

letters

Correction on Aleut editorial

(Editor's Note: The editorial to which the writer refers first appeared in another newspaper, and was reprinted in the "Other Voices" editorial section of the Tundra Times.)

Unalaska, Alaska
July 17, 1978

Dear Sir:

The first sentence of your Editorial of your June 28th edition on page two is not correct.

After the Russians discovered the Pribilof Islands they took Aleuts from Atka and Unalaska to harvest the fur seals found there. Thereafter the number of Aleuts used like this stayed pretty much the same, however the Russians would take and return the Aleutian Islanders indiscriminately until Baranov took over the management of this islands.

Under Baranof there was a marked difference in the plight of those Aleuts who stayed on St. Paul and St. George in that their way of life became better than those living on the Aleutian Chain.

Subjugation came with those people who took over the management of the Islands when Alaska was sold to the United States.

One thing that the Russians left the Aleuts that they could not take back was Orthodox Christian faith.

This proved to be a form of sustenance for the Aleuts on the "Chain" and Pribilofs through the difficult times that came even though the ownership of their homeland changed hands.

With the church, particularly in the Pribilofs, the needs of the people as individuals were considered. The lot of those on the Pribilofs went from fair to very bad under the U.S. Government.

I would not have responded in this way if I did not discuss authenticity in the printed word on several occasions with the late beloved Mr. Rock.

Respectively yours,
Phil Tutiakoff

P.S. I forgot to state my source of information as, "The Seal Islands of Alaska," by Henry W. Elliott: a reprint of the 1881 edition.

letters

Copper River fish battle

Dear Editor:

Enclosed is a copy of the statement I presented to our fish and game meeting held here in Copper Center on July 5. Would you please publish it along with this letter.

For any of your readers who are unaware of our problems here I will rehash them.

The Copper River salmon run has had a very poor return this year. Catch as of July 5 we are told was approximately 260,000 fish for the commercial fishermen in the Cordova area and 15,000 fish for the subsistence users in the upper Copper River.

Fish and Game by emergency order closed subsistence fishing from our usual 7 days a week to Saturdays and Sundays. Those of us in the villages along the river were irritated because this gives greatest opportunity to those "subsistence users" who work 5 days a week in the cities and probably have the least need for the fish.

Anyway a protest of mostly Natives was held shortly after the Fish and Game locked up and issued citations to four of our older village leaders. Preliminary hearing has been held with all of the four pleading "not guilty" and the case is now scheduled for August 28.

So a fish and game meeting was called for July 5 here in Copper Center. Ninety two people were present and testimony went on for several hours. One thing came through loud and clear and that is that the people really were worried about the need for salmon for the older folks who eat and need so much salmon. Their checks only seem to cover the bare necessities now and without salmon to help a real hardship would exist.

Anyway as a result of that meeting we now have a new ruling out by Fish and Game allowing 7 day a week fishing by all those permit holders who hold low income permits. This includes most of our older people in all the villages.

I personally helped build a fish wheel for my brother in law Bacile George here in Copper Center. He is 72 years old and has several kids and lots of grand kids in the area. He needs at least 100 fish a year to make it. He always has eaten salmon

and still eats them.

Anyway we got his wheel done and in the water on June 21. By the time they cited him and locked up his wheel he had caught a total of 5 salmon, one king and four reds. So we eat two of the fish and he cut for drying the other three fish. A few days later a bear come and cleaned up the three fish that were drying. So he's hurting for fish. It's a real problem for us here in the Copper River.

Thank you,
Dean Wilson

Zeroing in on subsistence

Mother Red Salmon lays several thousand eggs in a high mountain lake in the Copper Basin. Father Salmon comes in behind her and fertilizes the eggs. From this point on the struggle for existence begins for the Red Salmon.

Within a short time, Dollie Varden moves into the spawning grounds digging up and eating many of the eggs. The Dollie Varden is protected by the seasons and limits by the Department of Fish and Game. At one time, many of us remember when a bounty was paid by the State for Dollie Varden tails. No More! Soon Ling Cod (also protected by seasons and limits) move into the area eating eggs. This is followed by Grayling and Whitefish (also protected by seasons and limits) which take their toll of mother Red Salmon's eggs. The Seagulls (also protected) get their toll of the eggs.

A few months after being spawned, the remaining eggs hatch and the baby Salmon soon head down the river system to the ocean. Here the struggle continues, as the Salmon grow for a period of four or five years.

Seals (once hunted for bounty, now protected by law) also get large numbers of Salmon. The Foreign Fleets (even with (See LETTERS, Page 5)

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● Letters to the editor from Tundra Times readers

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the 200 mile limit) take part of the Salmon long before they have reached maturity. Porpoises (protected by law) and Whales (protected by law) also feed upon our salmon as does many, many of the other forms of sea life.

After several years the remaining Salmon move from the ocean toward the mouth of the Copper River heading once more to their point of origin to spawn. As they enter Prince William Sound, the Commercial fishermen (also regulated by law) take their toll. Soon when water levels and water temperatures are right, the move up river is begun, along the way still more predation takes place.

Bears (protected by law) wade out into the rivers and fish. Eagles (again protected by law) also fish heavily along the rivers.

Dip netters and fish wheels also take a percentage of returning Salmon, and wouldn't you know, they are regulated by law.

As the Salmon enter the clear water rivers, the Sports fisherman awaits him (and you guessed it he is also regulated by law).

By following mother Red Salmon's original spawn of 2,000 to 3,000 eggs through the cycle we see only 4 fish made it back to the spawning ground.

So along comes the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Biologist and tells us "Don't worry about a thing. He is a professional and has everything under control, but that he can clearly see that the Subsistence Fishermen have been hitting the Salmon runs too hard and will have to be restricted to less fishing time." But somehow, us dummies along the river feel that maybe he is ignoring 17 major problems and trying to zero in on one minor problem which is US.

I believe it is time to start tackling all of the many problems that affect our Salmon runs.

Respectfully submitted,
Dean L. Wilson

U of A should have considered Alaskans

July 21, 1978

Dear Editor,

The University of Alaska's recent Recruitment for a Dean of Rural Education Affairs needs to be commented on. The process of selecting the Dean was designated to a selection committee, appointed by the Chancellor for Community Colleges and Rural Education affairs. I have nothing against the selection committee or the process used to select the Dean but I do have some reservations as to why an Alaska Native or two were not appointed to sit on

this important committee.

The Dean for Rural Education will have an important impact as to the delivery of higher education to rural Alaska. Rural Alaska's population is mainly Alaska Native (Eskimo, Indian and Aleut). Why did the University deny the Alaska Natives a voice in the selection of an individual who in their work as Dean will touch the lives of the Rural Alaska Native?

The Alaska Native is constantly asked to contribute to the University's various research, evaluation and study projects and yet when it comes time to involve them in decision making activities they are ignored. I am very disappointed as to the recent blatant omittance of an Alaska Native on the selection committee for Dean of Rural Affairs. The Selection committee and the University also ignored most of the applicants

from Alaska with the talent and professionalism of important experience in rural education by selecting two outside applicants as the finalists for the position.

The outside applicants probably were well qualified but will need to become educated to the problems rural Alaska has faced regarding the delivery of higher education.

It is too bad the selection committee and University officials chose to ignore some of

the well qualified Alaska applicants and did not choose one of them for the Dean of REA.

Hopefully, in the future, the University of Alaska will research, evaluate and study itself so that the Alaska Native can play a more important role and become more a part of its workings.

Sincerely,
Fred Bigjim
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