

# Cultural Resource Stewardship: A 20 year view from the Alutiiq Museum



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# Kodiak Archaeology



Kodiak's archaeological sites are:

- Abundant
- Easy to identify
- Often well preserved
- Every Family has a collection

Area	Acres of Land	% Land	All Sites	% Sites	Prehistoric Sites	% Prehistoric Sites
ALASKA	590,693	100	42,576	100	15,647	100
KODIAK	5,360	0.9	1,921	4.5	1,000	6.4

# Issues in 1995

- Heritage movement underway
- Growing community dialog about Alutiiq
- Preservation messages limited and not well understood.
- Looting is a pastime.
- Artifacts and human remains are curios.



# Our Mission - The Alutiiq Museum preserves and shares the heritage and culture of the Alutiiq people.

Contemporary Weavers



Historic Weavers



Prehistoric Basket



# Concerted Educational Effort for Preservation



## Our Strategy:

- **Be Positive** – Don't punish or shame, enlist
- **Be Participatory** – Create opportunities for meaningful engagement
- **Be Professional** – Maintain standards, use existing frameworks, set an example
- **Collaborate** – Enlist support from stakeholders
- **Promote** – Infuse our work with preservation messages – website, newsletter, programs, exhibits, tours

# Community Archaeology



Blisky Site 1997

Mitigation project for Kodiak Island Borough becomes the model for a long term education and research program.

1. Study threatened sites on the Kodiak road system
2. Learn about subsistence and settlement in a variety of site
3. Work with local volunteer crews
4. Curate the materials at the Alutiiq Museum
5. Create exhibits, articles, tours, press, etc. around project to promote respect for Alutiiq heritage and preservation

# Community Archaeology



10 Sites excavated in 20 years

- Vandalized, eroding, etc.
- Great variety of sites studied  
– new types and locations

6 major landowner partners

Over 800 volunteer participants

Large collections given to Museum

# Site Stewardship - Monitoring



## 1998 – 2015 Program Stats

- 18 Years of Research
- 60 Volunteers
- 17 Surveys
- 580 Sites visited
- 342 undocumented sites recorded
- 1329 individual site visits
- Patterns of preservation detected





# Educational Resources

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## History isn't yours to take...

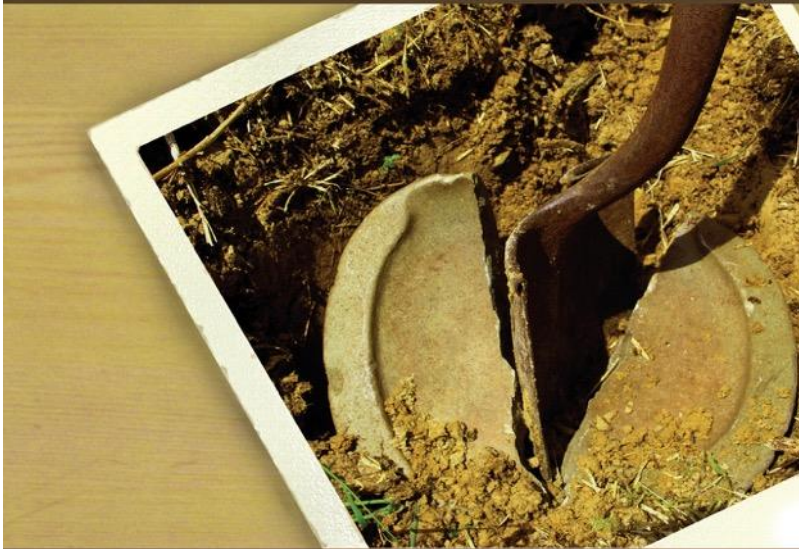
Prehistoric and historic sites, shipwrecks, and abandoned aircraft are protected by state and federal laws

Damaging sites and collecting, transporting, selling, trading, and purchasing artifacts, or assisting others with these activities is illegal and can result in:

Fines of up to \$250,000

Five years in prison

Confiscation of *any* equipment and vehicles used to commit the crime



## Know the facts about artifacts.

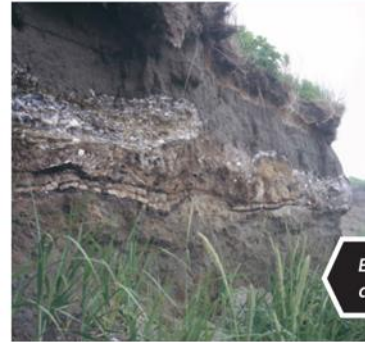
You can report looters to:  
National Park Service Crime Hotline (1-800-478-2724)

Rewards of up to \$500 are available for information leading to a conviction under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act

Produced in partnership by Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Department of Wildlife Services, and Alaska Office of History & Archaeology.

Partnerships for preserving Kodiak's past

# STEWARDSHIP



## A Damaging Story

We tend to think of archaeological sites as a part of the past. They hold the remains of activities that occurred long ago, and tell us about how people once lived. Yet, ancient sites are also part of the present. They exist today, and the modern forces that shape them dramatically alter the information they can provide.

**Erosion in Uganik Bay exposed this pile of clamshells filling a collapsed sod house. Photo: Alutiiq Museum archives.**

### RESULTS OF YOUR EFFORTS

- 17 Years of Research
  - 59 Volunteer Families
  - 17 Surveys
  - 1250 Archaeological Site Visits
  - 565 Archaeological Sites Studied
  - 342 Undocumented Sites Recorded
- HISTORY PRESERVED

### JOIN THE ALUTIIQ MUSEUM TEAM

Are you a set netter, a fisherman, a pilot, a guide, a lodge owner, a rural resident, a hiker, or a camper? Would you like to document archaeological sites as a museum volunteer? Contact curator Patrick Saltonstall at 907.486.7004 x23 or patrick@alutiiqmuseum.org. Learn to see the land like an archaeologist and help to preserve Kodiak history.

A collaboration between the Alutiiq Museum and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

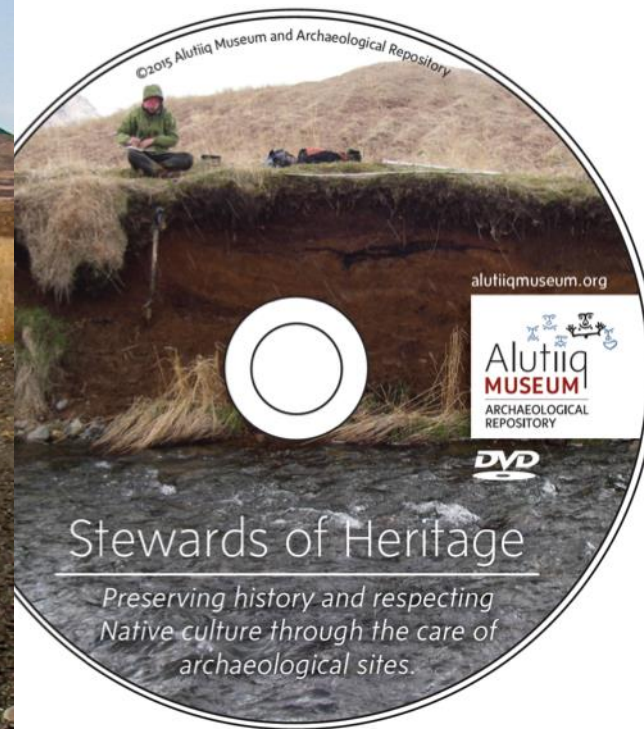
There are many types of archaeological sites. On Kodiak, the most common are areas with buried evidence of human activities, like the remains of sod house villages or deposits of ancient garbage. Over time, natural forces change these sites. Organic materials like grass, wood, and bone gradually rot, leaving behind just stone tools and an incomplete view of past technologies. Kodiak's rivers meander, eating away their banks and the remains of streamside camps. Winter waves pound the coast, eroding coastal village sites and scattering their contents on the beach. And then there are digging animals. Otters, foxes, and birds dig dens in sites, and brown bears create craters in search of tender spring plants. The result is like tearing a hold in the center of a photograph.

While natural disturbances are often unavoidable, the damage caused by people—artifact digging, construction, camping on top of a site, and the use of off-road vehicles—can be avoided. Like animal digging, these activities, which are often illegal, stir a site's contents. Much of what sites have to tell us is in the locations of artifacts and their relationship to things like hearths or storage pits. Dig in a site or remove its artifacts and these relationships are lost.

Whatever the cause, understanding the forces that impact sites is critical to their study. Archaeologists need to know how a site has been altered to interpret its contents. Moreover, patterns of site disturbance across a region can alert researchers to major changes in the archaeological record or the need to study materials before they vanish.

For these reasons, we work with our site stewards to record site damage. A simple system helps volunteers record the presence of erosion, animal damage, vandalism, and modern use at the sites they visit and to estimate the extent of the damage. The result is a picture of how the sites studied today have changed since they were created hundreds or even thousands of years ago. ●

# Educational Resources



Alutiiq MUSEUM  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPOSITORY

VISIT | LEARN | EXPLORE | RESEARCH | SHOP | GIVE

Home / LEARN / Videos

### STEWARDS OF HERITAGE

This series of three short films explores the value of archaeological sites and the issues that surround their care. Produced with assistance from videographer Alf Pryor with generous funding from the US Fish & Wildlife Service.

**Stewards of Heritage, Kodiak Archaeology: A Library Underground**  
from Alutiiq Museum

**Stewards of Heritage: Digging into the Past**  
from Alutiiq Museum

**Stewards of Heritage: Artifacts, Our Ancestors' Tools**  
from Alutiiq Museum

In the United States, archaeological sites and their contents belong to the owner of the land on which they occur.

Please share these films. Copies can be downloaded for free on the Alutiiq Museum's Vimeo Channel.

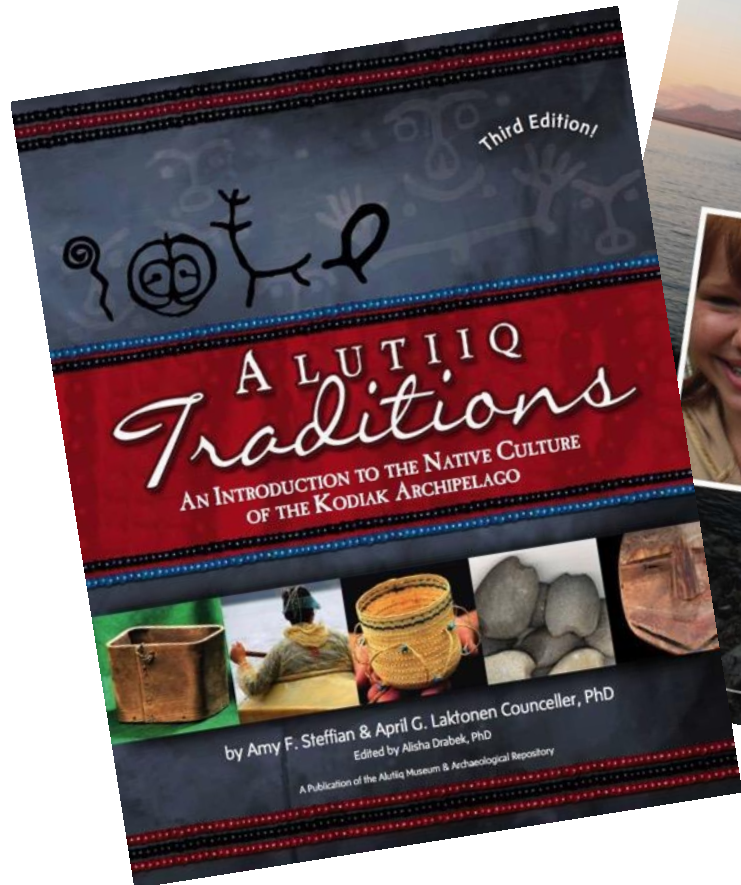
CONNECT WITH US

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LEARN

- History of the Alutiiq Museum
- The Alutiiq / Sugpiaq People
- Alutiiq Word of the Week
- Alutiiq Word of the Week Archive
- On Line Exhibits
- Virtual Tour
- Videos
- Handouts / Teacher Resources

# Publications



*rs feeding along the shore of Karluk Lake, Spring 2009.*

## ear Beds and Barabaras\*

Alutiiq Museum archaeologist Patrick Saltonstall is used to working around bears. For years he has been hiking through some of Kodiak's prime bear territory, coexisting with the big brownies as he studies ancient settlements. While Saltonstall has a healthy respect for these powerful creatures, as a professional, their behavior also fascinates him. *What do bears have to teach an archaeologist?*

It turns out that archaeologists aren't the only mammals who enjoy spending time at ancient settlements. As the long days and warm temperatures of spring arrive on Kodiak, bears feed on tender green plants. Ancient villages have nutrient rich soils, fertilized by the gradual decay of age-old garbage. Plants

in archaeological sites. And while they hang out at a site, they will walk up and down its banks, creating trails that cause erosion. This sort of damage is particularly common along Kodiak's large salmon streams. Bears waiting for fish to arrive hang out around archaeological sites, feeding, digging, sleeping and even fighting. I've seen sites covered with bear holes. Some deposits are so badly pitted that you can't make out the house depressions any more."

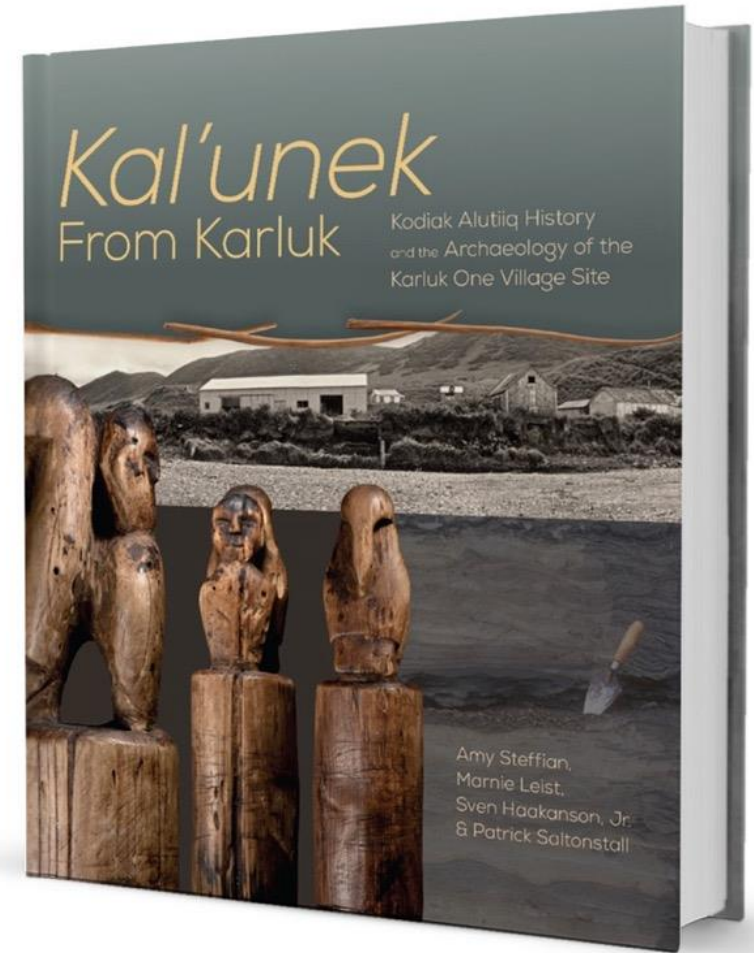
*What does this mean for an archaeologist?* First, studying the damage caused by bears is helping Saltonstall to fine-tune his eyes — to tell the difference between a depression created by a bear and one created by an



## Site Stewardship

Site stewards are part of the Alutiiq Museum's historic preservation team. With cameras and pencils, these volunteers monitor the conditions of archaeological sites across the archipelago and report their observations to us. This year 18 stewards studied 92 sites. We thank volunteers Suzanne Abraham, Andy Christofferson, John Crye, Brigid and Harry Dodge, Samantha Dunning, Jacob Harding, Marnie Leist, Hans Klausner, Mike Munsey, Dan Ogg, Sue Jeffrey, Susan Payne, Leila Pyle, Patrick Saltonstall, Mike Sirofchuck, Jack Withrow, Catherine West, and Jeffrey Aaron Woods for helping to care for Kodiak's buried history. If you would like to join our stewardship team, please contact Patrick Saltonstall, 486-7004, x23. This program is funded by the US Fish & Wildlife Service.

# Collaborative Research



Involving our community in publication of archaeological data

# Professional Education

- Researchers
- ANCSA Corporation Staff Members
- Artists
- Museum Professionals
- Educators



What International travellers, shop owners and artisans need to know

## A Customs Guide to Alaska Native Arts

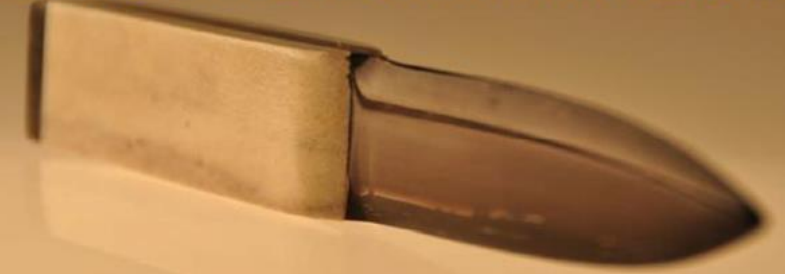


Photo Credits:  
Alaska Native Arts Foundation

Updated: June 2012



# Policy

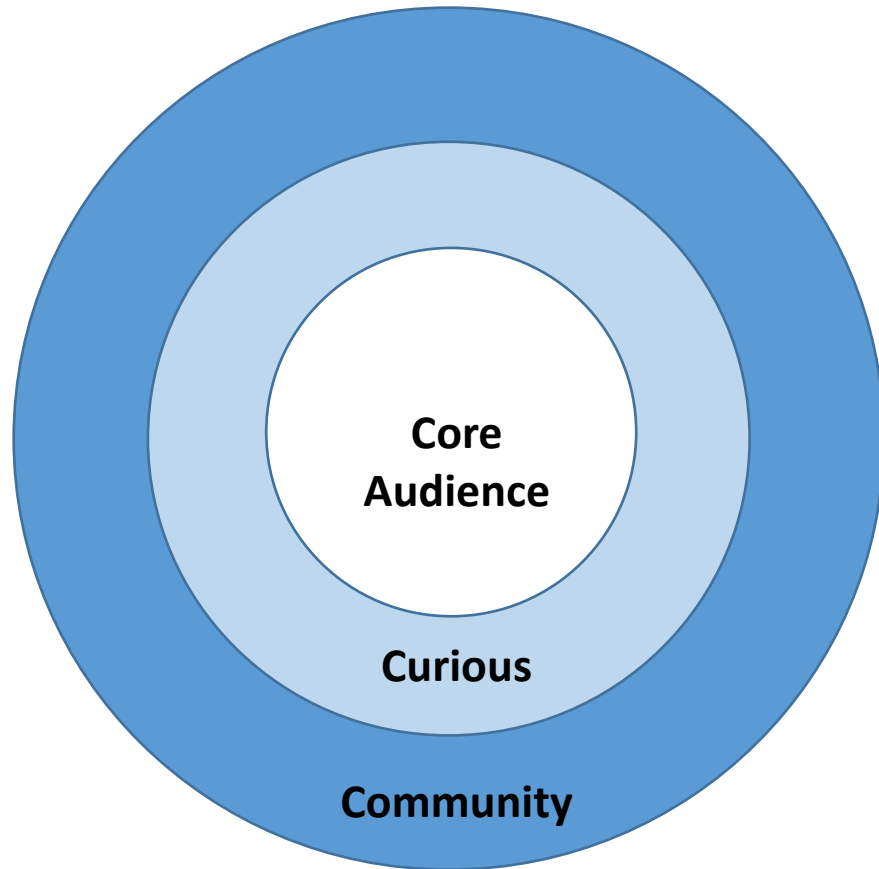
- Collections Policy
- Store Policy
- Ethics Policy



***The museum store also recognizes its ethical responsibility to protect archaeological sites and will not purchase, consign or sell artwork that includes archaeological materials even if these materials have been legally obtained.***



# The Future



Opportunities:  
Tribal Land Managers, New Audience Engagement

