



**Sitka Spruce Plantation National Historic Landmark
Unalaska, Alaska**

The Aleutian Islands are remarkable for their treeless landscapes with far-off views of tundra valleys, snowcapped mountain peaks, steaming volcano tops, and the deep blue Pacific Ocean. In 1805 a Russian colony had settled on Unalaska. Desiring to be as self-sufficient as possible, they planted spruce trees imported from Southeast Alaska. Here on Amaknak Island, is the first recorded afforestation (planting trees where none had grown before) project on the North America continent. The fierce Aleutian winds, however, prevented trees from growing tall. By 1975, only six of the original Sitka spruce were still growing but hundreds of small saplings surrounded them. Today these trees are enjoyed as part of Unalaska's Sitka Spruce Park. Walking along a trail that winds through the remains of the plantation gives one the feeling of being in a forest, a rare experience in the Aleutians.