

# CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN ALASKA

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## ABSTRACT

Two aspects of working in Alaska that make the job of managing cultural resources different from the way it is practiced elsewhere are land ownership and the remoteness of sites from road access and population centers. Eighty-nine percent of the land in the state is controlled by federal or state agencies; therefore, state and federal cultural resource laws apply to most of the land in the state. These agencies also have fewer people managing the lands compared with other parts of the country. Most of these lands are not accessible by road and require boat, plane, or helicopter access, which increases management costs. The harsh environment and increasing coastal and riverine erosion accelerates the need for management decisions and mitigation of cultural resources. This combination of conditions creates a unique working environment for cultural resource managers in Alaska.

**KEYWORDS:** heritage resource laws, compliance, land management

## INTRODUCTION

Alaska is generally perceived as a state with extreme conditions, and these conditions present unique problems for cultural resource managers that are not likely to concern managers in other states. These challenges include the vast amount of land, and for the State of Alaska, also includes responsibility for the extensive shoreline (McMahan, this volume). Associated with this is the difficulty of reaching the cultural resources and the high cost of travel to remote locations.

Cultural resource management is usually used to mean “managing historic places of archaeological, architectural, and historic interest, and considering impacts to

such places under the environmental and historic preservation laws” (King 2004:9). As managers work increasingly with the people whose culture they are affecting, cultural resource managers are becoming aware of a greater responsibility to a broader range of important places, values, or resources than just historical or archaeological sites. Cultural resource managers are expanding their views to include effects on subsistence, relationships to the place people live, to their health, to the social health of the community, and the physical and psychological health of its members. Cultural resource managers are now integrating social impact assessments, subsistence studies, traditional

cultural properties, sacred sites, landscapes, and even heritage tourism into their duties.

Many people in the field participate in cultural resource management beyond archaeology, history, and architecture, which have always had an important role, and include geography, anthropology, language, sociology, and folklore. Consultation with Alaska Natives, community members, local cultural specialists, community historians, and religious specialists is becoming standard in Alaska—a trend that began earlier in other parts of North America.

A multidisciplinary approach also means that cultural resource managers need to have better and more extensive training in ethics, the techniques needed to document and record the increasingly complex kinds of information (geographic information systems, or GIS, for example), cultural anthropology, interviewing and listening skills, history for dealing with recent properties including World War II and Cold War sites, and working with traditional cultural places that may have no human-built remains. These evolving approaches have led to greater discomfort by some practitioners. Managers no longer make decisions without consultation nor assume they have the primary interest in the site. When it is done well, cultural resource management is more complex than simply following the process.

The specialized knowledge required for federal and private cultural resource specialists includes more than a passing acquaintance with the many federal laws and executive orders. Most of these apply to federal lands or projects supported through federal funding or requiring a federal permit. In Alaska, cultural resource managers also need to be aware of the Alaska Heritage Protection Act. This act defines the responsibilities of the Department of Natural Resources as they relate to historic, prehistoric, and archaeological resources on state lands, and grave sites on all lands within the state (see Dale and McMahan, this volume).

## **DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN ALASKA**

Most training in cultural resource management in the 1970s and 1980s was not through university classes, although the University of Alaska Fairbanks did provide a cultural resource management class as early as 1978. Most cultural resource management skills were learned on projects during the relatively dynamic 1970s and 1980s described in Howard Smith's paper (this volume). These people moved into cultural resource management posi-

tions in the federal or state government as the agencies became aware that they needed their own experts, or they became contractors using their extensive background to develop successful businesses (Smith, this volume).

During the hectic 1970s and 1980s, application of cultural resource laws was somewhat haphazard. Field crews received little training beyond bear awareness and shotgun and first aid training. Site significance was determined based on intuition rather than criteria described in regulations, if there was any awareness that the project was established to comply with federal regulations.

It was probably not until the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill in 1989 that training and standard procedures and qualifications for professionals were established broadly in Alaska, although individual agencies may have had more rigorous expectations before that. This work required multiple agencies working with the state historic preservation officer to assess the spill's effects on cultural resources in Prince William Sound. In the 1990s, training became more common as classes were brought up from the contiguous United States, cultural resource managers were hired by the agencies to deal with compliance with federal laws, agencies paid to train their full-time employees, and cultural resource management became more visible in national professional organizations.

A new generation is moving into the agency positions now, and they are far better trained than their predecessors were at the beginning of their careers. They have had the benefit of working with cultural resource managers already established within the agencies, or with contracting companies, have taken one or more university courses in cultural resource management or have participated in a cultural resource management certification program in one of the other states, and they normally have a better understanding of the laws and their application. They are more aware of the requirements of cultural resource management beyond recording archaeological and historic sites, and they are more skilled with the technology needed to do the job, including geographic information systems, global positioning systems, surveying, and computer applications.

## **WHAT MAKES CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN ALASKA DIFFERENT?**

Cultural resource management is practiced differently in Alaska from other states. Land ownership and management is different partly because of the political organization of

Alaska Native lands. Another important factor affecting cultural resource management is the remote locations of most of the sites, the sparse state population, and the resulting logistical challenges.

#### LAND OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Land ownership affects the applicable cultural resource laws in the United States. The federal government manages 89.8 million ha (222 million acres) of land in Alaska or 60% of the state as military lands, parks, BLM-managed lands, wildlife refuges, and forests (Department of Natural Resources 2000:2). Only Nevada has a greater portion of federal lands with 81% of their state or 23 million ha (57 million acres) managed by federal agencies. The Alaska state government manages 36.4 million ha (90 million acres) or another 29% of the state.

**Federal Lands:** Federally managed lands are covered under several laws: National Historic Preservation Act, Archaeological Resources Protection Act, Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act, several laws that address policies for each agency, and numerous executive orders. Therefore, 60 percent of the land in the state is covered by federal laws addressing the treatment of cultural resources. Unfortunately, the agencies responsible for complying with or enforcing these laws have few cultural resource management specialists for the amount of land they are managing. They are usually outnumbered by their colleagues in the Lower 48 states who are managing much less land.

Tongass National Forest is the largest national forest in the U.S., with 6.8 million ha (16.8 million acres) occupying three-quarters of the land in the Panhandle. They have a permanent forest archaeologist, five permanent zone archaeologists and five seasonal archaeologists who work half the year. Susan Marvin, the Alaska Regional Heritage Program leader for the USDA Forest Service, noted that the forests are divided into zones, then into ranger districts. One zone within the Tongass National Forest is larger than the largest national forest in all of the contiguous states. So essentially, each zone archaeologist is covering more territory than a whole national forest elsewhere (Susan Marvin 2005, written communication). Neighboring Chugach National Forest is the second largest national forest in the country. It has one forest archaeologist, an assistant forest archaeologist, a district archaeologist, and three full-time support people to manage their

2.3 million ha (5.6 million acres). As tourism is increasing in Prince William Sound, the number of temporary employees is increasing so sites can be monitored (Susan Marvin 2005, written communication; Linda Yarborough 2005, personal communication).

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve is the largest park in the United States, covering 5.3 million ha (13.2 million acres), and with Kluane National Park in Yukon Territory and Tatshenshini-Alsek Park in British Columbia, Canada, these parks form the largest World Heritage Site (National Park Service 2005; Michele Jespersen 2005, personal communication). The snow-covered lands are also being administered by cultural resource managers now that more people are becoming aware of the resources in the icefields (see VanderHoek, this volume). This park has one historian, one part-time archaeologist, one part-time curator, and one anthropologist, but only one cultural resource manager to deal with compliance and the resources (Michele Jespersen 2005, personal communication).

Other national parks are not far behind. Lake Clark (5 million ha or 1.2 million acres) and Katmai (1.4 million ha or 3.5 million acres) share one cultural resource manager and one archaeologist; Denali (2.4 million ha or 6 million acres) has one cultural resource manager; Gates of the Arctic (2.9 million ha or 7.25 million acres) and Yukon-Charley River National Preserve (1 million ha or 2.5 million acres) share a cultural resource manager; and Glacier Bay (1.3 million ha or 3.2 million acres) has one cultural resource manager (Susan Bender 2005, personal communication).

Probably the greatest pressure is on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife cultural resource manager. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages 39.25 million ha (97 million acres) nationwide and 32.4 million (80 million acres) of those hectares are in the state of Alaska. They manage nearly a third of the federal land in Alaska but they have only one cultural resource manager, having elected not to fill a recently vacated position. To manage the remaining 6.9 million ha (17 million acres) of land outside Alaska they have 16 cultural resource managers. In the 1980s, this agency had about six archaeologists in Alaska (Linda Yarborough 2005, personal communication). Federal cutbacks are further reducing temporary student help designed to compensate for the loss of the second full-time position vacated in 2004.

The Bureau of Land Management manages approximately 34.4 million ha (85 million acres) in Alaska with

a staff of five full-time field archaeologists responsible for field management of the resources (Robert King 2005, written communication). Each of the field offices also has an office manager responsible for compliance, although the managers rely on the field archaeologists as the “subject matter experts” to help make many of the decisions.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is the federal administrator for approximately 527,000 ha (1.3 million acres) of 12,700 federally restricted Alaska Native allotments and 4,100 village townsite lots in Alaska. The lands they administer are privately owned and the Alaska Native landowners hold the legal title but the property is subject to federal statutory restrictions. When the townsites or allotments are sold and removed from federal protection, BIA must comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and determine if historic properties will be adversely affected by removing that protection. BIA has three permanent archaeologists and usually two seasonal archaeologists, depending on yearly funding. To help with the inventories and compliance work, BIA has developed contracts with Native tribes that requested to do their own archaeological surveys for Section 106 compliance. The Association of Village Council Presidents has one archaeologist to conduct work in the Lower Kuskokwim–Yukon Delta area, and Tanana Chiefs Conference has three archaeologists doing this work in the Interior. In southeast Alaska, the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes and the Sitka Tribe hire contract archaeologists to do the work on allotments and townsites for most of their region. Usually, the contracts are underfunded for the amount of work that is required. Because BIA is responsible for the Section 106 compliance, the work is reviewed by BIA Regional Archaeology before the information is submitted to the Alaska state historic preservation officer (Ricky Hoff 2007, written communication).

Comparatively, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is well staffed given that they manage only 8,100 ha (20,000 acres) of land near Fairbanks; however, most of their work involves construction (building harbors, breakwaters, shore storm and erosion protection, and small dams) or cleaning up military contamination on other lands—usually local government or corporation lands. They have 130 cleanup projects, although probably only 10 to 15 are active during any one year. They administer the Native American Lands Environmental Mitigation Program that funnels federal funding to Alaska Native organizations and are therefore responsible for compliance with federal cultural resource laws. They also do work for other

Department of Defense agencies, the U.S. Coast Guard, Federal Aviation Administration, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and others.

Contamination cleanup can cover a considerable area, and there are automatically cultural resource issues because the cleanup sites are military posts, radar sites, and forts from World War II and Cold War eras. Some even date from the initial arrival of the military into Alaska to maintain order during gold rushes in the late 1890s and early 1900s. These military sites often lie over much older cultural places and traditional cultural properties. Between 2000 and 2005, the Corps of Engineers environmental staff had two full-time archaeologists working in cultural resource compliance and one full-time temporary anthropologist. Between 2005 and 2007 the staff was reduced to a single archaeologist and a term anthropologist despite an increased workload. The regulatory section of the Corps of Engineers issues approximately 2,000 permits a year and has one cultural resource management specialist, although all project managers are responsible for ensuring the permits are in compliance with the federal laws. So, while the Corps of Engineers controls comparatively little land, its far-reaching projects are all subject to cultural resource laws that apply to federally funded undertakings. Any work being conducted by others but covered by permits issued by the Corps of Engineers are also subject to these laws.

Other military agencies also started hiring their own managers rather than relying on contractors or other Department of Defense employees. The U.S. Army Garrison Alaska added an architectural historian in 1999 to run its program. He quickly added archaeologists and historians to help manage their 687,965 ha (1.7 million acres) (Amanda Shearer 2005, personal communication; Smith, this volume). The 611<sup>th</sup> Airborne manages 15,135 ha (37,400 acres) of remote sites with one cultural resources manager (Karlene Leeper 2005, personal communication).

Most agency archaeologists, historians, and anthropologists do not have the time to do the bulk of the field work themselves beyond short surveys, site visits, and short-term monitoring. All of the agencies rely heavily on contractors to help with compliance, developing cultural resource management plans, and recording resources on their lands. Contractors help monitor construction or cleanup, record oral histories, record sites or buildings, and document traditional cultural places. Without cultural resource contractors, most agencies would not be able to comply with the federal laws or to manage their lands. Most of the contractors used by the agencies are

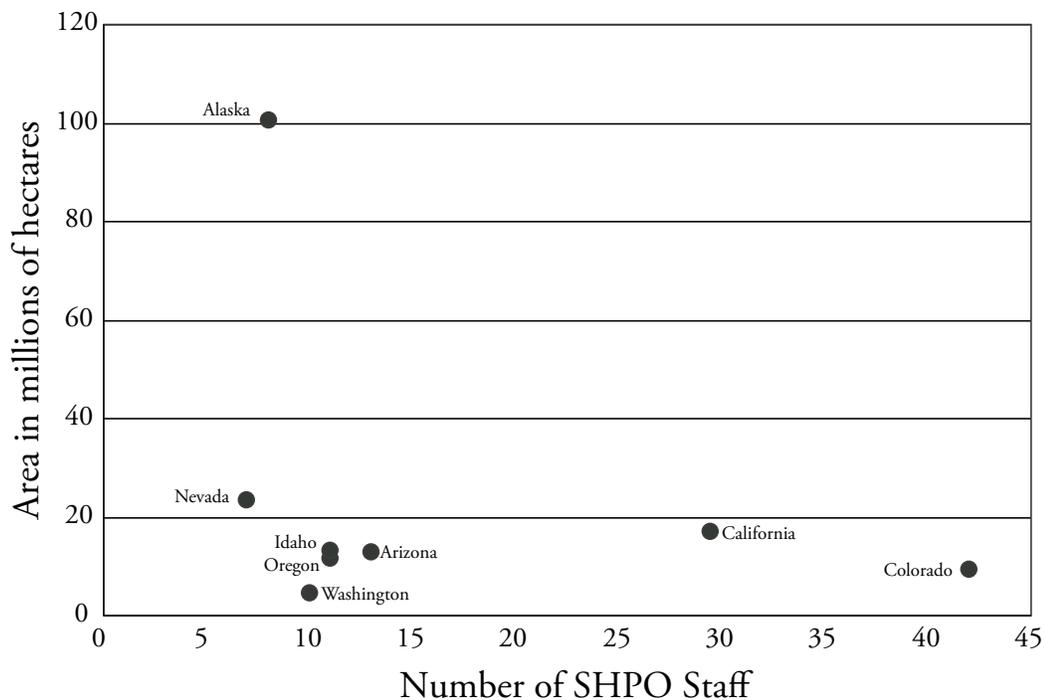
in-state contractors, although there are some large cultural resource management companies elsewhere that do work in Alaska.

**State Lands:** The State of Alaska controls 36.4 million ha (90 million acres) of the land within its boundaries. Alaska state lands also include most of the intertidal zone and submerged resources. This covers 54,700 km of tidal shoreline and the waters out 4.8 km (the 3-mile limit) from the shore. The Office of History and Archaeology (OHA) manages these lands under the Alaska Historic Preservation Act. There are three field archaeologist positions and a field historian but these individuals are project funded so their primary mission is to perform compliance work for the Department of Transportation and other state agencies. Like other agencies, any survey actually done on state land is normally funded through Section 106 projects that might coincidentally fall on state lands. Funding for surveys and other management work is minimal. The state archaeologist (one person) issues permits for work on the lands and deals with infractions on the land. A special projects archaeologist is specifically responsible for managing the Tangle Lakes Archaeological District (Richard VanderHoek 2005, personal communication).

The state historic preservation officer's staff deals primarily with reviewing compliance documents generated by the federal agencies and assists agencies and individuals with preservation issues. The rest of the OHA staff main-

tain databases on cultural resources in the state and on National Register properties, evaluate National Register nominations, and respond to oil spills in the state because the intertidal and submerged cultural resources are owned by the State of Alaska (see McMahan, this volume). Considering the work for which the office is responsible, it has a relatively small staff.

The amount of federal land also affects the workload of the state historic preservation officer's staff. There are three people responsible for review and compliance. The state historic preservation officer, state archaeologist, state historian and various in-house experts also participate in making decisions about requests for concurrence and assist with preservation issues from the federal agencies. With 60 percent of the land managed by various federal agencies, the state historic preservation officer and her compliance staff must review actions on these lands and review projects conducted by federal agencies, with federal funding, or requiring federal permits taking place on other lands. The Army Corps of Engineers had approximately 2000 permit actions in 2004. States with less federal land have a far smaller work load and yet cannot keep up (Claudia Nissley 2005, written communication). Alaska is struggling with the responsibilities required of its compliance staff. With another 29 percent of the land covered by the Alaska State Historic Preservation Act, no other state has so much area covered by cultural resource laws, yet has so few to administer those laws (Fig. 1).



*Figure 1: Comparison of the hectares of federally managed land in millions of hectares to the number of staff supporting the state historic preservation officers in western states (National Council of State Historic Preservation Officers 2004).*

**Private Lands:** Other lands are private and the laws that govern them are normally property laws. Twelve regional corporations, established under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), retained 6.5 million ha (16 million acres). A thirteenth, landless regional corporation represents people living outside of Alaska. The 224 village corporations own or have selected 10.5 million ha (26 million acres) within Alaska. The corporations hold these properties in fee simple title and their lands are not considered tribal land (Case and Voluck 2002). Therefore, these are private lands that are not subject to federal resource management laws unless they have not yet been conveyed to the corporation. Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act lands also do not qualify as Indian Country (Case and Voluck 2002:400). The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) do not apply to these lands if sites are discovered there, although if a federally funded project occurs on ANCSA lands (or any lands), Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act still applies to the federal agency involved. Alaska state laws against desecrating human graves cover burial sites on all lands within the state (see Dale and McMahan, this volume).

Generally, the village corporations retain the surface rights to the land, while regional corporations retain subsurface rights. Archaeological materials are considered surface unless they are in a gravel or sand matrix (which are material sources owned by the regional corporation), then they are considered subsurface. If sites are within a gravel or sand matrix that can be sold by the regional corporation, they are considered part of that subsurface property and are owned by the regional corporation (Case and Voluck 2002:161). Corporations have their own policies and permitting systems and can control some looting problems through property law.

The regional corporations selected some historical places and cemetery sites under Section 14(h)(1) of ANCSA, but regional corporation cultural resource management is variable since the primary purpose of the corporations is to generate a profit for their stockholders. Some have cultural resource specialists and others turn the duties over to their realty departments or land management or environmental resource specialists.

Unlike corporations, tribes do not have a land base with the exception of the Metlakatla Indian Community (Case and Voluck 2002:401). The lands are controlled by the corporations under ANCSA. Tribes are dependent

domestic governments with federal recognition. There are 231 federally recognized tribes in the state. The federal government must consult with tribal governments about tribal rights and resources when federal actions (even those not on federal lands) have the potential to affect a tribe. Cultural resources are one of those tribal resources. Because Alaska tribes do not own the land the resources are on, they have no direct control over those resources beyond having the opportunity to comment or consult through government-to-government requirements and the various cultural resource laws. Native allotments and village townsite lots are private land but not considered fee lands because of their federally restricted status, so these lands are subject to federal resource management laws.

There is one reservation in Alaska (Metlakatla Indian Community), and federal cultural resource laws do apply to its lands. It also can develop a cultural resource program with a tribal historic preservation officer to take the place of the state historic preservation officer for activities on their reservation. Metlakatla Indian Community has been considering that option for administering cultural resources on their lands.

#### REMOTENESS AND LOGISTICS

Travel to most of Alaska is not by car or truck. There are few roads in Alaska other than through the center of the state and some roads that link one community to another. In the 48 contiguous states, the most remote mainland spot is in Yellowstone National Park, which is 35 km from the nearest road (Raymond D. Watts 2005, written communication). In contrast, preliminary calculations of the most remote mainland location in Alaska place it near the border with the Yukon Territory, an estimated 131 km from the nearest road (John H. McCammon 2005, written communication). The estimate includes Yukon Territory roads and proximity to small communities with local roads that are not connected to the main Alaska road system. These results do not include archipelagos or remote islands. Many areas are not accessible by road from the primary population centers of Fairbanks and Anchorage and require one to fly to the regional hubs.

Travel costs in rural Alaska are notorious. Because the ground is not visible after the snow falls and until it melts, archaeologists must travel during the peak tourist season. This increases costs and makes it more difficult to reserve plane seats, hotel rooms, and housing in smaller communities on short notice. It is also the peak forest fire fighting

season in the state, and chartering planes and helicopters can also be difficult. Planes and helicopters and their pilots are usually contracted many months earlier in anticipation of the fire season. Chartering boats is somewhat easier, provided there is no commercial fishing or the boat is not being used by tourists for charters. The competition for resources drives costs up.

Some of the primary hubs are Dutch Harbor for the eastern Aleutian Islands, Barrow for northwestern Alaska, Kotzebue and Nome for western Alaska, Bethel for southwest Alaska, and Juneau and Ketchikan for southeast Alaska. Fairbanks was not included since it is on the road system and is used as the home base for many projects. The 2007 costs for travel to each of these hubs from Anchorage are shown in Table 1.

This table assumes mid-June travel, with advance reservations for seats in coach class, traveling for approximately one week. It also assumes that the ticket is refundable and can be changed. Fuel costs will affect this fare as well. Without the luxury of being able to make advance reservations (as happens during many projects) the passenger would probably add \$200 to the prices in Table 1.

The price from these Alaska hubs to outlying smaller communities may be nearly as much as the ticket purchases to get to the hub from Anchorage. For example, the flight from Nome to Shishmaref is approximately \$300 round trip. Other outlying areas are similarly priced. Freight costs to bring gear in or out add to the budget. Two trips are needed when the plane can't bring people and the gear together.

If you use alternate modes of transportation, a helicopter may cost \$1,000 per hour or an estimated \$10,000 a day, and plane charters are also expensive. A small skiff with a driver in Shishmaref may cost \$200 per day, plus fuel, and \$20 per hour for the owner's time. It costs \$700

*Table 1: Airfare roundtrip to Alaska hubs from Anchorage using Alaska Air full flex prices for mid-June 2007 travel (refundable, changeable tickets; www.alaskaair.com)*

Dutch Harbor	\$960
Barrow	\$900
Kotzebue	\$650
Nome	\$650
Bethel	\$560
Dillingham	\$560
Juneau	\$520
Ketchikan	\$1,600

(cash) for a small fishing boat to travel to a site half an hour away from town. It would cost considerably more to travel along the Aleutian chain. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's vessel, the *Tiglax*, is a \$4,000-per-day charter for researchers (Debra Corbett 2006, personal communication).

In small communities off the main road system, roads are often limited to the middle of town or from the runway to town. All-terrain-vehicles (ATVs) or boats are required to get to the survey area, and that time also needs to be factored into labor and time estimates. Sometimes walking is the only option. The cost to rent an ATV varies from community to community and from individual to individual, depending on the circumstances. Some communities do have vehicle rentals through a corporation or other private company. Often an individual will rent a personal vehicle if one is available and the owner does not need it that day. Vehicle rentals can be interesting, and there are many stories of trucks that have to be stopped to shift to a higher gear, unbolted seats, no doors, or engines that have to be persuaded to start again should they accidentally be turned off. In remote communities it is difficult to get parts needed to repair vehicles.

Using the estimates for travel costs for two people working one week and hiring a boat for one week for a two-person pedestrian survey in Kaktovik, the total travel cost was \$6,400 (Margan Grover 2005, written communication). Housing is \$175 per day (although the total federal per diem allowance is \$251 for this particular community), a plane ticket is \$1,110 per person, and a boat rental is estimated at \$250 per day. This estimate excludes salary.

The prices listed in Table 1 and described for Kaktovik are estimates for planned trips. A medical emergency requiring a crew member to be air-lifted by helicopter or airplane could cause the summer's work to end because the costs could exceed the budget. As an example, a medical evacuation by jet from Dutch Harbor, Alaska, to Anchorage is \$25,000 (Karen Stolting 2005, Alaska Regional Hospital, personal communication). Medical evacuations may be required for relatively simple injuries such as a broken ankle that needs to be pinned. Commercial carriers will not transport patients in pain. Even a simple injury could effectively end a project. It may be impossible to get help quickly enough for someone with serious medical problems in a remote area if the field crew is unable to communicate with someone for pick-up, if a helicopter or plane is unavailable because there is none in

the area, or if the weather makes flying dangerous. Safety can become an obsession in field work in Alaska.

Frequently, people coming from the contiguous United States have difficulty planning for weather delays affecting travel schedules. Fog, wind, and snow (even in midsummer) combined with short runways or choppy water for float planes or boats can cause delays of a week or more. Delays of several flights will place you at the end of a long waiting list. During that time, the crew needs to be housed, and fed, and paid for their time. A project can begin and end in the airport until additional funds can be found to get the work done the following season. Short summers limit seasons to a four-month window in some parts of the state.

The cost and remote locations affect the field work as well. Sophisticated equipment is left behind at the office if it cannot endure harsh weather or dust or cannot withstand being thrown in a backpack day after day. Heavy equipment also is left behind. Surveys may be done with a compass and tape rather than sophisticated surveying equipment. Now, there are weather-resistant GPS units that fit in a coat pocket and provide more accurate site locations, and pocket computers that are essentially sophisticated computers with GPS used to map sites. Tape and video recorders are smaller and the information can be loaded directly into a laptop computer to link to GIS points. Solar power sources run laptop computers and recharge the batteries for the hand-held systems to the field. If a stationary camp can be established, it is possible to bring the more sophisticated equipment in the field. Cultural resource managers are finally able to return with data similar in quality to the data obtained by their colleagues in less remote parts of the country. The capabilities are much greater than they were 30 years ago, when establishing a location on a photocopied USGS map was sometimes no better than guesswork, particularly in low-relief, relatively featureless areas.

Freight costs are high, and artifact and sample triage needs to occur in the field. The archaeologist needs to determine if it is necessary to bring back fire-cracked rock, whale bone, soil samples, and cobble choppers. Many archaeologists do not collect samples or artifacts for a couple of reasons. One is the ethics of collecting and removing artifacts from the original context, another is the curation crisis in the museums (Odess, this volume). Some sites are in such remote areas that it is unlikely that collectors are going to take away the artifacts. Architects and historians usually record the information they need with drawings

and photographs, and anthropologists bring back their notes and tapes (or memory cards), alleviating some of the problems with freight. Architectural features are also less likely to suffer damage in remote areas, except where they are used for shelter or used as firewood where wood is scarce. The most extensive damage is likely to be caused by heavy snow loads, wind, and time.

The distance and cost of travel make it difficult for cultural resource managers to regularly monitor damage to sites or structures. The harsh environment in the north causes greater structural damage. Aleutian and Kodiak Island World War II sites are rapidly being destroyed by the combination of wind, snow load, age, and “eBay harvesting.” Global warming is also affecting the 54,700 km of Alaska coastline. Shorter seasons of sea ice are causing shorelines to suffer from longer exposure to fall storms in the Arctic and accelerating the rates of erosion. Erosion can destroy sites many hundreds or thousands of years old during a few intense storms. Pictures in the news over the past few years of the erosion at Shishmaref in northwest Alaska make this apparent.

The agencies and their staff depend on project funds to support Section 106 compliance and to gain access to remote sites, whether they do it themselves or hire contractors. This limits exploration and management to project areas and not necessarily to the places that need monitoring, such as eroding shorelines or riverbanks. While neglect is considered an adverse effect and therefore is a federal action, no agency in Alaska has been considered out of compliance because they were unable to manage these endangered sites.

The remote locations can reduce the amount of looting, although Bundy and Moss (this volume) has observed that increased accessibility did not lead to increased looting near large population centers in Alaska; however, lower site visibility in those areas may have contributed to that. Sites near or within communities or camps can suffer badly from subsistence digging (Staley 1993) and development, but obscure sites are protected because people may not be aware of them (Bundy and Moss, this volume). If the modern ethical values of cultural resource managers are to preserve the resources in place, then traditional cultural places and other cultural resources may be protected because they are away from population centers and relatively unknown—even to the cultural resource managers.

It is difficult, however, to monitor construction or demolition projects in remote places. Elsewhere, compliance staff for the state historic preservation officer might

be able to drive by a project. Dennis Griffin, state archaeologist with the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, stated that he may drop by a project when he has concerns, although he usually relies on what he calls the “rattling out method” to find out if someone is not in compliance (Dennis Griffin 2005, written communication). Former Wyoming state historic preservation officer, Claudia Nissley (2005, written communication) said they never have the time or the staff to check up on projects. She said they are completely overwhelmed by work because of the large amount of federal land in their state. Alaska state compliance staff have far too few people, too much federal and state land, and too high travel costs to allow them to monitor construction projects directly. Sometimes an agency will invite a staff member or the state historic preservation officer to accompany them on a site visit so they can become familiar with the project and make informed decisions.

#### CURATING MATERIALS FROM REMOTE SITES

With half the Alaska population in Anchorage, museum directors have difficulties justifying their budgets in small communities and do not have the fundraising opportunities that museums have in larger towns. Federal agencies can only use museums that meet standards in the regulations described in 36 CFR 79: Curation of Federally Owned and Administered Archaeological Collections. The state museums, the University of Alaska Museum of the North, Alutiiq Museum, and the Museum of the Aleutians are among the museums that meet these standards. Artifacts collected from Alaska Native allotments are considered private property, although the land is administered by the BIA, and the landowner can treat the items as they wish. Most communities would like to have the artifacts and other cultural items back that are part of their local history, and many people are quite vocal about this. If the items were collected from federal lands they must be curated in a museum meeting federal standards, and most communities cannot afford the facilities that meet the federal standards, nor do they have the staff to curate the collections. Some communities hold their collections in community buildings, storage, garages, or abandoned buildings until the day they can afford a local museum. While some communities have asked for cultural heritage museums and repositories as part of mitigation for federally funded projects, the days of

abundant federal or state funds for these kinds of projects are likely over. Creative grant writers may be able to get the required money, but even small, established museums in moderately populated hub communities in Alaska are having problems remaining solvent. At the same time, the University of Alaska Museum of the North is increasing its repository charges because it is running out of room, and the federal agencies have few other options within the state (Odess, this volume).

#### HOW FAR HAVE WE COME IN 20 YEARS?

William Workman (1985) conducted a similar assessment of cultural resource management in Alaska over 20 years ago. That report was a result of a three-day meeting sponsored by the Society for American Archaeology at the University of Alaska Anchorage in 1984. The participants, including agency, contracting, and academic archaeologists, discussed the state of cultural resource management in Alaska and made recommendations about improving conditions for research, compliance, and education. Workman assembled the information, which was reviewed by the panel members, and the report was printed the next year by the Alaska Historical Commission. Many of the observations in Workman’s (1985) report are similar to those being made twenty years later.

Workman noted that the size and the logistical challenges in Alaska meant that large parts of the state were unsurveyed. In 1984, he noted that 25 of the 153 USGS map quadrants in Alaska had no surveys conducted in them. At the time only 9,300 sites were included in the Alaska Heritage Resource Survey database. Now only two quadrants remain unsurveyed: Mount Saint Elias and Atlin (R. Joan Dale 2005, written communication). By 2005, there were 22,218 completed cards in the database (the discrepancy between assigned numbers and actual site cards is because many of the site numbers have no information to go with them). Of those completed cards, 16,516 were sites while the rest were buildings, structures, objects, or districts (R. Joan Dale 2005, written communication). While the numbers have grown in the past two decades, large portions of the state are still relatively unknown and basic cultural chronologies have yet to be established for precontact occupations. This means that in some areas, nearly all intact sites have the potential to yield information important to the understanding of history or prehistory. In other parts of the United States, certain site

types or periods may be so ubiquitous and well understood that they no longer retain this significance. As Workman (1985:15) noted:

Lack of baseline data for most areas has serious impact on the sophistication of the archeological questions which can be addressed in much of Alaska at present. Most survey work to date has been of a reconnaissance nature, thus the majority of known sites have contributed little as yet to a scientific understanding of Alaska's past.

Then as now, the state historic preservation officer's staff was overworked. Workman (1985) reported that in 1984, 1,500 construction projects were reviewed by the staff at the Office of History and Archaeology. There was one full-time and one part-time person reviewing the projects. Stefanie Ludwig (2005, personal communication) reported that a compliance staff of three people was sent 3,164 projects to review, of which 526 were state projects with no federal involvement. While the compliance staff at the OHA has doubled, so did the number of projects being reviewed, so they have not managed to catch up to the workload in the past 20 years.

Among other things, Workman and his colleagues were concerned about the cleanup of World War II-era military sites during the mid-1980s. Their concern was warranted. Some cleanup project managers sent in compliance letters describing a small part of the work being undertaken and used the letter to justify the removal of large portions of the World War II sites without further consultation. Since then, Cold War sites have also been included in the cleanup programs, and many of the Cold War facilities have been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places through Criterion Consideration G for sites fewer than 50 years old. Since Workman and his colleagues met in 1984, the military agencies responsible for cleanup activities have hired archaeologists whose responsibility is to track the cleanup projects and to conduct the compliance work. Compliance has improved markedly in this area largely through the efforts of the state historic preservation officer, National Environmental Policy Act compliance staff within the agencies, and in-house cultural resource managers continuously striving to educate a rotating cadre of project managers in the military agencies. Greater attention is also being paid to underlying historic and precontact sites.

## FUTURE OF CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN ALASKA

### TRIBAL INVOLVEMENT IN CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The politics of land ownership are likely to affect Alaska Native involvement in cultural resource management differently than it has developed in the 48 contiguous states. As was discussed earlier, the village corporations own the surface rights; therefore, the archaeological sites are owned by them, unless the site matrix is part of a material source and is a subsurface property. In that instance it is the property of the regional corporation. Archaeologists or historians in most cases get permits for work on corporation lands from the village or the regional corporation office. Despite the land ownership, government-to-government consultation by the agencies is with the federally recognized tribe. Tribal rights and resources include cultural resources (Shearer, this volume). Therefore, when the federal government begins any project that may affect a tribal right or resource, they must provide the opportunity for government-to-government consultation with the tribe because of the special relationship of the tribe with the United States government as a domestic dependent nation. It may not be the corporations that become involved in cultural resource management so much as the tribes, even though the corporations have the land base and issue the permits.

The relationship of the tribe with the village and regional corporations varies from region to region. The way each region chooses to work with cultural management depends on local histories. In some areas, village corporations are heavily involved in cultural resource management and in others, their priorities lie elsewhere.

In contrast to the corporations, tribes have few resources. They have few people to do the work and considerable paperwork for various federal programs. The tribes of the Upper Tanana river region, for example, are combining resources to further their economic development through the Upper Tanana Intertribal Coalition. Similar coalitions may form elsewhere to deal with the problem of not having lands and the economic base to support the tribal government. The tribes can use their relationship with the federal government to increase their participation in cultural resources management (among other things). As there are more trained people specializing in cultural

resources within tribal organizations, tribes may develop their own cultural resource management companies under the federal 8A program for minority and small disadvantaged companies and get contracts to do oral histories, to identify traditional cultural places, to identify historic and precontact sites, and to provide stewardship services for the federal agencies on federally managed lands for their own heritage sites and places. Part of the relationship with the federal government includes government-provided training opportunities. The Army is already providing training in Section 106 regulations for tribes affected by Army activities. These cultural resource companies would not require the land base that tribes have in the contiguous United States but can take advantage of the unique and special relationship between the domestic governments of the tribes and the U.S. government.

Metlakatla Indian Community is the only tribe in Alaska with reservation lands. They will likely have the state's only tribal historic preservation officer within the next decade. The tribal historic preservation officer is a position established through the National Historic Preservation Act, in which the tribe can take on the duties of the state historic preservation officer, and must be consulted as part of any compliance work on tribal lands. To establish a tribal historic preservation officer the tribe must have the same capabilities of a state historic preservation officer's office. Metlakatla Indian Community has been exploring the possibility for the past five years or more and they were considering several options, including contracting the duties to an outside company.

Rural communities are beginning to work with federal agencies and academics to design their own priorities for the management of their cultural resources. This was started at Kaktovik, where Tribal Partnership Program funding through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was combined with logistical assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Air Force (611<sup>th</sup> Airborne) to support a survey to identify the cultural resources in their area, collect oral histories, and establish a cultural resource management plan. Additional groups are expected to be brought into the consultation to help fund the work. The community of Kaktovik stated that they were concerned about their heritage disappearing as sites and important historic places eroded away without any information being recorded about them and about the artifacts being taken and sold. They want the artifacts put into a local museum, and they want to develop a heritage program. The program was being developed by Kaktovik using their pri-

orities through the Tribal Partnership Program, although the project has been postponed until erosion projects elsewhere are completed.

This is part of a trend that has seen increasingly greater integration of Alaska Native priorities into cultural resource management, whether it is architectural, landscapes, traditional cultural properties, precontact or contact period histories, or sacred sites. This is a trend already apparent in the 48 contiguous states that is gradually being felt in Alaska. There will be a greater emphasis on Alaska Native priorities through government consultation, application of the federal laws, and cooperative projects with independent researchers.

#### **REDUCTION IN FEDERAL AND STATE FUNDING FOR LAND MANAGEMENT**

Cultural resource managers are struggling. Positions are being cut and not refilled, and budgets are being slashed for the federal agencies, even given the vast amount of land they need to manage. Decreasing travel funds affect Alaska federal cultural resource specialists more than their colleagues in the contiguous states, who are more likely to be able to drive to training opportunities, conferences, and to the lands they manage. In Alaska, there are also fewer people in the profession available with whom to interact compared with other states. Electronic mail is critical in Alaska and the lack of access to this critical communication tool has been particularly hard on cultural resource managers in the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Agencies are increasingly relying on databases to report to congressional aides about how much land they have, how many sites they manage, and how many hours are spent on different tasks, just as their jobs are threatened by plans for outsourcing. Database management is beginning to overwhelm cultural resource managers as more hours are used to justify doing less. At the same time, development is increasing within this state as new roads and gas lines are proposed, new mines established, state and federal land traded, and new oil fields sought.

Lynne Sebastian (2004), the former state historic preservation officer for New Mexico, offered advice to the other state historic preservation officers about ways to deal with increasing responsibilities and smaller budgets. She essentially told them to let go of the process and the minutiae of compliance and work on the more important goal of historic preservation. New ways of doing the work need to be developed to adjust to the responsibilities of the job on the

federal agencies' side too. One way is for federal agencies to develop programmatic agreements with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the state historic preservation officer so that routine activities no longer need to be individually reviewed. The National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management have nationwide programmatic agreements. The Army developed the Army Alternate Procedures so that the same kinds of properties do not need to be documented every place they occur. In the case of the Army Alternate Procedures, it may be at the expense of locally significant properties (Russell Sackett 2005, written communication), but it does take care of the routine building and structural types and allows the Army to do its job.

Education is more cost-effective than policing, and there is an increasing emphasis on educational programs (Saleeby, this volume). This includes participation, establishing stewardship programs with local communities, and heritage tourism (Corbett, this volume; Steffian and Saltonstall, this volume). Educational programs reach more people, can affect people for a longer time, and extend through multiple generations as one teaches the next (usually younger to older, to begin with). Programs such as Project Archaeology, to train teachers to use archaeologically based lesson plans, should receive greater support in agencies. Educational programs have already been shown to reduce looting and vandalism elsewhere (Saleeby, this volume).

To deal with some of the common financial and personnel support problems, agencies continue to combine resources and establish cooperative projects to work with management issues on neighboring lands or contiguous resources. A case in point was the Kaktovik project, bringing together the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Air Force, and the Army Corps of Engineers. Department of Defense cultural resource managers had a working group that met twice a year to deal with military properties and informal lunches once or twice a month to discuss common problems. The education interest group of the Alaska Anthropological Association includes several agencies, including the National Park Service, USDA Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Alaska Office of History and Archaeology, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Air Force, Army, and other entities to pool their resources to support Archaeology Month, a lecture series, and other education programs that could not be supported by one agency alone. Fortunately, given the small community in Alaska and the level of co-

operation among professionals in the state, these endeavors are likely to become more common.

Stewardship programs are partly educational and partly cooperative programs with rural communities. With relatively little cost given the area being managed, agencies are able to monitor many of the sites most likely to be affected, looted, or eroded (Corbett, this volume). By combining the resources of the federal government with local interests, more is being done to manage the resources than could be done by the cultural resource manager alone (Steffian and Saltonstall, this volume).

## TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

Workman (1985:61) noted that by the mid-1980s the University of Alaska Fairbanks offered a master's degree in anthropology and it was possible to receive a doctorate in interdisciplinary studies in archaeology, while the community colleges around the state offered anthropology courses. The University of Alaska Anchorage offered an undergraduate degree in anthropology. By that time, the University of Alaska Fairbanks had offered at least one cultural resource management course.

Now cultural resource management courses are a regular feature at both the University of Alaska Anchorage and the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and the University of Alaska Fairbanks now offers a doctorate in anthropology. University of Alaska Anchorage has taken a different track by emphasizing an applied approach in their graduate program. Archaeology students in Anchorage can receive a master's degree in anthropology with an emphasis in cultural resource management. While there is not yet a certificate of cultural resource management in the University of Alaska system, as elsewhere in the United States and Canada, it is probably only a matter of time before the university begins producing technically capable field people to support cultural resource programs in the state. Workman (1985:113) and the cultural resource management specialists who gathered in 1984 recommended that all archaeologists should have some training in "business, legal and ethical aspects of CRM archaeology," and that occasional workshops be offered at professional meetings. While many archaeologists, anthropologists, historians, historic architects, and other potential cultural resource managers slip through their academic programs without this background, the number of workshops has increased to fill those gaps. The Office of History and Archaeology regularly offers workshops the day before the annual meet-

ings of the Alaska Anthropological Association, and the federal agencies frequently hire instructors to train their employees on the cultural resource management laws and practices. These classes are open to the public, so any interested cultural resource manager can attend if there are enough seats available. There are fewer grounds to excuse a cultural resource manager for ignorance of relevant cultural resource management laws and ethics because of a lack of training. However, it is more expensive to bring classes to Alaska and the number of classes available or accessible is considerably smaller than one would see in the other states. New college graduates are likely to have a better understanding of cultural resource management laws and the ethics than did their predecessors 20 or even 10 years ago.

Some of the large projects described by Smith (this volume) were the training grounds for cultural resource practitioners in the 1970s, '80s, and '90s. Potential opportunities for the next generation to learn this specialty are the Knik River Bridge, the Trans-Alaska gas line, Arctic National Wildlife Refuge oil exploration, and coastal erosion projects associated with global warming and storm damage. The development of large mines may also provide many jobs.

The number of Alaska cultural resource companies will likely increase if federal jobs are outsourced, with increased development in the state, and the greater number of trained specialists. Established companies from the 48 contiguous states and Canada will probably begin to compete with Northern Land Use Research, Inc., for the larger projects in Alaska as competition increases elsewhere. Fortunately, Alaska has seen little of the cutthroat and exclusionary tactics seen in the more competitive spheres. Increasing numbers of graduating students who specialized in cultural resource management at the outset will establish their own companies as the "boomer" generation gradually loses mobility after many hard years of pedestrian surveys and retires.

Register of Professional Archaeologists (RPA) certification may become more important. In other states it is slowly becoming a requirement, although no federal law requires such membership to do cultural resource work. Generally, word-of-mouth has been used in Alaska to determine a company's reputation and capabilities before this; but more development companies are bringing familiar cultural resource businesses with them to work in Alaska, and those businesses usually have RPA-certified archaeologists. The other cultural resource professions do

not appear to have developed a similar requirement for work in this field.

Development leads to greater pressures on environmental laws as the need for rapid construction of pipelines, bridges, or roads is portrayed as being more important than compliance with the required cultural and natural resource laws. Recent changes in Section 106 occurred as a result of disputes with mining companies and the Federal Communications Commission at a national level because they felt the Section 106 process was punitive and held back development. Although the people of the United States pressured Congress to write these environmental laws because they had seen the results of unfettered development in the 1950s and 1960s, the tide is turning, and Congress is being increasingly pressured by development interests to remove the restrictions. Given the development focus in this state, similar pressures are occurring in Alaska.

Academic archaeology is also changing in response to cultural resource management. As more students are trained in the field and new positions come open in university and college departments, academically focused researchers will become more aware that the federal and state laws apply to them as well. Until now, these laws have largely been ignored. Examples include the application of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act to federally funded research. Workman (1985:65) documented this 20 years ago:

Others may root in ignorance and confusion about the proper interpretation of laws and regulations, or even about the existence of pertinent laws and regulations. Many of us have not kept up as well as we should have with precedent-setting CRM decisions made outside Alaska. In the future we should participate more actively in CRM forums outside Alaska than we have in the past.

This brings us back to the importance of training and workshops for both new archaeologists and established cultural resource managers in Alaska.

## SUMMARY

This paper concentrated on the aspects of cultural resource management that make practicing this field in Alaska different from other states. As elsewhere, cultural resource management is personality-driven, but there are political and geographical features that make managing cultural resources and complying with the many cultural resource

laws in Alaska a specialty. Land ownership, remoteness, and logistics affect the management of cultural resources within the state.

These characteristics are related. The small numbers of managers, the vast lands being managed, and the difficulty of getting to the resources create an almost impossible situation for cultural resource management. It is so great a problem that neglect is often the only reasonable solution given the extent of the responsibilities. The Alaska state historic preservation officer's compliance staff responsible for reviewing federal compliance with the laws is in a similar situation given the number of federal projects that take place in the state and the extent of federal and state land holdings.

The Alaska Native land base controlled by corporations instead of the tribal government is very different from the reservation system common in the 48 contiguous states and creates a problem when tribes do not have direct control of lands and their associated sites and places. Fortunately, executive orders requiring government-to-government consultation provide the mechanism to cover federal actions on other lands. Federal laws do not, however, cover activities by corporations, businesses, or private landowners on their own land. Alaska Native allotments are not considered tribal lands although BIA administers the lands after they have been conveyed to the Native landowner. There are no tribal land managers in Alaska simply because there are no tribal lands with the exception of Metlakatla Indian Community. Village corporations manage cultural resources as the surface land owner, and regional corporations manage the historical and cemetery sites selected under Section 14(h)(1) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and sites in subsurface materials sources.

Technological developments have made the job somewhat easier, allowing managers to accurately map or locate sites using handheld equipment. We are now using satellite photographs to predict site locations; digitally photographing sites and features while simultaneously recording the time, latitude, and longitude on the photograph;

recording conversations and storing data on solar-powered computers, and linking all this information through GIS software to the physical location on a map. This technology makes information gathered in the field in Alaska comparable to the information coming from more accessible areas in the 48 contiguous states. This a far cry from carrying only a compass and a tape to reduce the pack weight only a decade ago.

Workman (1985) and his colleagues discussed similar issues 22 years ago. Some things have improved in the past two decades and other issues are still with us. The papers in this volume readdress many of the continuing concerns by cultural resource managers and new responsibilities brought on by changes in the laws or new laws and executive orders. These issues are relevant to academic, contracting, and agency cultural resource managers.

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