

The background of the slide is a vibrant, painterly illustration of an Alaskan landscape. It features a lush green valley with a small stream in the foreground, surrounded by steep, rocky mountains with patches of snow. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. The overall style is artistic and scenic.

# WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH ALASKA NATIVES

# MODULE EXPECTATIONS

This module introduces cultural concepts and considerations for working in Alaska Native Villages

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GOALS

Understand state government structure  
Understand ANSCA government structure  
Ability to identify predominate cultures

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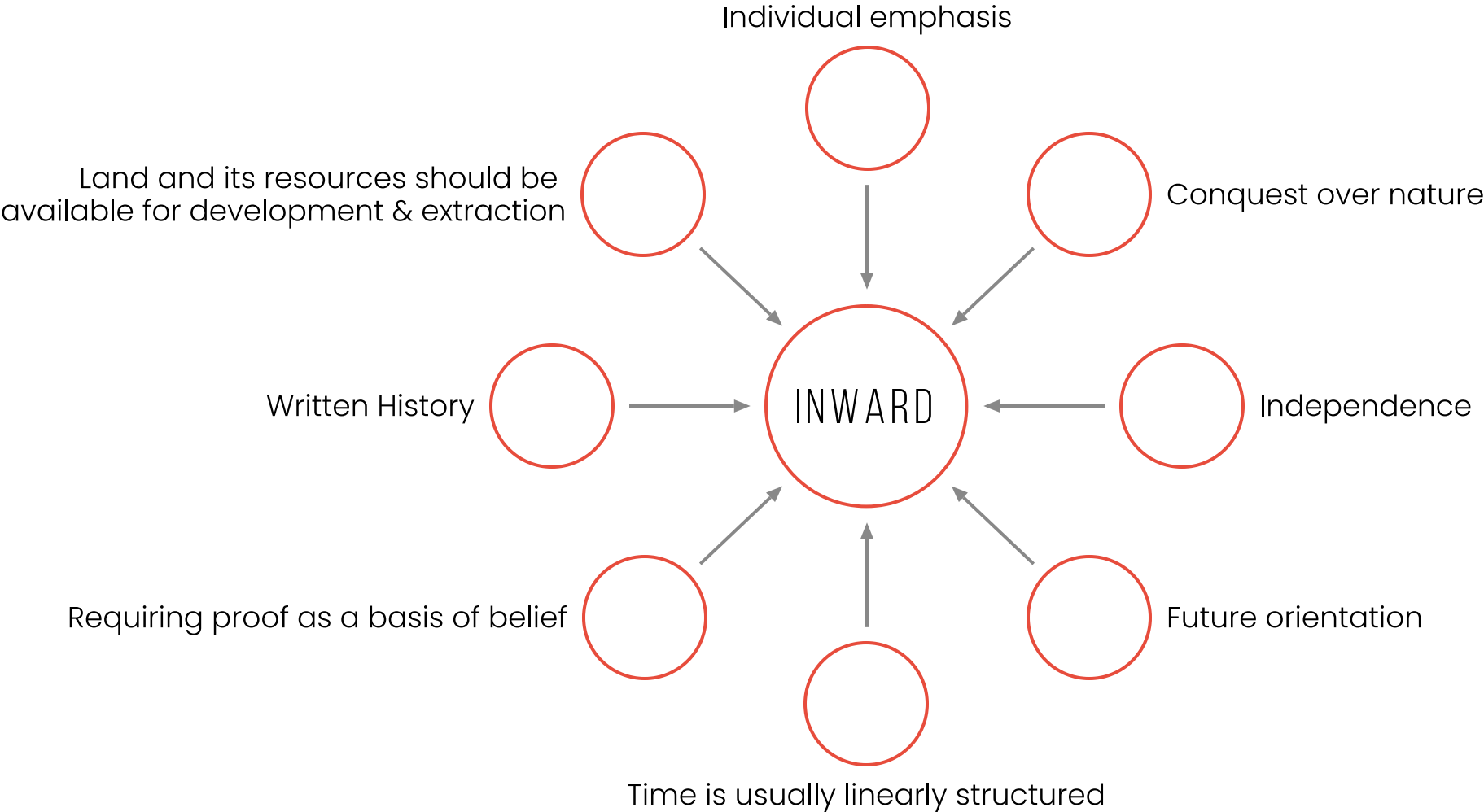
OBJECTIVES

Develop a cultural understanding when working with Alaska Natives

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OUTCOMES

# WESTERN WORLDVIEW



# STATE-CHARTERED GOVERNMENT

## Borough

Units of government formed for the purpose of providing services to people residing in a large geographic area or region (They resemble counties in other states)

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First and second class boroughs must perform three area-wide powers: education, planning/platting/zoning, and tax assessment/collection.

## Municipal Government

A city has only those powers given to it by the state, including financial, administrative, and legal

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Powers to provide public facilities and services, and regulatory

## First Class City

Minimum population of 400 in order to incorporate

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Mayor may vote only in cases of a tie or a veto action

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Must provide education, planning, and zoning services for its residents.

## Second Class City

Most common form of municipal government found in Alaska

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Less than 400 residents to incorporate - Bethel and Kotzebue are the exception

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Provide services and facilities to their residents.

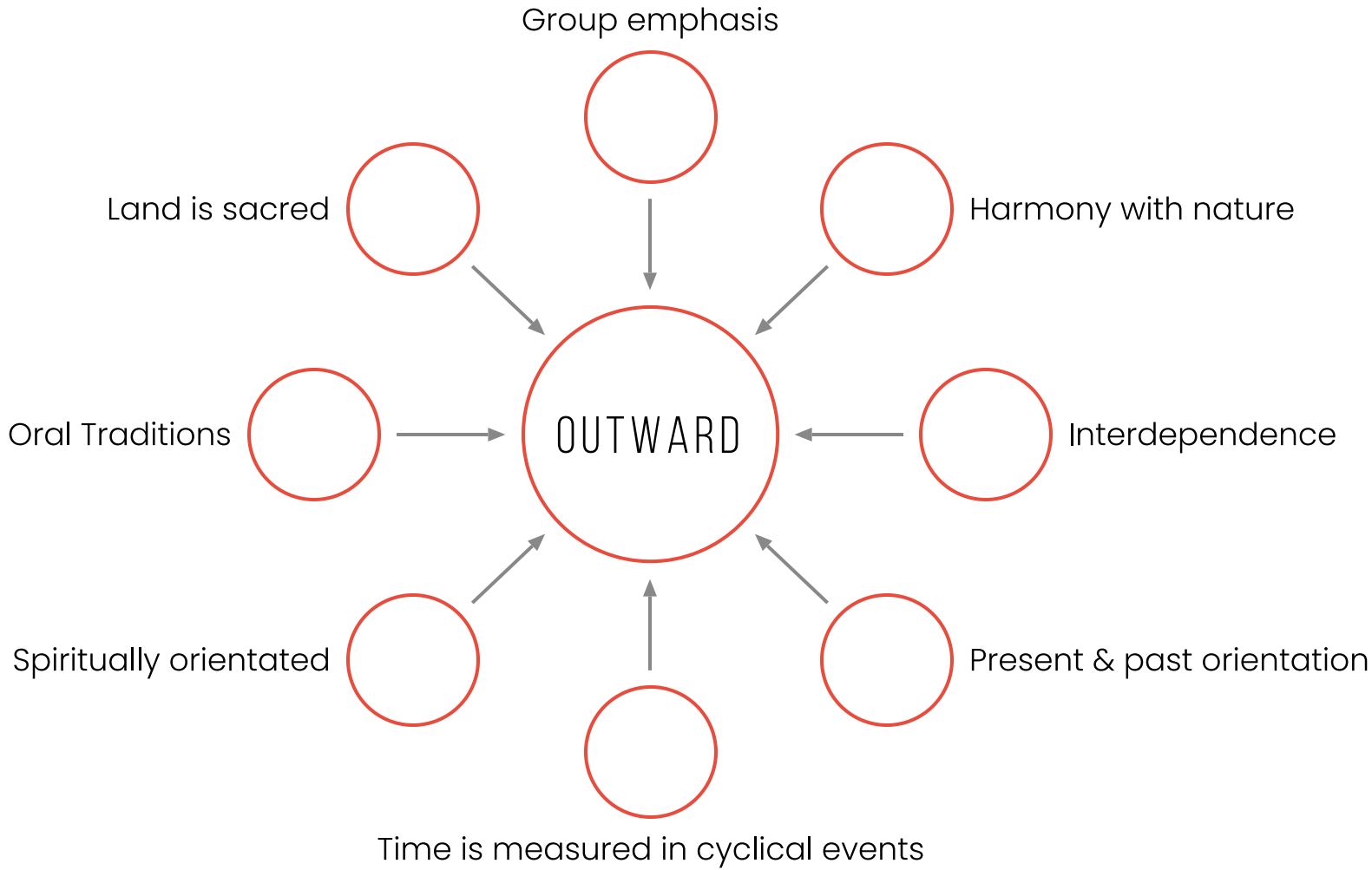
19 ORGANIZED BOROUGHES

11 CENSUS AREAS (UNORGANIZED)



Administrative boundaries: boroughs, census areas, cities and municipalities.

# ALASKAN NATIVE WORLDVIEW



# IMPORTANT CULTURAL UNDERSTANDINGS

Developed over thousands of years

Many & varied cultures

Distinct from one another

Unique and varied languages

Complex kinship structures

Developed subsistence hunting and gathering practices

Belief systems

Different art, music, storytelling, and dance traditions

Share key values

Respecting and learning from Elders

Sharing with others

Being mindful in word and deed

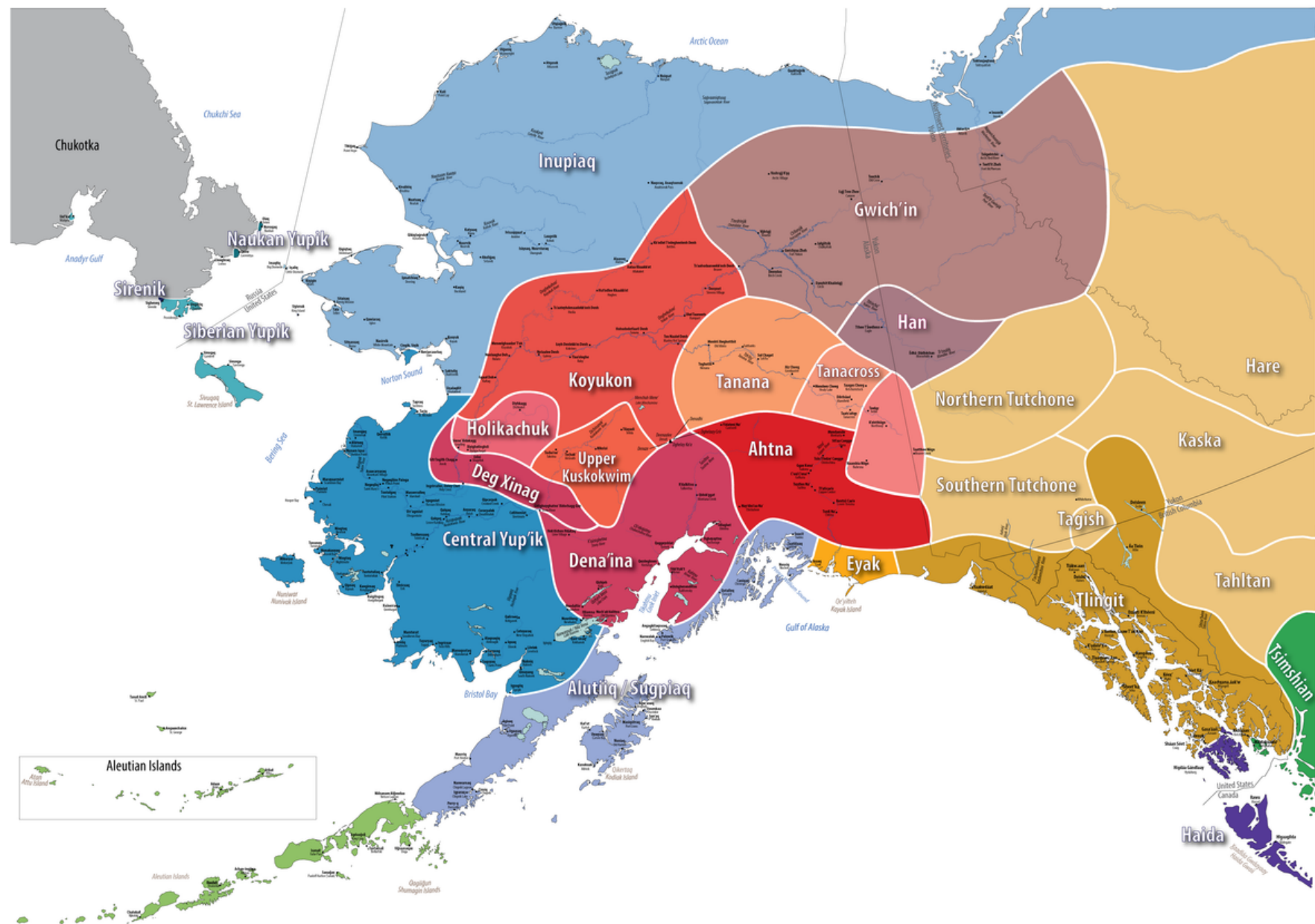
Knowing one's place in the context of one's history, traditions, and ancestors

Rooted in and tied to the land and waters

Practices and customs necessary to thrive in within a particular region

Traveling to the remote villages is like traveling to a foreign country

# NATIVE PEOPLES & LANGUAGES OF ALASKA



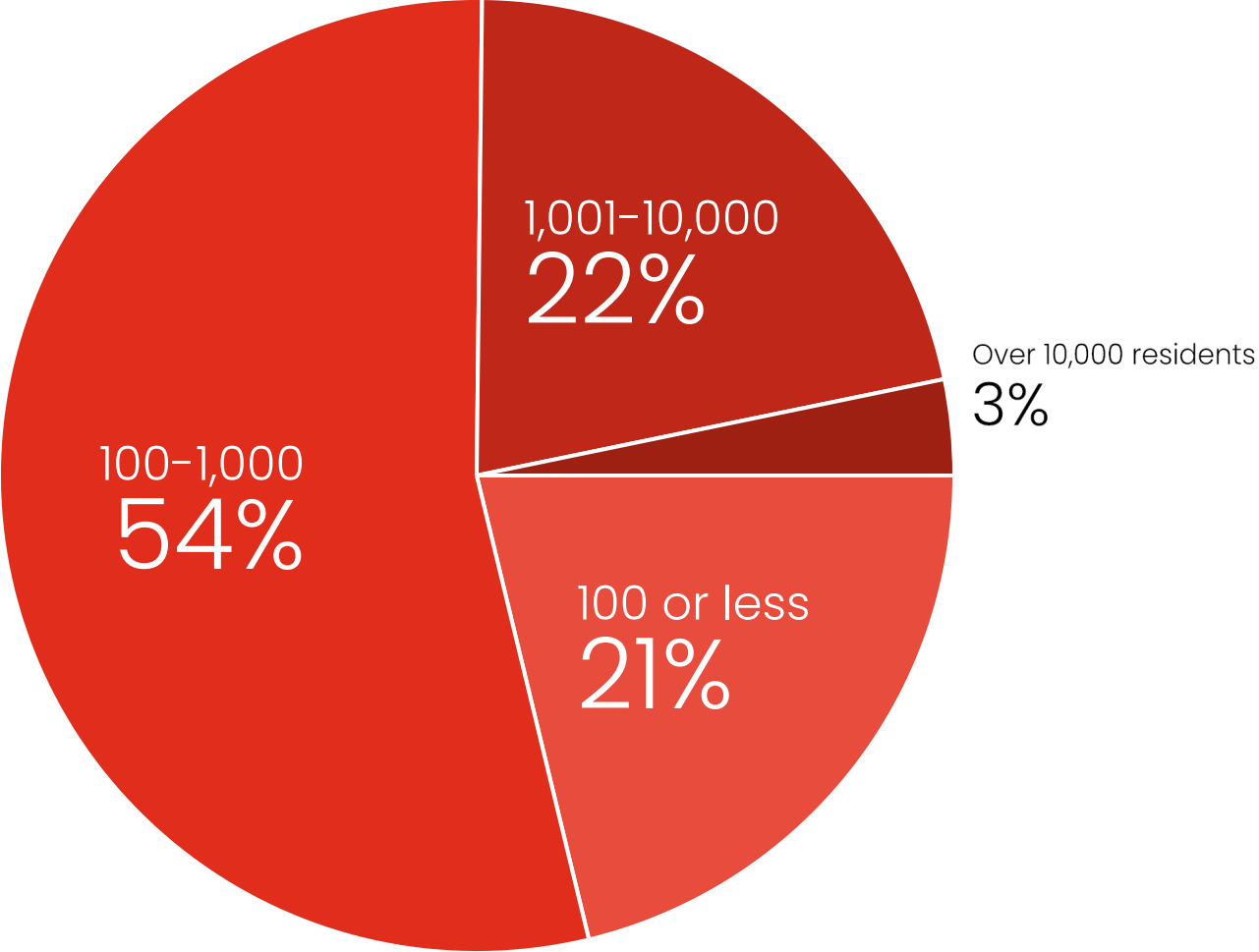


# 240 ALASKA NATIVE VILLAGES



# ALASKA COMMUNITY POPULATION COMPARISON

Source: United States Census Bureau: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019



# PROMINENT ALASKA NATIVE CULTURES

Athabascan

Eyak

Iñupiaq

Haida

Tlingit

Tsimshian

St. Lawrence Island Yupik

Yup'ik

Cup'ik

Sugpiaq

Unangax

Different tribes or clans are within these groupings



TLINGIT CULTURE ILLUSTRATED BY  
TRIBES, CLANS AND CLAN HOUSES IN SOUTHEAST ALASKA

# ALASKA NATIVE GOVERNMENT

FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED TRIBE A LEGAL TERM MEANING THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT RECOGNIZES A GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIP

ANCSA Corporations

The 12 Regional Corporations – profit corporations for the purposes of development and payment of dividends to their shareholders.

Regional Non-Profit Associations

Some Regional Alaska Native non-profit organizations provide delivery of federal programs in Alaska

Advocacy organizations

Tribes

Tribes in Alaska retain sovereign authority over their members

Village Corporations

Village corporations own the surface title to their lands

Tribal Governments

Traditional governments are those organized according to the customs and traditions of the village, but without a federal or state government approved constitution.

Regional tribes are multiple tribes not restricted to a single village location  
Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska  
Iñupiat Community of the Arctic Slope  
St. Paul & St. George known as the Pribilof Islands Aleut Communities

# GET TO KNOW THE COMMUNITY YOU ARE WORKING WITH

## SUBSURFACE RIGHTS ARE OWNED & MANAGED BY REGIONAL CORPORATIONS

Land issues are largely resolved by the Village Corporation

## LOCAL MATTERS ARE HANDLED BY THE VILLAGE COUNCIL

Indian Environmental General Assistance Program

Bureau of Indian Affairs'

Natural Resources

Subsistence

## POLITICAL ISSUES AND SOCIAL SERVICE LARGELY TRIBAL

Depending on the region and village, sometimes the regional provides the service, other times the tribe itself provides the service

Some tribes pull services from regional consortium, others have skeleton staff and rely on their region

# COUNCILS GO BY MANY NAMES

Village Council

Tribal Council

IRA Council (Indian Reorganization Act of 1934)

Traditional Council

Councils range from 5 to 9 members in size

# VISITING/WORKING IN THE VILLAGE

Be prepared for distinct cultural differences.

Some villages do not have running water or sewer systems.

Do not react in a negative manner, verbally or in expression, to different foods

Walking, waiting, silence – hear a lot of silence

Learn about the village before your visit [here](#)

Find out which governing body has the leadership role concerning your assigned task

Advance contact should be made with all parties





# VISITING/WORKING IN THE VILLAGE

Be prepared for distinct cultural differences.

Plan your logistics, including travel, lodging and food

Check the weather forecast and bring appropriate outer wear. You may need rubber boots, rain gear, and insect repellent

Dress casually; no ties, high heels, or umbrellas

Do not attempt to bring inappropriate items to rural villages

Churches are very important in some villages. Leave your religious preferences behind.

# TIMING

Be prepared for distinct cultural differences.

Find out the seasons for fishing, berry picking, hunting, migratory bird hunting/egging, and the local seasons for harvesting land animals

Schedule business meetings in the afternoon and any community meetings in the evening  
AND be prepared to stay until everyone has agreed and made a decision

Remember it is not about your schedule

# PROTOCOL

Be prepared for distinct cultural differences.

Work with the tribes even when your business is with the corporation. There is an expectation of consultation on the local level when decisions will effect them

Not everyone has adjusted to ANCSA - listen and remain neutral

As you have your own cultural way of communicating remember that each Alaska Native community will have a slightly different communication style and method. RESPECT those differences

Some cultures may not make eye contact while in other areas, if you do not make eye contact, they may believe you are not telling the truth and are not to be trusted. Learn about where you are going and the cultural practices

Get to know the people before you begin your business - Greet people. Get acquainted. Walk around. Be honest. Avoid jokes.

Do not assume that silence means acceptance. Nodding of the head does not necessarily mean agreement.

Do not make promises you cannot keep. If you cannot make a commitment, say so and give your reason.

WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH ALASKA NATIVES

