

# Railroad Freezer Boxcars Being Utilized at Nenana

The recent untimely flood that seriously interfered with winter food-gathering efforts of the interior Athabaskan-Indians may be in the process of being solved where the town of Nenana on the banks of Tanana River is

concerned.

Two reefer type freezer boxcars rushed to the town soon after the floodwaters receded by the Alaska Railroad are now being utilized to store fish and moose meat before freezeup.

The freezer cars were made available to Nenana after VISTA Volunteer, Frank Hoffman, Anchorage Mayor Elmer Rasmuson and Tundra Times editor combined their efforts to get the storage cars for the community.

Although some fish and meat have already been stored in one of the cars, the efforts to fill them has been hampered by immediate lack of equipment because some fishwheels, boats and motors were lost in the flood.

The problem is being solved by donations of fish from individual fishwheel owners and from a fishwheel lent to the community by Thomas Albert of Nenana.

The Fairbanks Regional Office of the Bureau of Indian Affairs is helping by funding boat rentals for the Nenana residents. The Bureau is also making tents and camping equipment available for use by moose hunting parties.

The tents and camping equipment were used for emergency shelters for Nenananans during the flood. The BIA assistance is being coordinated by Bob Carroll of the Bureau.

The effort to store food is also running into problems

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# Nenana Freezers

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because moose are now in back country chased there by the flood. According to Nenana hunters, moose are choosy as to what they eat and will have little to do with vegetation that had been covered with mud and silt caused by the flood.

Normally, the animals forage quite close to the riverbanks and more accessible to the hunters.

Jack Doyle, a fisheries biologist at the University of Alaska, is planning to do driftnetting to add to the community fish catch.

Doyle is to be assisted and guided by Thomas Albert in areas where fishing is known to be good.

The emergency winter food program in Nenana is under the direction of council president, Richard Ketzler. Al Ketzler, Richard's brother and former chairman of the Tanana chiefs and who is now a member of the board on the Alaska State Community Action Program, is supporting the emergency food program.

Outside of emergency food-gathering, the native people of Nenana prefer the natural foods they gather, like salmon, whitefish and moose which they are presently getting.

In general, the people of the village are helping themselves in flood recovery. Much has been done in rebuilding homes and they are still cleaning the interiors of houses to make them livable for the winter.