

FAIRBANKS NONSUBSISTENCE AREA
FINDINGS
#92-24-JB

A. Introduction to Written Findings: During the publicly convened board meeting on November 1 - 7, 1992, the Joint Boards of Fisheries and Game (Joint Board) heard and considered public testimony, ADF&G staff reports and advisory committee reports, and deliberated on the information in relation to the totality of the twelve socio-economic characteristics in the 1992 subsistence law at AS 16.05.258(c). Based on the information and deliberations the Joint Board found that in the Fairbanks-Denali area described in Section B below, subsistence is not a principal characteristic of the economy, culture, and way of life. The Joint Board incorporates by reference the information provided by ADF&G in the worksheets included in the Joint Board Workbook. Additionally the board found the following:

Geographic locations where those domiciled in the area or community hunt and fish: The Joint Board examined (under factor 11) patterns of hunting and fishing by residents of the proposed nonsubsistence area. The Board finds that area residents hunt and fish throughout the proposed area as well as GMU 13 and other areas of the state. The Board considered including the Minto Flats State Game Refuge and later added the Minto Flats Management Area and Uniform Coding Unit 0100 south of the Tanana River. The additional area was used by residents of the proposed nonsubsistence area for fishing and hunting for moose, waterfowl, and other wildlife uses. The Minto Refuge and Management Area was removed from consideration as a nonsubsistence area based on information submitted by the department from a 1983-84 household survey of Minto residents and wildlife use and consumptive patterns. Specifically there is not a well developed cash economy. Only 25 percent of the population is employed, primarily in seasonal jobs. 75 percent of the residents were below the poverty level with only a third having motor vehicles. There is a small store but costs are 1.8 times those of Fairbanks. There is a high use of fish and game resources by Minto residents which is consistent with a subsistence lifestyle dependent on the natural resources.

In discussing the area of 20(C) west of the Nenana River, the Board concluded that the land area in the proposed nonsubsistence area was predominantly Denali National Park over which the State has no authority. Hunting is by subsistence permit only and restricted to rural residents as defined by Federal regulations. This area was removed from the proposed nonsubsistence area. Additionally, the board reviewed fish and game harvest and use patterns of the residents along the Parks Highway in GMU 20(A) between Nenana and Wood Rivers to see if that area should be removed from the nonsubsistence area. In applying the 12 factors, the Board found a mixed social and economic lifestyle that was characterized by

average incomes higher than Fairbanks and wildlife use patterns that fluctuated from high to low use. The proximity to Fairbanks, employment at the Usibelli Mine, Clear Air Force Base, Golden Valley Power Plant and Denali National Park and the accompanying service sectors brought many jobs, some seasonal in nature. The use patterns of highway residents showed use of the area, i.e., an average annual moose harvest by Healy residents of 8.3, Denali Park 2.3, Anderson 6.5 and Fairbanks of 155.8; an average annual sheep harvest by Healy residents of 5.7, Denali Park 1.3, Anderson 3, and Fairbanks 45. Based on the totality of the factors, the Board left the area in the proposed nonsubsistence area as it determined it was an area used by a high percentage of the residents of the nonsubsistence area.

1. The socio-economic structure: The socio-economic structure of this area is consistent with the information provided by the ADF&G in no. 1 of the nonsubsistence area report for proposal no. 1. The Board recognizes that most segments of the population within the area support an industrial-capitalism economy. However, there is a mixture of lifestyles and a high percent of the residents obtain food by hunting and fishing. Evidence supplied by Board members from the area support the department's information indicating that Fairbanks typifies the type of cash economy envisioned by the legislature as a nonsubsistence area. Based on the information presented and the Board's discussion, the Board found that subsistence was not a principal characteristic of the socio-economic structure.

2. The stability of the economy: The Board found that the information presented in Section 2 of the ADF&G staff report indicates that the Fairbanks area's economy is heavily dependent on government, military, and services jobs. Unemployment is low, 10.7 percent, compared to remote isolated Alaskan communities where unemployment is above 30 percent and the state average of 9.7%. Overall wages are higher than most areas of the state, unemployment is low, and the numbers of jobs are expanding. The board concludes the area has a relatively stable industrial-capitalism economy and subsistence is not a principal characteristic of the economy.

3. Extent and kinds of employment for wages, including full time, part time, temporary, and seasonal employment: Department of Labor statistics for 1991 have 27,800 jobs in Fairbanks of which 7,650 are in military, 9,950 in government, 6,250 in services, 6,400 in trade, and 600 in manufacturing. This indicates the heavy dependence in Fairbanks on government and military employment. The Board also explored the Department of Labor statistics for Healy and McKinley Village communities within the proposed area. Based on percent of households having employed members (1987), Healy has 53 percent employed in mining, 20 percent in transportation/utilities/communications, 19 percent in services,

and 29 percent in government (local, state, & federal). McKinley Village's percent of households having employed members for 1987 were 10 percent in mining, 18 percent for transportation/utilities/communications, 13 percent services, and 74 percent in government (local, state, & federal). Reviewing Fairbanks and McKinley Village labor statistics, reveals a capital-industrial economy. Reliance on subsistence is not a principal characteristic of the area.

4. The amount and distribution of cash income among those domiciled in the area or community: In 1989 the average per capita income for the Fairbanks North Star Borough was \$15,914, slightly below Alaska's average of \$17,610. The average income in 1989 for McKinley Park Village was \$20,917, in Healy \$18,160. Board members summarized the economic data for Delta Junction and Fort Greely based on personal knowledge and information provided the Board by ADF&G. The average household incomes discussed in Delta Junction and Fort Greely were \$35 - 40,000 for Delta Junction and \$20 - 30,000 for Fort Greely. 11.5 percent of the households earning less than the federal poverty standards (1989) were in Fairbanks. The Board recognized that distribution of cash income varies among the residents within the proposed nonsubsistence area but is consistent with an urban environment in Alaska.

5. The cost and availability of goods and services to those domiciled in the area or community: The Fairbanks area has a large range of goods and services available. Fairbanks' cost of food index at 7 percent higher than Anchorage is relatively low for Alaskan communities. The cost of food index for Delta Junction is 33 percent higher than Anchorage and for the Parks Highway area is 56 - 89 percent higher. The communities located along the Parks Highway do most of their shopping in Fairbanks due to road access.

6. The variety of fish and game species used by those domiciled in the area or community: Residents of the proposed area used a wide variety of fish and game resources locally available as well as resources distant from their residence. Primary big game species used in order of importance are moose, caribou, sheep, black and brown bears. Major fish species include salmon, grayling, pike, burbot and white fish. Halibut are also taken in other areas of the state. The Board of Game previously found a positive customary and traditional finding for moose in Game Management Units (GMU) 20A, 20B, 20C & 20D. There were no findings for GMU 25C. There are also no findings for black and brown bears. There are negative findings for sheep in GMUs 20D and 25C, and negative findings for bison in GMU 20D. There were no positive C&Ts for caribou in the area. The Board of Fisheries previously determined positive C&Ts for salmon and other finfish (sheefish, white fish, lamprey, burbot, sucker, grayling, pike,

char, and blackfish). Subsistence fishing permits for residents of the nonsubsistence area were used mainly in areas along the Tanana River, outside the proposed area.

7. The seasonal cycle of economic activity: The Fairbanks area has seasonal fluctuations in economic activity related to tourism. The primary types of jobs in the Fairbanks area (government, military, services and trade) are not normally affected by seasonal changes. Residents along the Parks Highway have seasonal cycles of employment associated with Denali National Park tourism. Healy and Anderson residents are not affected as much by seasonal changes because of coal mine and electrical production employment. The Board finds overall economic activity of the proposed area to be representative of an economy where reliance on wage employment is a principal characteristic of the economy.

8. The percentage of those domiciled in the area or community participating in hunting and fishing activities or using wild fish and game: Based on a household survey in the Fairbanks North Star Borough, 50 - 59 percent hunted and 74 - 82 percent fished. In McKinley Park Village households, 70 percent fished and 45 percent hunted. The Board notes some individual households within the proposed area may be hunting and fishing for larger amounts for food production, but overall residents of the proposed area hunted and fished for nonsubsistence use.

9. The harvest levels of fish and game by those domiciled in the area or community: The Board considered harvest levels of fish and game species in communities within the proposed area by using department reports and verbal and written comments by the public and Board members. The Board noted the range of pounds per person, per year for communities in the proposed area with Fairbanks at 16 pounds, Healy at 132 pounds and McKinley Village at 242 pounds. The Board finds the overall proposed area the harvest levels are representative of a nonsubsistence area.

10. The cultural, social, and economic values associated with the taking and use of fish and game: The Board notes there are subsistence uses outside the proposed area and protected Minto and Nenana subsistence uses when it deleted the proposed addition of the Minto Flats area. The Board determined the area's cultural, social, and economic values represent a nonsubsistence value system.

12. The extent of sharing and exchange of fish and game by those domiciled in the area or community: Sharing and exchange of wild fish and game occurs within and between families in and adjacent to the proposed area. The extent of sharing for the proposed area has not been quantified in all communities.

Conclusion: Based on all the information before the Joint Board, deliberations and the finding above, the Board concludes that dependence upon subsistence is not a principal characteristic of the economy, culture, and way of life of the Fairbanks/Denali areas as defined below. In making this determination, the Board noted that Fairbanks is easily defined as a nonsubsistence area when applying the 12 factors. There is a wide variety of uses and a mixture of lifestyles of which subsistence was not a principal characteristics of the area.

B. Area Boundaries

Based on the information provided to the Joint Board and the Board's deliberations, the Joint Board concludes that the boundaries of the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence area are as follows:

The Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area is comprised of the following: within Unit 20(A) as defined by 5 AAC 92.450(20)(A) east of the Wood River drainage and south of the Rex Trail but including the upper Wood River drainage south of its confluence with Chicken Creek, within Unit 20((B) as defined by 5 AAC 92.450(20)(B) the North Star Borough and that portion of the Washington Creek drainage east of the Elliot Highway, within Unit 20(D) as defined by 5 AAC 92.450(20)(D) west of the Tanana River between its confluences with the Johnson and Delta Rivers, west of the west bank of the Johnson River, and north and west of the Volkmar drainage, including the Goodpaster River drainage, and within Unit 25(C) as defined by 5 AAC 92.450(25)(C) the Preacher and Beaver Creek drainages.

The Joint Board agrees with and incorporates by reference the ADF&G recommendations contained in the worksheets used during this deliberation. Based on examination of the 12 factors the Joint Board concludes that the reduced Fairbanks-Denali area is a nonsubsistence area.



Michael Martin, Chair
Joint Boards of Fisheries and Game

Adopted: November 7, 1992
Anchorage, Alaska