

**Valdez Nonsubsistence Area  
Findings #93-27-JB**

A. Introduction to Written Findings: During the publicly convened board meeting on March 6 - 8, 1993, 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 Valdez 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 other areas of the state.

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. The Board recognizes that most segments of the population within the area participated in an industrial-capitalism economy; example: oil industry, commercial fishing & commercial guiding. However, there is a mixture of lifestyles and a percent of the residents obtain food by sport hunting and fishing. 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 socio-economic structure of this area is consistent with the information provided in Section 2 of the nonsubsistence area report. The Valdez area economy is dependent on wage employment in the following job categories: transportation (31 percent), government (27 percent), services (14 percent), and manufacturing (13 percent). Unemployment is low for the Valdez area compared to remote isolated Alaskan communities where unemployment is above 30 percent and the state average of 9.7 percent. Overall wages are higher than most areas of the state and the numbers of jobs are stable. The Board concludes that the harvest of fish and game for subsistence uses does not contribute significantly to the stability of the economy.

3. Extent and kinds of employment for wages, including full time, part time, temporary, and seasonal employment: In the proposed area most wage-paying jobs were in transportation (31 percent) and government (27 percent). This reflects the importance of shipping oil in the local economy. In 1991, there were 48 limited entry commercial fishing permits issued to Valdez residents. The Board after reviewing the data on the extent and kinds of employment found that Valdez's unemployment rate typifies a stable urban environment. The Board found that 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, per capita income of \$26,968 in Valdez was above the state's average of \$17,610. The Board recognized that distribution of cash income varies among

residents within the proposed area but is consistent with an urban environment in Alaska and is typical of a nonsubsistence area.

5. The cost and availability of goods and services to those domiciled in the area or community: Valdez has a well developed system of commerce providing needed goods and services. Valdez's cost of food index is 23 percent higher than Anchorage but is below the cost of food index for Dillingham (45 percent higher than Valdez). The availability of goods and services and the relative low harvest of wild foods supports a finding that Valdez residents are typical of residents of a nonsubsistence area.

6. The variety of fish and game species used by those domiciled in the area or community: The residents of Valdez make use of the wide variety of fish and wildlife in their area. Game species used include black bear, brown bear, caribou, goat, moose, sheep, and deer. Fish species used include salmon (all five species), halibut, varieties of trout, other freshwater fish, and shellfish. The Board found that Valdez residents harvest a variety of resources within the proposed area and a high percent harvested outside the proposed area. The Board found that the proposed nonsubsistence area supported only a limited amount of hunting effort, but did support a large majority of the recreational sport fishing effort.

7. The seasonal cycle of economic activity: The majority of Valdez's employment is year-round with summer seasonal increase due to tourism and commercial fishing. The Board finds the 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: In Valdez, 44-68 percent of the population fished with rod and reel during 1989-91, based on angler surveys. Valdez's percentages for rod and reel compare closely with Anchorage percentages, representative of a nonsubsistence area. In 1991, 788 hunting/fishing combination licenses were sold to Valdez residents. Based on the data provided, the Board found that hunting and fishing is recreational in nature rather than for food production. The Board's findings overall residents of the proposed area hunted and fished for recreational purposes.

9. The harvest levels of fish and game by those domiciled in the area or community: The wild resource harvests pounds per person for 1991 was 85 pounds (excluding wild plants). The 1991 harvest levels are closely aligned with the Anchorage/Matsu/Kenai Nonsubsistence area which has 80 pounds per person for wild resource harvests, and much less than subsistence use areas (example: Chenega Bay at 188 pounds). The Board found that this level of harvest typifies a nonsubsistence area.

10. The cultural, social, and economic values associated with the taking and use of fish and game: The predominant values associated with fish and wildlife harvests are recreational. Fishing and hunting are periodic outdoor activities, valued as breaks from the wage-employment. For residents directly employed in commercial fishing and outdoor recreational industries values are commercial in nature with a percent harvested for

recreational values. Environmental awareness and nonconsumptive uses (wildlife viewing) are other values Valdez residents associate with fish and game resources. The Board determined the area's cultural, social, and economic values represent a nonsubsistence value system.

11. The geographic locations where hunting and fishing takes place: During 1986-91 Valdez hunted primarily in GMUs 13, 6, 20, 11, and 12. The Board found that 75 percent of the sport fishing effort by residents domiciled in Valdez takes place within the proposed nonsubsistence area. The Board had difficulty with the proposed boundaries based on straight line surveys and not topographical features. The Board was unable to describe the proposed nonsubsistence area using other boundaries based on information provided. The game harvests by residents of Valdez as well as residents of Anchorage, Tatitlek, and Chenega Bay overlap within Prince William Sound which made separation of use areas into an expanded nonsubsistence area difficult. No reasonable solution was evident in attempts to adjust the boundaries to better reflect area uses.

12. The extent of sharing and exchange of fish and game: The 1991 average number of fish and game resources shared per household was four which closely matches the Anchorage/Matsu/Kenai Nonsubsistence Area. The Board felt the amount of wild foods shared on a per capita basis by Valdez residents is indicative of a nonsubsistence area.

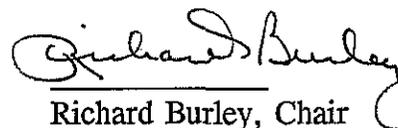
Conclusion: Based upon an examination of the relative importance of subsistence in the context of the totality of the 12 socio-economic characteristics established in AS 16.05258(c), the Joint Board concludes that subsistence is not a principal characteristic of the economy, culture, and way of life of the Valdez area as defined below.

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 Valdez Nonsubsistence area are as follows:

The Valdez Nonsubsistence Area is comprised of the following: within Unit 6(D), as defined by 5 AAC 92.450(6)(D), and all waters of Alaska in the Prince William Sound Area as defined by 5 AAC 24.100, within the March 1993 Valdez City limits;

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 Valdez area is indeed a nonsubsistence area.



Richard Burley, Chair

Joint Boards of Fisheries and Game

Adopted: March 7, 1993  
Juneau, Alaska