

# Subsistence Resource Commission discusses ATV use, access issues

by **Steve Kakaruk**

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Anaktuvuk Pass subsistence users attended a Subsistence Resource Commission meeting for the Gates of the Arctic National Park meeting in Fairbanks January 29-31. There, the National Park Service met with nine subsistence specialists from the SRC, shared some ideas and held workshops.

Last fall subsistence users attempted to come up with some working solutions as the NPS imposed and enforced rules and regulations. Anaktuvuk residents say unfairly

restrict their customary and traditional use of their subsistence lands. Residents have said that the non-access to vital subsistence use areas has been a problem.

Easements were mapped out by the NPS which do not reflect a realistic attempt at allowing subsistence users to travel freely to and from the subsistence stocks. Residents have also cited pressure from the NPS toward private landowners with inholders to apply for permits.

Anaktuvuk residents have felt that

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the present policies imposed on in-holders are a not-so-subtle method the NPS is using to discourage them from using their lands.

Anaktuvuk residents would have liked to have been involved when those regulations first came out. Now they would like to be involved even more, perhaps more than the National Park Service would like.

Originally, the NPS took one man's opinion before they placed easements on the map so subsistence users could get to the resources on ATV's.

Anaktuvuk residents felt the easements were unjust and caused undue damage to man and ATV where they often encountered ravines, boulders and a trail miles away from the resources.

Ben Nageak, Subsistence Resource Commission, Barrow district said, "We're discussing still today the ATV issue." Although not resolved Nageak would like to resolve it soon. Nageak also said, "our groups went to a couple of workshops on access and traditional use with ATV's and I'm hoping they'll look and act on our recommendations for better access." He added, "mapping of recreational over traditional use is probably going to occur, we want to be involved should easements restrict people from access. We have paths that we use for travel on our traditional camping and subsistence areas." Nageak did feel comfortable that there was a meeting to discuss the subsistence issues. "We passed some resolutions during the meetings that will hopefully make the subsistence issue easier for the NPS and us, the users in the park."



*Left to Right, Dick Ring, Secretary, Jim Schwarber and Rick Caulfield at the Subsistence Resource Commission meeting in Fairbanks.*

photo by Wayne Attla

Eight resolutions were passed; all are very important. Four are specific enough to address problems that need attention within the Gates of the Arctic.

The four that address the current problems are; Resolution 86-07: A resolution to involve communities in or near the park in identifying and mapping traditional use areas and access routes; Resolution 86-09: ATV Access; Resolution 86-11: Traditional Use Areas; and Resolution 86-13: General Management Plan.

Another Anaktuvuk resident, Jacob Ahgook simply said, "I really don't know what is going to happen (this summer)." Anaktuvuk residents rely on subsistence which makes 80 percent of their diet. The 20 percent represents the condiments. The community itself has survived the pipeline era primarily as subsistence gatherers. Some did work during the era and made a little income.

Nageak said, "Gramm-Rudmann (bill), it's a four percent cut in most federal operations and will affect some

of our agencies involved (like the subsistence issue).

There are nine members to the Subsistence Resource Commission. Newly appointed Raymond Paneak, who lives in Anaktuvuk Pass, was recently appointed to fill a vacancy on the commission. The other eight are James Schwarber, Chairman from Allatna River; Richard Caulfield of Dillingham; Bill Fickus and Homer Tobuk of Bettles; Ben Nageak of Barrow; Levi Cleveland of Shungnak; Pollock Simon of Allakaket and Zacharius Hugo of Anaktuvuk Pass.