

Inside: Cliff Gray's story: Years of abuse failed to keep him from finding his family in Alaska

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Effects of subsistence ruling remain unclear State cancels three hunts

by Warren Jarvis
for the Tundra Times

Two weeks after the Alaska State Supreme Court ruled the Native subsistence preference unconstitutional, there have still been no decisions by state agencies on how to deal with the growing crisis.

The decision leaves the state's rural population, which depended on the stricken law and the three hunts cancelled as a result, confused as to

what changes will be made.

"People who had planned for and depend on these hunts will face significant problems feeding their families, or they will be forced to break the law," said Alaska Federation of Natives President Julie Kitka in a letter to Gov. Steve Cowper.

The letter went on to urge the reinstatement of the three cancelled subsistence hunts, suggesting that

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Southeast Alaska Natives form subsistence panel

JUNEAU — Native leaders from Southeast Alaska have formed the Southeast Native Subsistence Commission, according to Richard Stitt, president of the Grand Camp Alaska Native Brotherhood.

"The commission's purpose is to protect and assert the right of Alaska Natives to continue traditional uses of plant, animal and fisheries resources," he said. "Native people feel strongly that the subsistence rights of Alaska Native people are in serious jeopardy, and they continue to deteriorate by actions of the state and federal agencies and the Alaska courts."

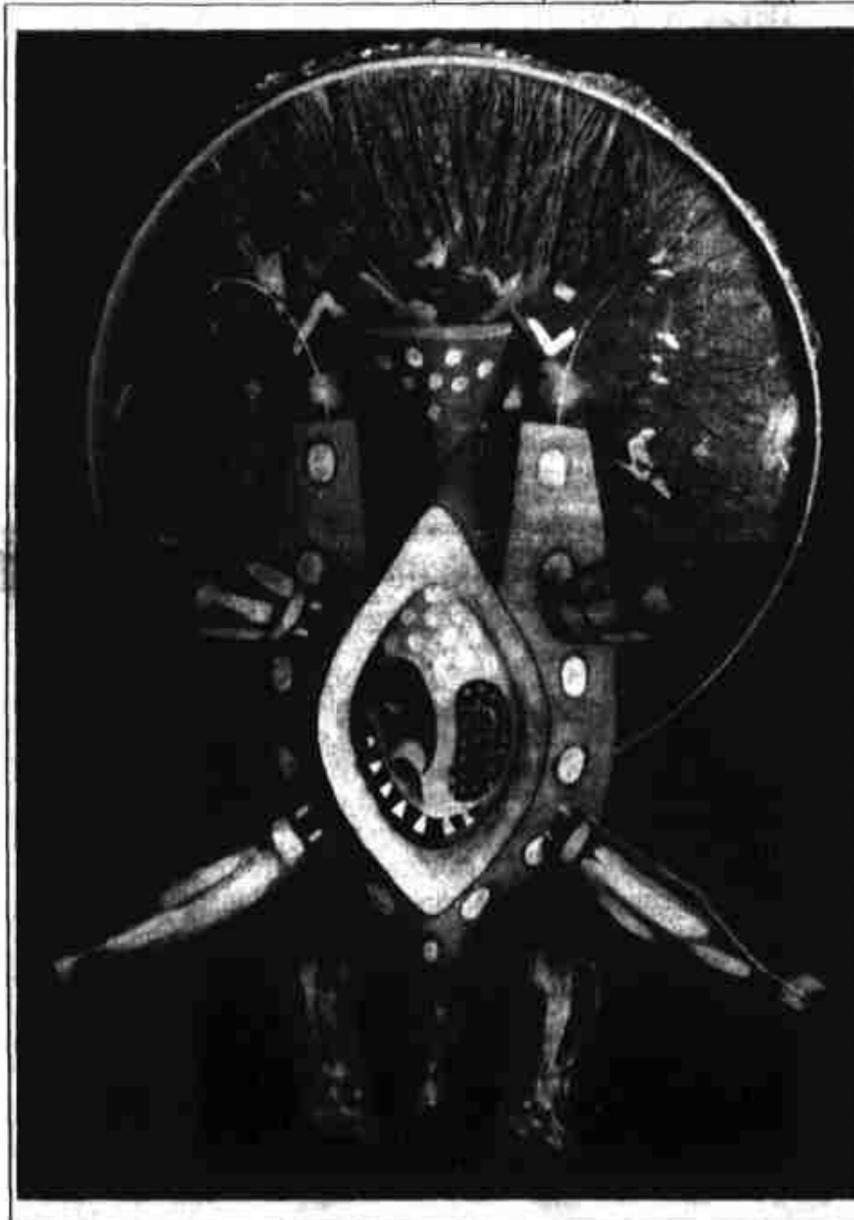
The commission is endorsed by Ed Thomas, president of the Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska; Sue Sargent, grand president of the Grand Camp Alaska Native Sisterhood; and Bryon I. Mallott, chief executive officer of Sealaska Corp.

The formation of the commission will occur under the tribal government structure of the Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska. Appointments of the initial members will be from elected Native leaders from each community throughout the region.

"In light of recent decisions by the Alaska Supreme Court, we urge the agencies to maintain the status quo," Stitt said. "Existing agencies and personnel who work in this area should be kept in place."

He added that he hopes the state courts do not leave the subsistence issue in "complete disarray."

"Southeast Alaska is largely federal land managed by the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service. Native subsistence activities take place on federal lands, Native lands and some state recreation sites throughout the region," he said.



Among recent acquisitions of the Anchorage Museum of History and Art is a James Schoppert sculpture entitled "Migrations." The museum is ushering in the new year by exhibiting some of the gifts and purchases of the previous year. The Schoppert sculpture was a gift of the Anchorage Museum Association. Among recent historical and ethnographic acquisitions is a Kwakiutl shaman's figure, circa 1900; and a Lapp cradle. The exhibit will be in the museum atrium through Feb. 3.

Redoubt Volcano erupts back into life Jan. 2

by Holly F. Hallam
Tundra Times reporter

Redoubt Volcano erupted again last week, and this time the eruption was bigger and more dramatic than its first series of explosions last month.

Redoubt Volcano came back to life on Dec. 14 after being at rest for more than 20 years.

During December, the volcano spewed out thick clouds of ash which halted most flights in and out of Anchorage and other areas of the state. The volcano left many rural residents

short of supplies, such as food, and the ash even put a stop to the state's mail service.

It wasn't that Anchorage or other communities got dumped on with the volcanic ash, but rather, the high plumes of ash drifting around in the atmosphere can literally put a stop to an aircraft's engine. And the ash did do that. It completely stopped all the engine power on a Boeing 747 filled with passengers. The aircraft fell more than two miles toward the earth before pilots regained engine power.

Geologists practically predicted this

most recent eruption — Jan. 2 — after monitoring nearly constant seismic activity in and around the volcano.

Robert McGimsey, a spokesman from the Alaska Volcano Observatory in Anchorage, said his agency put out a volcano eruption warning within 24 hours from when Redoubt erupted.

McGimsey said after that eruption the volcano has just been letting out steam and he's not sure what to expect next.

A specially equipped research aircraft which could help determine the content and movement of ash and

steam clouds arrived in Anchorage last week, according to Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska.

The equipment is called Lidar technology, and the aircraft was funded with a \$83,178 grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

According to officials at the University of Washington, where the aircraft had been, the Lidar technology and other equipment onboard the aircraft could help the Federal Aviation Administration determine safe air routes for planes flying in Alaska.