

88-49-76

Dave Johnson, Matthew Nicolai

Fairbanks, Alaska

Jeff Kennedy, moderator

1976

Series: Potlatch series

Dave Johnson from the Department of Fish and Game talked about the decline of the western arctic caribou. Their populations dropped from 242,000 animals in 1970 to less than one quarter of that population this summer. Many Alaskans ask what is going to be done about the situation. The Department of Fish and Game has issued an emergency order last week. The range of the western arctic caribou will be closed to all caribou hunting. Bob Rausch said the emergency order which was started on August 14 was for the purpose of allowing the board the opportunity to receive maximum input from the public during an approximate five week period. On September 20th they will consider new regulations for the western arctic herd and the Porcupine herd. Dave Johnson said the game board will consider a set of regulation proposals which could substantially change caribou hunting in the arctic. Rausch said they have a number of options. They are proposing to allocate those animals that may be taken on a subunit basis and issuing permits for each subunit within the appropriate villages. It may give local residents an edge in obtaining access to the harvestable numbers of caribou. Dave Johnson said the board doesn't have to accept the proposals and anyone who cares about the western arctic caribou should look at the proposals. He said comments should be sent to the board. Man hunting isn't the only problem for the herd. Wolves may be taking up to 15,000 caribou each year. Wolf control happens when the caribou herd size falls below a certain size. Wolf control happened this summer. Rausch said the herd appears to be in good condition. There has been a high production of calves and a reasonable survival of yearlings. He said the range is in relatively good condition. The herd appears to be capable of reproduction if it is given relief from human use and from wolf predation. If wolves are not taken the caribou would continue to decrease. Dave Johnson talked about wolf control with fixed wing aircraft. He said the proposals are a compromise that will not please everyone totally. The final decisions have not all been made. He encouraged everyone to send their concerns to the board.

Music by Renborn

Matthew Nicolai, the Communications supervisor for the Chulista Corporation, lists some of the investments of the corporation in Anchorage. Matthew Nicolai said right now they are getting started on a hotel in Anchorage. It will be located on block 19 between 5th and 6th and is a large complex hotel. They plan to start building in April. They are in a lot of investments in that area. He talked about Settler's Bay properties and the work going on in that area. A lot of the village corporations are investing in the hotel project. They are also building mobile home development in Valdez. Chulista has been negotiating with Port Authority with the sale of Pier 48 in Seattle. They will develop it as a restaurant and artistry center for Native Alaska art. They are involved with a travel agency in Anchorage and Bethel. They are invested in Earth Science Consulting Firm with offices in Anchorage and Long Beach, California.

Song by Eric Anderson

Matthew Nicolai talks about his experience in college in Massachusetts. Nicolai said other students expected him to be wearing Native clothing. He said he has traveled in other states and he found there are a lot of opportunities. It's not so isolated like Alaska. Nicolai said it is easier for Alaskans to attend the college of their choice than for people in other states. They are accepting a lot of Alaskan students in the lower states. Jeff Kennedy asked if the University of Alaska serves Alaskans better. Nicolai said Albuquerque and Harvard have good programs for Native students. He wanted to attend George Washington University which has good programs for Natives. He said there are a lot of Alaskan students at Stanford. They also have good programs just for the Native students. He was the first Native student to attend his college in Massachusetts and he has changed a lot of incorrect views of Alaska. He talked about his student internship program in the legislature. Jeff Kennedy asked if Native students should attend school in Alaska or outside. Matthew Nicolai said it depends on the student. He wanted to attend UAF to be closer to home after attending high school in the lower states. He recommends an outside school for students who are from a larger town. It is better to go to a smaller college or university first.

Song by John Hartford

A report from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). An unidentified person said the BIA is responsible for the protection and management of 13 million acres of acres of forested land on Indian reservations and the supervision of a billion board feet of lumber. Forestry is a big business for reservations. One tribe along the Pacific Ocean is the Quinault Indian Nation. They are trying to save its forest land from bad logging practices and liquidation. Tribal economy is dependent on forestry economy. Reforestation is a priority. Guy McMines said there is a need for a long range management plan. He said the forests in Indian country were managed on a liquidation basis. The major parts of the proceeds have gone to interests outside of the reservation. They don't mind other people benefitting but the problem has been there has been no reinvestment in the natural resources. This is a national problem in Indian country and in national forests and BLM land. On the reservations it is a severe problem because there has been little attention to reforestation of the property and all the things that go along with reforestation programs. On the Quinault properties the money was just made available for a comprehensive soil survey. This survey will be used to determine which kinds of trees grow best on the reservation. There is also a need for a proper inventory.

An unidentified person said Congress has opened the door for additional enrollment in the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. Morris Thompson said any time anyone is left out is a sad event. He would like to see 100 percent enrollment. He wants everyone who thinks they are eligible to enroll to apply. They have enrolled 70,000 Natives. He said those benefitting will be landholders and stockholders.