

Native Participation in Land Management Planning in Alaska

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ABSTRACT. Land ownership and land management in Alaska have changed dramatically since 1980. Native people have become owners of relatively small tracts of private land surrounded by large federal and state holdings. These public lands are the responsibility of a variety of agencies, each of which is preparing land management plans to guide how the land is to be used. Native people, to protect their traditional use of the land, must participate successfully in the preparation of these plans. Four problems inhibit participation: 1) native people are overloaded by the large number of plans, 2) the "world view" of native cultures does not readily accept planning, 3) the public meeting used by all agencies is an inappropriate forum for native participation, and 4) differences in communication style complicate discussion between native people and non-native planners. Potential solutions include coordinating planning efforts to reduce the number of plans, use of more appropriate participation methods, and training of non-native planners in cross-cultural communication and native people in land management planning.

Key words: land planning, land management, native people, public participation, cross-cultural communication

RÉSUMÉ. La propriété foncière et la gestion du territoire en Alaska ont changé radicalement depuis 1980. Les autochtones sont devenus propriétaires de terrains privés de taille relativement modeste, entourés de terres fédérales ou d'état. Ces terrains communaux sont sous la responsabilité de diverses agences, chacune d'elle préparant des projets de gestion du territoire, pour orienter l'utilisation future de ces terrains. Les autochtones, afin de protéger leur usage traditionnel de la terre, doivent participer avec succès à l'étude de ces projets. Leur participation est entravée par quatre problèmes : 1) les autochtones sont dépassés par le nombre de projets, 2) les cultures autochtones, en général, n'acceptent pas facilement l'idée de planification, 3) la réunion publique qu'organisent toutes les agences est un forum qui ne convient pas à la participation des autochtones, 4) les différences qui existent dans la façon de communiquer compliquent les débats entre les autochtones et les planificateurs non-autochtones. Les solutions possibles comprennent des efforts de planification coordonnés, pour réduire le nombre de projets; l'utilisation de méthodes de participation plus appropriées, et la formation de planificateurs non-autochtones en communication inter-culturelle, d'une part; et celle des autochtones en planification de la gestion du territoire, d'autre part.

Mots clés: planification du territoire, gestion du territoire, autochtones, participation publique, communication inter-culturelle

Участие местного населения в управлении системы планирования на Аляске.

С 1980 года землевладение и управление земельными участками на Аляске претерпело значительные изменения. Местное население стало обладателем небольших частных наделов в окружении крупных земельных участков, принадлежащих федеральному и государственному арендаторам. Эти земли находятся в ведении различных агенств, каждое из которых подготавливает планы земельного правления и регулирования с указаниями того, как эти земли могут быть использованы. Для того, чтобы защитить свое традиционное пользование землей, местному населению необходимо успешное участие при составлении этих планов. Четыре основных проблемы тормозят их участие:

- 1/ местное население перегружено количеством планов
- 2/ мировоззрение местной культуры не всегда с готовностью воспринимает систему планирования
- 3/ многолюдные собрания, повсеместно используемые для участия местных жителей в планировании всеми агенствами без исключения, являются несоответствующей в местных условиях формой
- 4/ разница в стиле коммуникации между местным населением и плановыми работниками не местного происхождения осложняет взаимную дискуссию

Потенциальные решения вышеуказанных проблем включают координирование усилий в планировании, использование более соответствующих методов непосредственного участия и тренингов плановых работников не местного происхождения в сфере кросс культурных коммуникаций, а так же подготовка специалистов в области земельного планирования из слоев местного населения.

Ключевые слова и выражения: земельное планирование, земельное управление, местное население, общественное участие, кросс-культурные коммуникации.

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INTRODUCTION

“Our culture comes from that land. That is how we define ourselves as people.” With these words an Alaska native, speaking before the Alaska Native Review Commission (Berger, 1985:74), described the fundamental and traditional link between the indigenous people of Alaska and the land. Recent changes in land ownership and land management now threaten this link and with it the Aleut, Eskimo, and Indian cultures of Alaska.

In 1980 the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) effectively completed the carving up of Alaska land into a complex mosaic of federal, state, and native ownerships. Alaska natives became owners of relatively small enclaves surrounded by relatively large blocks of public land. These public lands are managed by the state of Alaska or by one of several federal agencies. Each management entity has different management goals that guide substantially different land management programs. These programs may alter the amount of access to resources on public land, and they may determine how native people can use their private lands.

Access to resources is a primary concern for subsistence-based native people. Subsistence activities are fundamental to both the native cultures (Berger, 1985) and to the “bush” economy (Robinson and Ghostkeeper, 1987). The loss of these resources threatens native self-sufficiency and, in the final analysis, may threaten native autonomy (Weeden, 1985).

To protect their link to the land, native people must be able to influence the public land management programs. These programs are guided by comprehensive land management plans. Each agency develops a plan for each of its management units or regions. As the plans are being developed, the agencies provide opportunities for the public to participate. For native people, it is critical that they be able to take full advantage of these opportunities so that their interests are recognized. Unless their participation is successful, the voices of others — non-native rural people, urban people, corporations, interest groups — will determine how the land is to be managed. As competition for Alaska’s resources increases over time, the potential for native people to lose access to resources also increases (Schneider, 1982).

Many of the comprehensive management plans are now complete. No formal research has been conducted to determine the extent or effect of native participation. It is clear, however, that both native people and non-native planners feel participation has been less than desirable. Some public meetings have gone unattended or have become hostile. In other situations, native people have demanded, through political channels, that agencies provide additional opportunities to participate.

This paper presents an overview of native participation in land management planning in Alaska. The paper is divided into three sections. The first briefly examines the history of land ownership and land management in Alaska, both important to understanding the context in which participation occurs. The second section presents four problems that inhibit native participation, including: the large number of plans, a native “world view” that does not readily accept planning, the inappropriate use of public meetings for native participation, and communication style differences that cause unnecessary conflicts and misunderstandings. The last part of the paper identifies areas of research needed to understand and solve these problems. By providing a broad, and necessarily introductory, review of the

situation, the paper will perhaps serve as an impetus to further discussion of an issue of critical concern to Alaska natives.

HISTORY

When the United States purchased Alaska in 1867, all of the state’s 375 million acres became part of the federal public domain. Native people continued to use the land in traditional ways without regulation by the federal government. The issue of aboriginal rights to ownership of the land remained untested and unresolved for over a century.

The Alaska Statehood Act of 1958 raised the question of native land rights to a critical level. The act entitled the new state to select 102.5 million acres from the public domain. Native people went to court to protect their interests and, after much litigation and debate, Congress passed the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) in 1971. This act entitled native people to select approximately 40 million acres of land from the public domain, while it extinguished all other native claims to the land. ANCSA also established 12 regional and over 200 village corporations to hold this land as private, fee simple, property. In 1980, ANILCA and concurrent amendments to ANCSA effectively determined what lands were to be set aside for national parks, refuges, and other conservation areas, what lands were to be held by native corporations, and what lands were available for the state to select from. Most native and state selections are now complete, although the final selections will continue for years due to conflicting claims. When the process is complete, about 60% of the state will remain federal land, 28% will be state land, and 12% will be private native corporation land. (Less than 1% of Alaska is private land not held by a native corporation.)

Thus, between 1958 and 1980 the native linkage to the land changed dramatically. In 1958 native people could access virtually all land and had uncertain legal right to all of it. In 1980, however, native people owned about 12% of the state as private land but had less certain access to and fewer rights to use the remaining 88% of the state.

The three acts created a land ownership pattern that has been called “irrational” (Brewer, 1975) and a “patchwork quilt” (Arnold, 1983). Figure 1 identifies the major owner of each township. (The actual land ownership pattern is far more complex but is not mapable at this scale.) The lands held by each agency are often dissected into a variety of management units. Even large units, such as the major parks and refuges, have irregular boundaries and numerous inholdings. Several villages are entirely within federal or state units, although most have several agencies as neighbors.

The land has been divided so that authority over resources is spread among many landowners. Management of land resources is complicated by the lack of correlation between ownership boundaries and ecosystem, watershed, or resource boundaries. Property lines are based on the rectangular grid survey and, at best, approximate natural boundaries, such as rivers and ridge lines. Most resources of any consequence come under the jurisdiction of more than one landowner. Wildlife, such as caribou and wolves, migrate seasonally across ownerships. Other fixed resources, such as timber and minerals, often occur linearly or in large tracts that cross many boundaries. Even where all resources occur on one ownership, other owners may be called upon to provide access or to manage their land in some

non-conflicting way. The result is that either the development or protection of a resource will require a coordinated effort by many entities.

The land ownership pattern expresses an equally complex land management pattern. Each agency in Alaska has distinct management goals and strategies to achieve their goals. The four federal agencies — the Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, and Bureau of Land Management — differ widely in their land management objectives. They in turn are all different from the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, which manages the state land. Federal agency goals range from preservation of land for wilderness to active encouragement of private development, such as mining. The State of Alaska tends to be pro-development and has several programs to sell land to private parties. Native people consider these land sales to be a serious threat to their subsistence lifestyle (Arnold, 1983; DNR, 1987).

Given their different goals, agencies have tended to compete rather than work together. An example of this is found in the Alaska Land Use Council (ALUC). The ALUC was established by ANILCA to facilitate coordination among agencies. Competition among federal, state, and native participants on the council has, in the opinion of many, rendered the ALUC ineffective. Native people, as owners of relatively small parcels

in the matrix of large public ownerships, may find themselves the innocent, but injured, bystanders in conflicts between larger adversaries.

Native people cannot just withdraw from the battle and live entirely on their own private lands. The amount of land villages received from ANCSA was far less than that traditionally used by most villages. Berger (1985), FFCDDPA (1968), Klein (1966), and Brody (1982), among others, have documented the large land base that native people need for subsistence hunting and gathering. The land base provided by ANCSA is a small fraction of that traditionally used. And native people still depend heavily on resources gathered through subsistence activities. Kruse (1984) found that 35% of native people still take over 50% of their annual food resources from subsistence activities.

To maintain their subsistence tradition, native people will require access to resources on public lands. What agencies do with their land, however, may alter the resources available or limit access to the resources. Resources might be diminished by any number of activities, such as mining, logging, wildlife management, or land sales. Access might be limited directly by a ban on off-road vehicles or indirectly by eliminating remote cabins. Agency plans will also influence what native people can do on their own land. A proposal by a native corporation to develop its timber or mineral resources could be halted by an

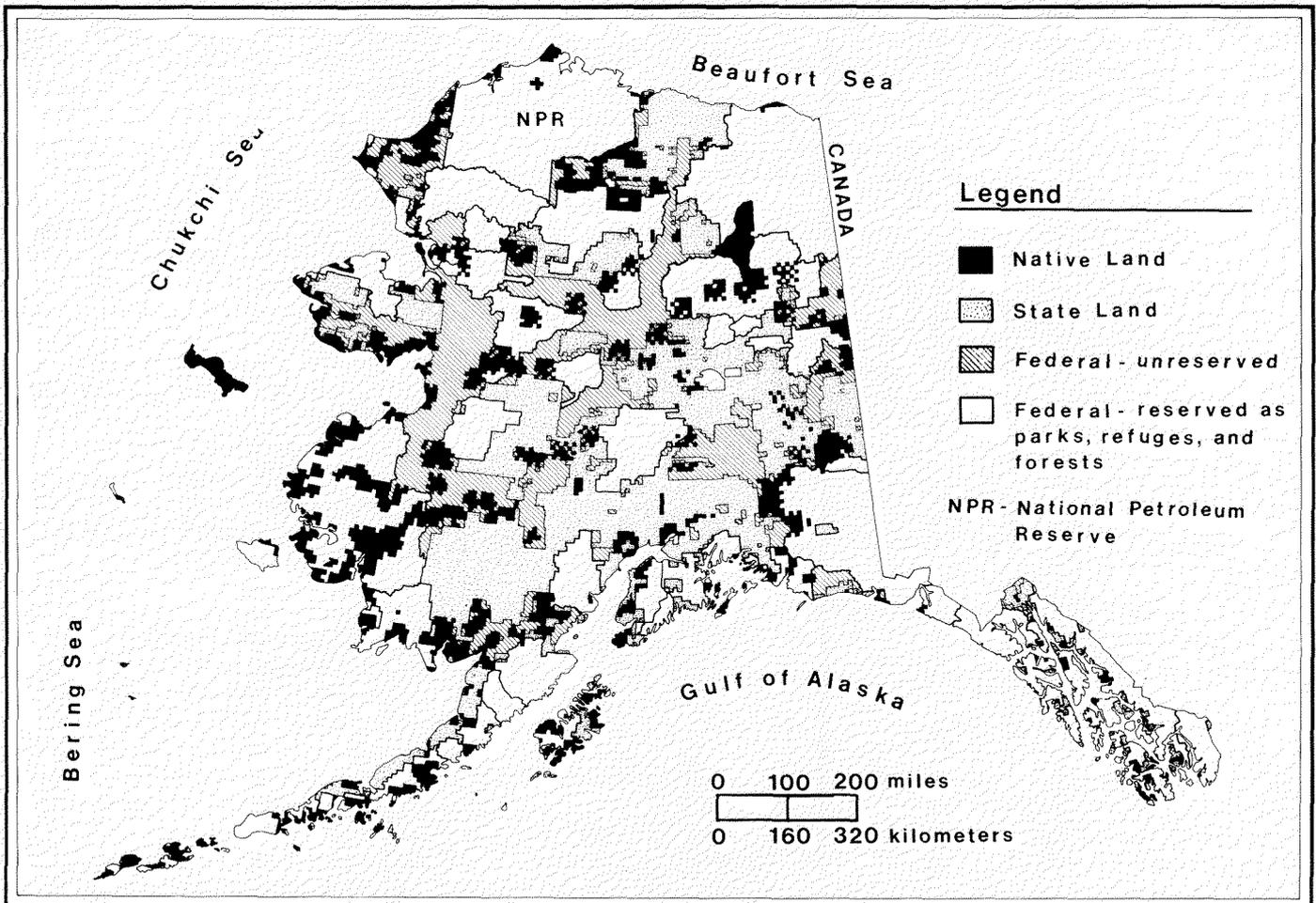


FIG. 1: Land ownership in Alaska after ANILCA (redrawn from Alaska Land Status Map, June 1986, Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior).

agency unwilling to grant access. Or improved recreation access to public lands could encourage trespass on native lands. Of course, what native people do on their private lands will also have an impact on public lands. Since native lands are private property, native corporations may have the greatest opportunity for land development in Alaska.

At present the primary opportunity for coordination among the various landowners is during preparation of the land management plans. These formal plans are a relatively new form of decision making for management agencies. Most planning programs were initiated after the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in 1969. The plans serve as an adjunct to the existing democratic legislative process, somewhat like the public inquiries found in Canada (Bayda, 1979). Like the public inquiry, the plans provide an opportunity for public sentiment, resource information, and alternative solutions to be aired in a public forum. In general, the plans provide a mechanism for publicly refining legislative policy into a general program of action. The process used to develop the plans includes a democratic element called a "citizen participation program." It is this program of meetings and other public participation events that provides the opportunity for the citizenry, including native people, to make their interests known. In the United States the tradition is to involve the general public, the widest spectrum of citizens, in the planning process (IPMP, 1986; Warner, 1978; Creighton, 1981). Although the value of this broad participation has been criticized as unnecessary, it remains a basic strategy among all planning agencies in Alaska.

For native people the issue of participation is complicated by the regional and village corporations that own the land. The corporation boards, elected by the stockholders, technically represent the native people of a region or village. Arnold (1983) writes that native people, however, often do not feel they are represented by the board members, some of whom live in urban areas far from the village and the subsistence lifestyle. As the corporations are "for-profit," they tend to support resource development, which concerns people who rely on subsistence resources. Typically these people exert influence on the for-profit corporations through traditional councils and non-profit corporations. Given this array of native organizations and perspectives, the agency planner may hear several different opinions from the native community during the planning process. Still, agency participation programs are designed to draw broad public participation, not just participation of select representatives. It is the problem of improving participation by a broad spectrum of native people that is the focus of this paper.

PROBLEMS WITH NATIVE PARTICIPATION

Number of Plans

The most obvious problem inhibiting participation has been the large number of plans. It has simply not been possible for native people, or non-native people, to participate in all the plans initiated since ANILCA. Although there were several land management plans in Alaska before ANILCA, the act set in motion an unprecedented deluge of new plans. (For a complete directory of these plans see Gallagher, 1987a.)

ANILCA directly mandated a number of plans. It required that the Park Service prepare "comprehensive management plans" (CMPs) for its 13 parks and preserves and that the Fish

and Wildlife Service prepare "comprehensive conservation plans" (CCPs) for its 16 refuges. In addition, it required the Forest Service to prepare special plans for various management units within the two national forests in Alaska and the Bureau of Land Management to prepare "resource management plans" (RMPs) for its two new recreation and conservation areas. In all, ANILCA required at least 31 major new land management plans and many other minor plans for wild and scenic rivers, wilderness areas, and the like.

ANILCA also indirectly precipitated other plans. After ANILCA, the Forest Service initiated new "land use plans" (LUPs) for both the Chugach and Tongass national forests and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) began a series of new RMPs for the remaining "unreserved" federal lands in Alaska. As the unreserved lands are scattered around the state, the BLM divided Alaska into seven regions, each to have its own plan.

Following ANILCA, the State of Alaska also began to plan. Alaska Statute 38.04 has obligated the state to plan since 1960. Until ANILCA resolved land ownership, the state refrained from planning. Following ANILCA the responsible state agency, the Department of Natural Resources, divided the state into 16 regions. The agency is now preparing "area plans" for each region.

In addition to these federal and state land management plans, it is important to note that many native people have also been called on to participate in local planning efforts. About 50% of the state is within the 12 boroughs, a county-like form of local government. Boroughs are obligated by law to prepare a comprehensive plan to be implemented through zoning. Comprehensive plans are updated periodically, usually every three years, and most have been updated since ANILCA. Also, all coastal boroughs and cities and special "coastal service areas" have been involved in preparing substantial plans, 33 in all, for Alaska's shoreline use. In those parts of the state without borough government, the "unorganized borough," the Alaska Department of Community and Regional Affairs has prepared a series of "regional strategies." These plans have led directly to the formation of several new borough governments in recent years.

In sum, the amount of planning in Alaska since 1980 has been unprecedented. In most regions of the state there have been several major plans in progress at any one time. Many villages found themselves with up to six major plans in progress simultaneously. The logistics of participating — of responding to surveys, attending meetings, reviewing and commenting on draft plans — has overwhelmed native people, leading to what Arnold (1983) has described as "burn out."

Several factors exacerbate the problem. There are many agencies in Alaska, some involved in planning and some not. It is difficult to tell agencies and their responsibilities apart. For example, few people in Alaska can accurately discriminate between the state Department of Fish and Game, the state Division of Fish and Wildlife Protection, and the federal Fish and Wildlife Service. To complicate matters, those agencies that do prepare plans have chosen to use different terms and processes. An example of this variation is expressed in the acronyms used to describe management plans — CMP, CCP, RMP, and LUP. Similarly, each agency uses a different process with different steps and different participation strategies and events. To add to the complication, the plans themselves are long, often over 200 pages, and difficult to read due to their technical and legal bias.

For those native people living a subsistence lifestyle the opportunity to participate is limited by the amount of time available and difficulty of travel. Many native people are away to their fishing or hunting camp a good portion of the year, and transportation to meetings is made difficult by weather, terrain, or expense.

Many of the new plans are now complete, and the number in progress has subsided. This does not mean, however, that planning has ended. All of the plans are scheduled for periodic updates, usually between five and ten years. Also, because the first plans were comprehensive and general in character, they do not provide specific direction for managers. Hence, agencies are preparing more focused "step-down" plans to provide this direction. Because these plans are more specific and talk about actions to be taken, they tend to be more controversial. (It may be of some concern that public participation is not required for these more specific plans but occurs at the agency's initiative.)

For native people the plans have come at a time when they are already occupied with more critical concerns, such as the "1991 Issue," which threatens loss of their land through corporate takeovers and taxation. Native people have been expending tremendous energy to amend ANCSA so that their corporate stock is not open to public (non-native) purchase and taxation in 1991 as now provided in the act. Compared to this issue, the land management plans, particularly given their general goals and solutions, must appear relatively benign.

The problem of too many plans affects each of the native cultures relatively uniformly. The following three problems, however, are probably less uniform in their occurrence. As Berger (1985) clearly explains, the native cultures of Alaska vary both among the groups and within each group. It is difficult to generalize about cultural matters, particularly in Alaska, where many native people retain their traditional ways while others have become immersed in the Western culture. However, to investigate the following problems it is necessary to make some generalizations. As an introductory paper, the intent here is not to delineate a specific list of problems associated with a specific cultural group or sub-group. Rather, the intent is to identify the problems most clearly defined in the literature and most capable of impacting native participation in planning. The goal is to increase recognition that differences exist and that they may interfere with the ability of native people to participate in the preparation of the land management plans.

World View of Planning

The first cultural difference concerns how some native people may view planning, as compared to people in the Western culture. In much of Western culture, or at least mainstream American culture, planning is accepted as necessary to achieve personal goals, to manage a business or make investments, and — to a lesser extent — to plan city growth and land use. To be sure, there are many people in Western culture who find certain government planning socialistic, but there are few who actually refrain from planning or do not talk about planning a vacation or their retirement.

For Athabaskans, however, several authorities have reported a clear difference in their attitude toward planning the future (Goffman, 1974; Thompson, 1984; Scollon and Scollon, 1980). This difference may stem from a "world view" in which the future is perceived as uncertain and beyond control (Guedon, 1974). With this view the native person "conditions" the future

when talking about it, saying "if" something happens rather than "when." In this world view, to speak of the future with great certainty is to be presumptuous.

If native people are concerned about the propriety of planning, the impact on participation could be profound. When agencies ask people to participate in shaping the future, they may be asking them to do something that is not appropriate or normative. Indeed, agency planners often comment that native people do not understand the need for planning. Such lack of concern can be particularly frustrating to planners who are in the profession of influencing the future.

This difference in world view may pose a fundamental problem in involving native people in land management planning. Public land management agencies are obligated to plan, and the alternative of not planning does not appear politically acceptable. Further, if agencies did not plan, then native interests might be further harmed through negligent or inappropriate use of resources. A dilemma exists in that there is a need to plan to protect the resources on which native people depend, but cultural concern for planning may reduce the willingness of native people to participate in this planning.

Native People and Public Meetings

A more manageable problem is the overuse of the public meeting to involve native people in the plans. In Western culture the public meeting is a traditional strategy for adding a democratic element to a decision process. The tradition extends back at least to the New England town meeting. The public meeting (or more formal public hearing) has become the minimum participation event required by regulations to implement the National Environmental Policy Act. Participation experts (IPMP, 1986) have argued that agencies often depend too heavily on the public meeting for participation, but it remains the primary forum for participation of all agencies in Alaska to date.

In fairness, many agencies have made a special effort to encourage participation at meetings or to achieve participation through other means. Some agencies are very careful to hold their meetings at a time of year when people have the time to attend, to hold the meeting in a location that is comfortable, and to advertise the meeting well in advance — even to the point of sending the planner to the village hours or days in advance of the meeting to encourage participation. Recognizing the limited value of meetings, some agencies have developed other methods of gathering input, such as surveys and workshops. While some agencies have recognized the limited value of the public meeting and adapted their participation programs accordingly, other agencies continue to use the public meeting even though few if any people attend.

There are several reasons why the public meeting may not be appropriate for native people. First, among native groups there are customary times and places for discussion. What is discussed and who participates varies. The public meeting asks native people to meet at a certain time and place to discuss a certain subject. Further, the public meeting encourages all members of the native community to speak, not just those people who would normally represent the community. The traditional native forum for decision making, which typically involves much discussion and visiting (Guedon, 1974), is ignored. Second, the public meeting forum tends to encourage debate. Scollon and Scollon (1980), speaking of Athabaskans, argue that public debate is frowned on within the culture. Individual

opinions are highly respected and people have no direct interest in challenging or changing another's viewpoint. The use of a public meeting to argue viewpoints and alternative solutions is thus less appropriate. Third, to speak out may represent a form of boasting for some native people. Kleinfeld (1972b) first identified this difference from Western culture with Athabaskan school children. In the classroom setting the children were unwilling to answer a teacher's question, not because they didn't know the answer but because to answer the question required boasting. Vaudrin (1974) found this same reluctance among adult natives in school board meetings. And fourth, no one, native or non-native, enjoys speaking out in public about a subject that is not well understood. This may be the case among native people not familiar with the procedures, terms, and concepts being used by the planners.

The research support for these ideas is meager, but the anecdotal evidence is not (Berger, 1985; DNR, 1987). There have been some successful meetings, but there are many more that native people do not attend or, if they do, at which they say nothing. As noted, the public meeting in Western culture is synonymous with fair public opportunity to be heard. It is so basic that planners may have trouble imagining that it could prevent public participation in native settings.

Differences in Communication Styles

Most native people speak English as their first language, while a minority, particularly elders, speak English as a second language or not at all. This language barrier poses a problem of sorts to effective participation. It has been resolved in part through judicious use of translators who have an adequate grasp of the concepts being discussed. Although there are few qualified translators, this problem is obvious and understood by most participants. The differences in communication style discussed here are much less obvious. They exist even though native people are speaking English. The differences become important in the planning setting because virtually all planners are non-native. Native participation in land planning almost always requires cross-cultural communication.

The kinds of misunderstandings that can occur in the planning setting are numerous. Scollon and Scollon (1980), in Table 1, list common perceptions held by Athabaskans and non-natives. These perceptions exist in large part because of misunderstandings about communications rules. These rules do not concern obvious matters, like grammar, but more subtle issues of how information is shared and how people relate to each other while speaking. The confusion arises because some native people, while speaking English, borrow communication rules from their native language. Scollon and Scollon (1981:28) point out that

In present day Alaska and Canada, many people who do not speak any Athabaskan language have nevertheless learned Athabaskan discourse patterns which are essential for effective communication within the village, even though the language used may be English.

The confusion that follows unfortunately leads to misunderstandings that can create tension between planner and participant.

This discussion focuses on five differences considered most likely to impact participation. The first two — questioning style and use of narratives — directly affect the exchange of information needed for effective participation. The remaining three — pause length, eye contact, and courtesies — tend to confuse speakers and cause misunderstandings.

TABLE 1. Perceptions in Athabaskan-English cross-cultural communication (Scollon and Scollon, 1980:17)

What's confusing to English speakers about Athabaskans	What's confusing to Athabaskans about English speakers
The presentation of self	
They do not speak.	They talk too much.
They keep silent.	They always talk first.
They avoid situations of talking.	They talk to strangers or people they don't know.
They play down their abilities.	They brag about themselves.
They act as if they expect things to be given to them.	They don't help people even when they can.
They deny planning.	They always talk about what's going to happen later.
The distribution of talk	
They avoid direct questions.	They ask too many questions.
They never start a conversation.	They always interrupt.
They talk off the topic.	They only talk about what they are interested in.
They never say anything about themselves.	They don't give others a chance to talk.
They are slow to take a turn in talking.	They just go on and on when they talk.
The contents of talk	
They are too indirect, too inexplicit.	They aren't careful how they talk about people or things.
They don't make sense.	They have to say "goodbye" even when they can see you are leaving.
They just leave without saying anything.	

The first problem involves the style of questioning, of gathering information from another person. In the Western culture the direct question is an accepted and common way to gather information. Traditional Eskimos and Athabaskans, however, may believe such direct questions are inappropriate. Nelson (1969) and Cline (1975) argue that Eskimos are more likely to "talk around the question" until the information they want is provided. Each side is confused by the other's actions. The native person may feel the non-native is asking questions that are too direct while refusing to talk about a subject in a "normal" manner. The non-native may be equally frustrated with the native person's indirect discussion of a subject and unwillingness to ask a question when in doubt.

The second problem concerns the use of narratives, or stories, to give advice. Nelson (1969) writes, from his observations in an Eskimo community, that it is uncommon for one person to tell another what to do, except by a narrative. The narrative may be loaded with advice, but the listener can take it or leave it. Others (Scollon and Scollon, 1981; Cazden and Hymes, 1978; Guedon, 1974) argue that few Westerners appreciate and can draw full meaning from a narrative. Thus, while the native speaker may be trying to provide information through a story, the non-native planner may be missing the point. Again, frustration can develop as the native person strives to make a point and the non-native planner wishes the native person would get to the point.

The third problem is the length of pause between sentences. Scollon and Scollon (1980) point out that one of the simplest differences between Athabaskans (speaking English) and non-natives is that native people tend to pause longer between sentences. This difference affects who "has the floor." The non-native person hears a pause and, believing the native person

has concluded, begins to speak. The native person, however, interprets this as an interruption. Conversely, when the non-native speaker offers the floor with a pause, the native speaker does not enter into the discussion because the pause was not long enough. Thus the non-native is perceived as always talking while the native is perceived as silent.

A fourth problem concerns a form of non-verbal communication: eye contact. In Western culture direct eye contact is often used as a way to show interest and sincerity. For some native people, however, direct eye contact has other meanings. Kleinfeld (1972b:37) writes that the ". . . penetrating gaze that White people commonly use to signal interest in the speaker may be interpreted by Indians and Eskimos as a display of anger." More commonly, direct eye contact is associated with putting someone "on the spot," of demanding a response. The difference can lead to an escalating problem where the non-native planner, believing the conversation is not going well, intensifies eye contact and makes the native person even more uncomfortable.

The fifth problem in communication style concerns the two common courtesies of saying "thank you" and "good-bye." Non-natives tend to respond to even small favors with "thank you" and end almost all meetings with a closing "good-bye." When a person omits these courtesies a non-native person is likely to think something is wrong. About "thank you," Kleinfeld (1972a) has noted that this phrase is not common to Indian and Eskimo villages. Indeed, several Athabaskan dialects lack an equivalent word. It is more common for these people to express their gratitude indirectly, often through another person, and at some distant time. About "good-bye," Thompson (1984) notes that non-natives often are confused when Athabaskans break off conversations without warning, and that Athabaskans are equally confused by the "lengthy and seemingly pointless" good-byes of non-natives.

These differences no doubt occur with substantial variation among native people. If these problems occur with any regularity and intensity, however — and there are indications they do — they could dramatically interfere with participation. The differences could affect both the formal communication that occurs at public meetings as well as informal, person-to-person discussions. Misunderstandings that follow could lead to an unnecessary loss of trust between planner and participant.

CONCLUSION

The impact of these problems on native participation is still speculative. It will remain so until the problems begin to draw the interest of researchers. Native people and agency planners agree that native participation is a major concern, but there is little defensible research to suggest where to go from here. It is important to note that what has happened and is happening in land management in Alaska is unprecedented. The problem of involving large numbers of people of a subsistence-based culture in land management planning is novel in the United States, if not the world. Research is needed to better understand the problem so that solutions can be devised. There are at least four major areas to investigate.

There is a basic need to understand how well native people have been involved to date. This research should determine to what extent they have participated and have been successful at conveying their concerns to the planners. More specifically, this research could determine if some native people and some

agency programs have been more successful than others. And it could examine the efficacy of using the public meeting as the primary forum for participation. Research in this area could lead to major procedural and policy changes in how agencies involve native people.

A second need is to better understand how cultural differences — world view, decision-making style, and communication style — affect participation. This research should help clarify differences within and among native cultures and between native cultures and the Western culture, so that both participants and planners could better understand where problems might exist. With this information, cross-cultural training programs, as developed for other cross-cultural situations (Brislin and Pedersen, 1976), might be devised to increase understanding.

A third need is to determine how to reduce the now intensely cross-cultural nature of land management in Alaska. As noted, virtually all land planners are non-native. Although native people have begun to recognize the importance of training in this field (DCRA, 1982), very few native people have earned degrees to date. (None has graduated from the University of Alaska program in Natural Resource Management in its 14-year existence.) This might be caused by the native "world view" about planning or by other factors such as the difficulty of the curriculum. No matter what the cause, the effect is that native people have few members of their own cultural group who can represent them in the planning process. Research is needed to determine how native people might take a more active role in determining how Alaska's land is to be managed.

A fourth need is to simplify and coordinate the vast array of planning occurring in Alaska. The plethora of plans with dissimilar planning boundaries, processes, and terms has made participation unnecessarily difficult. There is a need for some form of regionally coordinated planning. Analysis is essential to determine what form would be best. One strategy might be to have all agencies complete, or update, their plans currently on a regional basis. These regions would be defined using ecological, cultural, and administrative boundaries. Within each region all agencies would use a common process, terms, and participation program. An example of this type of multi-agency planning has proven successful in Colorado, where that state uses a "joint review process" to coordinate the permitting phase of mega-projects (Gallagher, 1987b).

In summary, Alaska's natural resources are of exceptional nature and well worth a coordinated effort among all landowners to achieve productive, long-term management. Alaska's native people are linked to these resources by centuries of use and by cultures that derive much of their character from subsistence activities. As others have made clear, the ability of native people to sustain themselves with a sense of self-reliance and autonomy requires that they have access to the land, and that the land have resources worth accessing.

Many native people at the time of ANCSA thought the land claims settlement would reduce their reliance on the dominant Western culture. The private lands they received, however, did not relieve them of obligations to agencies. Indeed, in place of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, native people now have a variety of federal and state agencies with which they must work if they hope to protect their interests. Whether this relationship between native people and agencies will be one of competition and discord or one of coordination and synergy will depend as much as anything on the ability of native people to participate in land management planning.

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