* for 1959 (p. 59), 1960 (p. 74), 1961 (p. 93), and 1962 (p. 106).

[98] There is some confusion about the property, regarding both the method of purchase and the names of the mining claim. Max Heifner, interviewed on December 16, 1996, stated that the mine was purchased in 1963 (not 1965) when a consortium of people from Ohio purchased the mining property and appointed an overseer to operate the mine.

The new partnership reinvigorated activity at the mine. Heifner noted that soon after the partnership began purchasing the property, Glass "cleared out an ad hoc [aircraft] runway along the beach and made it sufficiently long by clearing out a lot of alders that grew above the high tide line."[99] He also widened the mile-long trail between the beach and mine with a bulldozer. In 1965, Glass purchased a used four-foot ball mill from the state and installed it on the property. By 1967 he had also lengthened the existing cabin by 15 to 18 feet and had added a machine shop. In addition to the ball mill, the milling equipment consisted of two jaw crushers and a concentrating table. By 1973, the partners had reportedly invested $230,000 in the operation.[100]

Records are not available regarding the amount of ore milled from the site, but it appears to have been a small-scale commercial operation. Donald Richter noted in 1967, for example, that "a limited amount of ore" had been mined, and the Seward City Council, in 1974, stated that $27,000 in gold had been extracted from the site during the previous year. George Moerlein, asked to assess the operation in July 1976, stated that the partners had produced "less than 100 tons" of ore over the last 12 years (although he also stated that "to date, the property has no recorded production"). He assessed the property, exclusive of improvements, at $30,000; this was more than twice that of any other Nuka Bay mining property. Heifner, in a recent interview, noted that the partners were "fairly successful" but that they didn't get rich.[101]

That arrangement, however, proved unsatisfactory, and before the year was out, he and Glass were in charge of the property. Regarding claim names, most sources note that the partners worked the Beauty Bay and the two Glass-Heifner claims. George Moerlein, however, investigated claim records and stated that the partners had five claims (the Little Beauty Nos. 1 through 5) and also claimed an associated millsite at the head of Beauty Bay. Moerlein, "Mining Claim Appraisals," July 1976, 2.

[99] Max Heifner interview, December 16, 1996. Richter, who visited in 1967, noted that "a privately maintained landing strip at the head of Beauty Bay is adequate for wheeled light aircraft." Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits,* 1970, B1; also see Alaska Planning Group, *Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Monument, Alaska, A Master Plan,* December 1973, 7.

[100] Barry, *A History of Mining,* 169; Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits,* 1970, B8; Max Heifner interview, December 16, 1996; Seward City Council, Resolution #899, February 25, 1974. State regulatory reports noted that the operation was engaged in mill construction from 1965 through 1967 and supported a crew of eight throughout that period. The reports noted no further activity from the Glass-Heifner property. Alaska DNR, *Report of the Division of Mines and Minerals* for 1965 (p. 82), 1966 (p. 103), and 1967 (p. 83).

[101] Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits,* 1970, B3; Seward City Council, Resolution #899, February 25, 1974; Moerlein, "Mining Claim Appraisals," July 1976, 2, 3, 8; Heifner interview, December 16, 1996. Moerlein noted that the $52,500 which Glass and Heifner paid for their claim "probably exceeds the gross value of the indicated

Glass returned to the site each year until 1979. By 1981, the partners had leased their property. They later sold the mine on contract to Harry Waterfield, who mined and performed assessment work. After Waterfield's death, Glass and Heifner again claimed the property and continued to hold it until 1994, when they sold it to Seward resident Tom DeMachele, the current claimant. Because mining has remained active in recent years, there are still two valid unpatented mining claims at the site: Glass-Heifner No. 1 and Glass-Heifner No. 2.[102]

Although development activities took place in the mid-1920s, early 1930s, and late 1950s, commercial mining took place only after 1965. Recent activity, moreover, has diminished whatever historic value the site may have acquired from pre-World War II developments. Shields, in 1983, noted that recent mining activities had "pretty much obliterated the traces of the early mining activity."[103]

In August 1989, a National Park Service team visited the site as part of the Mining Inventory and Monitoring Program. A report generated after that visit noted that the camp still contained all the buildings that had been constructed in the 1960s save the bunkhouse, which had burned. It also stated that "scattered pre-1940 artifacts were observed and recorded, although they have been displaced from their original contexts and integrated into the modern venture." Based on that evidence, investigator Logan Hovis stated that "it seems likely that this site is not eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places," and no attempt was made to prepare such a nomination.

Miscellaneous Sites, Beauty Bay

Little is known about other mining sites adjacent to Beauty Bay. Somewhere along the bay's west side, perhaps midway between the head of the bay and Shelter Cove, was a prospect worked by Robert Evans. Evans, as noted in Chapter 6, was a homesteader who lived in a cabin near present-day McCarty Fjord. Nuka Island resident Josephine Sather recalled that when Evans "first came to this part of the country he did assessment work for others. Later he hunted seals, and finally he took to prospecting." Records related to Evans are few, but a May 1935 article

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gold on the property that could possibly be mined at a profit, a fact that the present owners may now realize..."

[102] Heifner interview, December 16, 1996.

[103] Shields, "Historic Mining Site Evaluation in Kenai Fjords National Monument, 1983."

from the *Seward Gateway* suggests that he remained at one site for an extended period:

> Bob Evans came to town this morning riding his Speedboat "Nuka Bay Comet." It was his first visit from the gold camp in two and one-half years. He is doing development work on gold claims owned jointly by Mrs. P. C. McMullen and himself, driving a long tunnel into a rich lead. Mr. Evans, veteran prospector and amateur photographer of exceptional ability, is in town for a brief vacation and for supplies.[104]

Evans probably began working the claim in late 1931 or 1932; how long he worked the site is not known, although other comments by Mrs. Sather suggest that he may have intermittently returned to the site until just before his death in 1941.[105] Unfortunately, however, no area visitors ever noted the specific site of his claim, and the site may now be indistinguishable from the surrounding terrain. Evans probably never built a cabin at the site, preferring instead to travel there from his East Arm cabin, and inasmuch as no records establish specific development work, he probably never installed milling equipment.

Scattered sources refer to other ephemeral prospecting ventures. The Homestead and Anchor Group, purportedly located between the Alaska Hills Mine and Nuka Bay, was located shortly after Skeen's find in 1923, and it was visited by geological investigators in both 1924 and 1925. A 15-foot tunnel was driven on the property in 1924, but the prospects were so poor that it was probably abandoned after 1925. So far as is known, no recent investigators have rediscovered this site.

Two historic cabins were constructed on the shore of Beauty Bay which are not known to be related to a mining venture. Earl Pilgrim noted both during his 1931 investigation; both were located at the head of the bay. One, at the base of the trail to the mining development along Ferrum Creek, was probably built by Earl Mount (or someone in his employ) after Mount acquired the mining property in 1927. A field examination notes that the other cabin, at the northeast end of the bay, is located at the southern end of the old wagon road; in all probability, therefore, it was built in conjunction with either the Alaska Hills or Nuka Bay properties. Geologist Don Glass may have obliterated Mount's cabin as part of his airstrip development during the 1960s. If not, it may still exist, though in

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[104] Sather, "Our Glorious World," 40; *Seward Gateway,* May 16, 1935, 3.

[105] Engineer Earl Pilgrim, who visited in the summer of 1931, made no note of Evans' activities, but a Chamber of Commerce map, drawn in late 1932, identifies his prospect. Sather, "Our Glorious World," 40-41.

RICH STRIKE MADE BY FRANK SKEEN AT NUKA BAY

VEIN TWO AND A HALF FEET IN WIDTH AND FAIRLY PLASTERED WITH GOLD

Frank Skeen returned from Nuka Bay last evening with two hundred pounds of the richest gold-bearing quartz every shown in this vicinity

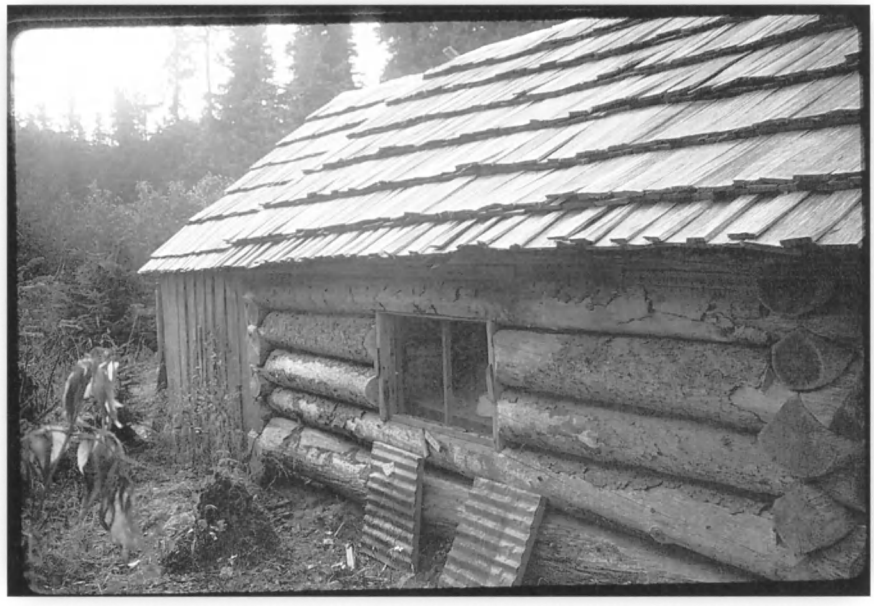
Seward Gateway, July 2, 1923, 1.

Frank Skeen's June 1923 gold discovery led to the Alaska Hills Mine, which was the first commercially productive mine in the Nuka Bay district. The mill, shown in the photograph, was completed in November 1924; it operated until 1928. *Seward Gateway*, December 5, 1925, 9.

Foss Wright Sargent, a recent migrant to Seward, may have helped build the Placer Creek cabin. He was one of a trio of men who owned the cabin from the late 1940s until 1953. NPS photo.

Remains of tunnels, mining equipment, camp buildings and roads are scattered throughout the West Arm and North Arm of Nuka Bay. This 1970s-era photo may have been taken at the Goyne/Golden Horn prospect. Don Follows photo, NPS/ Alaska Area Office print file, NARA Anchorage.

Crews from NPS's Mining Inventory and Monitoring Program visited various Nuka Bay-area historic sites during the late 1980s and early 1990s. They encountered hundreds of artifacts--tramways (left), classifiers (below), and other items--that remain from the mines' heyday in the 1920s and 1930s. NPS photos.



The Placer Creek Cabin, built in 1945 or 1946, is located in the Resurrection River valley north of Exit Glacier. The only standing historic building in the park, it was photographed in November 1992. NPS photo.

The Placer Creek Cabin, as seen in November 1992. NPS photo.

deteriorated condition. The other cabin is now just above the tidal zone, the land having subsided during the March 1964 earthquake; only a few base logs remain to identify it.[106]

Nuka Bay Mining Sites: North Arm

Rosness and Larson Property

This property is located on the west side of North Arm, more specifically two miles northeast of Moss Point and surrounding a small cove. The mountain slope, in the area of the workings, juts up fairly steeply from the water's edge. All human activity at this site took place within several hundred yards of tidewater.

This site is one of the first places where minerals were recorded in the present park boundaries. When Ulysses S. Grant made the area's first geological investigation in 1909, he noted that a four-man prospecting party—Daniel Morris, James Sheridan, George W. Kuppler, and John H. Lee—had located several pyritized dikes at the site and staked a mineral claim. Grant recorded five mining sites that year along the park's southern seacoast; this site, however, was the only one that was later developed.[107]

The claim made by Morris and his fellow prospectors was quickly abandoned, and the property lay idle until Skeen's find brought renewed interest to the area. Soon afterward, "old John Gillespie" (as he was known locally) rediscovered the site. By the summer of 1924, he had teamed up with Albert Rosness.[108] An investigator that year noted that the partners were pursuing a quartz vein that was exposed at tide level,

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[106] J. G. Shepard, "The Homestead and Anchor Group, Nuka Bay, Kenai Precinct," Sept. 1925 (Report MR 104-1); Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, Plate I; Bud Rice interview, December 12, 1997.

[107] Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits,* 1970, B3; U. S. Grant, "The Southeastern Coast of Kenai Peninsula," in USGS Bulletin 587 (1915), 229.

[108] Sather, "The Birds and the Bears," 27. There is some confusion regarding who, in the Rosness family, worked at the mine. Earl Pilgrim, who visited the mine in 1931, wrote that Albert Rosness was one of three partners in the venture. A 1928 news article, however, discussed an injury to "John Rosness, Nuka Bay mining man," and in 1932, a Chamber of Commerce list of area "quartz properties" described the mine as "Alfred Rosness, North Arm." John Rosness and his family were longtime Seward residents; it is not known, however, whether the three Rosnesses just described were related to each other, whether all three worked at the mine, or even whether there were three different men named Albert, Alfred, and John Rosness. *Seward Gateway,* August 2, 1928, 8; Seward Chamber of Commerce, "Kenai Peninsula, Alaska Quartz Properties," in Box 4, Seward C of C Collection, Seward Library; Paulsteiner, *Sinful Town,* 99.

but "little exploratory work" had been done at that time. By the following summer, "a small amount of work" consisting "mostly of surface trenching" had taken place at the site. But the site investigator that year was pessimistic to an extreme; he stated that "nothing of any importance was discovered," and furthermore predicted that "it is not likely that the prospect will ever prove of commercial value."[109]

Nothing more was heard about the property for the next several years. By 1931, however, Gillespie had abandoned his interest in the site; Rosness's new partners were Josie Emsweiler and Frank Larson.[110] Investigator Earl Pilgrim, who visited the area that July, noted two men working there. At the quartz vein located in the southwest corner of the cove, they had erected a bulkhead to prevent waves from entering the workings. They had mined the decomposed surface material and hoisted it up to an ore bin by means of a trolley and windlass. Thirty feet to the south, a 28-foot tunnel had been dug; near the end of it, a winze had been sunk to a depth of 27 feet. Two hundred and fifty feet northwest of the beach workings, at an elevation of 110 feet, was a 20-foot tunnel. Seventy feet to the north was an open cut; below the cut was a 105-foot tunnel. In order to process the ore from the three tunnels and the various surface croppings, the partners had erected a gasoline-driven Ellis mill; the mill, located just below the 20-foot tunnel, was small, having a capacity of four tons per day. In addition, the site featured a small frame residence and two tents.[111]

By 1932, Emsweiler's interest in the property had been replaced by that of Nuka Island resident Peter Sather, and the mine continued to operate on a commercially-productive basis for another year. Donald Richter, who chronicled the site's history, was skeptical about the level of commercial activity, noting that the property "apparently produced some gold" during the 1931-33 period. Using rough calculations, however, he estimated a total production of about $15,000 in gold during that biennium.[112]

The property was probably not active after 1933, and by 1967, when Richter visited the site, he described the mill and camp buildings as

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[109] Townsend, "Brief Narrative Report," U.S. Bureau of Mines Report IR 195-47, 7; J. G. Shepard, "Rosness-Gillespie Prospect, Nuka Bay, Kenai Precinct" (Report MR 104-1), September 1925.

[110] Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 41-42. In Pilgrim's report, Josie's surname is Ehmswiler; Josie was probably related to Charles Emsweiler, a local game guide.

[111] Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 41-42.

[112] Seward Chamber of Commerce, "Map of Nuka Bay Mining Properties," 1932, in Box 1, Seward C of C Collection, Seward Public Library; Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits,* 1970, B3, B11.

"ruined."[113] In May 1969, the property was restaked as the North Nuka No. 1 and No. 2 claims by J. L. Young, V. J. Wright, and Ray Wells. The trio, however, apparently made no improvements to the site, and they abandoned their yearly assessment work after 1971. The site has lain idle since that time.[114]

In July 1991, National Park Service personnel visited the property as part of the Mining Inventory and Monitoring Program. The site that year featured "a power plant with a mill, two adits at tide level, an adit on a hillside, a penstock, a dam, and scattered artifacts." Power generating equipment was located on the floor of the ruined power plant, mining equipment was found outside of one of the adit portals, and scattered mining artifacts were found in the intertidal zone. The crew was not, however, able to locate either the cabin or the tent frames that comprised the former camp. Perhaps based on the poor condition and relative paucity of artifacts, the agency made no attempt to nominate the property to the National Register of Historic Places.

Kasanek-Smith Prospect

Southeast of the Rosness and Larson property, and directly across North Arm, is a small, unnamed cove. On a point of land, about one-half mile north of the cove, Alec Kasanek[115] and Jack Smith found a promising quartz vein in 1924 or early 1925. They called their claims the Butter Clam group. "Alex Kasenek" registered four claims in July 1925, and by September a tunnel 20 feet long had been dug near the high tide line. But ore values were apparently low; visiting geologist J. G. Shepard remarked that "the prospect does not seem to warrant further investigation."[116]

The partners, however, decided to press on. A *Seward Gateway* article in December 1925 stated that the pair were "remaining in the district over

[113] Stephen Capps, who wrote about the site in 1936 based solely on Earl Pilgrim's information plus "reports of local persons who are familiar with this property," noted that the 20-foot tunnel was now 110 feet long. (This may, however, have been an error, inasmuch as the tunnel was 110 feet above sea level.) By 1967, when Richter visited the site, the tunnel in question had caved in. If Capps's assertion is in error, very little tunneling took place at the site after Pilgrim's July 1931 visit. Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1936*, Bulletin 897, 32; Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits,* 1970, B11.

[114] Moerlein, "Mining Claim Appraisals," July 1976, 4, 9-10.

[115] This surname, as noted in local news reports and geological investigations, has been variously spelled as Kasnek, Kasenek, and Kesnoff; his given name has been reported as Alex as well as Alec. See *Seward Gateway*, December 4, 1925; June 25, 1927; J. G. Shepard, "The Kasnek-Smith Prospect, Nuka Bay, Kenai Precinct" (Report MR 104-1), September 1925; Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 40.

[116] Shepard, "The Kasnek-Smith Prospect," September 1925; Record Book 9, pp. 192-94, in Seward Magistrate's Office.

the winter." They remained active as late as 1927; that June, Kasanek was listed as one of several mining men who "will carry on development work on their various properties," and Smith was also at "the quartz camp" that year. The ever-bullish local newspaper stated that the partners were "developing one of the best looking properties in the Nuka Bay field."[117] Expectations, however, evidently exceeded reality, and by 1931 the property had been abandoned. The tunnel, at that time, was described as being 26 feet in length, which suggested that the partners undertook little development work after September 1925. (Based on evidence gained during a 1976 visit, the partners may also have dug out a surface trench above the adit; see discussion below.) Pilgrim noted a cabin, evidently associated with the tunnel; located in a small cove a few hundred feet south of the tunnel, it was probably built about 1925. So far as is known, no mill was ever brought to the property.[118]

Donald Richter, during his 1967 investigation, did not visit the property. But in July 1969, three prospectors—J. L. Young, V. J. Wright, and Ray Wells—established the Rainy Day claim there. They maintained yearly assessments until 1971, then abandoned the claim. George Moerlein, who visited the property in 1976, found "a 20 foot adit along the shore" and, at an elevation of 60 feet, "a shallow trench on a 3 foot wide quartz vein."[119] NPS personnel have since located the adit but no one, so far as is known, has visited the cabin site. The area has not been evaluated for National Register of Historic Places eligibility.

Robert Hatcher Prospects

Robert L. Hatcher was, according to one source, "one of the best known prospectors and miners of Alaska." Born in 1867, Hatcher first located Kenai Peninsula claims in 1910, near Moose Pass. Later, he staked the properties that became the well-known Independence Mine, north of Palmer. (Hatcher Pass, two miles southwest of the mine, is named in his honor.) During the mid-to-late 1930s, he returned to the Kenai and developed prospects on Palmer Creek (south of Hope) and Slate Creek (northeast of Cooper Landing). He remained active well into his dotage; at age 76, he located a new property between Lawing and Moose Pass. More successful than most, Hatcher was one of thousands who spent his life in search of gold and other "colors."[120]

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[117] *Seward Gateway*, December 4, 1925, 8; June 25, 1927, 5; July 5, 1927, 3; July 13, 1927, 8.

[118] Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 44.

[119] Moerlein, "Mining Claim Appraisals," July 1976, 4, 10.

[120] Barry, *A History of Mining on the Kenai Peninsula*, 112, 130, 151, 164, 177.

From the mid-1920s through the early 1930s, some of Hatcher's energy was directed toward a series of prospects along Nuka Bay's North Arm. He located five or more properties, none of which proved commercially successful. His first prospect was apparently located in 1923 or 1924; a geologist visited the site, on the east side of the arm, in the summer of 1924 and noted that Hatcher's work consisted of a single open cut and a nearby adit.

By the following summer, Hatcher had not improved either site, and the geological investigator was pessimistic that future adit work would prove fruitful. Perhaps as a result, Hatcher pursued new properties. During the summer of 1925, he and a partner known only as Mr. T. McDonald staked some "quartz ground" in a valley on North Arm's western side. The site, opposite Pilot Harbor and three-quarters of a mile upstream from tidewater, contained two huge waterfalls, ten feet wide and more than a thousand feet high. So far as is known, Hatcher and McDonald never developed this claim.[121]

Despite his lack of success, Hatcher did not give up. In the summer of 1927, he was still active in Nuka Bay mining.[122] By 1931, when engineer Earl Pilgrim visited the area, Hatcher had driven four tunnels along North Arm's eastern shoreline. Along the southern shore of Pilot Harbor, at the harbor mouth and just 10 feet above sea level, he had driven a tunnel for "a few feet;" just above that tunnel, at elevation 85, a 60-foot tunnel had been driven. These two tunnels were located on the Sea Level No. 1 claim. A quarter mile to the south, he had driven a 30-foot tunnel just above the high tide line. Finally, he had driven a 20-foot tunnel, at an elevation of 64 feet, three-quarters of a mile south of the 30-foot tunnel. The southernmost tunnel was part of the Utopia vein, which included the Utopia No. 1 and 2 and North Gold claims. Hatcher's cabin was located just south of the 30-foot tunnel, at the head of a small cove. A map that accompanies Pilgrim's report specifies locations for all four tunnels as well as the cabin.[123]

Little is known about the details of Hatcher's activities. It is not known, for example, whether Hatcher was actively working any of his prospects in 1931. No name has surfaced for one of Hatcher's claims. Details about the construction date or appearance of Hatcher's cabin are unknown. Similarly unknown is when Hatcher began drilling his various tunnels,

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[121] Townsend, "Brief Narrative Report," U.S. Bureau of Mines Report IR-195-47, 6; J. G. Shepard, "The Hatcher Prospect, Nuka Bay, Kenai Precinct," (Report MR 104-1), September 1925; *Seward Gateway*, December 5, 1925, 29.

[122] *Seward Gateway*, June 4, 1927, 6.

[123] Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 42.

and which of them (if any) were his "single open cut" noted in 1924 or the tunnel face noted in 1925.

Hatcher appears to have lost interest in his North Arm prospects after 1931. A year later, his name briefly surfaced in relation to a prospect on the western side of Nuka Bay's West Arm. (This location was not far north of the Lang-Skinner Prospect; its exact location, however, is uncertain.) Those prospects, however, did not pan out, and after 1932, Hatcher apparently abandoned Nuka Bay altogether.[124] His North Arm prospects remained forgotten until 1967, when Donald Richter visited the area. Richter relocated the tunnel, at the mouth of Pilot Harbor, that was "a few feet long," as well as the 30-foot tunnel located one-quarter mile to the south. He was not, however, able to enter either tunnel (rough waters prevented his leaving the boat), nor was he able to find either the cabin site or the other two tunnels.[125]

These prospects appear to have been entirely ignored in recent years. None were claimed during the 1970s, and none are active claims today. Members of NPS's Mining Inventory and Monitoring Program did not visit these properties during the late 1980s or early 1990s, and no attempts have been made to evaluate any of these sites for the National Register of Historic Places.

Charles Frank Prospect

Just one-quarter mile south of the Rosness and Larson property is the Charles Frank prospect. Located on a steep slope, the prospect is about fifty feet above the high tide line on the west side of North Arm.

The property was probably worked for only a short time. Between 1925 and 1931, Charles Frank dug a 60-foot adit, at the end of which was dug an additional 60 feet of drifting. Three hundred feet southwest of the tunnel, on a bluff 100 feet above sea level, a cabin was built to support the mine. No mill, however, was ever brought to the site.[126]

The property remained active until 1932 but no future developments took place, and it was all but ignored by later investigators. By 1967 the adit was covered with slide debris and vegetation, and no remains of the former cabin were noted. In 1969, a trio of prospectors—J. L. Young, V. J.

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[124] Seward Chamber of Commerce, "Map of Nuka Bay Mining Properties," 1932, in Box 1; Seward Chamber of Commerce, "Kenai Peninsula, Alaska Quartz Properties," in Box 4; both in Seward C of C Collection, Seward Public Library.

[125] Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits,* 1970, B11.

[126] Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 40.

Wright, and Ray Wells—established the Cheri claim at the site. So far as is known, however, they made no improvements to the property, and they ceased doing assessment work in 1971. The property has probably lain idle since the early 1930s.[127] Personnel from the NPS's Mining Inventory and Monitoring Program did not visit the site, and the property has not been considered for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

Nuka Bay Mining Sites: Surprise and Quartz Bays

Sonny Fox Mine (Babcock and Downey Property)

The Sonny Fox Mine is located one mile upstream from the mouth of Babcock Creek. This creek flows into Palisade Lagoon, which is at the head of Surprise Bay, an eastern extension of Nuka Bay's West Arm. The mine was, by all accounts, one of the major mining properties along the Kenai Peninsula's southern coast. It produced gold on a commercial basis for more than ten years, longer than any other Nuka Bay property during the pre-World War II period.

Gold was apparently discovered at the site soon after Frank Steen awakened mining interest in the area with his June 1923 find. That September, the *Seward Gateway* reported on Tom Babcock's good fortune:

> Tom Babcock, an old time Dawson and Willow Creek miner ... arrived today from Nuka Bay. Mr. Babcock prospected the country while at Nuka Bay, and found three claims on an opposite mountain, tracing the ore vein for 1200 feet....[128]

Babcock did not immediately develop his prospect. By 1925, however, he had acquired two partners; one was David W. Downey, the other was his brother A. C. Downey, a Seward longshoreman. J. G. Shepard, who visited the Sonny Fox mining claim at the "Babcock and Downey Prospect" that September, noted that the partners had already roughed out a mile-long trail from the beach to their mining property. He also noted that they had "ordered an Ellis chili ball mill and a small aerial tramway for installation this fall." Shepard, however, was patently skeptical of the

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[127] Seward Chamber of Commerce, "Kenai Peninsula, Alaska Quartz Properties," in Box 4, Seward C of C Collection, Seward Library; Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits,* 1970, B3, B11; Moerlein, "Mining Claim Appraisals," July 1976, 4, 9, Pl. 6.

[128] *Seward Gateway,* September 29, 1923, 1; Record Book 8, p. 304, in Seward Magistrate's Office. John Paulsteiner notes on page 40 of *Seward, Alaska, the Sinful Town on Resurrection Bay* that Babcock, a Seward resident, also owned a liquor store. Mary Barry, however, fails to mention Babcock's store in her three-volume history.

site's commercial viability; he noted that "it is extremely doubtful if ore of a sufficiently rich gold tenor will be found to make an installation of this sort profitable. Certainly at this time, the expenditure is not warranted." The partners, however, remained optimistic, and they hauled the mill to their claim that fall. By December 1925, they were "preparing everything so that in the spring, actual operations can commence."[129]

Despite the presence of milling equipment, the property produced no gold either in 1926 or 1927. But in 1928 production began, and a U.S. Geological Survey bulletin for that year declared that "in the Nuka Bay region, the greatest amount of gold was recovered from the Babcock & Downey property." (Until this time, the Alaska Hills Mine had been the only other commercial producer.)[130] During 1929 and 1930, Babcock and Downey's operation became even more important in the local area; it was Nuka Bay's only producing camp, owing to the snowslide that destroyed several buildings at the Alaska Hills site.

In May 1929, the local newspaper editorialized on the success of the Babcock and Downey "gold quartz mine;"

> After three years of hard effort [the mine] made its first production last summer.... Further development has only gone to confirm the early judgment that it is the biggest gold strike in years.... Notwithstanding the fact that big balls of amalgam [of] almost solid gold weighing many pounds recovered from a little wornout mill testified to the phenomenal richness of the vein, the scoffers refused to believe, evidently on the theory that Babcock and Downey were modern alchemists and had made their gold out of some base metals they found out there.... This gives the direct lie to the wise-crackers who sneeringly declaim that Alaska is no longer the land of opportunity for the poor man.... In fact there is no portion of Alaska that holds forth greater promise right now to the prospector than Nuka Bay and its extensions.[131]

News from the site, now known as the Sonny Fox Mining Company, remained good during the first several months of the 1929 season. Except

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[129] J. G. Shepard, "Babcock and Downey prospect, Nuka Bay, Kenai Precinct" (Report MR 104-1), September 1925; *Seward Gateway*, December 5, 1925, 9, 16; June 27, 1927, 1; July 9, 1927, 3.

[130] Smith, *Mineral Resources in Alaska, 1926*, Bulletin 797, 12; Smith, *Mineral Resources in Alaska, 1928*, Bulletin 813, 17; *Seward Gateway*, May 22, 1929, 4.

[131] *Seward Gateway*, May 22, 1929, 4.

for a bad casting, which slowed mill production for a short time, good news poured forth. A June 14 article was particularly bullish; "It is estimated that the partners will take out at least $100,000 this season." A mid-July article noted that Tom Babcock had just brought between 20 and 30 pounds of gold bricks into Seward, and that "a few months ago a similar shipment was brought up from the camp." By this time, Babcock's sole partner was Dave Downey. (A. C. Downey had given up his interest in the operation back in October 1928.) The two owners hired an employee (Charles Skinner) to work at the mine site that summer.[132]

Based on the mine's optimistic prospects, Babcock and Downey petitioned the Alaska Road Commission for improved access to the mine. At the time, only a rough, one-mile trail connected the mine with Palisade Lagoon; over that trail, the partners had carried supplies to the mine, first on foot and later on horseback. Because the mine was now producing commercially, Tom Babcock hoped to obtain an improved trail and a 30- or 40-foot bridge, the cost of which would be approximately $1,500. Babcock also convinced the local chamber of commerce to intercede on his behalf. Philip Garges of the ARC, however, turned him down, noting that "I very much doubt if status of our funds will permit considering the project this season." The ARC, so far as is known, never helped improve this trail.[133]

For the next several years, the mine continued to be the area's top producer. At the close of the 1929 season, the U.S. Geological Survey noted that "the showings on this property continued to be very encouraging, and the plant was in operation from the later part of May to early in October." Up to that point, the ore had been tested in the Ellis ball mill, the tailings were concentrated, and the concentrates were shipped to a smelter in the States. But the amount of stoping ground that had been opened up was overtaxing the small capacity of the mill, and by mid-July the owners decided to purchase a 15-ton No. 1 Denver stamp mill.[134] In 1930, many improvements were added. Work that year consisted of the mill installation

> and the construction of the necessary mill and compressor buildings, together with tram, dock, and other facilities required to aid production. At the mine about 1,000 feet of

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[132] *Seward Gateway*, May 21, 1929, 5; June 14, 1929, 6; July 5, 1929, 4; July 8, 1929, 6; July 16, 1929, 2; July 17, 1929, 3; Deed Book 8, p. 277, in Seward Magistrate's Office.

[133] "Downey and Babcock's Trail" folder, Box 2, Seward C of C Collection; *Seward Gateway*, July 17, 1929, 4.

[134] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1929*, Bulletin 824, 20-21; *Seward Gateway*, July 17, 1929, 3.

> drifts and tunnels and 100 feet of raises have been driven. The ore is principally quartz, with sulphides, and the larger part of the gold is recovered by amalgamation. In addition to concentrates some crude ore is produced that is shipped directly to smelters in the States.

The installation of the new mill and the other construction work necessarily restricted production in 1930. The report noted, however, "from all accounts the conditions are favorable for a considerably greater production in 1931 if not subjected to interruptions."[135]

Mine operations in 1931, as predicted, were rosy. Although several Nuka Bay operations were active that year, it remained the region's biggest producer. The property that year consisted of six mining claims: Sonny Fox (the discovery claim) and Sonny Fox Numbers 1 through 5, inclusive. Earl Pilgrim, who visited the site that year, noted that on the Sonny Fox claim, a 60-foot tunnel and, 40 feet higher, a second 40-foot tunnel had been drilled. A raise had been excavated between the two tunnels, and a tramway (as noted above) delivered ore from these workings to an Ellis ball mill. The Sonny Fox vein had produced "a small production of gold." On the Sonny Fox No. 3 claim, 1,200 feet to the south, the owners had dug out a short tunnel, at an elevation of 206 feet, and several open cuts. Twenty feet to the south was a fourth tunnel, 60 feet long (and also at a 206-foot elevation); and south of that, on the Sonny Fox No. 4 claim, was the Lady Luck vein, which was "the most productive vein on the property" at that time. Initial operations on this claim had consisted of "an open-cut, 65 feet in length, from which several hundred tons of high-grade ore was extracted." Subsequently, a 100-foot tunnel was driven on the vein below the outcrop exposure at an elevation of 190 feet. The tunnel being worked in 1931 was driven at an elevation of 150 feet, just below the 100-foot tunnel; by July 1931, it was 230 feet long. An "800-foot surface tram, partly graded and partly on trestle work" connected the portal of the 230-foot tunnel to an ore bin at the head of a short two-bucket aerial tram. The aerial tram, after a 75-foot drop, carried the gold ore to the new (Denver) stamp mill, which was at an elevation of 35 feet. Other mill machinery included a Blake jaw crusher and a Wilfley concentrating table. The camp buildings, located adjacent to the stamp mill, included "a log mess-house, a log bunk-house, two tent-frame residences, and a log compressor-house and blacksmith-shop." The company that year had three owners: Thomas Babcock, D. W. Downey and Charles A. Tecklenberg, all of whom listed a Seward address. On August 1, 1931, the

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[135] Philip S. Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1930*, Bulletin 836 (Washington, GPO, 1931), 20.

property had produced about 1,000 tons of ore; the value of that ore had averaged approximately $25 per ton.[136]

In spite of their operation's success, the owners recognized that the mill installed in 1930 made "no adequate provision ... to improve the milling technique to a point where the gold losses would be negligible." Furthermore, they knew that "the recovery of no more than 60 per cent [of the gold ore] is possible with this equipment." In 1931, therefore, Babcock left to purchase "complete cyaniding equipment." Such equipment, however, was never used at the mine site.[137]

The mine continued commercial production each year during the early and mid-1930s, and annual government reports consistently described the site as one of the "principal producing mines in the Nuka Bay district." Local sources buttressed those statements; an April 1935 newspaper article, for example, stated that development work had been going on all winter, that mill operations were set to begin, and that a "big season" was in the offing.[138]

In 1936, geologist Stephen Capps visited the property and found that both the camp and the tramway system had changed little since Pilgrim had been there five years earlier. He noted that the present workings, which were at the same site as in 1931, "are on a vein which crops out near the camp and on which more than 800 feet of drifts have been driven on two levels, in addition to raises and stopes." Capps, clearly impressed by what he saw, said that

> free gold is ... present, often in coarse particles abundantly visible to the naked eye. This mine has yielded remarkable rich specimens, assays having shown a gold content of many thousand dollars to the ton and one shipment of 5 tons to the smelter having yielded a net return to the owners of $530 a ton.[139]

The mine, with its relatively long production history, is one of the few in the district in which details of the area's social history are known. Nuka

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[136] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1931*, Bulletin 844, 20; Earl Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 31-34; Heath, "Nuka Bay Mining District," 1932, 2. Tecklenberg, a Seward pioneer, was a businessman and civic official who invested in a number of area mines. Paulsteiner, *Sinful Town*, 21-22; Barry, *Seward History, II,* 5, 9, 57, 99, 225; Barry, *Seward History, III,* 19.

[137] Heath, "Nuka Bay Mining District," 1932, 2.

[138] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1933*, Bulletin 864, 21; Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1934*, Bulletin 868, 23; *Seward Gateway*, April 23, 1935, 5.

[139] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1936*, Bulletin 897, 27-28.

Island residents Pete and Josephine Sather, for example, liked to stop by. As Josephine recalled several years later,

> Pete would often take me with him to visit Mrs. Downey, who for years was the only woman besides myself in Nuka Bay, and whose husband and his partner, Tom Babcock, owned several claims.... Tom Babcock would take me up to the tunnel and pan gold for me, while Pete sat visiting with the Downeys and drinking coffee. Every pan Tom brought out of that tunnel had gold in it.[140]

Bad news came out of the mine, too. In April 1932, Dave Downey was seriously injured when his left hand was caught in a compressor. Ray Russell, who was working with him, turned off the machine in time to save his life.[141]

During the mid-to-late 1930s, the Sonny Fox Mining Company and the Nukalaska Mining Company were the only two consistent producers in Nuka Bay. To judge by crew size, the Nukalaska was a far larger operation; while Nukalaska's crew during the 1934-1938 period ranged from 12 to as many as 20, Sonny Fox's crew during the same period ranged from 2 to 4.[142]

In 1939, the mine remained active; a report that year noted that the Sonny Fox was one of three Nuka Bay mines where "more than casual prospecting" took place. In 1940, a site visitor noted that "Babcock and Downey have been developing and milling a small amount of ore with no men hired." A year later, Babcock reported that the property "had been inactive all season." Rumors flew that "further development [was] to be continued this fall and winter," but other events—perhaps the beginning of World War II—intervened, and before long Babcock and Downey abandoned their claims.[143] By the time it ceased operation, the property had been commercially active for 13 years, from 1928 to 1940 inclusive. During that time, it produced an estimated $70,000 in gold. Both the

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[140] Sather, "The Birds and the Bears," 27.

[141] Barry, *History of Mining*, 152; *Seward Gateway*, April 19, 1932, 3. The accident may have prevented Downey from further mining efforts; no later references to the operation describe Downey as a physically involved participant.

[142] Stewart, *Report of the Commissioner ... for the Biennium ended December 31, 1936*, 47: B. D. Stewart, *Report of the Commissioner of Mines to the Governor for the Biennium ended December 31, 1938* (Juneau, n.pub., 1939), 46. Also see *Seward Gateway*, May 16, 1935, 4.

[143] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1939*, Bulletin 926, 25; Roehm, "Summary of Mining Investigations," 1940, 15; Roehm, "Summary of Investigations," 1941, 4, 11.

length of operation and the level of commercial output were greater than for any other Nuka Bay property.

The property remained idle until July 1951, when Wyman Anderson and B. C. Rick relocated the site, calling it the Surprise Mine. Soon afterward, they transferred their interest in the mine to the Alaska Exploration and Development Corporation. The company held the ground, apparently without developing it, until August 1953, when a territorial mining engineer evaluated the property's mineralization potential. The engineer noted that minerals were limited to pyrite and arsenopyrite; at no point was either free gold or gold ore encountered. Perhaps on the basis of that report, the company abandoned the property.[144]

When geologist Donald Richter visited the property in 1967, the condition of the mine, mill and camp had significantly deteriorated. He noted that only the northernmost quarter-mile of the route connecting the camp to Palisade Lagoon was "a well graded trail;" the remainder was "no longer discernible." The rock and wood trestle connecting the mine entrance with the mill was still in evidence, but the mill was "almost completely ruined." Most of the camp buildings were "still standing and serviceable," but the "lower adit, or main working tunnel" was caved and thus inaccessible. Richter, as part of his survey, sampled the sediments of nearby Babcock Creek and noted that the results "suggest the presence of additional gold-bearing veins in the drainage area."[145]

Perhaps in response to Richter's visit, Leroy Hollman of Seward and William Bern of Wooster, Ohio, recorded the Surprise Bay No. 1 through No. 5 claims on August 23, 1968. The partners[146] do not appear to have carried on active development work. They retained their interest in the property at least until 1976; an assessment that year stated that past production had amounted to "1,500 tons averaged 1 to 2 ounces of gold per ton." The existing physical plant, however, was limited to a "one room cabin in poor to fair shape." (This appears to have been the only standing building. The "old mill building" was collapsed, and both of the tunnel portals were partially caved.) The value of the physical plant was assessed at $1,000; the value of onsite minerals, judged to be primarily from mill tailings, was assessed at $5,250.[147]

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[144] Jasper, *Property Examination Report, Surprise Mine,* Alaska Territorial Department of Mines, Report No. PE 104-4 (April 1954), 1, 5. Maps accompanying the report refer to the developing entity as the Alaska Development and Exploration Company.

[145] Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits,* 1970, B12, B14.

[146] William Bern died at some point between 1968 and 1976. His interest in the mine passed to his widow, Judy.

[147] George A. Moerlein, "Mining Claim Appraisals," July 1976, 5, 11, 12.

In 1979, claim holder Julie Bern Hightower leased the five claims to John Kinney and Jock Coglan. The following year, the pair cleared brush from the tailings piles, re-opened the portals, and tested the tailings and loose materials found underground. Kinney apparently found prospects encouraging; in 1981, he acquired a full interest in the property from Hightower, Don Coisman, and Leroy Hollman.[148]

Kinney held the unpatented claim for more than 15 years. In 1983, archeologist Harvey Shields visited the site and noted that the "Surprise Bay Mine" was an active concern where "present activity is focused on the reworking of the tailings from previous operations...." Shields found that there were "several buildings making up the [camp] complex, including a standing bunkhouse and cookhouse as well as a collapsed shed or garage." He also found a sizable collection of mining tools and equipment. Kinney, however, had "gone through" many of the artifacts, and because of his "well intentioned collecting," Shields observed that "archeologically, this site's worth has been severely diminished." Bill Brown, who accompanied Shields to the site, came away with a more positive impression; he noted that "the area is rich in mining machinery and artifacts dating mainly from the 1930s and 1940s." He too recognized that "most of the artifacts have been moved, reused, etc., to the point where they have no scientific value." He did, however, note that the artifacts had "atmospheric value" and that Kinney's "opportunism in using old items in the modern mining site is one of the strongest historic values at the site."[149] Kinney held the claim until the mid-1990s, when the NPS acquired it.

In 1989, a team of NPS personnel working for the Mining Inventory and Monitoring Program visited the site. The writeup that followed that visit stated that the site was potentially eligible to the National Register of Historic Places. A year later, staff prepared a Determination of Eligibility report for the site and again recommended the site's National Register eligibility. The NPS forwarded the report to Alaska's State Historic Preservation Office. On April 24, 1991, the head of that office, Judy Bittner, wrote the NPS and stated, "We concur that [this site is] eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under the stated criteria."[150]

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[148] Copies of Mining Claim Location Notices, dated July 4, 1968, in RMM files, AKSO.

[149] Harvey M. Shields, "Historic Mining Site Evaluation in Kenai Fjords National Monument," 1983; Bill Brown, letter to Dave Moore, etc., July 6, 1983; both in "ARO Site Files, KEFJ" folder, Mining Inventory Program, AKSO-RCR.

[150] Kate Lidfors to Judy Bittner, April 2, 1991; Bittner to NPS, April 24, 1991; both in SEL-175 file, Mining Inventory Program Collection, AKSO-RCR.

Skinner Prospect #1

This property is located in a small cove on the east side of Surprise Bay, approximately one mile south of the narrows at the entrance to Palisade Lagoon. Little is known about the prospect, and some of the available information is contradictory.

In 1931, when engineer Earl Pilgrim visited the various Nuka Bay properties, he noted the Frank Skinner Property. Here, at an elevation of "a few feet above high-tide level, a tunnel has been driven on the [graywacke and quartz] vein for a distance of 42 feet." Pilgrim made no mention of how old the tunnel was or if it was currently active. He visited the site but did not sample the ore; he was informed, however, "that assays of two samples of the vein taken by others showed values in gold of $38.90 and $18 per ton, respectively." Those values, at that time, appeared to justify further development work.[151]

The following year, the Chamber of Commerce listed and mapped the site as an active prospect; the claimant, however, was labeled as Gaylord (not Frank) Skinner. Nothing more surfaces in the literature about Frank Skinner; the following year, however, the local newspaper described "Gaylorde Skinner" as a "Nuka Bay quartz operator." (As if to lend authenticity to this claim, a 1928 article in the Seward newspaper noted that "G. R. Skinner" had been prospecting in the area for the past three years and had recently found a purported platinum deposit.) By the mid-1930s, Skinner had lost interest in the site and was instead developing a new property (probably the old Lang Prospect) on the western side of West Arm (see below).[152]

The property lay idle until 1966 when three men from Seward, with the surnames of Madison, Quackenbush, and Suddath, relocated the property and called it the Tidewater claim. A year later, Richter visited the site and found that the trio had left the site untouched. The site, however, had severely deteriorated; slumping of the cliff at the adit's portal had shortened the tunnel by 17 feet, and the Good Friday earthquake of 1964 had lowered the local topography to the point where the adit was almost completely flooded during high tides.[153]

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[151] Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 30-31.

[152] Seward Chamber of Commerce, "Map of Nuka Bay Quartz Properties," in Box 1, C of C Collection; Seward C of C, "Kenai Peninsula, Alaska, Quartz Properties," in Box 4, C of C Collection; *Seward Gateway*, August 7, 1928, 5; July 21, 1933, 1.

[153] Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits*, 1970, B13.

The three Sewardites soon abandoned the property, and in May 1969 three others—J. L. Young, V. J. Wright, and Ray Wells—established the Sheri No. 1 through No. 3 claims. They, however, made no improvements to the property, and abandoned it after 1971. A 1976 assessment of the site showed that neither a mill nor camp was located anywhere in the vicinity; furthermore, there was "nothing of economic interest evident on these claims." The site was not claimed again. The NPS did not visit the site as part of its Mining Inventory and Monitoring Program work, and no attempt has been made to nominate the site to the National Register of Historic Places.

Johnston and Deegan Property

As historian Mary Barry has noted, Fred Johnston was a Seward pioneer, having arrived in town with his family in 1904. In 1916, he began working as a fireman for the Alaska Engineering Commission, which at that time was building the railroad from Anchorage to Fairbanks. By 1925 he was an engineer, and he continued to work on the Alaska Railroad until his death in 1932.[154]

In addition to his railroad duties, Johnston worked with a partner, Mike Deegan, in developing a Nuka Bay mining property. The pair may have begun their partnership as early as 1925; a newspaper article that fall referred to Johnston as a "Nuka Bay mining man." Though no corroborating evidence has surfaced, it appears likely that by the fall of 1925, the pair had begun to develop a claim on the ridge between Quartz and Surprise bays. In June 1927, a local newspaper article noted that the two men, along with several others, were getting ready to go to Nuka Bay to "carry on development work on their various properties."[155]

The first known description of the partners' claims appeared after engineer Earl Pilgrim's 1931 visit. Pilgrim noted that the pair had five claims that were situated on either side of the ridge top. The Grubstake No. 1 and No. 2 and Lost Bay claims were on the Quartz Bay side of the ridge, while the Grubstake Extension No. 1 and No. 2 claims were "on the ridge directly above the narrows that connect the head of Surprise Bay with Palisade Lagoon." Development work, by that time, included a number of shallow surface trenches, which were probably located on the Grubstake Extension claims. The pair also built a cabin at the northeastern end of

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[154] Barry, *Seward History, I*, 89.

[155] *Seward Gateway*, November 27, 1925, 2; June 25, 1927, 5; July 5, 1929, 4. Records pertaining to the pair give surnames of either Johnston or Johnson and either Deegan, Deigan or Degan. The second person in the partnership may have been the same man who, as noted in Chapter 6, had operated a Kenai Lake fox farm in 1914.

Quartz Bay and roughed out several trails that connected the cabin to the various quartz veins on their property. Pilgrim's report suggests, however, that the site was idle at the time of his visit.[156]

That October, Johnston had a fall, and in January 1932 he died from his wounds. Deegan, however, retained an interest in the property until 1936, when the property was incorporated into the Sonny Fox holdings, two miles to the northeast. A geologist who visited the area that year noted that "no recent work of note" had taken place at the Johnston and Deegan claims.[157] These claims, along with the Sonny Fox holdings, were probably abandoned in the early 1940s.

Little is known about the property's current status. It does not appear to have been reclaimed by latter-day prospectors. Donald Richter, who visited the area in 1967, was unable to find the decades-old trenches (he suggested that they were covered with either slide debris or snow) and did not describe the condition of the Quartz Bay cabin.[158] The NPS's Mining Inventory and Monitoring team did not visit the site of either the trenches or cabin, and it therefore made no attempt to nominate the property to the National Register of Historic Places.

A U.S. Geological Survey quadrangle, published in 1953, identified a cabin at the northwestern end of Surprise Bay; more specifically, it was located just southwest of the narrows and at the base of a likely access route to the Johnston and Deegan claims. (This cabin is just one-quarter mile southeast of the claims, while the Quartz Bay cabin is a mile or more west of them.) The source for the cabin's existence appears to have been a 1951 aerial photograph. Although the cabin is not known to have been related to the Johnston and Deegan operation, it was probably constructed after the Sonny Fox interests claimed the property in 1936, and the cabin was probably used in that context. The cabin no longer exists; either the 1964 earthquake or an avalanche destroyed it.[159]

Goyne Prospect (Golden Horn Prospect)

The Charles Goyne prospect is located on the west side of Surprise Bay, one-half mile south of the narrows that separate the bay from Palisade

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[156] Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 34-36; Heath, "Nuka Bay Mining District," 1932, 16.

[157] Barry, *Seward History, I,* 89; Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1936,* Bulletin 897, 28.

[158] Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits,* 1970, B14.

[159] USGS, "Seldovia C-2 Quadrangle (1:63,360), 1953; Bud Rice interview, December 8, 1997.

Lagoon. Over the years, several people have attempted to develop the site. Charles H. Goyne, the initial site claimant, moved to Alaska in 1906, apparently from Pennsylvania. Shortly after World War I, he and his brother Frank moved to Seward. Before long he became interested in Nuka Bay's mining possibilities, and in 1929 he located and staked his first claim at the site.[160] By 1931, Goyne apparently had two claims, the Surprise and the Bear, which extended "from the shore of Surprise Bay up the mountain-side to an elevation of approximately 1,000 feet." A year later, however, Robert Heath stated that Goyne had a "group of three contiguous unpatented lode claims" which started "at the beach line and continue[d] up the hill in a westerly direction for three thousand feet," where it joined with the Johnston-Deegan claims.[161]

Regardless of the actual number or configuration of Goyne's claims, development activity was focused on the Surprise claim, near tidewater, where the principal vein exposures were located. By the summer of 1931, Goyne had dug out a 51-foot tunnel at an elevation of 150 feet; earlier that year, he had taken 6,710 pounds of the extracted ore to a Tacoma smelter. (The ore yielded 4.1 ounces of gold and 1.7 ounces of silver, and Goyne received about $80 for his efforts.) By early 1932, Goyne had dug a few shallow pits just 20 feet south of the tunnel, and by the end of the 1932 season, he had apparently extended his tunnel another 100 feet. He had a cabin at the site, which may have been built as early as 1929. In the spring of 1932, he was living alone at the cabin.[162]

Later in 1932, Peter M. Ogle, a Seward garage owner, and William Patterson obtained an option on Goyne's property, and the partners spent the next two years working there. Various news articles during the period detailed their comings and goings; at one point, Ogle's wife and her niece visited the property for several days.[163] The partner's efforts were centered on digging out a second, lower tunnel, just 30 feet above sea level, and by 1934 the tunnel was 300 feet long. During the winter of 1934, the pair shipped 35 tons of ore to the Tacoma smelter. The results of that shipment, however, were disappointing, and the partners allowed their option to lapse. Stephen Capps, who visited the property in 1936, philosophically noted that

> There can be no doubt that ore having a high gold content occurs on this property, but the developments so far made have not yet demonstrated the presence of an ore body of

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[160] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 137.
[161] Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 36-37; Heath, "Nuka Bay Mining District," 9.
[162] *Ibid.*; USGS, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1936*, 30-31.
[163] *Seward Gateway*, June 1, 1933, 4; June 17, 1933, 3; July 1, 1933, 4.

> sufficient size to justify the installation of milling equipment with the assurance that a continuous supply of profitable ore can be obtained.[164]

Despite that glum assessment, Goyne apparently returned to the property sometime after 1936. He now had four claims: Surprise, Bear, Surprise Extension, and Bear Extension. By 1940 he was again "working alone developing on his property at Surprise Bay." A year later, perhaps as a result of a financial infusion from outside investors, he was calling his claims the Golden Horn prospect. He spent the year "engaged in driving the lower tunnel by hand mining," and by late July of 1941 the tunnel was 514 feet long.[165] But the coming of World War II forced Goyne to stop his prospecting. He returned to Seward and worked as a longshoreman until his retirement in 1953. He then returned to Pennsylvania.[166]

After the war, the Golden Horn group of investors may have made another attempt to work the deposit. They were, however, unsuccessful.[167] No further work has been performed at the site. Altogether, the prospect had more than 650 feet of underground workings from two tunnels, and there were also "numerous small open-cuts extend[ing] up the slope above the upper tunnel to an elevation of 570 feet." Despite all that activity, however, no mill was ever built, and less than $300 in gold ore appears to have extracted from the property.[168]

The site, predictably, has significantly deteriorated in recent years. When Donald Richter visited in 1967, he noted the presence of two adits: the vein in the lower adit was just 100 feet long, and in the upper one it was just 70 feet long. All that remained of the campsite area was "a wave-demolished cabin on a small slate-pebble beach, about 300 feet north of a

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[164] Roehm, "Summary Report of Investigations," 1941, 11; Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1936*, Bulletin 897, 31.

[165] Roehm, "Summary Report of Mining Investigations," 1940, 15; Roehm, "Summary Report of Investigations," 1941, 9-10. Goyne apparently remained at his claim throughout the winter of 1940-1941. Early in 1941, East Arm homesteader (and longtime friend) Bob Evans rowed over to see him. Evans died shortly after returning to his East Arm cabin. Sather, "Our Glorious World," 40.

[166] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 137.

[167] Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits*, 1970, B12. Richter may have been incorrect in stating that the Golden Horn group was active after World War II; elsewhere in his discussion, he erroneously stated that "the property appears to have been idle" since 1934.

[168] Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits*, 1970, B3; Roehm, "Summary Report of Investigations," 1941, 10. Richter, on page B11, noted that in addition to the two tunnels, exploration and development work consisted of "a number of pits and trenches that have traced a series of mineralized quartz veins in a granodiorite dike from the bay to the top of the mountain ridge about 1,000 feet above sea level."

still-conspicuous tailings dump," the latter located at the lower tunnel entrance.[169]

In August 1968, Henry Waterfield of Anchorage renewed interest in the property when he established the Surprise Bay No. 1 claim at the site. Soon afterward, he installed an air compressor on the beach, and using a 1¼ inch compressed air line he did some shallow trenching on a quartz vein located 500 feet above sea level. George Moerlein, who assessed the property in July 1976, estimated that 100 to 200 tons of ore, containing 2 to 4 ounces of gold per ton, might exist between the upper and lower tunnel levels. Based on that estimate, he estimated that the property, exclusive of physical improvements, was worth $7,000.[170]

In late June 1983, NPS historian Bill Brown visited the property. He noted that "some artifacts and old narrow-gauge ore-car rails make the mine reasonably interesting, but it is not a significant site." (Waterfield probably obtained the ore-car rails from the nearby Sonny Fox Mine.) Brown recommended that the agency make no effort to preserve onsite artifacts.[171]

In 1986, a team from the NPS's Mining and Minerals Branch in Anchorage visited and mapped the site. They noted two adits with adjacent tailings piles, a gravel road connecting the upper adit with the beach, an ore bin and adjacent crusher, a covered equipment/storage building, a recently constructed cookhouse/bunkhouse and adjacent fuel storage location, an old bunkhouse and cabin remnants.

Six years later, members of NPS's Mining Inventory and Monitoring Program visited the site and made a detailed description of the mine and camp. The inventory form that resulted from the visit showed several new site features, at least some of which appear to have been borrowed from other Nuka Bay mine sites. The form stated that the site

> consists of an amalgamation of features and structures dating from the 1930s through to the present. Features dating from the 1930s operations include: cabin remnants; upper adit; equipment scatter and aerial tramway. All that remains of the wave demolished cabin are sill logs adjacent to the slate pebble beach. Recent structures and features dating from the 1950s to the present include: screening and concentrating

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[169] Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits,* 1970, B11-B12.

[170] George A. Moerlein, "Mining Claim Appraisals," July 1976, 10-11.

[171] Bill Brown, letter to Dave Moore, etc., July 6, 1983, in "ARO Site Files, KEFJ" folder, Mining Inventory Program Collection, AKSO-RCR.

machinery; collapsed rib frame structure; explosives box; plywood bunkhouse; smaller plywood shed and compressor. The site is in fair to poor condition and deteriorating rapidly.

Throughout this period, Henry Waterfield claimed the property, but after his death in the mid-1990s, his claim was relinquished to Tom DeMachele.[172]

Nuka Bay Mining Sites: West Arm and Yalik Bay

Lang-Skinner Prospect

The Lang-Skinner Prospect is located on the west side of Nuka Bay's West Arm. The property is 1½ miles due west of the southern end of Beautiful Island and just north of the mouth of a small stream that flows northeasterly into Nuka Bay. The site is relatively inaccessible; in the immediate vicinity, according to a 1931 report, "the shores are rocky and there is no beach suitable for landing a boat."[173]

Frank Lang located the site before Territorial Engineer Harry H. Townsend visited the area in the summer of 1924, but the only development to that point had been one or more open cuts on a single quartz vein that outcropped onto the beach. During the following year, Lang located a second vein, 14 feet above the beach, and drove 10-foot tunnels into both the upper and lower veins. Engineer J. G. Shepard sampled ore from both veins and declared that the showings were "worth further investigation." Lang was apparently so buoyed by the results of the ore samples that he remained at his property for most or all of the following winter. In 1927, he was still actively working his claim; that June, he noted that "his average assay runs around $90," a return so hopeful that he contemplated the purchase of a stamp mill.[174]

When Earl Pilgrim visited the area in 1931, the upper tunnel, 10 feet above the high tide line, was 88 feet long. Two buildings now existed on the property: a log cabin, situated on the hillside above the tunnel, and a

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[172] SEL-213 folder, Mining Inventory Program Collection, AKSO.

[173] Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 50. Lang's surname, in other sources, has also been spelled Long or Lange.

[174] Townsend, "Brief Narrative Report," U.S. Bureau of Mines Report IR 195-47, 6; J. G. Shepard, "The Lang Prospect, Nuka Bay, Kenai Precinct," Alaska Department of Mines, Report MR 104-1, 1925; *Seward Gateway*, December 4, 1925, 8; June 6, 1927, 7. Townsend noted that the so-called Lang Prospect was "a quartz vein that outcrops at the beach on the west side of the *North* Arm, but his other descriptions appear consistent with the Lang Prospect on the *West* Arm.

frame house, on the leveled dump at the tunnel's portal.[175] Robert C. Heath, a 1932 visitor, noted that the tunnel was now caved near the entrance. The site was also practically abandoned, inasmuch as "very little work has been done on the property for the last two years." Neither Pilgrim nor Heath noted the existence of the lower tunnel, perhaps because the tailings pile outside the upper tunnel had covered it up.[176]

After 1932, Lang apparently abandoned his interest in the area. Then, in 1936, geologist Stephen Capps described the Gaylord Skinner prospect in or near the same area. No sources have provided a definite link between the two sites, but Capps's description of the prospect's location ("on the west shore of West Arm, 1½ miles south of the entrance to Beauty Bay") closely matches the one which Pilgrim and others assigned to the Lang prospect. Donald Richter, moreover, concluded that the two prospects "are probably the same, although discrepancies exist in regard to length of tunnels and orientation of the veins." Inasmuch as the Lang Prospect tunnel appears to also describe one of the Skinner Prospect tunnels (as noted below), logic suggests that the two properties are in the same location.[177]

In 1936, when Stephen Capps visited the property, the so-called Skinner Prospect contained three tunnels. One was a "50-foot tunnel at the cabin, just above high-tide level." This tunnel, which was probably the same as the tunnel on the old Lang prospect, had not been worked "for some years." Two newer tunnels were also on the property. One, 50 feet long, was located at an elevation of about 75 feet; a second, at an altitude of about 400 feet, was 300 feet long. Both of the new tunnels were driven to tap into the Golden Goose quartz vein, which "is said to have been traced on the surface for a distance of 2,600 feet." Interest in the vein was fostered because, as Capps noted, "it is said that assays showing as much as four ounces of gold to the ton have been obtained...." The 300-foot tunnel was begun in 1934 and was under current development when Capps visited the site; the 50-foot tunnel at elevation 75 feet was apparently dug earlier. The "cabin" which Capps refers to is apparently

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[175] Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 50-51. A third building, shown on Pilgrim's map, was located at "Lang's Beach," three-quarters of a mile south of the property and at the mouth of a small stream. Because the mining claim was located on a steep slope, Lang probably used "Lang's Beach" to transfer goods on and off boats.

[176] Heath, "Nuka Bay Mining District," 1932, 17.

[177] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1936,* Bulletin 897, 31; Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits,* 1970, B13. The Seward Chamber of Commerce's map, drawn in late 1932, identified properties belonging to both Frank Lange [sic] and Gaylord Skinner. The map's geographical inexactness, however, and the lack of field investigation that preceded its creation suggest that the map may be in error.

the same as the "frame house" which Pilgrim describes. Capps failed to mention either Pilgrim's "log cabin" or the cabin at Lang's Beach.[178]

Capps, in his site description, noted that the Golden Goose vein "ranges in thickness from 3 to 8 feet of quartz and carries abundant sulphides." He also noted, however, that "so far no high-grade shoots of free-milling ore have been found on it." Apparently little of economic value was found in later years, and by 1941, an engineer with the Territorial Bureau of Mines was unable to locate the tunnel associated with the "Lang gold prospect," perhaps because it was "located in a very thick alder slide along a steep slope." Donald Richter, who investigated Nuka Bay's mines in the summer of 1967, was also frustrated in his search, noting that "Diligent search along the coastline in this area during our visit ... failed to reveal any workings, buildings, or even significant mineralization."[179]

Blair-Sather Prospect

The Blair-Sather Prospect is located on the south shore of Yalik Bay, about two miles from its bay's mouth and near the mouth of a small stream. A quartz vein here runs parallel to the shoreline for some 1,500 feet; according to one report, the site was particularly favorable because "nowhere along the [vein] is it more than 300 feet distant from the beach."

It is not known who first established a mining claim in the area; most probably the discoverer was Al Blair, who later located the vein that would be developed into the Nukalaska Mine near Shelter Cove. He apparently began working the claim in 1924 or early 1925. By the summer of 1925, the so-called Blair Prospect—owned jointly by Blair, Pete Sather, and John Smith—had been "stripped at intervals for a distance of some 1,500 feet." Engineer J. G. Shepard sampled the vein. He found that the samples did not carry "bonanza values;" they were, however, "sufficiently encouraging ... to warrant a further examination." The ore samples revealed quantities of free gold, galena, zinc and pyrite, an analysis that was "quite pleasing to the partners." The three men located seven mining claims that August; the following April, Blair relinquished to Sather his interest in the property.[180]

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[178] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1936*, Bulletin 897, 27, 31.

[179] *Ibid.*, 27; Roehm, "Summary Report of Investigations," 1941, 12.

[180] J. G. Shepard, "Blair Prospect, Nuka Bay, Kenai Precinct," Territorial Department of Mines, Report MR 104-1, September 1925; *Seward Gateway*, December 5, 1925, 48; Deed Book 7, p. 227 and Record Book 9, pp. 226-30, in Seward Magistrate's Office. Sather had previously been involved with the Rosness-Larson property on North Arm. Josephine Sather noted that after her husband and his partners located the Yalik Bay site, "we stripped our ledge for 1,500 feet and had it assayed every few feet to make sure it was the real thing before we really went to work on it." Sather, "The Birds and the Bears," 28.

Nothing more is known about development work at the site until 1931, when engineer Earl Pilgrim visited the area. By that time the property was known as the Sather Prospect; both Blair and Smith had relinquished their interest in it. The property that summer consisted of seven claims: Rolph No. 1 to Rolph No. 7. (Sather, as noted in Chapter 9, had owned several boats over the years, most of which he dubbed the *Rolfh.*) The claims paralleled the beach from east (No. 1) to west (No. 7). A 51-foot tunnel, just above the beach line, had been drilled on Rolph No. 1; 700 feet to the west, there was a 60-foot tunnel, at an elevation of 20 feet, on Rolph No. 3. A frame house was located just east of the mouth of a small, unnamed stream; the cabin was "at a point in the heavy timber" about 450 feet west of the 60-foot tunnel. Samples from both tunnels were not encouraging, assaying "a trace of gold and silver."[181]

After Pilgrim's visit, Sather abandoned the site, although he performed annual assessment work for another few years. Government engineers who periodically visited Nuka Bay (Capps in 1936, Roehm in 1941, and Richter in 1967) bypassed the site.[182] No known activity was associated with the property until May 1969, when J. L. Young, V. J. Wright and Ray Wells located the Determination No. 1 through No. 3 claims there. They retained the claims for another two years and then abandoned them. George Moerlein, who visited the site in July 1976, noted that site improvements consisted of a "one room cabin in fair to poor shape. The mining property, however, was described as "not reasonable to develop" and was assessed at a minimal value of $750.[183] The site has not been claimed since then.

In 1989, a team of NPS investigators from the Mining Inventory and Monitoring Program visited the site. In the inventory form that followed their visit, they noted a "milled lumber cabin in an active state of collapse," trenches dug on a nearby, quartz-veined dike, and two adits (in the locations noted above). The team made no attempt to nominate the property to the National Register of Historic Places.

Resurrection River Mining Sites

As noted in Chapter 3, Russians had occasionally traveled up and down the Kenai River drainage during the early and mid-nineteenth century,

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[181] Pilgrim, "Nuka Bay District," 1933, 38-39; Heath, "Nuka Bay Mining District," 1932, 16.

[182] Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1936*, Bulletin 897, 32; Roehm, "Summary Report of Investigations," 1941, 12; Richter, *Geology and Lode-Gold Deposits*, 1970, B14.

[183] George A. Moerlein, "Mining Claim Appraisals," July 1976, 12-13.

and in 1850-51 mining engineer Peter Doroshin headed a 14-man party that ascended the drainage and scouted for minerals in the area just west of Kenai Lake. The Russian party found gold seemingly everywhere it looked, but the quantities were insufficient to warrant further exploration.[184] Some Americans, however, believed that the area held an untapped gold reserve. A 1921 issue of the *Seward Gateway* described the long-rumored gold:

> Shortly before the acquisition of the Territory by the United States government, the Russians had discovered placer gold in interesting quantities on the high ridges of Resurrection River on the right [west] limit, but owing to the change in ownership and resulting circumstances, the prospecting in this locality was discontinued. Following down to our day, there has even been a whispering amongst the out-of-door men like unto a legend that placer gold was found by the Russians on the high reaches of Resurrection River.[185]

No one, however, responded to the siren song until after the turn of the century. Two brothers—William L. and B. F. Redman—were the first known prospectors in the Resurrection River drainage. William L. Redman, an experienced quartz miner, moved from Bellingham, Washington, to Seward in 1907. He and several partners spent the next two years prospecting along the east side of Resurrection Bay or in the vicinity of Kenai Lake.[186]

In 1909, B. F. Redman joined his brother, and the two headed toward the upper reaches of the Resurrection River in order to investigate possible mining sites and establish claims. They first traveled to present-day Redman Creek, and on September 3 they established three quartz claims at the head of the creek. They may have remained at the site that winter; the following spring, however, the brothers vowed their intention to prospect "the upper reaches of Resurrection River," and before long they ventured north to Placer Creek. In August 1910 they "made an important strike" there and staked Log Cabin Placer Claim Nos. 1 through 8. By October of that year, the property (in the words of the local press) "bids fair to become one of the big mines of this peninsula," with assays "of better than $12 per ton in gold." "Creditable reports" at the time noted that the mine "will soon be opened" as a commercial venture. The two "Redman prospects" were still viable during the summer of 1911, when U.S. Geological Survey topographer R. H. Sargent visited the area; they

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[184] Barry, *History of Mining*, 182.
[185] *Seward Gateway*, June 11, 1921, 1.
[186] *Seward Weekly Gateway*, July 13, 1907, 1; July 20, 1907, 1; July 27, 1907, 3.

were the only mineral deposits located in the Resurrection River valley at that time.[187]

Despite that optimism, the Redmans worked their claims for only a short time. In January 1912, B. F. Redman relinquished all of his remaining mining properties (including the eight Placer Creek claims) to his brother, and just two days later, W. L. Redman agreed to sell all of his Kenai Peninsula claims to J. D. Meenach of Seattle. Meenach, however, was unable to complete the transaction and the properties remained with Redman. Before long, however, William Redman died, and in March 1913 his widow, May Redman, sold three of the claims—Log Cabin Placer Claim Nos. 1 through 3—for $100. The purchasers were Seward residents John Dubreuil and Frank Winchester. Winchester apparently lost interest in the claim shortly after purchasing it.[188]

John Dubreuil, the new claim owner, had been born in Canada in 1863. He was a relative pioneer to the area; he and his wife, who was five years his senior, had moved to Seward just two years after the town's founding. In 1905, he prospected along the eastern side of Resurrection Bay. The following year, he and his wife built and opened a small Seward hotel. They continued to do so until September 1908, when his wife died of a stroke. The following year, both Dubreuil and William Redman were serving as volunteer firemen; furthermore, Dubreuil made no secret of his desire to abandon the hotel business in favor of mining. So it is not surprising that Dubreuil, in March 1913, purchased several of his late friend's mining claims.[189]

During the next several years, Dubreuil apparently spent little time on his claims. He did, however, retain an interest in them, and during the fall of 1919, when local residents petitioned the Alaska Road Commission to build a short spur road up the Resurrection River valley from Seward (see Chapter 5), Dubreuil was an active supporter (although not an instigator) of that effort. At the time, others were also developing mining properties in the Resurrection River valley. They included Charles A. Tecklenberg, who also had claims near Hope and a fleeting interest in the Sonny Fox Mine at Nuka Bay; the Adams Company, represented by John and Charles

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[187] *Seward Weekly Gateway*, September 11, 1909, 4; September 25, 1909, 4; May 14, 1910, 1; August 20, 1910, 3; October 1, 1910, 2, 4; Martin, Johnson, and Grant, *Geology and Mineral Resources of Kenai Peninsula*, USGS Bulletin 587 (1915), 18, Pl. III.

[188] *Deed Book*, vol. 1, p. 621; same, vol. 2, pp. 33-34, 64-66. Both located in State Recorder's Office, Seward.

[189] *Seward Weekly Gateway*, September 26, 1908, 3; January 2, 1909, 3; June 18, 1910, 1; U.S. Census, *Fourteenth Census of Population, Alaska* (1920), raw data, in Microfilm Roll S 360, NARA ANC.

Adams; and the Stotko Company, represented by J. P. Stotko. Anton Eide, a Road Commission official based in Seward, noted that the local mining district consisted of "some claims up there in various stages of development."[190]

Perhaps intrigued by the road proposal, Dubreuil returned to his claims, and during the winter of 1920-21 an 18-foot tunnel and 66-foot raise was driven on his property, which was located "at the falls of the Placer River." Dubreuil constructed the tunnel so as to divert the stream at the top of the falls; this diversion caused the stream to pour out of an adjacent rock wall. The following spring, Dubreuil began to sluice the former creek bed and soon recovered "a substantial quantity of placer gold." When he returned to Seward, he exhibited "large samples" of the coarse, dark gold and noted that although the site "discloses an ideal hydraulic proposition," it would probably continue to be operated as a "most feasible hand mining proposition."[191]

Encouraged by his find, Dubreuil continued his work at the site, and by 1924 he had added two new claims—Log Cabin Placer Claim Nos. 4 and 5—to his original three. (As noted above, the Redman brothers had originally established claims with this name in 1909 or 1910. It is not known if the two new claims were located in the same place as the former ones.) Dubreuil's claim was apparently quite successful; John Brody, a former district ranger with Chugach National Forest, recalled that "some ambitious men ... took out about 25 to 40 thousand in gold" from the site.[192] The site was sufficiently significant that the U.S. Geological Survey, in 1924, noted that Resurrection River was one of several "small producers in the Kenai District." The optimistic *Seward Gateway* noted that the river valley, in 1925, was "rich in placer and quartz workings." (Dubreuil's property was undoubtedly productive; so far as is known, however, other area prospectors were unable to commercially develop their operations.) Dubreuil himself most likely abandoned the site during the mid- to late 1920s; he died during the 1930s.

Before long, William "Bill" Bryan became interested in the area. Bryan, who was in charge of the Resurrection Bay Lumber Company sawmill at the mouth of Fourth of July Creek, purchased various properties and claims in the Seward area. On December 5, 1932, he and two partners—Oliver Bryan (his brother) and longshoreman Lindsay "Happy" Ratchford—

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[190] ARC, McPherson Road file (13/44), ARC Collection (RG 30), NARA ANC.

[191] *Seward Gateway*, June 11, 1921, 1.

[192] *Record Book*, Vol. 8, pp. 340-41, in State Recorder's Office, Seward; Barry, *A History of Mining*, 156; Smith, *Mineral Resources of Alaska, 1924*, Bulletin 783, 12; *Seward Gateway*, December 5, 1925, 22.

discovered and located three mining claims. These claims, known as Falls Claim Nos. 1 through 3, were on Placer Creek and situated "14 miles from the Rail Road up the Resurrection River." They were probably located at or near the site of the Redman-Dubreuil claims.[193] How long the claims may have been retained is unknown; they may have been abandoned just a few years later, or they may have been retained until October 1944 when Bill Bryan, the last of the trio still living, disappeared under mysterious circumstances. The three apparently conducted development work, but commercial production never took place.[194]

No sooner had Bryan disappeared than new interest arose in the area. Herbert Smith, who was probably nicknamed "Whitey" Smith, had been using trapping cabins, on the Resurrection River's east side, since the 1930s. (In 1939 he had requested a U.S. Forest Service permit to use a trapping cabin just south of the Boulder Creek mouth. Although he eventually abandoned that site, he returned to the area in 1945 and requested a second permit for a trapping cabin two miles to the south, at the mouth of Martin Creek.) Smith and Bryan knew each other; when Bryan disappeared, in fact, the local newspaper noted that Bryan, at first, was "thought to be up the Resurrection River with Whitey Smith, who has a cabin about 18 miles up the river from Seward."[195]

Smith apparently moved to claim the Placer Creek property soon after Bryan's disappearance. No record has surfaced regarding his locating the property, but he, together with George Lesko and possibly Foss Wright Sargent, appear to have constructed a cabin on the property in 1945 or 1946. (George Lesko and his wife Myra Lesko, and Foss Sargent and his wife Mary "Irene" Sargent, were all recent migrants to Seward. If the values placed on quit-claims are any indication, George Lesko may have helped Smith construct the cabin but Sargent may have joined the partnership at a later date.)

The three retained an interest in the cabin until 1950. Seward resident George Black bought out Bert Smith's interest in the property that January. During the spring of 1953, Black purchased the interests of Sargent and Lesko. Black paid a total of $210 for the cabin. Neither Black nor the trio that preceded him, it should be noted, were interested in the area's mining claims; instead, they were interested in the "cabin and the surrounding grounds" for their trapping or homesteading

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[193] *Record Book*, Vol. 11, pp. 194, 248; in State Recorder's Office, Seward.

[194] Seward Shea, interview by Mary Tidlow, February 2, 1997; *[Seward] Daily Polaris*, October 23, 1944.

[195] U.S. Forest Service, "Use Permits for Cabins," Chugach National Forest, Anchorage.

possibilities.[196] Black, the cabin's owner after 1953, remained in Seward for years afterward. Nothing is known, however, about whether he spent much time at his cabin. Before long he abandoned it. During subsequent years, as graffiti on the cabin's walls attest, other Seward residents used the cabin from time to time. The Bureau of Land Management recognized the cabin's cultural importance following a June 1978 visit by archeologist John Beck, but the site was still unclaimed public land when President Jimmy Carter proclaimed Kenai Fjords National Monument in December 1978.[197]

During the summer of 1983, archeologist Georgeanne Reynolds led a reconnaissance of the Resurrection Valley's west side. Central to her survey was an investigation of the lower Redman and Placer Creek drainages. The survey uncovered evidence of four area cabins. On the south bank of Redman Creek, on the western edge of the valley, the team uncovered the ruins of a 16' x 17' cabin. Hidden in the underbrush, the extant walls were two to three logs high. Reynolds noted that a 1915 report on the area, which was based on 1909 fieldwork, described a placer mine in the vicinity but did not describe a cabin. Reynolds therefore concluded that the cabin "most likely dates to the 1920's mining era due to its state of preservation and all the similarities with the other mining aged cabins located this summer." She further suggested, on the basis of site evidence, that the cabin may have been a short-term or intermittent occupation site.[198]

On Placer Creek, Reynolds and her crew found the remains of three cabins. The most intact cabin, the so-called Placer Creek cabin, was just south of the creek and one-half mile west of the creek's confluence with the Resurrection River. It was the only standing historic structure in the valley. The dimension of the one-room cabin, with an adjacent portico, was 25' x 15'. Reynolds estimated that the cabin was built in 1945 or 1946. She noted several remarkable architectural features:

> The building was carefully constructed as a major residence and multi-purpose (i.e., mining and trapping) base of operations. The logs are well laid and tightly fitted, utilizing a modified saddle notch technique. The hand split shingle roof is also carefully crafted and is a rarity in this part of Alaska

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[196] *Deed Book*, Vol. 15, pp. 323, 330; *Deed Book*, Vol. 16, p. 3.

[197] John Beck, "Report on Cultural Resources on the Resurrection River near Seward," unpub. BLM mss., October 25, 1978, in KEFJ HRS files, AKSO-RCR.

[198] Georgeanne Lewis Reynolds, *An Archeological Reconnaissance of the West Side of the Resurrection River Valley, Kenai Fjords National Park, 1983*, NPS Research/Resources Management Report AR-13 (Anchorage, NPS, October 1987), 52, 81-84.

> because of the difficulty in finding clear and straight grained wood suitable for bolts. Another unusual feature is the portico on the east end of the structure which functioned as a shed.[199]

The cabin, Reynolds noted, was being converted during the summer of 1983 into a backcountry public use cabin. That summer the roof was reshingled, tin was laid around the stovepipe, and new floor joists were laid. Five years later, a new stovepipe was installed.[200] In 1997, the entire cabin was restored. The cabin has not yet been evaluated for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places.

Just 470 feet upstream from the Placer Creek Cabin, the team found a cabin ruin. Reynolds noted that the logs were stacked three or four high in the corners of the 12' x 13' structure; the center of the walls, however, were lower. Based on a site survey, Reynolds estimated that the site "evidently predates Placer Creek Cabin due to its advanced state of deterioration." (She noted elsewhere that the cabin was "likely much older" than the Placer Creek Cabin, but she did not speculate as to the cabin's age.) The lack of a dump, the lack of artifacts under the collapsed roof, and the small size of the foundation led her to conclude that the cabin had witnessed only short-term use.[201]

The team located the remains of a third cabin in the Placer Creek drainage on the creek's north side, almost directly across from the Placer Creek Cabin. Reynolds noted that the cabin, although in a ruined state, was relatively intact in comparison to both the Redman Creek ruin and the 12' x 13' cabin ruin on the south side of Placer Creek. This cabin, which had dimensions of 13' x 14', featured walls that were between four and five logs high, and the surrounding clearing had not regrown as much as the other two ruins. Based on the large amount of mining-related debris around the site, Reynolds estimated that the cabin "probably dates to the mining days of the 1920's and early 1930's." She further noted that the cabin was occupied for a longer period of time than the 12' x 13' ruin on the south side of Placer Creek.[202]

Inasmuch as Reynolds did little historical research in conjunction with her archeological survey, she was able to provide only rough estimates on the age of the various Resurrection River valley cabins. In 1997, however,

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[199] *Ibid.*, 42, 69-73.

[200] Gary Somers to Superintendent, Kenai Fjords National Park, "Archeological Inventory Survey, XXX No. ARO-93-060," December 9, 1993, AKSO-RCR.

[201] Reynolds, *An Archeological Reconnaissance*, 42, 74-77.

[202] *Ibid.*, 47, 51, 77-81.

NPS intern Mary Tidlow prepared a draft Historic Structures Report for the Placer Creek cabin; as part of her research, she extracted sufficient historical documentation to provide a historical context to each of the cabins that Reynolds had identified. Her history noted, for example, that the Redman brothers' prospecting in 1909 and 1910 was the only known historical activity along Redman Creek. That knowledge, combined with the deteriorated condition of the Redman Creek cabin ruin, caused Tidlow to conclude that the Redmans built the Redman Creek cabin; this date is consistent with verbiage in the 1915 USGS report, which described mining activity along the creek in 1909.

Tidlow, on the basis of her research, also helped pinpoint the history of the various Placer Creek cabins. She noted, for example, that the Redman brothers also built the 12' x 13' cabin on the creek's south side in either 1909 or 1910. The brothers abandoned the cabin shortly after it was constructed, but it apparently later served as the occasional residence of John Dubreuil, who owned several area mineral claims from 1913 to the mid-1920s. The cabin on the north side of Placer Creek, which was in better shape than the 12' x 13' cabin, probably dates from the 1930s; based on her research, Tidlow noted that the cabin was probably built by William "Bill" Bryan, Oliver Bryan, and Lindsay "Happy" Ratchford. Herbert "Whitey" Smith and George Lesko, possibly assisted by Foss Wright Sargent, probably built the so-called Placer Creek Cabin in either 1945 or 1946. This cabin is still standing; it is, in fact, the only standing historical structure in Kenai Fjords National Park.[203]

Little is known about the various historic cabins east of the Resurrection River, all of which are administered by the U.S. Forest Service. As noted above, "Whitey" Smith had permits for two "trapping cabins" during the 1939-1945 period. One was near the mouth of Boulder Creek (specifically, within 132 feet of the east bank of the Resurrection River and "approximately 400 yards from Boulder Creek"), while the other was at the "junction of Martin Creek and Resurrection River."[204] Inasmuch as historical mining claims were established along Martin Creek (and perhaps Boulder Creek as well), it is probable that both of these cabins were built prior to the late 1930s. Both were built to support either mining or trapping activities. The condition of the two cabins is unknown.

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[203] Steve Peterson and Mary Tidlow, *Historic Structures Report, Placer Creek Cabin, Kenai Fjords National Park (draft)* (Anchorage, NPS, October 1997), 2-6.

[204] Bert Smith, Trapping Cabin Permits, issued September 14, 1939 and September 12, 1945, Public Use Permits file, Chugach National Forest office, Anchorage. Both permits apparently had a corresponding file, which was sent to the National Archives in 1968; these files and their contents, however, have since been destroyed.

Two other historic cabins also appear to have been built east of the Resurrection River. One is located near the river, midway between Martin and Boulder creeks; the other is just three-quarters of a mile north of the Resurrection River vehicle bridge. Archeologist John Beck noted both cabins during a June 1978 overflight. He was not able to visit either cabin on the ground. On the basis of his aerial observation, however, he noted that the two cabins were still standing; moreover, they "have hand split shingle roofs and could conceivably have been constructed by the same individual(s)" that constructed the Placer Creek cabin. That assumption, however, was challenged in 1984, when U.S. Forest Service archeologist Jonathan Lothrop surveyed the area around the proposed Boulder Creek Recreation Cabin. During that survey, he located the cabin midway between Martin and Boulder creeks. He found it "in a state of advanced decay, with the original corrugated sheet metal roof collapsed and the four walls still standing, but missing one or two of the upper log courses." He concluded that the structure did not qualify for the National Register of Historic Places. The other cabin has not yet been subject to a detailed survey; a Forest Service official, however, noted that the cabin had "pretty well melted down" by the mid-1990s.[205] Historical details about both cabins are entirely lacking.

[205] U.S. Forest Service, "Archeological Reconnaissance Report No. 84-30," February 14, 1985, in Chugach National Forest files, Anchorage; Patrick J. O'Leary interview, December 17, 1996. It is possible that the two cabins Smith used, and the two cabins that Beck identified in 1978, are one and the same. If true, the geographical descriptions provided on Smith's trapping permit forms are either in error or need to be liberally interpreted.

Illustration by Rockwell Kent from *Wilderness, A Journal of Quiet Adventure in Alaska*, 1920. The Rockwell Kent Legacies.

Map 8-1 **Historic Sites-Military Activity**

Chapter 8. Impacts of Military Activities

The military has long been interested in the Kenai Peninsula's southern coastline. Resurrection Bay, one of many indentations along that coastline, has enormous strategic value; it remains ice-free all year long, and the topography north of the bay is sufficiently gentle that roads and rail lines beginning here have penetrated the interior. These routes, as noted in Chapter 5, have allowed the area to serve as a commercial entrepôt for much of southcentral and interior Alaska. Because of its strategic value, Resurrection Bay has been the military's primary focus. Certain aspects of military activity, however, have taken place in or near present-day parklands.

Early Plans and Activities

Russian authorities, through naval charts and occasional expeditions, knew of Resurrection Bay's strategic value by the mid-nineteenth century. During the first two decades after the U.S. government purchased Russian America, the bay's strategic value was largely overlooked. Beginning in the 1880s, however, the Lowell family's settlement and roadbuilding activities connected with Hope-Sunrise mining operations increased that value. As noted in Chapter 5, the U.S. military had the opportunity to see the area for themselves during the Klondike gold rush period; in May 1898, a three-man army expedition sailed to the head of Resurrection Bay and trekked north to Kenai Lake. Five years later, the town of Seward was founded and a railroad toward Alaska's interior was begun. From that point on, most of those interested in Alaska recognized that Seward and Resurrection Bay would be a primary access corridor into southcentral and interior Alaska. This fact was of considerable interest to both military and civilian authorities.

The military first signaled its interest in the Seward area in March 1907, shortly after Congress appropriated study funds for a suitable harbor along the "southern Alaska coast" for a navy yard and navy station. An army expedition, in 1898, had located a substantial coal deposit along the Chickaloon River, a branch of the Matanuska River near present-day Sutton; the Navy, recognizing that the Alaska Central was being built northward to make the coal deposit more accessible, was interested in constructing a coal transfer facility along the coast. But the Navy also knew of another potentially large deposit—the Bering River coal beds—so the study was intended to decide which field should be developed.[1]

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[1] *Seward Weekly Gateway*, March 30, 1907, 2; October 5, 1907, 2; Joan Antonson and

During the summer of 1907, the Navy began to lean toward selecting a location near Seward, and in late September, a navy ship arrived to choose an appropriate site for a Naval Coaling Depot. By November, naval authorities had announced their intention to withdraw a 3,350-acre parcel along the west side of Resurrection Bay; it would be 2½ miles from north to south and include both the Spruce Creek and Tonsina Creek drainage, and would go two miles west from the bay. The coaling depot would be sited at Lowell Point. President Roosevelt withdrew the parcel on February 21, 1908.[2]

Development of the parcel, however, had to wait until coal could be cheaply brought to the site and the Navy had demonstrated a need for it. Those conditions would not be fulfilled any time soon because President Roosevelt, in a widely disparaged move, withdrew Alaska's coal reserves from entry in November 1906. (Roosevelt issued his edict because, in his opinion, existing laws limiting coal-mine claims to 160 acres were unworkable and conducive to fraud.) Naval authorities were further stymied because the Alaska Central's end of track was more than a hundred miles away from the coalfields.[3]

Events on the federal level soon re-ignited interest in the Chickaloon River coal resources and Seward's role in the coal lands' development. On May 28, 1908, Congress passed the Alaska Coal Act, which permitted lands intended for coal developments to be consolidated in claims of up to 2,560 acres. Soon afterward, construction on the Alaska Central stopped, and as noted in Chapter 5, the transfer of the railroad's assets to the Alaska Northern did not result in additional track mileage. Construction remained at a standstill until 1912, when Congress authorized the construction of the Alaska Railroad. In 1914, Congress passed a coal-land leasing bill, which further stimulated Alaska coal development. The government, recognizing that the Chickaloon deposit would become accessible in the near future, extracted 800 tons of coal as a pilot project during the winter of 1913-14. It tested the coal and found it had good burning properties. That test stimulated further site development. The government made no secret of its intention to use Chickaloon coal to

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William S. Hanable, *Alaska's Heritage* (Anchorage, Alaska Historical Commission, 1985), 428-29.

[2] *Seward Weekly Gateway*, August 17, 1907, 1; September 21, 1907, 1; November 2, 1907; February 1, 1908, 1; Executive Order 760, February 21, 1908, at Alaska State Office, Bureau of Land Management, Anchorage. Because of a clerical error in EO 760, Roosevelt revoked the order on March 23 and substituted EO 773. This withdrawal remained in effect until April 21, 1948, when Public Land Order 470 revoked it.

[3] Claus-M. Naske and Herman Slotnick, *Alaska, A History of the 49th State*, 2nd edition (Norman, Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 92.

power U.S. Navy vessels. It needed to do so because the U.S., with its growing international stature, had many new navy ships docked in Pacific Coast ports, but it had few west-coast sources of cheap, plentiful coal.[4]

As a result of those actions, the military again became interested in the Seward area. By February 1916, local officials had been informed that Resurrection Bay "may be the location of a coaling station in the near future." Seven months later, President Wilson set aside Rugged Island as a military reservation, perhaps as a proposed coaling-station site.[5] Meanwhile, railroad construction (which included the rehabilitation of the old Alaska Central route) had begun in April 1915; it reached Anchorage in the fall of 1916, and by October 1917 the rails had been extended to the mine at Chickaloon. A coal train arrived there soon afterward, and on October 30, the first shipment from the government-owned mine arrived in Anchorage.[6]

Coal continued to be mined at Chickaloon for the next several years. Only a small amount, however, was mined each year; in 1919, for example, just 4,000 tons were extracted. The coal, moreover, was used locally, thus obviating any need for a Seward-area coaling station. The Navy, during this period, made no move to develop or use the mine.[7]

Beginning in 1919, the Navy decided to increase its involvement in the area. A Navy Commission report that year recommended that land be set aside at Seward "for a Navy pier and coal-handling plant," and in August, President Wilson issued an order setting aside acreage at the east end of Monroe Street "for the erection of wharves, coal storage yards and other Naval purposes." During the summer of 1920, Navy Secretary Josephus Daniels and other officials traveled to both Seward and Chickaloon to assess the situation for themselves. On the heels of that visit, the Navy decided to invest more than $1 million in the development of the Chickaloon coal deposit. During the next two years exploration activity was dramatically intensified, more than a hundred workers were brought to the area, a commodious townsite was constructed, and an imposing coal washing plant—begun in 1921 and completed in March 1922—was built several miles away.[8]

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[4] Antonson and Hanable, *Alaska's Heritage*, 429; Naske and Slotnick, *Alaska, A History of the 49th State*, 93.

[5] Seward Chamber of Commerce to Josephus Daniels (Secretary of the Navy), February 16, 1916, in Brown and Hawkins Collection, UAF; EO 2454, September 15, 1916.

[6] Lyman L. Woodman, *Duty Station Northwest; The U.S. Army in Alaska and Western Canada, 1867-1987; Vol. One, 1867-1917* (Anchorage, Alaska Historical Society, 1996), 291.

[7] Antonson and Hanable, *Alaska's Heritage*, 428-29.

[8] Vincent W. Ponko, Jr., "The Alaskan Coal Commission, 1920 to 1922," *Alaska*

The washing facility had been completed for just two weeks when, on March 30, 1922, Interior Secretary Albert B. Fall abruptly announced that the Navy, on May 1, would close the mine and abandon the coal-washing plant. Navy officials did so because, after further tests, they found east coast coal superior to Alaska coal; because they knew that a large-scale Alaska coal source was available in case of an emergency; and because the discovery of vast new California oil fields portended the Navy's gradual transition from coal-powered to oil-powered ships. As a result of the Navy's decision, Seward never received large volumes of Chickaloon coal, and the military never constructed a Seward-area coaling station.[9]

During the summer of 1923, the hopes of Seward citizens were buoyed once again, when a survey ship visited the bay "with a view to the establishment of a navy base at some point in Alaska." The Navy, however, did not follow through on its proposal, either in the Seward area or anywhere else in the territory. By January 1925, Rugged Island was declared "useless for military purposes" and the former withdrawal was revoked.[10]

Although no facilities were constructed in conjunction with Seward area military reservations, the military was nevertheless active in Seward during this period. The government, which was constructing the railroad, had a large number of foreign nationals on the various construction crews. When the U.S. government entered World War I in April 1917, emotions rose and some of those foreigners were regarded as "enemy aliens." That same month, therefore, Seward's Spanish-American veterans' group organized an ad hoc committee for public safety and defense. By year's end, Seward's so-called Council of Defense was large and well organized, and in early 1918, its leaders requested that a military detachment be brought from nearby Fort Liscum (near Valdez) to patrol the city. The local citizens' group, which was later known as the Seward Home Guard, disbanded in March 1919. The military detachment, however, remained after the cessation of hostilities, and it was not until the summer of 1921 that the soldiers returned to Fort Liscum. A new

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Journal 8 (Spring 1978), 119-125; Executive Order 3149, August 16, 1919.

[9] Alison K. Hoagland, *Buildings of Alaska* (New York, Oxford, 1993), 135-36; Barry, *Seward History, II*, 55, 60; *Seward Gateway*, March 30, 1922, 1.

[10] *Seward Gateway*, July 17, 1923, 3; August 29, 1923, 2; Executive Order 4131, January 22, 1925. Rugged Island, which had a navigation light on it, was transferred from a War Department withdrawal to a Commerce Department withdrawal via Executive Order 4223, dated May 11, 1925. The Navy dock site, which was reserved in August 1919, was partially revoked by Executive Order 3828, dated May 3, 1923. The remainder, however, remained under nominal naval control until World War II.

detachment arrived in town the following summer; it probably remained until the railroad was completed in mid-1923, then left soon afterward.[11]

The military, during this period, also maintained a radio station on the Resurrection River flats north of Seward. In February 1916, the local chamber of commerce wrote the Navy Secretary and urged that a radio station would be a necessary adjunct to the proposed naval coaling station. Perhaps in response, personnel from the Naval Communication Service arrived in town that August to select an appropriate site. A 40-acre site north of town (near today's airport) was withdrawn the following April, and by December 1917 facilities had been constructed and the station was operating. The stationed remained until August 1923, when budget cuts forced its closure, but the Naval Radio Service reopened the facility in April 1924. The U.S. Army Signal Corps assumed control over the station in June 1926 and operated it until it was abandoned in 1930.[12]

World War II Activities in Seward

During the 1930s, Japan became increasingly militaristic; in 1931 it invaded Manchuria, in 1934 it denounced the five-nation Naval Disarmament Treaty of 1922, and in 1936 it allowed the treaty to lapse. War clouds grew, both in Europe and the Pacific, and on September 1, 1939, World War II began in Europe. In order to be prepared for war, Alaska's Congressional Delegate, Anthony Dimond, repeatedly urged Congress to fund the construction of military bases in the increasingly vulnerable territory. Congress, however, refused. Thus when Germany invaded Poland, Alaska had only one small military installation: Chilkoot Barracks, an army detachment near Haines. This post was more than a thousand miles away from the Aleutian Islands, the most likely Japanese target.

The war in Europe finally goaded Congress into action. Congress authorized three Alaska naval bases; work began at Sitka and Kodiak in 1939 and at Dutch Harbor in 1940. Congress dragged its feet on further Alaska appropriations until Germany invaded Scandinavia in the spring of 1940. The recognition that Alaska lay within striking distance of Nazi bombers spurred further activity, and during the summer of 1940 Army bases were laid out near both Anchorage and Fairbanks. A series of

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[11] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 62, 174, 176, 177, 180, 181, 182.

[12] Seward Chamber of Commerce to Josephus Daniels (Secretary of the Navy), February 16, 1916, in Brown and Hawkins Collection, UAF: Barry, *Seward History, II*, 217, 220; *Seward Gateway*, September 5, 1916, 1.

airfields linking interior Alaska with bases in southern Canada, along the so-called Northwest Staging Route, was authorized in 1940 and either constructed or expanded in 1941.

After the summer of 1940, the nation increasingly prepared for war, and as a part of the military buildup, millions of dollars were expended in Alaska to develop a stronger defense infrastructure. Because of that buildup, the U.S. government was fairly well prepared for war on December 7, 1941, when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and the U.S. entered World War II.

Seward, at the southern end of the Alaska Railroad, was the linchpin for the only railroad—and the only year-round route—connecting the major shipping lanes with Alaska's two largest air bases. The town and bay, therefore, held enormous strategic value. In order to protect Seward, its port and rail facilities, and the enormous traffic that passed through, the U.S. Army Air Corps established Fort Raymond.[13] The fort consisted of the Seward garrison, just north of town; a dock and adjacent housing area for the stevedores, on the northeastern outskirts of town; and a fuel oil storage area, just south of the garrison. The fort was named for Capt. Charles W. Raymond, of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Raymond had ascended the Yukon River to Fort Yukon in 1869. It was he who determined that the fort lay in Alaska; he convinced the Hudson's Bay Company personnel there that the post had been illegally established, and the traders vacated the post soon afterward.[14]

The Adjutant General of the Army Corps of Engineers authorized the construction of Fort Raymond on June 4, 1941. A small detail from Fort Richardson, near Anchorage, began preparing the site soon afterward. In late June, the first large troop complement left Seattle; it arrived in Seward on June 30. Construction began immediately afterward. Within two days, the fort site was being graded and leveled, and within a week, anti-aircraft gun emplacements were being constructed.[15] The first soldiers were from the Arkansas-based 153rd Infantry Battalion, which

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[13] Jack Sinclair noted that for a brief period during the World War II, Seward had the busiest waterfront on the west coast of North America. Sinclair, "Turning the Forgotten into the Remembered: The Making of Caines Head State Recreation Area," in Fern Chandonnet, ed., *Alaska at War, 1941-1945, the Forgotten War Remembered* (Anchorage, Alaska at War Committee, 1995), 377.

[14] Erwin (Tee) Thompson to Bruce Kaye, KEFJ, August 24, 1985, in History Box B-C, KEFJ Library; Melody Webb, *The Last Frontier; A History of the Yukon Basin of Canada and Alaska* (Albuquerque, Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1985), 48-50.

[15] n.a., "Fort Raymond, Seward, A History," in *Historical Reports, Alaska Department, Vol. 2*, p. 1, in Box 373, RG 338, Western National Records Center, NARA; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 152-53.

guarded ships and patrolled the town. Before long, they were joined by the 420th Coast Artillery, which manned the pillboxes on the beach and furnished the anti-aircraft unit; two port battalions, the 371st and the 260th; the 203rd Station Hospital Force; and the 29th Engineers Battalion. Later, in December 1942, troops from the 267th Coast Artillery (most of whom hailed from Pittsburgh and Baltimore) arrived in Seward. Some of those troops remained in town and were stationed at Fort Raymond.[16]

Living conditions at the fort were crude at first. Troops lived in tents, and until a mess hall was set up, soldiers marched to the supply ships for meals. Meanwhile, construction proceeded quickly; grading was completed by the end of July, and in August the Post Headquarters building was erected. Construction of other buildings followed. By the end of August 1943, the fort's buildings—in the stevedoring area, at the Army dock, the San Juan dock, and the main garrison—had all been completed. The main garrison featured a horseshoe-shaped parade ground; the nearby hospital area had three wards plus numerous associated buildings.[17]

Nine months after Fort Raymond was founded, on March 25, 1942, the troops had their only enemy encounter when they spotted a Japanese submarine within 2,000 yards of Seward's Army Dock.[18] Then, on June 3 and June 4, the Japanese Navy bombed Dutch Harbor. The raid resulted in relatively little damage to either Fort Mears (a U.S. Army post) or the Dutch Harbor Naval Operating Base. It did, however, underscore U.S. vulnerability to Japanese attack, and it was also followed soon afterward by the Japanese invasion of Attu and Kiska islands, at the western end of the Aleutian chain.

Perhaps in response to the raid, the U.S. Navy established a Navy Section Base at Seward. Located just north and west of the San Juan dock, the base was commissioned on July 31, 1942, and before long it consisted of four semi-permanent barracks, a seaplane hangar and ramp, and two piers: one 165 feet long, the other 100 feet long.[19]

Construction continued at Fort Raymond, as noted above, until the summer of 1943. No sooner was construction complete, however, than the fort had begun to lose its strategic value. Allied troops, in May 1943,

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[16] Paulsteiner, *Sinful Town*, 107-08; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 171. The full name of the 267th was the 267th Separate Coast Artillery (HD), the "HD" signifying "harbor defense."

[17] "Fort Raymond, Seward, A History," 2-3; Thompson to Kaye, August 24, 1985.

[18] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 175.

[19] Thompson to Kaye, August 24, 1985.

successfully landed on Attu Island. Three weeks of hard fighting ensued, and by May 30, Japanese forces had been driven off the island. At Kiska Island, Allied forces launched a major assault on August 15. Surprisingly, they found no resistance; only later did they discover that the Japanese had evacuated the island in late July. Allied forces, once again, controlled the Aleutian Islands, and with action shifted to other theatres of operation, military commanders began to de-emphasize the importance of Fort Raymond and other Alaskan bases.

The Navy, perhaps because of higher priorities elsewhere, began to downsize its Seward facility even before the May campaign to retake Attu had begun. On April 1, 1943, the Section Base became a Naval Auxiliary Air Facility. Naval troops left town during June and July. On July 29, all naval activities at the facility were discontinued and the site was turned over to the U.S. Coast Guard.[20]

U.S. Army units began to leave Seward even before the Navy did so. In mid-March 1943, three battalions of the 153rd Infantry were sent to a camp in Mississippi, and before the end of the month the 420th Infantry had transferred to a camp in California. Other battalions of the 153rd Infantry continued to leave during the summer, and in October the 267th Artillery, which had been in Seward less than a year, took over the fort's administrative functions.[21]

By the spring of 1944, Alaska's defense network was considered sufficiently secure that further cutbacks were in order. On March 25, therefore, the Alaskan Department Headquarters of the U.S. War Department ordered that the entire Seward harbor defense network be dismantled. Two months later, all harbor entrance control post functions stopped. In response to those orders, most of those constituting the 267th Coast Artillery left Seward on August 28, 1944 and headed to a camp in Texas. A few troops, however, remained in town until 1945.[22]

After the war, Fort Raymond was a vacant government post until October 1947, when it was sold by the War Assets Administration to the private sector.[23] Just three years later, however, the military changed course when it established a U.S. Army Recreation Center on a small portion of the former fort. The recreation center, used by troops from Whittier and Fort Richardson, offered boats and barges for deep sea fishing. The center

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[20] Thompson to Kaye, August 24, 1985.

[21] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 165.

[22] Thompson to Kaye, August 24, 1985; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 165.

[23] Real Property Disposal Case Files, 1944-49, Regional Director's office, Alaska Region (Anchorage), Region 37, Box 7 of 37, RG 270 (War Assets Administration), NARA ANC.

has utilized the site ever since. Sometime later, the U.S. Air Force moved to establish a similar facility. The two centers were merged in 1989; they now operate as the Seward Military Recreation Camp.[24]

World War II Activities in Resurrection Bay

In order to protect Seward and the Alaska Railroad yards, the U.S. Army established outposts and bases on many of the islands and headlands of Resurrection Bay. Recognizing the bay's strategic importance, the military reserved most of the bay's islands and headlands during the summer of 1941; later in the war, it reserved thousands of additional acres overlooking the bay. Facilities, consisting of gun batteries, searchlights, communications sites, and supporting facilities, were constructed at many sites in and around the bay; many were built under the most trying of circumstances. Sites were reserved, and facilities built, on both sides of the bay and as far east as Chamberlain Point, overlooking Day Harbor. Because the focus of this study is the Kenai Fjords area, primary attention will be limited to the reservations and facilities that were located either on Resurrection Bay's west side or on islands within the bay.

Shortly after troops moved north to establish Fort Raymond, Army officials decided to move men and armaments to strategic points south of town. Caines Head, eight miles south of Seward, was the first site chosen because of its commanding position overlooking Resurrection Bay. A quick survey of proposed camp sites and road rights-of-way took place in July 1941, and on the last day of the month, troops from the 250th Coast Artillery moved from Seward to South Beach (also known as Minneapolis Beach) along with 155mm guns, ammunition, and supplies. The South Beach Cantonment of Fort Raymond was in operation. A road, intended to go from South Beach to North Beach, was already under construction by this time. But plans quickly changed; new plans called for all resources to be devoted to the construction of a gun battery at Rocky Point, a mile southwest of South Beach. The overwhelming demands for war materials brought many delays, so for the next several months, construction of the Rocky Point gun battery and the South Beach camp buildings fully occupied the soldiers.[25]

Meanwhile, the military moved to reserve the more strategic headlands and islands surrounding the bay. On August 29, 1941, the General Land Office withdrew seven area sites "for the use of the War Department for

[24] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 271, 342.
[25] Thompson to Kaye, August 24, 1985; "Fort Raymond, Seward, A History," 3.

military purposes." The sites, and the approximate acreage reserved, included:

* the Rocky Point-Caines Head area	4,650 acres
* the Humpy Cove-Thumb Cove area	900 acres
* Rugged Island	1,020 acres
* Barwell Island	36 acres
* Renard (Fox) Island	1,510 acres
* Hive Island	225 acres
* Cheval Island	330 acres

The military, as it turned out, used only the first four sites for defensive purposes; it bypassed Renard, Hive, and Cheval islands.[26]

In February 1942, the military authorized the construction of two six-inch batteries for the Seward harbor defense network. A locally appointed Harbor Defense Board recommended that the batteries be installed on Rugged Island and Aialik Cape. The latter point, at the south end of Aialik Peninsula, had not been withdrawn by the GLO the previous summer. Some authorities advocated the idea of a Cape Aialik battery, but others apparently did not, and by May 1942, the proposed battery site had been moved from Aialik Cape to Caines Head. Construction on the battery at the highest point on Caines Head began on July 20, 1942, while work at the southern tip of Rugged Island commenced on August 1. The Caines Head battery became known as Battery No. 293; the Rugged Island site became known as Battery No. 294.[27]

In November 1942, Fort Raymond's commanding officer was ordered to construct two four-gun anti-motor torpedo boat (AMTB) batteries. By the following February, authorities had decided that the batteries would be constructed at Lowell Point and at the mouth of Fourth of July Creek. Both sites were at the northern end of Resurrection Bay; neither site had been withdrawn by the GLO in August 1941. The Lowell Point battery was completed as scheduled, but at Fourth of July Creek, a mobile gun base was operated on a temporary base but quickly abandoned.[28]

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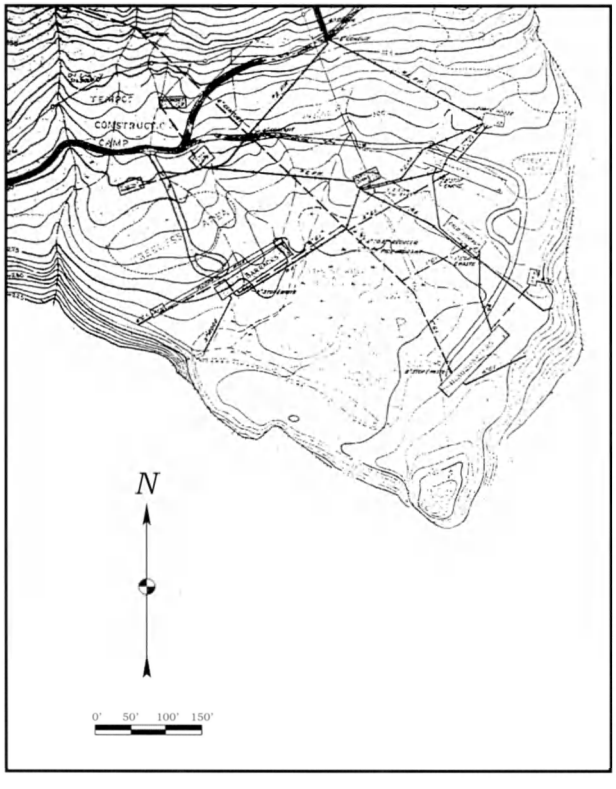
[26] Executive Order 8877, August 29, 1941, at Alaska State Office, Bureau of Land Management, Anchorage. Wartime maps refer to Humpy Cove as Butts Bay. In addition to EO 8877, the military withdrew an additional 11,266 acres between Thumb Cove and the southern end of Resurrection Peninsula, via Public Land Order 77, on January 8, 1943. The only improvement that followed this withdrawal was the Chamberlain Point searchlight (see discussion below), plus the overland cable that connected Chamberlain Point with Topeka Point. On April 26, 1948, the land withdrawn in 1943 reverted to the public domain via Public Land Order 471.

[27] "Fort Raymond, Seward, A History," 5-6.

[28] "Fort Raymond, Seward, A History," 6-7.

The Aircraft Warning Service staffed a detector-site station in the Pye Islands (shown in foreground) from 1942 to 1944. M. Woodbridge Williams/NPS photo, in *Alaska Regional Profiles, Southcentral Region*, July 1974, 35.



This Army Corps drawing, made in 1942, details the layout of the Aircraft Warning Service camp on Outer Island. Army Corps of Engineers collection, NARA Anchorage.

The Kitten Pass stairway, built by military personnel in 1942 at the north end of Outer Island. M. Woodbridge Williams photo, NPS/Alaska Area Office print file, NARA Anchorage.

During the construction of the Rugged Island and Caines Head batteries, the military decided to diversify the functions of both sites. Caines Head, for example, was chosen as the site for a joint Army-Navy Harbor Entrance Control Post (HECP) in November 1941. This post was necessary to coordinate and control shipping entering and leaving Resurrection Bay. The station, located in a temporary building, was ready for operation in August 1942. This post was later moved to a 37' x 83' concrete building at Patsy Point, at the southern tip of Rugged Island near Battery 294; in the same building, the military located a Harbor Defense Command Post. In addition, both the Caines Head and Rugged Island batteries were equipped with Radar Surface Craft Protector Units, which supplied advance intelligence to both the HECP and to the Fort Raymond Headquarters. South Beach (Caines Head) had sufficient barracks and mess facilities for 250 men, while the Rugged Island post had facilities to support an 88-man contingent. In recognition of these multiple functions, the Caines Head site was officially designated Fort McGilvray on March 25, 1943; that same day, the Rugged Island installation was designated Fort Bulkley.[29] Construction at both posts continued for another year.

Military personnel occupied many other sites in and around Resurrection Bay. Searchlights were installed at Topeka Point (just north of Humpy Cove), Chamberlain Point (just south of Safety Cove, in Day Harbor), Carol Cove (on the northeast side of Rugged Island), Alma Point (on the northwest end of Rugged Island), Barwell Island, the east end of Thumb Cove, Caines Head, and Rocky Point. Radio stations were also widely distributed: sites included South Beach (Caines Head), Lowell Point, Barwell Island, Alma Point (Rugged Island), and Battery 294 (Rugged Island). A dock was constructed at North Beach (Caines Head), and barge-landing facilities were installed at Marys Bay (Rugged Island) and Topeka Point. To facilitate telephone communications, a submarine cable linked South Beach with Topeka Point and Topeka Point with Chamberlain Point; other cables connected South Beach to Rugged and Barwell islands.[30]

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[29] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 157; "Fort Raymond, Seward, A History," 4-7. Barry notes that the Caines Head site was named for John McGilvray, a Civil War veteran who had also commanded nearby Fort Kenay during the years immediately following the U.S. purchase of Russian America. The Rugged Island post was probably named for Charles Bulkley, a U.S. Army colonel who had played a major role in the 1865-68 Western Union Telegraph Expedition.

[30] "Fort Raymond, Seward, A History," 7-8; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 156; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, "Harbor Defenses of Seward Alaska, As Constructed Drawing, Master Plan," May 14, 1945, in Aperture Cards, Set B (Box O), RG 77, NARA ANC.

The 250th Coast Artillery, recently arrived from a camp near Watsonville, California, was assigned to construct and operate the various installations south of Seward. They were the sole unit in the area from the summer of 1941 to December 1942, when the 267th Coast Artillery arrived at Fort Raymond. Soldiers of the 267th were soon deployed to various Resurrection Bay locations, and by October 1943 they were the sole occupants of the various remote posts.[31]

The soldiers stationed south of Seward witnessed few incidents of real or perceived enemy activity. In late March 1943, the Rugged Island Observation Post reported an unidentified submarine 15 miles off the island. The Navy, in response, spotted the same submarine 30 miles off the island and "that necessary action was taken." Six months later, a submarine periscope was reportedly seen in Day Harbor.[32] The only other known "enemy action" took place when local fox farmer Pete Sather headed into the bay without signaling. Military authorities had told him to identify himself but he apparently forgot, and he was soon surprised to see artillery shells being lobbed his way. Soldiers put a searchlight on him and boarded his boat; Sather, however, was indignant over the incident. He figured that because he was carrying the mail, he should have been ensured a safe, unhindered passage.[33]

By the spring of 1944, the various Resurrection Bay military facilities were largely finished; the Rugged Island installation was 90 percent complete, and the Caines Head facility was 99 percent complete.[34] On March 25, however, troops were ordered to dismantle all of Seward's harbor defenses. All construction work stopped, and the military began removing the equipment it had so painstakingly placed at Caines Head, Rugged Island, and the other area sites. The dismantling process took several months; during that time, the two big six-inch guns were shipped to locations in South Dakota and southern California. By August 28, 1944, most of the existing troop complement had left the area and headed south. The once-bustling military sites were now abandoned.[35]

After the war, government officials moved to make the islands in the harbor defense network available to the public. On November 6, 1945, the military declared the land surplus, and on November 28 it was assigned to

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[31] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 159, 172; Paulsteiner, *Sinful Town*, 107-08.

[32] "Fort Raymond, Seward, A History," 12.

[33] Paulsteiner, *Sinful Town*, 99-100; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 159.

[34] On the basis of Sinclair's conclusive evidence, it appears that Erwin Thompson's comment, "I doubt that the 6-inch guns were installed at either Caines Head or Rugged Island," was incorrect. Thompson to Kaye, August 24, 1985.

[35] Sinclair, "Turning the Forgotten into the Remembered," 379.

the Department of the Interior. Interior officials initially moved to return Renard, Hive, and Cheval islands to the public domain; all had been included in the August 1941 withdrawal but had not been subject to military improvements. These islands were returned to the General Land Office by July 9, 1946, but it took more than eighteen additional months for a public land order to be signed that formally revoked the August 1941 military withdrawal for these islands.[36]

The War Assets Administration (WAA), given the task of evaluating the defense network "betterments" (improvements) at the other Resurrection Bay sites, noted that they had an acquisition cost of $3,424,632. The vast majority of the improvements, however, had no alternative uses; in April 1946, therefore, the WAA declared that the improvements had a "fair value" of $25,000. On August 22, 1946, Bureau of Land Management staff visited the site. The agency noted that the improvements were "comprised mostly of T-buildings, Quonset and Butler huts, and at one point a report from the custodian shows an 80 per cent loss of buildings caused by their collapse from the weight of heavy snow." A month later, Interior Department personnel made a Survey for Disposal of Surplus Property at three locations along the bay's western side; they noted 16 buildings and a small dam at South Beach, 5 buildings at Rocky Point, and 2 huts, a dock and a warehouse at North Beach.[37]

These lands were no longer valuable to the military, so officials moved to transfer them back to civilian control. In September and October 1946, Barwell Island and Topeka Point, respectively, were abandoned. In September 1947, representatives of WAA and BLM tentatively concluded that the remainder of the harbor defense network should either be abandoned or donated to the Department of the Interior. They reached this conclusion because no one had shown an interest in using the property and because none of the remaining improvements had commercial value for use at an off-site location. On October 29, the WAA authorized the BLM to abandon all structures and improvements at Rocky Point, South Beach, North Beach, and Rugged Island and to return all lands covered by the August 1941 executive order to the public domain. The public land order that carried out the WAA's decision, however, was not issued until 1962. By that time, the new State of Alaska had already shown an interest in acquiring these lands, so the land order that returned the parcels to the public domain specified that the state had first

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[36] "Harbor Defenses, Seward, AK" (WAA-W-TA-4) folder, in Real Property Disposal Case Files, 1944-49, Box 7 of 37, RD's office, AK Region (Anchorage), Region 37, RG 270 (War Assets Administration), NARA ANC; Public Land Order 445, February 3, 1948,

[37] "Harbor Defenses, Seward" folder; U.S. Survey 2742, U.S. Survey 2743, and U.S. Survey 2744 (maps), October 22, 1946. The GLO became the BLM on July 16, 1946.

selection rights. The state, in fact, moved to acquire land surrounding Caines Head. It also made claims to most of the other parcels containing Harbor Defense installations. Some of those parcels have been transferred to state control, but others have remained under federal jurisdiction.[38]

In April 1962, the State of Alaska filed for a 13,800-acre parcel containing Caines Head. In May 1964, it received a patent to the North Beach, South Beach, and Rocky Point sites; that same year, the BLM tentatively approved the state's application for the remainder of the parcel.[39] In 1971, the Alaska Division of Parks (which had been created just a year earlier) selected some 1,800 acres and established Caines Head State Recreation Area. Three years later, more than 4,000 acres was added to the park; its new area was 5,961 acres. No recreational development, however, took place at the site until the mid-1980s. Since that time, rangers and volunteers have constructed trails, built a public use cabin and ranger station, interviewed veterans who served there, and conducted initial interpretation efforts.[40]

The rest of the harbor defense network, returned to the public domain in 1962, has been ignored in recent years. Aside from the Caines Head area, no organized efforts have been made to either protect or interpret what remains of the World War II-era improvements.[41]

The Outer Island Station

The Aircraft Warning Service, part of the U.S. Army Signal Corps, received authorization in May 1940 to begin setting up a network of Alaska detector sites. The military's Western Defense Command initially proposed four such sites, and in December 1940, authorization was granted to construct four fixed sites and one mobile site. Three months later, stations were authorized at a minimum of seven additional locations. These stations were designed to give a minimum warning to the approach of hostile aircraft at the territory's three largest Navy bases (at Dutch Harbor, Kodiak, and Sitka) and its two largest Army bases (at Anchorage and Fairbanks). The Western Defense Command, up to this point, did not propose any AWS detector sites in the Seward area.[42]

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[38] "Harbor Defenses, Seward, AK" (WAA-W-TA-4) folder; Public Land Order 2587, January 15, 1962.

[39] BLM, Application A 056952; Master Title Plat and Historical Index sheet for T1S, R2W, SM; at Alaska State Office, Anchorage.

[40] Sinclair, "Turning the Forgotten into the Remembered," 379-80.

[41] Bill Stevens interview, August 25, 1995.

[42] James D. Bush, Jr., *Narrative Report of Alaska Construction, 1941-1944* (Anchorage?, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1944), 216-17.

Following the declaration of war in December 1941, the Commanding General of the Alaska Defense Command was given the authority to immediately construct detector sites as determined by the tactical situation. Soon afterward, new detector sites were established surrounding each major air base in Alaska. Then, in October 1942, the Alaska's Air Defense Plan was expanded to include Very High Frequency stations for local communication with certain friendly aircraft during periods of general radio silence. The construction of the Outer Island Aircraft Warning Service Station, in the Pye Islands 80 miles southwest of Seward, was constructed in response to one of these two initiatives. The station was one of the more than 20 Alaska AWS stations which were either operating or under construction by the end of 1942.[43]

Contemporary maps and drawings suggest that the Outer Island AWS station was first proposed in June 1942.[44] By August a small, temporary construction camp had apparently been established at the island's southeastern tip, 325 feet above sea level. Plans were laid out that month for a detector-site complex large enough to house 150 men. The proposed camp, which would be laid out on a south-facing hill, surrounded a small swamp. The camp would consist of a 50-man headquarters building, two 50-man barracks, three 16' x 36' Quonset huts (for materials storage), three latrines, a cold storage building, a powerhouse, and the detector site. Water would be provided by two concrete-lined storage tanks, connected to the camp by water lines. Either underground or overhead power lines connected the powerhouse to each building; the entire camp would be connected to the north side of the island by a 0.6-mile dirt road. The proposed Kitten Pass landing site, at the island's northern end, would have a dock, where two additional 16' x 36' Quonset huts were proposed; the dock, located at the base of a cliff, would connect to the road by means of a short tramway and stairway.[45]

Construction on the permanent camp closely followed the outlined plans. Much of the camp was built that winter; the communications gear was installed by the Signal Corps, while the buildings and supporting infrastructure were supplied by the Corps of Engineers. The detector site was fully operational by March 1943. By October, the camp had been

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[43] Bush, *Narrative Report of Alaska Construction*, 217-18.

[44] U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Aperture Cards, Set C (various), in "Box 3 of 3," RG 77, NARA ANC. Several aperture cards in the Outer Island set labeled "bombardment plane," "revetment," "hangar," and "camouflage" are in error; the drawings on the microfiche images make no reference to Outer Island.

[45] *Ibid*; Bush, *Narrative Report of Alaska Construction*, 218-20. Perhaps because of the site's remoteness, the military made no arrangements with the General Land Office to secure usage rights to the island.

completed. During that summer or fall, the island saw its only "action" when the commander of a U.S. ship convoy ordered his crew to open fire with its 20mm guns. The detector-site crew, clearly alarmed at the assault, jumped behind sandbags and radioed that they were under attack by a Japanese submarine. The convoy commander was obviously unaware that the island had a fully staffed AWS station. Fortunately, no one was hurt in the incident.[46]

Little is known about the lifestyle led by the soldiers stationed on Outer Island. One anecdote suggests that many soldiers, either out of frustration or boredom, killed hundreds of sea lions at their rookeries while out on patrol. Another account states that Outer Island soldiers, like soldiers in many remote areas, were lonely; they thus welcomed the opportunity to socialize with others. Josephine Sather, who lived on nearby Nuka Island, recalled that:

> During the war, many young servicemen came here. Many times we've had four or five of them sitting or lying on the carpet with books and newspapers all around them, while still others, perhaps in a real home for the first time since they left their mothers' homes, were writing long-delayed letters to their families. In the summer, when my flowers were at the height of their glory, the first thing these boys would say was "Oh! I wish my mother could see all this!" Then, "May I write a letter? This time I really have something to write about."
>
> In the winter they'd say, "Gee, it's good to get off the boat for a few hours!" I'll always remember one lad who sat on the couch not saying a word, stroking the silky draperies ever so gently, his eyes misty and his thoughts no doubt of home.... They called me mom; and the good will and kind memories they carried away from my home are worth more to me than any monetary consideration.[47]

It is not known how long soldiers remained on Outer Island. They probably remained at their post until the spring or summer of 1944; then they, like those who were serving at the various Resurrection Bay posts, vacated the area and moved to camps in the States.

The area, not having been withdrawn by the War Department, remained part of the public domain for the duration of the war. When the soldiers

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[46] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 158-59; Bush, *Narrative Report of Alaska Construction*, 218, 221.

[47] Sather, "The Birds and the Bears," 24; Sather, "Our Glorious World," 40.

left, military officials apparently removed the camp's communication gear and other valuable equipment. They abandoned the various buildings, however.

The camp was quickly forgotten and its material remains soon deteriorated. When the U.S. Geological Survey studied the island in 1951, in conjunction with a topographic map of the area published that year, it made no indication of buildings or other cultural features.[48]

For the next several decades, few visited or paid attention to the old World War II site. In July 1976, Nina Faust visited the landing site at the northern end of the island as part of a bird survey. While there, she found many remaining artifacts. She noted that:

> Remains of an old rail supply line, apparently installed by the Army to bring supplies from the water to a ladder at the base of a trail, are now bent and rusty. Portions of an old, rotten wooden ladder, traversing moss-covered boulders and crevices, still remain. The ladder ascends a steep hillside to an obscure footpath that crosses spectacular cliffs to an observation post on the island's southern plateau.[49]

Excerpts of Ms. Faust's journal from that visit provide an excellent description of both the landing and camp area:

> Friday, July 2, 1976. [We were] left on Outer Island of the Pye Islands to recon the area. We established our camp at the base of a wooden ladder leading to an old WW II bunker. It took some digging to get a level tent area for our supply tent and sleeping tent.
>
> Saturday, July 3. At noon we took off up the mountain above our camp. The bunker trail is very overgrown in some places, very evident in others. The ladder is very rotted in most places where it is even visible. We were not able to trace the trail very far going up mainly because our objective was to reach the top. On the way down we encountered the army trail which indicates that it contours around the side of the hill.
>
> Sunday, July 4. Followed an old army trail to the bunkers on the south point of the island. The old WW II trail was built on

[48] USGS, Seldovia B-2 Quadrangle (1:63,360), 1951.

[49] Nina Faust, "Exploring the Kenai Peninsula," *Alaska* 43 (July, 1977), 5.

> a contour around the east side of the island over very steep cliffs and gorges—a very difficult route to have built. We followed the trail the best we could climbing up rotted wood ladders, pushing our way through thick salmon berry bushes and alder. Several times we lost the trail because the vegetation was so thick. Other times we came to a temporary impasse at steep rock walled gorges where the trail once had some kind of suspension bridge. Bits of rotted rope hang on a rusted bracing spike. A giant rusted eyebolt is pounded into the rock before the gorge.... At this first gorge, we were forced to climb up the steep slope pulling ourselves up with vegetation as best as possible, until we were finally higher than the impassible part we had encountered. Further along we lost the trail entirely where it had simply slid down the hill, probably during the '64 earthquake.... Our destination was the plateau above the large puffin colony and the bunker was finally made five hours after starting. The area of former habitation was dangerous walking. Salmonberry bushes were waist to chest high. Stepping on rotten boardwalks between the six buildings was easy to do—so was falling through. There is one quonset hut, one small lookout shelter right next to the cliff, and about 4 other large bunkhouse, dining hall, work area buildings placed around among the trees. They are slowly collapsing as the wood rots away. As there was really nothing left inside, I did not risk the rotten wood. We know they had a generator, probably a well and a small reservoir. It appears to have been a good-sized detachment.[50]

Many of those who have visited the island since then have also focused on the decaying resources at the north-end landing site. Marge Tillion, who lived on nearby Nuka Island during the early 1980s, noted that it was still possible to ascend the stairs rising from the beach. In 1989, archeologist Mike Yarborough noted that the site consisted of "three flights of log stairs, iron rails, and drilled boulders on or adjacent to a boulder beach at the northeast corner of the island." Yarborough, who was unable to make a land survey, also noted a road cut that "runs up the mountain slope along the southeastern coast of the island" and located an iron cart beside the road.[51]

National Park Service ranger Mike Tetreau visited the island in 1994. He noted that in the old camp area, salmonberries and other overgrowth had

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[50] Nina Faust, unpublished journal, July 2-4, 1976.

[51] Marge Tillion interview, April 9, 1997; Alaska Heritage Resource Survey, files for sites SEL-202 and SEL-203.

done much to obscure the visible resources. He recalled, however, seeing the remains of at least two large bunkhouse structures and at least two smaller buildings. Of these buildings, perhaps one wall remained standing; all the rest were collapsed. One of the buildings was buttressed with earth mounds. The road that once connected the camp to the landing area was almost if not entirely obscured.[52]

[52] Mike Tetreau interview, December 17, 1997.

Map 9-1 **Historic Sites-Commercial Fishing**

Chapter 9. Commercial Fish and Shellfish Harvesting

The Kenai Fjords coastline is rich with marine life. Many species of fish and shellfish inhabit the area's streams, fjords, and pelagic zones. Relatively few species, however, have been harvested for commercial purposes. Prior to the 1960s, the only species of interest to commercial fishers have been various species of salmon, halibut, cod, and herring. In recent decades, fishers have harvested a variety of new species, including species of crab, shrimp, scallops, and octopus. Halibut and cod, as a rule, have been harvested in the open ocean, 30 to 60 miles south of the park coastline, while the remaining fish and shellfish species have been gathered along or near the coast.

The streams of Kenai Peninsula's southern flank are shorter than those that flow into Cook Inlet. For this and other reasons, salmon (particularly red salmon) and other commercially viable fish and shellfish have never been as plentiful in this area as they have been either in Cook Inlet or Prince William Sound. Inasmuch as commercial fishing along the peninsula's southern coastline did not take place until fishing was a well-established industry in both Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound, the park's fishing history will be told within the context of developments in these adjacent areas.

This chapter will concern itself primarily with the area's commercial fisheries. A history of the park area's twentieth century subsistence fishery is described in Chapter 6, while the sport fishery is covered in Chapter 10.

The Southern Kenai Peninsula Salmon Fishery, 1911-1945

Not long after the United States government purchased Alaska from the Russian government, West Coast commercial fisheries interests began to exploit Alaska's untapped fisheries populations. They had, by this time, been harvesting the salmon populations of Washington territory and the province of British Columbia for some time. Before long, fishing companies began to eye Alaska's seemingly unlimited salmon resource.

Early Cook Inlet Salteries and Canneries

In 1878, Alaska's first two salmon canneries were established. Both were located in southeast: one was near Sitka, the other at Klawock, on Prince of Wales Island. That same year, commercial salmon interests first took advantage of Cook Inlet's rich fisheries resource; the Alaska Commercial Company (ACC), which operated a fur trading station near the mouth of

the Kenai River, established a salmon saltery at the site. Captain James Wilson, the station agent, was in charge. A year later, a second salmon saltery was established at the Western Fur and Trading Company's fur trading station at the mouth of the salmon-rich Kasilof River, some 12 miles south of the ACC saltery. Captain H. R. Bowen operated both the trading station and saltery. During the same period, the first saltery was opened on Kodiak Island; it was located on Karluk Spit, along the island's southwestern coast.[1]

Other nearby fisheries developments followed soon afterward. In 1882, the first two salmon canneries in Central Alaska were built; the Alaska Packing Company of San Francisco built a cannery at Kasilof, while Smith and Hirsh built a cannery at Karluk Spit. The following year, the Alaska Commercial Company opened its second Cook Inlet salmon saltery; it was located at English Bay, where the company had operated a fur station since the early 1870s.[2]

Between the late 1880s and the late 1890s, new canneries were built in several areas adjacent to the southern Kenai coast. In 1888, four canneries were built on Kodiak Island and one at Kenai. A year later, the first Prince William Sound canneries were built (four were constructed there that year, all on the sound's eastern shore), and five additional canneries were erected on Kodiak Island. In 1890, a new cannery was constructed at Kasilof, and in 1897 another cannery arose at Kenai. In 1899, the first cannery was constructed on Cook Inlet's western shore; it was located at Tyonek. By 1900, therefore, scattered salmon canneries were located northwest, south, and east of the present park boundaries; all, however, were located more than a hundred miles away. During this period, the sockeye (or red) salmon was the only valuable salmon species; the early canneries, therefore, were located near sockeye-laden streams. Few were interested in the southern Kenai fishery, where pink and chum salmon species predominated.[3]

Few new canneries were constructed during the first decade of the twentieth century. The decade that followed, however, witnessed new

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[1] Tarleton H. Bean, "The Fishery Resources of Alaska," in U.S. Commission on Fish and Fisheries, *The Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the United States,* edited by George Brown Goode (Washington, GPO, 1887), Section III, pp. 92-93.

[2] Robert N. DeArmond, "The Cook Inlet Fishing Industry" [1969], p. 6, in DeArmond Research Material file #11, Cook Inlet Fisheries, Box V-29, Record Group 03, Cook Inlet Case Records, 1960s-1970s, ASA; Lewis G. MacDonald, "Chronological History of Salmon Canneries in Central Alaska," in Alaska Fisheries Board and Alaska Department of Fisheries, *Annual Report,* 1951, 72. The Kasilof cannery, owned by a succession of interests, operated until 1922; the English Bay saltery operated only until 1885.

[3] MacDonald, "Chronological History of Salmon Canneries," 72-75.

growth in the fishing industry, and for the first time, canneries were constructed just a few miles away from the present park boundaries. In 1911, the Seldovia Salmon Company built the first cannery in Lower Cook Inlet; it was located at Seldovia, a town that had been in existence for more than 30 years. In 1912, the Fidalgo Island Packing Company built a cannery at Port Graham, and three years later a cold storage facility (for cod and halibut) was constructed at Portlock. Eight years later, the Arctic Packing Company built a cannery at English Bay. Seldovia and English Bay were long-established area villages; Port Graham and Portlock, however, were unpopulated sites before facilities were erected there. Canneries remained at most of these locations until the 1950s, if not longer.[4]

The Resurrection Bay Fishery

During the same period that witnessed the first canneries in Lower Cook Inlet, commercial salmon processing facilities were pioneered in Resurrection Bay. In 1911, Charles F. Boggs established a salmon saltery in Seward. Boggs, along with partner Alfred Rosness, operated the saltery in 1912 but closed it thereafter.[5] During 1915 and 1916 new salteries popped up on the east side of Resurrection Bay, at Caines Head, and at Sunny Cove on Renard Island; all were small in scale, and none lasted more than a few years.[6]

Canneries were also in the works. In 1912, former Seward resident Henry H. Hildreth headed a group that proposed a salmon cannery at Caines Head. The group also planned to construct a saltery at Porcupine Cove, recognizing that nearby Bear Glacier would be an excellent source for ice. But neither facility was built.[7] A more successful proposal was made by the San Juan Fishing and Packing Company.[8] Officials from that company arrived in Seward in November 1916; construction of a cannery

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[4] MacDonald, "Chronological History of Salmon Canneries," 75-80. The English Bay cannery operated for only a short time (until 1925), but canneries at both Port Graham and Seldovia remained for more than a half-century. At Portlock, the fishing facilities were augmented by a small salmon cannery, which was constructed in 1928; two years later, the A. N. Nilson Company built a larger cannery, which remained until the late 1950s.

[5] Barry, *Seward History, I*, 131. Alfred Rosness may have also been involved with the Rosness and Larson mine, in Nuka Bay's North Arm (see Chapter 7).

[6] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 185.

[7] Barry, *Seward History, I*, 135.

[8] The San Juan Fishing and Packing Co. was organized in Seattle in 1899. William and James Calvert and Edwin Ripley bought the Seattle Fish Co. that year, then renamed it. F. Heward Bell, *The Pacific Halibut, the Resource and the Fishery* (Anchorage, Alaska Northwest, 1981), 77.

and cold storage plant, located at the foot of Jefferson Street, began in January 1917. It was ready by the time salmon season commenced in mid-June.[9] Cannery management stated that in addition to canning salmon, they planned to freeze halibut, salmon, black cod and red snapper.

For most of the next forty years, a salmon cannery operated in Seward. The so-called San Juan plant, using traps[10] as well as company-owned purse seiners, canned salmon only until 1921; for the rest of the decade, salmon was only an incidental part of an operation that was geared toward halibut processing. (Few black cod or red snapper were ever processed there.) Just a year after the San Juan plant de-emphasized its salmon canning operations, the Kodiak Island Fishing and Packing Company established a Seward plant. The cannery, however, operated for only the 1922 and 1923 seasons.[11] Fisheries interests were forced to conclude that the Resurrection Bay salmon supply was (in the words of one government report) "insufficient for the profitable operation of a cannery." In order to augment the salmon harvest, the Territory of Alaska built a hatchery at Grouse Lake (eight miles north of Seward) that opened in late 1924. Red, king, and pink salmon were raised. A fire, however, destroyed the hatchery in March 1927. It was not rebuilt.[12]

In 1929 a new plant, called Seward Fisheries, Inc., appeared on the scene. Owned by Nils Hagen and three associates, it was located just south of town and was described as a "smaller fish-processing plant;" fish were butchered by hand but packed by machine. The facility operated until 1934; it then lay idle for two years until it was reopened as the Hagen and Company plant. The new, improved plant was fully mechanized; government observers, however, noted that the facility was still just "a small one-line cannery."[13] The Hagen and Company plant operated until the end of World War II.[14]

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[9] Barry, *Seward History, I,* 131, 135; vol. II, 185-86.

[10] U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, *Alaska Fishery and Fur-Seal Industries,* 1917 through 1921 issues. In 1920, the San Juan plant maintained two Resurrection Bay traps, one located at Caines Head; a year later, it had just one trap.

[11] MacDonald, "Chronological History of Salmon Canneries," 76, 78; Barry, *Seward History, II,* 186-88; vol. III, 33. U.S. Fisheries Service reports note that the San Juan cannery continued to process a small quantity of salmon until 1931.

[12] Barry, *Seward History, III,* 32-33; Willis H. Rich and Edward M. Ball, *Statistical Review of the Alaska Salmon Fisheries, Part II: Chignik to Resurrection Bay,* Bureau of Fisheries Document 1102 (DC, GPO, 1931), 712.

[13] Barry, *Seward History, III,* 33; National Resources Planning Board, "City of Seward, Survey of Conditions and Suggestions for a Public Improvement Program," unpub. mss., May 1942, 2, 26, in "Seward-Programming" file, Box 26, RG 187, NARA ANC. The NRPB report's assessment of the bay's fishery resource was glum to an extreme; it noted that "the fishing in Resurrection Bay is extremely limited," and that "unfortunately, salmon

When the San Juan plant opened in 1917, officials had announced that even though the company had three purse seiners, it would process all fish delivered to the plant. Such an invitation, which was tendered by canneries throughout the territory, encouraged the growth of a local, independent fishing industry. Before the San Juan plant opened, Seward-area fishers were probably limited to those who were involved in the early salteries (noted above), plus occasional entrepreneurs who sold their catch directly to local residents. The presence of a cannery, however, attracted a sufficient number of Seward-based fishing vessels that by the late 1920s, the Federal government had agreed to construct a small boat harbor. The Corps of Engineers constructed the harbor during the summer of 1931.[15]

The number of fishing vessels, never large, varied from year to year; in 1933, for instance, the *Seward Gateway* noted that the local fleet consisted of the M.S. *Marian*, the M.S. *Roy*, the M.S. *Mayflower*, the M.S. *Bavaria*, and several power dories. (The first four motor ships were independently owned; Seward Fisheries owned the dories.) Henry Munson, a longtime local resident, recalled that during the 1930s "there were about a dozen boats fishing in the bay;" a wartime report concurred with Munson's estimate, noting that "about 12 fishing boats are normally based in the Seward harbor."[16] During the early years of the fishery, the primary techniques used were either beach seines or hand purse seines. By the mid-1920s, however, these methods had been replaced by gill nets; during the 1930s, gill nets and power dories harvested the bay's fish. The summer fishing season typically began in early June and lasted until August 10; the fall season began ten days later and stayed on until September 10.[17]

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are not plentiful in Resurrection Bay."

[14] MacDonald, "Chronological History of Salmon Canneries in Central Alaska," 80; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 181.

[15] n.a., *Alaska Year Book* (Seattle, Alaska Weekly, c. 1928), 64; U.S. Lighthouse Service, "Recommendation as to Aids to Navigation" for "Seward Boat Harbor, East Light, Alaska," July 31, 1931, in Records of the Lighthouse Service (District 16), 1910-1938, RG 23, NARA DC.

[16] *Seward Gateway*, June 6, 1933, 3; Henry Munson interview, April 2, 1997; National Resources Planning Board, "City of Seward, Survey of Conditions and Suggestions for a Public Improvement Program," unpub. mss., May 1942, 2, in "Seward-Programming" file, Box 26, RG 187, NARA ANC.

[17] Willis H. Rich and Edward M. Ball, *Statistical Review of the Alaska Salmon Fisheries, Part II: Chignik to Resurrection Bay*, Bureau of Fisheries Document 1102 (DC, GPO, 1931), 712; U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, "Central District [Prince William Sound] Annual Report," 1931, p. 95; "Annual Report," 1942, p. 26; both in Box 6, Annual Reports, Alaska Region, 1925-1966, RG 370, NARA ANC.

The Regulatory Environment

Early Alaska salmon processing was carried on in a virtually laissez-faire environment. But by the early 1920s, it had become increasingly clear that commercial interests had overfished and abused many of Alaska's primary salmon fisheries. Governmental authorities, as a result, began to regulate some of the territory's prime salmon fishing areas. The first such action took place in 1922 when three fisheries reservations were established; one of the three, the Southwestern Alaska Fisheries Reservation, included waters just west of the southwestern Kenai Peninsula. The following year, more widespread changes began. The U.S. Bureau of Fisheries subdivided the territory into management districts; the area west of Gore Point was included in the Cook Inlet district, while the area east of Gore Point was included in the Prince William Sound district.[18] The reservations created in 1922 remained in force until June 6, 1924, when Congress passed the so-called White Act. This act established a framework for regulating each of the territory's fisheries; areas undergoing considerable fishing pressure, predictably, were immediately regulated with closures and other management actions, while areas that were seldom fished were given few regulations.[19]

In Cook Inlet, several canneries were in operation each year during the 1920s and 1930s. In response to the high degree of fishing activity, the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries applied increasingly sophisticated management actions. Beginning in 1923, for example, the agency dispatched the patrol boat *Teal* from its Seattle headquarters to the Cook Inlet fishing grounds; the *Teal* remained in the inlet all summer, gathering information and enforcing fishing regulations. By the end of the decade, the government was sponsoring an ongoing stream improvement program along selected Cook Inlet waterways. Before long, the agency began to deploy stream guards at key Inlet locations to enforce fishing regulations, and by the late 1930s it had begun chartering aircraft to augment the existing patrol efforts.[20]

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[18] U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, *Alaska Fishery and Fur-Seal Industries* (Washington, GPO), issues of 1922 (pp. 12-13) and 1923 (p. 98).

[19] USBF, *Alaska Fishery and Fur-Seal Industries*, 1924, 70; Jim Rearden, "Alaska's Salmon Fisheries," *Alaska Geographic* 10 (1983), 69.

[20] Rearden, "Alaska's Salmon Fisheries," 69; Roy L. Cole, "Cook Inlet Management Report, 1939," p. 48, in Box 8, Fisheries District Annual Reports, ca. 1925-56, RG 370, NARA ANC; Harlan Unrau, *Lake Clark National Park and Preserve, Historic Resource Study* (Anchorage, NPS, 1994), 173; U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, "Cook Inlet Stream Improvement" files (for 1929, 1931, and 1939), in Boxes 14-17, Fisheries Research Data Files, 1904-1960, RG 22, NARA ANC.

In Resurrection Bay, where fishing activity was substantially less than in Cook Inlet, the regulatory environment was more relaxed. As noted above, Resurrection Bay was first considered to be part of the Prince William Sound management district. In December 1924, revised White Act regulations redefined Resurrection Bay as being a separate management district with its own set of regulations; the district's fish volume, however, was so small that Central District (Prince William Sound) personnel in Cordova reported on Resurrection Bay fisheries activity. The bay became an administrative part of the Cook Inlet district in early 1951 and has remained there ever since.[21]

Fisheries management in Resurrection Bay was applied with a much lighter touch than in Cook Inlet. Specific regulations, for example, were applied only to bay waters that were north of an imaginary line connecting Cape Resurrection and the west side of Bear Glacier. Active management measures were few. In 1931, the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries dispatched a stream guard to the bay; a year later, the agency maintained a salmon weir near Bear and Grouse lakes. The *Teal*, however, seldom visited Resurrection Bay; the stream improvement program was virtually nonexistent; and fisheries personnel rarely if ever engaged in aerial patrols.[22]

Fishing Along the Outer Coast

Prior to the end of World War II, the long stretch of coastline between Resurrection Bay and the southwestern tip of Kenai Peninsula was almost entirely ignored by the commercial salmon industry. The primary reason for the lack of interest was that red (sockeye) and king (chinook) salmon were the only varieties sought by the canneries. The southern coastline's annual yield of these species was insignificant during this period; the sockeye runs were much smaller than those of later years, because glaciers and floating glacial ice then covered many areas that are now ice-free.[23] The severe weather, rough seas, remoteness from a fisheries

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[21] USBF, *Alaska Fishery and Fur-Seal Industries*, 1924, 84; USF&WS, "Cook Inlet Annual Management Report," 1951, 1.

[22] USBF, "Central District [Prince William Sound] Annual Report," 1931, p. 150; "Annual Report," 1932, pp. 96-101; both in Box 6, Annual Reports, Alaska Region, 1925-1966, RG 370, NARA ANC.

[23] Josephine Sather moved to Nuka Island in 1921. Shortly after she sailed westward through "McCarty Pass" [McArthur Pass] that year, she noted that "against the mainland [northern] shore, thick and shadowy with timber coming right down to the water's edge, drift ice from McCarty Glacier ran with the strong tide." The face of McCarty Glacier, at that time, reached from James Lagoon to McCarty Lagoon, and present-day Desire and Delight lakes did not exist. Sather, "The Island," *Alaska Sportsman* 12 (July 1946), 9.

facility, and the comparative fragility of the fishing boats then in use were additional reasons why fishers generally avoided the area.

The outer coast, beginning in 1923, was classified as being part of the Prince William Sound district. Then, in late 1924, the area became part of the new Resurrection Bay district. Fishing pressure along the outer coast, however, was so light that no specific regulations were applied to the area until after World War II. By the 1930s, the coastline had once again come under the nominal purview of the Prince William Sound district fisheries agent. That person, however, had far more pressing management concerns; he generally ignored this stretch of coastline, both in day-to-day activities and in annual reports. By 1943, the stretch of coastline west of Aialik Cape had become an administrative division of Cook Inlet. It has remained there ever since.[24]

Governmental fisheries officials, for the most part, were convinced that this stretch of coastline was essentially bereft of marine resources. One report, based on 1927 data, noted the following about the area:

> The fishery districts nearest to [Resurrection Bay] are Prince William Sound on the east and Cook Inlet on the west. In both directions [from Resurrection Bay], especially to the westward, are miles of coastal waters that have no salmon fisheries, so that this bay stands as a district wholly apart from any other....[25]

Despite that assessment, however, there is widespread evidence that commercial fishers periodically harvested fish from park waters prior to World War II. Evidence is strongest for such activity during the 1930s and early 1940s, although commercial fishing boats may have been active in the area during the 1920s as well.

As noted in Chapter 6, Natives from English Bay and vicinity often traveled along the park coastline as part of their seasonal round during the years prior to World War I. The establishment of canneries at Seldovia, Port Graham, and English Bay during the 1911-1920 period had the practical effect of disrupting the Natives' seasonal cycle; cannery work was available during the months when residents traditionally put up salmon for winter supplies.[26] Prior to World War I, therefore, Natives were the primary (perhaps the only) subsistence fishers along the outer Kenai

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[24] U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, *Alaska Fishery and Fur-Seal Industries*, 1924, 76.

[25] Rich and Ball, *Statistical Review*, Bureau of Fisheries Document 1102 (1931), 711.

[26] Ronald T. Stanek, *Patterns of Wild Resource Use in English Bay and Port Graham, Alaska*, Technical Paper 104 (Anchorage, ADF&G Division of Subsistence, 1985), 45.

coast; whites avoided the area (in the words of one longtime resident) because they "didn't want to step on the toes of the Natives." But after the war, there were "lots of white fishermen" and relatively few Natives. Some of those white fishers may have been residents of Halibut Cove or other Lower Cook Inlet communities who traveled the coast on their way to the Prince William Sound fishing grounds; residents of Cordova and vicinity may also have fished the coastline on their way to Cook Inlet.[27]

Specific information about who fished (or just traveled) along the coast has been provided by Josephine Sather, who helped run a fox farm on Nuka Island. Sather, writing in the mid-1940s, spoke kindly of several "old timers who [came] here on their regular seasonal trips." They included John Malutin, Hans Simondsen, and Bert Jacobsen. Malutin, a Seward resident, was captain of the M.S. *Marian*, which was active from 1927 to 1933, perhaps longer. Little is known about the other two fishermen. In all probability, the Kenai coast was probably visited by quite a number of fishing boats during the 1920s and early 1930s. Because the coast yielded few if any kings or sockeyes, however, commercial fishers did not linger in the area for long.[28]

As noted in Chapter 6, Pete and Josephine Sather were the best-known people to fish the park's waters during this period. They caught pink salmon with seines in many areas of Nuka Bay, and most of the time they were subsistence fishers, feeding what they caught to their foxes. Pete, however, occasionally attempted to sell pink salmon at the canneries, despite their relatively low value. One old-timer recalled that if Sather and other locals "could sell their fish for one-quarter cent each, that gave them flour and sugar for the winter."[29] Sather would typically fill his boat to overflowing; then, because his fishing boat had no refrigeration equipment, he would often head west to the Port Graham-Seldovia area, hoping for a quick sale. If the first cannery he visited wouldn't buy his fish, he would move on to other canneries, making offers at each one. Sather also sold his harvest at the Seward canneries; according to Ralph Hatch, a longtime resident, Sather made a couple of heavily-loaded trips per year to off-load pinks. "By the time he got here," Hatch recalls, "the boat smelled bad but the cannery took them anyway."[30] It should be noted that while much of Sather's subsistence fishing was from Nuka Bay,

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[27] Clem Tillion interview, April 2, 1997.

[28] *Seward Gateway*, June 10, 1927, 5; *Seward Gateway*, June 6, 1933, 3; Josephine Sather, "Our Glorious World," *Alaska Sportsman* 12 (October 1946), 40; Clem Tillion interview, April 2, 1997.

[29] Sather, "The Island," 43; Sather, "The Birds and the Bears," 33; Clem Tillion interview, April 2, 1997.

[30] Ralph Hatch interview, April 2, 1997. Kristel Nelson, "'Herring Pete' Sather, An Alaskan Early Legend," unpub. mss., in Seward Public Library Collection.

some—perhaps most—of his commercial fishing harvests were probably from Port Dick and other westward waters.[31]

East of Nuka Bay, the only park waters known to be fished before World War II were located at the southwestern end of Resurrection Bay. In all probability, Seward-area fishers discovered not long after the San Juan plant commenced operations that the Bear Glacier area offered a significant fish run. By the early 1930s, Resurrection Bay had two distinct sockeye runs. The first and larger run took place in the upper bay (north of Caines Head) in early June. By the end of the month, however, the local newspaper announced that "The salmon run in [upper] Resurrection Bay is about over and vessels will have to journey down to Bear Glacier if they expect to make any catches, say local fishermen."[32]

West of Nuka Bay, little or no commercial fishing took place anywhere along the outer coast during the early to mid-1920s. The English Bay, Port Graham, and Seldovia canneries obtained their fish either from nearby fish traps or from fishing boats that stayed fairly close to home. Beginning in 1928, however, a new cannery was built in Portlock, 12 miles southeast of English Bay, and a larger facility was constructed there in 1930. The new Portlock cannery, the availability of more seaworthy fishing vessels, and most of all the rising value of pink salmon all resulted in the exploration of the fishing resources of Windy Bay, Rocky Bay, Port Dick, and other outer coast sites. Fishers soon discovered that these bays were rich in pink and chum salmon, and as the price of these fish rose, these areas became increasingly attractive to the nearby canneries. Roy Cole, the captain of the patrol boat *Teal*, noted in 1935 that "a few [pinks] show in the lower Inlet from English Bay to Point Gore." By mid-July of that year, commercials fishers were harvesting pinks and chums in Port Dick and selling their harvest to the *Adriatic*, a tender owned by the Cook Inlet Packing Company plant in Seldovia.[33]

Little is known about fishing activity in the western part of the outer coast for the next few years; management reports from the period do not discuss the subject.[34] Nevertheless, pink or chum salmon (perhaps both) probably

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[31] USF&WS, "Cook Inlet Annual Management Report," 1945, p. 22; Sather, "The Island," 43.

[32] *Seward Gateway*, June 30, 1933, 3.

[33] Roy Cole (U.S. Bureau of Fisheries), "Cook Inlet Annual Management Report," 1935, pp. 17, 19, in Fisheries District Annual Reports, ca. 1925-56, Box 8, RG 370, NARA ANC.

[34] The information about the 1935 activity was gained largely because a fisheries violation took place in Port Dick that year; a Petersburg-based boat was caught with a beach seine at a river mouth. The only other concern that Bureau of Fisheries personnel had in the area was the eradication of rainbow trout, inasmuch as trout—a bounty fish during this period—were considered to be destructive to salmon eggs.

continued to be harvested, though in small volumes. By 1939, the area was once again receiving Captain Cole's attention; he noted that year that "the run of pinks in the section from Point Gore to Seldovia was scattered" and made a specific description of the Port Dick run. In 1940, he noted that "intensive fishing was in progress" between Seldovia and Port Dick from July 28 to August 10; the following year, Cole noted a "very good" pink run along the coast between Kachemak Bay and Port Dick and "intensive seine fishing" in the Port Dick area in late July and early August. The resource was sufficiently valuable that Cole, and the *Teal*, personally monitored the Port Dick seine activity during this period. By the early 1940s, therefore, the fishing resources west of Gore Point had been fully explored and were being commercially exploited on a regular basis; Port Dick, specifically, was being described as one of two major pink producing streams in Lower Cook Inlet.[35]

By 1943, commercial fishers had made the first known foray into the Kenai Fjords area. The management report that year noted a new "Seward District" that year east of Port Dick; that district was composed of "Seward Bay" (Resurrection Bay?), from which 7,330 pink salmon were harvested, and "Tunder Bay" (Thunder Bay?), from which 11,970 pinks were harvested. The harvest for both bays was minor; together, they accounted for just 2.1% of the 900,000-plus pink salmon that were caught that year on the east side of Cook Inlet.[36] The "Tunder Bay" harvest did not immediately result in further commercial activity. By 1944, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (the successor to the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries) had instituted a statistical system that recorded the number of fish caught along specific segments of coastline (see Map 9-2). That system failed to record a commercial fish harvest between Gore Point and Aialik Cape either in 1944 or 1945.

Although fisheries reports suggest (admittedly, with some lack of certainty) that 1943 was the first year of commercial activity in park waters, several longtime Seward residents recall that local fishers (other than Pete Sather) worked in park waters before 1943. Henry Munson, whose memories of Seward date back to the mid-1930s, recalls that "boats went beyond Resurrection Bay" during that period and that "there were boats in that area before World War II." Seward Shea, another longtime resident, was

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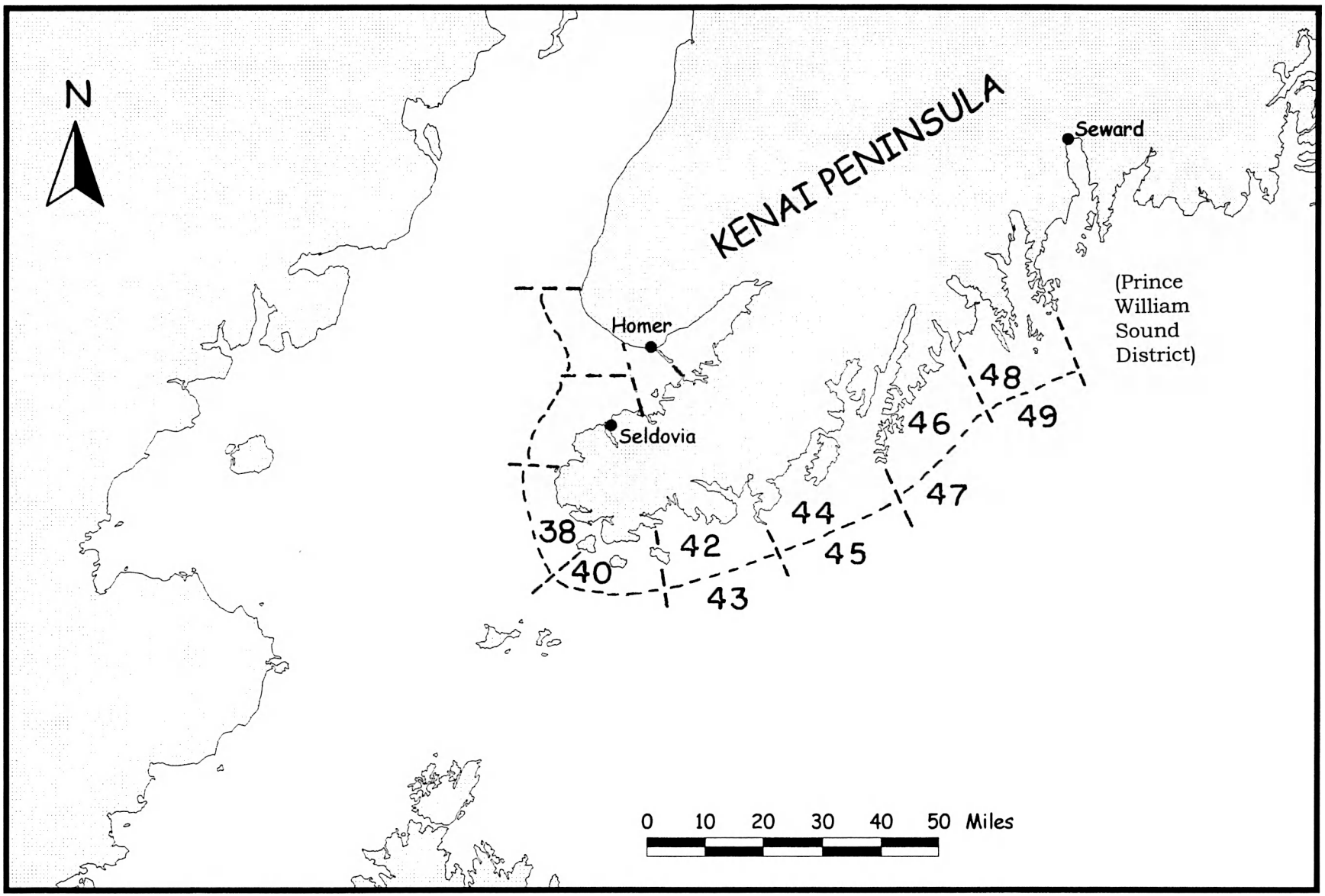
[35] Cole, "Cook Inlet Annual Management Report" for 1939 (p. 39), 1940 (p. 12), 1941 (pp. 3, 14), and 1943 (p. 25).

[36] Cole, "Cook Inlet Annual Management Report," 1943, p. 19. It is a mystery why Thunder Bay, one of several small indentations in the coastline between Nuka and Two Arm bays, should have the only recorded area salmon harvest. Few if any salmon-producing streams flow into the bay. No other fisheries management documents written during the past half century have noted fisheries resources in Thunder Bay.



Map 9-2. Southern Kenai Peninsula Statistical Areas, 1944-1950

more specific; he remembers stories of salmon fishing at the south end of "Pete's Island" (Nuka Island) and also near Petrof Point. In Shea' s recollection, the boats in this area came from Seldovia; he admits, however, that never personally saw a Seldovia or Port Graham boat east of Gore Point during this period.[37]

Salmon Fishing Along the Southern Kenai Coast, 1946-1959

General Postwar Trends

During the decade following World War II, the number of canneries in lower Cook Inlet remained stable. As they had for the previous two decades, canneries active west of the park were located at Portlock, Port Graham, and Seldovia. East of the park boundaries, the "small, one-line cannery" in Seward changed its name in 1946 (from Hagen and Company to the Resurrection Bay Company), and it changed its ownership in 1950 (from Nils Hagen to Marvin Viale). The cannery, however, continued to operate much as it had since 1937, when the plant had become fully mechanized.

Major changes took place in the area's salmon industry during the postwar period. One discouraging trend was that fishermen, particularly in Resurrection Bay, were overharvesting reds and other salmon species. (In 1947, a Seward entrepreneur backed away from a fisheries venture because he considered "the runs in Resurrection Bay to be too nearly depleted;" the area fisheries agent that year agreed, declaring that the bay's chum run was "used up."[38]) The Seward cannery, desperate to obtain enough fish to sustain operations, began purchasing Copper River salmon, even though (in the government agent's opinion) "some of these fish were, no doubt, taken illegally in [Prince William] Sound...." This practice was already underway by 1944 and continued for several years thereafter.[39]

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[37] Henry Munson interview, April 2, 1997; Seward Shea interview, March 7, 1997.

[38] In 1948, and again in 1949, government agents proposed regulations to revive the local fish population. Because the bay's fish run was fairly minor, however, they spent little time on the problem. No Fish and Wildlife Service agent, in fact, spent any appreciable time in the area until 1953, when an employee surveyed the entire watershed on foot and mapped the streams at the bay's northern end. Otto Koppen (USF&WS), "Central District Annual Report," 1947, 11, 81, in Box 6; Koppen, "Central District Annual Report," 1948, 91, in Box 7; both in Annual Reports, Alaska Region, 1925-1966, RG 370, NARA ANC; Alaska Fisheries Board and Alaska Department of Fisheries, *Annual Report*, 1949, 17; USF&WS, "Cook Inlet Management Report," 1953, 34.

[39] Cole, "Cook Inlet Annual Management Report" for 1944, 25; Otto Koppen, "Central District Annual Report," 1947, 81.

A second postwar trend that affected canneries was the statehood movement. Prior to World War II, few Alaskans pushed for statehood. The war, however, brought thousands of new residents, an enhanced defense capability, and less dependence on resource-based industries. The canneries were one of the primary interests fighting statehood, but statehood advocates fought back and cited the widely used fish trap as a primary instrument preventing locally-based resource development. The territorial legislature, and Alaska's delegates to Congress, put increasing pressure on the canneries to eliminate fish traps. The canneries stubbornly hung on; they did not abandon fish traps until 1958, the year Congress passed the statehood bill. The continuing pressure, however, resulted in a reduction in the number of fish traps during the 1940s and early 1950s. This de-emphasis on fish traps took place in Lower Cook Inlet, as elsewhere; in order to keep harvest levels at previous levels, more fishing boats were deployed and boats searched ever farther for salmon stocks.

The overharvesting of the red salmon resource (on a territory-wide basis) and the increasing acceptance of pink salmon as a food fish resulted in higher pink and chum salmon prices. That price structure made Port Dick (which during some years was the Cook Inlet district's most highly-productive pink salmon harvest area) and nearby bays increasingly attractive fishing venues. The new price structure, combined with the increasing scarcity of red salmon, also encouraged independent fishers to seek out previously untapped areas. The windswept, stormy stretch of coastline between Gore Point and Resurrection Bay had, as noted above, been only lightly utilized prior to the mid-1940s. During the next decade, however, an increasing number of fishers explored the area for the first time.

Fishing in Park Waters: The Laissez Faire Period, 1946-1954

The first postwar harvesting of park waters took place in 1946 in Statistical Area 44 (see Table 9-1). This stretch of coastline runs between Gore Point and the Pye Islands; it encompasses both Nuka Bay and Nuka Island. Fish and Wildlife Service records indicate that 2,513 pinks and 75 chums were caught there that year; the number of pinks was some 0.3 percent of the Cook Inlet total, while the chum harvest was less than 0.1 percent of the total number caught in the Cook Inlet district. Records do not indicate specifically who caught these fish. It appears, however, that Pete Sather, who worked that year as an independent purse seiner for the Resurrection Bay Company, harvested a majority of the pink salmon and

Table 9-1. Harvest Data for Statistical Area 44, 1944-1950

In 1944, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service divided the Cook Inlet Management District into statistical harvest areas. Six statistical areas comprised the waters of present-day Kenai Fjords National Park. Area 44 included the inner waters from Point Gore to the Pye Islands; Area 45 included the outer waters in that area. Area 46 included the inner waters from the Pye Islands to the east side of Two Arm Bay, Area 47 the outer islands. Area 48 included the inner waters from the east side of Two Arm Bay to Aialik Cape, Area 49 the outer waters.

For Area 44, which included the waters surrounding Nuka Island and the waters of Nuka Bay, the harvests in the following table were recorded from 1944 through 1950. For areas 45 through 49, the Fish and Wildlife Service tabulated no harvest during this seven-year period. The agency did not provide data for these areas after 1950.

NOTE: "% of CIH" is the percentage of the total Cook Inlet harvest (for that species) that was caught in Statistical Area 44.

	Pink Salmon		Chum Salmon		Coho Salmon	
	Number	% of CIH	Number	% of CIH	Number	% of CIH
1944	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
1945	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
1946	2,513	0.3	75	0.0	0	0.0
1947	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
1948	7,918	2.1	109	0.1	52	16.2
1949*	36,761	8.5	5,200	2.2	37	n.a.
1950	1,760	0.8	1,857	5.2	0	0.0

* - The 1949 total includes 151 reds. The harvest total includes 6,891 pinks reported in the Cook Inlet report; the remaining harvest, which came from "Nuka Bay," was processed by the Resurrection Bay (Seward) cannery and was reported in the Central District (Prince William Sound) report.

Source: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, *Cook Inlet Annual Management Report*, various issues.

almost all of the chums in that area. (Sather also worked elsewhere, most probably in the Port Dick-Windy Bay area.)[40]

In 1947 no commercial harvests were recorded in park waters, perhaps because even-year runs in adjacent areas had proven to be far stronger than odd-year runs. The following year, however, commercial fishermen returned to Area 44 and harvested 7,918 pinks, 109 chums, and 52 cohos. Although Pete Sather may have harvested a portion of the area's catch, the only known fisher there that year was Alfred A. Anahonak, a 30-year-old "private operator" (that is, an independent fisherman) from Port Graham. Anahonak's possession of a fishing boat represented a new trend among area residents. Subsistence expert Ronald Stanek has noted that before World War II, residents were "limited to set netting, working for the canneries, and utilizing wild resources for subsistence purposes. Since then, Port Graham fishermen have acquired their own drift and seine boats...."[41]

In 1949, fishers again ventured out to Area 44 and gathered far more fish than they had in previous years. Fish and Wildlife Service figures indicate a total harvest of 36,761 pinks, 5,200 chums, 151 reds, and 37 cohos. The Area 44 pink harvest that year was a surprising 8.5 percent of the Cook Inlet total; the chum haul was large too, totaling 2.2 percent of the Cook Inlet catch. The harvest was notable for another reason; it was the first year that a red salmon harvest had been recorded in the area. In 1950, fishers returned to Area 44 and harvested 1,857 chum salmon (5.2% of the Cook Inlet chum catch) along with 1,760 pink salmon. Commercial fishers, it appeared, had "discovered" the park's waters. The only park area in which fishers had shown an interest, however, was Area 44 (west of the Pye Islands), along with the Bear Glacier area.[42] The long stretch of coastline between McArthur Pass and Aialik Cape was still untouched.

During this period, "Herring Pete" Sather (according to admittedly inexact records) spent much of the fishing season working in the Port Dick area or in other areas outside park waters. Others, therefore, fished the Nuka Bay area to an increasing degree. Alfred Anahonak, noted above, was one early harvester. Others may have been a quartet of Seward fishers named

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[40] George D. Black, "Cook Inlet Annual Report" for 1946 (p. 26) and 1947 (p. 22); Koppen, "Central District Annual Report," 1946, 112.

[41] Black, "Cook Inlet Annual Report," 1948, 25; File 1306-07, (English Bay, 1938-1940 Census) in Bureau of Indian Affairs, Juneau Area Office, Village Census Rolls, 1935-1966, RG 75, NARA ANC; Stanek, *Patterns of Wild Resource Use*, 48.

[42] USF&WS, "Cook Inlet Annual Report" for 1949 (p. 22) and 1950 (p. 16); USF&WS, "Central District Annual Report," 1949, 35.

Bill Bern, Glen Hammersly, Freddy Blosso, and Charles Peterson. According to Seward Shea, a longtime Seward resident, the four men worked on the purse seiner *Marathon.* One day, "Herring Pete" told them that the fish were jumping in Nuka Bay. The bay at that time, however, was a hazardous place to reach; McArthur Pass was often impassable because floating ice was dangerous to the wooden boats then in use. Because the McCarty Glacier face was not far north of James Lagoon, additional ice lay in the southern reaches of Nuka Bay. Despite those dangers, the four successfully fished the bay, and their success brought others in their wake.[43]

As noted above, 137 red salmon were harvested in Area 44 in 1949. This harvest, small though it was, was significant inasmuch as these were the first red salmon caught in park waters by commercial fishers. The existence of a red salmon population in the bay indicated that the glaciers had retreated enough to support a biologically active lake-and-river system where reds could spawn and migrate. The McCarty Glacier face, during the early years of the century, had connected James Lagoon on the west with McCarty Lagoon on the east; and to the north, the upland areas on both sides of the glacier were glaciated as well. Between 1920 and 1925, however, the glacier's eastern side had melted to the point that Delight Lake was formed, and between 1935 and 1940 a new water body, Desire Lake, emerged to the north. If it is assumed that the red salmon harvested in 1949 came from the Delight Lake system (the most logical location for them), then the time lapse between the lake's emergence from the ice and its ability to support a red salmon run was less than thirty years. This is a remarkably quick recovery, considering the biological complexities involved.[44]

Another sockeye run that began during this period took place in Aialik Bay. Longtime resident Seward Shea recalls that the run, which spawns in Addison Lake above Pederson Lagoon, was discovered by Seward resident Henry Larson, known locally as "Henry the Bear." In either the late 1940s or early 1950s, Larson entered the bay in search of platinum float. He built a small prospecting shack and used it as a base camp. His prospecting venture failed but he found salmon by the hundreds. Using a gill net, which he stretched between an island (perhaps Slate Island) and the mainland, he harvested $6500 worth of sockeyes. Soon after Larson returned to the dock, news of the find spread to Shea and other Seward fishermen. Many of the other fishers made their own investigation and

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[43] Seward Shea interview, March 7, 1997.

[44] Wes Bucher to author, facsimile, February 10, 1997; Ross Kavanagh to author, email, February 11, 1997.

returned there in later years. Government fisheries agents, however, did not learn about the Aialik red run until the late 1950s.[45]

Pete Sather, a Nuka Island resident since the mid-1920s, not only fished Nuka Bay's salmon, but as an incident during the early 1950s shows, he claimed to have single-handedly started a run of his own. As part of his fox farming operation, he consistently cleaned the pink salmon he harvested in a stream that previously, in Sather's opinion, had had no salmon in it. (This stream was probably adjacent to his cookhouse, which was not far from his residence.) By the early 1950s, the stream supported a significant pink salmon population. Other fishers discovered the run and attempted to harvest the resource. Pete, however, resisted; he reasoned that he had single-handedly created the run and should therefore have proprietary rights over the salmon. He took his case to the courthouse in Anchorage; the court, however, ruled against him.[46]

As noted above, management of park waters during the late 1940s was ostensibly under the purview of the Cook Inlet District. The small harvest level, however, incited no interest from federal fisheries authorities; they may have ignored the area because, to some degree, the park's waters were being fished out of Seward, which was in the Central (Prince William Sound) District, headquartered in Cordova. In early 1951, management of the Resurrection Bay fishery shifted from the Central District to the Cook Inlet District. For the next several years after that boundary change, annual reports continued to overlook fishing activity in park waters. (Jim Branson, who worked as a Fish and Wildlife Service stream guard at Port Dick in 1952, perhaps summed up the agency's attitude toward the area when he mentioned, in a recent interview, that the agency ignored the coast east of Gore Point because there was "not much of a resource out there.") In all probability, a small number of commercial fishermen continued to venture to Nuka Bay[47], but as one old-timer noted,

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[45] Seward Shea interview, March 7, 1997. Herring Pete didn't know about the Aialik sockeye run before Larson discovered it, probably because he spent relatively little time in Aialik Bay.

[46] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 76: Kristel Nelson, "'Herring Pete' Sather, An Alaskan Early Legend," unpub. mss., Seward Public Library. Anchorage District Court files have no record of Sather's involvement in a court case.

[47] Ralph Hatch, whose residence in Seward precedes World War II, recalls that local fishermen during this period were Bill Bern, Dennis Thompson, Casey Cobban, and Henry "the Bear" Larson. (Bern and Larson, as noted above, had pioneered the harvest of specific park-area fish runs.) These men typically started their season fishing for reds in Resurrection Bay. They then went to Aialik Bay for reds, to Nuka Bay's East Arm for more reds, and finished up the season at Port Dick, where they fished for pinks and chums. All of these men had wooden boats, 28 feet long or longer; they had "no problem handling the open seas" in those craft. But Jim Branson, who worked as a Port Dick stream guard beginning in 1952, was oblivious to all the activity. He stated, matter-of-

"population levels [of fish were] hammered there because there was no enforcement." Fisheries managers continued to ignore the area until 1953, when "numerous air and foot surveys were conducted in the lower inlet...." That effort, which included "all important pink and chum streams south of Kachemak Bay," included a cursory survey of Nuka Island streams. Fisheries personnel probably ignored other Nuka Bay sites.[48]

As noted earlier, one of the two major reasons that Nuka Bay and other pink- and chum-producing areas became popular between the late 1940s and the mid-1950s was because of increasing price levels. Before 1940, prices for the two species were so low that they were incidental fish; that is, they were caught by fishers who were searching for other, more highly valued species. By 1942, the price of the two species had risen to 6½-8½ cents apiece; five years later, pinks sold for 11 cents while chums sold for 15½ cents. Based on those prices, Cook Inlet canneries typically processed 40,000 cases of pinks and 30,000 cases of chums each year. But after 1950, prices on both species rose substantially; in 1952, for example, pinks sold for 30 to 40 cents apiece while chums were worth 40 to 50 cents. As a result, fishing boats sought to catch an increasing number of pinks and chums during the 1950s.[49]

Rising price factors, however, do not fully explain why interest in the Nuka Bay area skyrocketed in the mid-1950s. The other causative factor was availability. Statistics from Cook Inlet show that during the 1946-1951 period, both total catch levels (expressed in number of fish) and fishing effort (expressed in gear-unit days) rose steadily. From 1951 to 1957, however, both of these figures declined. It became increasingly clear that the streams that had traditionally provided large pink salmon returns—the Talachulitna River (a tributary of the Susitna), the Kenai River and other streams flowing into the northern and central portions of Cook Inlet—were being overharvested. As a result, canneries eagerly sought out alternative locations. The Outer District, which stretched from Point Adam (near Portlock) to Aialik Cape (see Map 9-3), contained many productive pink and chum runs; not surprisingly, therefore, the park waters and other Outer District streams became increasingly important during this period (see Tables 9-2 and 9-3). Based on the contributions of

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factly, that nobody fished east of Port Dick in those days, "and I'd like to think that I'd be the one to know about it if there was." Ralph Hatch interview, April 2, 1997; Jim Branson interview, April 2, 1997.

[48] Clem Tillion interview, April 2, 1997; USF&WS, "Cook Inlet Annual Report," 1952, 70-80; 1953 annual report, 93.

[49] USF&WS, "Cook Inlet Annual Management Report" for 1942 (p. 33), 1947 (p. 36), and 1952 (p. 27).

Outer District streams and those in other newly-harvested locations, the volume of fish caught in the Cook Inlet administrative district rose again by the late 1950s and continued to rise for years thereafter.[50]

The Onset of Regulation, 1955-1959

The Fish and Wildlife Service continued to ignore the park coastline through the 1954 season. Most of the fish harvested in the area, as before, were probably pink salmon that were caught near Nuka Island. In 1955, however, the agency instituted active management when it dispatched its first enforcement specialist to Nuka Island. Fishery aid F. Douglas Swanson was assigned to Nuka Bay for six days in mid-August. One of 273 agency enforcement personnel who worked Alaskan streams that summer, Swanson performed the typical duties that his predecessors had been undertaking since the 1920s. Those duties included enforcing closure regulations (particularly around stream mouths) and conducting spawning-ground observations. As part of his work, Swanson was the first governmental representative to learn of the existence of the Delight and Desire Lake sockeye run. John Skerry, the Fish and Wildlife Service's agent for Cook Inlet, concluded that because the run was unregulated, local fishers were therefore abusing the resource. Those fishers, moreover, had no interest in helping government agents. Skerry noted that "there is still a great deal to be learned of the various fish runs in [park waters]. Much of this has to be uncovered by personal observation due to the unco-operative attitude taken by the Seward fishermen."[51]

By 1956, the park coastline was becoming an increasingly popular fishing venue. Nuka Bay was now home to boats owned by Port Graham canneries; the Libby, McNeill and Libby company, which had a cannery on Kodiak Island; and one or more of the Seattle-based processing ships. These fishing boats, in turn, were supported by tenders that waited nearby. Aialik Bay, on the other hand, was fished primarily by Seward-based boats. During this period the Resurrection Bay harvests, which had been anemic since the 1930s, fell to the point that Seward's only cannery closed after the 1955 season. Despite the lack of a nearby cannery, Seward fishers continued to harvest the small if valuable Aialik Bay sockeye run.[52]

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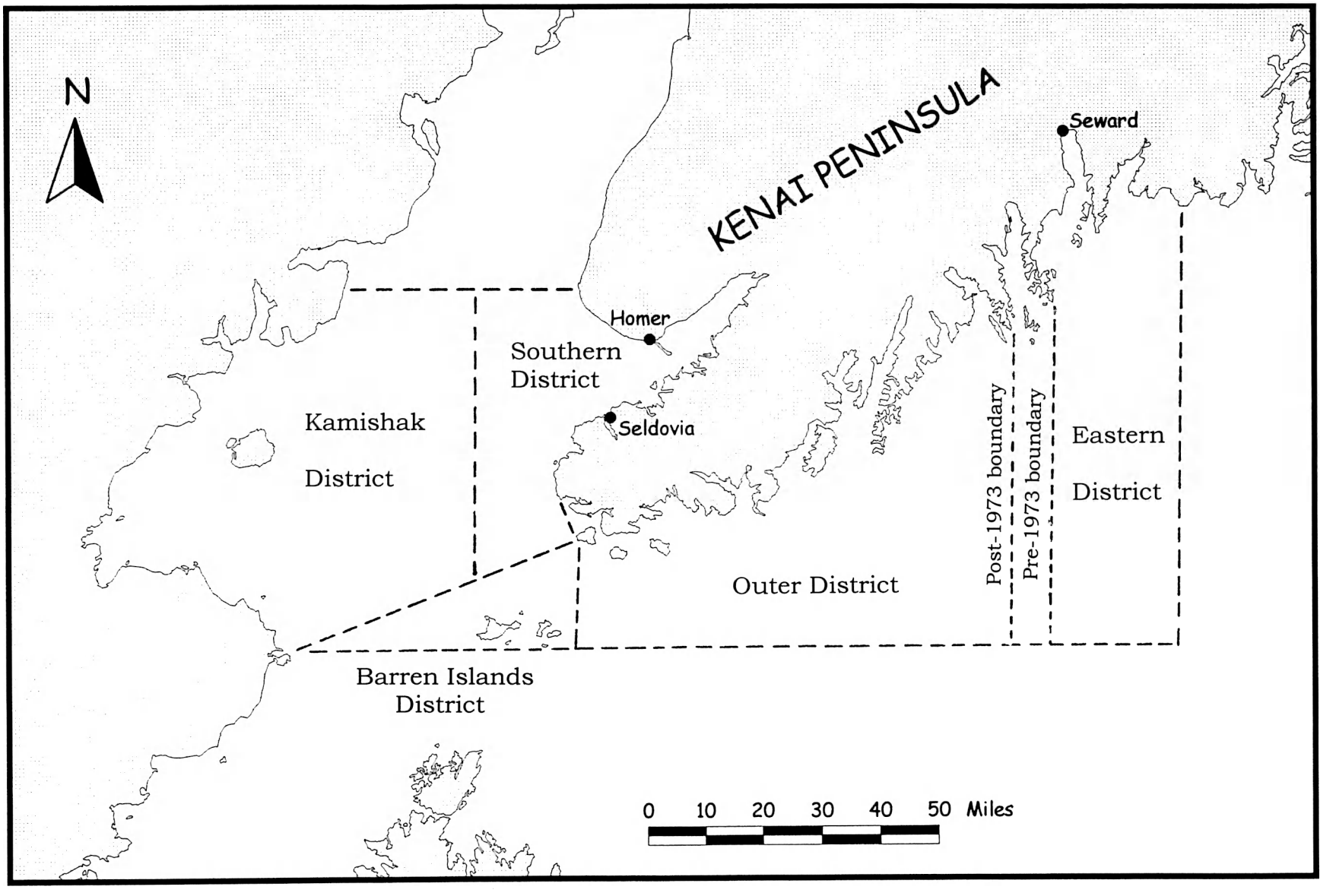
[50] USF&WS, "Cook Inlet Annual Management Report" for 1957, p. 3; Jim Rearden, *Status of the Cook Inlet-Resurrection Bay Commercial Salmon Fishery, 1965*, ADF&G Informational Leaflet 69, October 14, 1965, 19; Jim Rearden, "Alaska's Salmon Fisheries," *Alaska Geographic* 10 (1983), 79.

[51] USF&WS, "Cook Inlet Annual Management Report" for1954 (p. 1), 1955 (p. 90), and 1956 (pp. 3, 78).

[52] William Miller interview, March 24, 1997; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 226.



Map 9-3. Lower Cook Inlet Management Districts

Table 9-2. Outer District (of Cook Inlet) Salmon Harvest, 1954-1995

Figures given are number of fish, while percentages are those of the entire Lower Cook Inlet catch. The Outer District goes from Point Adam (south of Port Graham, on Kenai Peninsula's southwestern tip) to Bear Glacier (at the southwestern end of Resurrection Bay). Source: ADF&G, *Cook Inlet Finfish Report, 1976-1977*, Table 16; and ADF&G, *Lower Cook Inlet Finfish, Annual Management Report, 1995*, Appendix Table 8.

An asterisk (*) signifies a percentage less than 0.1%. In regards to king salmon, a number sign (#) is used because no attempt was made to compute percentages. The number of kings harvested is relatively small; the number harvested in all of Lower Cook Inlet has never exceeded 2,000 per year, and in most years commercial fishers harvested fewer than 500.

Year	Kings(#)	Reds	Cohos	Pinks	Chums	Total
1954	13	4,927 (12.4%)	369 (2.4%)	82,205 (30.6%)	112,877 (42.5%)	200,391 (33.8%)
1955	7	701 (1.7%)	277 (2.9%)	557,997 (47.1%)	40,887 (59.5%)	599,869 (46.1%)
1956	23	2,889 (8.0%)	190 (2.0%)	42,368 (20.4%)	19,248 (21.8%)	64,718 (18.9%)
1957	13	2,982 (11.1%)	110 (6.2%)	149,197 (52.2%)	138,171 (66.9%)	290,473 (55.7%)
1958	1	1,719 (8.8%)	83 (4.6%)	739,768 (77.9%)	100,386 (80.6%)	841,957 (76.8%)
1959	3	10,365 (47.9%)	109 (1.7%)	68,875 (55.2%)	65,675 (59.3%)	145,027 (55.0%)
1960	4	1,336 (5.4%)	533 (19.8%)	328,501 (53.7%)	67,187 (57.9%)	397,561 (52.6%)
1961	2	12,595 (55.3%)	444 (27.4%)	105,447 (34.8%)	40,204 (72.3%)	158,692 (41.4%)
1962	2	8,697 (34.4%)	1,893 (24.5%)	1,684,023 (74.9%)	126,750 (70.7%)	1,821,365 (74.0%)
1963	6	1,974 (13.1%)	369 (5.5%)	21,462 (10.6%)	116,923 (84.4%)	140,734 (38.7%)
1964	2	1,370 (6.6%)	431 (4.6%)	767,396 (72.7%)	269,512 (83.4%)	1,038,711 (73.7%)
1965	0	1,965 (14.0%)	7 (0.8%)	21,816 (18.9%)	22,443 (79.9%)	46,231 (29.2%)
1966	1	2,710 (17.7%)	357 (6.6%)	398,751 (68.8%)	87,620 (67.9%)	489,439 (67.1%)
1967	2	2,165 (7.5%)	56 (2.1%)	259,951 (69.2%)	37,533 (43.9%)	299,707 (60.8%)
1968	1	1,550 (1.6%)	106 (2.2%)	191,691 (32.7%)	20,283 (27.0%)	213,631 (28.1%)
1969	0	92 (0.1%)	11 (1.8%)	51,533 (25.5%)	5,400 (8.8%)	57,036 (14.7%)

Table 9-2. Outer District (of Cook Inlet) Salmon Harvest, 1954-1995 (cont.)

Year	Kings(#)	Reds	Cohos	Pinks	Chums	Total
1970	5	4,177 (18.7%)	243 (5.0%)	302,879 (52.7%)	118,746 (52.9%)	426,050 (51.6%)
1971	11	1,630 (7.3%)	174 (3.8%)	310,710 (79.1%)	116,995 (78.7%)	431,520 (75.9%)
1972	7	26,423 (45.6%)	17 (0.8%)	1,005 (3.5%)	43,490 (57.6%)	70,942 (43.1%)
1973	1	5,064 (17.3%)	30 (1.4%)	197,259 (64.2%)	76,341 (66.1%)	278,695 (61.3%)
1974	1	399 (1.5%)	28 (0.4%)	1,678 (3.3%)	11,931 (62.1%)	14,037 (13.5%)
1975	0	720 (2.6%)	7 (0.1%)	160,291 (15.1%)	11,350 (52.4%)	172,368 (15.4%)
1976	7	18,886 (32.5%)	0 (0%)	93 (0.1%)	412 (0.8%)	19,398 (7.8%)
1977	34	33,733 (33.7%)	1,528 (53.2%)	1,127,800 (87.3%)	70,167 (48.1%)	1,233,262 (80.0%)
1978	236	10,695 (6.8%)	45 (0.7%)	70,080 (19.9%)	19,224 (26.1%)	100,280 (17.0%)
1979	30	25,297 (39.3%)	150 (1.2%)	1,945,521 (65.0%)	180,558 (82.6%)	2,151,556 (65.4%)
1980	12	22,514 (32.4%)	16 (0.1%)	154,041 (17.3%)	32,246 (43.9%)	208,827 (20.0%)
1981	61	18,133 (16.4%)	485 (4.5%)	1,714,115 (52.3%)	238,393 (70.9%)	1,971,187 (52.7%)
1982	129	66,781 (50.9%)	92 (0.2%)	67,523 (12.2%)	63,075 (31.8%)	197,600 (21.3%)
1983	14	16,835 (9.0%)	54 (0.5%)	199,794 (21.5%)	27,203 (14.1%)	243,900 (18.5%)
1984	3	29,276 (10.9%)	41 (0.3%)	89,085 (12.7%)	3,204 (3.5%)	121,609 (11.3%)
1985	19	91,957 (33.0%)	3,210 (31.1%)	618,222 (50.3%)	11,844 (38.7%)	725,252 (46.8%)
1986	6	48,472 (20.6%)	5,052 (26.8%)	401,755 (28.5%)	11,701 (14.1%)	466,986 (26.8%)
1987	14	31,845 (12.8%)	2,481 (17.3%)	23,890 (11.9%)	28,663 (18.3%)	86,893 (14.0%)
1988	5	9,501 (3.0%)	2 (*)	6,094 (0.7%)	71,202 (22.1%)	86,804 (5.5%)
1989	1	10,286 (6.3%)	72 (0.6%)	52,677 (4.1%)	43 (0.4%)	63,079 (4.2%)
1990	2	17,404 (8.5%)	74 (0.8%)	191,320 (49.9%)	614 (8.8%)	209,414 (34.6%)
1991	2	6,408 (2.0%)	12 (0.1%)	359,664 (43.4%)	14,337 (59.2%)	380,423 (31.9%)
1992	0	572 (0.3%)	1 (*)	146 (*)	181 (0.8%)	900 (0.1%)
1993	2	4,613 (2.0%)	119 (0.9%)	159,159 (18.4%)	970 (22.2%)	164,863 (14.7%)
1994	0	5,930 (5.1%)	993 (6.8%)	13,200 (0.8%)	32 (0.6%)	20,155 (1.1%)
1995	12	17,642 (6.6%)	1,272 (7.2%)	192,098 (6.7%)	474 (3.0%)	211,498 (6.7%)

Table 9-3. Eastern District (of Cook Inlet) Salmon Harvest, 1954-1995

Figures given are number of fish, while percentages are those of the entire LOWER Cook Inlet catch. An asterisk (*) signifies a percentage less than 0.1%. The Eastern District extends from Bear Glacier (at the southwestern end of Resurrection Bay) east to Cape Fairfield (between Whidbey and Johnstone bays).
Source: ADF&G, *Cook Inlet Finfish Report, 1976-1977*, Table 18; and ADF&G, *Lower Cook Inlet Finfish, Annual Management Report, 1995*, Appendix Table 9.

An asterisk (*) signifies a percentage less than 0.1%. In regards to king salmon, no attempt was made to compute percentages. A number sign (#) is used because the number of kings harvested is relatively small: the Lower Cook Inlet harvest has never exceeded 2,000 per year, and in most years is fewer than 500.

Year	Kings(#)	Reds	Cohos	Pinks	Chums	Total
1954	0	11,786 (29.7%)	2,256 (14.9%)	7,562 (2.8%)	1,945 (0.7%)	23,849 (4.0%)
1955	4	5,049 (13.8%)	6,160 (63.7%)	55,994 (4.7%)	3,147 (4.6%)	70,354 (5.4%)
1956	0	296 (0.8%)	3,761 (40.2%)	14,873 (7.2%)	519 (0.6%)	19,450 (5.7%)
1957	120	169 (0.6%)	119 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	20 (*)	428 (0.1%)
1958	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	200 (*)	0 (0%)	200 (*)
1959	58	5,477 (25.3%)	8,954 (95.0%)	125 (0.1%)	14,612 (13.2%)	29,226 (11.1%)
1960	0	105 (0.4%)	853 (31.7%)	8,720 (1.4%)	467 (0.4%)	10,415 (1.4%)
1961	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
1962	0	0 (0%)	3,728 (48.2%)	49 (*)	10 (*)	3,787 (0.2%)
1963	1	1 (*)	2,250 (33.4%)	11 (*)	0 (0%)	2,263 (0.6%)
1964	0	22 (0.1%)	22 (0.2%)	813 (0.1%)	12 (*)	869 (0.1%)
1965	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
1966	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
1967	0	348 (1.2%)	203 (7.4%)	3,097 (0.8%)	275 (0.3%)	3,923 (0.8%)
1968	2	74,484 (78.2%)	5 (0.1%)	41,464 (7.1%)	872 (1.2%)	116,827 (15.4%)
1969	3	99,403 (80.9%)	6 (1.0%)	1 (*)	10 (*)	99,423 (25.7%)

Table 9-3. Eastern District (of Cook Inlet) Salmon Harvest, 1954-1995 (cont.)

Year	Kings(#)	Reds		Cohos		Pinks		Chums		Total	
1970	11	1,767	(7.9%)	692	(14.2%)	40,226	(7.0%)	633	(0.3%)	43,329	(5.2%)
1971	21	2,198	(9.9%)	1,115	(24.4%)	1	(*)	423	(0.3%)	3,758	(0.7%)
1972	12	82	(0.1%)	903	(40.4%)	18,190	(63.5%)	743	(1.0%)	19,930	(12.1%)
1973	5	0	(0%)	801	(38.1%)	2	(*)	0	(0%)	808	(0.2%)
1974	0	0	(0%)	517	(7.9%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	517	(0.5%)
1975	1	0	(0%)	124	(2.0%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	125	(*)
1976	0	5	(*)	200	(6.2%)	35,423	(26.0%)	45	(0.1%)	35,673	(14.3%)
1977	0	5,776	(5.8%)	360	(12.5%)	1,349	(0.1%)	3,229	(2.2%)	10,714	(7.0%)
1978	0	2	(*)	582	(8.9%)	29,738	(8.4%)	100	(1.4%)	30,422	(5.1%)
1979	0	0	(0%)	296	(2.4%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	296	(*)
1980	0	122	(0.2%)	426	(2.9%)	155,779	(17.5%)	720	(1.0%)	157,047	(15.0%)
1981	0	9,270	(8.4%)	470	(4.4%)	44,989	(1.4%)	3,279	(1.0%)	58,008	(1.6%)
1982	0	3,092	(2.4%)	950	(2.0%)	143,639	(26.0%)	7,698	(3.9%)	155,379	(16.7%)
1983	0	25,932	(13.8%)	594	(5.3%)	36,154	(3.9%)	7,934	(4.1%)	70,614	(5.4%)
1984	47	54,420	(20.2%)	536	(3.2%)	136,797	(19.5%)	10,535	(11.4%)	202,335	(18.7%)
1985	11	24,338	(8.7%)	835	(8.1%)	92,403	(7.5%)	5,144	(16.8%)	122,731	(7.9%)
1986	0	3,055	(1.3%)	770	(4.1%)	40,243	(2.9%)	3,757	(4.5%)	47,825	(2.7%)
1987	0	3,687	(1.5%)	1,631	(11.4%)	14,333	(7.1%)	14,913	(9.5%)	34,564	(5.5%)
1988	1	20,253	(6.3%)	486	(6.1%)	1,740	(0.2%)	24,668	(7.7%)	47,148	(3.0%)
1989	0	8,538	(5.2%)	5,346	(44.2%)	92	(*)	312	(2.8%)	14,288	(1.0%)
1990	0	7,682	(3.8%)	7,645	(82.2%)	11,815	(3.1%)	307	(4.4%)	27,449	(4.5%)
1991	1	4,703	(1.5%)	7,283	(38.2%)	167,250	(20.2%)	80	(0.3%)	179,317	(15.1%)
1992	0	432	(0.2%)	3,136	(53.1%)	60,007	(12.5%)	86	(0.4%)	63,361	(9.2%)
1993	0	1,824	(0.8%)	8,924	(66.2%)	10,616	(1.2%)	9	(0.2%)	21,373	(1.9%)
1994	1	9,661	(8.3%)	10,410	(70.9%)	44,987	(2.7%)	2,792	(51.1%)	67,851	(3.8%)
1995	0	46,556	(17.5%)	5,192	(29.3%)	12,000	(0.4%)	330	(2.1%)	64,078	(2.0%)

As a result of the stepped-up activity, federal fisheries personnel in 1956 increased their presence in park waters and moved to ensure the protection of the sockeye run that had been revealed to them the previous year. William Miller, who had been working as a Fish and Wildlife Service stream guard since 1953, was stationed at the mouth of Delight Creek from mid-June to late July; he then moved to Nuka Island, where he stayed until mid-August. He also served a stint at the head of Beauty Bay in Nuka Bay's West Arm. Another stream guard dispatched to the area that summer was John Frye, who arrived at the mouth of Delight Creek before Miller left. A Fish and Wildlife Service floatplane, which patrolled the Outer District for the first time, augmented Miller and Frye's observations and enforcement capabilities.[53] During the same general period—probably in the mid-1950s, according to one old-time fisherman—the Fish and Wildlife Service stationed a stream guard in a tent at the edge of Pederson Lagoon, in Aialik Bay. Here, as in Nuka Bay, the guard remained until fishermen left the area.[54]

Miller's experiences as a stream guard, like Swanson's, were more or less typical of those who served in that capacity elsewhere in Alaska during territorial days. It was Miller's job to monitor activity surrounding the buoys that had been placed 500 yards from the mouth of salmon streams. Because pink and chum salmon commonly school at stream mouths, regulations prohibited fishing boats from passing beyond the buoys, which were marked with plywood, three-foot-square stream markers. Fishing boats, however, often lurked just beyond the markers, particularly at high tide. In an intricate game of cat-and-mouse, many boats tried—in various, devious ways—to fish inside the buoy perimeter without being detected. Miller, equipped with a small, motorized skiff, was asked to establish a presence and prevent fisheries violations; during his stay on Nuka Island, he was responsible for monitoring the fishing activities at several island streams simultaneously. Miller led a rugged life that summer; on Nuka Island, he stayed in one of Pete Sather's abandoned fox shacks, while at Delight Creek, he camped in a tent.[55]

Miller and the other stream guards recognized that the Nuka Bay pink runs for 1956 were "not as great" as in 1955, even though the even-year pink fishery was traditionally dominant. Worried that the pink population

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[53] William Miller interview, March 24, 1997; USF&WS, "Cook Inlet Annual Management Report," 1956, 63, 64, 68.

[54] Seward Shea interview, March 7, 1997.

[55] While on Nuka Island, Miller lived just west of the Sather residence. (Seward Shea remembers that the fox shack where the guard lived "was in the same general area as the house.") The "humpy creek" that Miller guarded may have been the same creek (as noted above) where Pete Sather had allegedly created a salmon run, years earlier, as a result of his fish-cleaning activities. William Miller interview, March 24, 1997.

could not be sustained under the current system, fisheries agent John Skerry recommended that the season end on August 18. The suggestion was quickly implemented. The stream guards also made a number of baseline stream surveys. Streams surveyed for the first time included Nuka Island Creek, Home Cove, South Creek, Mike Bay, and Duck Bay—all of which were located on Nuka Island—along with Desire and Delight creeks, which flowed into McCarty Fjord. Stream mouths marked that summer were located at Delight and Desire creeks, Home Cove, the unnamed cove south of Home Cove, and Nuka Bay Creek.[56]

From 1957 to 1959, the park fishery continued to be managed in much the same way as in 1956. At least one fisheries enforcement person was dispatched to Nuka Bay each summer; stream guard work continued to take place at Delight Creek and several Nuka Island locations.[57] On a more occasional basis, personnel tallied escapement levels, surveyed streams, and measured stream temperatures. One summer, the agency patrolled the area with its Grumman Goose; a year later the agency's patrol vessel, the *Kittiwake*, checked Nuka Bay's closure markers.[58]

Specific changes during this period were few. The various stream guards welcomed one of those changes; in 1957, the shelters at both Nuka Island Creek and Delight Creek were upgraded from tents to an 8' x 10' tent frame, with walls and roof made of corrugated aluminum. A second change involved enforcement methods. The existing system of stream mouth protection was apparently less than effective, so agency managers adopted a stakeout system in which the stream guards hid in the undergrowth and watched for stream robbers. This practice was more cost-effective than the previous system had been and it resulted in more fisheries violations, but local fishers became angrier than ever at federal fishing policies.[59]

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[56] USF&WS, "Cook Inlet Annual Management Report," 1956, 3, 82, 84, 100.

[57] *Ibid.*, for 1957 (pp. 90, 107-08), 1958 (p. 75), and 1959 (p. 45).

[58] *Ibid.*, for 1957 (pp. 57, 73, 90, 102), 1958 (pp. 114, 122-23) and 1959 (pp. 54, 77-78).

[59] *Ibid.*, 1957, 103; W. B. "Buck" Stewart interview, March 7, 1997; Seward Shea interview, March 7, 1997. Another change during this period was administrative. In October 1957, the Commercial Fisheries Division of the newly-formed Alaska [Territorial] Department of Fish and Game added a District Biologist, based in Homer; the following year, it hired a fisheries biologist whose duties included Resurrection Bay. ADF&G, *Annual Report* for 1957 (p. 5) and 1958 (p. 64).

Commercial Salmon Fishing Since Statehood

Statehood and Its Ramifications, 1960-1963

The relative continuity of fisheries management along the Kenai Peninsula's outer coast, and fisheries management throughout Alaska, was abruptly changed by statehood. A statehood bill passed Congress in June 1958, but Alaska did not enter the Union until January 1959, and the new state did not assume responsibility for fisheries management until 1960. Therefore, fisheries management for the first year after statehood continued much as it had during territorial days.

When the Alaska Department of Fish and Game assumed control of the new state's fisheries, the health of Alaska's salmon stocks had been declining for years. A major reason for the declining stocks was the strong bond between the canneries and the Fish and Wildlife Service, both being based outside Alaska. Jim Rearden, a longtime Fish and Game biologist, has remarked that "all the agency cared about was the canneries," and the canneries had a near-total influence over territorial fishing regulations. Independent fishermen, and Alaskans in general, strongly resented their own lack of influence over fisheries regulations. One manifestation of that resentment was that some Alaska fishers robbed fish along creeks and at stream mouths.[60] As noted above, many Alaskans equated federal fisheries management with the fish trap. While the number of fish traps slowly declined during the years that preceded statehood, the widely hated traps were not eliminated until Congress passed the statehood bill.

Another reason that Alaska's salmon stocks were in relatively poor shape was because of the nature of fisheries regulation. Jim Rearden has noted that

> under Federal control, the regulations were generally adopted six months or more in advance of the fishing season and they were virtually inflexible; any change had to be published in the *Federal Register* before it became effective. Once a regulation was in place, there was little chance of modifying it, regardless of its effect on fishermen or on the salmon.

The transfer to state management, however, made the adoption of fisheries rules far easier; rule changes, via "emergency orders," could be made by field announcement and implemented within hours.[61] Those

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[60] Jim Rearden interview, February 24, 1997; W. B. "Buck" Stewart interview, March 7, 1997.

[61] Jim Rearden, "Alaska's Salmon Fisheries," *Alaska Geographic* 10 (1983), 9.

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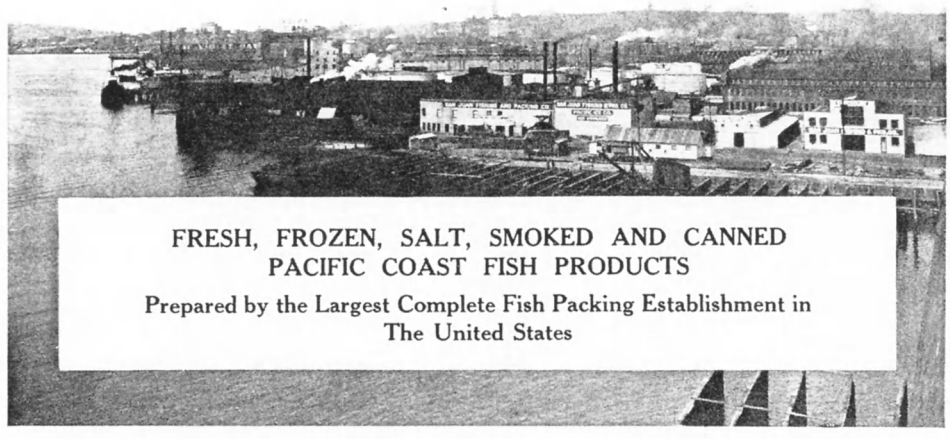

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The "San Juan plant" was Seward's largest cannery from 1917 to 1930. *Pacific Fisherman Year Book*, 1921, 104.

Boats based at the Seward small boat harbor (such as those moored in this mid-1970s view) have played a major role in the fishing history of the nearby fjords country. M. Woodbridge Williams photo, NPS/Alaska Area Office print file, NARA Anchorage.

Seward has offered cold storage facilities for the area's fishing fleet for more than fifty years. John Skerry photo, from USF&WS, *Cook Inlet Annual Management Report*, 1958, 42.

Markers such as this one were posted near various Kenai Fjords stream mouths beginning in the mid-1950s. *Alaska Geographic* 10:3 (1983), 9.

During the early 1960s, and again in the 1970s, the ADF&G had a fish counting tower near the mouth of Delight Creek. *Alaska Geographic* 10:3 (1983), 9.

During the mid-1950s, the Fish and Wildlife Service placed stream guards near several area streams. This 1958 photo shows a typical stream guard shack, skiff, and a Coast Guard floatplane. USF&WS, *Cook Inlet Annual Management Report*, 1958, 127.

During the 1920s, Seward was a popular stopover for ships in the halibut fleet that fished out on Portlock Bank and area sites. Neville Public Museum, photo 5670.4.

regulations, moreover, were generated by an Alaskan, not Federal, bureaucracy. Fisheries policy was set by a statewide board appointed by Alaskans and subject to a public hearing process. Because of the changes in fisheries management that followed statehood, local antagonism against fisheries regulations lessened. The resentment did not, however, evaporate. Some fishers continued to fish out of season, at stream mouths, and in other ways contrary to the newly constituted regulations.

Other changes that followed statehood were easily visible on the fishing grounds. The placing of stream guards continued after statehood, but the unpopular stakeout program was eliminated. The number of Alaska stream guards, moreover, shrank considerably. In park waters, stream guards continued at Home Cove on Nuka Island and in the Delight-Desire Creek area,[62] but apparently no guards were deployed to Aialik Bay after statehood. The guards' survey duties, to an increasing degree, were taken over by a Fish and Game biologist who periodically flew over the area—either from Port Dick to Resurrection Bay, or from the head of Kachemak Bay to Nuka Bay and on to Resurrection Bay—in a Super Cub. (The small, maneuverable Cub had a distinct advantage over the Grumman Goose used by federal fisheries managers. The Cub could fly as slowly as 65 or 70 miles per hour without stalling—slow enough that biologists could count the spawners from the air—while the Goose's stall speed was 140 or 150 miles per hour.) Stream guards returned to the area in the summer of 1961, and perhaps again in 1962; they then left the Outer Coast, never to return.[63]

By the time the State of Alaska began managing the park area fishery, the southern coast's salmon runs had become sufficiently well known—and its harvest statistics had become sufficiently reliable—that its contribution to the overall Cook Inlet regional fishery could be assessed (see Table 9-4). Fish and Game personnel recognized that Nuka Bay (i.e., the stretch of coastline between Gore Point and the Pye Islands) had a fairly strong run of pink, chum and sockeye salmon; the Aialik Bay area had a sizable sockeye run; and Resurrection Bay had distinctive pink, chum, and sockeye runs. For those reasons, historical statistics are provided in the following paragraphs for three of the five salmon species. (Relatively small numbers of coho and king salmon are harvested in park waters, or

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[62] Jim Rearden interview, February 24, 1997. During the 1960 and 1961 seasons, the Delight-Desire Creek area sported a fish-counting tower. As in other locations, guards laid screen and heavy fencing in the stream bottom to make the fish easier to see.

[63] Jim Rearden interview, February 24, 1997. Rearden, admittedly not an objective party, stated that the ADF&G withdrew the stream guards "because fishermen liked our management." Others, however, have mentioned that some fishers continued to violate the rules. The adoption of aerial surveying, moreover, lessened the stream guards' traditional role.

Table 9-4. Salmon Harvest, by Number of Fish (in thousands) and Percentage of Total Harvest for Selected Periods, 1954-1994

Outer District Figures:

Years	chinook salmon (410)	sockeye salmon (420)	coho salmon (430)	pink salmon (440)	chum salmon (450)	total salmon
1954-59	0 – 0.0%	23.6 – 1.1%	1.1 – 0.1%	1,640.4 – 76.6%	477.2 – 22.3%	2,142.4
1960-65	0 – 0.0%	25.9 – 0.7%	3.7 – 0.1%	2,936.8 – 81.1%	654.7 – 18.1%	3,621.2

Statistical Area 232 Figures:

Years	chinook salmon (410)	sockeye salmon (420)	coho salmon (430)	pink salmon (440)	chum salmon (450)	total salmon
1968-69	0 – 0.0%	0.1 – 0.2%	0 – 0.0%	64.6 – 91.9%	5.5 – 7.9%	70.3
1970-74	0 – 0.0%	37.6 – 13.3%	0 – 0.0%	190.9 – 67.6%	53.8 – 19.1%	282.4
1975-79	0.3 – 0.0%	89.4 – 2.5%	1.6 – 0.0%	3,179.2 – 89.7%	274.0 – 7.7%	3,544.7
1980-84	0.1 – 0.0%	153.5 – 5.6%	0.5 – 0.0%	2,224.5 – 81.1%	364.0 – 13.3%	2,743.1
1985-89	0 – 0.0%	192.1 – 13.4%	10.6 – 0.7%	1,102.7 – 77.2%	123.4 – 8.6%	1,429.0
1990-94	0 – 0.0%	34.3 – 4.4%	1.0 – 0.1%	723.5 – 93.3%	15.9 – 2.1%	775.1

Source: Tables 9-2 and 9-8.

elsewhere in the Outer District, so no specific statistics are provided for those species.)

Statistics collected during the 1960-1963 period show that in regard to pink salmon (see Table 9-5), Nuka Bay had fairly strong harvests during even-numbered years. These harvests numbered more than 25,000 fish per year, and comprised between 4% and 6% of the total Lower Cook Inlet harvest. Its odd-year harvests, however, were so small that they comprised less than 1% of the Lower Cook Inlet harvest. During all four of these years, the Resurrection Bay harvest was far less than that in Nuka Bay; in 1961 and 1963, in fact, the harvest was nonexistent. But the Port Dick harvest—just west of Nuka Bay—was far greater than in any park area.

Regarding chum salmon (see Table 9-6), the Nuka Bay harvest was fairly strong in both 1960 and 1961; the bay yielded more than 3% of the Lower Cook Inlet harvest in both years. During the following two years, however, the chum runs there slid into insignificance. As with pink salmon, the Nuka Bay harvests were consistently greater than in Resurrection Bay, which had almost no harvest activity, while the Port Dick harvest was many times greater than in Nuka Bay.

As to the sockeye run (see Table 9-7), the number of fish caught in both Aialik Bay and Nuka Bay was no larger, in general, than either the pink or chum harvest. But because the Lower Cook Inlet is not normally considered a significant sockeye region, these two bays often contributed more than 10% of the region's total harvest. More important, sockeye salmon's relatively high value (more than twice the price, on a per-pound basis, than either pinks or chums) ensured that both fishers and agency officials paid especial attention to the health of those runs. The Nuka Bay and Aialik Bay runs were far greater than were those in adjacent districts along Kenai Peninsula's southern coast.

The Good Friday Earthquake and Its Aftermath

At 5:36 p.m. on March 27, 1964, a massive earthquake struck southcentral Alaska. The earthquake measured between 8.2 and 8.4 on the Richter scale; its epicenter was near the north end of College Fjord, approximately 50 miles west of Valdez. The earthquake and the resulting aftershocks, tsumanis and submarine landslides killed 115 people and caused an estimated $380 to $500 million in property damage.[64]

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[64] Clarence C. Hulley, *Alaska, Past and Present* (Portland, Binfords and Mort, 1970), 398-400; Naske and Slotnick, *Alaska, A History of the 49th State*, 178-79.

Table 9-5. Commercial Pink Salmon Harvest for Selected Lower Cook Inlet Bays, 1959-1995

Figures given are in numbers of fish (in thousands), while percentages are those of the entire Lower Cook Inlet catch. (Lower Cook Inlet includes all Kenai Peninsula Streams between Anchor Point and Cape Fairfield, plus all west-side waters between Cape Douglas and the Iniskin Peninsula.) Source: ADF&G, *1995 Lower Cook Inlet Annual Finfish Management Report*, Appendix Tables 19 and 20. T = trace (i.e., fewer than 50 fish), * = percentage less than 0.1%.

Year	Port Dick Bay	Nuka Bay	Resurrection Bay	Total, Lower Cook Inlet
1959	28.2 (22.6%)	33.3 (26.7%)	8.4 (6.7%)	124.7
1960	257.4 (42.1%)	26.6 (4.3%)	5.8 (0.9%)	611.6
1961	92.9 (30.6%)	2.0 (0.6%)	0 (0%)	303.4
1962	1,118.3 (49.7%)	129.8 (5.8%)	0.1 (*)	2,248.3
1963	19.0 (9.3%)	0.3 (0.1%)	0 (0%)	203.6
1964	526.3 (49.9%)	23.8 (2.3%)	0.3 (*)	1,055.4
1965	15.3 (13.2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	115.6
1966	296.8 (51.2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	579.2
1967	259.9 (69.2%)	0.1 (*)	1.2 (0.3%)	375.5
1968	55.0 (9.4%)	90.2 (15.4%)	37.4 (6.4%)	585.4
1969	51.5 (25.4%)	0 (*)	0 (0%)	202.4
1970	193.8 (33.7%)	48.4 (8.4%)	40.2 (7.0%)	574.3
1971	94.6 (24.1%)	119.7 (30.5%)	0 (0%)	392.9
1972	0 (0%)	0.3 (1.0%)	18.2 (63.4%)	28.7
1973	96.6 (31.4%)	8.1 (2.6%)	0 (0%)	307.4
1974	0.6 (1.2%)	0.7 (1.4%)	0 (0%)	50.6
1975	90.3 (8.5%)	35.4 (3.3%)	0 (0%)	1,063.4
1976	0 (0%)	0.1 (0.1%)	35.4 (26.0%)	136.4
1977	881.7 (68.1%)	56.3 (4.4%)	0 (0%)	1,293.9
1978	63.6 (18.0%)	6.3 (1.8%)	29.7 (8.4%)	352.6
1979	964.8 (32.3%)	121.7 (4.1%)	0 (0%)	2,990.9
1980	133.3 (15.0%)	12.8 (1.4%)	155.8 (17.4%)	889.7
1981	1,140.9 (35.7%)	395.1 (12.3%)	32.6 (1.0%)	3,199.2
1982	44.0 (8.0%)	8.7 (1.6%)	137.4 (24.9%)	551.6
1983	140.0 (15.1%)	55.0 (5.9%)	27.1 (2.9%)	927.6
1984	84.6 (12.1%)	4.4 (0.6%)	122.3 (17.5%)	700.6
1985	455.6 (37.0%)	150.8 (12.3%)	74.6 (6.1%)	1,229.7
1986	304.0 (21.6%)	97.8 (6.9%)	36.5 (2.6%)	1,408.3
1987	3.0 (1.5%)	20.9 (10.4%)	11.8 (5.9%)	201.4
1988	5.9 (0.6%)	0.2 (*)	0.5 (0.1%)	921.3
1989	0 (0%)	43.0 (3.3%)	0 (0%)	1,296.9
1990	169.1 (44.1%)	0.2 (0.1%)	0 (0%)	383.7
1991	289.7 (35.0%)	10.6 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	828.7
1992	0.1 (*)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	479.8
1993	26.6 (3.1%)	13.8 (1.6%)	0.7 (0.1%)	866.8
1994	1.6 (0.1%)	11.6 (0.7%)	T (*)	1,647.9
1995	0 (0%)	21.4 (0.8%)	0 (0%)	2,848.5

Table 9-6. Commercial Chum Salmon Harvest for Selected Lower Cook Inlet Bays, 1959-1995

Figures given are in numbers of fish (in thousands), while percentages are those of the entire Lower Cook Inlet catch. (Lower Cook Inlet includes all Kenai Peninsula Streams between Anchor Point and Cape Fairfield, plus all west-side waters between Cape Douglas and the Iniskin Peninsula.) Source: ADF&G, 1995 Lower Cook Inlet Annual Finfish Management Report, Appendix Table 22. T = trace (i.e., fewer than 50 fish), * - less than 0.1%.

Year	Port Dick Bay	Nuka Bay	Resurrection Bay	Total, Lower Cook Inlet
1959	42.4 (38.3%)	1.7 (1.5%)	0.1 (0.1%)	110.8
1960	53.9 (46.4%)	8.4 (7.2%)	0.5 (0.4%)	116.1
1961	36.8 (66.2%)	1.7 (3.1%)	0 (0%)	55.6
1962	112.0 (62.5%)	0.5 (0.3%)	0 (0%)	179.3
1963	110.8 (80.0%)	1.5 (1.1%)	0 (0%)	138.5
1964	227.4 (70.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	323.3
1965	14.2 (50.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	28.1
1966	60.9 (47.2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	129.1
1967	36.0 (42.2%)	1.5 (1.8%)	0.1 (0.1%)	85.4
1968	10.9 (14.5%)	6.9 (9.2%)	0.7 (0.9%)	75.1
1969	5.4 (8.8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	61.2
1970	21.8 (9.7%)	5.9 (2.6%)	0.4 (0.2%)	224.2
1971	0.7 (0.5%)	0.1 (0.1%)	0.4 (0.3%)	148.6
1972	0 (0%)	2.3 (3.0%)	0.7 (0.9%)	75.5
1973	33.4 (28.9%)	40.8 (35.3%)	0 (0%)	115.5
1974	8.1 (42.2%)	3.9 (20.3%)	0 (0%)	19.2
1975	6.8 (31.5%)	3.6 (16.7%)	0 (0%)	21.6
1976	0 (0%)	0.4 (0.8%)	0 (0%)	50.8
1977	25.6 (17.6%)	17.4 (11.9%)	0 (0%)	145.8
1978	10.3 (14.0%)	0.4 (0.6%)	0.1 (0.1%)	73.5
1979	79.0 (36.2%)	14.7 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	218.5
1980	19.0 (25.9%)	7.8 (10.6%)	0.7 (1.0%)	73.5
1981	85.8 (25.5%)	3.8 (1.1%)	2.4 (0.7%)	336.1
1982	30.3 (15.3%)	0.9 (0.4%)	7.7 (3.9%)	198.0
1983	18.0 (9.4%)	0.8 (0.4%)	6.9 (3.6%)	192.3
1984	1.9 (2.1%)	0.2 (0.2%)	3.0 (3.2%)	92.5
1985	9.6 (31.4%)	0.8 (2.6%)	3.0 (9.8%)	30.6
1986	10.4 (12.6%)	1.3 (1.6%)	3.5 (4.2%)	82.7
1987	27.1 (17.3%)	1.6 (1.0%)	13.9 (8.9%)	157.0
1988	64.4 (20.0%)	6.8 (2.1%)	23.9 (7.4%)	321.9
1989	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11.3
1990	0.5 (7.1%)	T (*)	0 (0%)	7.0
1991	13.7 (56.6%)	T (*)	0 (0%)	24.2
1992	0.2 (1.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	22.2
1993	0.7 (15.9%)	T (*)	0 (0%)	4.4
1994	T (*)	T (*)	2.5 (45.5%)	5.5
1995	0 (0%)	0.1 (0.6%)	0.3 (1.9%)	15.6

Table 9-7. Commercial Sockeye Salmon Harvest for Selected Lower Cook Inlet Bays, 1959-1995

Figures given are in numbers of fish (in thousands), while percentages are those of the entire Lower Cook Inlet catch. (Lower Cook Inlet includes all Kenai Peninsula Streams between Anchor Point and Cape Fairfield, plus all west-side waters between Cape Douglas and the Iniskin Peninsula.) Source: ADF&G, 1995 Lower Cook Inlet Annual Finfish Management Report, Appendix Table 14. T = trace (i.e., fewer than 50 fish), * - less than 0.1%.

Year	Port Dick Bay		Nuka Bay		Resurrection Bay		Total, Lower Cook Inlet
1959	1.3	(6.0%)	8.3	(38.4%)	0	(0%)	21.6
1960	0.2	(0.8%)	6.7	(27.1%)	0.1	(0.4%)	24.7
1961	4.3	(18.9%)	8.2	(36.0%)	0	(0%)	22.8
1962	2.6	(10.3%)	5.1	(20.2%)	0	(0%)	25.3
1963	0.5	(3.3%)	0.5	(3.3%)	0	(0%)	15.1
1964	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	20.7
1965	0	(0%)	2.0	(14.3%)	0	(0%)	14.0
1966	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	15.3
1967	0	(0%)	2.2	(7.6%)	0	(0%)	29.0
1968	0	(0%)	1.5	(1.6%)	74.5	(78.3%)	95.2
1969	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	99.4	(80.9%)	122.8
1970	3.1	(13.9%)	1.0	(4.5%)	1.7	(7.6%)	22.3
1971	0	(0%)	1.6	(7.2%)	2.2	(9.9%)	22.2
1972	0.3	(0.5%)	26.1	(45.1%)	0.1	(0.2%)	57.9
1973	3.1	(10.6%)	1.5	(5.1%)	0	(0%)	29.2
1974	0.2	(0.7%)	0.2	(0.7%)	0	(0%)	27.4
1975	0.6	(2.1%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	28.1
1976	0	(0%)	18.9	(32.5%)	0	(0%)	58.2
1977	5.8	(5.8%)	32.5	(32.5%)	0	(0%)	100.1
1978	0	(0%)	10.7	(6.8%)	0	(0%)	156.4
1979	0	(0%)	24.4	(37.9%)	0	(0%)	64.4
1980	0.1	(0.1%)	21.5	(31.0%)	0	(0%)	69.4
1981	8.7	(7.9%)	17.2	(15.6%)	0.6	(0.6%)	110.3
1982	3.0	(2.2%)	66.3	(50.5%)	0	(0%)	131.3
1983	25.9	(13.8%)	16.8	(9.0%)	0	(0%)	187.6
1984	50.8	(18.9%)	29.2	(10.9%)	3.4	(1.3%)	269.0
1985	24.1	(8.6%)	91.8	(32.9%)	0.3	(0.1%)	278.7
1986	3.0	(1.3%)	48.4	(20.6%)	0	(0%)	234.9
1987	3.5	(1.4%)	31.8	(12.8%)	0.2	(0.1%)	248.8
1988	20.2	(6.3%)	9.5	(3.0%)	0	(0%)	319.0
1989	8.5	(5.2%)	10.3	(6.3%)	0	(0%)	163.3
1990	7.7	(3.8%)	5.7	(2.8%)	0	(0%)	203.9
1991	4.7	(1.5%)	1.8	(0.6%)	0	(0%)	317.9
1992	0.4	(0.2%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	176.6
1993	0.2	(0.1%)	3.5	(1.5%)	1.7	(0.7%)	233.8
1994	0.6	(0.5%)	5.9	(5.1%)	9.0	(7.8%)	115.4
1995	2.0	(0.8%)	17.6	(6.6%)	44.6	(16.8%)	265.4

The earthquake devastated Seward, where 11 deaths were recorded and property damage totaled more than $14.6 million. The quake hit Seward, and the park coastline, particularly hard because although the epicenter was more than 100 miles to the northeast, the earthquake's main fault line (and thus its "area of epicenter") paralleled the coast and included most of the park. The park was thus subject to many of the quake's most devastating effects. The earthquake in the park lasted from 2½ to 5 minutes.[65]

One of the earthquake's most substantial impacts was its effect on land elevations. Some areas of southcentral Alaska, in effect, rose from the sea; one site on Montague Island (in Prince William Sound) rose 33 feet. The area within the park, however, was in a zone of subsidence. Maps published as a result of post-earthquake scientific studies show that the quake's "axis of maximum subsidence" went right through the park; it was a sinuous line that wound from the western end of Kenai Lake to the eastern edge of Nuka Island. Areas that were relatively distant from that axis subsided only slightly; the southern tip of Aialik Peninsula, for instance, sank only a foot. But Aialik Bay dropped 4.5 feet, both Two Arm Bay and Shelter Cove (the latter in Nuka Bay) subsided 5.4 feet, and both Beauty Bay (in Nuka Bay) and Chance Cove (just east of McArthur Pass) dropped 6.6 feet. Some areas astride the axis fell as much as 7.5 feet. Near the Sather residence, on the western side of Nuka Island, the water rose and covered part of the warehouse; the quake also destroyed the adjacent boat dock.[66]

The other major impact caused by the March 27 earthquake was a series of tsunamis (large waves) that hit the coast within one-half hour of the quake. The quake generated a large tsunami out in the Gulf of Alaska; the tsunami rose in height as it reached the coast due to the funneling effect of the various fjords. In Resurrection Bay, the tsunami was an estimated 30 to 40 feet high as it neared the bay's northern end; a 30-foot wave slammed into Thumb Cove, on the bay's eastern side, and it was at

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[65] Arthur Grantz, George Plafker, and Reuben Kachadoorian, *Alaska's Good Friday Earthquake, March 27, 1964; A Preliminary Geologic Evaluation*, USGS Circular 491 (Washington, GPO, 1964), 9; George Plafker, *Tectonics of the March 27, 1964 Alaska Earthquake*, U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper 543-I (Washington, GPO, 1970), I-4; Doak C. Cox, "Introduction," in Committee on the Alaska Earthquake of the Division of Earth Sciences, National Research Council, *The Great Alaska Earthquake of 1964; Oceanography and Coastal Engineering* (Washington, National Academy of Sciences, 1972), 33, 39.

[66] Kirk W. Stanley, *Effects of the Alaska Earthquake of March 27, 1964 on Shore Processes and Beach Morphology*, USGS Professional Paper 543-J (Washington, GPO, 1968), J-1; Plafker, *Tectonics of the March 27, 1964 Alaska Earthquake*, I-9, I-10, I-58; Marge Tillion interview, April 9, 1997.

least that high when it reached Seward. Waves entering Aialik Bay were far higher.[67] Gene Rusnak, a USGS employee, observed that a wave between 90 and 100 feet high hit on either side of Aialik Bay's terminus; spruce trees up to 18 inches in diameter were snapped throughout the area where the wave hit. These waves were particularly devastating because the quake generated submarine landslides that exacerbated the tsunami's effects. Huge waves also hit Port Dick; other bays between there and Aialik Bay were also probably affected, but specific details are lacking.[68]

The lowering of the landmass, in combination with the effects of the tsunami, had devastating consequences on the park's fish population. Both factors, particularly the former, inundated the gravel at stream mouths that was key to pink and chum salmon spawning. (The earthquake had varying impacts on sockeye populations, where spawning took place in upstream lakes; the Aialik Bay population was wiped out for years afterward, probably because of the tsunami's effects, while at Delight and Desire creeks, the impacts were significant but not devastating.)[69] The salmon industry was also crippled because facilities were destroyed. The quake wrecked canneries in Seldovia and elsewhere in lower Cook Inlet. In Seward, four seafood processors were destroyed; of those, Halibut Producers' Co-operative was back on line a year later, but Seward Seafoods and the other processors never reopened. Many fishing boats were destroyed in both locations, and the quake resulted in the death of at least one Seward-area fisherman.[70]

Statistics for the remainder of the decade illustrate the extent of the earthquake's destruction. Nuka Bay pink salmon harvests for 1964 were

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[67] The quake, surprisingly, had little or no effect on the location of the park's glacier termini. A USGS study noted that Northwestern Glacier had a "slight retreat" (of less than 50 meters) while the other park glaciers had only minor changes. Austin Post, *Effects of the March 1964 Alaska Earthquake on Glaciers*, USGS Professional Paper 544-D (1967), D-36.

[68] Cox, "Introduction," p. 33; Basil W. Wilson and Alf Tørum, "Runup Heights of the Major Tsunami on North American Coasts," in Committee on the Alaska Earthquake, *The Great Alaska Earthquake of 1964*, 161-62, 214; Jim Rearden interview, February 24, 1997; Grantz, Plafker, and Kachadoorian, *Alaska's Good Friday Earthquake*, 10-11. As George Plafker noted, the 1964 quake was by no means a unique seismic event in this area; other tremors centering in or near the park, with a magnitude of 4 or greater, took place in March 1963 and January 1954. Land on the southern Kenai Peninsula has been sinking for centuries; at least 300 feet of submergence has taken place. Plafker, *Tectonics of the March 27, 1964 Alaska Earthquake*, I-48, I-58, I-60.

[69] Jim Rearden interview, February 24, 1997; Stanley, *Effects of the Alaska Earthquake*, J-10, J-17, J-18; Plafker, *Tectonics of the March 27, 1964 Alaska Earthquake*, I-34.

[70] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 238, 295; Seward Shea interview, March 7, 1997.

low, although within a normal range; but for the next three years they were almost nonexistent. The only productive year for the remainder of the decade was 1968, when the Nuka Bay fishery constituted more than 15 percent of the total Lower Cook Inlet pink salmon harvest. Similar impacts were recorded in nearby Resurrection Bay. But in Port Dick, to the west, the quake had few if any impacts on the pink harvest.

Chum salmon harvests followed a similar pattern. In both Nuka Bay and Resurrection Bay, no chum harvest was recorded from 1964 through 1966, inclusively. Both bays recorded a fairly healthy harvest in 1968 but none in 1969. The Port Dick area, meanwhile, saw chum harvest tumble from more than 100,000 per year during the 1962-64 period to just 10,000 fish in 1968 and 5,000 in 1969.

In regard to sockeye harvests, Aialik Bay suffered catastrophic devastation in the earthquake; no harvests of the species were recorded between 1964 and 1969, inclusively. Nuka Bay fared better, but only slightly; harvests during those years were recorded only in 1965, 1967, and 1968, and the harvests that were recorded lagged behind those that predated the earthquake. In Resurrection Bay, where sockeyes had been off-limits to fishermen for years, no harvests were recorded until 1968, when a hatchery program brought huge numbers of sockeyes. They remained high for another year, then dropped back to insignificant levels.

Fishing in Park Waters, 1970 to Present

No sooner had salmon populations begun to rebound from the earthquake's devastation than another hazard—cold weather—impacted the park's fishery. The winters of both 1970-71 and 1971-72 were "extremely cold years" in the words of the Lower Cook Inlet fisheries biologist. As a result of the environmental stress caused by those winters, the salmon runs and harvests were hit hard. As late as 1977, the East Arm of Nuka Bay was "kept closed to build up pink and chum stock depleted by the 1964 earthquake and severe winter conditions in the early 1970s."[71]

This report is intended to trace the major historical developments in the park's fishery. It is not the place to chronicle or explain the annual salmon harvests, particularly since the mid-1970s. The report shall, however, cover some of the major new actions that have affected the park's fishery in recent years (see Table 9-8 and Map 9-4).

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[71] ADF&G, *Lower Cook Inlet Finfish Management Report* for 1975 (p. 8), 1976-77 (p. 6), and 1978 (p. 23).

Table 9-8. Statistics on Park-Area (Statistical Area 232) Salmon Fishing, 1968-1995

Year	chinook salmon (410) (#/pounds)	sockeye salmon (420) (#/pounds)	coho salmon (430) (#/pounds)	pink salmon (440) (#/pounds)	chum salmon (450) (#/pounds)	salmon total (#/pounds)
1968	-0-	4/ n.d.	3/ n.d.	**13,155**/ n.d.	84/ n.d.	13/246/ n.d.
1969	-0-	92/ n.d.	11/ n.d.	**51,533**/ n.d.	5,400/ n.d.	57,036/ n.d.
1970	2/ 54	4,129/ 21,470	19/ 116	**59,518/ 214,261**	6,602/ 44,234	70,270/ 280,135
1971	11/ 47	1,626/ 9,749	17/ 94	**119,661/ 420,605**	56/ 413	121,371/ 430,908
1972	7/ 37	**26,420/154,665**	3/ 16	682/ 2,394	2,434/ 18,369	29,546/ 175,481
1973	1/ 30	5,052/ 31,984	4/ 34	10,031/ 34,179	**40,909/ 351,028**	55,997/ 417,255
1974	1/ 30	398/ 1,917	27/ 204	1,082/ 4,380	**3,871/ 31,045**	5,379/ 37,576
1975	-0-	710/ 3,894	1/ 8	**35,886/ 119,402**	3,648/ 25,778	40,245/ 149,082
1976	7/ 42	**18,886/117,509**	-0-	93/ 333	412/ 3,383	19,398/ 121,267
1977	34/ 279	33,733/257,372	1,528/ 6,014	**1,127,800/4,236,975**	70,167/ 631,916	1,233,262/5,132,556
1978	236/11,031	10,695/ 71,597	45/ 365	**70,080/ 256,708**	19,224/ 144,071	100,280/ 483,772
1979	30/ 346	25,297/167,662	142/ 1,068	**1,945,529/6,713,115**	180,558/1,526,669	2,151,556/8,408,860
1980	10/ 77	22,514/121,500	16/ 133	**154,041/ 506,266**	32,246/ 248,250	208,827/ 876,226
1981	61/ 833	18,133/109,835	485/ 2,174	**1,714,115/6,687,327**	238,393/1,912,968	1,971,187/8,713,137
1982	129/ 1,629	66,781/431,669	92/ 949	**67,523**/ 224,550	63,075/ **571,414**	197,600/1,230,211
1983	14/ (CD)	16,835/ 95,547	54/ 479	**199,794/ 666,357**	27,203/ 241,565	243,900/*1,003,948*
1984	3/ (CD)	29,276/144,046	41/ 412	**89,085/ 319,979**	3,204/ 26,900	121,609/ *491,337*
1985	19/ 121	91,957/499,664	3,210/39,571	**618,222/2,322,644**	11,844/ 100,425	725,252/2,962,425
1986	6/ 64	48,472/278,627	5,052/53,003	**401,755/1,399,956**	11,701/ 93,571	466,986/1,825,221
1987	14/ 118	**31,845**/210,437	2,481/22,283	23,890/ 88,922	28,663/ **221,052**	86,893/ 542,812
1988	5/ 88	9,501/ 58,788	2/ (CD)	6,094/ 21,109	**71,202/ 640,101**	86,804/ *720,086*
1989	1/ (CD)	10,286/ 60,244	72/ (CD)	**52,677/ 181,767**	43/ 276	63,073/ *242,287*
1990	2/ (CD)	17,404/ 76,966	74/ 483	**191,320/ 585,250**	614/ 4,121	209,412/ *666,820*
1991	2/ (CD)	6,408/ 30,207	12/ 70	**359,664/ 992,328**	14,337/ 95,915	380,423/*1,118,520*
1992	-0-	572/ (CD)	1/ (CD)	146/ 490	**181/ 1,633**	900/ *2,123*
1993	2/ (CD)	4,613/ 27,012	119/ 937	**159,159/ 461,911**	970/ 6,607	164,863/ *496,467*
1994	-0-	5,930/ 31,620	993/10,342	**13,200/ 41,574**	32/ (CD)	20,155/ *83,536*
1995	12/ 141	17,642/ 96,224	1,272/ 8,868	**192,098/ 601,532**	474/ 3,344	211,498/ 710,109

Explanatory Notes to Table 9-8:

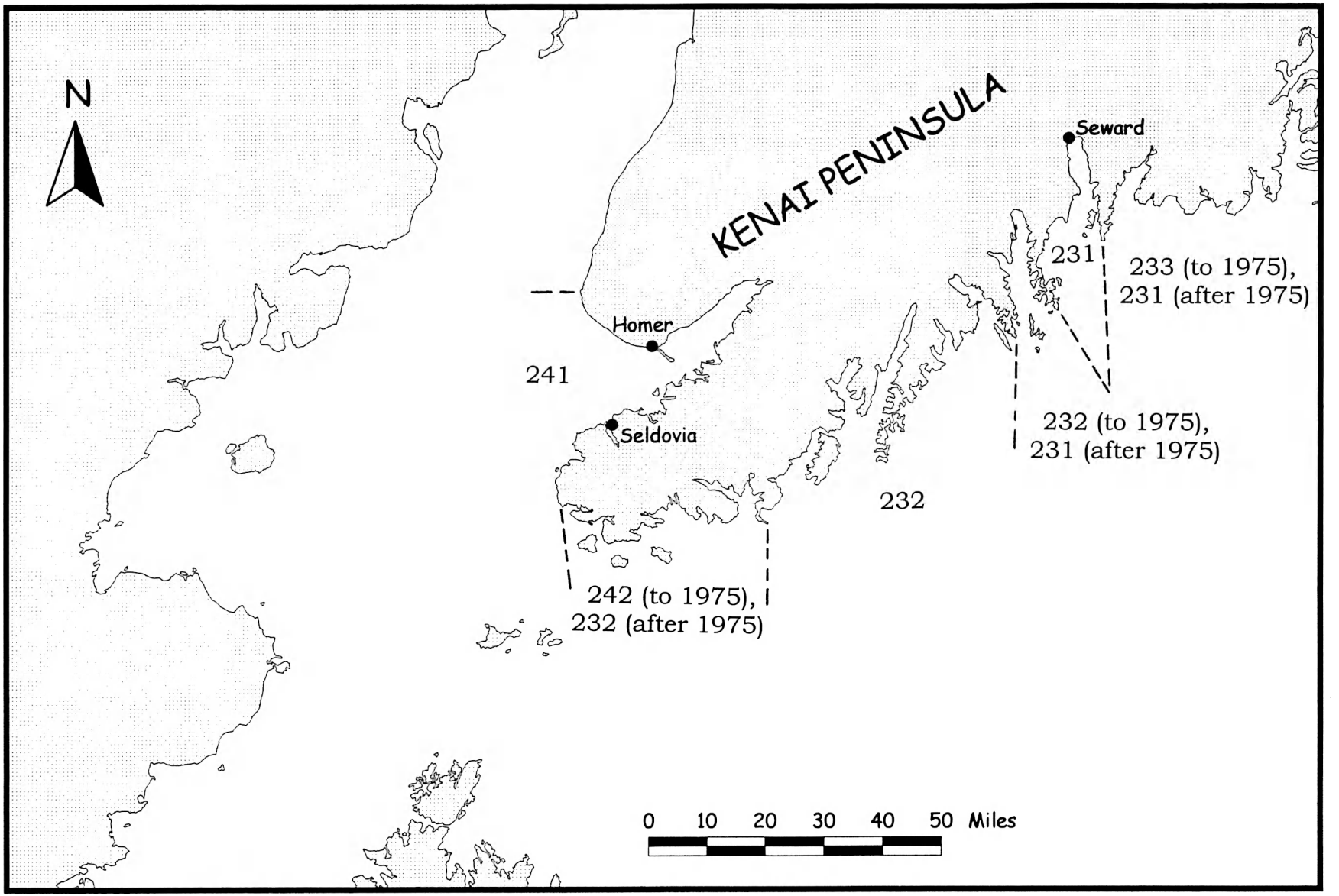
Species Identification: Salmon statistics, over the years, have been tabulated for Area 232; the specific stretch of coastline defined within this statistical area is defined in "Area Identification," below. The three-digit numbers following each species name have been assigned by the ADF&G to identify the various species.

Area Identification: There is a line between the 1973 and 1974 figures, and also between the 1975 and 1976 figures, because of changes in the geographical area in Statistical Area 232. From 1968 through 1973, Area 232 included the stretch of coastline between Gore Point and Aialik Cape. After the 1973 season, the statistical area's eastern boundary was moved west from Aialik Cape to Aligo Point; that action moved Statistical Area 231 (which included Resurrection Bay) west to include Aialik Bay. After 1975, the western boundary of Statistical Area 232 was moved west from Gore Point to Point Adam; after that action, Statistical Area 232 included all of former Statistical Area 242). As a result of this action, post-1975 figures for Area 232 are identical with those for the Outer District. In addition, post-1975 figures (and, to a lesser extent, 1974 and 1975 figures) are not as accurate a guide to park fishing activity as are the 1968-1973 figures.

BOLD numbers indicate the most prevalent species for a given year. Numbers in *ITALICS*, provided in the "total/pounds" column, are less than the total for all salmon species because one or more columns have no data due to confidentiality restrictions.

(CD) – confidential data. When fewer than four permittees fished for a given species in a given year, ADF&G censors harvest data in order to protect the privacy of an individual permittee's harvest. The term "CD", therefore, shows that there were 1, 2, or 3 active permittees.

Source: Herman Savikko (ADF&G, Juneau) letter, June 12 and July 11, 1997.



Map 9-4. Lower Cook Inlet Statistical Areas, 1968-1995

A major management change, inaugurated in 1975, altered the system by which Alaska's salmon have been harvested. The Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission, for the first time, began issuing limited entry permits to potential fishers. That system limited the number of fishers active in any given fishery and thus exerted greater management control. The average annual harvest volume, both on a per-boat and total yield basis, rose after the new system was implemented; increases were seen both in park waters and elsewhere in Lower Cook Inlet. Total harvest volumes in park waters remained relatively high for more than a decade after the limited entry system was implemented. There is no evidence that harvest volumes increased due to the new system; instead, salmon productivity probably rose due to improved stream and harvest management techniques.[72]

Another significant change in the park fishery took place in 1987. Prior to that year, the only approved salmon harvesting methods along the outer coast were by hand purse seines (or "pocket seines") and beach seines; these seines could only be used near the coastline or in shallow waters. In 1987, however, a group of seiners prevailed on the Board of Fisheries to modify the regulations in order to allow the use of power purse seines. These seines were attached to larger boats; they allowed fishers to harvest the resource more efficiently and gave fishers from other areas (where power purse seines had been legalized years before) the flexibility to fish the outer coast's waters.[73]

Changes were also taking place in the Delight and Desire lakes area of Nuka Bay. In 1972, fishers harvested the creek system's first major sockeye run; it totaled 26,100 fish, which was more than three times any previous harvest. After a lull, harvest levels shot up again in 1976. To gain more data about the area's salmon resource, Fish and Game personnel spent the following two summers maintaining a counting weir in the area.[74]

Meanwhile, a new salmon-bearing stream was emerging from the retreating ice of McCarty Fjord. North of Desire Lake, a new lake began to be seen which, as late as 1974, had been covered by a glacier. The lake, variously called Delectable, Delusion, or Ecstacy Lake, first appeared in 1985 or 1986; it has been contributing to Nuka Bay's salmon harvest since the late 1980s, if not before.

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[72] *Ibid.*, 1975, 5.

[73] ADF&G, *Cook Inlet Management Report*, 1972, 5; Jim Rearden interview, February 24, 1997; Joel Moss interview, March 7, 1997; Wes Bucher interview, March 19, 1998.

[74] Wes Bucher interview, February 10, 1997.

Table 9-9. Residence of Commercial Salmon Fishers Active in Kenai Fjords National Park, 1975-1995

The following chart shows the residence of permit holders who actively fished all species of salmon, for commercial purposes only, in the waters of Kenai Fjords National Park (Statistical Area 232) from 1975 to 1995. Note: In 1975 and 1976, Statistical Area 232 extended east to Aialik Cape (and thus included Aialik Bay), but from 1977 through 1995, the coast east of Aligo Point (including Aialik Bay) was in another statistical area.

The areas of residence are defined as follows:

Homer Area = Homer, Anchor Point, Halibut Cove
Seldovia Area = Seldovia, Port Graham, Nanwalek (English Bay)
Seward = Seward (only)
Other = all other locations

	Homer Area		**Seldovia Area**		**Seward**		**Other**		**Total**
Year	number	% of total	number	% of total	number	% of total	number	% of total	number
1975/fishers	0	0.0%	2	25.0%	2	25.0%	4	50.0%	8
fish	*0*	*0.0%*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*10,357*	*25.7%*	*40,245*
1976/fishers	3	20.0%	7	46.7%	4	26.7%	1	6.7%	15
fish	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*12,815*	*66.1%*	*1,975*	*10.2%*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*19,398*
1977/fishers	22	40.0%	20	36.4%	9	16.4%	4	7.3%	55
fish	*609,128*	*49.4%*	*455,764*	*37.0%*	*145,543*	*11.8%*	*22,827*	*1.9%*	*1,233,262*
1978/fishers	10	25.6%	16	41.0%	8	20.5%	5	12.8%	39
fish	*12,090*	*12.1%*	*38,058*	*38.0%*	*46,407*	*46.3%*	*3,725*	*3.7%*	*100,280*
1979/fishers	22	34.9%	23	36.5%	10	15.9%	8	12.7%	63
fish	*878,866*	*40.8%*	*676,727*	*31.5%*	*348,875*	*16.2%*	*247,088*	*11.5%*	*2,151,556*
1980/fishers	20	37.0%	20	37.0%	6	11.1%	8	14.8%	54
fish	*87,926*	*42.1%*	*68,648*	*32.9%*	*24,924*	*11.9%*	*26,756*	*12.8%*	*208,827*
1981/fishers	25	37.3%	19	28.4%	10	14.9%	13	19.4%	67
fish	*880,137*	*44.7%*	*460,062*	*23.3%*	*304,516*	*15.4%*	*326,472*	*16.6%*	*1,971,187*
1982/fishers	15	36.6%	16	39.0%	6	14.6%	4	9.8%	41
fish	*69,068*	*35.0%*	*71,861*	*36.4%*	*37,435*	*18.9%*	*19,236*	*9.7%*	*197,600*
1983/fishers	11	25.0%	17	38.6%	9	20.5%	7	15.9%	44
fish	*72,552*	*29.7%*	*77,292*	*31.7%*	*71,509*	*29.3%*	*21,806*	*8.9%*	*243,886*

Table 9-9. Residence of Commercial Salmon Fishers Active in Kenai Fjords National Park, 1975-1995 (cont.)

	Homer Area		Seldovia Area		Seward		Other		Total
Year	number	% of total	number	% of total	number	% of total	number	% of total	number
1984/fishers	8	25.0%	14	43.8%	5	15.6%	5	15.6%	32
fish	*20,336*	*16.7%*	*67,495*	*55.5%*	*5,116*	*4.2%*	*30,849*	*25.4%*	*121,606*
1985/fishers	10	28.6%	10	28.6%	10	28.6%	5	14.3%	35
fish	*196,418*	*27.1%*	*207,355*	*28.6%*	*242,621*	*33.5%*	*78,858*	*10.9%*	*725,252*
1986/fishers	13	32.5%	10	25.0%	9	22.5%	8	20.0%	40
fish	*162,407*	*34.8%*	*119,472*	*25.6%*	*118,564*	*25.4%*	*66,543*	*14.2%*	*466,986*
1987/fishers	9	28.1%	8	25.0%	9	28.1%	6	18.8%	32
fish	*13,083*	*15.1%*	*18,893*	*21.7%*	*45,882*	*52.8%*	*9,035*	*10.4%*	*86,893*
1988/fishers	13	41.9%	7	22.6%	9	29.0%	2	6.5%	31
fish	*53,311*	*61.4%*	*15,785*	*18.2%*	*17,204*	*19.8%*	*502*	*0.6%*	*86,802*
1989/fishers	2	20.0%	3	30.0%	3	30.0%	2	20.0%	10
fish	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*63,006*
1990/fishers	22	46.8%	8	17.0%	6	12.8%	11	23.4%	47
fish	*71,150*	*34.0%*	*39,923*	*19.1%*	*18,124*	*8.7%*	*80,217*	*38.3%*	*209,412*
1991/fishers	18	51.4%	6	17.1%	5	14.3%	6	17.1%	35
fish	*210,197*	*55.3%*	*76,524*	*20.1%*	*9,301*	*2.4%*	*84,401*	*22.2%*	*380,421*
1992/fishers	2	40.0%	1	20.0%	1	20.0%	1	20.0%	5
fish	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*327*
1993/fishers	10	47.6%	5	23.8%	3	14.3%	3	14.3%	21
fish	*79,373*	*48.1%*	*7,732*	*4.7%*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*164,861*
1994/fishers	1	16.6%	2	33.3%	3	50.0%	0	0.0%	6
fish	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*20,123*
1995/fishers	5	38.5%	3	23.1%	4	30.8%	1	7.7%	13
fish	*127,984*	*60.5%*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*38,495*	*18.2%*	*n.d.*	*n.d.*	*211,498*

Source: State of Alaska, Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission, "Salmon Seine Statistics by Residence City Areas, 1975-1995" (Project Number 97146), September 8, 1997. n.d.=no data.

In 1985, the Delight-Desire area supported a substantial coho (silver) salmon harvest for the first time. Coho salmon, historically, had never been numerous along the Kenai's southern coast; since 1954, harvest levels had never exceeded 2,000 and had exceeded 500 only three times. But in each of the three years from 1985 through 1987, more than 2,000 salmon were harvested in the Outer District, many of them from the Delight-Desire lake system.[75]

As a final note pertaining to the park's salmon fishery, the creation of a limited entry permit system under the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (and the statistical data bases that were a by-product of that commission) allowed park managers to accurately recognize, for the first time, the residence of park fishers. As noted above, anecdotal evidence has suggested that the first commercial salmon fishers in the fjords hailed from Seward. Cook Inlet fishers did not sail east of Gore Point; as one longtime Homer fisherman phrased it, there was "kind of a gentlemen's agreement in the early days not to invade each other's territory."[76] As early as the late 1940s, however, Fish and Wildlife Service records were noting that a Port Graham fisherman was active in Nuka Bay. Fisheries personnel stationed in park waters during the mid-1950s suggested that most Nuka Bay salmon fishers were either from Lower Cook Inlet or from locations away from the Kenai Peninsula, while most Aialik Bay fishermen were based in Seward. Biologists were also quick to note that many salmon fishers passed through the area and had valid permits to fish in park waters; some of those people, however, did not fish there.[77] No statistical evidence to prove or disprove these generalities was available until 1975 (see Table 9-9).

Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission statistics suggest, fairly conclusively, that a majority of the salmon fishers active in Statistical Unit 232 (which includes most of the park's waters) during the 1975-1995 period have been Lower Cook Inlet residents. Not surprisingly, those fishers have been responsible for a majority of the salmon harvested. In 1977, for example, 76.4% of the fishers harvested in Statistical Area 232 hailed from Lower Cook Inlet communities; these fishers were responsible for 86.4% of the fish harvest. In 1980, Lower Cook Inlet fishers comprised 74% of all park fishers and brought in 75.0% of the area's salmon harvest; and in 1983, Lower Cook Inlet residents accounted for 63.6% of all park fishers and 61.4% of the salmon harvest. The only years in which Lower

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[75] Tom Schroeder interview, April 18, 1997; Wesley A. Bucher and Lee F. Hammarstrom (ADF&G), *Lower Cook Inlet Annual Finfish Management Report*, 1995, 22-23.

[76] Joel Moss interview, March 7, 1997.

[77] Jim Rearden interview, February 24, 1997; Tom Schroeder interview, April 18, 1997.

Cook Inlet fishers did not account for a majority of park-area fishers *and* a majority of the salmon harvested in the park was in 1975 (when few statistics were available) and in 1987. Seward-area fishers have generally accounted for between 10 and 35 percent of all park-area fishers, and 10 to 35 percent of the total salmon harvest. Fishers residing away from the Kenai Peninsula have usually accounted for 5 to 25 percent of all park fishers, and 5 to 25 percent of the total salmon harvest.

The Halibut and Cod Fisheries

The waters off the Alaska coast have been attracting commercial cod and halibut fishers for more than a century. In 1884, not long after the first salmon cannery commenced operations, San Francisco-based schooners began to exploit Alaska's cod banks. Two areas were visited: the southeastern Bering Sea and "the southern shore of Alaska" (probably the Gulf of Alaska). In the years that followed, cod boats returned to these areas to an increasing degree. The cod harvest continued to increase until about 1915.[78] The cod banks, however, were miles offshore. The schooners, in most cases, had little or no contact with Alaskans and made few if any port calls.

Another bottomfish, the Pacific halibut, was first harvested in 1888 off the Washington coast. At first, vessels remained close to Puget Sound. Industry development, moreover, proceeded slowly; as late as 1900, the total West Coast harvest was less than 10 million pounds. (From 1930 to 1970, by contrast, the west coast harvest varied from 44 million to 75 million pounds.) Then, in the late 1890s, some of the Seattle-based vessels began fishing the waters of Southeastern Alaska each fall. At first, growth was slow because of the difficulties in getting ice, the relatively high transportation costs, and the long distance to the large volume markets in the East. Soon after the turn of the century, however, Seattle began to assume significance as a halibut center, largely based on the increasing supply of Alaska halibut.[79]

During the new century's first decade, the heightened demand for fresh fish caused the Pacific halibut fleet to move northward in search of new fishing grounds. Fisheries interests recognized that halibut and cod thrived on many of the same banks. A chart issued in 1905 of the North Pacific fishing banks noted that the principal halibut and cod banks were in Alaska waters. The three largest banks, where "codfish and small

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[78] Albert C. Jensen, *The Cod* (New York, Thomas Y. Crowell, 1972), 40-41.

[79] F. Heward Bell, *The Pacific Halibut, the Resource and the Fishery* (Anchorage, Alaska Northwest, 1981), 76-77.

halibut are numerous and red rock fish fairly abundant," were of particular note. Those three, in rank order, were Baird Bank, in Bristol Bay (9,200 square miles); Portlock Bank, northeast of Kodiak Island (6,800 square miles); and Slime Bank, in the Bering Sea (1,445 square miles).[80] In all probability, little commercial bottomfish harvesting took place in Central or Western Alaska during this period; in the Seward area, the only known commercial activity was an occasional boatload of halibut that was sold directly to local residents.[81]

By 1910, the southeastern Alaska halibut and cod fisheries were in sufficient difficulty that Governor Walter E. Clark conducted a fact-finding mission on the subject. He then wrote to Charles Nagel, the U.S. Secretary of Commerce and Labor. In that letter, he noted that "In the last few years the halibut and cod industries have experienced a large growth, and the fresh fish industry ... has become highly important to the people of Alaska and of the states." He was alarmed, however, "that some of the halibut fishing banks [i.e., those in southeastern Alaska] are seemingly becoming depleted." He therefore urged that the steamer *Albatross* be ordered to Alaska waters that year to study the problem. In response, the U.S. Fish Commission agreed to send a boat that would "prospect for cod and halibut banks in the waters adjacent to Kodiak Island during the season."[82]

Commercial halibut harvesting in the Gulf of Alaska may have begun as early as 1911, primarily as a result of overfishing in southeastern Alaska waters.[83] By November 1913, further development was in the offing. A news article stated that "A fleet of halibut fishing schooners are outfitting [in Seattle], preparatory to sailing for Alaska to test reported halibut banks off the entrance to Resurrection Bay and Prince William Sound. Should the halibut grounds prove satisfactory, the fleet will continue operations there."[84]

Bottomfish harvesting in the Gulf of Alaska continued, probably in small but increasing volumes, for the next several years. In June 1916, a fishing boat from the new Kenai Fishing and Trading Company saltery on

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[80] *Seward Weekly Gateway*, December 23, 1905, 2. Twenty years later, a more specific description of the Portlock Banks was provided. These banks, "reputed to the largest in the world," extended for 7,000 square miles in the 40-70 fathom range and for 10,000 square miles in the 40-125 fathom range. *Seward Gateway*, December 5, 1925, 24.

[81] *Seward Weekly Gateway*, October 21, 1904, 2.

[82] *Ibid.*, February 26, 1910, 4; June 4, 1910, 3.

[83] *Seward Gateway*, July 20, 1927, 1.

[84] *Seward Daily Gateway*, November 4, 1913, 1.

Renard Island (near Seward) "located five banks of cod on its first trip out, and returned to Seward with 500 cod fish for salting."[85]

That fall, industry prospects brightened when the San Juan Fishing and Packing Company agreed to build a cannery in Seward. Plant managers were primarily interested in canning salmon, but they also announced that they would freeze halibut and black cod, along with other species. The new plant was a boon to the local halibut industry; two halibut boats were part of the company-owned fleet, and the company also agreed to buy halibut (and other species) from independent fishers. By March 1917, even before the plant had been completed, the *San Juan* was already hard at work; the boat caught 176,000 pounds of halibut within 50 miles of Seward and headed south to the company's Seattle plant to process the catch.[86] These halibut, in all probability, were caught either on the Portlock Bank or in Seward Gully, both of which are directly south of the present-day park.

The San Juan's cold storage facility was completed during the summer of 1917. Largely as a result, Seward became an important halibut port. As F. Heward Bell has noted, it was a convenient port to dispose of "broken trips," those catches too small or with fish to old to be run east to the distant railhead ports. Seward also gained prominence as a reoutfitting center—that is, a place for repairs, spare parts, and provisions. The Portlock Bank and other areas in the Gulf of Alaska, by this time, were becoming major bottomfish harvest areas, and Seward was a welcome nearby port for the Seattle-based fleet. The annual number of halibut processed in Seward during this period remained small.[87]

Seward commercial interests, always hungry for a new economic base, publicized the new industry and tried to lure fish-laden boats—and fisheries capitalists—to the port. Seward, at the time, was booming because it was the terminus of the government railroad, then under construction, and residents hoped that the town's growth potential would lead to additional fisheries facilities. The problem, from Seward's point of view, was that there was little market for Pacific bottomfish on the West Coast. Many halibut boats, therefore, headed straight from the fishing banks to Prince Rupert, B.C., from which Canadian National trains sped shipments to eastern markets. Others, aiming for the frozen-fish market, were willing to drop off their fish at an Alaska port; citing a lack of cold

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[85] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 185.

[86] *Ibid.*, 186.

[87] Bell, *The Pacific Halibut*, 90. The March 8, 1922 issue of the *Seward Gateway* stated that "halibut schooners are starting out from southeast Alaska for the season's fishing, and soon Seward will see a number of these vessels calling in for gear and supplies."

storage capacity, however, they usually took their catches to Juneau, Ketchikan, and elsewhere.[88]

Seward commercial interests waged a campaign that stressed the port's unique location and growth potential. The *Pathfinder*, a Pioneers of Alaska publication, hyperbolically proclaimed that

> Seward is the nearest port to the most extensive halibut banks in the world.... The halibut is found on many banks, and is especially plentiful on the famous banks forty miles out from Resurrection Bay.... This great industry is in its infancy, but will be developed to the full in due time, with the result that Seward is destined to be within the next few years the fishing center of Alaska.... Our halibut have already found the Eastern market by the hundreds of thousands of tons. A marked increase each year is shipped East.... To illustrate the extent and richness of the "Halibut Pay Streak," ... boats have repeatedly brought into Seward catches ranging from 100,000 to 125,000 pounds of halibut each, within a period of from six to nine days. This illustration is not an exception. It is the average. It is usual for boats of from 15 to 20 tons to catch their capacity in one day after arriving at the banks.[89]

Advocates also tried to convince fisheries capitalists to invest in new cold storage and transportation facilities. A 1922 *Seward Gateway* article intoned that the lack of additional storage space prevented Seward from profiting from the increasing harvest. If one or more plants could be built, it stated,

> this town will become the biggest fishing center on the Pacific Coast.... There would be fish for at least ten big cold storage plants on this bay. This means that a couple of hundred fishing boats with crews ranging from three to twenty men would be stationed here.... [But] cold storage plants here must be first assured of transportation [to the] coast cities of the States.... There is no use lying down on the job because

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[88] U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, *Alaska Fishery and Fur-Seal Industries*, 1921, 42; *Seward Gateway*, January 22, 1922, 2; Barry, *Seward History, II*, 188. The only time that Seward halibut landings rose to a significant level during this period was in June 1919, when a strike shut down the Prince Rupert halibut industry. *Seward Gateway*, June 21, 1919, 4.

[89] "A Few Facts About Seward, Alaska," *The Pathfinder* 1 (June 1920), 2.

> some efforts have failed in the past. Keep trying and we are bound to succeed.[90]

Still others claimed that all Seward needed to become a major halibut port was corrective legislation. A 1922 editorial recognized why the industry had been slow to develop and posed a question that called for a legislative response:

> It seems strange to the layman that fishing boats will fish on these banks at the very entrance to Resurrection Bay and take their catches [elsewhere]. On first thought it appears that the reason for this is that there is no market here for the fish. True, there is one cold storage plant and it cannot handle but a very small part of the catch.... Why are there not more cold storage plants on Resurrection Bay? [Because] cold storage fish ... cannot compete with fresh fish. There is one thing that will make the cold storage business profitable ... and that is a closed season on halibut fishing.... The cold storage fish will have a market when fresh fish can no longer be had.... When this becomes the case it is safe to say then Seward will become one of the principal fishing centers on the Alaskan coast.[91]

The editorial writer's wish, in fact, soon became reality. Because the abundance of halibut had been declining for years, in both the U.S. and Canada, industry representatives requested international control of the fishery. The two countries drafted a convention in 1922, and on March 2, 1923, representatives from both countries signed the Convention for the Preservation of the Halibut Fishery of the North Pacific Ocean. The convention created the International Fisheries Commission, the forerunner of today's International Pacific Halibut Commission. One of the convention's main provisions was for a three-month closed season; the first closure began on November 15, 1924.[92]

The international treaty, and the three-month closure, did not result in the construction of new cold storage plants in Seward. This period, to be sure, witnessed dramatically increased utilization of existing facilities; this increase, however, was largely coincidental to the imposition of the

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[90] *Seward Gateway*, February 15, 1922, 2.

[91] *Ibid.*, April 7, 1922, 2.

[92] International Pacific Halibut Commission, *The Pacific Halibut: Biology, Fishery, and Management*, Technical Report No. 22 (Seattle, the author, 1987), 34; U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, *Alaska Fishery and Fur-Seal Industries*, 1930, 62. The IFC became the IPHC in 1953.

seasonal closure. Instead, three other factors are cited in attracting increasing halibut volumes to Seward. The first event, in 1922 or 1923, was an increase in capacity in the San Juan plant's cold storage facilities. (As noted above, the plant was primarily a salmon cannery when it opened in 1917. After the 1921 season, however, canning ceased, and the canning floor was probably converted to a halibut cold storage area soon afterward.) In 1923, the plant instituted two other attractions to lure nearby halibut boats; it installed fueling facilities and raised the prices it paid for halibut. The plant made no secret of its intention to "get boats to offload here that normally go to Sitka and Ketchikan." The newspaper crowed that "there is no reason why Seward should not become the center of the halibut fishing industry, as the banks are right against the mouth of the harbor and extend westward for a hundred miles."[93]

The plan worked. In 1923, the San Juan plant announced that it was shipping between 1.5 million and 1.75 million pounds of frozen halibut per annum; a year later, the plant received some 2.5 million pounds of halibut. Halibut volume remained high for the next several years; in 1927, the plant again received 2.5 million pounds.[94] These higher volumes, to a large part, were in part due to San Juan's heightened customer-service orientation; a far more important variable, however, was the sharply increasing level of halibut harvesting. (John P. Babcock, of the International Fisheries Commission, stated in July 1927 that "the amount taken from the banks near Kodiak has tripled in the last three years.") In addition, Seward had the nearest cold-storage plant to the rapidly increasing halibut fishery off the Alaska Peninsula. In 1924, relatively few halibut were being caught in the Gulf of Alaska; the Central Alaska harvest was just one-seventh of that in Southeastern Alaska. But by 1925, halibut fishing was being carried on "as far west as Unimak Island," and in 1927, "fish came into Seward from as far away as 800 miles to the westward"—that is, from the seas surrounding Unalaska Island. Although many of the halibut from this newly-exploited fishery found their way to the San Juan plant, local sources continued to state, conclusively, that the Gulf of Alaska halibut fleet landed the lion's share of its catch in Prince Rupert.[95]

During this period, most of those that fished for halibut in the local waters were Americans; Canadians fished there as well, though on a smaller

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[93] *Seward Gateway*, June 27, 1923, 1.

[94] Barry, *Seward History, Vol. II*, 88, and vol. III, 33; *Seward Gateway*, July 18, 1923, 4.

[95] U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, *Alaska Fishery and Fur-Seal Industries*, 1924, 137; *Seward Gateway*, November 19, 1925, 2; December 5, 1925, 24; July 20, 1927, 1; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 33.

scale. (Fishermen of other nationalities were not prohibited from harvesting in the area, but did not do so.)[96] Prior to 1929, no comprehensive statistics are available on the specific nature of area fishing (see Table 9-10). The Seward newspaper, however, routinely jotted down details about the local halibut fleet when they emptied their holds at the San Juan dock. To judge by news accounts, few if any boats off-loaded halibut in 1921, but during the spring and summer of 1922 scores of notices appeared. (Typical entries noted that "the halibut boat *Constitution* arrived in port Sunday with a load of halibut, the cargo of 12,000 pounds being taken by the San Juan Company," and "the halibut boat *Gladstone*, Capt. Pete Peterson, arrived in port with 28,000 lbs. of halibut, sold to San Juan."[97]

As has been noted in Chapter 6, one of the most prominent early halibut fishermen was "Herring Pete" Sather. The *Seward Gateway* was reporting on his fishing activities by June of 1922. In late July, this entry appeared:

> The halibut boat *Rolfe* [sic] arrived in port Sunday with 15,000 pounds of fish which were sold to the San Juan Co. The *Rolfe* is one of the luckiest boats in the business, bringing in a full load each trip. The boat is registered at 6 tons, but Capt. Pete generally piles on a ton or two more for good measure.[98]

Notices about Seward halibut processing were published throughout the 1920s.[99] Pete Sather's interest in the halibut fishery, however, appears to have tapered off after his marriage, in May 1924, to Josephine Tuerck. After that date, his primary responsibilities centered on the couple's Nuka Island fox farm. He probably never abandoned halibut fishing, however; in 1946, Josephine noted that he "is forever ... fishing halibut for market."[100]

Sather and the other halibut-boat captains sold their product for 10 to 11 cents per pound during the early to mid-1920s. The evidence gathered during this period provides few details about where the halibut were harvested. Most were probably caught out on Portlock Bank. But most of

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[96] *Seward Gateway*, July 20, 1927, 7. The only known instance during the 1920s of foreign craft off-loading halibut in Seward was when a Japanese boat arrived in July 1929. *Ibid.*, July 22, 1929, 5.

[97] *Ibid.*, April 24, 1922, 1; May 23, 1922, 4.

[98] *Ibid.*, June 24, 1922, 1; July 25, 1922, 1. Also see Barry, *Seward History, II*, 188.

[99] See, for example, the following *Seward Gateway* issues: May 10, 1927, 3; May 16, 1927, 2; June 14, 1927, 5; July 18, 1929, 7.

[100] Sather, "The Birds and the Bears," *Alaska Sportsman*, September 1946, 33.

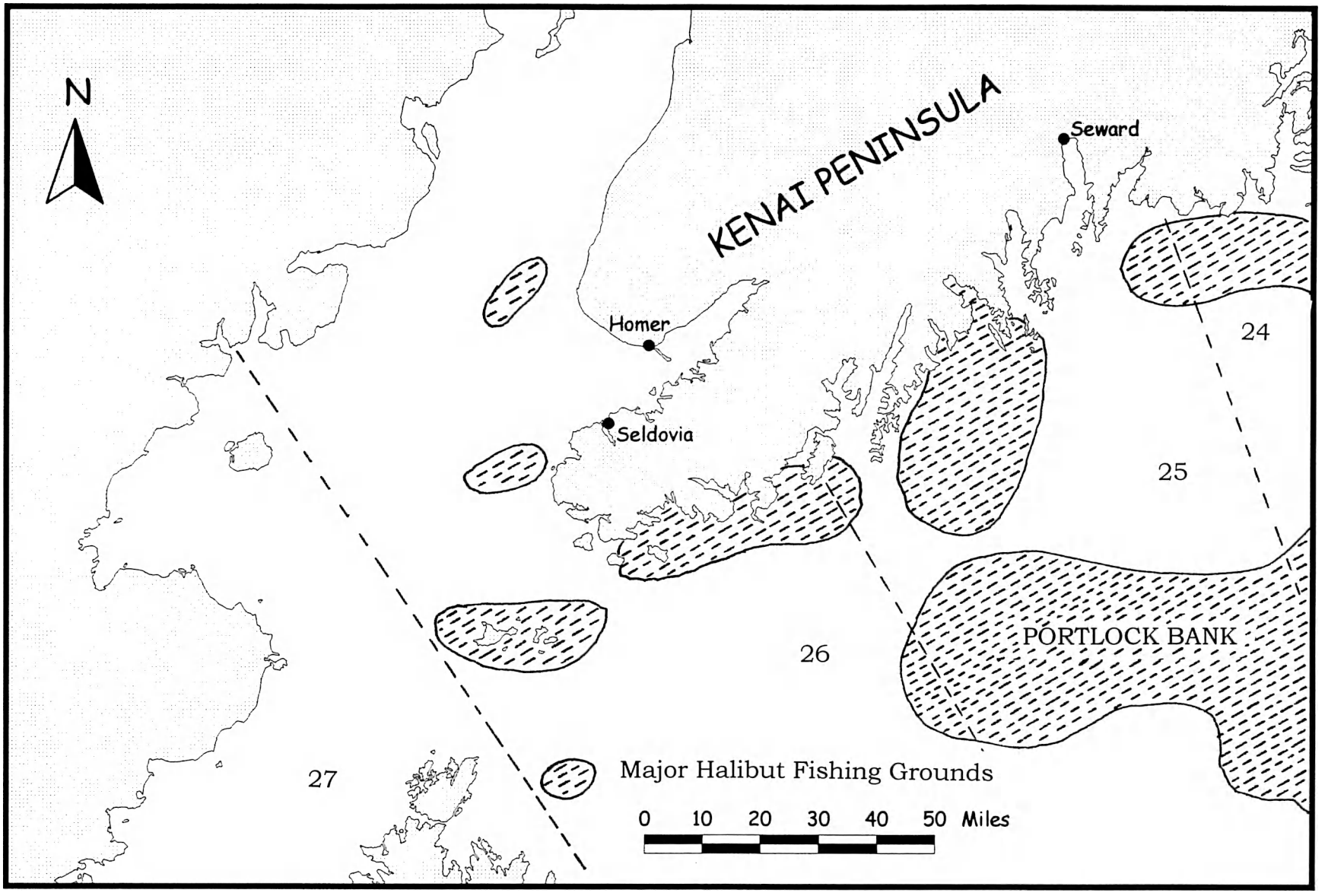
Table 9-10. Annual Halibut Harvest in Statistical Area 25, 1923-1995

Figures provided in the "volume" and "landings" columns are in thousands of pounds of net weight. * - volume has been rounded off to the nearest 10,000 pounds of net weight. m - millions of pounds of net weight.

	Volume of Catch, Area 25			Total for	% of	Area	Landings	% of West
	Canada	U.S.	Total	West Coast	Take	Rank	@ Seward	Coast Total
1923a							1.5-1.75 m	
1924b							2.5 m	
1927b							2.5 m	
1928c							1.0 m	
1929	103	3,204	3,307	56,928	5.8	4/45	1,400	2.4
1930	163	2,479	2,642	49,492	5.3	5/49	1,645	3.3
1931	171	1,948	2,119	44,220	4.8	6/47	1,012	2.3
1932	92	2,935	3,027	44,454	6.8	2/44	52	0.1
1933	89	3,695	3,784	46,795	8.1	1/45	24	0.1
1934	126	3,340	3,466	47,546	7.3	1/41	52	0.1
1935	0	3,465	3,465	47,343	7.3	1/41	17	*
1936	53	3,059	3,112	48,923	6.4	3/41	25	0.1
1937	50	3,892	3,942	49,539	8.0	1/41	6	*
1938	130	3,614	3,744	49,553	7.6	2/41	1	*
1939	62	4,393	4,455	50,903	8.8	2/40	0	0
1940	22	4,354	4,376	53,381	8.2	2/40	1	*
1941	99	3,650	3,749	52,231	7.2	3/40	0	0
1942	35	4,501	4,536	50,388	9.0	1/41	0	0
1943	168	2,814	2,982	53,699	5.6	5/40	0	0
1944	218	2,935	3,153	53,435	5.9	4/41	0	0
1945	601	3,920	4,521	53,395	8.5	2/43	0	0
1946	661	3,129	3,790	60,266	6.3	3/44	0	0
1947	708	1,167	1,875	55,700	3.4	11/43	0	0
1948	453	3,596	4,049	55,564	7.3	4/44	69	0.1
1949	592	2,197	2,789	55,025	5.1	7/44	483	0.9
1950	700	3,677	4,377	57,234	7.6	3/44	182	0.3
1951	871	4,334	5,205	56,045	9.3	2/43	506	0.9
1952	1,064	4,051	5,115	62,262	8.2	2/47	49	0.1
1953	1,770	3,252	5,022	59,837	8.4	2/47	8	*
1954	1,665	3,752	5,417	70,583	7.7	4/46	0	0
1955	1,357	3,836	5,193	57,521	9.0	2/44	9	*
1956	1,200	3,142	4,342	66,588	6.5	4/43	0	0
1957	2,140	3,719	5,859	60,854	9.6	1/44	16	*
1958	1,961	3,663	5,624	64,508	8.7	2/45	51	0.1
1959	2,486	3,951	6,437	71,204	9.0	1/49	124	0.2

	Volume of Catch, Area 25			Total for	% of	Area	Landings	% of West
	Canada	U.S.	Total	West Coast	Take	Rank	@ Seward	Coast Total
1960	2,344	2,879	5,223	71,605	7.3	2/51	162	0.2
1961	2,590	3,441	6,031	69,274	8.7	1/49	87	0.1
1962	2,006	3,562	5,568	74,862	7.4	2/52	619	0.8
1963	2,274	3,555	5,829	71,237	8.2	2/53	1,005	1.4
1964	2,474	2,471	4,945	59,784	8.3	2/53	0	0
1965	2,647	3,145	5,792	63,176	9.2	1/53	666	1.1
1966	3,191	3,403	6,594	62,016	10.6	1/53	1,167	1.9
1967	1,172	4,130	5,302	55,222	9.6	1/52	1,238	2.2
1968	1,175	2,431	3,606	48,594	7.4	4/53	381	0.8
1969	1,089	3,524	4,613	58,275	7.9	1/54	294	0.5
1970	1,169	3,845	5,014	54,938	9.1	1/54	4,046	7.4
1971	1,331	3,139	4,470	46,654	9.6	1/53	3,611	7.7
1972	1,367	3,267	4,634	42,884	10.8	1/56	5,056	11.8
1973	708	2,435	3,143	31,740	9.9	1/51	3,972	12.5
1974	84	1,594	1,678	21,306	7.9	1/52	1,930	9.1
1975	416	1,773	2,189	27,616	7.9	1/52	3,936	14.3
1976	393	1,344	1,737	27,535	6.3	3/51	3,418	12.4
1977	231	1,287	1,518	21,880*	6.9	2/54	3,149	14.4
1978	282	1,518	1,800	22,000*	8.2	2/53	3,396	15.4
1979	174	1,947	2,121	22,540*	9.4	1/53	2,638	11.7
1980	380	1,796	2,176	21,870*	9.9	1/50	1,443	6.6
1981	0	3,155	3,155	25,720*	12.9	1/50	2,334	9.1
1982	0	3,308	3,308	29,010*	11.4	1/51	3,234	11.1
1983	0	2,339	2,339	38,380*	6.1	2/55	3,987	10.4
1984	0	3,601	3,601	44,960*	8.0	3/53	2,914	6.5
1985	0	4,496	4,496	56,110*	8.0	2/54	4,081	7.3
1986	0	7,572	7,572	69,620*	10.9	1/53	5,899	8.5
1987	0	5,058	5,058	69,480*	7.3	4/51	4,201	6.0
1988	0	3,994	3,994	74,350*	5.4	4/50	4,530	6.1
1989	0	3,705	3,705	66,930*	5.5	4/52	4,454	6.7
1990	0	4,869	4,869	61,590*	7.9	2/52	5,183	8.4
1991	0	3,315	3,315	57,000*	5.8	5/52	3,283	5.7
1992	0	3,754	3,754	59,900*	6.3	5/52	3,997	6.7
1993	0	3,097	3,097	59,280*	5.2	5/52	2,936	5.0
1994	0	3,884	3,884	54,750*	7.1	3/52	3,896	7.1
1995	0	2,147	2,147	43,890*	4.9	6/52	2,770	6.3

Source: Richard J. Myhre, et. al., *The Pacific Halibut Fishery: Catch, Effort and CPUE, 1929-1975* (Seattle, International Pacific Halibut Commission), 1977, except as noted. Sources for pre-1929 data for Seward landings: a – Barry, *Seward History/II*, 88, b - Barry, *Seward: A History/III*, 33, c – *Seward Gateway*, August 10, 1928, 4.



Map 9-5. Pacific Halibut Statistical Areas

the smaller boats—including Sather's—fished in waters close to the Kenai Peninsula shoreline.[101]

As noted above, the halibut industry, both in the Gulf of Alaska and Seward, grew dramatically during the mid-1920s. In 1927, however, the fishery—and Seward's role in it—took a turn for the worse. That summer, the spectre of overfishing began to rise; the editor of the *Seward Gateway* interviewed the captains of several halibut boats and concluded that the halibut harvests were headed for a crash. The editor stated that "With few exceptions, [the captains] advocate the closing of certain banks, such as ... the Portlock bank.... The fish taken there are all immature and the bulk too small for the market."[102] The number of fish caught in waters off the park coast (in Statistical Area 25, which includes the waters east of Nuka Island and west of Cape Fairfield; see Map 9-5) dropped from 3.3 million in 1929 to 2.1 million in 1931. In addition, a new cold storage plant was built at Portlock, which was more than 100 miles closer to the Alaska Peninsula halibut harvesting areas than Seward. A third factor working against Seward's role was that the Seattle-based halibut fleet, during this period, was converting from sail power to gasoline power; the new technology shortened the time needed between Seattle and the fishing grounds.[103]

For all of these reasons, the number of halibut processed at the San Juan plant dropped from 2.5 million in 1927 to 1.0 million a year later. The annual total rebounded to 1.4 million in 1929 and 1.6 million in 1930, but in 1931 it sank back to 1.0 million. In order to profitably operate, the plant had to process at least a million halibut per year. The deepening depression, however, promised further cutbacks in the halibut harvest, so the plant closed after the 1931 season. For the next 18 years, Seward fish plants played an insignificant role in halibut processing and shipping; for at least part of that period, Seattle was the home port for most of the U.S. halibut fleet that fished in the waters of Central and Western Alaska.[104]

The late 1920s and early 1930s were also declining years for the Central Alaska cod industry. The Alaska cod industry, as noted above, reached its peak about 1915. After that point, however, the lack of a West Coast market began to hamper industry growth. A more sinister factor working

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[101] *Seward Gateway*, July 25, 1922, 1; USBF, *Alaska Fishery and Fur-Seal Industries*, 1920, 61; Tracee Geernaert to Linda Cook letter, November 24, 1992, in "Halibut" folder, KEFJ HRS Collection, NPS; Seward Shea interview, March 7, 1997.

[102] *Seward Gateway*, July 20, 1927, 1, 7.

[103] *Ibid.*, November 19, 1925, 2; Bell, *The Pacific Halibut*, 76.

[104] *Seward Gateway*, August 10, 1928, 4; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 33; Bell, *The Pacific Halibut*, 76.

against the industry was the persistent claim of Atlantic cod dealers that the Pacific species was "an inferior fish that will not keep." Perhaps because of that claim, the industry appears to have declined during the 1920s; more important to the Alaska economy, the territory never gained a strong foothold as a processing venue. The San Juan cold storage plant in Seward, as noted above, stated its intention to process cod when it opened in 1917, and the Portlock facility, which opened in 1927, was built with the express purpose of processing cod from the Aleutian Islands. At both locations, however, cod appears to have been a minor player. In May 1927, the *Seward Gateway* reported a proposal for a new cold storage plant that would process "cod and halibut for the North Dakota market." That plant, however, was never built, and cod processing appears to have largely disappeared from the scene after that date.[105] By 1933, the Alaska cod industry was operating at a "low level." Annual fisheries reports published in later years indicate that cod, over the years, supported a small, intermittently industry. Harvesting areas included southeastern Alaska, the Bering Sea, the Unalaska area and the Shumagin Islands. These areas were all quite distant from Seward and had no economic impact on local fisheries operations.[106]

Although Seward, during the 1930s and 1940s, did not play a significant role as a halibut-processing site, the waters south of Seward witnessed a boom in halibut harvesting. As noted in Table 9-10, the harvest in Statistical Area 25 (that is, the waters just south of the present-day park) rebounded from 2.1 million in 1931 to 3.7 million in 1933. In 1933 the waters south of the park, for the first time, recorded the highest harvest of any West Coast statistical area; an astonishing 8.1 percent of all West Coast halibut were caught there.[107] The halibut harvest, contrary to the dire predictions of the later 1920s, did not crash. Instead, it remained high for years afterward. From 1933 to 1950, for example, more than three million pounds of halibut were annually harvested from Area 25, with just three exceptions. Area 25 continued to be one of the five highest-ranked West Coast harvest areas in all but two years during that 18-year period, and in five of those years—1933, 1934, 1935, 1937, and 1942—the area was the highest-ranked West Coast harvest area. During

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[105] Jensen, *The Cod*, 40-41; *Seward Gateway*, November 19, 1925, 2; May 27, 1927, 3.

[106] U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, *Alaska Fishery and Fur-Seal Industries*, various years, 1940 through 1956; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 212. The Seward Fish and Cold Storage plant, which opened in 1948, apparently processed black cod as well as other species. There is no evidence, however, that a significant number of cod were processed during its decade-long period of operation.

[107] The International Fisheries Commission divided the West Coast halibut fishery, for statistical purposes, into 60-mile-wide zones. Some 60-odd zones were delineated between Northern California and the Bering Sea; in any given year, between 40 and 55 of those zones reported halibut harvests.

this period, between 5 and 9 percent of all West Coast halibut were typically caught in Area 25.

During the 1950s and 1960s, halibut fishing in Statistical Area 25 continued at a high, sustained level. Harvests during that 20-year period ranged from 3.6 million pounds, in 1968, up to 6.6 million pounds, in 1966. Area 25's halibut resource led the West Coast industry; the area was ranked among the top five statistical areas every year between 1950 and 1970, and it was responsible for between 6.5 and 10.6 percent of the entire West Coast harvest during that period.

During the 1970s, harvest levels in Area 25 dramatically fell—most harvests during the 1974-78 level were below two million pounds per year—but they then rebounded. From 1981 to 1994, harvests consistently exceeded three million pounds per year, and in 1986, longliners harvested a record 7.5 million pounds of halibut. Throughout this period, Area 25 continued to rank among the top five statistical areas. The area, each year, was responsible for at least five percent of the West Coast halibut harvest, and in 1981, this area alone accounted for a remarkable 12.9 percent of the entire coast's halibut harvest. Figures from the International Pacific Halibut Commission are unequivocal in their conclusion that Area 25, over the past 67 years (the period for which records have been kept) has been by far the most productive West Coast halibut harvesting area.

Since the 1940s, the Seward halibut processing industry has undergone dramatic change. As noted above, an insignificant number of halibut were processed in Seward from 1932 to 1947. (During the 1932-1936 period, most of the Alaska halibut fleet processed its catch in Seattle; in later years, Prince Rupert and southeastern Alaska ports processed an increasing number of fish due to their ability to command higher prices and their closeness to the fishing grounds.[108]) The opening, in 1948, of William Pege's Seward Fish and Cold Storage Company brought a brief revival of halibut processing. The company processed 69,000 pounds of locally caught halibut that year. It then shipped out frozen halibut steaks on the Alaska Railroad to Anchorage; the halibut was then air freighted to U.S. destinations.[109] The following year, the cold storage plant took in almost 500,000 pounds of halibut; shipping arrangements changed, and for the first time since 1930, ocean-going vessels tied up in Seward to load fish. The volume of halibut processed remained high in 1950 and 1951, but in 1952 the volume fell to just 49,000 pounds of halibut, and during

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[108] Bell, *The Pacific Halibut*, 76.

[109] USF&WS, "Central District Annual Report," 1948, 30; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 211.

the 1953-1957 period an insignificant number of halibut were processed in Seward.[110] It should be noted that even in 1949 and 1951, during the height of this short-lived boom, the Seward plant processed less than one percent of all West Coast halibut, even though Area 25 in those years yielded between 5 and 10 percent of the West Coast halibut harvest.

In 1958, Seward Fish and Cold Storage leased its plant to the Seattle-based Halibut Producers Co-operative (HPC), and for the next five years it processed a modest volume of halibut. (Most halibut boats bypassed Seward because, as noted in a 1962 letter from the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, "new modern fishing boats now transfer their catches to larger cities in the south."[111]) The volume in 1963 shot up to more than a million pounds; this was highest total that Seward had witnessed since 1931. The HPC facility, along with other Seward fish plants, was wiped out in the 1964 earthquake. In 1965, however, the plant was rebuilt, and the following year the volume exceeded the 1963 total.[112]

In 1969, HPC sold out to a Petersburg-based consortium that renamed the plant Seward Fisheries, Inc. In the year that followed, the plant processed more than four million pounds of halibut—by far the largest annual volume for a Seward plant. Ever since that time, Seward Fisheries has been a major West Coast halibut processor. It has processed more than two million pounds of halibut in every year except one, and in both 1972 and 1973 it was the top halibut plant on the West Coast.[113] Since 1970, furthermore, the plant has consistently processed between five and fifteen percent of the West Coast halibut harvest. Of those that brought their catch into the Seward plant, Canadian vessels accounted for more than 30 percent of the volume during the 1970-1972 period. That proportion dropped soon afterward, however, and by the 1976-1978 period, Canadian vessels were contributing less than 20 percent of the Seward plant's fishing volume. Due to international treaty provisions, Canadian vessels no longer fished Central Alaskan waters after the 1980 season; Canadian ship captains, therefore, stopped off-loading halibut in Seward.

State fisheries experts have given varying opinions regarding the amount of commercial halibut fishing that has taken place near the Kenai Fjords National Park shoreline. Ted McHenry, an ADF&G sport fishing specialist who lived in Seward from 1969 to 1988, noted that the commercial halibut

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[110] USF&WS, "Central District Annual Report" for 1949 (p. 12) and 1950 (p. 6); Barry, *Seward History, III*, 212.

[111] Letter in "Seward" folder, Bureau of Fisheries annual report, "Miscellaneous" file, ca. 1960s, RG 370 (NOAA), NARA ANC.

[112] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 295.

[113] *Ibid.*

people "stayed way out there ... the only time they were forced close to the beach was in storms." But Tom Schroeder, an ADF&G commercial fisheries biologist based in Homer from 1974 to 1989, stated that smaller halibut boats fished in several places along the park shoreline. Specifically, he stated that halibut boats fished near the south end of Nuka Bay, near Pederson Lagoon (in Aialik Bay) and James Lagoon (on the east arm of Nuka Bay). He agreed with McHenry, however, that the vast majority of the halibut boats fished outside (i.e., on the Portlock Bank), "especially in more recent years." Sportsmen, Schroeder added, are now responsible for most of the halibut harvest from waters near the park shoreline.[114]

Other Commercial Fisheries

Herring

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, both Natives and non-Natives harvested Cook Inlet herring on a small-scale, subsistence basis. Then, in 1914, the commercial herring fishery began at Halibut Cove in Kachemak Bay.[115] The industry grew slowly until 1917, when the U.S. government successfully introduced a new method of processing herring, called scotch curing. Largely because of the new curing method, the industry boomed in 1918; there were 36 Alaska herring plants, 25 of which were located in Central Alaska (either in Cook Inlet, Prince William Sound, or Kodiak-Afognak islands). Fifteen of the 36 plants were in Kachemak Bay (see Table 9-11a).[116] The industry retrenched the following year. The number of plants fell sharply, although the value of the herring harvest fell only modestly.

From 1919 to 1926, herring was an Alaska growth industry. The number of plants rose from 11 to 61, and in Lower Cook Inlet, the number of plants rose from a mere handful to 32. Revenues rose accordingly; on a territory-wide basis, the herring harvest rose from $1.6 million to more than $3.5 million. Plants during this period were scattered all over the lower Inlet; as noted in Table 9-11b, most plants were located in Halibut Cove, but they were also sited in Portlock, Port Graham, Seldovia, and elsewhere.

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[114] Ted McHenry interview, April 2, 1997; Tom Schroeder interview, April 18, 1997.

[115] Alaska Department of Fish and Game, "Cook Inlet Herring Report," 1980, p. 1, in ADF&G Collection; *Seward Gateway*, June 10, 1919, 3.

[116] U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, *Alaska Fishery and Fur-Seal Industries*, 1918, 61-62.

Table 9-11a. Herring Harvesting in Lower Cook Inlet, 1918-1930

	Number of Plants		Harvest Yield (millions of dollars)	
	C AK	AK (all)	SC/AK	AK
1918	25	36	$0.748	$1.819
1919	6	11	0.451	1.676
1920	7	14	0.490	1.303
1921	8	13	0.838	0.934

	Number of Plants			Harvest Yield (millions of dollars)		
	LCI	C AK	AK (all)	SC/C AK	C AK	AK (all)
1922	n.a.	15	22	$1.650	$1.741	$2.329
1923	n.a.	12	19	0.800	0.936	1.602
1924	15*	22	32	1.342	1.496	2.458
1925	19*	40	54	1.960	2.174	3.852
1926	32*	45	61	1.421	1.512	3.554
1927	29*	48	68	1.149	1.213	2.850
1928	28*	37	65	0.396	0.558	3.098
1929	1*	7	30	0.013	0.154	2.794
1930	0	6	39	0.166	0.415	2.133

Guide to Abbreviations:

* - The location of plants in Lower Cook Inlet is shown in the table below.
AK - Alaska (entire territory)
C AK - Central Alaska (Cook Inlet, Prince William Sound, and Kodiak-Afognak)
LCI - Lower Cook Inlet (Kachemak Bay and vicinity)
SC – scotch cure (method of curing herring, introduced to Alaska in 1917)

Source: U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, *Alaska Fishery and Fur-Seal Industries*, annual issues.

Table 9-11b. Location of Lower Cook Inlet Herring Plants, 1924-1930

	Halibut Cove	Homer Spit	Port Graham	Portlock City	Sel-dovia	Tutka Bay	Float-ing	Total
1924	10		1		3	1		15
1925	6	1	1	1	6	1	3	19
1926	17	1	1	1	4	1	7	32
1927	12		1		6	1	9	29
1928	19		1		2		6	28
1929							1	1
1930								0

Source: U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, *Alaska Fishery and Fur-Seal Industries*, annual issues.

After 1926, the herring industry crashed even more quickly than it had grown. Overfishing was the cause. By 1929, the number of plants in Alaska was half of what it had been three years earlier, and revenues were slashed by one-third. In Lower Cook Inlet, fishers responded to the depleted stocks by heading west, and by 1928, Inlet-based fishers were harvesting Aleutian stocks. That however, was merely a temporary expedient, and it merely delayed the inevitable crash. That crash, as it turned out, was nothing less than catastrophic; of 32 herring plants that operated in 1926, only one remained in 1929. That last plant was gone by 1930. The herring fishery in Lower Cook Inlet never recovered. For years afterward, locals reminisced about the "good old herring days at Seldovia."[117] Beginning in the late 1930s, occasional harvests were made in the Seldovia area and in Kachemak Bay, chiefly for local use and for halibut bait. It remained a minor industry until the late 1960s.[118]

In Resurrection Bay, interest in the herring fishery appears to have begun in 1914. A newspaper item that November stated that "two tons of the delicious little fish known as herring sardines were caught Saturday.... The extraordinary run of the fish proves fully that there would be big money in the fishing business here."[119] Little more was heard of the herring resource until 1920. Perhaps caught up in the flurry of activity taking place in Lower Cook Inlet, Seward interests publicized the local resource. That January, the *Gateway* editorialized that:

> The herring industry ... bids fair to almost outrival that of salmon in the near future. The waters of and contiguous to Resurrection Bay, close to the thriving town of Seward, are pronounced by experts and those who have closely investigated that field to offer unequalled inducements to those who may contemplate engaging in herring fishing. The fact remains that fish are Alaska's greatest and most valuable asset.

The *Pathfinder*, an arm of the Pioneers of Alaska, weighed in with similar hyperbole. It noted that "the Gulf of Alaska is literally alive with herring, a fish that bids fair to bring fame to this coast and much added prosperity to the port of Seward."[120] Despite that boosterism, Seward had no herring

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[117] *Ibid.* for 1928 (p. 285) and 1929 (p. 297); *Seward Gateway* for July 30, 1927, 5 and May 7, 1935, 4.

[118] U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, "Cook Inlet Annual Report," 1939, p. 10, in Box 8; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "Cook Inlet Annual Report," 1955, p. 36, in Box 9; both in Fisheries District Annual Reports, ca. 1925-56, RG 370, NARA ANC.

[119] *Seward Gateway*, November 16, 1914, 1.

[120] *Ibid.*, January 16, 1920, 2; "A Few Facts About Seward, Alaska," *The Pathfinder* 1 (June 1920), 2.

plants, and Resurrection Bay had little or no herring harvesting, for the remainder of the decade.

Events in Prince William Sound brought renewed attention to Resurrection Bay's herring resource. The Sound was a major herring harvest area during the 1930s; in the peak year of 1936, the herring reduction facility at Port Ashton (near Latouche) processed over 56,000 tons of herring.[121] Harvesting continued in the Sound for the remainder of the decade. Herring, during this period, was valuable, but not as a food fish. Instead, the harvested product underwent a reduction process from which oil and meal were made.

During the 1940s, attention in the herring fishery shifted over to Resurrection Bay, largely because fishery interests had fully explored Prince William Sound and sought new sites. The northern part of the bay—in the immediate Seward area—recorded a commercial harvest in 1941. Activity then ceased until 1944, when harvests were recorded both in the Seward area and at the bay's southern end. The area at the extreme southwestern end of the bay—between Aialik Cape and Bulldog Cove—was harvested in 1945. Herring harvesting in that area did not take place again for years afterward. But other parts of southern Resurrection Bay (i.e., areas south of Caines Head) were harvested off and on until 1959; in 1955, moreover, the present-day park coastline between Aialik Cape and Gore Point recorded a small (128,000-pound) harvest. The amount harvested in and around Resurrection Bay, to be sure, was not as large as that recorded in Prince William Sound; the bay's yield in the most productive years (1946 and 1955) did not exceed 7,500 tons, and the harvest total for the entire 16-year period was less than 25,000 tons.[122] The harvests, however, reaffirmed that commercial quantities of herring were available in waters both in and adjacent to the future Kenai Fjords National Park.[123]

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[121] Chris Wooley, *Final Report of the Exxon Cultural Resource Program*, unpub. mss., c. 1992, 99, in KEFJ HRS Collection, NPS.

[122] Bernard E. Skud, Henry M. Sakuda and Gerald M. Reid, *Statistics of the Alaska Herring Fishery, 1878-1956*, USF&WS Statistical Digest 48 (Washington, GPO, 1960), 5; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "Central District Annual Report," 1946, pp. 15-19, in Box 6; USF&WS, "Cook Inlet Annual Report," 1955, p. 36, in Box 9; both in Fisheries District Annual Reports, ca. 1925-56, RG 370, NARA ANC; ADF&G, "Cook Inlet Herring Report," 1980, p. 1.

[123] As if to demonstrate that the 1955 harvest in the present-day park waters was not an isolated event, a Fish and Wildlife Service observer reported on May 13, 1959 that "unusually heavy herring spawning was observed in the Nuka Island area...." Longtime Nuka Island resident Pete Sather noted in 1959 that "[this] is one of the best spawning years seen in about 30 years." Optimistic observations that year were also made in Kachemak Bay, but no commercial harvests were made in either area. USF&WS, "Cook Inlet Annual Report," 1959, p. 36, in Box 9, Fisheries District Annual Reports, ca. 1925-

Herring harvesting activity at the southern end of Kenai Peninsula remained at a standstill from 1960 until 1969, when the fishery was reopened due to increased Japanese demands for herring and herring roe. Harvests for the first year or two took place primarily in Halibut Cove and the Seward Boat Harbor. By 1972, however, the search for herring resulted in expeditions to Nuka Passage and to Aialik, Two Arm, Thunder, Black, Nuka, Yalik, and other bays in the present-day park.[124] Almost 700,000 pounds (350 tons) of herring was harvested in park waters that year (see Table 9-12); the following year, the herring harvest totaled more than 770,000 pounds (385 tons). Much of this harvest was processed at the Seward Fisheries plant. In 1974, most of the area's herring fishing took place on the west side of Cook Inlet; the results were disappointing, and the Cook Inlet fishery—which, as in previous decades, provided consistently smaller returns than the Prince William Sound fishery—was closed because the resource had been exhausted.[125]

For more than a decade, no commercial herring fishing took place in or near park waters. Then, in 1985, commercial harvesting began again, although on a smaller, more restrictive scale than before. Again, much of the herring harvest was processed in Seward. Commercial production continued each year until 1988. Since then, the park's herring fishery has been inactive. Seward fish plants, however, have benefited in recent years by processing harvests from neighboring districts.[126]

Shrimp

Kenai Peninsula's shrimp fishing industry has been active for more than fifty years. Back in 1935, the Seward newspaper noted that Resurrection Bay shrimp prospecting had been "carried on some years ago, and a small quantity of commercial size was found, but not in sufficient number to justify engaging in the business." Commercial operations stayed away from Resurrection Bay until the late 1950s.[127] West of the park, the first commercial shrimp harvest in Cook Inlet took place in Kachemak Bay in 1939. Thereafter, the industry remained small. From 1949 through

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56, RG 370, NARA ANC.

[124] ADF&G, "Annual Management Report, Cook Inlet," 1970, 31, 109, 111; Tom Schroeder interview, April 18, 1997; Henry Munson interview, April 2, 1997; Joel Moss interview, March 7, 1997.

[125] ADF&G, "Cook Inlet Herring Report," 1980, p. 1; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 295.

[126] Schroeder interview; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 367.

[127] *Seward Gateway*, April 18, 1935, 2. Mary Barry, in Volume III of her *Seward History* series (p. 237), noted that in March 1951 "a haul of shrimp" was harvested in Resurrection Bay and brought into Seward. The harvest brought "expectations of a new industry," but nothing came of those expectations until the late 1950s.

Table 9-12. Statistics on Park-Area Fishing, 1970-1995 (Non-Salmon Species)

Year	Herring (230, 234) Area 232 (pounds)	Octopus (870) Area 23 (#/pounds)	Dungeness Crab (910) Area 23 (#/pounds)	King Crab (920) Area 23 (#/pounds)	Tanner Crab (930) Area 23 (#/pounds)	General Shrimp (960) Area 23 (pounds)	Other Species/ Area 23 (pounds)
1970				430/ 4,429	500/ 1,742	2,365	
1971				1,625/17,534	448/ 1,258	13,024	
1972				134/ 1,605	65,486/ 205,659	79,506	
1973	697,988(HB)		260/954	370/ 3,623	333,891/ 852,322	138,999	
1974	773,379(HB)			240/ 1,875	680,935/1,623,306	265,286	
1975					106,614/ 247,919	1,293	
1976				1,191/10,269	49,200/ 129,178	595	
1977			(CD)	776/ 7,465	67,776/ 162,669	26,437	
1978				(CD)	84,249/ 197,411	10,154	
1979				(CD)	(CD)	(CD)	
1980			(CD)	(CD)	81,321/ 186,305*	(CD)	
1981				(CD)	67,047/ 159,451	(CD)	
1982		(CD)	335/685	2,005/14,967	127,333/ 300,843*	(CD)	
1983		19/ 641	(CD)	(CD)	99,195/ 220,211*	36,927*	
1984		(CD)			48,087/ 104,046*	552,136	
1985	(CD/SR)	(CD)			(CD)	(CD)	
1986	(CD/SR)				(CD)	(CD)	
1987	403,110(SR)	(CD)			48,863/ 108,864*	7,292*	Weathervane scal-
1988	(CD/SR)	n.d./1,115			19,227/ 42,080*	(CD)	[lops(850)/1,128
1989						17,482*	
1990						(CD)	
1991		(CD)				(CD)	
1992		(CD)			7,124/ 15,244*	(CD)	[Waste fish/trawl
1993						(CD)	shrimp(101)/(CD)
1994						(CD)	Sea Cucumber
1995						n.d.	(895)/(CD)

Explanatory Notes for Table 9-12:

Area and Species Identification: crab, shrimp, octopus, and miscellaneous-species statistics are maintained for Area 23 (which includes the coastline all the way from Gore Point east to Cape Fairfield during the 1970-75 period and from Point Adam to Cape Fairfield in the 1976-1995 period). Herring statistics, however, are maintained for Area 232 (that is, the coastline between Gore Point and Aialik Cape during the 1968-1973, between Gore Point and Aligo Point during the 1974-75 period, and between Aligo Point and Point Adam during the 1976-1995 period). The three-digit numbers following each species name have been assigned by the ADF&G to identify the various species.

* - numbers and weights are actually for a particular subspecies within the general classification. Most tanner crabs in this category are for biardi tanner crabs (931), and most shrimp in this category are for spot shrimp (965).

(CD) – confidential data. When fewer than four permittees fished for a given species in a given year, ADF&G censors harvest data in order to protect the privacy of an individual permittee's harvest. The term "CD", therefore, shows that there were 1, 2, or 3 active permittees.
(HB) – herring by-products
(SR) – sac roe
n.d. – no data.

Source: Herman Savikko (ADF&G, Juneau) letter, June 12 and July 11, 1997.

1952, for instance, the only Central Alaska shrimp operator harvested the waters of Kachemak Bay; and in 1955, the Fish and Wildlife Service noted that the Cook Inlet shrimp industry was limited to "a very few fishermen in Kachemak Bay."[128]

A major expansion in the Peninsula's shrimp industry took place in 1958. The Fish and Wildlife Service boat *John N. Cobb*, hoping to assist potential fishermen and processors, dragged selected waters of the southern Kenai that summer; waters in or near the present-day park included Nuka Bay, Nuka Passage, and the area surrounding Rugged Island. The agency noted that neither Nuka Bay nor Nuka Passage was on a par with Kachemak Bay. Both, however, were important shrimping areas; Nuka Passage contained pink, sidestripe and coonstripe shrimp, while Nuka Bay yielded pinks and sidestripes.[129] Fishermen that summer brought in 16,300 pounds of shrimp, which were processed at the Seward Fish and Cold Storage (SF&CS) plant.[130]

In response to the new activity, the Halibut Producers Co-op bought a shrimp-peeling machine (to take the shell off) and installed it at the SF&CS plant. Rapid industrial development followed, and by the end of 1959 four additional shrimp peelers had been installed at SF&CS, four at Seward Seafoods, and one at Seldovia. Shrimp that year was taken principally from a small area of Nuka Bay, from the Bear Glacier area of Resurrection Bay, the Kodiak area and Prince William Sound.[131]

For the next several years, the shrimp industry thrived. A December 1961 report on Seward's economic development prospects noted that shrimp was a much needed growth industry in a town where the salmon, halibut and herring industries were all undergoing a serious decline. "In the last 2-3 years," the report stated, "the processing of sea-caught shrimp has come into prominence. There have been 3 shrimp canneries started in the area at this time." One of the canneries was still operating full time, a second operated seasonally, and the third had shut down.[132] In order to

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[128] Roy L. Cole, "Cook Inlet Annual Report," 1939, p. 13, in Box 8; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "Cook Inlet Annual Report," 1955, p. 87, in Box 9; both in Fisheries District Annual Reports, ca. 1925-56, RG 370, NARA ANC; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, *Alaska Fishery and Fur-Seal Industries*, editions of 1949 (p. 50), 1950 (p. 45), 1951 (p. 48), and 1952 (p. 48).

[129] U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "Cook Inlet Annual Report," 1958, pp. 60-61, in Box 9, Fisheries District Annual Reports, ca. 1925-56, RG 370, NARA ANC.

[130] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 237.

[131] ADF&G, *Annual Report* for 1958 (p. 64) and 1959 (pp. 2, 27); Barry, *Seward History, III*, 237.

[132] Seward Redevelopment Committee, "Seward Area Preliminary Redevelopment Plan," December 30, 1961, in "Seward" folder, Bureau of Fisheries Annual Report Files,

sustain operations, the shrimp harvesters had to seek out locations that were increasingly distant from Kachemak and Resurrection bays. It is likely that the park's waters were harvested off and on during the early 1960s. Kodiak Island and other Cook Inlet waters (perhaps Kamishak Bay) were also relied on to an increasing extent during this period. The plants in both Seward and Seldovia remained active through the 1963 season. The March 1964 earthquake, however, destroyed all of the shrimp-processing facilities and killed the industry.[133]

The Cook Inlet shrimp industry did not reawaken until 1968. A total of 26,660 pounds of shrimp was harvested that year; a mere 418 pounds of that came from the waters of the Outer District (i.e., between Point Adam and Aialik Cape). The industry remained small for the next three years (see Table 9-12). From 1972 through 1974, however, the waters between Gore Point and Cape Fairfield yielded more than 75,000 pounds of shrimp each year. (The most productive harvest was in 1974, when shrimp fishers caught more than 265,000 pounds of shrimp.) Yields of this volume apparently injured the resource to such an extent that few shrimp were caught in park waters for the remainder of the decade. During this period, the only Cook Inlet shrimp boats belonged to a Homer-based seafood company. No Seward fishermen participated. The Seward Fisheries plant, however, apparently benefited from the short-lived boom because many of the shrimp were harvested in peelers that had been installed in the facility in 1971.[134]

Since 1980, the shrimp industry has continued its boom-and-bust cycle. Although confidentiality concerns prevent the drawing of an accurate industry description, it appears that the shrimp industry, both in park waters and adjacent areas, boomed between 1982 and 1986, inclusively (see Table 9-13). More than 200,000 pounds of shrimp—primarily pink shrimp—were harvested annually during this period in the Outer and Eastern districts (i.e., between Point Adam and Cape Fairfield). The peak year was in 1984, when the Outer and Eastern districts yielded more than 1.9 million pounds and the area between Gore Point and Cape Fairfield yielded more than 550,000 pounds. Since 1988, the Outer and Eastern districts have yielded fewer than 25,000 pounds of shrimp each year.

Miscellaneous Files, ca. 1960s, RG 370, NARA ANC.

[133] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 237-38; Jim Rearden interview, February 25, 1997; ADF&G, "Cook Inlet Annual Management Report," 1970, 97. Among the major shrimp fishermen at this time were two brothers from Seward, Al and Oral Burch.

[134] ADF&G, Commercial Fisheries Division, "Annual Report, Cook Inlet Area" for 1968 (p. 37) and 1971 (not paginated).

Table 9-13. Shrimp Harvests in Cook Inlet (Outer and Eastern Districts), 1977-1995

Outer Cook Inlet, or Area "G," is comprised of the Outer and Eastern Districts. Harvests are in pounds. Pot shrimp figures are harvests for the given calendar year, while trawl shrimp harvests are for the season beginning in the given calendar year.

The letters "(CD)" indicate that data cannot be supplied because of confidentiality concerns.

Year	Pot Shrimp	Trawl Shrimp
1977	1,776	26,556
1978	10,157	1,245
1979	4,211	0
1980	2,911	4,000
1981	2,031	19,454
1982	2,805	239,584
1983	18,679	760,430
1984	5,504	1,957,959
1985	3,305	421,063
1986	2,967	297,762
1987	12,458	22,231
1988	13,445	4,878
1989	20,500	0
1990	8,853	0
1991	7,315	(CD)
1992	2,804	(CD)
1993	8,356	(CD)
1994	(CD)	32,591
1995	0	(CD)

Source: ADF&G, Division of Commercial Fisheries, *Cook Inlet Area, Annual Shellfish Management Report*, issues of 1992-93 (November 1993, appendices H and J) and 1995-96 (August 1996, pp. 61 and 63).

Most of what has been caught in recent years has been sidestripe shrimp.[135]

Statistics issued by state regulatory authorities provide few clues on shrimp fishing in park waters. Local residents, however, suggest that most activity—for shrimp caught in both trawls and pots—took place in Aialik Bay, with additional activity in Northwestern Fjord and McCarty Fjord. Tom Schroeder, the Homer-based ADF&G biologist, recalled that shrimp trawlers were active in Aialik Bay during the late 1970s and early 1980s. Longtime Seward fisherman Seward Shea recalled that there were "lots of shrimp pots out there." "A few made a living at it," he stated, "but they had to work at it." An NPS report confirms the presence of shrimp pots in Aialik Bay in 1980; a former park employee recalls that recreational fishermen were the primary shrimp pot users, although commercial shrimpers may have been active there as well.[136]

Crab

The first Cook Inlet crab harvest—and one of the earliest Alaska crab harvests—took place in 1920, when the Arctic Packing Company in English Bay put up 75 cases of so-called "spider crabs." That pack was an isolated event; a similar spike in interest took place in 1937, when a Halibut Cove cannery processed king crab. In the late 1940s, Resurrection Bay was the site of occasional dungeness harvests. During the same period, king crab was finally becoming a recognized market commodity, and beginning in 1953 Pacific Coast harvest levels for the species began a long-term growth curve. That growth, however, was not immediately reflected in activities along the Kenai Peninsula. Both Resurrection Bay and Kachemak Bay, though not the coast between them, may have been harvested from time to time; harvest volume, however, remained small. King crab accounted for most if not all crab production during the 1940s and 1950s.[137]

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[135] ADF&G, Commercial Fisheries Division, "Cook Inlet Area, Annual Shellfish Management Report, 1995-96," 61.

[136] Tom Schroeder interview, April 18, 1997; Seward Shea interview, March 7, 1997; Edward C. Murphy and A. Anne Hoover, "Research Study of the Reactions of Wildlife to Boating Activity Along the Kenai Fjords Coastline," final report to NPS, September 1981, 21; Bud Rice interview, January 28, 1998.

[137] "Pacific Canned Crab Pack, 1920," *Pacific Fisherman Year Book* 19 (1921), 93; ADF&G, "Lower Cook Inlet Annual Shellfish Management Report," 1975, 3; USF&WS, "Central District Annual Report," 1948, p. 29; Robert J. Browning, *Fisheries of the North Pacific; History, Species, Gear and Processes*, rev. ed. (Anchorage, Alaska Northwest, 1980), 21.

In 1960, the king crab industry jumped into prominence when 60 boats signaled their interest in the species. During the 1960-1961 season, some four million pounds of crab—far more than ever before—were harvested from the Cook Inlet management district. During that season, Cook Inlet boats made several exploratory fishing trips into Outer District waters, mainly to Port Dick and Nuka Bay. Those trips resulted in an Outer District harvest of 118,067 pounds, about 3.1 percent of the Cook Inlet total (see Table 9-14).[138]

For the next several years, the fortunes of the crab fishery largely paralleled those of the shrimp industry; both remained healthy, although both required increasing effort, as the years wore on, to maintain harvest levels. Outer District king crab harvest levels during both the 1961-62 and 1962-63 seasons exceeded 300,000 pounds; those totals, though record-setting, continued to comprise a small proportion (four to seven percent) of the Cook Inlet harvest total. Crabbers during this period probably exploited the crab population along much of the park coastline. Some of the harvesters lived in Seward: Seward Shea once harvested Dungeness crab in James Lagoon, and Ben Suddath kept crab pots out in Aialik Bay, James Lagoon, and Nuka Bay.[139]

The March 1964 earthquake brought the Kenai Peninsula's crab-harvesting industry to a temporary standstill. Because most of the Kodiak crab fleet had been destroyed, Cook Inlet crabbers headed south and harvested the Kodiak Island resource.[140] Less than a thousand pounds of Outer District king crab, therefore, were harvested during the 1964-65 season. Before long, however, the Kodiak fleet was rebuilt and the Kenai crab industry roared back into prominence. More than 80,000 pounds of king crab were harvested each year during the 1966-67 through 1968-69 seasons, and during the 1967-68 season the harvest exceeded 230,000 pounds—7.4 percent of the Cook Inlet total. Outer District king crab harvests continued at a respectable level until the 1969-1970 season; after that date, however, harvest volumes dropped dramatically. Since 1970, Outer District king crab harvests have exceeded 20,000 pounds only once (during the 1975-76 season); during the same period, the Outer District's contribution to the Cook Inlet harvest, moreover, has never

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[138] Loren B. Flagg (ADF&G), "Cook Inlet Annual Shellfish Management Report; Southern, Outer and Kamishak Districts," 1971, unpaginated. Flagg noted that except for the Barren Islands, the Outer District crab fishery was "primarily a bay fishery with minimal offshore fishery activity."

[139] Seward Shea interview, March 7, 1997. See also Stanek, *Patterns of Wild Resource Use,* 1985, 70.

[140] ADF&G, "Cook Inlet Annual Management Report," 1970, 78.

Table 9-14. Outer District and Eastern District Crab Harvest, 1960-1995

Figures given are in pounds, while percentages are those of the entire Cook Inlet catch. An asterisk (*) signifies a percentage less than 0.1%. Source: ADF&G, *Annual Management Report on Shellfish, 1981-1982*, Appendix, Tables 8 and 15; ADF&G, *Cook Inlet Area, Annual Shellfish Management Report, 1995-96*, 54, 57.

Season	King Crab Harvest, Outer District		Tanner Crab Harvest, Outer and Eastern Districts	
1960-61	118,067	(3.1%)		
1961-62	368,909	(6.6%)		
1962-63	343,505	(4.0%)		
1963-64	59,352	(0.9%)		
1964-65	963	(*)		
1965-66	14,491	(0.4%)		
1966-67	89,510	(3.2%)		
1967-68	239,518	(7.4%)		
1968-69	87,302	(3.4%)	816	(0.1%)
1969-70	73,644	(2.2%)	104,191	(7.9%)
1970-71	9,468	(0.3%)	3,000	(0.2%)
1971-72	12,657	(0.2%)	804,765	(19.0%)
1972-73	1,966	(*)	1,266,937	(16.8%)
1973-74	5,613	(0.1%)	1,891,021	(24.6%)
1974-75	2,035	(*)	656,660	(13.8%)
1975-76	45,293	(1.2%)	850,964	(15.6%)
1976-77	16,384	(0.4%)	824,520	(17.9%)
1977-78	1,350	(0.1%)	502,049	(9.3%)
1978-79	1,753	(0.2%)	694,728	(12.1%)
1979-80	4,871	(0.4%)	595,645	(11.8%)
1980-81	8,022	(0.4%)	463,201	(14.2%)
1981-82	4,143	(0.3%)	524,897	(22.2%)
1982-83	15,280	(1.9%)	682,919	(23.1%)
1983-84	4,504		443,384	(15.8%)
1984-85	No Cook Inlet Harvest		259,083	(8.6%)
1985-86	"		177,041	(6.7%)
1987	"		251,174	(10.3%)
1988	"		168,969	(11.0%)
1989	"		No Cook Inlet Harvest	
1990	"		Closed	(0%)
1991	"		Closed	(0%)
1992	"		53,049	(13.0%)
1993 and 1994	"		Closed	(0%)
1995	"		No Cook Inlet Harvest	

exceeded two percent. Since 1984, the Cook Inlet management district has been off-limits to king crab harvesting.

In 1968, Cook Inlet fishers began to harvest a new crab species: the tanner or snow crab. Commercial interests had ignored the species previously, but as a contemporary management report noted, "due to the shortened king crab season, a tanner crab fishery developed to keep the fishermen and canneries in operation." At first, tanners were an incidental part of the king crab harvest, and tanner harvesters generally avoided the Outer and Eastern districts.[141] Beginning in 1971, however, tanner crabs were no longer considered an incidental species; as a result, harvest levels erupted to new heights. From the 1971-72 season to the 1973-74 season, inclusively, Outer and Eastern district tanner crab harvests exceeded 800,000 pounds annually; the 1972-73 season was particularly productive, with a harvest level that neared 1.9 million pounds. Thereafter, harvest levels dropped, but not dramatically. During the ten-year period between the 1974-75 season and the 1983-84 season, annual harvest levels consistently exceeded 400,000 pounds and occasionally exceeded 800,000 pounds. The industry sputtered along, at a much-reduced level, for a few additional years. Beginning in 1989, however, regulatory authorities closed the Outer and Eastern districts. With a single exception, the tanner crab fishery has remained closed ever since.

Statistical data on the volume of tanner crab harvest levels during the 1972-1988 period (Table 9-15) show that the park's waters have contributed a widely varying amount of the total catch along the southern Kenai Peninsula coast. In 1975, for example, the park was responsible for more than half (56.8%) of the south coast harvest; five years later, however, the park yielded just 5.3% of the south coast harvest. Within the park, the statistics suggest that the eastern part of the park—between the Pye Islands and Aligo Point—is the district that has yielded a majority of the tanner crab harvest during more than half of the years between 1972 and 1988. Areas west of Nuka Island, and the southern portion of Nuka Bay, have been less important tanner crab harvesting areas. Virtually all of the park's waters have yielded tanner crab on at least an occasional basis.

Dungeness crab has also been harvested in park waters, although to a smaller degree than either tanner or king crab. As noted above, the species may have been taken in Resurrection Bay during the late 1940s,

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[141] ADF&G, Commercial Fisheries Division, "Annual Report, Cook Inlet Area," 1968, 37; Donald M. Stewart (ADF&G), Annual Management Report, Cook Inlet-Resurrection Bay Area," 1969, 49; ADF&G, "Cook Inlet Annual Management Report, Part II," 1973, 9.

Table 9-15. Statistics of the Kenai Fjords Tanner Crab Fishery, 1972-1988

Figures are number of tanner crab harvested. Percentages (in parentheses) in the various subareas are of the Statistical Area 232 total, while the percentage in the "Totals for Statistical Area 232" column is of the Statistical Area 23 total.

NOTE: The area enclosed within Statistical Areas 232 and 23 has changed over time. In 1972 and 1973, Statistical Area 232 stretched from Gore Point to Aialik Cape, and Statistical Area 23 stretched from Gore Point to Cape Fairfield. In 1974 and 1975, Statistical Area 232 stretched from Gore Point to Aligo Point, while Statistical Area 23 continued to be the area from Gore Point to Cape Fairfield. After 1975, Statistical Area 232 stretched from Point Adam to Aligo Point, while Statistical Area 23 stretched from Point Adam to Cape Fairfield.

	Subareas Within Statistical Area 232					
Year	-10 (W and SW of Nuka Island)	-15 (W Shoreline of Nuka Island)	-21 (Nuka Bay S of Harrington Point)	-23 (East Arm of Nuka Bay)	-30 (between Pye Ids. and Aligo Point)	TOTALS for Statistical Area 232
1972	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1,660 (29.1%)	0 (0.0%)	4,040 (70.9%)	5,700 (8.7%)
1973	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	650 (2.5%)	0 (0.0%)	25,228 (97.5%)	25,878 (7.8%)
1974	9,440 (3.5%)	0 (0.0%)	31,034 (11.5%)	0 (0.0%)	230,268 (85.1%)	270,742 (39.8%)
1975	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	16,536 (27.3%)	0 (0.0%)	44,001 (72.7%)	60,537 (56.8%)
1976	NO HARVEST IN STATISTICAL AREA 232					
1977	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4,131 (7.8%)	2,705 (5.1%)	46,220 (87.1%)	53,056 (32.6%)
1978	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3,560 (7.0%)	0 (0.0%)	47,105 (93.0%)	50,665 (25.7%)
1979	NO HARVEST IN STATISTICAL AREA 232					
1980	8,386 (84.9%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1,495 (15.1%)	9,881 (5.3%)
1981	13,082 (62.7%)	0 (0.0%)	160 (0.8%)	0 (0.0%)	7,619 (36.5%)	20,861 (13.1%)
1982	6,943 (11.1%)	1,075 (1.7%)	9,068 (14.5%)	3,539 (5.7%)	42,012 (67.1%)	62,637 (49.2%)
1983	7,220 (15.3%)	3,671 (7.8%)	15,981 (33.8%)	0 (0.0%)	20,422 (43.2%)	47,294 (47.7%)
1984	803 (4.3%)	0 (0.0%)	508 (2.7%)	0 (0.0%)	17,176 (92.9%)	18,487 (38.4%)
1985	0 (0.0%)	7,846 (23.3%)	17,537 (52.0%)	0 (0.0%)	8,338 (24.7%)	33,721 (n. a.)
1986	2,720 (19.2%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	11,446 (80.8%)	14,166 (n. a.)
1987	9,299 (20.9%)	13,184 (29.6%)	2,762 (6.2%)	328 (0.7%)	18,583 (41.8%)	*44,484 (40.9%)
1988	3,661 (38.5%)	0 (0.0%)	2,170 (22.8%)	0 (0.0%)	3,683 (38.7%)	9,514 (22.6%)

* 1987 total also includes 328 crabs harvested in Subarea 232-22, which includes the North Arm and West Arm of Nuka Bay. Source: Charles Trowbridge, Shellfish Specialist, ADF&G, Homer.

and early harvests were also recorded in Kachemak Bay. The first known harvests in the park took place in James Lagoon during the early 1960s. In the late 1960s, crabbers increased their interest in the species due to the success of the fishery in California, Oregon, and Washington. As a result, harvests over the next few years continued in Kachemak Bay, while newly harvested areas included Homer Spit, Seldovia, and Port Graham. By 1975, Bluff Point (between Anchor Point and Homer) had become the largest Cook Inlet harvest area. Harvests in and around the park, however, have been sporadic. In both 1968 and 1969, a small Outer District harvest was recorded. Since then, commercial dungeness harvests along the stretch of coastline between Gore Point and Cape Fairfield have been recorded only five times. Each of those harvests took place between 1973 and 1983, inclusive; so far as is known, all of the harvests were minor, none exceeding one thousand pounds per year.[142]

Miscellaneous Species

Several fish and shellfish species have been harvested for only short-term periods in and around the present park. Scallops, for example, came under scrutiny in the late 1960s, when scallop beds were discovered in the Gulf of Alaska. In 1968, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game brought in a New England scallop vessel. The vessel collected some 50,000 pounds of scallops and brought them to the Halibut Producers Co-op plant in Seward. The success of the venture brought several New Bedford, Massachusetts fishing companies to the area. They were so successful that the Seward plant, by November 1968, had processed more than a million pounds of scallop meat. Further increases took place in 1969, and the Seward Fisheries plant also began processing scallops. The industry, however, lasted only until the mid-1970s before exhausting the resource. Beginning in 1983, a revival in Cook Inlet scallop harvesting took place. Most of that activity, however, was limited to the area surrounding Augustine Island, on the west side of Cook Inlet; the Outer District witnessed scallop harvesting only in 1987, and then to only a minor degree (see Table 9-12).[143]

Clams and octopus have also been harvested in the vicinity of the park. In 1925, a clam fishery was located in Resurrection Bay. Before long, the federal government had established regulations on its use, and a Stanford

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[142] Stewart, "Annual Management Report, Cook Inlet-Resurrection Bay Area," 1969, 3; ADF&G, "Cook Inlet Annual Management Report," 1970, 30; ADF&G, "Lower Cook Inlet Annual Shellfish Management Report," 1975, 10.

[143] Alaska Northwest Publishing, *The Milepost*, editions of 1969 (p. 265) and 1975 (p. 390); ADF&G, "Lower Cook Inlet, Annual Shellfish Management Report" for 1973 (p. 19) and 1995-96 (pp. 24, 64); Barry, *Seward History, III*, 295.

University professor named F. W. Weymouth had investigated the beds' economic possibilities. So far as is known, however, the clam resource was not commercially developed. No significant clam resources are known to exist within the present park boundaries.[144]

Of more recent vintage, octopus has been harvested in Area 23 (i.e., the stretch of coastline between Gore Point and Cape Fairfield), as well as elsewhere in Cook Inlet. Since relatively few people have harvested this resource, few statistics are available. Statistics show, however, that harvests were recorded during eight of the eleven years between 1982 and 1992. Octopus has not been fished for its own sake; instead, those seeking groundfish, tanner crab, and other species have caught the species incidentally.[145]

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[144] U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, *Alaska Fishery and Fur-Seal Industries*, editions of 1925 (p. 76) and 1927 (p. 141).

[145] ADF&G, "Lower Cook Inlet, Annual Shellfish Management Report, 1995-96," pp. 34-35.

Map 10-1 **Historic Sites-Recreation/Tourism**

Chapter 10. Recreation and Tourism

Early Recreational Trends

Before the Klondike gold rush began, there was little pressure on Alaska or Yukon game resources except in the vicinity of widely dispersed mining camps and cannery sites. The gold rush, however, lured tens of thousands of people northward. By 1900, Alaska had more than twice the population than it had had in 1890; its non-Native population, moreover, grew more than 750 percent during the same ten-year period.[1]

The Lure of the Kenai Peninsula Gamelands

As a direct result of the gold boom, market hunters and individual prospectors fanned out across Alaska in search of game. The publicity that accompanied the gold rush also attracted trophy hunters, few of whom had visited Alaska previously. On the Kenai Peninsula, the Hope-Sunrise area had supported a growing population since 1894, and hunters were active along the Kenai coast during the mid- and late 1890s. As a result, the wildlife inevitably began to suffer. Dall De Weese, a hunter and travel writer, was able to count 500 sheep within six to eight miles of a spot in the Kenai Mountains in 1897; four years later, however, the number of animals had drastically declined. Similarly, hunter Andrew J. Stone noted in 1900 that "the Kenai Peninsula ... has been prolific in animal life but there are so many sportsmen now coming in that the large game is suffering quite a slaughter." (One author felt that non-resident sportsmen were a major culprit; although the game laws "allowed them to kill only two moose, three sheep, three bear, etc., [they] would kill all the animals they could lay their eyes on.")[2] Caribou were particularly vulnerable. Market hunters during the early 1900s exterminated the species in the Kachemak Bay area; in the years that followed, hunters were so successful in their endeavors that the last caribou were eliminated from the Kenai Peninsula about 1913.[3]

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[1] Morgan Sherwood, *Big Game in Alaska; A History of Wildlife and People* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1981), 26.

[2] Sherwood, *Big Game in Alaska,* 26-27; Chris Wooley, *Final Report of the Exxon Cultural Resource Program,* unpub. mss., c. 1992, 120; Chris C. Shea, "Game and Hunting on the Kenai Peninsula," *Alaska-Yukon Magazine,* July 1911, 26.

[3] Ronald T. Stanek, *Patterns of Wild Resource Use in English Bay and Port Graham, Alaska,* ADF&G Technical Paper #104 (1985), 75; n.a., "Big Game on the Kenai Peninsula," *The Pathfinder of Alaska* 1 (June 1920), 4; ADF&G, "Survey-Inventory Progress Report," 1969, 3.

By 1905, both the Klondike gold rush and the Hope-Sunrise excitement had passed their peak, and as a result, pressure on the Kenai Peninsula game populations began to diminish. The Kenai, moreover, gained increasing fame as a sport-hunting destination during the years following the gold rush; by 1911, one source noted that it had "come to be regarded as the greatest game country in the possession of the United States."[4] Its popularity stemmed from its accessibility, the variety of local megafauna (specifically moose, sheep, bear, and goat), and the existence of many trophy-size animals.[5]

The gamelands, located in the hills and flatlands of western Kenai Peninsula, were reached via Kenai during the gold rush period. By 1905, however, construction of the Alaska Central Railroad had proceeded to the point that Seward became the primary entrepôt to the gamelands. Thereafter, most hunters who planned a Kenai Peninsula hunt sailed to Seward where they met a guide. They then took the train north to Kenai Lake, after which they sailed the length of the lake and floated down the Kenai River to the gamelands. As noted in a contemporary article, hunters looking for moose headed most often to Skilak Lake, Kenai Lake, Kenai River, [Lower] Russian Lake, the Chickaloon Flats, or "Kusiloff Lake." Sheep hunting areas included Sheep Mountain, False Creek, Stetson Creek, Skilak Lake, and Tustumena Lake. Goat hunters headed to the eastern peninsula, near Spencer and Bartlett glaciers, and both black and brown bears were scattered about the moose and sheep hunting country.[6]

By 1910, hunters throughout the world had heard about the Kenai Peninsula gamelands, and each year thereafter a smattering of hunters arrived in Seward. Some came for the spring bear hunt, while others arrived to take advantage of the fall moose and sheep hunt. The sportsmen hailed from all over the United States and from foreign countries as well, particularly from Europe.[7] The number who arrived each year was fairly small—usually just 10 or 15 parties totaling 25 or 30 hunters—but their wealth, their influence, and their penchant for publicizing their adventures via books and articles played a large role in broadcasting the Kenai's game resources.[8]

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[4] Madison Grant as noted in Sherwood, *Big Game in Alaska*, 31; Chris C. Shea, "Game and Hunting on the Kenai Peninsula," *Alaska-Yukon Magazine*, July 1911, 24.

[5] Alfred H. Brooks, Preface to G. C. Martin, B. L. Johnson and U. S. Grant, *Geology and Mineral Resources of Kenai Peninsula, Alaska* (Washington, GPO, 1915), 13.

[6] Shea, "Game and Hunting on the Kenai Peninsula," 24; n.a., "Big Game on the Kenai Peninsula," *Pathfinder* I (June 1920), 4.

[7] Barry, *Seward History, I*, 28; *Seward Daily Gateway*, March 11, 1914, 1; *Seward Gateway*, December 5, 1925, 8.

[8] Shea, "Game and Hunting on the Kenai Peninsula," 27; *Seward Gateway*, December

The Kenai Peninsula gamelands were essentially unregulated until May 1908, when Congress passed (and President Roosevelt signed) a law providing for major revisions to the Alaska Game Law of June 7, 1902. The 1908 law mandated that all Alaska hunting guides be licensed; in addition, the law recognized both the popularity and the fragility of the Kenai gamelands when it demanded that all Kenai Peninsula sport hunters be accompanied by a licensed guide. No other Alaska hunting grounds were singled out with this requirement. The law helped ensure the continuity of the Kenai game resource.

One beneficial effect of the 1908 law was that it brought forth a small corps of locally based guides, who gained fame (and some fortune) through their guiding efforts. By 1911, ten of Alaska's fifteen guides listed a Seward address. (The other five lived in Kenai.) Well-known guides living in or near Seward included Andrew Simons, Charles Emsweiler, Ben Sweazey, Bill De Witt, and Andrew Berg. Most if not all of these guides earned the respect of men who had hunted trophy animals throughout the world.[9] Another guide, who joined the ranks during the 1920s, was Luke Elwell. The Seward-bred guide lived in town for more than a decade; then, in 1939, he and his wife Mamie built a lodge at Upper Russian Lake and operated it for the next twenty years. The lodge was (and is) the first permanent habitation north of the present-day park boundary; it is also the largest structure between the park boundary and the Kenai River.[10]

One site along the hunters' route became a point of interest for tourists. Roosevelt, a station stop on the east side of Kenai Lake, had long been a transfer point and roadhouse for hunters heading west to the game country. Then, in August 1923, Nellie Neal announced that she had purchased the roadhouse. Neal, a former market hunter and cook in the railroad construction camps, soon married a Seattle electrician named William B. Lawing. The new Ms. Lawing, hoping to cash in on the expected boom in tourist travel on the recently completed railroad, cleaned out a building that was located in the narrow strip between the lake and the railroad right-of-way. Then, according to a local news report, she

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5, 1925, 8.

[9] Shea, "Game and Hunting on the Kenai Peninsula," 25, 27; *Seward Daily Gateway*, September 2, 1913, 1. Some hunters had few expectations of the local guides but were pleasantly surprised at their experience. Sir Robert Harvey, in his *Five Weeks in Alaska; Diary of a Trip to the Kenai Peninsula, September, 1913* (unpub. mss., p. 4, at PABC) noted that "I was greatly struck with my guide Andrew Simons, who I at once determined would be an excellent companion. [My companion's] guide Charles Emsweiller [sic] also appeared an excellent man, both in fact very superior to what I anticipated."

[10] *Seward Gateway*, August 11, 1928, 3; May 2, 1935, 1; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 272.

"placed her entire exhibit of fine Alaskan skins and furs on exhibit." The stop, which was renamed Lawing, became increasingly well-known; thousands of Alaska tourists (and residents) stopped there during the 1920s and 1930s.[11]

Seward Area Land Reservations

During the first quarter of the twentieth century, the federal government—specifically, the Interior and Agriculture departments—reserved land along the Kenai Peninsula's southern coastline. These actions may have prevented a broad range of development actions on the lands in question. Most of these withdrawals were the manifestation of events taking place away from southcentral Alaska. The reservations, however, were temporary, and they had a minor if not insignificant impact on Seward-area land use development. They have been presented in this chapter because the Interior Department has reserved several large blocks of Kenai Peninsula land in recent years; each of these actions, including the reservation that eventually resulted in Kenai Fjords National Park, was made to enhance recreational opportunities and preserve non-economic values.

The first agency to reserve a large area along Alaska's southeastern coastline was the Interior Department's Bureau of Forestry. In August 1902, President Theodore Roosevelt had proclaimed the establishment of the Alexander Archipelago Forest Reserve. The Bureau of Forestry administered this area, which comprised a portion of what is now known as Tongass National Forest. Roosevelt, well known as a conservationist, chose William A. Langille to head the reserve. Langille established a reserve headquarters in Wrangell, although he later moved to Ketchikan.

In 1904 and 1905, Langille made several long trips, at the behest of his Washington superiors, to inspect either recently withdrawn areas or areas proposed for withdrawal. One of those trips, beginning in September 1904, took him to Prince William Sound, where he made an examination the area's forest resources. He continued on to Seward, then headed overland to Kenai. He eventually wound up in Seldovia, where he boarded a coastal steamer and sailed back to Resurrection Bay.[12]

Langille, among his duties, was asked to evaluate the idea of a Kenai Forest Reserve. Those whom he encountered during his sojourn had

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[11] *Seward Gateway*, August 2, 1923, 1; August 25, 1923, 1; September 10, 1923, 1; Nellie Neal Lawing, *Alaska Nellie* (Seattle, Seattle Printing, 1953), 185-190, 196.

[12] Lawrence W. Rakestraw, *A History of the United States Forest Service in Alaska* (Anchorage, Alaska Historical Commission, 1981), 16, 18, 37.

mixed feelings about the proposal. A few recognized the importance of the forestry movement, and others (particularly along the railroad corridor) were opposed to the proposal, but most were indifferent. Langille himself reflected those sentiments; he noted that "The existing forest reserve law ... is too restricting and in a measure unjust to so new a country...." For that reason, he hoped that land would still be available for settlement in any new reserves. Given that caveat, Langille recommended the creation of a reserve that would encompass most of the northern and central Kenai Peninsula; specifically, he recommended that the reserve include the entire peninsula north of a line that connected Cape Puget (40 miles southeast of Seward) with "Coal Inlet" (Kachemak Bay).[13]

There was no immediate response to Langille's proposal. The Bureau of Forestry, meanwhile, underwent major structural change. In February 1905, the Bureau became part of the Agriculture Department; a month later, the bureau's name changed to the U.S. Forest Service; and in 1907, the agency changed the name of its forest reserves to national forests.[14] Historian Lawrence Rakestraw noted that soon after the establishment of the new agency,

> there came a flurry of activity within the Forest Service regarding new reserves.... The Alaska reserves came up for consideration, and by March [1907] the Forest Service had decided to create new reserves, both in southeastern Alaska and in the Prince William Sound area.

President Roosevelt responded to that activity by proclaiming the Chugach National Forest on July 23, 1907. The forest, at this time, comprised just 4,960,000 acres, more than a million acres smaller than today; its western boundary snaked along the peninsula's eastern edge. Kenai Lake, the Quartz and Canyon Creek valleys, and the Hope-Sunrise area—all part of the Chugach today—were omitted from Roosevelt's 1907 proclamation.[15]

Just a few months later, in his 1907 annual report, Langille recommended that additional areas—primarily along Turnagain and Knik arms—be added to the Chugach in order to protect them from Alaska Central Railroad construction crews. That order was sent on to Washington, where it and other proposals lay until the closing days of the Roosevelt administration. On February 23, 1909—less than two weeks before William Howard Taft assumed the presidency—Roosevelt more than doubled the size of the Chugach, to 11,280,640 acres, the largest in the

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[13] *Ibid.*, 38, 43.
[14] *Ibid.*, 13.
[15] *Ibid.*, 43-44.

country. The proclamation, which institutionalized the boundaries that Langille had recommended in 1904, spread the previous boundaries of the national forest in several directions. It included all of the Kenai except for the area south of a sinuous line that connected Cape Puget with the head of Kachemak Bay (see Map 10-2). That line, for the most part, followed the drainage divide. Most of the Kenai Peninsula land not included in the Chugach, therefore, drained south into the Gulf of Alaska. The newly expanded forest included several thousand acres that are within the present park boundaries; almost all of that land is on the high-elevation portions of Harding Icefield.[16]

Sewardites did not hear about Roosevelt's action until several weeks into the new president's term. Local newspaper editor Leo F. Shaw was skeptical about the need for such an action. Shaw noted that "there is apparently little excuse for making a large forest reserve in this part of the territory of Alaska. There are practically no valuable forests in the section of the country included in the reserve."[17]

It is of more than parenthetical importance to note that Kenai's south coast was thrice considered for inclusion in Chugach National Forest. Forest Service historian Lawrence Rakestraw notes that the February 1909 addition had originally been planned to include the south Kenai coast, but commercial interests in Seward objected, so the crest of the range to Kachemak Bay was used. Two years later, in a report on the Chugach, Tongass National Forest head William Langille suggested that "the southern shore of the Kenai Peninsula from near Seward to the head of Kachemak Bay" be added to the forest. Then, in 1913, forester George Cecil visited the area and reported that the timber resources south of Kachemak Bay were superior to those north of the bay. Neither Langille's nor Cecil's observations, however, resulted in boundary modifications.[18]

On December 5, 1911, the federal government declared a land freeze in the Seward area. In anticipation of "future legislation" (which was probably the Congressional act of August 24, 1912, which authorized a commission to study various rail routes to the interior), the General Land Office established Alaska Withdrawal #1. The newly-designated land, which was "withdrawn from settlement, location, sale, or entry," stretched along the coast from Day Harbor to Aialik Bay; it included all land south of the recently expanded Chugach National Forest boundary, and several thousand acres in the present park. That executive order was modified in

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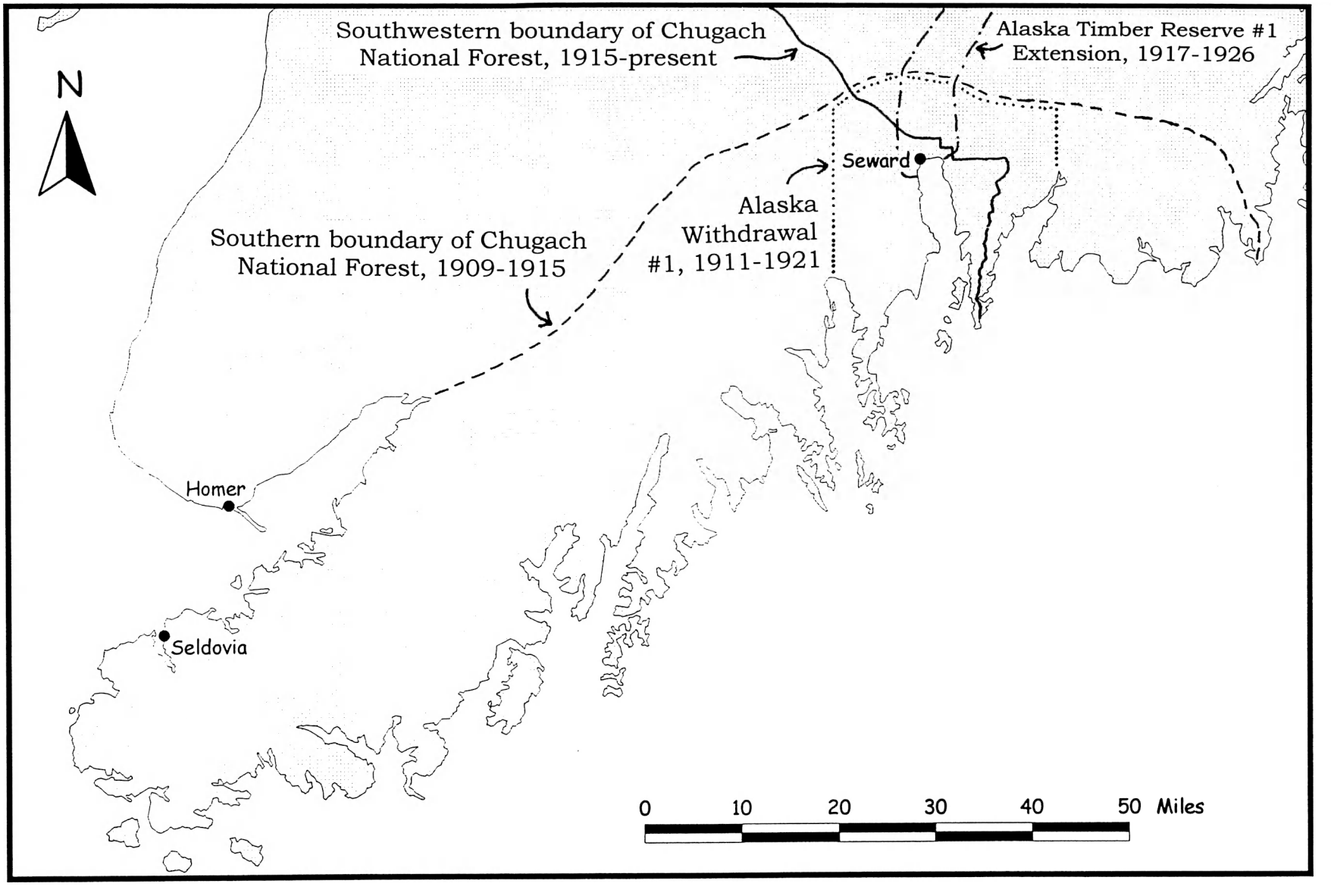
[16] President Theodore Roosevelt, Proclamation 846, February 23, 1909 (35 Stat. 2231); Rakestraw, *Forest Service in Alaska*, 46-48.

[17] *Seward Weekly Gateway*, March 27, 1909, 1.

[18] Rakestraw, *Forest Service in Alaska*, 70-71.



Map 10-2. Seward Area Land Reservations, 1909-1926

August 1912 to allow the "use or disposition of timber" within the recently withdrawn land. This latter provision was probably implemented to make the area's wood resource available to government rail construction crews.[19]

The General Land Office continued to be concerned about timber resources. In the summer of 1915, it created the huge Alaska Timber Reserve #1 in the Susitna and Nenana river drainages to ensure an adequate timber supply for the railroad construction crews. In April 1917, that reservation was extended to include a tract five miles on each side of the government railroad from Seward to the Knik River. The latter action included within its scope a few thousand acres currently included within Kenai Fjords National Park.[20]

Even before the three reservations had been created, action to nullify them had begun. In 1913, Alaska Delegate James Wickersham submitted a U.S. House bill to abolish the Chugach National Forest because of its relative lack of timber; a short time later, the newly created Alaska legislature passed a resolution in support of Wickersham's action. The General Land Office, perhaps in response, decided to tailor its boundaries to more closely circumscribe timbered lands. The agency recognized that "the public good will be promoted by adding to the Chugach National Forest ... certain lands, and by excluding certain areas therefrom and restoring the public lands therein." It prepared a proclamation to that effect, and on August 2, 1915, President Woodrow Wilson signed the proclamation that, on the Kenai Peninsula, modified the Chugach's boundaries to resemble their present configuration. (This action added to the forest the large tract of land on the northeast side of the Resurrection River, but eliminated the huge area in the western Kenai north of the coastal drainage divide.)[21] The following year, forester Asher Ireland visited the Seward area and recommended that 8,641 acres on the southwest side of Resurrection River be added to the forest. Ireland considered the parcel, which contained 42 million feet of spruce and hemlock, valuable both for both timber and protective cover; it had, in Ireland's opinion, "the best body of timber in southwestern Alaska."[22] Ireland's recommendation, however, was not enacted into law.

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[19] Fred Dennett (Commissioner, General Land Office), Executive Order, Alaska Withdrawal #1, December 5, 1911; William H. Taft, Executive Order 1584, August 24, 1912.

[20] Woodrow Wilson, Executive Order 2589, April 11, 1917. (This was an amendment to EO 2217 (of June 22, 1915) and EO 2226 (of July 31, 1915).

[21] Woodrow Wilson, Proclamation 1307, August 2, 1915; Rakestraw, *Forest Service in Alaska*, 57-59, 71.

[22] Rakestraw, *Forest Service in Alaska*, 72.

During the 1920s, the other reservations were eliminated, probably at the urging of local authorities. Seward Senator L. V. Ray sponsored a joint memorial in the 1919 Alaska legislature requesting the "restoration or modification" of Alaska Withdrawal #1. The General Land Office, in response, "appreciated that most of the reasons for the withdrawal have ceased to exist," but it was not until May 1921, with construction of the government railroad nearly completed, that Alaska Withdrawal #1 was "vacated and annulled" by President Warren Harding. Five years later, in November 1926, President Calvin Coolidge issued a similar executive order revoking Alaska Timber Reserve #1 on the Kenai Peninsula. Except for land in the newly reduced Chugach National Forest, most if not all of the Kenai Peninsula was now open, once again, to location and entry.[23]

Although the federal government appears to have paid an extraordinary amount of attention to the Seward area's forestry resources during this period, there have been no known attempts or proposals to secure timber for commercial purposes in or near the present park boundaries. Isolation, inaccessibility, the lack of potential board feet, and the lack of markets all help explain the absence of commercial timber operations.[24]

Visitors to the Southern Kenai Coast, 1900-1940

Early Sightseers and Hunters

Both sightseers and hunters have been attracted to the Seward area since the earliest years of the twentieth century. Tourists, to be sure, were few and far between during the first decade after Seward's founding. Most of the visiting hunters, moreover, were merely passing through on their way to the western gamelands.

Seward's earliest residents were well aware of Resurrection Bay's tremendous scenic attributes, and less than a year after the town's founding, the bay was being used for recreational sailing trips.[25] These trips probably continued, on an intermittent basis, for years afterward.

Relatively few people sailed along the outer coast during the twentieth century's first decade, but some of those that did were well aware of its

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[23] *Seward Gateway*, September 29, 1920, 1; Warren Harding, Executive Order, May 19, 1921; Calvin Coolidge, Executive Order 4542, November 13, 1926.

[24] Alaska Planning Group, *Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Monument, Alaska, A Master Plan,* December 1973, 12.

[25] Barry, *Seward History, I*, 88. The well-known Harriman Expedition of 1899 visited Port Graham and Kachemak Bay, but it did not visit the southern Kenai coast.

scenic beauty and tourist potential. Ulysses S. Grant and D. F. Higgins, Jr., two government geologists, sailed the Kenai coast in 1909 and were thunderstruck at what they saw. In a 1913 monograph they wrote, "It is hoped that this publication may attract attention to some of the most magnificent scenery that is now accessible to the tourist and nature lover."[26]

During this period, Alaska tourists were seldom seen outside of the southeastern "Inside Passage" route, and those who sailed "to the westward" were a rare sight indeed. The decision to build a government railroad, and the line's subsequent construction, however, took place at the same time in which tourists were showing an increased interest in Alaska as a destination. As a result, tourism became increasingly evident in Seward and other southcentral ports during the years that immediately preceded World War I. Beginning in 1912, the Alaska Steamship Company advertised trips into the area. The advertisements apparently met with some success, and when the Pacific Steamship Company—the successor to the Pacific Coast Steamship Company—began operations in 1916, it too advertised for tourists. The World War I years were particularly successful for Alaska tourism because European travel was prohibited. Thus, it is highly likely that an increasing number of tourists during this period visited Seward, Kodiak, Seldovia, Anchorage, and other southcentral ports.[27] The route for some of these ships—both from "Alaska Steam" and from "the Admiral Line"—undoubtedly paralleled the outer Kenai coast. The route for the large steamships, however, took passengers on a more southerly route, away from the coast. Clouds and storms, moreover, often obscured the view. For these reasons, the few tourists who may have been aboard these ships saw only an occasional, distant glimpse of the outer Kenai coast.[28]

Hunters were also attracted to the area. As noted above, hunters from around the world passed through Seward each spring and fall on their way to the famed western Kenai gamelands. But others hunted locally. In February 1907, lands within the present park received favorable publicity when an article by local hunter Edwin Lowell was published in *Recreation Magazine.* The article concerned a moose hunt that he and a fellow

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[26] U. S. Grant and D. F. Higgins, Jr., *Coastal Glaciers in Prince William Sound and Kenai Peninsula, Alaska,* USGS Bulletin 526 (Washington, GPO, 1913), 7.

[27] Frank Norris, *Gawking at the Midnight Sun: The Tourist in Early Alaska* (Anchorage, Alaska Historical Commission Studies in History No. 170), June 1985, 36.

[28] Rockwell Kent, who spent the winter of 1918-1919 on an island in Resurrection Bay, was a harsh judge of the Alaska Steamship Company ships that served Seward. Noting the steamer *Curacao* one evening, he noted, "What old hulks they do put onto this Alaska service." Kent, *Wilderness, A Journal of Quiet Adventure in Alaska* (New Haven, Leete's Island Books, 1982), 188.

Sewardite had taken "around the head of the Resurrection River" the previous September.[29]

Hunting was a popular pastime among Seward residents, and in October 1910 sufficient numbers of them gathered to organize the first of several "big game hunts." In this activity, local hunters were divided into teams; the teams received points according to the species of game that they obtained during the restricted time of the contest. Upon hearing of the contest, eastern big game hunters howled in protest, fearing a wholesale slaughter of game. The protesters were told, however, that the participants all adhered to the game laws and that all meat obtained was either consumed or put into storage for future use. The Seward Outing Club, which may have been an outgrowth of those hunts, was well established by 1914; it was one of a series of organizations that had been formed in the early twentieth century in towns along the southcentral Alaska coast.[30] Available evidence suggests that the vast majority of hunting by Seward residents during this period took place within a few miles of town or near the railroad right-of-way. As has been detailed below, an insignificant amount of sport hunting took place within the present park boundaries.

Rockwell Kent's Visit to Renard Island

In August 1918, a relatively obscure writer and illustrator named Rockwell Kent and his nine-year-old son sailed into Seward and checked in at the Sexton Hotel. The elder Kent, aged 36 at the time, had studied architecture and art; upon leaving school, he became an adventurer. When he arrived in Seward, he was not a tourist. Instead, he came to Alaska, in part, because he was a free-hearted spirit. And because he loved German literature and culture, he also sought a refuge from the jingoistic, anti-German sentiment then rampant in the United States. In addition, he noted,

> I came to Alaska because I love the North. I crave snow-topped mountains, dreary wastes and the cruel Northern Sea with its hard horizons at the edge of the world where infinite space begins. Here skies are clearer and deeper and, for the greater mystery of those of softer lands.[31]

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[29] Barry, *Seward History, I*, 30.

[30] *Ibid.*, 133; *Seward Daily Gateway*, May 4, 1914, 1; Sherwood, *Big Game in Alaska*, 50.

[31] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 90; Doug Capra, "Fox Island Retreat, Rockwell Kent's Wilderness Sojourn," *Seward Magazine* (Spring-Summer 1987), 5.

More specifically, Kent chose to visit Seward because he "did have a love for the isolation and wonder of island life," and he ideally sought a location "that combined the quiet dignity of the primitive forest with the excitement of the ever-changing ocean."[32]

He found such a location soon after he arrived. While rowing in the bay, he and his son met a 71-year-old fox and goat farmer named Lars Matt Olson. During the course of their conversation, Olson invited the two to visit him on Renard (Fox) Island, and on August 28, the two moved into a cabin near Olson's residence. Kent and his son remained on the island for more than seven months; the elder Kent spent much of that time writing, drawing, and enjoying a simple, primitive existence. The illustrated narrative of his experience, which he called *Wilderness; A Journal of Quiet Adventure in Alaska,* was Kent's first published book—and one of his best. The *New York Times* called it a "very beautiful and poignant record of one of the most unusual adventures ever chronicled;" it has also been called "a unique book and [an] unrecognized classic in the tradition of Henry David Thoreau's *Walden.*" The woodcuts with which he illustrated the volume were notable as well; the public reportedly "gobbled up his work" when it was exhibited in New York. One biographer has noted that "With the appearance ... of his 64 Alaska drawings, Kent suddenly became one of the top-notch illustrators. His illustrations, in subsequent years, ... have become collectors' items." Critics also praised the book for its deft interplay of text and illustration; according to Frank Getlein, "many critics consider [*Wilderness* as one of] the best American books ever produced in terms of harmonious balance between text and pictures."[33]

Kent appears to have savored his life on Renard Island during most of his sojourn, and he wrote extensively about the snow, wind, cold, isolation, and other elements of his immediate surroundings. The book made no attempt to soft-pedal the surrounding climate and topography, elements that were far more similar to the fjord country to the west than of Seward and the surrounding railbelt. (Caines Head, for example, was "a merciless shore without a harbor or tending place;" Bear Glacier was a place from which "the winds blow forever fiercely and ice cold;" and Renard Island itself was "warmer and much wetter [than Seward], and even the wind blows there when Seward's waters are calm.") Kent, during his stay, never ventured within the boundaries of the present park; the closest he came

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[32] Capra, "Fox Island Retreat," 5; Barry, *Seward History, II,* 90.

[33] Capra, "Fox Island Retreat," 5; *Current Biography,* 1942, 447-48; Frank Getlein, "R. Kent," *The McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of World Biography,* Vol. 6 (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1973), 173. Capra, a Seward resident, differs with Getlein; he feels that Kent's best American work is the edition of Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* that contain Kent's illustrations.

was a yearning to visit Bear Glacier that manifested itself during a visit to nearby Sunny Cove. He did, however, complete paintings of the present park coastline; one features Bear Glacier, while another looks from Renard Island toward Resurrection Bay's western shore.[34]

Kent, artistically and spiritually, appears to have embraced his experience on the island. Shortly after leaving, he exulted, "Know, people of the busier world, that there on that wild island in Resurrection Bay is to be found throughout winter and summer the peace and plenty of a true Northern Paradise...."[35] The popularity and the positive tone of Kent's reminiscence, however, did not result in increased tourism to either Alaska or the Seward area, for two reasons. Kent's book, successful as it was, appealed primarily to a small, literary audience.[36] In addition, almost everyone that visited Alaska during this period demanded the modern-day amenities that steamship travel provided; tourists thus had little interest in emulating Kent's strenuous, primitive experience.

Renard Island, and other points in southern Resurrection Bay, were fairly popular visitor destinations both before and after Rockwell Kent spent his winter there. Several visited the island, either on day trips or on overnight camps, while others sailed "down the bay" without disembarking. Several Sewardites, to be sure, paid social calls on Kent (and Olson) during the winter of 1918-19, but few latter-day tourists were so captivated by *Wilderness* that they felt the need to visit the island where they had resided. The cabin in which Kent and his son lived eventually collapsed. Today, there are almost no physical remnants of the cabin where the Kents stayed, and a tourist lodge was built in the mid-1990s on the Olson cabin site.[37]

Seward Becomes a Tourist Node

After World War I, the Alaska tourist trade boomed. The number of tourists increased almost every year from 1918 (when the war ended) through the late 1920s. Although there area few statistics that describe the industry during this period, the number of tourists that sailed to Alaska each year probably doubled, and may have tripled, during the decade that followed the cessation of World War I.

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[34] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 90; Kent, *Wilderness*, 195-96, 209, inside covers; Capra to Norris, email, May 18, 1998.

[35] *Seward Gateway*, March 21, 1919, 1.

[36] Doug Capra notes that although Kent had little direct influence on Alaska tourism, he did influence a number of Alaska-based writers and painters, some of which were read or viewed by visitors to the territory. Capra to Norris, email, May 18, 1998.

[37] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 170; *Seward Gateway*, June 11, 1921, 7; June 18, 1921, 2; July 16, 1921, 5; Capra, "Fox Island Retreat," 5.

One of the most dramatic tourist growth areas was southcentral Alaska. Prior to the war, the only maintained routes in the region were the Valdez-Fairbanks Trail, the Copper River and Northwestern (CR&NW) Railroad, the Alaska Northern Railroad (which operated, on an intermittent basis, for only 72 miles), and a broad network of sled roads and winter trails. But by 1919, the trail between Valdez and Fairbanks had been improved into the Richardson Highway; and, as noted in Chapter 5, the U.S. government purchased the Alaska Northern line and extended the railhead hundreds of miles northward. With the exception of a bridge over the Tanana River, the so-called Alaska Railroad was completed all the way to Fairbanks in early 1922. Most tourists, however, did not begin to travel over the line until the summer of 1923.[38]

The completion of the line gave the prospective visitor to southcentral and interior Alaska an increasing variety of tour choices. A few tourists, as before, remained on board the coastal steamers, disembarking only for day trips in the vicinity of ports. Most people, however, chose to head inland. Tourists opting for a short trip inland disembarked in Cordova, took the CR&NW north to Chitina, boarded an auto stage and rode to Willow Creek on the Richardson Highway. They then continued on to Thompson Pass and Valdez, where they resumed their steamship journey.[39]

Those opting for a longer trip in southcentral and interior Alaska chose the Golden Belt Tour. Passengers on this tour rode the CR&NW north from Cordova to Chitina, where an auto stage awaited them for a trip north to Fairbanks. (Others began their inland trip in Valdez and took an auto stage all the way to Fairbanks.) Once in Fairbanks, tourists boarded the recently completed Alaska Railroad and rode south to McKinley Park, Anchorage, and Seward. Some tourists took this tour in reverse order; in either direction, it was a popular tour for almost twenty years. Those who wanted to avoid the travails of the Richardson Highway opted for the All-Rail Tour, an excursion on the Alaska Railroad from Seward to Fairbanks and return.[40]

Those who hoped to see the north country in a more leisurely manner—and could afford to do so—chose the Grand Circle Tour. Tourists taking this tour package disembarked at Skagway, rode the White Pass and Yukon Route railroad to Whitehorse, and sailed down the Yukon River on a WP&YR boat to Dawson. From there, tourists continued down the

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[38] Norris, *Gawking at the Midnight Sun*, 46-47.
[39] *Ibid.*, 45.
[40] *Ibid.*, 52.

Yukon on an Alaska-Yukon Navigation Company steamer to Tanana and Fairbanks, and then rode the Alaska Railroad south to Seward. This tour required more than three weeks of inland travel. It could be taken in reverse order as well, although that option was longer (and more expensive) because of the slower pace of upstream travel.[41]

Because it was a leading Alaska port, Seward had been dealing with visitors ever since its founding. Hunters, most of whom hailed from Outside points, had been streaming through town for years; they used local accommodations, and some of them bought their outfits in Seward as well. The spate of tourists that invaded after World War I, however, had different needs and expectations than any previous group; they made local citizens aware, many for the first time, of the area's tourist attractions and facilities.

Seward residents, to be sure, had been enjoying outdoor pastimes for years; available activities included bear and moose hunting, berry picking, water sports, picnicking, vacation cabins, and mountaineering. Tourists, however, were less willing to "rough it" than locals, and most needed guides and a large-scale form of transportation. But because tourism was such a minor industry, the only local tour was a rail excursion north to Kenai Lake, which had been offered on an intermittent basis (to hunters and fishermen as well as tourists) since the days when the Alaska Northern operated the line.[42] By the early 1920s, tourists were also given the option of taking an auto stage north on the as-yet-uncompleted road to Kenai Lake.

In 1922, Seward development interests investigated a new way to stimulate local tourism. Before this time, local residents had ignored the huge, unnamed ice cap located west of the city. But in March 1922, it was announced that the "monster glacier near here" would "be used as an attraction for tourists this summer." In order to stimulate interest, the *Seward Gateway* asked local residents to name the feature. One suggested that it be named after Warren Harding, the current chief executive. Harding had made no secret of his interest in Alaska; he had publicly expressed his interest in visiting the territory as early as April 1921 and still planned to do so. *Gateway* editor E. A. Rucker therefore concluded that "some honor could be shown him by naming this great glacier after him." By April 1922, someone in Seward—perhaps Rucker himself—had decided on the name Harding Icefield.[43]

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[41] *Ibid.*, 51.

[42] *Ibid.*, 47-48; Barry, *Seward History, II*, 168-71.

[43] *Seward Gateway*, April 16, 1921, 7; March 22, 1922, 6; March 24, 1922, 6; April 21, 1922, 1; July 12, 1923, 5; Barry, *Seward History, II*, 58. In an adroit public-relations

At first, locals were given few hints about how the nearby ice cap would become a tourist attraction. But in late April, acting mayor Harry E. Ellsworth announced that local businessmen would fund the construction of a trail from Seward south to Lowell Point, and from there up Spruce Creek. The trail would continue over the drainage divide to the eastern edge of Harding Icefield. Promoters felt that the so-called Spruce Creek Trail would have economic benefits because at its terminus, "one hour and fifty minutes walking time" from Seward, tourists could "actually stand on a glacier and be carried across the great body of snow and ice in dog teams. [This would be] a novelty they cannot enjoy anywhere else in the summer time," an attraction that would "prove a great drawing card for tourists."[44]

Local resident Eric Nelson began constructing the trail in mid-July, and by August 12 the trail was complete. Several hikers assayed the route that summer, at least as far as the drainage divide.[45] By all accounts, the trip was awe-inspiring. Local resident D. C. Mathison, who ascended the trail in late July, positively gushed about the glacier as viewed from the ridgeline:

> But it is to the west, that ever mysterious west, [where] the greatest attraction lies. Near at hand are deep gorges, glacier-torn mountains, heaved and twisted ridges, smooth and placid lakes, whose shores when not covered with snow are literally strewn with vari-colored stones and pebbles.... In the not too great distance is the vast expanse of Harding glacier.... I am perfectly sure that anyone obtaining a view under the ideal conditions which obtained when I was there, whose very soul was not stirred, who fails to bow in humble acknowledgement of the puniness and insignificance of man, is bereft of one of Nature's greatest gifts – appreciation! Its gigantic size, its monstrous shape, its forbidding appearance, whose frigid bosom only the most rugged and uncompromising peaks have dared to defile.
>
> But I am wasting time in attempting to describe. You should have been where I sat, have this great panorama

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move on the eve of President Harding's visit to Seward, the *Gateway* announced that Seward citizens had named the "huge ice pack" west of town "the Harding Glacier in honor of the visit of our nation's chief executive." The name, as noted above, had actually been bestowed more than a year earlier.

[44] *Seward Gateway*, April 21, 1922, 1; July 18, 1922, 1; Barry, *Seward History, II*, 58.

[45] *Seward Gateway*, July 18, 1922, 1; July 25, 1922, 1; August 11, 1922, 4; Barry, *Seward History, II*, 60. As Ms. Barry notes in Volume III of her Seward history (p. 253), the road to Lowell Point was not completed until 1961.

> before you, which to be appreciated must be seen. Only a geologist could tell what has caused the topsy-turvy appearance of the whole country. None but an artist could, with the delicate strokes of his brush and the blending of his colors, do justice to its beauty. No one but a poet endowed with the descriptive language of Shakespeare, the weird imagination of Poe, the rollicking language of Burns or the wholesome simplicity of Edgar Guest, could describe its wonders and its beauties.[46]

The trail remained in use for years afterward. By the spring of 1924 a shelter cabin had been built at the trail summit. That summer, local resident Jo Hofman "arranged dog sled rides ... so tourists could enjoy a unique outing on the glacier." There is little evidence, however, that tourists braved the long, steep trail to ride on dog sleds. Most of those who hiked up the Spruce Creek Trail, in fact, were probably local residents; after 1926, tourist materials no longer advertised the trail.[47]

A more popular way to ascend the slopes west of Seward was the Mount Marathon trail. Since 1916, Mount Marathon had been the site of a July 4 race; a few participants each year, all from Seward, had scrambled up the slopes to Race Point before sliding and tumbling back into town. With the growth of tourism, however, locals began to recognize that non-racers would also like to ascend the mountain because it offered the climber a magnificent view of the town, Resurrection Bay, the outer islands, and the nearby mountains and glaciers. In June 1925 a visitor from Seattle, Ben Poindexter, suggested that he and a group of volunteers blaze such a trail. A trail up the face of the mountain was roughed out that year; it proved popular, both with visitors and local residents.[48]

During the 1920s, many Seward-area tourist attractions were developed in addition to the two trails noted above. In November 1923, for example, the road from Seward to Kenai Lake was completed, and in the years that followed, many Seward visitors took the half-day excursion out to Kenai Lake.[49] In downtown Seward, civic authorities established a waterfront park; complete with fountains and a Russian cannon, its purpose was to ensure that "visitors would find a pleasant scene when arriving by ship or train." Seward residents were proud of the new tourist amenities.

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[46] *Seward Gateway*, July 31, 1922, 5.

[47] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 116, 132; J. P. Hannon, "Seward, Alaska," *The Pathfinder of Alaska* 4 (April 1924), 11.

[48] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 132.

[49] "Kenai, the Beautiful, A Tourists' Paradise," *Seward Gateway*, August 25, 1923, 1; Norris, *Gawking at the Midnight Sun*, 47.

Historian Mary Barry notes that on some sunny summer days during the 1920s, "Seward was practically deserted ... as beautiful weather lured the residents to the forests—some to hike the Spruce Creek trail, others to climb Mount Marathon, and the rest to motor to Kenai Lake."[50]

In the summer of 1923, Seward was briefly in the world spotlight when President Harding visited the port as part of his Alaska tour. On July 13, Harding arrived in Seward on the Navy cruiser *Henderson*; he mingled briefly with the townspeople, then headed inland on a waiting train. At Nenana, he paused long enough to tap in the "golden spike" commemorating the Alaska Railroad's completion (a feat that had been accomplished several months before), then continued on to Fairbanks. By July 17 he was back in Seward; two days later, the presidential party steamed down the bay and headed toward Valdez.[51]

Beyond the publicity it shed on Alaska in general and Seward in particular, the trip was notable to the project area in several respects. Harding was particularly impressed with both Seward and Resurrection Bay. He called Seward "a rare gem in a perfect setting." As to the bay, Governor Scott Bone advised Harding that Alaskans wanted to bestow his name on some physical feature. Bone suggested naming a glacier or mountain after him, but Harding, after entering Resurrection Bay, told him that "of all the beautiful scenery and interesting objects we have passed, I would rather have this entrance perpetuate my name than anything else I could imagine." Within an hour, Bone issued a proclamation naming it the Harding Gateway.[52] In addition, the *Seward Gateway* named the huge icefield west of town in his honor (an action that, as noted above, had first been accomplished several months earlier). Harding himself probably saw no more of the icefield than a glimpse of Bear Glacier, but the *Henderson* crew saw the icefield in greater detail. The crew spent several days in port while the President's party toured the Alaska interior; on one of those days, local resident Mel Horner guided the crew, a few townspeople, and several tourists south on the newly-

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[50] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 62; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 4, 133, 226. Ms. Barry notes that the Russian cannon inexplicably disappeared from the park in 1941. It was recovered, however, in October 1951 and is now in the Resurrection Bay Historical Society museum.

[51] *Seward Gateway*, July 14, 1923, 1; July 18, 1923, 1; and July 19, 1923, 1; Barry, *Seward History, II*, 33-35.

[52] Aron Ericson, a local sign painter, responded to Harding's gesture by painting a white, 12-by-250-foot sign, "HARDING GATEWAY," on the cliffs at the south end of Renard Island to "remind travelers of our distinguished visitor." J. P. Hannon, "Seward, Alaska," *The Pathfinder of Alaska* 4 (April 1924), 11; Francis Russell, *The Shadow of Blooming Grove* (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1968), 584; *Seward Gateway*, July 17, 1923, 4; August 13, 1923, 2.

constructed Spruce Creek trail. Judging by contemporary press reports, the party hiked to the watershed divide and continued all the way to Harding Icefield before returning to town.[53]

The Alaska Railroad, in conjunction with the various tour packages, developed several Seward-based tourist excursions during this period. In 1926, it revived its Kenai Lake rail tour, using as its northern destination a visit with Nellie Neal Lawing at the Lawing wildlife museum. That same year, rail tourists were given the opportunity to take a day trip to Spencer Glacier, 52 miles north of Seward; the glacier here was within easy walking distance of the train. And in 1927, tourists on a two-day Seward layover were given an opportunity to visit Anchorage. The popularity of these excursions was mixed. The Lawing excursion lasted until 1931, and the Spencer Glacier trip remained until 1935. These two side trips, and the Anchorage excursion as well, had the practical effect of diminishing prospects for Seward-area tourism development.[54]

Relatively few Alaska tourists prior to World War II traveled independently (that is, apart from an advertised tour package). For that reason, relatively few out-of-state tourists had more than a few hours' free time while in Seward. Despite that limitation, it appears that some tourists, as well as some Seward-area residents, enjoyed taking boat trips on Resurrection Bay. In 1923, for example, local resident Howard Long advertised his motor boat as being available "for hunting or pleasure trips." The following spring, an article advertised boat trips on the bay for tourists, and a self-styled vacation guide issued in August 1926 urged Seward visitors to "take a motor boat ride to Fox Island."[55] In all probability, small numbers of visitors, primarily from Seward, continued to take Resurrection Bay boat rides each summer from the mid-1920s through the late 1930s.

Tourists and Hunters Visit the Coastal Fjords

As noted above, visitors have been passing through Seward ever since the town's founding in 1903. Hunters, furthermore, have been prominent since early days as well; Outside hunters headed through town on their way to Kenai Lake and the western Kenai gamelands, while Seward

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[53] *Seward Gateway*, July 14, 1923, 4.

[54] Norris, *Gawking at the Midnight Sun*, 47-48.

[55] *Seward Gateway*, June 11, 1923, 2; June 25, 1923, 2; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 116; J. P. Hannon, "Seward, Alaska," *The Pathfinder of Alaska* 4 (April 1924), 11. The *Seward Gateway* (June 14, 1927, page 1) noted that tourists enjoyed watching the whales that had been lured into Resurrection Bay because of the eulachon run; those tourists, however, watched the whales from steamships, not from locally-charted craft.

residents hunted on the outskirts of town and north within a few miles of the road or railroad. So far as is known, tourists and hunters prior to World War I largely ignored the southern reaches of Resurrection Bay, and virtually no recreationists spent time within the present park boundaries.

The first known recreational visit into park waters ended in tragedy. In October 1917, William G. Weaver and Benjamin F. Sweazey, the latter a licensed game guide, headed toward Aialik Bay on a bear hunt. When they did not return as scheduled, search parties were formed. Before long, the men's boat was found, bottom up, near Bear Glacier. No trace of the men was ever located.[56]

Over the next few years, a few Seward residents began to hunt in the coastal fjords. Charles Emsweiler, a local guide whose reputation was well established by 1913, took clients to the western peninsula gamelands. On his own, however, he hunted in a wide variety of locales, and in June 1919 he and his wife concluded a hunt in Nuka Bay, where they harvested three black bear. Three years later, the couple repeated their adventure.[57]

During the early to mid-1920s, occasional hunting parties—perhaps just one per year or even fewer—hunted within the present park boundaries. In May 1921, for example, local resident Jack Matsen headed down to Bear Glacier on what turned out to be an unsuccessful bear hunt. Two years later, the *Gateway* noted that "a party composed of Mrs. J. H. Flickinger, Andy Simons and wife, Frank Revelle and Milton Noll left today for down sound points where they will engage in a bear hunt." Occasional hunters also headed up into the Resurrection River valley; in August 1920, three Army privates ascended the valley at least as far as Redman Creek.[58]

Tourists—that is, recreationists who were not interested in hunting—were not known to frequent the present-day park until the mid-1920s. In August 1923, local residents Earl Mount and Mr. and Mrs. Otto Schallerer reportedly spent a pleasant Sunday on a boat "at the entrance to Resurrection Bay and at Bear Glacier."[59] So far as is known, no further pleasure trips to the park took place again until 1927. Captain Heinie Berger that year began operating his M.S. *Discoverer* between Seward and nearby points. In order to publicize his service and to create some

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[56] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 84, 192.

[57] Harvey, *Five Weeks in Alaska*, 4; Barry, *Seward History, II*, 192; *Seward Gateway*, June 9, 1919, 1; July 25, 1922, 1.

[58] *Seward Gateway*, May 14, 1921, 8; May 21, 1921, 8; September 8, 1923, 7; Barry, *Seward History, II*, 182.

[59] *Seward Gateway*, August 27, 1923, 4.

community good will, Berger announced that for a mere $3, he would take local residents on a daylong scenic tour to Bear Glacier, Chiswell Island [sic], Seal Rocks, and Northwestern Glacier. The day set for the tour was Sunday, June 5. Poor weather, however, descended on Seward that day. The trip was cancelled, and the excursion was never rescheduled.[60]

For the remainder of the 1920s, and on into the 1930s, occasional tourist and hunting parties ventured into park waters. In 1927, for example, Seward police and fire chief Bob Guest headed off on "a sea voyage ... which will take in Seal Rocks and Nuka Bay." Two years later, a large party composed of the Seward Chamber of Commerce and their families cruised down the bay and got as far as Cape Resurrection and Bear Glacier before returning home. That same year, businessman Mel Horner shot a black bear at Bear Glacier, and in 1933 a Seattle physician named Frederick G. Nichols and his son spent almost two months in and around Nuka Bay engaged in fishing, hunting, and prospecting.[61] Nuka Island resident Pete Sather, the well-known Nuka Island resident, was glad to convey several of these parties. It should be noted, however, that Sather himself apparently found little enjoyment in the scenery that surrounded his daily travels. As Kenai Peninsula historian Elsa Pedersen has noted, Sather "did not notice the sure-footed mountain goats or the glossy black bears except as possible quarry for hunting parties he occasionally transported."[62]

In 1925, Seward witnessed a new form of recreational opportunity—aviation—that quickly put the previously inaccessible fjord and icecap country west of town within easy reach. That August, aviators Russell Merrill and Roy J. Davis flew from Anchorage down to Seward, and for the next several days the pair offered rides to all comers. The Alaska Road Commission, reacting to the growing popularity of aviation, roughed out an airfield in 1927-28, and in May 1928, Merrill and Davis "took three

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[60] *Seward Gateway*, June 3, 1927, 3; June 4, 1927, 6; June 6, 1927, 4. Mary Barry, in Volume III of her Seward history (p. 97), notes that Berger that summer operated under the auspices of the Alaska Glacier Tours Association.

[61] *Seward Gateway*, July 20, 1927, 6; May 3, 1929, 2; May 13, 1929, 5; July 21, 1933, 2. As noted above, most of the major coastal steamers passed too far south of the fjord country for passengers to benefit much from the coastal scenery and wildlife. The steamship route between Seward and Kodiak, however, passed relatively close to Seal Rocks, and many were highly impressed by what they saw. *Gateway* editor E. F. Jessen noted that Frank Barry, a 1935 passenger, reportedly saw "thousands of seals ... he had never seen anything like it before, and the wonderful spectacle will stay long in his memory." *Seward Gateway*, April 23, 1935, 4.

[62] Elsa Pedersen, "I Remember Herring Pete," *Alaska* 40 (July 1974), 28-29. For examples of Sather hauling tourists to and from Nuka Bay, see the *Seward Gateway* for July 16, 1929, 2, and June 1, 1933, 4.

local passengers ... for a short flight over the bay and mountains." Aviation quickly caught on with Alaska's trappers, game guides and other outdoorsmen, but few tourists signed on, at least in Seward.[63]

Additional attempts to fly tourists took place during the 1930s, with mixed results. In 1932, Alaskan Airways began offering tourist flights from Seward to the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes. In all likelihood, few responded to this offer. The following June a new pilot, Art Woodley, began offering a series of flights out of Seward. The news article announcing his flights spared few adjectives in describing the surrounding countryside:

> Seward, the Kenai ice cap and the marvelous scenic wonders of Resurrection Bay from the air is the temptation Pilot Arthur Woodley will toss to local residents Sunday when he will be prepared to provide a series of airplane flights beginning early in the afternoon, weather permitting.
>
> The flights will be made in the handsome six-seated, 300-horse power Bellanca plane.... The flights will be divided into two divisions for local air excursions. Ten dollars will be charged for a cruise over the great eternal ice cap of the rugged Kenai Peninsula, from which vantage point the marvels of hundreds of miles of scenic grandeur will be unfolded from Prince William Sound to Cook Inlet.
>
> There will be the lesser flight out over Resurrection Bay, with the broad Pacific laving the rugged shoreline, another treat of thrilling scenic wonders. For this flight a fee of $5 will be charged....
>
> Lastly, there will be the Russian River fishermen's cruise, down where the 30-inch Rainbow trout sport in the crystal pools and challenging the angler. For this cruise a fee of $15 will be charged for the round-trip.
>
> These cruises should have a strong appeal to all who have never beheld Alaska's scenic wonderland from the ethereal heights, from which to look down upon a world shedding its chaste garments of winter for the verdure of spring, its mighty glaciers and Brobdingnagian pinnacles reaching upward to greet the air-minded.[64]

Despite the favorable publicity, Woodley was unable to fly that day, "pea-soup weather" being the culprit. A few days later, however, the weather

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[63] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 210, 212.

[64] *Seward Gateway*, June 10, 1933, 1.

Rockwell Kent, a budding author and artist, spent the winter of 1918-1919 at a fox and goat farm on Renard Island in Resurrection Bay. *Current Biography*, 1942, 447.

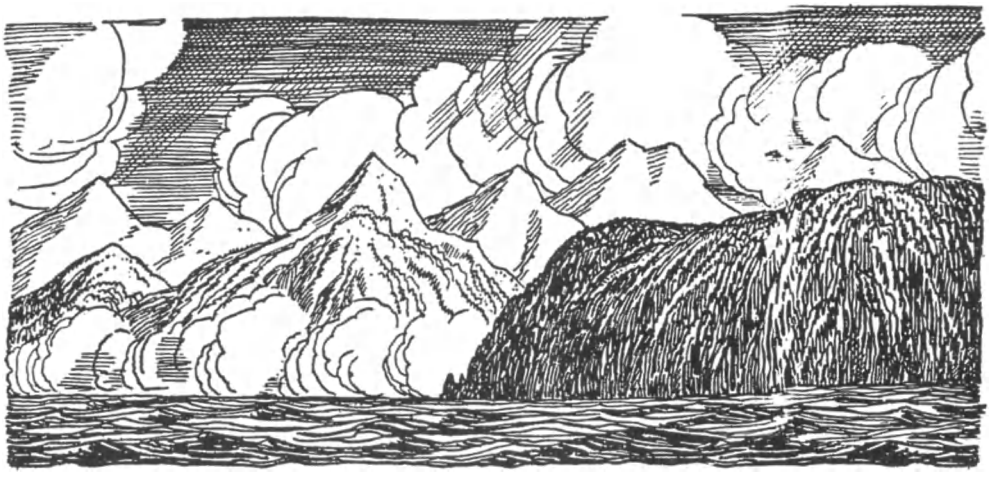
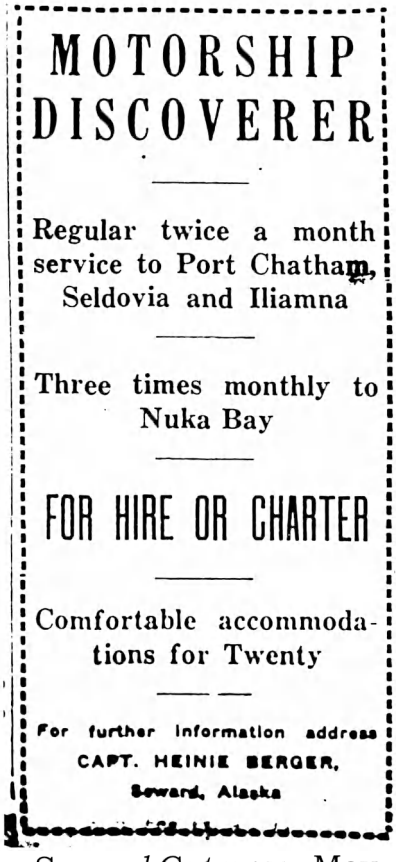
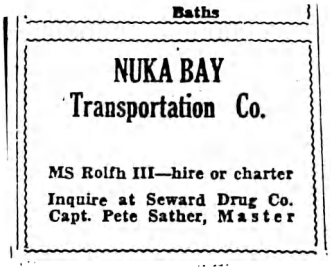


Illustration by Rockwell Kent from his book *Wilderness, A Journal of Quiet Adventure in Alaska*, 1920. Courtesy The Rockwell Kent Legacies.



Seward Gateway, May 7, 1927, 6.

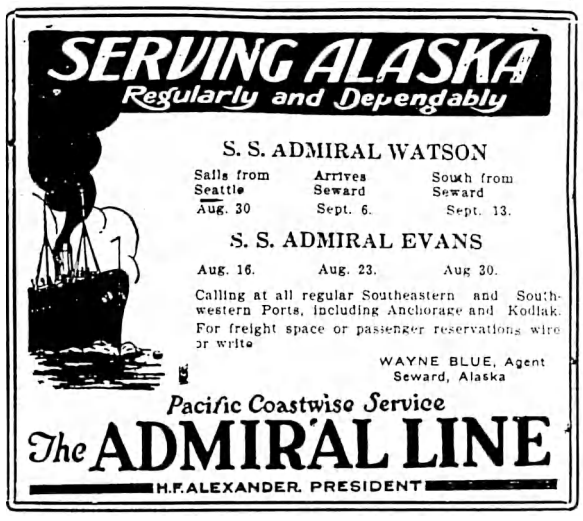
Seward Gateway, June 4, 1927, 6.



Seward Gateway, May 9, 1935, 8.

Seward Gateway, June 25, 1923, 2.

Seward Gateway, July 25, 1929, 7.

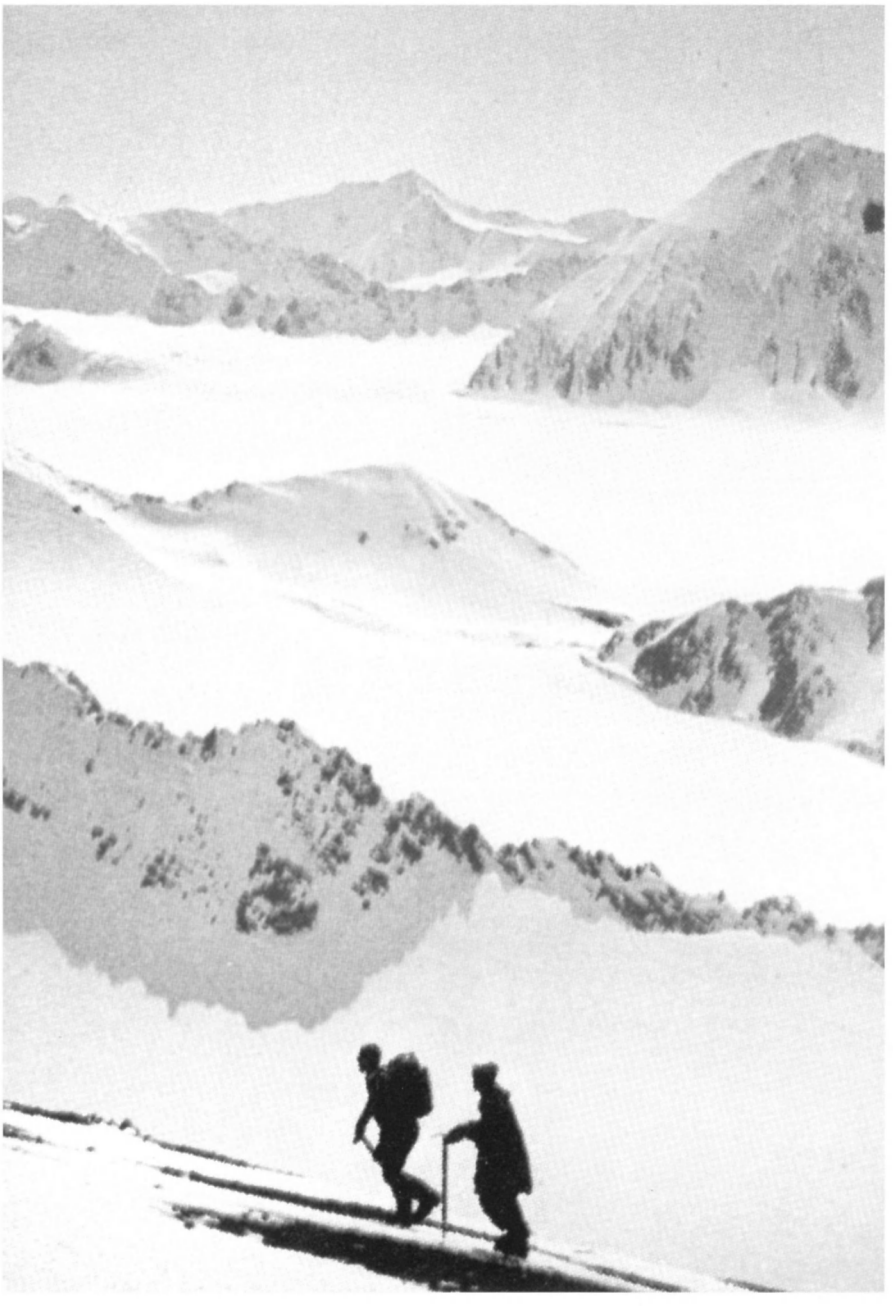


Seward Gateway, August 27, 1923, 2.

Advertisements such as these lured early adventurers to the fjord country.

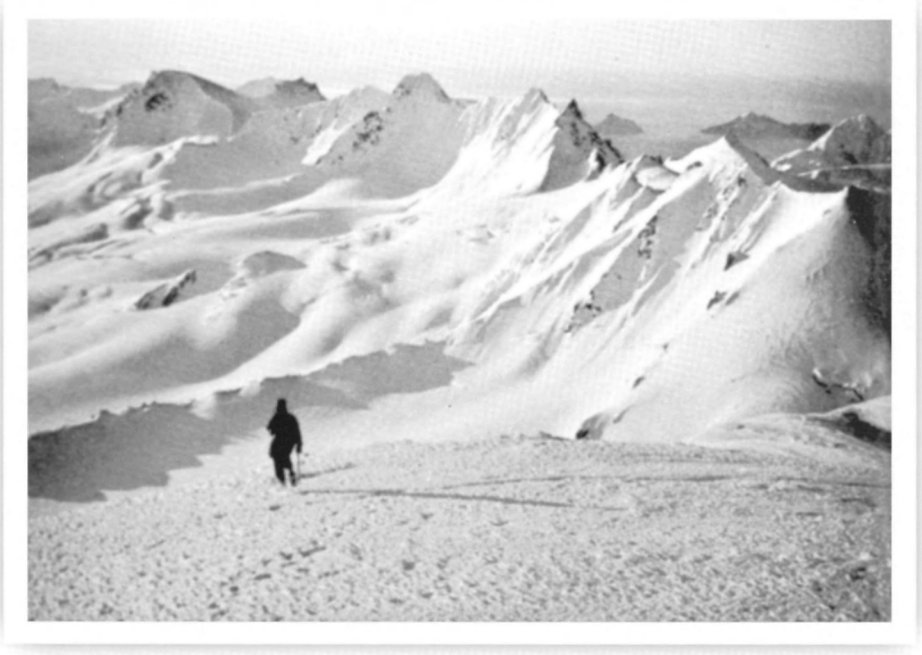
In July 1923, President Harding and his wife visited Seward. Harding is shown in a light-colored coat at the top the gangway; his wife is in front of him. Neville Public Museum, photo 5658.4.

The coastal littoral has long attracted a small corps of hunters on the lookout for mountain goats and black bear. Marilyn Warren photo, in *Alaska Regional Profiles, Southcentral Region*, July 1974, 147.

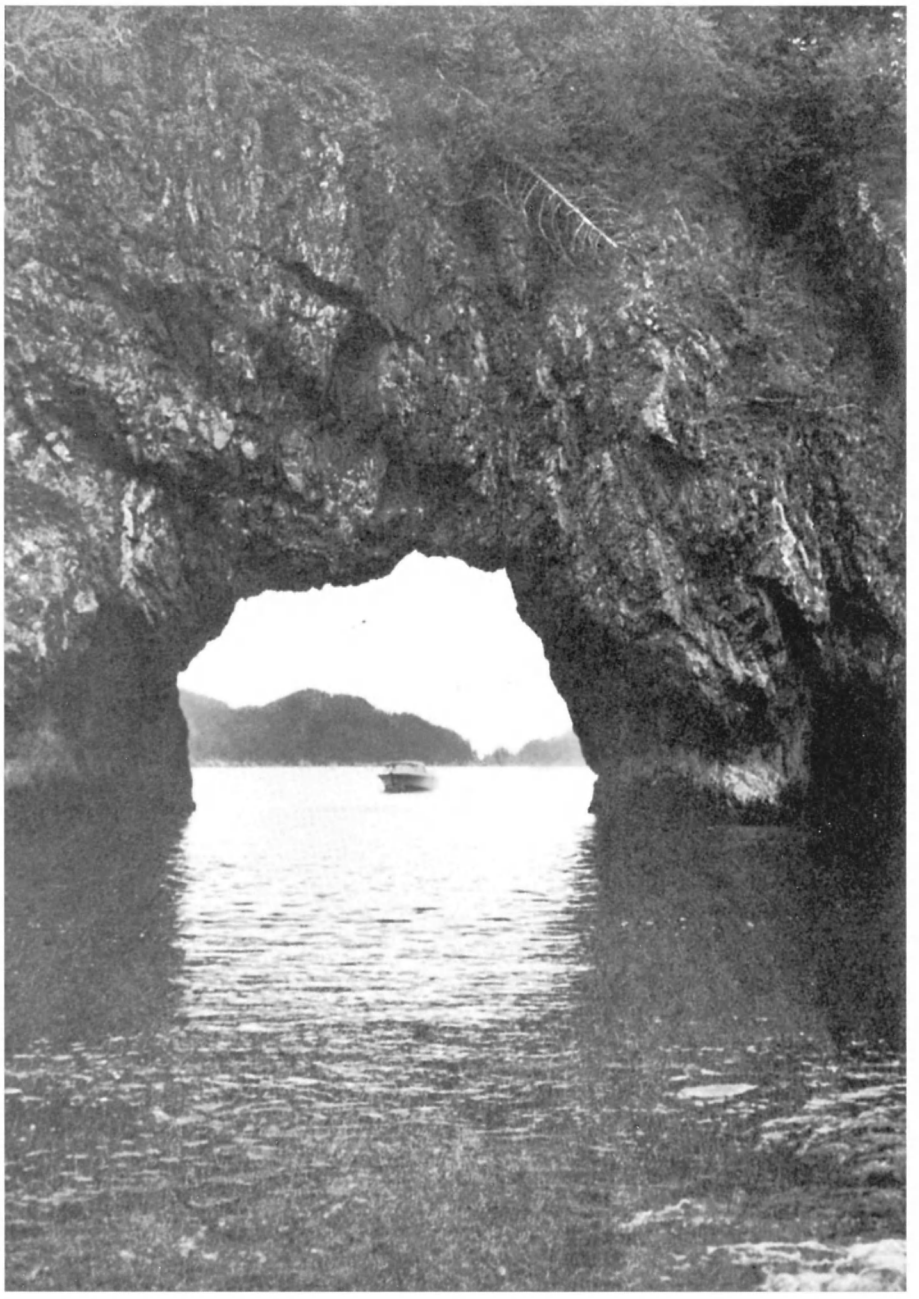


Eric Barnes and Helmut Tschaffert during their ascent of Truuli Peak in April 1968. David Spencer photo, *Alaska Magazine*, May 1971, 47.

A trio of skiers crossing the Harding Icefield during the 1970s. M. Woodbridge Williams photo, NPS/Alaska Area Office print file, NARA Anchorage.



Bill Babcock looks out from a nunatak on the morning of April 25, 1968. Dave Spencer photo, *Alaska Magazine*, May 1971, 46.



Few sport fishers tested the park's waters prior to 1970, but in more recent years the park has become an increasingly popular destination. NPS photo, in *Alaska Regional Profiles, Southcentral Region*, July 1974, 94.

cleared.[65] His operation that summer evidently had some success, because he offered a similar variety of flights the following year. Three years later, John Littley established Seward Airways, which evidently lasted only a short time; two years later, Seward Airways, Inc. commenced operation. Neither of these carriers appears to have advertised scenic or recreational flights as a primary aspect of their operation.[66]

Recreational Trends, 1940-1970

The Kenai National Moose Range is Established

On December 16, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 8979, which established the Kenai National Moose Range. The range reserved much of the western side of the Kenai Peninsula in order to ensure the preservation of the local moose population.

The movement to create a game range on the western Kenai had been a long time in coming. Back in 1904, when forester William Langille made his initial venture into the area, he was quick to note that big game was an important peninsula resource; moose, caribou, sheep, and bear were all noted. Langille noted that

> the game of the region should be a source of revenue to the people and of pleasure and sport to the outsiders who wish to hunt, and there should be some meeting place where the game can be conserved, clashing interests harmonized and trophy hunting permitted.[67]

Nothing came of Langille's recommendations, but they were not ignored. In 1916, forester Arthur Ringland, worried about game poaching by trophy hunters, repeated those recommendations.[68] But the U.S. Forest Service had little intrinsic interest in game protection, and the issue lay fallow for more than a decade. During this period, the number of homesteads grew in both the Kenai and Homer areas. Increasing settlement, along with increased market hunting, caused federal authorities to worry about the permanence of the peninsula's moose population. In 1931, therefore, the

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[65] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 214; *Seward Gateway*, June 12, 1933, 1; June 17, 1933, 4; June 26, 1933, 3.

[66] Barry, *Seward History, II*, 214-16; National Resources Planning Board, "City of Seward, Survey of Conditions and Suggestions for a Public Improvement Program," unpub. mss., May 1942, 2, in "Seward-Programming" file, Box 26, RG 187, NARA ANC.

[67] Rakestraw, *Forest Service in Alaska*, 38, 54.

[68] *Ibid.*, 80.

Alaska Game Commission recommended, at its regular annual meeting, that an 800,000-acre (1,230 square mile) moose sanctuary, to be located in the northwestern part of the peninsula, be established by presidential proclamation.[69]

That recommendation, although not acted upon, set off a long-running investigation into the size and health of the Kenai moose herd. The Game Commission, using donated funds, dispatched guide Henry Lucas into the Skilak-Tustumena lakes area in 1932. Lucas discovered, due to Game Commission enforcement efforts, that the moose population was no longer declining; he also noted that local residents were firmly in favor of a moose sanctuary being established. The Game Commission, after studying the matter during a second field season, backed the idea of a moose sanctuary in the Skilak-Tustumena lakes area; that area, however, promised to be controversial because it was a prime trophy hunting area. Before long, the federal Bureau of Biological Survey promoted a competing plan, for a 500,000-acre moose sanctuary in the northern part of the peninsula (that is, in the same general area that the AGC had recommended in 1931). By 1934, interagency differences on the proposal had still not been resolved; this impasse had the practical effect of shelving any protection proposals for the time being.[70]

In the late 1930s, new worries about a perceived decline in the peninsula's moose population sparked another round of studies. Biologist L. J. Palmer spent the 1938 field season in the Skilak-Tustumena lakes area. He confirmed a long-term moose decline, but instead of a moose sanctuary, he recommended that the area be set aside as a moose and mountain sheep reserve. The area would be open to limited hunting, but closed to homesteading or other land location without special permits. He returned to the field that winter, and came back convinced more than ever that a moose range needed to be established.[71] Palmer's research provided the technical data necessary to justify the moose range idea; two years later, Ira N. Gabrielson applied the idea politically and established the moose range. Gabrielson, a leading conservationist, was the head of the newly established U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It was he who guided the proposal—a far grander proposal than Palmer had ever envisioned—through the agency and on to Roosevelt's desk.[72]

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[69] David L. Spencer, Claus M. Naske, and John Carnahan, "National Wildlife Refuges of Alaska, a Historical Perspective," unpub. mss., January 1979, 124, at ARLIS.

[70] *Ibid.*, 124-27; *Seward Gateway*, August 2, 1933, 2. Frank Dufresne, who later served as the Alaska regional director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, headed the AGC's 1933 field efforts.

[71] Spencer, Naske, and Carnahan, "National Wildlife Refuges of Alaska," 127-28.

[72] *Ibid.*, 126-28; L. J. Palmer, "Kenai Peninsula Moose, Alaska, Research Project Report," May-June-July 1939, 34, at ARLIS; Rakestraw, *Forest Service in Alaska*, 131.

The Kenai National Moose Range, as enacted, covered some 2,000,000 acres. As stated in the proclamation, the range was established

> for the purpose of protecting the natural breeding and feeding range of the giant Kenai moose on the Kenai Peninsula, Alaska, which in this area presents a unique wildlife feature and an unusual opportunity for the study in its natural environment of the practical management of a big game species that has considerable economic value....[73]

Although the range was primarily established to protect wildlife habitat, its southeastern boundary followed the top of the Kenai Mountains drainage divide and covered more than 100,000 acres of the Harding Icefield. Tens of thousands of these acres, located high in the Kenai Mountains, are now part of Kenai Fjords National Park.

By the time President Roosevelt signed the Kenai National Moose Range proclamation, Japan had bombed Pearl Harbor and World War II was at hand. Understandably, therefore, the range remained undeveloped for the next several years. It was not until 1948 that the first administrative facilities, at Kenai, were established. That September, David L. Spencer was appointed as the refuge's first manager; James D. Peterson was his assistant.[74]

Recreational Activities Along the Southern Coast

As has been noted (both in Chapter 9 and in a section above), commercial fishers and sightseeing parties were first lured to Resurrection Bay in the early years of the century and consistently used the resource in the decades that followed. The historical record is less forthcoming about Resurrection Bay sport fishing in the years prior to 1940. Most likely, sport fishing was a popular activity in and around Seward, and it may have also been part of early Resurrection Bay sightseeing activities.

After 1940 these trends continued. As Chapter 8 has noted, the military buildup prior to World War II brought thousands of soldiers to Seward's Fort Raymond and to the remote posts of Fort Bulkley (Rugged Island), Fort McGilvray (Caines Head), and similar installations scattered around Resurrection Bay. To cater to the soldiers' recreational needs, a variety of activities were organized. As early as April 1942, military authorities were sponsoring sightseeing and fishing excursions on Resurrection Bay.

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[73] Executive Order 8979, December 16, 1941.

[74] Alaska Game Commission, *Biennial Report, 1948-50,* 15.

These seven-hour trips took place twice each week and appear to have continued, on a seasonal basis, through the summer of 1944.[75]

After the war, activity in Seward dropped off. But local officials, hoping to popularize the town, were buoyed by ongoing road development projects elsewhere on the peninsula and seized on those activities as opportunities to attract outsiders.

Several activities soon came to the fore. In 1950, before Seward gained its road link to Anchorage, local boosters began to advertise the traditional Mount Marathon race to out-of-towners. Five outsiders answered the call that year, and in 1951 a non-Seward resident won the race for the first time. During the mid-1950s, several nationally popular magazines noted the race in Alaskan feature articles. Over the years, the race attracted an increasing number of out-of-town contestants and their families. In recent years the Fourth of July race, and various associated events, have attracted thousands of participants and spectators each year.[76]

The road connecting Anchorage (and the rest of the Alaska road network) with the Kenai Peninsula was completed in October 1951. Soon afterward, residents from other communities began coming to Seward to fish and boat on Resurrection Bay. The number who engaged in such activities was at first fairly small. The migration was sufficiently large, however, to augment the fortunes of local businesses that sold licenses and gear, operated and coordinated charters, and processed fish. By 1953, sport fishing was sufficiently popular to attract the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; the agency dispatched an enforcement patrolman, Joseph Widauf, to Seward for the silver salmon season. Widauf reportedly "did a very good job acquainting the sportsmen with the regulations and keeping violations at a minimum."[77]

In 1956, Sewardites took a major new step when the town hosted its first Silver Salmon Derby. The event was the brainchild of local residents Jim and Celia Wellington. Juneau, by this time, had been holding its salmon derby for more than twenty years, and the Wellingtons, former Juneau residents, borrowed the idea and brought it to Seward. The derby, sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, was held on two successive weekends in August; the proceeds of the event were used to stock local

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[75] "Excursions Run Twice a Week," *Seward Polaris*, mid-April 1942; "Post Despatches/Boat Trip Outing," *[Seward] Daily Polaris*, August 17, 1944; both at Seward Public Library.

[76] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 212, 273.

[77] *Ibid.*, 272, 339; USF&WS, "Annual Fishery Report, 1953, Cook Inlet District" (ARLIS Report FWLB 1168), 4.

streams with game fish and to finance other local improvements. The contest quickly caught on with both locals and out-of-town residents, and by the mid-1960s, "large numbers of sports fishermen [were harvesting] a high proportion of the silver salmon entering Resurrection Bay."[78]

Pleasure boating also grew during the 1950s. Soon after highway from Anchorage was completed, locals formed the Seward Small Boat Owners' Association to improve the facilities in the small boat harbor. Then, in March 1957, the Anchorage-Seward Yacht Club was founded to promote nautical recreation and to push for harbor improvements. The organization, renamed the Alaska Yacht Club, was incorporated in January 1958. The club, which by the 1970s was known as the William H. Seward Yacht Club, is still active. Over the years, the club has held many sailboat races; during the late 1960s, one of the more challenging races was the Summer Solstice meet, a 70-mile race that took contestants from Seward to the Chiswell Islands and back.[79]

With few exceptions (such as the boat races just noted), most of the boating and sportfishing activity that took place out of Seward from the 1940s through the 1960s was limited to Resurrection Bay. Very few boated or fished for pleasure in park waters. Known instances of such use are described below.

During World War II, the USO-SSO Activities Council (which organized recreational activities for soldiers) sponsored a series of boat trip outings, at least one of which entered park waters. In August 1944, it organized a free daylong trip to Aialik Glacier. Trips to other nearby features—Bear Glacier or the Chiswell Islands—may also have been sponsored during the war years.[80]

During the 1950s, the Fish and Wildlife Service wrote a special report on the Kenai Peninsula's fishery resources. The report noted that none of the bays or rivers in the present park ranked particularly high among the peninsula's sport fishing destinations. It did, however, state that in 1955, Resurrection River recorded 1,000 man-days of use by sport fishers, a volume that was exceeded by eleven other peninsula sport-fishing areas.[81]

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[78] John B. Skerry (USF&WS), "Cook Inlet Annual Management Report," 1956, 3: Barry, *Seward History, III*, 228, 270-71; Rearden, *Status of the Cook Inlet-Resurrection Bay Commercial Salmon Fishery*, ADF&G Informational Leaflet 69 (1965), 14.

[79] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 270, 300, 340.

[80] "Post Despatches/Boat Trip Outing," *[Seward] Daily Polaris*, August 17, 1944, at Seward Public Library.

[81] USF&WS, "A Special Report on Fishery Resources of the Kenai Peninsula, Territory of Alaska," February 1957, p. 25 and Table 15, at ARLIS.

In July 1961, the Bureau of Land Management classified hundreds of Alaska public land parcels as recreation and public purpose sites. These parcels, scattered throughout the state, were authorized by a Congressional act of June 14, 1926 and were available for disposal to "a state, territory ... or to a non-profit corporation or nonprofit association for any recreational or any public purpose." Within the present park boundaries, two parcels were classified by the BLM's action: a 900-acre parcel in the Bulldog Cove area, south of Bear Glacier, and an 80-acre parcel on the east side of Aialik Bay, just south of Coleman Bay. Available land records do not specify who may have been interested in the parcels, nor do they describe the parcels' intended land use. Lacking other evidence, it appears that the BLM probably offered the parcels to the State of Alaska. They were offered either to the Division of Lands for a future state park or recreation site or (less likely) to the Department of Fish and Game for fish management purposes. The interested party—whoever it was—soon learned that part of the Bulldog Cove parcel had previously been claimed by Raymond W. Gregory, who hoped to establish a fishing lodge on the property. Gregory, as it turned out, never developed his lodge plans, but the existence of his claim probably prevented the state from developing the site. Neither parcel was developed, and in January 1969 the two parcels were returned to the public domain.[82]

Sidney Logan, an ADF&G fisheries biologist, was posted in Seward in April 1961, largely due to the efforts of Seward Salmon Derby officials. In a recent interview, Logan recalled that Seward had four or five boats available for charter during the seven-year period he lived there; sportsmen normally did not fish farther south than Rugged Island, although they occasionally fished as far south as the Chiswell Islands. He noted that "hundreds of boats per summer visited the Kenai Fjords coast" during the years he lived in Seward. Logan was quick to point out, however, that "there was no sport fishing activity to speak of" in the fjords and that the amount of fishing was "insignificant" in comparison to either the Resurrection Bay silver salmon sport fishery or the Russian River sport fishery. Fishers sought out the waters of the future park for halibut, rockfish, and lingcod; so far as he recalled, no charter-boat operators consistently referred clients to locations in park waters. He did not recall any problems managing the park's sport fishery during this period. As to sightseers, Logan had no recollection of any; "there may have been some," he noted, "but I wasn't aware of it."[83]

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[82] Alaska Recreation and Public Purposes parcels 147 and 148, July 28, 1961; files in Alaska State Office, BLM, Anchorage.

[83] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 238; Sidney Logan interview, May 1, 1997.

Jim Rearden, who served as the Homer-based commercial fisheries biologist for ADF&G from 1960 to 1969, recalls that the waters of the future park supported much less activity than Logan had estimated. Rearden, who flew along the coast several times each year, stated in a recent interview that there were "virtually no sports fishermen" in the fjord waters during his tenure in that position. He recalled that the Seward boat harbor had "almost no sports boats before the [1964] quake" and that the waters in the fjords were too rough to allow sport fishing with the boats then available.[84]

Research by historian Mary Barry largely corroborates Logan's and Rearden's recollections. Barry noted that before 1960, Mark Walker's *Breezin' Along* was the only large boat in Seward available for fishing charters. (Several smaller boats also carried small numbers of paying fishermen.) During the early 1960s, there were approximately six charter boats; Jim Lawson and his wife started the Fish House during this period to coordinate fishermen and charter boats. The fishing fleet was largely wiped out in the 1964 earthquake, but a year later several charter boats were again available, the largest being the 83-foot *Maxine*, which carried 49 passengers. In 1968, a new company organizing fishing charters—Resurrection Bay Tours—commenced operations. Don Oldow, a veteran ship pilot, founded the company with his wife Pam. Beginning in 1974, the company began serving the fjord country. It thus played a key role in stimulating tourism to the fjord country, and it also assisted the NPS in its investigations of the proposed park unit.[85]

Ted McHenry, who moved to Seward as a sport fisheries biologist in 1969, recalls that there were "an odd few"—perhaps 20 boats per summer—that went into park waters during his first year or two of residence. Those few were operated primarily by Anchorage people who had "larger boats" moored at the Seward boat harbor. Most of those who sailed into park waters headed for Aialik Bay; others went to Harris Bay. McHenry felt that the boat owners, some of whom were veteran Resurrection Bay sports fishers, were attracted to park waters because they offered better opportunities to harvest halibut, salmon, rockfish, red snapper, black bass, and lingcod.[86]

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[84] Jim Rearden interview, February 24, 1997.

[85] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 349. Elsewhere in her volume (on pages 302-03 and 310), Barry appears to refute some of these statements; she notes, for example, that a 1966 city directory had no listings for "boat rentals and charters," and that the same directory did not list the Fish House.

[86] Ted McHenry interview, April 2, 1997.

If fishing and sightseeing were occasional activities in the future park during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, hunting appears to have been an even rarer activity. Little solid evidence has come to light regarding how much hunting has taken place. Prior to the mid-1960s, few sport hunters were willing to brave the fjord country's rough waters. Hunting pressure was slight for several reasons: the number of large mammals was relatively small, species such as Dall sheep and moose were unavailable, and the megafauna that inhabited the area—black bear and goats—could be harvested with less effort elsewhere. The only hunter known to frequent the outer coastal area during this period was Martin L. Goreson. Whether he hunted in the park is a matter open to debate.

Goreson, who hailed from New York, was one of hundreds of GI's who landed in Seward and served at Fort Raymond. After the war ended, he remained in town as a guard at the mothballed camp until October 1947, when the camp passed into private hands. Goreson then went into the guiding business, and in 1950 he heard about a Fish and Wildlife Service plan to transport goats from the Seward area to Kodiak Island. For two years, agency staff tried and failed to capture any goats; Goreson then stepped forward and volunteered. To the surprise of agency officials, Goreson was able to collect at least five mountain goats, more than enough to successfully initiate a Kodiak Island goat herd.[87] Several local wildlife experts have suggested that Goreson captured at least some of these goats within the boundaries of the present park. Available research, however, suggests that most if not all of his goat gathering took place either on the slopes of Mount Alice (northeast of Seward), near Day Harbor (east of Resurrection Bay), or at South Beach (near Caines Head).[88]

When a national park was being considered for the area in the early 1970s, the state (which favored the status quo) and the National Park Service (which backed a plan that would prohibit hunting) had widely divergent opinions on historical hunting levels. The state, citing the existence of an airstrip (built in 1965) at the head of Beauty Bay, noted that "the lands surrounding Beauty Bay have had a long history of seasonal use by hunters and fishermen because of ... its proximity to Homer." But NPS officials disputed that assertion and countered that "access [to the proposed park] for hunting is limited by the rugged terrain, weather conditions and general accessibility;" for that reason, "relatively

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[87] Real Property Disposal Files, 1944-49, Box 7, in Regional Director's office, Alaska Region (Region 37) collection, RG 270 (War Assets Administration), NARA; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 272; Louis R. Huber, "Mountain Goats – Alive," *Alaska Sportsman* 21 (September 1955), 6.

[88] Jim Branson interview, April 2, 1997; Dave Spencer interview, April 3, 1997; Huber, "Mountain Goats – Alive," 7, 10-11.

few people would be affected" if a park was established. The agency noted that "the wild coastline and the lack of interest generally has kept sport hunting down. Harvest ticket counts ... show relatively low use." Citing ADF&G records for 1973, for example, the NPS noted that nine goat hunters had canvassed the coastline that year and bagged four goats. The NPS further noted that "only one full-time guide out of Seward hunts the fjord coast for mountain goat and black bear, the only two big game species represented in the proposal," and it was quick to point out that most of the guide's income was from non-hunting sources.[89]

In the Resurrection River valley, the NPS recognized that hunting opportunities were more favorable. A government report stated that "hunting of mountain goats also occurs [in the valley], where a few moose may also be taken." The state, however, closed the area along the newly constructed Exit Glacier Road in the early 1970s, probably to enhance wildlife viewing opportunities for tourists (see section below). It reportedly did so "at the request of the Seward Community who wished to encourage the viewing of unhunted wildlife in their natural habitats."[90]

Throughout the quarter-century that followed World War II, Seward itself was a relatively minor tourist draw. As noted above, the completion of the road to Anchorage made Seward accessible to rubber-tire travelers, and out-of-towners to an increasing degree flocked to Seward for the Fourth of July (for the Mount Marathon race and associated activities) and in August (for the Silver Salmon Derby). Except for those two events, however, the town had few tourist attractions. Seward promoters trumpeted that its Fourth Avenue had "the second brightest street in America" (only Chicago's State Street was brighter), and in the mid-1960s the town proclaimed itself the "Fun Capital of Alaska." Those claims, however, did little to change the town's overall perception; as a 1975 article noted, "When you mention Seward, most Alaskans think of a sleepy little town at the end of the highway."[91]

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[89] ADF&G, "Resource Management Recommendations for Kenai Fjords National Park and Surrounding Area," February 24, 1984, 14, at ARLIS; NPS, "Areas of Conflict, Questions and Answers on Kenai Fjords," c. 1977, 2, in KEFJ Collection; Alaska Planning Group, *Proposed Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Monument, Alaska, Final Environmental Statement*, 1975, 91.

[90] NPS, "Areas of Conflict," 2; NPS, *Environmental Assessment and Draft Development Concept Plan, Kenai Fjords National Park, Exit Glacier Area, Alaska*, September 1981, 9; Pat O'Leary interview, December 17, 1996; Bob White interview, December 17, 1996; Alaska Planning Group, *Proposed Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Monument,* 1975, 91.

[91] *The Milepost*, issues of 1968 (p. 259) and 1970 (p. 287); Seward Chamber of Commerce, "What to See and Do" [brochure], 1967, in KEFJ Collection; n.a., "Seward Having a Quiet Boom," *Alaska Industry*, July 1975, 46.

Oil Exploration and Kenai National Moose Range Management

One of the most significant events in Kenai Peninsula's history was the discovery of oil along the Swanson River, northeast of Kenai, in the summer of 1957. Because of the widespread period of oil exploration that preceded the find—and particularly because of the rush of activity that followed it—thousands of people descended on the Kenai, and thousands of acres of wilderness were converted to residential, commercial, and industrial purposes. Paradoxically, however, the only effect that this activity had on land in or near the present park was a blanket prohibition on oil and gas development. The following paragraphs explain how these developments were manifested.

As noted above, President Roosevelt had signed an executive order establishing the Kenai National Moose Range in December 1941. The range had remained intact and generally undisturbed during the war years; shortly after the cessation of hostilities, however, three privately-owned townships in the present Soldotna and Sterling areas were homesteaded and subsequently eliminated from the range. In 1947, a fire started by road workers destroyed 400,000 acres of wildlife and wildfowl habitat on the 2,000,000-acre range; on the heels of that fire, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service set up a headquarters for the range (in Kenai) and dispatched two men there to staff it.[92]

Before long, oil company representatives began to eye the range, and in 1952 seismic exploration began. Exploration, most or all of it taking place north of the Sterling Highway, continued at an increasingly hectic pace for the next several years, in large part because of the pro-development policies of Interior Secretary Douglas McKay. The frantic level of activity slowed in June 1956 when Fred Seaton succeeded McKay; Seaton halted any new oil and gas exploration until impact studies could be completed. But the pressure for development skyrocketed on July 23, 1957, when the Richfield Oil Company announced that one of its wildcat wells had struck a significant oil deposit more than two miles underneath a Swanson River moose pasture.[93]

The Interior Department was soon inundated with requests that would have opened most of the Kenai Moose Range to oil-development activity. Congress reacted to the pressure by holding hearings in Washington because it wanted to know how the agency could simultaneously protect

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[92] Rakestraw, *Forest Service in Alaska*, 147; Spencer, Naske, and Carnahan, "National Wildlife Refuges of Alaska," 128-29.

[93] Spencer, Naske, and Carnahan, "National Wildlife Refuges of Alaska," 131-32.

wildlife and permit petroleum development. Those hearings took place in December 1957. In the face of such development pressure, all the agency could realistically hope to do was shield a reasonable portion of the area from petroleum development. Secretary Seaton, therefore, decided in late January 1958 to close approximately half of the range to oil and gas leasing "because such activities would be incompatible with the management thereof for wildlife purposes."[94] Seaton, however, did not issue a Secretarial Order with that language until July 24 (see Map 10-3). The order declared that most of the range's southern half—including all of the land in the high-elevation country overlooking Skilak and Tustumena lakes—would be off-limits to oil and gas leasing.[95]

Pro-development forces, both inside and outside of government, demanded that Seaton open up more of the moose range to oil development. The agency, worried about a sharp drop in the area moose population, initially refused to budge. Eventually, however, the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife (part of the Fish and Wildlife Service) agreed on a land swap with the Bureau of Land Management and the Alaska Division of Lands. The various agencies agreed that the boundary realignment was "necessary in order to facilitate administration of the Range and as a basis for the survey of adjoining selections by the State of Alaska." The land trade entailed the removal of 310,000 acres of existing refuge land—most of which lay on the Harding Ice Cap and thus had low wildlife values—and added 40,115 acres of land in the Caribou Hills, adjacent to the refuge. On May 22, 1964, Interior Secretary Stewart Udall signed a Public Land Order that codified the land swap. The 270,000-acre reduction was not enough for the Alaska Congressional delegation, which attempted to eliminate another 270,000 acres. (Senator Ernest Gruening, part of the delegation, went so far as to urge that the entire moose range be returned

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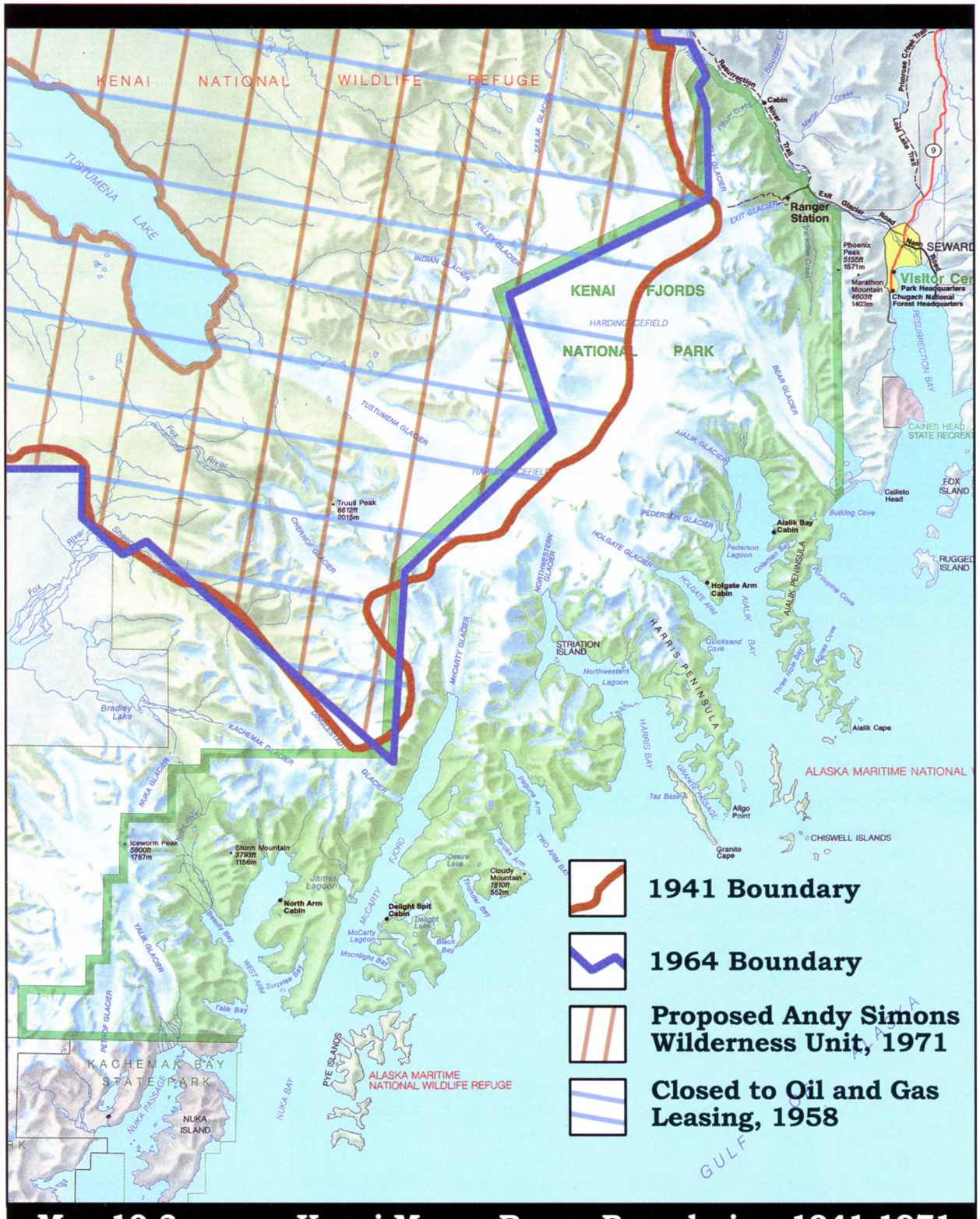
[94] The Alaska Game Commission, in its *Nineteenth Annual Report* (1958), pp. 39-40, noted that "Oil discoveries on the Moose Range were represented to be of such potential importance that the northern half of the Moose Range was opened during the year to oil development under stipulations designed to protect wildlife." The range's southern half, however, was closed "to protect Dall sheep and to guarantee trophy moose."

[95] Spencer, Naske, and Carnahan, "National Wildlife Refuges of Alaska, a Historical Perspective," 132-33; Secretarial Order, July 24, 1958, in Alaska State Office, BLM, Anchorage. This order, while nominally protective of the Kenai Mountains portion of the moose range, was largely inconsequential for two reasons: first, petroleum companies showed no particular interest in this portion of the range; and second, Seaton's administrative action could be reversed by any succeeding Interior Secretary. BLM records indicate that the only oil and gas lease activity in or near present-day Kenai Fjords National Park was located in the Martin Creek-Cottonwood Creek portion of the Resurrection River valley. In September 1957, Joseph T. Sparling of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada applied for a standard 2,560-acre oil and gas lease. He did not develop the area, however, and in January 1961 his lease was terminated. BLM, Application A 038092, in Alaska State Office, Anchorage.



Map 10-3 **Kenai Moose Range Boundaries, 1941-1971**

to the public domain.) That move, however, was squelched, and the boundaries that were established in 1964 remained until the passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act in December 1980.[96]

The agency's early plans for the refuge (and in particular its plans for the Kenai Mountains portion of the refuge, adjacent to the present national park) were by necessity inseparable from the ongoing, petroleum-dominated political atmosphere. Agency officials nevertheless recognized that the range's ecological diversity demanded two different management objectives. Biologist Will Troyer, who wrote an early management document for the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife (BSF&W), stated that the refuge had been created to "support large populations of moose, as well as quality trophy animals." The lowlands, he noted, were managed for high moose populations. The range also, however, had more than 500,000 acres of "spectacular mountain country" that the agency planned to manage for "trophy purposes and high quality hunting enjoyment." He recognized that nearly all hunting in the refuge took place in the lowlands. The managing agency, however, was also "obligated to manage a portion of this area for trophy animals," particularly of Dall sheep.[97] Because most hunting pressure took place in the lowlands, the agency had a largely laissez faire attitude toward the higher elevation areas of the refuge; so far as is known, it conducted no research projects in the highlands portion of the moose range.

During the 1960s and on into the 1970s, the BSF&W's management attitude toward the southeastern portion of the moose range remained consistently protective. In February 1960, for example, the agency released a recreational management plan for the refuge. The plan stated that "a management approach forcefully directed at a wilderness concept is required to preserve a resemblance [sic] of natural conditions caused by the inevitable forces of progress." The plan proposed numerous recreational improvements for the refuge, but none in the southeastern uplands.[98] In April 1971, the Fish and Wildlife Service released a

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[96] Spencer, Naske, and Carnahan, "National Wildlife Refuges of Alaska," 133-34; Public Land Order 3400, May 22, 1964; Rakestraw, *Forest Service in Alaska*, 148. The BSF&W arranged for the 40,000-acre addition in order to facilitate the reintroduction of caribou into the area. In May 1965, and again in April 1966, the agency reintroduced caribou into two portions of the moose range; they were the first of the species seen on the peninsula since they were exterminated in 1913. ADF&G, "Survey-Inventory Progress Report," 1969, p. 3.

[97] Will Troyer, "Moose Management on the Kenai National Moose Range" (FWLB 0519) n.d. (c. 1958), pp. 2, 5, 6, at ARLIS; Alaska Game Commission, *Nineteenth Annual Report* (1958), 38.

[98] BSF&W, "Recreational Management Plan, Kenai National Moose Range, Kenai, Alaska" (FWLB 1134), February 4, 1960, p. 1.

wilderness plan for the refuge; it proposed more than a million acres of wilderness, including a huge Andy Simons Wilderness Unit encompassing all of the refuge's high country. (Simons, at noted above, was a famous, long-time guide who had died just a few years earlier.)[99] That plan was not implemented. Most of the acreage in the Andy Simons Wilderness proposal, however, became congressionally designated wilderness nine years later with the passage of ANILCA.

The Exit Glacier Road

As noted in Chapter 5, Seward citizens had been lobbying off and on since the 1920s for a road that would connect Seward to the Cooper Landing area via the Resurrection and Russian River valleys. Neither Federal nor state funding authorities had ever seriously considered these proposals. The completion of the Sterling Highway, and the connection of the Kenai Peninsula road network to Anchorage, largely negated the need to build such a road. But road-based tourism, which consistently increased during the 1950s and early 1960s, spotlighted the need to develop new area attractions, and the devastation wrought by the 1964 earthquake underscored the critical need to diversify Seward's economy. Herman Leirer, whose family had operated the local dairy since the mid-1920s, was acutely aware that far too many people "drove down the highway into town, then turned around and headed back because there wasn't anything to do."[100]

Leirer, Jack Werner, and other residents felt that "Resurrection Glacier," eight miles northwest of town, would be an excellent new sightseeing destination. In order to access the glacier, they decided to build a road there. By October 1965, they had convinced Seward City Manager Fred Waltz and the city council to take up the cause; they, in turn, organized a committee to complete the seven-mile access road. Many Seward residents, including some of the trainees at the local Skill Center, immediately set to work; the city helped by loaning them graders, loaders, and other equipment. Work continued until cold weather forced a cessation of activity. The following year, work was furthered by a grant from the Alaska Purchase Centennial Commission; efforts continued throughout the warmer months, primarily on weekends.[101]

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[99] BSF&W, "Kenai Wilderness Proposal, Kenai National Moose Range, Alaska," April 1971, centerfold map; USF&WS, "Kenai National Moose Range" photo booklet (FWLB 1056), n.d (1971?); *Seward Phoenix Log*, May 6, 1971, 5. Simons died on September 18, 1962; see *Anchorage Times*, September 20, 1962, 2.

[100] Herman Leirer interview, December 17, 1996; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 40-41.

[101] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 41-42, 346. After several climbers traversed Harding Glacier in April 1968, Resurrection Glacier became known as Exit Glacier because the climbers descended from the icefield at that point. It has been known as Exit Glacier

Work continued at a slower pace until 1970. By that time, four miles of road had been roughed out and the state had expended $58,000. In July 1970, Governor Keith Miller announced that the state would provide an additional $125,000 for road construction; this was intended to be sufficient to complete the road. By the end of the 1971 construction season, a gravel road that was "generally too rough for many passenger cars" had been largely completed from Seward Highway to the east bank of the Resurrection River. West of the river, a 1.75-mile road was bladed out in 1970 between the river and a site 0.2 miles east of Exit Glacier. All that was needed to complete the 9.3-mile road between Seward Highway and the glacier was the construction of two bridges, one of them over the Resurrection River.[102] A decade, however, would pass by before a pedestrian bridge was constructed, and another five years would elapse before vehicle access to the Exit Glacier area was a reality.[103]

Few tourists traveled the rough, unpaved road during the 1960s or 1970s. One user group, however, was the U.S. military. Since 1950, Seward had been home to an Army Recreation Center; the center's primary purpose was to provide deep sea fishing opportunities for troops from Whittier and Fort Richardson. But in 1970, the recreation center—and the Exit Glacier road—became part of rigorous outdoor training program. Twice a week, fifty-man platoons from Fort Richardson were dropped off at the Kenai River-Russian River confluence; from there, they hiked up the trail to Upper Russian Lake, then bushwhacked over the drainage divide and down the Resurrection River valley to the road terminus near Exit Glacier. The four-day hike gave the soldiers practice in survival, patrolling, camouflage, land navigation, and communications. It is unknown whether the military conducted these hikes in other years.[104] The Resurrection River valley remained isolated until the 1980s, when crews

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ever since.

[102] *Seward Phoenix Log*, July 23, 1970, 1; Herman Leirer interview, December 17, 1996; NPS, *Environmental Assessment/Draft Development Concept Plan, Kenai Fjords National Park, Exit Glacier Area, Alaska* (Denver, the author), September 1981, 2, 5, 19; Charles E. Sloan, *Water Resources and Hydrologic Hazards of the Exit Glacier Area near Seward, Alaska,* USGS Water-Resources Investigations Report 85-4247 (Anchorage, 1985), 1.

[103] The pedestrian bridge was completed in late May 1982, and the vehicle bridge was open to traffic in June or July 1986. Seward Chamber of Commerce, *Visitor's Guide* for 1982 (p. 4) and 1986 (p. 20).

[104] *Seward Phoenix Log*, July 2, 1970, 6; Barry, *Seward History, III*, 271, 342. Pat O'Leary, a local U.S. Forest Service staffer, noted in a December 17, 1996 interview that the soldiers may have avoided the Resurrection River valley by taking a roundabout, high-elevation route from Cooper Lake to Lost Lake.

under contract to the U.S. Forest Service completed a 16-mile trail that connected the Exit Glacier road with the Russian Lakes trail.[105]

Mountaineers Explore the Harding Icefield

As noted above, Seward residents generally ignored the huge icefield west of town before 1922. The construction of the Spruce Creek trail that year, however, made it possible to view the upper portions of the icecap, and President Harding's promise to visit the territory was sufficient to bestow his name on the feature. Between the mid-1920s and the early 1930s, the increasing popularity of aviation had given a lucky few the opportunity to soar over the icefield. Up to this point, however, people had walked only on the icefield's margins.[106]

In early 1936, a 27-year-old Swiss immigrant named Yule Kilcher disembarked in Seward. He was headed for Kachemak Bay, where he intended to take up residence, but he was so intrigued by the icefield he had seen from the steamship that he vowed to cross it before long. Unwilling to wait two weeks for a coastal steamer, Kilcher walked to the Homer area, probably by way of the Resurrection River valley. After securing a homestead, he returned to Seward, and in late July he hiked up the Lowell Creek drainage toward the icefield. Conditions on the icefield overwhelmed him, however, and a week later he was back in Seward.[107]

About 1940, two Kenai Peninsula residents, Eugene "Coho" Smith and Don Rising, apparently were successful in their attempt to cross the icefield. They hiked from Bear Glacier west to Tustumena Glacier. The men, however, told no one of their intentions, and once they returned, Smith's wife was the only one that was aware of what they had done.

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[105] On volume III, page 343 of her Seward history, Mary Barry noted that the first seven miles of the trail were cut in the summer of 1982 and that the remaining nine miles were constructed in 1984. However, the 1985 edition of the *Milepost* (p. 289) stated that the trail was still only half finished after the 1984 season, with "plans call[ing] for this trail to be connected with the Russian Lakes trail in 1985."

[106] Based on available sources, the Alaska Planning Group's assertion that "several touring and climbing parties have successfully crossed the Harding Icefield since the 1800s, using Seward as a staging area" is apparently incorrect because it implies that successful crossings were made prior to 1940. APG, *Proposed Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Monument*, 1975, 91.

[107] J. Vin Hoeman, "Crossing the Harding Icefield," *Alaska* 37 (May 1971), 46; Colin Aussant, "Pieces of Yule," *True North* 4 (Spring 1998), 19. One of Yule's granddaughters is Jewel Kilcher, a popular singer.

Their trip remained a virtual secret for more than twenty years after they completed it.[108]

Two parties attempted to cross the icefield in the mid-1960s. In 1963, a party consisting of Don Stockard, Tom Johnson, and Carl Blomgren tried a westbound crossing. Three years later, J. Vin Hoeman, Dave Johnston, and Dr. Grace Jansen made an eastbound attempt. Both attempts were unsuccessful.[109]

In the spring of 1968, the first documented mountaineering party succeeded in crossing the icefield. Ten people were involved in the crossing, which went from Chernof Glacier east to Exit Glacier. Expedition members included Bill Babcock, Eric Barnes, Bill Fox, Dave Johnston, Yule Kilcher and his son Otto, Dave Spencer, Helmut Tschaffert, and Vin and Grace (Jansen) Hoeman. As noted above, Yule Kilcher, Dave Johnston, Vin Hoeman, and Grace Hoeman were veterans of previous attempts; of the ten, only four—Bill Babcock, Dave Johnston, Yule Kilcher, and Vin Hoeman—hiked all the way across the icefield. The expedition left Homer on April 17, bound for Chernof Glacier; eight days later, they descended Exit Glacier and arrived in Seward. Along the way, the party made a first-ever ascent of Truuli Peak, a 6,612–foot eminence that protrudes from the northwestern edge of the icefield near Truuli Glacier.[110]

After the 1968 success, the icefield was crossed with increasing frequency. The Seward newspaper reported that two parties crossed during the summer of 1970, and during the early 1980s an NPS report stated that "1 to 2 Harding Icefield expeditions per year have taken place over the last five years." Most of those traverses began at Exit Glacier and ended in Homer.[111]

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[108] Hoeman, "Crossing the Harding Icefield," 46-47; *Anchorage Daily News*, April 26, 1968, 6.

[109] Hoeman, "Crossing the Harding Icefield," 47.

[110] *Anchorage Daily News*, April 17, 1968, 6; April 26, 1968, 1, 6; Hoeman, "Crossing the Harding Icefield," 47. The 1968 crossing party appears to have been responsible for the name Exit Glacier. As noted in Chapter 5, access-road advocate Herman Leirer, during the mid-1960s, had used the term "Resurrection Glacier." During the mid-1970s, a consultant (B. L. Nishkian, *Recreational Development Potential of the Harding Icefield, Seward, Alaska, as a Year-Round Sports and Scenic Area*, November 5, 1975, in Amy Vincent/1995 Swetmann Report file, Seward Public Library) called the feature Entry Glacier. Neither Leirer's nor Nishkian's terms gained common usage.

[111] *Seward Phoenix Log*, July 2, 1970, 1; July 30, 1970, 1, 12; August 6, 1970, 1-2; David E. Moore (NPS), "Statement for Management, Kenai Fjords National Park," December 1982, 6.

The Harding Ice Field Snowmobile Development

During the 1960s, when mountaineers were showing an increasing amount of interest in crossing the Harding Icefield, local entrepreneurs were beginning to envision the commercial possibilities of taking tourists up to the icefield on short-term excursions.

Commercial interest in the icefield apparently began in the spring of 1966 when Seward resident William C. Vincent made his first visit. Vincent, who ran a plumbing and heating shop, had lived in Seward since 1950; he was a Chamber of Commerce member and a two-term city councilman.[112] Vincent quickly became enthusiastic about the icefield; by January 1967, he had assembled a four-person development team and publicized a five-year icefield development scenario. As his granddaughter later noted, the team "proposed to make the Harding Icefield a visitors resort with glacier skiing, snowmobile tours, summer ski racing camps, mountaineering, outward bound camps, and cross-country ski touring." The first development project would be the construction of a small dock at Bear Glacier.[113]

Vincent's development project was never realized, but others shared his dreams and decided to act. Jim Arness, who operated a snowmachine rental shop in North Kenai, "dreamed up" the idea of establishing a snowmobile touring operation on the icefield near Seward. He therefore teamed up with Joe Stanton, the head of Harbor Air Service, and in the summer of 1969 the two constructed a "shack" on the icefield—reportedly "somewhere near the headwaters of Exit Glacier"—and brought three ski-doos up to the site. The operation that year apparently lasted for only a short time; snows that autumn came so quickly that both their building and one snowmachine were buried before they could be removed. The items were never recovered.[114]

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[112] *Seward Phoenix Log*, October 1, 1970, 1; William C. Vincent to Mr. Clark, February 27, 1971, in Amy Vincent/1995 Swetmann Report file, Seward Public Library.

[113] *Seward Phoenix Log*, January 5, 1967, 3; Amy C. Vincent, "The Harding Ice Field Development" (Swetmann Project), unpub. mss., 1995, in Seward Public Library Collection.

[114] *Cheechako News* [Kenai], May 16, 1970, 5; *Seward Phoenix Log*, June 19, 1970, 12; *Seward Gateway*, July 14, 1927, 4; NPS, *Environmental Assessment, Harding Icefield Tours Concession Permit, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska*, December 1988, 1, in KEFJ Collection. Both Arness and Stanton were longtime Peninsula residents; Stanton was born and raised in Seward (his family had operated the Seward Trading Company back in the 1920s), while Arness was a Fort Raymond soldier during World War II who later settled in Kenai.

Undaunted, the pair returned the following spring and began constructing a 16' x 20' equipment shed and warming hut. Soon afterward, they flew ten ski-doos (nine single-tracks and one double-track) and three ski-boos (sleds) up to the icefield.[115] In May, amid much fanfare, local residents and tourists began flocking to the site; some came to ride the snowmachines, but others wanted to ski, snowshoe, or merely sightsee. By early June, approximately 100 people had been flown up to the icefield, and by late July an estimated 200 to 300 had made the trip. To judge by contemporary accounts, reaction to the operation was overwhelmingly positive; local resident Dot Bardarson noted that her flight and snowmachine ride was "the best $70 I ever spent." The project's backers, sensing that it would be a long-term success, laid plans to increase the size of their operation. They envisioned a $1.5 million construction project that would include a gondola lift system (to take people to the top of Exit Glacier), a summit station, a lower terminal, and a T-bar lift near the warming hut.[116]

But in early July 1970, the operation hit a major snag when Bureau of Land Management officials in Anchorage read newspaper accounts about it. They quickly learned that the operation was being held on BLM land—and thus needed an agency-issued Special Land Use Permit—but Arness, the operation's organizer, had not applied for one. Making the situation far murkier was Interior Secretary Stewart Udall's 1966 land freeze order. This action withdrew the Harding Icefield (along with most of Alaska's unreserved public land) from entry; as a result, Arness would not have been approved for a permit even had he applied for one. BLM official Sherman Berg drove to Kenai on July 9 and discussed the matter with Arness; Berg personally expressed hope that a satisfactory resolution could be worked out, but he could promise nothing. Meanwhile, the agency handed Arness a tresspass injunction. He was given thirty days to quit his operation and vacate the area.[117]

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[115] *Seward Phoenix Log*, May 14, 1970, 1; June 4, 1970, 1; Harding Ice Cap" file folder, Mike Tetreau Collection, KEFJ; Bob White interview, December 17, 1996. The shelter had a gas range, gas heater, bed, table, chair, and several sleeping bags. Arland Zimmerman, who served as a snowmachine mechanic, and his twelve-year-old son Gary lived there off and on that summer.

[116] *Seward Phoenix Log*, June 4, 1970, 1; June 19, 1970, 12; Alaska Planning Group, *Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Monument, Alaska, A Master Plan*, December 1973, 9: Amy C. Vincent, "The Harding Ice Field Development."

[117] *Seward Phoenix Log*, July 16, 1970, 1, 12; July 23, 1970, 5; Alaska Planning Group, *Proposed Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Monument, Alaska, Final Environmental Statement*, 1975, 93. The press initially reported that the BLM had acted because two people with a potential interest in the icefield—"an Anchorage businesswoman dealing in land development and an official of the Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District"—had called at the agency's Anchorage office. One apparently wanted to buy land on the icecap and made reference to the snowmobile operation. Berg, however,

Seward area residents, predictably, were saddened by the BLM's decision. The *Seward Phoenix Log*, in an editorial, said "Let us hope that something can be done to see that the Cap development continues—it means a lot to Seward and the rest of the Kenai Peninsula." H. A. "Red" Boucher, who was running for governor at the time, visited the icefield on July 20; he vowed to keep it open and wrote a lengthy letter to BLM officials protesting the planned expulsion.[118]

The actions of Boucher, Arness, and local officials gave the operators a little breathing room; the operation's deadline to vacate was extended from August to November. But on the larger question, the BLM could not budge, perhaps because of the precedent that such an action would have had on other Alaska public lands. Given that scenario, the operation continued in business until September 1970, perhaps later. The operators, however, were forced to leave so quickly (perhaps because of a heavy, late-season snowstorm) that, as in 1969, they left their warming hut in place where it was engulfed by the winter's snowfall. As for the snowmobiles, several more were lost. One account states that two were buried near the warming hut, while another avers that the operators attempted to drive three off the icefield but became stuck in the crevasses of Bear Glacier.[119]

Bill Vincent, who fully supported the Arness-Stanton operation, refused to give up. He recognized that the icefield was an attraction that "would offer something strangely unique to visitors regardless of where they may have come from." Comparing the area to Columbia Icefield in Canada's Jasper National Park, he furthermore noted that the icefield could be put to any number of uses, including "a military testing area for arctic equipment and survival and an international type hotel." As late as February 1971, he wrote that his group "still plan[s] on seeking private capital to develop the field."[120] The continuing land freeze and the long battle over Alaska's national interest lands, however, prevented any such plans from being implemented, at least in the short term.

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responded to the newspaper's allegation by stating that "he was going to act on the trespass regardless of their visit to the office."

[118] *Seward Phoenix Log*, July 16, 1970, 1, 12; July 23, 1970, 1; Boucher to Vern Stahl (BLM), July 22, 1970, in "Harding Ice Cap" file folder, Tetreau files, KEFJ.

[119] "Harding Ice Cap" folder, Tetreau files, KEFJ; *Seward Phoenix Log*, July 23, 1970, 1; NPS, *Environmental Assessment, Harding Icefield Tours Concession Permit, Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska*, December 1988, 1; Mike Tetreau interview, December 17, 1997.

[120] William C. Vincent, "The Harding Icefield," unpub. mss., c. 1969; Vincent to Terry Fleming (Alaska Department of Highways), n.d.; Vincent, "Harding Icefield Development," c. 1969; Vincent to Mr. Clark, February 27, 1971; all in Amy Vincent/Swetmann Report file, Seward Public Library.

One positive spinoff of Vincent's publicity and the Arness-Stanton operation was a revival of interest in Seward-based tourist flights over the icefield. As noted above, flights over the icefield had been advertised, primarily to Seward residents, for short-term periods in both the 1920s and 1930s. In the decades that followed, some tourists doubtless arranged for overflights with Seward- or Homer-based pilots. But no one, so far as is known, advertised such a service. Beginning in 1970, however, the *Milepost*—a well-known tourist publication—began to advertise the beauty of the Harding Ice Cap in its Seward section and also urged tourists to see the Ice Cap "via charter plane trips." This verbiage, often accompanied by advertisements from local air taxis, remained in future *Milepost* issues as well as in other local promotional literature.[121]

Federal Efforts to Preserve the Icefield and Fjords, 1968-1980

The National Natural Landmark Nomination

Prior to the late 1960s, federal and state authorities had paid little attention to the coastal fjord country. Early efforts, as noted in previous chapters, had been limited to U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey investigations in the 1904-06 period, a U.S. Geological Survey visit in 1909, and occasional visits by USGS and Bureau of Mines personnel in the 1920s and 1930s. The military showed a brief interest in the area during the early 1940s; then, a decade later, the Fish and Wildlife Service began stationing personnel at various area sites. The newly established Alaska Department of Fish and Game continued this practice for a year or two; for the remainder of the decade, however, their presence was limited to aerial flights related to fish management activities. The Fish and Wildlife Service, according to a former agency official, also tried to do waterfowl surveys along the southern Kenai coastline "sometime during the 1960s" as part of a broad study on wintering waterfowl along the Alaska coast. Due to poor weather, however, the agency "didn't get much good data" from the Kenai coast. In 1956, the territorial ADF&G had conducted a sheep survey at nearby Cooper Mountain and in the mountains surrounding Crescent Lake; the agency did not conduct surveys within the boundaries of the present park, however, until goat inventories were conducted in 1968 and 1969.[122]

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[121] *Milepost*, issues of 1970 (p. 287) and 1971 (p. 335); Seward Chamber of Commerce, "Seward, Alaska" [brochure], 1973.

[122] Dave Spencer interview, April 3, 1997; ADF&G, "Survey-Inventory Progress Report" for 1969 (p. 83) and 1970 (p. 58), at ADF&G Library. Another research effort was made in 1908. "Professors Stevens and Carter" visited Yalik Bay supposedly "seeking speci-

The late 1960s brought a new governmental study of the area. The National Park Service, which had previously shown no interest in the southern Kenai coast, contracted with an Anchorage college to evaluate the Harding and Sargent Icefields for the National Natural Landmarks (NNL) program.

The NNL program was fairly new, the NPS having launched it in 1962. The agency established the program in order to recognize and encourage the preservation of significant natural lands. The NNL program was akin to the National Historic Landmarks program, which had been established two years earlier; the agency created both programs, in part, because of the increasing difficulty of adding new units to the NPS system. On March 17, 1964, Interior Secretary Stewart L. Udall announced the inclusion of the first seven areas in the new NNL system. None were in Alaska.[123]

In the spring of 1967, the agency began to turn its attention to the forty-ninth state. That April, Lake George—a site near Anchorage that was well known for its annual outburst floods—was declared the first Alaska NNL. A month later, NPS Assistant Director Theodor Swem allotted $20,000 for studies of potential natural landmarks. As a result of that and subsequent allotments, approximately fifty Alaska features had been evaluated for the program by the end of 1969. Investigators stated that more than forty of those sites were qualified to be National Natural Landmarks. Only fifteen of those sites, however, were named as NNLs.[124]

In May 1968, officials in NPS's Alaska Field Office moved to have the Harding and Sargent Icefields evaluated as a National Natural Landmark. Several factors apparently moved the NPS to take this action. First, NPS planner Craig Breedlove—one of the few employees in the agency's Anchorage office at that time—had flown over the icefields in the spring of 1967 and had been impressed by their beauty and expanse. Second, a mountaineering party had just completed a well-publicized traverse of the Harding Icefield. Third, the huge size and uniqueness of the icefields

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mens" for the University of Oklahoma. OU officials, however, have no records of either professor or of items they may have collected. *Seward Weekly Gateway*, May 30, 1908, 1.

[123] Ronald F. Lee, *Family Tree of the National Park System* (Philadelphia, Eastern National Parks and Monuments Association, 1972), 43.

[124] G. Frank Williss, *"Do Things Right the First Time": The National Park Service and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980* (Denver, NPS, September 1985), 45; NNL Files, RG 79, NARA ANC. For more information on Lake George and similar "self-dumping" lakes, see Austin Post and Laurence R. Mayo, *Glacier Dammed Lakes and Outburst Floods in Alaska*, USGS Hydrologic Investigations Atlas HA-455 (Washington, GPO, 1972), 4. Of the forty-odd sites recommended as NNLs, one was placed on the list in 1967, eight in 1968, and six in 1970.

demanded their inclusion on an inventory of this type; as the report evaluating the icefields noted, "The uniqueness of these areas was deemed worthy of investigation for a natural landmark site."[125]

On May 21, NPS officials tendered a contract with Anchorage Community College, and paleontologist Ruth A. M. Schmidt agreed to evaluate the icefields' NNL eligibility. Dr. Schmidt first discussed the icefields with Dr. Troy Péwé, a geologist at the University of Arizona and with H. R. Schmoll of the U.S. Geological Survey. Then, on July 24, she flew over the icefields. The following January 20, she submitted a report to the NPS stating that the Harding and Sargent icefields were two of only three relict glacial icefields located wholly within the United States. (Bagley Icefield, east of Cordova, was the third.) They furthermore represented "vanishing geological phenomena." She noted that there seemed "little possibility that man will endanger the integrity of either of these ice fields." She cautioned, however, that "at the present time, they are reasonably free of man-caused influences, and as such, are rare examples of our country's natural heritage." She thus found them outstanding on several counts, and concluded that "the Harding and Sargent Ice Fields are eligible for inclusion in the National Registry for Natural Landmarks."[126]

George Hall, who headed the NPS's Alaska Field Office, forwarded Schmidt's recommendations on to the Washington office. In a May 27, 1969 letter, Hall told Assistant Director Theodor Swem that the recently-completed evaluation of the two icefields "indicates that they are rare examples of our country's national heritage.... We recommend that [they] be strongly considered for eligibility under the Natural Landmarks program."[127] Despite Hall's urging and Schmidt's ringing endorsement, however, the nomination was not forwarded through either the NPS's Washington office or the Interior Secretary's office, and the site was not declared eligible for the NNL list. The Joint Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission, an interagency group studying Alaska lands issues, stated in the early 1970s that the icefields had "ecological reserve

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[125] Ruth A. M. Schmidt, "Evaluation of Harding and Sargent Ice Fields, Alaska, for Eligibility for Registered Natural National Landmarks," January 20, 1969, p. 1, in "123-Harding Icefield" folder, NNL collection, RG 79, NARA ANC; Donald S. Follows (Keyman, HIKF) to Chief, Professional Services, May 9, 1977, in "Geology" folder, KEFJ HRS Collection.

[126] Schmidt, "Evaluation of Harding and Sargent Ice Fields, Alaska," 2, 4; Donald S. Follows, "The Role of Nuka Island in a Kenai Fjords National Park Proposal," unpub. mss., December 12, 1977, 6.

[127] Hall to Director NPS (Attn: Assistant Director, Cooperative Activities, WASO), May 27, 1969, in "N44 Harding & Sargent Icefields (126-359), Anchorage Community College" file folder in "123-Harding Icefield" accordion folder, NNL collection, RG 79, NARA ANC.

potential," but the icefields never attained either NNL or ecological reserve status.[128]

The Seward National Recreation Area Proposal

As noted above, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service made several moves, on the heels of the Kenai Peninsula oil-exploration frenzy, to protect portions of the Kenai National Moose Range. In 1958, it had declared about half of the range—including all of its land in the Kenai Mountains—off-limits to oil exploration. Six years later, a Secretarial Order had modified the range's boundaries to eliminate much of its ice-cap acreage. In order to protect its remaining high-elevation acreage, however, the agency submitted a proposal in April 1971 that would have put more than a million acres of the range in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Just a month before the Fish and Wildlife Service submitted its wilderness proposal for the Kenai National Moose Range, Alaska's congressional delegation began making its own proposals for the huge amount of Forest Service and BLM land located elsewhere on the peninsula. On March 24, 1971, Senator Ted Stevens submitted Senate Bill 1356, which would have established a 1,400,000-acre Seward National Recreation Area, to be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture. The proposed NRA stretched from Crow Pass (near Girdwood) all the way south to Godwin Glacier (east of Seward); west of Seward, it also included Exit Glacier, Lowell Glacier, and more than 50,000 acres of the Harding Ice Cap. In commenting on the bill, Stevens remarked that the NRA would be managed "for public outdoor recreation benefits and the conservation of biotic, scenic, scientific, geologic, historic and other values." But the bill, which was patterned after legislation that established other National Forest

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[128] Alaska Planning Group, *Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Monument,* December 1973, 18. In 1985, the icefields were again considered for NNL status as part of a broad theme study that was prepared by Robert B. Forbes and David B. Stone at the University of Alaska Fairbanks Geophysical Institute. In this study, the two icefields were considered separately; the former, they noted, "is an excellent example of a glacial relict.... Comparatively, however, [its] features are equaled or exceeded by other icefields, fiords, and tidal glaciers in coastal Alaska." In a similar vein, they concluded that "the glacial features of the Sargent Icefield do not merit a high rating when compared to similar features elsewhere in the coastal ranges of Alaska." Both icefields were ranked low, for two reasons: they were ranked as being relatively insignificant and they were already in a protected land status. The study also evaluated Aialik Peninsula south of Three Hole Bay because the many drowned cirques created an excellent example of "biscuit-board" topography. The author noted, however, that "neither the theme nor the relative quality of the site merit a high significance priority." Forbes and Stone, *Proposed Geological Natural Landmarks and Themes for the Pacific Mountain System, Alaska, Part I,* prepared for the Division of Natural Landmarks, NPS (Fairbanks, UAF Geophysical Institute, 1985), 126, 278-286.

recreation areas, allowed a broad mix of land uses, including timber-cutting, mining, sport hunting, and other forms of recreational use. Most of the land involved in the proposal was U.S. Forest Service land, but some 116,000 acres (including the ice cap acreage) was on BLM land. (Within two years, as noted below, the NPS would be formulating its own proposals for the BLM portion of the Seward NRA proposal.)[129]

Inasmuch as the bill creating the Seward NRA largely perpetuated the status quo, local residents appear to have favorably viewed S. 1356. Before long, Alaska's sole House member, Nick Begich, submitted a similar bill in that body. The BLM, which had a multiple-use philosophy similar to that of the Forest Service, also favored the bill; in its 1971 report on the legislation, the agency proposed extending Seward NRA's proposed boundaries south to the coast to include Aialik and Harris bays. As is noted in a section below, proposals for a Seward NRA remained active for the remainder of the decade, though it soon became one of many competing proposals regarding Kenai Peninsula's (and Alaska's) public lands.[130]

Proposed Interior Department Reservations

In December 1971 the fate of the Seward NRA proposal, and the status of public lands throughout Alaska, was cast in an entirely new mold when Congress passed, and President Nixon signed, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). The bill's primary aim was to provide a land settlement, and cash payments, to Alaska's Native peoples. But one small provision inserted into the bill—Section 17(d)(2)—set the stage for a public debate that would dominate Alaska for the remainder of the 1970s. This provision demanded that Congress, within a seven-year time frame, determine the fate of Alaska's federal public lands by including them in one of several protective classifications.[131]

The general outline of the Alaska public lands debate, which culminated in the December 1980 passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, is fairly well known. Historian Frank Williss has written a comprehensive account of this process from the National Park Service's point of view. The present study will present only a general outline of how

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[129] *Seward Phoenix Log,* April 8, 1971, 5; Alaska Planning Group, *Proposed Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Monument,* 1975, 17; *Congressional Record* 117 (1971), 7657-58.

[130] APG, *Proposed Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Monument,* 1975, 17; Rakestraw, *Forest Service in Alaska,* 168; Kerry Martin interview, December 17, 1996.

[131] G. Frank Williss, *"Do Things Right the First Time,"* 89-93.

the Kenai Fjords National Park proposal developed; a more detailed account is within the purview of an administrative history.

When ANCSA was passed in December 1971, both the NPS and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service had already shown an interest in the area. The F&WS had been managing a large part of the Kenai Peninsula for more than thirty years, and it had previously exhibited some research interest in the southern coast. The NPS, for its part, had had several exposures with the area. NPS planner Craig Breedlove, as previously noted, had flown over Harding Icefield five years earlier. In 1968-69, the agency contracted with the University of Alaska regarding the Harding and Sargent Icefields NNL nomination. During the summer of 1970, Breedlove and NPS planner Richard Stenmark made an overflight of the southern coastline in order to gather information for Interior Secretary Walter Hickel's Alaska Parks and Monuments Advisory Committee. Perhaps the most significant event had taken place during the summer of 1971, when NPS Director George Hartzog accompanied Senator Alan Bible (D-NV) on a visit to the southern Kenai coast. Perhaps as a result of the Hartzog-Bible visit, Director Hartzog outlined the so-called Kenai Fjords[132] area as one of several proposed parks and monuments in a November 1971 memorandum. Theodor Swem, who as the NPS's Assistant Director for Cooperative Activities was Hartzog's right-hand man on this issue, recognized that the NPS knew little about the area outside of what had been written in the Harding Icefield report. Swem, recalling that period, stated that "We probably thought that the Icefield wouldn't qualify on its own, so we asked about surrounding values as well. Probably Dick Stenmark or someone else had the answer, and told us they deserved consideration."[133]

In the wake of ANCSA's passage, NPS officials recognized that the agency would be competing with other federal agencies for the right to manage the hundreds of millions of acres of Alaska national interest lands. The NPS, therefore, quickly began to prioritize its interests. By early January

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[132] Donald S. Follows notes that Craig Breedlove and NPS planner Richard Stenmark decided upon the term "Kenai Fjords" as a proposal name, probably in 1971. It was not until 1977 that the name also came to be applied to "a set of geotectonic and glacial features" located between Port Dick to Cape Resurrection. Follows to Chief, Professional Services, May 9, 1977, in "Geology" folder, KEFJ HRS Collection; Follows, "The Role of Nuka Island in a Kenai Fjords National Park Proposal," unpub. mss., December 12, 1977, 4-5.

[133] Williss, *"Do Things Right the First Time,"* 39, 51-53, 75-79; Richard Stenmark to Norris, October 31, 1997; Theodor Swem to Norris, March 17, 1997. On page 27 of his history, Williss notes that during the mid-1950s or even earlier, the NPS had surveyed the "Kenai" area. A report of this survey has not been located; it may or may not pertain to the present park area.

1972, planner Richard Stenmark had assembled the agency's first rough list of proposed park areas, and on March 9—in accordance with an ANCSA-imposed timetable—Interior Secretary Rogers C. B. Morton made a preliminary withdrawal of approximately 80 million acres of so-called "d-2" land. Some 33.4 million of those acres had been withdrawn at the NPS's request.[134]

During the three-month period that followed the passage of ANCSA, the NPS showed a schizophrenic attitude toward the Kenai Peninsula's southern coast. In one January 1972 list of proposed parks, for example, Stenmark included the area, but another such list that month overlooked it. As the winter wore on, according to Williss, the area remained a more consistent priority in the minds of NPS officials. But by this time, Natives within the newly formed Chugach Alaska Corporation had made it known that they planned to claim much of the fjord country, using the "deficiency lands" clause, as part of their ANCSA allotments. Those claims threatened to prevent the NPS (or any other federal agency) from assembling a cohesive management unit. In order to meet the 80 million acre limit, therefore, the NPS deleted the Kenai Fjords area from its March 1972 list and allowed the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife (part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) to claim the area as part of its Aialik withdrawal area. Morton withdrew some 139,600 acres along the Kenai Peninsula's southern coast, much of which is now included in the present park.[135]

According to the ANCSA timetable, the Interior Secretary was mandated to make a final withdrawal of "d-2" lands by mid-September. The various public lands agencies, therefore, spent the next several months studying Alaska's public lands in order to ensure the selection of appropriate parcels. By July, the NPS had submitted a proposal to Secretary Morton that would have added 48.9 million acres to the NPS system. Included in that proposal was a 95,400-acre NPS unit in the so-called Kenai Fjords area southwest of Seward. This unit, by far the smallest of the eleven proposed areas, consisted of three small, separated subunits: two along the coast (in the Pye and Chiswell islands, respectively) and a third in the Exit Glacier area, near the northern edge of the icecap. Richard Stenmark, the NPS planner, recalls that the unit's existence in the NPS package was largely due to the "insistent" efforts of Craig Breedlove, who had "decided that Kenai Fjords was salvageable" and should be studied further.[136]

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[134] Williss, *"Do Things Right the First Time,"* 104-05.

[135] *Ibid.*, 98, 104-05, 117; Swem to Norris, March 17, 1997; Stenmark to Norris, October 31, 1997.

[136] Williss, *"Do Things Right the First Time,"* 107, 115, 117; Stenmark to Norris, October

Over the summer, the agency juggled many of the other proposals in its Alaska proposal package. In mid-September, the number of acres in the final withdrawal for proposed NPS units had shrunk from 48.9 million acres to 41.7 million acres. But the Kenai Fjords proposal remained as it had in July. Small as it was, Williss notes that "the Park Service received most of the land [that] Alaska Task Force planners believed necessary for study as potential parklands."[137] The F&WS, at this juncture, probably had its own proposal to manage other areas within the present park.

The next ANCSA-imposed deadline was December 18, 1973, a date by which draft environmental impact statements (EISs) and conceptual master plans would be submitted by the various agencies. During the fifteen-month period that preceded this deadline, the various agencies completed a series of progressively sophisticated study packages. In regard to the southern Kenai coast, NPS and F&WS officials were well aware that their interests overlapped; they therefore proposed various ways in which to manage that area.

In May 1973, the NPS completed its Kenai Fjords study package. Based on that study, agency officials apparently concluded that dual management would best serve the coastal areas. By mid-June, the NPS's Alaska Task Force had met with the interagency Alaska Planning Group; the APG, in turn, endorsed the idea of a proposed 100,000-acre Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Park. The NPS would manage the icefield portion of the park; the NPS and BSF&W would jointly manage the two coastal units.[138]

During the months that followed, the cooperative spirit of the two agencies apparently rose and fell. In September 1973, the Fish and Wildlife Service issued a Draft Environmental Statement for a BSF&W-managed Aialik National Wildlife Refuge, which would include the Pye and Chiswell islands. Three months later, Secretary Morton approved an NPS-issued master plan for a 300,000-acre Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Monument, in which the Pye and Chiswell islands units—as before—would be cooperatively managed by the NPS and BSF&W. The NPS proposal was far larger than in September 1972 because it included far more land on the Harding Icefield; it was renamed a monument, apparently because the Harding Icefield dominated the proposed acreage.[139]

31, 1997.

[137] Williss, *"Do Things Right the First Time,"* 123-24, 127.

[138] *Ibid.,* 135-37.

[139] Edgar P. Bailey, "Breeding Seabird Distribution and Abundance Along the South

Throughout the two-year period that followed the passage of ANCSA, the NPS was well aware that much of the land in the proposed monument was Native deficiency land. Agency officials could only wait until the Native corporations made their land selections. They hoped, obviously, that Native officials would select relatively few of the lands within the NPS proposal boundaries. If Natives did select lands within the proposed park, NPS officials knew that cooperative management agreements with the new landowners would be necessary in order to ensure a viable, manageable park unit. NPS officials, unsure of how the land selection process would unfold, purposely drew conservative boundaries for the proposed park. In order to indicate additional lands in which the agency had an interest, the NPS placed some 453,000 acres of adjacent Native-claimed lands in a so-called "area of environmental concern" that linked and expanded the three subunits of the national monument proposal.[140]

Congress Establishes Kenai Fjords National Park

Once the master plan and draft EISs had been submitted to the Interior Secretary, agencies proceeded to prepare final environmental statements (FESs). These documents were completed in late 1974 or early 1975. The FES for Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Monument envisioned a similar management scenario from that suggested a year earlier; the size of the proposed monument was now 305,000 acres, and it still called for joint management of the two coastal units.[141]

The completion of the master plans and draft EISs also meant that Congress was now free to either consider the recommendations that Secretary Morton had issued or propose a legislative alternative. Congress, however, showed little inclination to act. From 1974 through 1976, several bills were submitted to resolve the national interest lands question—most of them piecemeal in nature—but none became law.

During this period, several major developments took place. In one major action, the Chugach Alaska Corporation decided to select most of their

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Side of the Kenai Peninsula, AK," Cooperative Research Project, NPS/USF&WS, December 1976, 1; Williss, *"Do Things Right the First Time,"* 143-45. Theodor Swem, in a March 17, 1997 letter to Frank Norris, noted that "The only real difference on Kenai that I remember was that Keith Trexler, who was a strong supporter, thought that it should be a National Park, and I, who had worked on classification criteria when I first moved to Washington, thought it would be better as a National Monument. Keith would have been pleased over the outcome."

[140] Williss, *"Do Things Right the First Time,"* 117, 137, 149.

[141] Alaska Planning Group, *Proposed Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Monument*, 1975, 3-5.

deficiency acreage in areas outside the park. As a result of that action, federal managers felt more confident that Congress could enact legislation creating a single park unit rather than three noncontiguous subunits as had previously been the case.[142] The other major action was that the NPS and BSF&W, acting in a joint capacity, funded a scientific study in the proposed park unit. Both agencies recognized that wildlife was one of the major area resources, but little baseline information was at hand. The NPS, therefore, bankrolled a cooperative wildlife survey. Edgar Bailey and Nina Faust spent a month in the field in June and July 1976. The results of their survey were published later that year.[143]

During the mid-1970s, several alternative scenarios emerged on how the Alaska lands question could be resolved along the Kenai Peninsula's southern coast. Conservationists, predictably, hoped to see a relatively large unit with restricted land-use provisions. In November 1973, for example, the Sierra Club and the Wilderness Society issued a proposal for a 600,000-acre Kenai Fjords National Ecological Reserve. Shortly after learning about the Chugach Native corporation action, the NPS made a similar proposal for a large national monument. Alaskans, however, preferred a less restrictive environment. Seward-area citizens appear to have rallied around Senator Stevens's Seward National Recreation Area proposal, and the Joint Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission (which had strongly influenced Secretary Morton's September 1972 proposals) recommended an Alaska parks package that completely ignored the southern Kenai coast.[144]

The Seward NRA proposal, as noted above, was particularly popular among local citizens because it catered to their interests while providing few additional land use or lifestyle limitations. Locals also liked the bill because it proposed an expanded management role for the U.S. Forest Service, an agency that had been a part of community life for many years. Senator Stevens had submitted a bill to enact the Seward NRA several months before ANCSA was enacted; the following year, Rep. Begich submitted a similar bill in the U.S. House, and Stevens resubmitted the bill in the next three congresses.[145]

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[142] Williss, *"Do Things Right the First Time,"* 167-68.

[143] Donald S. Follows, "The Role of Nuka Island in a Kenai Fjords National Park Proposal," unpub. mss., December 12, 1977, 5-6; Bailey, "Breeding Seabird Distribution and Abundance."

[144] Williss, *"Do Things Right the First Time,"* 152, 168, 170.

[145] Alaska Planning Group, *Proposed Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Monument,* 1975, 17. For information on the Seward NRA bill in later (1975 and 1977) congresses, see Ted Stevens to Jay Hammond, October 3, 1975 and Hammond to Stevens, October 24, 1975, both in File NR-1, Series 88, RG 01, ASA; Rakestraw, *Forest Service in Alaska,* 168; and M. Woodbridge Williams, "Kenai Fjords: Treasure Unveiled," *National Parks and*

The Seward City Council made no secret that it backed the NRA proposal, and it actively fought any attempts to allow NPS management of area resources. Shortly after the NPS issued its master plan and draft EIS for the proposed Harding Icefield-Kenai Fjords National Monument, the Council passed a resolution opposing the agency's plans "because we support the Multiple Use Management philosophy for this area." Instead, it supported "the concept of a Seward National Recreation Area ... because of the unique terrain characteristics which lend themselves to year-round boating activity, professional, amateur and cross-country skiing, and other unlimited snow-oriented recreational events." The NPS would have had a difficult time organizing local support for its monument proposal under the best of circumstances; the agency, however, failed to contact either municipal or borough authorities and gather their input during the preparation of the master plan and draft EIS. The Council's anti-NPS resolution passed in February 1974; two years later, it passed a nearly identical resolution.[146]

In November 1976, Jimmy Carter defeated Gerald Ford in a close presidential election. A few months later, former Idaho governor Cecil Andrus became the new Interior Secretary. Carter and Andrus quickly made it known that they intended to break the legislative logjam over the Alaska lands issue. In early January 1977, Morris Udall, who headed the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, submitted H.R. 39, a bill backed by many national conservation groups. The bill called for a 600,000-acre Kenai Fjords National Monument, to be administered by the National Park Service. Opposing Udall's bill was one by Rep. John D. Dingell, which would have placed much of the fjord country in an F&WS-managed national wildlife refuge; that bill would have permitted sport hunting in some areas. Senator Stevens, as noted above, still advocated the establishment of a Seward NRA, which covered part of the fjord country and mandated relatively few restrictions on mining, timber cutting and other consumptive activities. None of these bills, it should be noted, called for joint management of the coastal portion of the park. The joint management idea was probably abandoned because the Natives' land-selection decision a year earlier allowed federal agencies to propose one

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Conservation Magazine, September 1977, 10.

[146] Seward City Council, Resolution No. 899 (February 25, 1974) and Resolution No. 935 (January 12, 1976); NPS, "Areas of Conflict, Questions and Answers on Kenai Fjords," n.d. [c. 1977], 1. The resolutions were apparently the work of B. C. Hulm, a councilman who also worked at the local Forest Service office. After the park was established, a greater sense of harmony developed between the City and the NPS. On January 14, 1985, the City Council, in Resolution 85-5, rescinded both of its previous resolutions.

cohesive unit rather than the three subunits that had been put forth during the early 1970s.[147]

During the spring and summer of 1977, two major decisions were made regarding the fate of the various public lands proposals along the Kenai's southern coast. First, the NPS decided to call the proposed unit a national park instead of a national monument. An NPS document written shortly afterward noted that the name change, in part, was the result of local input:

> Several people have suggested that the area should have a name to draw future tourism to the peninsula. The more famous term "National Park" was used to respond to a specific request from the President of the Seward Chamber of Commerce.

But the diversity of resources—coastal as well as glacial—also played a role in the name change. The NPS discovered that "field investigations of the area in 1976 revealed an area of rich scenic diversity and geological interpretive values." The agency felt that wildlife values not as high as the Fish and Wildlife Service had reported; the area's setting, however, was inarguably impressive. An NPS official noted that "the pristine area of Federal land with such a diversity of multiple experience values" allowed the area to qualify for national park status.[148]

The other major decision made during this period was that the Interior Department chose the National Park Service—and not the Fish and Wildlife Service—to represent the Department in future public land proposals for the lion's share of the southern Kenai coast. As noted above, both the NPS and the F&WS had long been interested in the area. On August 18, 1977, however, Assistant Interior Secretary Robert L. Herbst decided that the NPS would manage the mainland while the F&WS would manage most of the offshore islands. Historian Frank Williss notes that Secretary Andrus had ordered Interior agencies to make a thorough review of the 1973 Morton proposals; based on that order, F&WS officials had recommended that the fjord country be added to the wildlife refuge system. But "intensive lobbying" by NPS officials resulted in Herbst's August 18 decision.[149] That agreement stipulated that the F&WS would manage the Pye, Chiswell, and other offshore islands (but not Nuka

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[147] Williss, *"Do Things Right the First Time,"* 173-74, 177; Williams, "Kenai Fjords: Treasure Unveiled," 10.

[148] NPS, "Areas of Conflict, Questions and Answers on Kenai Fjords," c. 1977, 9.

[149] Williss, *"Do Things Right the First Time,"* 182-83, 188-89; Stenmark to Norris, October 31, 1997.

Island) as part of a new Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, which stretched from the Craig-Hydaburg area to the Aleutian Islands and north to the Chukchi Sea. Before long, language reflecting Herbst's decision had been placed in several congressional bills addressing the Alaska lands question.[150]

On September 15, 1977, Interior Secretary Andrus responded to Udall's H.R. 39 (the primary legislative vehicle at that time) and recommended a 410,000-acre Kenai Fjords National Park. This was far less than the 757,000-acre park proposal that NPS Director William Whalen had recommended a month earlier. Regarding the wilderness issue, Andrus agreed with Whalen; the Interior Department proposal called for 340,000 acres in the park to be managed as wilderness. In addition to recommending the establishment of a new park along the southern Kenai coast, Andrus also recommended that 230,000 acres be added to the Kenai National Moose Range and that 1,350,000 acres in the newly enlarged moose range be managed as wilderness.[151]

For the next several months, the House of Representatives considered several Alaska lands bills. Alaska's sole House member, Don Young, spearheaded an effort to have the Kenai Fjords area managed as a wildlife refuge. That effort fell short, however, and on May 19, 1978, the House passed H.R. 39, which called for a 420,000-acre Kenai Fjords National Park. In the Senate, the Energy and Natural Resources Committee passed a public lands bill; that bill, insofar as it pertained to the Kenai Fjords area, agreed with the House's overall boundary recommendations but eliminated the House's 340,000-acre wilderness proposal. The Senate committee, trying to be accurate, recalculated the area within the park proposal to be 570,000 acres—150,000 acres larger than the House committee staff had calculated.[152]

Although an Alaska lands bill cleared the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, it never passed the full Senate. Secretary Andrus was well aware that the seven-year deadline imposed by ANCSA was approaching. He knew that if no bill passed before the deadline, the lands being proposed in the various Congressional bills would revert to the public domain. To prevent that scenario from being implemented, Andrus

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[150] John Madson, "Kenai Fjords: National Park in Waiting," *Audubon* 80 (July 1978), 61. The Alaska Maritime NWR was a new name that incorporated nineteen existing refuges within its boundaries. The islands off the Kenai coast, however, had not previously been part of a wildlife refuge.

[151] Williss, *"Do Things Right the First Time,"* 186-87, 191-93.

[152] *Ibid.*, 200, 203; U.S. Department of the Interior, *Secretary's Issue Document and Alaska National Interest Lands Resource Analyses*, unpub. mss., 1978, 36, in AKSO-RCR Collection.

prepared a list of appropriate lands to be administratively designated as national monuments. On December 1, 1978, President Carter issued an executive order proclaiming 56 million acres of Alaska land as national monuments; the National Park Service would manage some 41 million of those acres. The proclamation included a 570,000-acre Kenai Fjords National Monument.[153]

In January 1979 a new Congress gathered, and a renewed attempt was made to pass a comprehensive Alaska lands bill. In mid-May, the House once again passed H.R. 39 that called for a 570,000-acre Kenai Fjords National Park. The Senate delayed action, but in August 1980 it passed its own Alaska lands bill, which also called for a 570,000-acre park. As it pertained to other park proposal areas, the Senate bill was more conservative than H.R. 39, so House leaders hoped that a conference committee would iron out the differences between the two bills. Senate leaders delayed, however, until the November 1980 election. The voters in that election chose Ronald Reagan as president and opted for a Republican majority in the Senate. Given that reality, the House reluctantly voted to accept the Senate bill in its entirety. On December 2, 1980, President Carter signed into law the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act.

That law, among its many provisions, established Kenai Fjords National Park. The bill declared that none of the new 570,000-acre[154] park would be managed as wilderness. Another provision of the bill changed the name of the Kenai National Moose Range to the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge; the bill added 240,000 acres to the new refuge and declared that 1,350,000 acres of the newly expanded refuge would be managed as wilderness. The bill also provided for the inclusion of the Pye, Chiswell, and adjacent islands in the far-flung Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge.[155]

Recreational Impacts of Interior Department Activities

Prior to 1970, neither the NPS nor other federal agencies had paid much attention to the southern Kenai coast. During this period, few sportsmen or sightseers visited this stretch of coastline. As noted above, the decade

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[153] Williss, *"Do Things Right the First Time,"* 218.

[154] According to the most recent figures, the park's area is approximately 652,000 acres. The 570,000-acre figure may have been based on public (federal) acreage. John Myers (NPS) interview, April 28, 1998.

[155] Williss, *"Do Things Right the First Time,"* 239, 243; NPS, *Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Assessment, Kenai Fjords National Park,* n.d. (September 1982), 2; *Congressional Record,* November 12, 1980, H 10532, H 10550.

of the 1970s witnessed a consistent, high level of interest in Alaska lands issues by Congress, the Forest Service, the Park Service, and the Fish and Wildlife Service. The decade also witnessed substantial growth in sportfishing and other recreational activities. Some of this growth was doubtless due to the publicity that accompanied the Alaska lands act study and evaluation process. But other growth would have taken place regardless of bureaucratic activity. The following section details the nature of recreational growth in the area during the 1970s.

In 1970, Seward was best known to tourists for the annual Silver Salmon Derby and the Mount Marathon race. During the 1970s, those activities continued. The growth of Anchorage and a general rise in leisure time activities also meant that an increasing number of tourists visited Seward, primarily in the summertime. Some of those tourists chartered boats and spent the day fishing in Resurrection Bay.

Relatively few, however, sailed to the south end of the bay or continued past Aialik Cape to the fjord country. Agency staff, as noted above, rarely saw sportsmen (either fishermen or hunters) in this area. In addition, a handful of sightseers flew over the Harding Icefield each summer. Northwest of Seward, a new road was being completed from the main highway west to Exit Glacier; almost no one used it, however, because of its rough surface and the lack of a bridge spanning the Resurrection River. Because no tourist facilities existed in these areas, and because recreational opportunities were usually available in less remote locations, commercial entities in the Seward and Homer areas saw no reason to advertise either the icefield or the fjord country southwest of Seward.

During the 1970s, area sport fishing grew more dramatically than it had in the 1960s, and by 1976, Seward was able to boast a number of businesses that profited from renting or chartering boats. One of those companies was Resurrection Bay Tours, established by Don Oldow in 1968. Oldow, a veteran ship pilot (he captained the ferryboat *Tustumena*), initially remained within the confines of Resurrection Bay. But in 1974, he began taking fishermen and sightseers out on the new, 43-foot M/V *Shaman* to the bays and fjords being considered in the various Interior Department proposals. By 1976, moreover, he was taking NPS and F&WS research personnel out into the fjord country. In 1977, Pam Oldow received her ocean operator license and began piloting her own tours. For the remainder of the decade, the couple operated regularly scheduled tours on Resurrection Bay; Aialik Bay tours were advertised (beginning in 1978) but were available only by request.[156] In 1980, anticipating tourist

[156] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 302-03, 307, 310. In 1978, Westours announced that it would be bringing a cruise ship in 1979 that would visit both Seward and the nearby

growth due to the new park, the Oldows became partners with Jack and Sheila Scoby (who owned the 43-foot *Foxy Lady*) and established Kenai Fjords Tours, Inc. Regular tours to Aialik Bay began not long afterward. The company, though no longer owned by either the Oldows or Scobys, remains an active part of the Seward tourist scene.[157]

By the late 1970s, several charter boat operators had taken clients into the fjord country; in addition, people who owned their own boat sailed into the area. The total number of visitors who headed that way is open to dispute. In 1977, an NPS official estimated that "about 200 recreationalists" each week visited either the Chiswell Islands or Aialik Bay. A state Fish and Game official made a more conservative guess; he estimated that between 50 and 100 boats per year visited the waters of the proposed park during the late 1970s. And a pair of wildlife biologists who spent the summer of 1980 in Aialik Bay estimated that perhaps 100 to 120 boats visited the bay between May and August, inclusively.[158] People apparently visited the fjord country in search of a wide variety of fish—salmon, halibut, rockfish, Dolly Varden and steelhead. Three trends brought more people into the fjords. First, the Silver Salmon Derby's increasing popularity caused participants to explore areas beyond Resurrection Bay. Second, the larger, more modern boats could maneuver through the fjord country in relative safety. The area also became better known because of the publicity brought by the various Alaska lands proposals.[159]

Harding Icefield, during the 1970s, became an increasingly popular destination. As noted above, bureaucrats in 1970 had forced a budding ski-and-snowmobile operation off the icefield after just two seasons. Although no on-the-ground development took place there for the

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fjords, but the plan was never implemented. Madson, "Kenai Fjords: National Park in Waiting," 56.

[157] Barry, *Seward History, III*, 349; *The Milepost*, 1978, 306. During the mid-1980s a travel writer wrote, "Since it was created in 1980, the park has been virtually impossible to visit. Finally, a couple of years ago [thus in 1983 or 1984], an adventurous couple [the Oldows] began regular full-day cruises into the area...." Heather Lockman, "Cruising the Kenai Fjords," *Travel & Leisure Magazine*, c. 1986, in KEFJ Collection.

[158] NPS, "Areas of Conflict, Questions and Answers On Kenai Fjords," c. 1977, 8; Ted McHenry interview, April 2, 1997; Edward C. Murphy and A. Anne Hoover, "Research Study of the Reactions of Wildlife to Boating Activity Along the Kenai Fjords Coastline," Alaska CPSU, Biological and Resource Management Program, UAF, September 1981, 21, at ARLIS. McHenry noted that in addition to the Oldows, another Sewardite who took people into the fjord country during the 1970s was Monty Richardson (a Seward High School teacher) and his wife.

[159] Sid Logan interview, May 1, 1997; Ted McHenry interview, April 2, 1997: Tom Schroeder interview, April 18, 1997; NPS, *Statement for Management, Kenai Fjords National Park*, December 1982, 4.

remainder of the decade, air taxi operators took an increasing number of patrons on icefield flights. The *Milepost* and other promotional organs consistently publicized flightseeing trips to "one of Alaska's most spectacular attractions," and individual operators (such as Harbor Air Service and Trail Lake Flying Service) published flightseeing ads.[160] As to the number of flights that visited the icefield, little is known. Edward Murphy and Anne Hoover estimated that 0.3 aircraft per day (thus 10 per month) flew over Aialik Bay during the summer of 1979; as many as 20 per month visited the bay a year later. Regarding a traffic figure for the park as a whole, no data are available until 1982, two years after the park was established. The park superintendent estimated that 500 flights visited the park each summer: 150 from Seward and the remainder from Kenai and Homer.[161]

The Harding Icefield continued to lure a small number of the mountain-expedition fraternity. Not more than a handful crossed the icefield during the decade, one of whom was NPS employee Bill Resor. A few others climbed Phoenix Peak, located three miles west of Seward near the park's eastern boundary.[162]

One additional form of transport to the area was the Alaska Marine Highway. The ferry *Tustumena*, active since 1964, skirted the park's waters on its Seward-Kodiak runs. Few tourists, however, saw the park from the *Tustumena*. Service to Kodiak, in comparison to other Alaska Marine Highway routes, was fairly infrequent. It was not a major tourist attraction, and the *Tustumena*'s route provided only distant glimpses of the Kenai Peninsula's southern coast.[163]

In the early 1970s, a new recreational opportunity loomed in the area when the Alaska legislature established Caines Head State Recreation Area. The state, as was noted in Chapter 8, selected land in the Caines Head area in 1962 and 1964. In 1971, 1,800 acres were transferred to the newly-created Alaska Division of Parks; three years later, more than 4,000 acres were added to create a 5,961-acre park that stretched more than seven miles along the bay's western shore from Tonsina Point to Rocky Point. Hopes were high that park development would quickly ensue. In 1979, plans were afoot to develop the area with a boat dock,

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[160] *The Milepost*, issues of 1972 (p. 382), 1975 (p. 390), 1976 (p. 304), 1978 (p. 306), and 1979 (p. 285).

[161] Murphy and Hoover, "Research Study of the Reactions of Wildlife to Boating Activity," 52; David E. Moore (NPS), *Statement for Management, Kenai Fjords National Park*, December 1982, 3.

[162] Moore, *Statement for Management*, 6; Swem to Norris, March 17, 1997.

[163] Karen L. Lew, "Seward, All-American City," *Alaskafest*, July 1979, 41.

hiking trails, camping shelters, a picnic area, and other amenities. That plan fell through, however, and the site was ignored for another five years.[164]

By the late 1970s, as has been noted, an increasing number of people were visiting the area within the park proposal, and both the icefield and the fjord country were no longer the *terra incognita* that they had been a decade earlier. Despite those changes, the area was still so remote—and visitation so light—that many people, both in Seward and elsewhere in Alaska, wondered why government agencies were expending so much effort to preserve the area. As John Madson noted in a 1978 *Audubon* article,

> Most of Seward's boat traffic stays on Resurrection Bay, which offers all any reasonable person could want in the way of sheltered boating, salmon fishing, highlining for bottom fish, scenery, and enough company to make a weekend skipper feel secure.... The Kenai Fjords area ... is surely the least-known [park proposal]. By default rather than by design, it is one of Alaska's best-kept secrets.[165]

Madson noted that Seward residents were initially leery of the NPS's proposal, primarily because they didn't want the federal government having more of a presence. By the late 1970s, however,

> the majority of Seward residents are evidently in favor of the Kenai Fjords National Park – or if not actually in favor of it, they're at least getting used to the idea.... Few of the commercial fishermen and charter captains can understand why any party of 6 people would hire a boat at $300 per day just to go out and look at seabirds and sea lions – but that $300 isn't hard to understand. [Local residents are] somewhat puzzled by all the attention being paid to features they often take for granted.[166]

In the years since the park's establishment, visitation has continued to rise. Tourism in the Seward area, based both on tours to the park and a variety of other activities, is now a mainstay of the local economy. In 1997, more than 300,000 people made a recreational visit to the park; given those numbers, Kenai Fjords has become one of the most popular

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[164] Sinclair, "Turning the Forgotten into the Remembered," 379-80; Lew, "Seward, All-American City," 41.

[165] Madson, "Kenai Fjords: National Park in Waiting," 52.

[166] *Ibid.*, 61.

national park destinations in Alaska. All signs point to a continuation of existing trends.

Illustration by Rockwell Kent from *Wilderness, A Journal of Quiet Adventure in Alaska*, 1920. The Rockwell Kent Legacies.

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