

'Just Interested'—

Nenana Man Tapes Songs, Dances

by CURT MADISON

Mr. Paul George of Nenana is "just interested" in the songs and dances of his native Athabascan, so he has been taping the singers during the last several potlatches.

He likes the music and wants to learn any new songs as they come along. By now most of the songs are familiar to him, but the young people of Nenana haven't seen them sung and don't know the words.

"The tapes are most valuable for the little kids growing up," says Mr. George.

This last spring when eight youngsters came to him to learn the old dances, he used the tapes for background music.

"When they want to dance, there is no stopping them and we couldn't always get the old people together to sing."

The songs are first recorded on cassette then transferred to a single master tape so there

will always be a record. Mr. George is going to the potlatch in Minto June 9-12 to record any new songs there.

With the growing interest in preserving the Athabascan languages these tapes may be invaluable.