

AFN Nunivak Delegate Took to Task U.S. Fish and Wildlife

(Editor's Note: The following letter was submitted to the Alaska Federation of Natives last Sunday by a delegate from Nunivak Island for consideration and as a basis for request for a resolution.)

Mekoryuk

Nunivak Island, Alaska

October 6, 1968

President, AFN
Fairbanks, Alaska

Dear Mr. President:

This is a letter of complaint from the people of Nunivak Island regarding our problems with the Fish and Wildlife Department, directed to the members of AFN so that we can have your help in resolving our problems.

Fish and Wildlife people told us native people of Nunivak that we were not there when they found the island; that it is necessary to get permission from Fish and Wildlife before the native people of Nunivak can use any land or make any improvements on our lands.

This is not true because our fathers, grandfathers and their fathers lived on Nunivak Island long before Fish and Wildlife ever came into existence in Alaska.

Fish and Wildlife people had also told our past village council president that if we didn't obey and follow Fish and Wildlife rules, they would see to it that our native people are moved out of and away from home island, Nunivak.

Many of our people also are working for the local reindeer service very cheap compared to employment standards.

We request support of the AFN delegation to resolve our problems in some way.

Sincerely yours,

Henry J. Shavings
Village Council President