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## Village Alaska: Community Characteristics and Public Safety

In early 1995, the Justice Center at the University of Alaska Anchorage conducted an on-site survey of 28 Alaska villages to gather information about village safety and policing needs. The survey was part of a three-phase project undertaken by the Center in conjunction with the Alaska Department of Public Safety. This and future *Forum* articles will examine the results of the study, which assembled information from community leaders and other residents. Data collection included (1) compilation of documents and other information related to each community; (2) interviews with city officials and Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) council members in each village and (3) interviews with other residents in each community. The interviews with officials elicited background information about the community and its government as well as about public safety issues. This article will present a summary discussion of village social and governing structures as they are perceived in relation to public safety.

The communities surveyed were selected after consideration of suggestions from Native leaders, participants in the Alaska Federation of Natives conference, the Alaska Native Justice Center and the Alaska State Troopers. Eleven of the Alaska Native regional corporations are represented. The Arctic Slope region was not included because its villages receive complete public safety services from their own borough pub-

lic safety agency rather than from the Alaska State Troopers, Village Police Officers (VPOs) or Village Public Safety Officers (VPSOs).

### Community Characteristics

The villages studied are in isolated locations 10 to 100 air miles from an urban center, with few road connections to other communities. They range in size from approximately 70 to over 700 residents (based on 1990 Census data). Residents are predominately Alaska Native, although the proportion of Native residents ranges from 98.3 per cent in Lower Kalskag to less than 7 per cent Native in Chickaloon. The average (mean) Native population is approximately 82 per cent and the median proportion of Natives in the community population is 93.8 per cent. This means that in 14 of the 28 villages, 94 per cent or more of the residents are Native.

Most villages have few permanent employment opportunities in the community, and cash employment positions with schools and other organizations in the communities have historically been dominated by non-Natives. Many residents rely heavily on hunting, fishing, and the collection of wild food for portions of their diets. In some communities, such as in the NANA region, which has the Red Dog Mine, employment opportunities do exist, but many residents must work outside their home villages. This situation reportedly results in significant numbers of working-age males regularly being away from their villages at work sites.

Even in those villages with available wage-paying jobs, residents often engage in hunting, fishing and/or food-gathering subsistence activities. Many adult village residents consider their subsistence activities to be their preferred and basic work obligations, requiring an extensive commitment of time, focus and effort.

The buildings and facilities of the typical village surveyed are modest by contemporary urban standards. Nearly all of the

communities have a general store, usually run by the local government. Similarly, most have a local school and housing for teachers (who are often non-Native). Native "teacher aides" from the local community are employed in almost every school. Most villages have well-maintained runways for regular air service. Every community has an office facility for the city and, in some instances, the tribal government officials, although in one case this office is located in a nearby town. These facilities are equipped with telephones, copy and fax machines, and other office equipment.

One of the most conspicuous differences between the current village situation and that found in the late 1970s in another study conducted by the Alaska State Troopers and the Justice Center is in the area of communication technology. In the late 1970s a single radio telephone in a village was not uncommon, and fax machines did not exist. A second notable difference is the increase in aircraft available for routine and emergency transportation between communities. The addition of this technology has greatly enhanced the potential for public safety services.

### Government

Most of the 28 villages are incorporated under Alaska law as first or second class cities. Unincorporated villages have established IRA or traditional councils administering local governmental affairs. Most of the first or second class city governments were incorporated to obtain state services and funds in the early 1970s. These governments often continue to share authority with the councils, which have formally existed since well before Alaska statehood, and in many villages these governing groups have members in common. The power distribution among these entities varies from community to community. City councils usually play the leadership role in dealing

### HIGHLIGHTS INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- The Bureau of Justice Statistics discusses the growth of correctional populations in the United States (page 2).
- Alaska prison populations are compared with prison populations in similar states (page 3).
- The Justice Center opens a new justice and law-related World Wide Web site on the Internet (page 4).

Please see *Village Alaska*, page 6

A BJS Report

# National Prison Population Growth

At the end of June 1995, state and federal prisons held 1,104,074 inmates.

State and federal prisons, which primarily house convicted felons serving sentences of a year or more, hold about two-thirds of the more than 1.5 million adults incarcerated in the United States. The other third are held in locally operated jails, which primarily house people awaiting trial or serving sentences of a year or less. On June 30, 1994, the most recent date for which jail data are available, 483,717 adults were in local jails.

The combined state and federal prison population increase of 8.8 per cent between mid-1994 and mid-1995 was slightly higher than the average annual growth (7.9%) recorded since 1990.

During the year preceding June 30, 1995, prison populations increased by at least 10 per cent in 23 states. Texas reported the largest growth (nearly 27%), followed by West Virginia (26%) and North Carolina (18%). Prison populations declined in the District of Columbia (down 5.0%), Alaska (3.1%), Arkansas (1.0%) and South Carolina (0.8%).

Between 1980 and 1994 the total number of people held in federal and state prisons and local jails almost tripled—increasing from 501,886 to 1,483,410. As of December 31, 1994, the total incarceration rate reached 565 inmates per 100,000 U.S. residents.

## Recent BJS Reports

In addition to the report summarized in the accompanying article, the following recent studies and reports from the Bureau of Justice Statistics are available from the Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Unit:

*“Weapons Offenses & Offenders,” an examination of national data on violation of laws controlling deadly weapons, NCJ-155284.*

*“Violent Offenders in State Prison: Sentences and Time Served,” nationwide data on sentencing for those convicted of violent crime, NCJ-154632.*

**Table 1. Prisoners Under the Jurisdiction of State or Federal Correctional Authorities, June 30, 1994, December 31, 1994, and June 30, 1995, by Region and State**

	Total in custody <sup>a</sup>			Per cent change		Incarceration rate per
	6/30/94	12/31/94	6/30/95	6/30/94–6/30/95	12/31/94–6/30/95	100,000 on 6/30/95 <sup>b</sup>
<b>U.S. total</b>	<b>1,014,367</b>	<b>1,054,671</b>	<b>1,104,074</b>	<b>8.8%</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>403</b>
Federal	93,708	95,034	99,466	6.1	4.7	31
State	920,659	959,637	1,004,608	9.1	4.7	372
<b>Northeast</b>	<b>150,702</b>	<b>153,072</b>	<b>158,184</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>295</b>
Connecticut	14,427	14,380	15,005	4.0	4.3	325
Maine	1,468	1,474	1,459	-0.6	-1.0	112
Massachusetts	11,166	11,293	11,469	2.7	1.6	180
New Hampshire	1,895	2,021	2,065	9.0	2.2	180
New Jersey	24,471	24,632	25,626	4.7	4.0	323
New York	65,962	66,750	68,526	3.9	2.7	377
Pennsylvania	27,082	28,302	29,844	10.2	5.4	247
Rhode Island <sup>d</sup>	3,049	2,919	3,132	2.7	7.3	190
Vermont <sup>d</sup>	1,182	1,301	1,058	—	—	135
<b>Midwest</b>	<b>176,339</b>	<b>184,508</b>	<b>190,170</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>307</b>
Illinois	35,614	36,531	37,790	6.1	3.4	320
Indiana	14,826	15,014	15,699	5.9	4.6	270
Iowa	5,090	5,437	5,692	11.8	4.7	201
Kansas	6,090	6,371	6,927	13.7	8.7	269
Michigan	40,220	40,631	41,377	2.9	1.8	434
Minnesota	4,573	4,575	4,764	4.2	4.1	103
Missouri	16,957	17,898	18,940	11.7	5.8	356
Nebraska	2,449	2,711	2,801	14.4	3.3	168
North Dakota	522	536	610	16.9	13.8	90
Ohio	41,156	43,074	43,158	4.9	0.2	387
South Dakota	1,636	1,708	1,780	8.8	4.2	245
Wisconsin	9,206	10,022	10,632	15.5	6.1	196
<b>South</b>	<b>395,188</b>	<b>422,053</b>	<b>446,498</b>	<b>13.0%</b>	<b>5.8%</b>	<b>474</b>
Alabama	19,098	19,573	20,082	5.2	2.6	459
Arkansas	8,916	8,643	8,825	-1.0	2.1	349
Delaware <sup>e</sup>	4,324	4,466	4,651	7.6	4.1	406
District of Columbia <sup>e</sup>	11,033	10,949	10,484	-5.0	-4.2	1,722
Florida	56,052	57,168	61,992	10.6	8.4	437
Georgia	30,292	33,425	34,111	12.6	2.1	468
Kentucky	10,724	11,066	11,949	11.4	8.0	310
Louisiana	23,333	24,063	24,840	6.5	3.2	573
Maryland	20,887	20,998	21,441	2.7	2.1	398
Mississippi	10,631	10,930	12,446	17.1	13.9	447
North Carolina	22,650	23,648	26,818	18.4	13.4	357
Oklahoma	16,306	16,631	17,605	8.0	5.9	536
South Carolina	19,646	18,999	19,481	-0.8	2.5	510
Tennessee	14,397	14,401	14,933	3.7	3.7	284
Texas	100,136	118,195	127,092	26.9	7.5	659
Virginia	24,822	26,968	27,310	10.0	1.3	412
West Virginia	1,941	1,930	2,438	25.6	26.3	134
<b>West</b>	<b>196,430</b>	<b>200,004</b>	<b>209,756</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>348</b>
Alaska <sup>c</sup>	3,128	3,292	3,031	-3.1	-7.9	293
Arizona	18,830	19,746	20,907	11.0	5.9	473
California	124,813	125,605	131,342	5.2	4.6	402
Colorado	9,954	10,717	10,757	8.1	0.4	287
Hawaii <sup>c</sup>	3,246	3,333	3,583	10.4	7.5	218
Idaho	2,861	2,811	3,240	13.2	15.3	278
Montana	1,654	1,764	1,801	8.9	2.1	207
Nevada	6,745	6,993	7,487	11.0	7.1	468
New Mexico	3,704	3,712	4,121	11.3	11.0	234
Oregon	6,723	6,936	7,505	11.6	8.2	199
Utah	2,948	3,045	3,272	11.0	7.5	166
Washington	10,650	10,833	11,402	7.1	5.3	210
Wyoming	1,174	1,217	1,308	11.4	7.5	271

— Not calculated.

a. Includes inmates sentenced to more than one year (“sentenced prisoners”) and those sentenced to a year or less with no sentence. Prisoner counts may differ from previously published figures and may also be revised.

b. The number of prisoners with a sentence of more than one year per 100,000 in the resident population.

c. Prison and jails form one integrated system. Data include total jail and prison population.

d. Data for 6/30/95 are custody counts only and are not comparable to previous counts.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics

**Table 2. Number of Adults in Custody of State or Federal Prisons or in Local Jails, 1980, 1985, 1990-1994**

	Total in custody <sup>a</sup>	Federal prisons	State prisons	Local jails <sup>b</sup>	Total rate per 100,000 <sup>c</sup>
1980	501,886	23,779	295,819	182,288	221
1985	742,579	35,781	451,812	254,986	312
1990	1,146,401	58,838	684,544	403,019	460
1991	1,216,664	63,930	728,605	424,129	482
1992	1,292,347	72,071	778,495	441,781	507
1993	1,364,881	80,815	828,566	455,500	529
1994	1,483,410	85,500	914,193	483,717	565

**Per cent change**

1980-1994	196.6%	260.6%	209.0%	165.4%
1993-1994	8.7%	5.8%	10.3%	6.2%

a. State and federal inmate counts exclude those under state or federal jurisdiction who were housed elsewhere, as in county or local jails.

b. Number of adults held in local jails.

c. Total number of adults held in the custody of state, federal, or local jurisdictions per 100,000 U.S. residents.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics

The incarceration rate of state and federal prisoners sentenced to more than a year reached 403 per 100,000 U.S. residents on June 30, 1995. Texas led the nation with 659 sentenced prisoners per 100,000 state residents, followed by Louisiana (573 per 100,000), Oklahoma (536) and South Carolina (510). The states with the lowest rates were North Dakota (90 sentenced prisoners per 100,000 state residents), Minnesota (103) and Maine (112).

The preceding article is derived from the Bureau of Justice Statistics reports "Prisoners in 1994," NCJ-151654, and "Prisoners at Midyear 1995," NCJ-158021. Copies of the entire report may be obtained from the Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Unit or on the World Wide Web at <http://ncjrs.aspensys.com:81>.

## Alaska Prison Data: Some Comparisons

N.E. Schafer

The Justice Center has extracted Alaska data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics report discussed in the accompanying article in order to compare the Alaska prison population with the populations of similar states.

According to the June 1995 data, Alaska ranks 41st among the 50 states in the number of persons incarcerated, but ranks in the middle of all states for the rate at which we incarcerate our people—25th among all the states, a ranking much lower than Alaska achieved in the 1980s but still high in comparison with other small states. In an effort to understand the disparity in our rankings we have examined the Alaska data in different ways. Table 1 presents the ten smallest states—according to Bureau of the

Census 1994 population estimates—with their 1995 prison populations, and Table 2 presents the BJS-computed rates of incarceration for the same states. (The figures in Table 1 include jail and prison populations; the rates in Table 2 are based on the number of prisoners sentenced to more than one year.)

One of the states closest to us in population (North Dakota) ranks 50th among states for both the number of prisoners held and for the rate at which its people are incarcerated. There are other, larger states which hold fewer prisoners than Alaska—Maine (pop. 1,240,000) with 1459 prisoners, West Virginia (pop. 1,822,000) with 2438 prisoners, and Nebraska (pop. 1,623,000) with 2801 prisoners.

Many states have lower incarceration rates. The ten states with the lowest BJS-calculated incarceration rates are: North Dakota, Minnesota, Maine, West Virginia, Vermont, Utah, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. Five of these states are among the states with the lowest general populations, but the remainder are considerably larger.

Because Alaska has an integrated state-level jail and prison system, we also compared Alaska to those states which have integrated their jails and prisons; this adds two states for consideration—Connecticut and Hawaii. (Rhode Island, Delaware and Vermont are the other states with integrated systems.) Connecticut held 15,005 prisoners on June 30, 1995 for an incarceration rate of 325 per 100,000, a rate a bit higher than Alaska's; Hawaii held 3583 prisoners—a rate of 218 per 100,000, a substantially lower incarceration rate.

While most of the small states listed in Tables 1 and 2 are rural with very few large metropolitan areas, in Alaska more than half of the population is urban, thus perhaps contributing to its rather high incarceration rate. (Anchorage is Alaska's largest city, with a city population of 246,000 in 1992 and a regional population of 290,000). However, several states with much larger urban areas have much lower incarceration rates—including some of the ten lowest: Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nebraska, Utah.

Another possible difference between Alaska and states with lower incarceration rates is the proportion of the population that

Please see *Alaska Prison Data*, page 4

**Table 1. Population and Prison Population in Selected States, June 30, 1995**

	State population*	No. of prisoners	Rank among all states
Wyoming	476,000	1,308	48
Vermont	580,000	1,058	49
<b>Alaska</b>	<b>606,000</b>	<b>3,031</b>	<b>41</b>
North Dakota	638,000	610	50
Delaware	706,000	4,651	35
South Dakota	721,000	1,780	46
Montana	856,000	1,801	45
Rhode Island	997,000	3,132	40
Idaho	1,133,000	3,240	39
New Hampshire	1,137,000	2,065	44

\* 1994 population estimates by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Source of data: Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Prisoners at Midyear 1995" (NCJ-150821); U.S. Bureau of the Census.

**Table 2. Population and Incarceration Rates in Selected States, June 30, 1995**

	State population <sup>a</sup>	Incarceration rate of sentenced prisoners per 100,000 <sup>b</sup>	Rank among all states
Wyoming	476,000	271	29
Vermont	580,000	135	46
<b>Alaska</b>	<b>606,000</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>25</b>
North Dakota	638,000	90	50
Delaware	706,000	406	13
South Dakota	721,000	245	33
Montana	856,000	207	37
Rhode Island	997,000	190	41
Idaho	1,133,000	278	28
New Hampshire	1,137,000	180	43

a. 1994 population estimates by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

b. Prisoners with sentences of more than one year per 100,000 in the resident population.

Source of data: Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Prisoners at Midyear 1995" (NCJ-150821); U.S. Bureau of the Census.

## Alaska Prison Data (continued from page 3)

is minority. Data from the Alaska Department of Corrections regularly show that minorities are overrepresented in Alaska's correctional institutions; that is, minorities form a higher percentage of the prison population than they do for the population as a whole. We used Bureau of the Census estimates of race and ethnic data for 1992 to compute the proportion of the Alaska population which is minority (26.1%) and the minority proportions of the ten states with the lowest incarceration rates. None of these

ten had a minority population which comprised more than 13 per cent of the general population. Massachusetts' minority population was 12.9 per cent of the total and Rhode Island's 11.0 per cent. New Hampshire, Vermont and West Virginia had minority populations which were less than 5 per cent of their totals. Thus, a higher level of heterogeneity may help to explain the higher rate of incarceration in Alaska. To check this we also computed approximate proportions for the states closest to Alaska in incarceration rate. Colorado's incarceration rate was 287 per 100,000 people, and its racial minority was 19.6 per cent of its

total population; Tennessee, with an incarceration rate of 284 per 100,000 population, had a minority population of 17.7 per cent. However, Kentucky, with a higher incarceration rate (310 per 100,000) than Alaska, has a minority population of 8.4 per cent. Although the results of the comparisons are not consistent, problems related to race and culture and the extent to which the population is urbanized, may help to explain why Alaska's incarceration rate continues to be higher than those of states of similar size.

*N.E. Schafer is a professor with the Justice Center.*

## New Justice Center Web Site

*Melissa S. Green*

The Justice Center at University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) has opened a channel to on-line information on justice and law to anyone with access to the World Wide Web (WWW). The new Internet site is de-

signed to act as a one-stop Internet resource for University of Alaska students, justice and legal professionals, Alaska citizens, and others concerned about justice and law in Alaska. Part of *Camai*, UAA's Campus-Wide Information System, the web site provides information about the Justice Center's baccalaureate and paralegal certificate programs, as well as Justice Center and Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Unit research, the complete Justice Center bibliography, and articles from the *Alaska Justice Forum*.

Other resources available at the site include detailed, annotated listings, with links, of Alaska, national, and international web sites dealing with Alaska Natives and justice, corrections, the courts, crime and crime prevention, government, juvenile justice, law, law enforcement, justice legislation, and other relevant topics. A "Legal & Justice Research" page makes it possible to conduct on-line research on Alaska and federal statutory and case law. On the World Wide Web, a link can be followed simply by selecting it; this site makes hundreds of justice and legal resources throughout the world immediately available.

A sampler of resources available through links from the Justice Center web site:

- The *Alaska Court System* (<http://www.alaska.net/~akctlib/homepage.htm>) has a page maintained by the staff of the Alaska Court Libraries, and provides recent appellate court decisions (slip opinions), Alaska Rules of Court, Alaska Court System press releases, and other resources.

- The *Alaska Justice Resource Center* (<http://Justice.uafss.alaska.edu/>). A service of the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) Justice Department, this site includes a Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) database based on crime data reported annually in the FBI's *Crime in the United States*. The UCR database comprises UCR index crime data for 1985, 1987, 1989, 1991, and 1993, and will

expand as future UCRs are published. The database includes all U.S. cities with populations of over 100,000 for years prior to 1993. Alaska cities in the database include Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau.

- The *Alaska State Legislature* (<http://www.state.ak.us/local/akpages/LEGISLATURE/home.htm>) web site includes addresses, email addresses, and information about all Alaska legislators. The legislature's Textual Infobases (<http://www.legis.state.ak.us/>) are word-searchable on Alaska Statutes, the Alaska Constitution, Legislative Uniform Rules, Alaska State Executive Orders, the Alaska Administrative Journal, current and previous years' legislative information (House bills and resolutions, House and Senate journals, committee minutes, and session laws and resolves), and a catalog of Legislative Research Agency memoranda (which can be ordered through Legislative Information Offices).

- *Cop Net* (<http://police.sas.ab.ca/>) is a central resource for police officers and law enforcement agencies, with links to law enforcement agencies in the U.S. and other nations, as well as numerous other resources. Portions of this site are available only to sworn officers with password access; information on getting a password is provided.

- *Cornell University's Legal Information Institute* (<http://www.law.cornell.edu/>) offers recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions, recent decisions of the New York Court of Appeals, the full U.S. Code, and other important legal documents.

- *Hieros Gamos* (<http://www.hg.org/>), according to its home page, provides national and international listings for "every organization, association, law school, firm, vendor, consultant, etc. directly or indirectly involved with the legal profession."

- *Introduction to American Justice* (<http://orion.alaska.edu/~afdsjw/justice.html>) is an educational resource site designed by Jus-



### Alaska Justice Forum

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## Research through the Justice Center Web Site: An Example

A newspaper story describes a recent Alaska Supreme Court decision on a citizen's suit against the Municipality of Anchorage for false arrest and imprisonment, and you'd like to read the complete decision. Select "Legal & Justice Research" from the "Other sites" menu at the bottom of the Justice Center home page. The "Legal & Justice Research" page includes links to Alaska, federal, and other resources useful in legal and justice research. These can be reached by scrolling down or by using an internal menuing system. Select "Alaska" from the menu immediately beneath the title "Legal & Justice Research;" under "Alaska," choose the menu item "Court Decisions."

This area of the page has links to Alaska appellate court decisions, including slip (recent) opinions and 1991-1996 decisions of the Alaska Supreme Court and the Alaska Court of Appeals, as well as decisions since June 1995 of the U.S. Ninth Circuit. Slip opinions, at a site maintained by the *Alaska Court Libraries* (<http://www.alaska.net/~akctlib/sp.htm>), are removed from the site once they are printed in *Pacific Reporter, 2d*, the designated official report of Alaska appellate decisions, but the decision we're looking for is recent enough that it will probably still be there. In fact, once we follow the link and start scrolling down the list of cases for those which name the Municipality of Anchorage as one of the litigants, we can easily find a possibility: a January 12, 1996 decision, *Waskey v. Municipality of Anchorage*. Select the link; the text of the decision appears on-screen. It is, indeed, the case we were seeking.

But what if you didn't know that the Municipality of Anchorage was involved? There are also links to a site main-

tained by the *Alaska Legal Resource Center* (<http://www.touchngo.com/1glcntr/1glcntr.htm>), a top site maintained by Touch N' Go Systems and the Law Offices of James P. Gottstein. The Alaska Legal Resource Center permits searching 1991-1996 Alaska Supreme Court decisions by key words, and also includes a topical index to the decisions. From the Justice Center's "Legal & Justice Research" page, select "Search Decisions by Keyword," and you'll be presented with a field in which you can enter your search keywords: "false arrest." Hit the <Enter> key on your keyboard, and in a moment a list of decisions, linked to copies of the actual court documents, will appear on your screen. As of this writing, the topmost decision is the one we're looking for, *Waskey v. Municipality of Anchorage* (1/12/96); as a bonus, most of the other cases listed address the same or related issues.

The Alaska Legislature's "infobase" of *Alaska Statutes* (<http://www.legis.state.ak.us/folio.cgi/stattx95?>), available through the same Justice Center research page, make it possible to find the exact statute governing issues of false arrest and imprisonment in Alaska. We can also research the issue at the federal level, through searchable versions of 1990-1995 U.S. Supreme Court decisions and the full U.S. Code, from Cornell University's *Legal Information Institute* (<http://www.law.cornell.edu/>), and the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) from the *U.S. House of Representatives Internet Law Library* (<http://www.pls.com:8001/his/1.htm>). Other links on the research page will take us to the various federal circuit courts of appeal, and there are also links to sites that will help us locate research sites in other states.

Justice Center faculty member Darryl Wood. Especially designed for students in Wood's Justice 110 "Introduction to Justice" class, this site is an interactive primer for learning about the American justice system, with comprehensive class lecture notes and pointers to resources in all aspects of the Alaska and U.S. justice systems.

- *The Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR)* ([http://icpsr.umich.edu/ICPSR\\_homepage.html](http://icpsr.umich.edu/ICPSR_homepage.html)) is a membership-based, not-for-profit, organization serving member colleges and universities in the U.S. and abroad. Its web site provides access to a large archive of machine-readable social science data, including the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD) (<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/CJAIN/nacjd.html>).

- *The National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS)* (<http://ncjrs.aspensys.com:81/1/new2/homepage.html>), the most extensive source of information on criminal and juvenile justice in the world, is a collection of information clearinghouses supporting bureaus of the U.S. Department of Justice: the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Bureau of Justice

Statistics, the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Office for Victims of Crime, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Drug Enforcement Agency. It also provides support for the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy.

- *Native Americans and the Environment* (<http://www.indians.org/library/>) provides links and articles on environmental justice, treaties, land and water rights, and other issues related to Native Americans and the environment.

- *Shattered Love, Broken Lives* (<http://www.ultranet.com/newstandard/projects/DomVio/domviohome.HTML>) archives 60 articles, published over 11 days in the *Standard-Times* of New Bedford, Massachusetts, based on six months of investigation into the causes of domestic violence, victims, and solutions.

- *Vote Smart Web* (<http://www.vote-smart.org/>) from Project Vote Smart is a project of the Center for National Independence in Politics, a national nonpartisan nonprofit organization focused on providing citizens/voters with information about the political system, issues, candidates, and elected officials. Vote Smart Web provides access to campaign finance data, voting

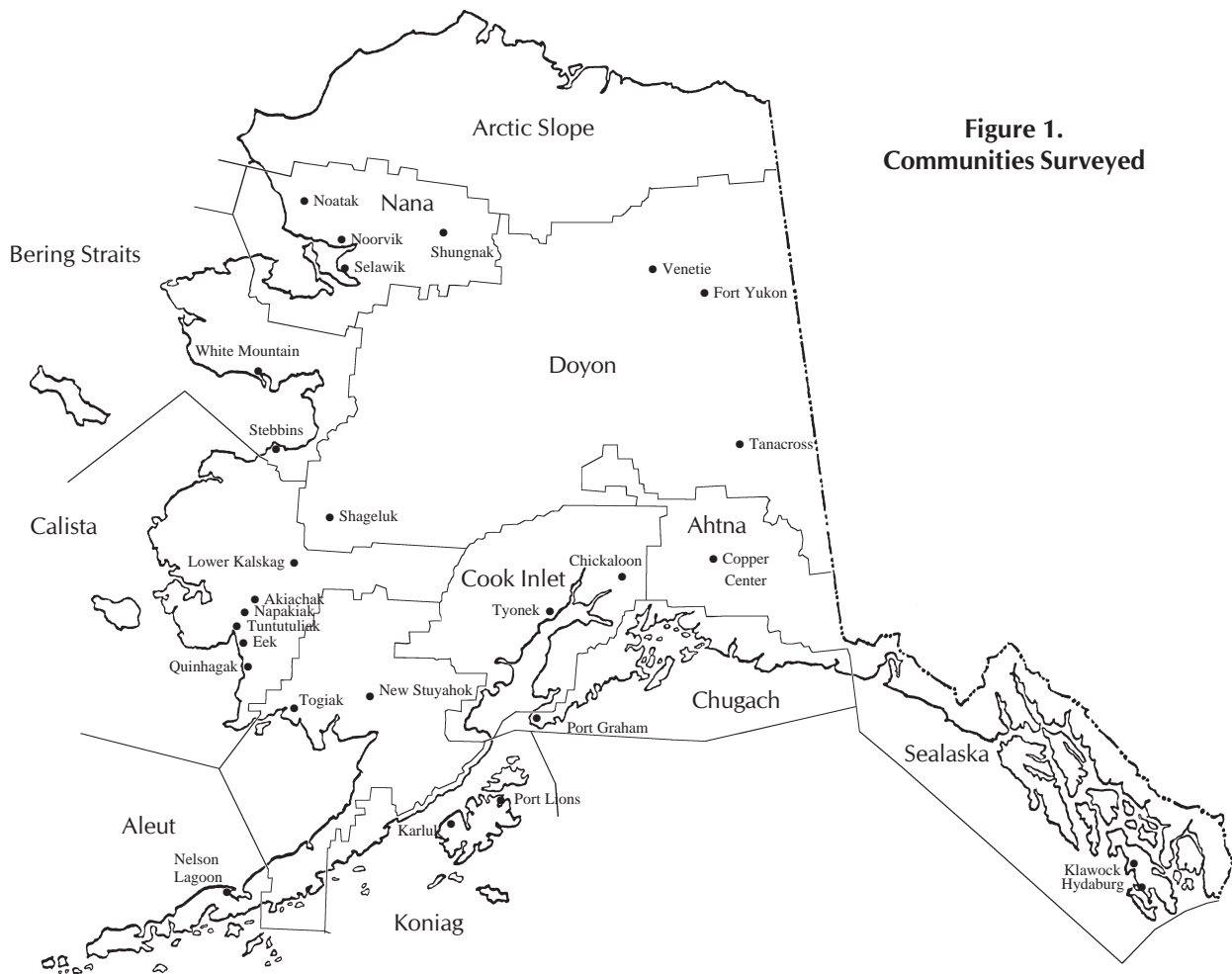
records, and performance evaluations prepared by competing special interest organizations, as well as biographical backgrounds and other information on members of Congress and candidates for federal and gubernatorial offices; it is expanding to include state legislative officials and candidates.

The Justice Center web site does not replace these or any of the other over 300 links listed on its pages, but rather makes existing Internet resources on justice and law, particularly pertaining to Alaska, available in one place. It can be reached using any World Wide Web browser such as Lynx, Netscape, or Mosaic at:

<http://orion.alaska.edu/just/1justice.html>

Like most sites on the World Wide Web, the Justice Center web site is continually "under construction." Comments and suggestions are welcome, including suggestions for additional links to justice and legal resources. Comments may be sent by email to [ajjust@orion.alaska.edu](mailto:ajjust@orion.alaska.edu).

*Melissa Green, the publication specialist at the Justice Center, designed the Justice Center web site.*



**Figure 1.**  
**Communities Surveyed**

### **Village Alaska** (continued from page 1)

with the agencies of the State of Alaska while the IRA councils deal primarily with federal agencies. IRA councils have responsibility for juvenile matters under the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and they manage trust lands in the community. In addition, they frequently provide a variety of grant-funded social services for the village. The village city councils usually manage public safety, road and facility maintenance, sewage and utility services, and similar fundamental government functions. Many villages employ at least one Village Police Officer (VPO) and are also served by a resident state-funded Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO).

In some instances the official members and the goals of both the city and IRA councils are the same, but in others the members and goals differ. The relationships can be very complex, and in a few cases these bodies are in competition.

The responsibilities, relationships and powers of various governing groups in Native communities across the state vary

greatly and, in some cases, shift dramatically over short periods of time. Information about such shifts is seldom given wide dissemination outside a community and is frequently not documented in state or regional publications. Consequently, nonresidents and outside agencies wishing to have effective relationships with local governments in Native communities must maintain continuous contact and face-to-face communication to understand community functioning and the changes which occur in the community government structure.

The village governments have a wide variety of income sources, most of which produce relatively limited amounts of money to support government operations. The most significant source of support is state-provided funds. State funds are supplemented by federal grants and contracts and city-run enterprises and businesses, such as washerias, bingo and pulltabs, public utilities, and stores. However, no matter how creative the community in obtaining resources to support public safety, nearly all the communities surveyed are short of money to pay for routine local public safety operations.

### **Social Control**

Most villages have established local ordinances and rules to handle behavior deemed undesirable by the local community or its officials. The nature of these rules and the degree of their formal codification vary from community to community. In a few instances, community officials spoke freely about written tribal or village rules and their use; however, they frequently would not provide a copy of these rules to interviewers.

Most of the villages have developed and regularly use local—sometimes extralegal—social control mechanisms. Although only a few communities have “tribal” courts in operation, officials in nearly all villages indicate the concept is being implemented or considered for use. The officials in one community reported having a tribal court and a tribal bar association consisting of lay-lawyers. Residents accused of law violations are given a choice of being tried by the tribal court or being referred to troopers for arrest and trial in a state court. Tribal court sentences comprise fines and community service, such as helping the elderly in the

village, cleaning public facilities, and working on community construction. Those serving tribal court sentences in the community are supervised by a Village Police Officer.

This same community also reported having established a children's court. On this court three elders oversee incidents related to misconduct such as curfew violations, juvenile drinking, stealing, and gasoline sniffing. This group relies heavily on counseling and discussions with the offender and the offender's family. The most severe sentence imposed on offending teenagers involves emptying honey buckets for residents.

In another community, the first and second chiefs of the tribal council have assumed responsibility for behavior control actions on behalf of the community. They report-

edly follow the rules in a "tribal handbook," and they are assisted by local Native "security guards" whom the tribal council has hired at \$140 per week. These officials indicated that they enforce only "tribal law" violations which occur in the village or on adjacent land claimed as the traditional subsistence area of their people. Offenses committed by village residents elsewhere in the state and offenses involving local, state or federal property (e.g., breaking and entry of the school or post office and warrants for offenses committed in Anchorage or Fairbanks) are left to the Alaska State Troopers. However, village officials insist upon accompanying and assisting troopers who come into the village to investigate or serve papers.

These chiefs also stated that people com-

ing into their village, including state officials, are randomly searched for alcohol and drugs. In addition, since most people in this village are lifelong residents and, by custom, walk freely into each other's homes, the chiefs seem to feel comfortable in entering any home, unannounced, to check on reported misconduct or alcohol possession.

This village is particularly interesting because its officials claim to use sentencing standards which can result in lifetime banishment from the village. For example, a resident judged in a hearing by the council as drunk or disorderly is given a fine of \$75 for a first occurrence, a fine of \$150 for a second incident, and a "blue ticket" for a third or subsequent incident. The first "blue

*Please see Village Alaska, page 8*

**Table 1. Demographics in Surveyed Communities**

*By regional corporation and village.*

	Alaska Native					Non-Native					Total pop.	
	American Indian	Eskimo	Aleut	Total		Caucasian	African Amer.	Asian/Pacific Islander	Other	Total		
				N	% of pop.					N		% of pop.
<b>Ahtna Inc.</b>												
Copper Center	146	9	0	155	34.5%	294	0	0	0	294	65.5%	449
<b>Aleut Corp.</b>												
Nelson Lagoon	0	1	66	67	80.7%	16	0	0	0	16	19.3%	83
<b>Bering Straits Native Corp.</b>												
Stebbins	2	376	1	379	94.8%	20	1	0	0	21	5.3%	400
White Mountain	2	154	2	158	87.8	20	1	1	0	22	12.2	180
<b>Bristol Bay Native Corp.</b>												
New Stuyahok	1	360	14	375	95.9%	16	0	0	0	16	4.1%	391
Togiak	2	531	2	535	87.3	71	1	0	6	78	12.7	613
<b>Calista Corp.</b>												
Akiachak	0	457	0	457	95.0%	22	0	2	0	24	5.0%	481
Chuathbaluk	8	79	0	87	89.7	10	0	0	0	10	10.3	97
Eek	4	239	0	243	95.7	10	0	0	1	11	4.3	254
Lower Kalskag	1	283	2	286	98.3	4	1	0	0	5	1.7	291
Napakiaik	2	298	0	300	94.3	14	4	0	0	18	5.7	318
Quinhagak	1	469	0	470	93.8	29	0	1	1	31	6.2	501
Tuntutuliak	1	289	0	290	96.7	9	0	0	1	10	3.3	300
<b>Chugach Alaska Corp.</b>												
Port Graham	1	2	147	150	90.4%	15	0	1	0	16	9.6%	166
<b>Cook Inlet Regional Corp.</b>												
Chickaloon	5	1	3	9	6.2%	132	0	1	3	136	93.8%	145
Tyonek	138	2	2	142	92.2	12	0	0	0	12	7.8	154
<b>Doyon Ltd.</b>												
Ft. Yukon	483	10	0	493	85.0%	85	0	0	2	87	15.0%	580
Shageluk	131	1	0	132	95.0	7	0	0	0	7	5.0	139
Tanacross	100	0	0	100	94.3	6	0	0	0	6	5.7	106
Venetie	168	3	0	171	94.0	11	0	0	0	11	6.0	182
<b>Koniag Inc.</b>												
Karluk	0	0	65	65	91.5%	5	0	1	0	6	8.5%	71
Port Lions	0	4	146	150	67.6	68	0	2	2	72	32.4	222
<b>NANA Regional Corp.</b>												
Noatak	1	321	0	322	96.7%	11	0	0	0	11	3.3%	333
Noorvik	17	481	0	498	93.8	32	1	0	0	33	6.2	531
Selawik	8	560	1	569	95.5	25	2	0	0	27	4.5	596
Shungnak	1	210	0	211	94.6	12	0	0	0	12	5.4	223
<b>Sealaska Corp.</b>												
Hydaburg	335	3	4	342	89.1%	40	1	1	0	42	10.9%	384
Klawock	386	1	5	392	54.3	324	1	4	1	330	45.7	722

*Source of data:* Alaska Department of Community and Regional Affairs; based on 1990 census data.

## **Village Alaska** (continued from page 7)

ticket” action banishes the offender for a minimum of three months, after which time he can be readmitted upon submission to the council of a written apology and a request for readmission. A second “blue ticket” is similar, except the banishment is for a minimum of six months. A third “blue ticket” action indicates permanent banishment. The process has reportedly been applied only to “tribe” members; “non-enrolled” people who are found drinking alcohol or being disorderly are sent out of the village after a single offense.

The officials of this village and those in many other communities claim to have developed their own system because they do not believe the state has effectively addressed community problems. Among the

most frequently occurring problems which community officials claim to have made progress in correcting are (1) alcohol importation, possession, and distribution; (2) curfew violations; (3) dog control; (4) misuse of firearms; (5) misuse of citizen band radios; and (6) disorderly conduct and interpersonal violence. They have had less success in dealing with nonresidents such as the pilots, guides, and hunters claimed to be trespassing in their territory.

### **Conclusion**

The current governmental arrangements reflect spontaneous resourcefulness as much as comprehensive design. Most of the communities studied either have or are in the process of developing a sense of direction which reflects a commitment to the familiar rural village life patterns and links to the

society outside the village boundaries.

Most of the villages in this survey have seemingly well-understood community social control methods to handle problems beyond the scope of family responsibility. These methods sometimes do not reflect the western legal system and lack articulated recognition from the Alaska Department of Public Safety, the Alaska Court System, and most other governmental organizations. The village social control systems tend, however, to be confined primarily to dealing with disruptive behavior in the community. Criminal acts which the state has defined as high-priority criminal behavior are nearly always referred by the village to the state.

*Future Forum articles will examine specific public safety data obtained from the survey. Copies of the entire report may be obtained from the Justice Center at UAA.*

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