

# ***Editorial***

## **It won't be easy, but this is what environmental justice is all about**

Not for the first time and not for the last, federal agencies are balking at cleaning up a legacy of the reckless environmental policies of the past. A million barrels, many containing some of the most noxious chemicals known to humans, were dumped near the King Salmon Airport between the 1950s and 1970s. Expensive to deal with? You bet. But the cost of leaving such toxic hotspots only poorly or partially remedied could be incalculable in terms of potential threats to human health safety.

It is shameful that so much of the brunt of this chemical recklessness occurs on land owned or occupied by people of color, or the economically disadvantaged. It

is at the core of the concept of environmental justice that Native Americans, African-Americans, Hispanics and others not be disproportionately afflicted with the excesses of industrial society.

The sad fact is, justice is not free. Achieving any measurable level of environmental justice will require a lot more commitment than we are seeing on the part of state and federal governments most anywhere we look.

That doesn't make the environmental justice imperative any less sacred. We must continue our own vigilance, and continue celebrating our own sacred relationship with the earth in order to find the wisdom, strength and perseverance to achieve it.