

ON-GOING BERINGIA PROJECTS BY YEAR:**FY 2014:****Prehistoric Obsidian Transport and Human Interactions Across the Bering Strait**

Partner(s): University of Georgia / North-East Interdisciplinary Scientific Research Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences/ National Park Service
Contact: Jeff Rasic, National Park Service; Jeff Speakman, University of Georgia

Collaborators:

- Sergei Slobodin, Northeast Interdisciplinary Science Research Institute
Russian Academy of Sciences
- Jeff Speakman, Center for Applied Isotope Studies, University of Georgia

Duration: 2 years

Locations: Various locations in Alaska, Magadan, Russia

Funding: FY14 - \$22,821 FY15 - \$12,933

SUMMARY: The newly funded project involves a multidisciplinary, international collaboration among scientists from the the University of Georgia, the Russian Academy of Sciences, and National Park Service. The primary objectives of this research are: (1) to study prehistoric inter- and intra-regional patterns of mobility, trade, exchange, resource exploitation, and cultural interaction within Eastern and Western Beringia (i.e., northeast Russia and Alaska) using obsidian as a proxy; (2) to facilitate a better understanding of the prehistory of Eastern and Western Beringia—areas that are typically viewed from singular perspectives depending on which side of the Bering Strait one happens to work; (3) develop a research agenda and foster collaborations between US and Russian colleagues that will facilitate the exchange of ideas and research findings. During this two year project, we will employ portable X-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF) to analyze an estimated 1,000 obsidian artifacts curated at the Northeastern Interdisciplinary Research Institute in Magadan. New analytical data generated from this study will enable archaeologists (1) to establish a comprehensive database of compositional data for obsidian artifacts Eastern and Western Beringia; and (2) to correlate the geochemical data from archaeological assemblages with sources and identify patterns of migration and exchange in northeast Russia and Alaska

Translation of *Archaeology of Kolyma and Continental Priokhot'e in Late Pleistocene and Early Holocene* by Sergei Slobodin into English

Partner: Richard Bland and Associates

Contact: Richard Bland, owner

Collaborators:

- none

Location: Kolyma and Continental Priokhot'e

Duration: 1 years

Funding: \$9,042 in 2014

SUMMARY: The book entitled *Arkheologiya Kolymy I kontinental'nogo Priokhot'ya v pozdnem pleistotsene I rannem golotsene* [*Archaeology of Kolyma and Continental Priokhot'e in Late Pleistocene and Early Holocene*], by Sergei B. Slobodin, will be translated from Russian into English. The book provides information on the archeology of Western Beringia during late Pleistocene and early Holocene time periods currently unavailable to the English speaking audiences. The book contains 233 pages. When translation is completed the English manuscript will be proofread against Russian original, professionally edited, and laid out for printing. The result will be a digital copy of the laid-out book that can be printed and distributed.

FY2013:**Beringian Messenger Network**

Partner: Institute of the North

Contact: Nils Andreasson, Managing Director, Institute of the North; Karlin Itchoak, Institute of the North; Kristina Baiborodova, Project Coordinator, Russian Federation Liaison, Institute of the North

Collaborators:

- RAIPON (Russian Association of Indigenous People of the North);
- Chukotka Reindeer Herders Association
- Chukotka Association of Marine Mammal Hunters (ChAZTO)
- University of Alaska, Fairbanks
- University of Alaska, Anchorage

Locations: Various locations in Alaska and Chukotka

Duration: 3 years

Funding: FY13 - \$42,055; FY14 - \$38,500; FY15 – \$37,500

SUMMARY: The Institute of the North will develop a Bering Strait (Beringian) Messenger Network to expand and strengthen the connections within the Beringia region. As an international program that incorporates local concerns, the Shared Beringian Heritage Program faces obstacles in sustaining open and direct lines of communication with regional, national, and international partners. Developing and strengthening effective communication systems will be the hallmark of this program, beginning at the community level and growing to incorporate regional and cross-border components. The Beringian Messenger Network will emphasize a value on traditional knowledge, respect for elders, and a commitment to youth and emerging leaders, while leveraging interest in the Arctic. These components of the program will augment existing efforts by the Beringia Program to open and maintain good communication with cooperators. The Beringian Messenger Network will evaluate and contribute a facilitative framework to the existing communication systems, while fostering inter- and intra-community, as well as cross-border, relationships. One of the hallmarks of the project is the monthly teleconferences that are hosted by Institute of the North. So far, these have been very well-attended, with 90 people from across the world calling in during the first telecon to discuss reindeer herding in the arctic. The connections are already being made, and herders in Alaska and Chukotka were able to get in contact with each other and begin the initial stages of a cooperative project. Topics covered in the telecons so far: reindeer herding, climate change, and mining in the Arctic. To view a calendar of scheduled Messenger Network telecons and more information on the project go to the website: <https://www.institutenorth.org/calendar/events/bering-strait-messenger-network/>

Chukotka Native Group Demonstration at the Qatnut Trade Fair

Partner: Northwest Arctic Borough (NWAB)

Contact: Karen Kim Franklin, NWAB; Judith Hassinger, Treasurer, NWAB; Vika Owens, Director, Sulianich Art Gallery

Collaborators:

- Uelen Native Group of dancers, carvers, and sewers
- NWAB Sulianich Art Gallery

Locations: Northwest Arctic Borough – Kotzebue

Duration: 1 year

Funding: FY13 - \$21,800

SUMMARY: This project supported the revival of an ancient festival that brought together Native peoples from throughout Beringia, as well as facilitated the re-establishment of cultural ties between Kotzebue and communities in Chukotka. Historically people gathered annual fairs, like the Qatnut Trade Fair, to trade goods and learn various skills from each other. Through the years these connections became increasingly difficult to maintain due to political and geographical obstacles. Now that travel and communication are far more fluid and accessible, the cultural ties that existed for centuries are slowly reemerging. In recent years, the community of Kotzebue has initiated the revival of the Qatnut Trade Fair and has drawn indigenous dance groups from surrounding communities and as far away as Barrow. In May of 2013, a group of dancers, carvers, and skin sewers from Uelen, Chukotka, Russia, traveled to Kotzebue to take part in the traditional dance contest as invited guests. Members of this group also held workshops on carving and skin sewing skills at the Sulianich Art Gallery. In cooperation with the Northwest Arctic Borough, the National Park Service (through the Beringia Program and the Western Arctic Parklands) assisted with the preparation of the visa free paperwork and travel logistics for the group to travel from Russia to the US. Translation support was also provided by the Beringia Program at the event, while the group was hosted at the Western Arctic Parklands Regional Office for a community dance workshop and demonstration. Final products from this project will be photo documentation of the dance festival and carving workshops, and a short written report on the dancer's visit. These products are expected in the spring of 2014, and will be featured on the program's website. Video footage of the Uelen Dancer's was also taken by Beringia Staff, and will accompany a feature article on the Qatnut Trade Fair in late April.

Diomedes Island Family Reunification Visit

Partner: The Native Village of Diomedes

Contact: Tandy and Ken Wallack, Circumpolar Expeditions, Etta Akhinga, Tribal Coordinator, Native Village of Diomedes, Karen Kazingnuk, Tribal Council President, Native Village of Diomedes

Locations:

- Native Village of Little Diomedes, Alaska,
- Moscow & Chukotka, Russia

Duration: 2 years

Funding: FY13 -- \$38,388 + \$3706; FY14 -- \$40,435 + \$3,706 = \$44,141

SUMMARY: The primary goal of this project is to research, track, and re-establish family ties between the people of Little Diomedes and their (relocated) relatives in Chukotka, Far East Russia. These relatives are descended from the previous inhabitants of Big Diomedes Island, but were forced to relocate during the Soviet period. A further goal is to convene one or more re-unification visits that would bring these family members together on Little Diomedes for the first time. For centuries residents travelled freely between the continents, and were considered one ethnic group. Political revolutions and trade and travel restrictions brought a stop to this back-and-forth travel between Alaska and Chukotka. Then after World War II, Little Diomedes was claimed by the United States, while the Soviet Union claimed Big Diomedes. The entire native population of Big Diomedes was relocated to the Russian mainland, and Big Diomedes became a military base. Since then, contact between people – family members- has been rare and very limited. As elders on both sides of the Bering Strait age and die, the ties and shared cultural heritage between the Native Village of Diomedes (NVD) and their relatives in Chukotka diminish. The NVD wanted to find a means to renew family ties through face-to-face contacts, which is especially important for cultural preservation, traditional knowledge, and youth on both sides of the Bering Strait. To accomplish this, NVD and their partner Circumpolar Expeditions have begun a comprehensive search through existing records of birth, death, residency and other indicators of heritage. Acting and working on behalf of the Native Village of Diomedes, Ken and Tandy Wallack of Circumpolar Expeditions will be coordinating and carrying out the project activities and gathering relevant information from existing records and archives in the US and Russia. Workshops have been organized in Nome in order to engage the community in this effort, and anyone with knowledge of long-lost relatives from Russia is encouraged to talk to the coordinators. Interviews and the unwritten knowledge of family heritage are also an essential part of the process, as many of the family ties can be interpreted from stories passed down through generations, rather than in an archive. Information and data from Chukotka will also be included depending on availability and accessibility. The research has begun and a database has been created, and a recent trip to Diomedes provided the Wallack's with a wealth of new information and leads to track down. An update on their progress this year is due in September, when they will start the second year of the project and will continue gathering information and expanding the database.

Traditional Arctic Sports and Games**Partner:** Go North! Adventure Learning**Contact:** Mille Porsild, Executive Director, GoNorth! Adventure Learning**Collaborators:**

- Committee of Sports and Tourism, Irina Ryabukhina, Head
- Chukotka Science Support Group
- University of Alaska, Fairbanks, Department of Anthropology, Dr. Sveta Yamin-Pasternak

Locations: Anadyr, New Chaplino, Lorino, Anadyr, Chukotka; Anchorage, Nome, Alaska**Duration:** 2 year**Funding:** FY13 -- \$30,000; FY14 -- \$30,000

SUMMARY: Traditional sports and games are a priceless part of Beringia's cultural heritage. They are expressions of indigenous ways of life and create a bridge between cultures and people. The project "Traditional Beringian Sports and Games" is an adventure learning program to promote, preserve and encourage Beringia's rich heritage, with a focus on sports and games. In addition to the Beringia Program funding, support is coming primarily from the government of the Chukotka Autonomous region. As the first truly "joint" project, the Beringia Games serves as a symbol for the cooperative relationship between Alaska and our neighbors on the Russian side. The central activity or focus of the project is the "Arctic Games," a sporting event for youth across the Arctic to come together and compete against each other while learning about different cultures and forming linkages with other indigenous youth. The first "games" are scheduled for the summer of 2014 in Chukotka, and will be recorded for the online component and for the curriculum. Within the framework of an online education program, the experiences at the games will be posted on the new website being developed for the project. As a starting point for the larger project, "Racing Beringia," a unit based on dog-mushing through 3 countries (US, Canada, Russia) is already fueling learning through exciting stories from the trail. The geography and landscape of the region play a large role in the curriculum developed around these three races. Competitive dog mushing is an ancient sporting activity, but it was also an integral part of survival in the Arctic. Many of the traditional games and sports have dual meanings or purposes, and the curriculum will explore these in relation to traditional knowledge, cultural practices, and methods of survival. The curriculum for the "Racing Beringia" phase of the project is already posted on the website and is available to students and teachers for free: www.racingberingia.com. Interest in the mushing component of the project is generating interest in the new website for the Sports and Games project curriculum. The new website for the Arctic Games has yet to be finalized, as more information needs to be gathered, but the preliminary version can be viewed at www.arcticgames.com.

Ice Bridge: Profiles of Beringia

Partner: Sitka Sound Science Center

Contact: Elizabeth S. Arnold, Assistant Professor of Journalism, University of Alaska Anchorage

Collaborators:

- North Pacific Research Board (NPRB)
- Pew Center for the Environment
- University of Alaska, Anchorage (UAA)

Locations: Anchorage, Alaska. Anadyr, Chukotka

Duration: 3 years

Funding: FY13 -- \$48,660; FY14 -- \$46,320; FY15 -- \$47,700

SUMMARY: “Ice Bridge: Profiles of Beringia” is a series of compelling, intimate portraits of people making a difference within the larger Beringia region. Each profile will focus on an individual whose life, work or research tells a larger story that is insightful, instructive, and inspiring to the overall community. These profiles, combined with an interactive website linked to both the Sitka Sound Science Center and the Shared Beringian Heritage Program pages, intends to generate interest in the issues and obstacles facing the region. This is a critical time for Beringia, as a shifting climate has increased attention to the Arctic in an unprecedented way. “Ice Bridge” aims to capture and tell the stories of everyday people as they experience these life changes. In addition, the profiles can shed light on the on-the-ground implications of subjects like climate change, life in a rural village, adapting to the environment, and the value of Traditional Knowledge. Project Coordinator/Principal Investigator Elizabeth Arnold is a nationally recognized and award winning journalist with more than three decades of national and international experience. Over the 3 year funding period, Arnold will research, write and produce a minimum of nine radio stories that will be broadcast nationally and will also be available with companion multimedia portraits posted on a central interactive website. By the second year, the material will be translated into Russian at the same site. The deliverables (3 podcasts and a functional website) from the first year are expected by April 30, 2014.

Nunavak Reindeer Herder's Exchange – (CANCELLED)

Partner: The Native Village of Mekoryuk

Contact: Dale Smith, Native Village of Mekoryuk; Albert Williams, President, Mekoryuk IRA Council; Howard Amos, Executive Director, Native Village of Mekoryuk

Collaborators:

- Kawerak
- Reindeers Herders Association of Chukotka

Locations: Nome and Mekoruyuk

Duration: 1 year

Funding: FY13 - \$10,000

SUMMARY: The project's main goal was to set up a significant and energizing exchange of Native reindeer herders, Youth, Elders and experts between Chukotka and Alaska. Unfortunately, the project was cancelled after consultation with the cooperator. The cooperator was encouraged to re-apply during the next funding cycle, after addressing some timing, staff, relationship and location difficulties.

FY 2012**Trans-Beringia Muskoxen — Creation of Ecological Baselines in an Era of Arctic Warming**

Partner: University of Montana

Contact: Joel Berger, John J. Craighead Chair and Professor of Wildlife Conservation, Biological Sciences

Collaborators:

- Ecological Inventory and Monitoring Program, National Park Service Arctic Network, Jim Lawler, Network Coordinator
- Blake Lowery, University of Montana graduate student
- Western Arctic National Parklands, Brad Shults, Wildlife Biologist
- Wrangel Island State Zapovednik, Alexander Gruzdev, Superintendent, and Taras Sipko, Scientist

Location: Cape Krusenstern National Monument, Bering Land Bridge National Preserve, Alaska; and Wrangel Island Federal Zapovednik, Chukotka

Duration: 3 years

Funding: \$39,010 in 2012; \$28,670 in 2013; \$39,010 in 2014

SUMMARY: The establishment of baseline conditions for muskoxen within and between populations over time is a primary goal of this project, which will be conducted across both Chukotka and Alaska. In a strong collaborative effort with Russian and American partners, the proposed study areas are Cape Krusenstern National Monument and Bering Land Bridge National Preserve, Alaska, and Wrangel Island Federal Zapovednik, Chukotka, Russia. The project goals are: 1) to gain insights about how climate and other factors affect or change population size and the survival of muskoxen; and 2) to establish ecological baselines for the measurement of these factors. These benchmarks are being achieved through the use of non-invasive measurement techniques to discern stress in populations of wild muskoxen in several of Alaska's national parks: Cape Krusenstern National Monument and Bering Land Bridge National Preserve. These methods are also being utilized to approximate the individual growth rates through the use of photogrammetry of young muskoxen across.. Photogrammetry is a technique that uses photo imaging to understand the precise body-size proportions of muskoxen and their calves. The project's principal investigator, Joel Berger, submitted a 2012 and 2013 progress report after two successful field seasons detailing the project activities during the first two years. The reports are available on the Program's website in a .PDF format. Currently Joel Berger is traveling around Chukotka and working cooperatively with the Director of the Wrangel Island Zapovednik, Alexander Gruzdev. In this third and last year of the project, most work will take place in Chukotka. You can read about project's progress in Berger's Blog at the e360 Yale Environment Digest (http://e360.yale.edu/digest/on_far-flung_wrangel_island_a_scientist_sizes_up_muskoxen/4121/)

Collection of Traditional Ecological Knowledge Regarding Polar Bear Habitat Use in Chukotka, Russia

Partner: Alaska Nanuuq Commission

Contact: Jack Omelak, Rhonda Sparks

Collaborators:

- Association of Traditional Marine Mammal Hunters of Chukotka (ATMMHC)

Location: Lorino, Lavrentiya, Uelen, Inchoun, Enurmino, Neshkan, Nutepelmen, Vankarem, Ryrkaipi, Yanranai, Rytkuchi, Chukotka.

Duration: 3 years

Funding: \$47,000 in 2012, \$47,000 in 2013, and \$47,000 in 2014

SUMMARY: The Alaska Nanuuq Commission (ANC) will conduct a habitat-use study on polar bears that builds on previous studies using traditional knowledge and local observers in several villages in Chukotka, Russia. This 3-year project will produce a report serving to augment and update a previous report: "Traditional Knowledge of Chukotka Native Peoples Regarding Polar Bear Habitat Use," which was conducted by ANC and the National Park Service in 2003. A similar update was completed in Alaska and while not identical, the intent of both projects is very similar: to utilize indigenous knowledge of polar bear habitat to map and identify key locations, to learn more about polar bear movements, and to document environmental changes. This knowledge is vital because the United States and Russia have an agreement, government-to-government, to manage the subsistence hunting of polar bears in order to ensure their sustainability. To gauge the health of the population, indigenous observations and traditional knowledge of bear behavior, denning, eating habits, mating, and human interaction are essential components. The ANC is working with indigenous hunters' organizations in Chukotka to gather the observations and to assess any major changes in polar bear habitats or movements on the Russian side. The Russian partner has reached out to an existing network of village coordinators (many were involved in the original 2003 study) and requested that they collect information on the changes to nearby polar bear habitats or movements. Year 1 of this project established these contacts and they were again utilized in year 2. However, due to the availability of several highly educated researchers who were able to participate in the project during the field season, digital mapping was used to locate areas where bears were plentiful. The village coordinators and the local hunters' observations will likely be used to augment the digital evidence and scientific approach. A successful field season in year 1 will be reinforced by years 2 and 3 field seasons. A report from the second year is currently being finalized, and the very last deliverable, a report summarizing, cataloguing and analyzing the results from the 3 years of observations will be due in October 2015.

CONTINUING FROM FY 2010**Beringia: What's Climate Change to You?**

Partner: GoNorth! Adventure Learning

Contact: Mille Porsild

Collaborators:

- Committee of Sports and Tourism, Irina Ryabukhina, Head
- Chukotka Science Support Group (pending the agreement with Chukotka Government)
- University of Alaska, Fairbanks, Department of Anthropology, Dr. Sveta Yamin-Pasternak

Location: Provideniya, Sireniki, Yanrakynnot, Lorino, Lavrentiya, and Uelen (pending the final agreement with Chukotka Government)

Duration: 3 years

Funding: \$37,000 in 2011 (awarded in 2010 – not signed until 2011), \$48,400 in 2012, \$49,610 in 2013.

SUMMARY: “What Is Climate Change to You?” is a program that engages young people in remote Arctic communities in the scientific efforts at documenting climate change. Team members, led by Mille Porsild and GoNorth! Adventure Learning, work with youth and teachers to plan strategies at documentation, and then leave them with computers, cameras and all necessary field equipment. Youth then continue to collect longitudinal data from the community and surrounding areas, which they then upload to an online environment for scientists to use in their research. Important parts of the research are environmental observations and stories, supported by photography, about local change. The photo-stories communicate the local perception and experience of environmental change in Chukotka; and how such change affects daily life and culture. The content of each photo-story is personal, but involves other community members like elders, hunters, teachers, family and friends. The youth-generated (and free) content is used by more than 3 million learners and is broadcast to teachers in more than 4,500 schools across the 50 U.S. states and on 5 continents. This project aims to establish a local and sustainable framework utilizing young people to continue community observations and contributions to science. In the fall of 2013, a photographic exhibit of the project with the work done in years 1 & 2 in Chukotka was installed at Beringia Days 2013 in Anadyr, and was awarded recognition in Warsaw, Poland at the United Nations Climate Conference COP19 in November 2013. Currently, the youth are still collecting and uploading observations and contributing to the curriculum on www.polarhusky.com. A final article about the reach and effects of the project and a comprehensive report to the National Park Service are due in the Spring of 2014.

Indigenous Language Learning and Documentation in the Bering Strait

Partner: Arctic Studies Center, Smithsonian Institution

Contact: Aron L. Crowell

Collaborators:

- Regional cultural organizations and language programs
- Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska, Fairbanks
- Alaska Native Language Archive, University of Alaska, Fairbanks

Location: Anchorage and Fairbanks, Alaska

Duration: 3 years

Funding: \$35,999 in 2010, \$45,001 in 2011, \$47,616 in 2012

SUMMARY: The future of indigenous languages around the Bering Strait is severely threatened. The Arctic Studies Center (ASC) has been working with elder fluent speakers of the Inupiaq and St. Lawrence Island/Siberian Yupik languages during workshops held in Anchorage. The workshops had native speakers gather and discuss the meaning of traditional objects or the rules of traditional games. The aim is to produce extensive linguistic recordings and documentation of these heritage objects (made 1850s-1950s) that is included in the Smithsonian exhibition *Living Our Cultures, Sharing Our Heritage: The First Peoples of Alaska* at the Anchorage Museum. The sessions were recorded and each individual was interviewed after participating. The interaction between the native speakers gave the language a more authentic context. The Arctic Studies Center, in cooperation with language educators from the region, are working to edit the recordings (video and audio) and convert them into learning materials. These language teaching tools and community source books will also contain English and eventually Russian transcriptions. The project was briefly extended in the fall of 2013 to allow the Principal Investigator Aron Crowell time to deliver more extensive results than first expected. The project will finish in September 2014 once the complete curriculum and recorded sessions are submitted.

Health Evaluation of Walrus

Partner: Eskimo Walrus Commission, Kawerak, Inc.

Contact: Vera Metcalf

Collaborators:

- Arctic Research Commission, Cheryl Rosa
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Gay Sheffield
- ChukotTINRO, Denis Litovka
- Association of Traditional Marine Mammal Hunters (ATMMHC), Eduard Zdor
- Chukotka Science Support Group (CSSG), Gennady Zelensky

Location: Chukotka, Russia

Duration: 3 years

Funding: No funding in 2009, \$25,601 in 2010, \$4284 in 2011 to cover travel cancellation cost in 2011; \$21,400 in 2012

SUMMARY: This community based project sought to proactively monitor walrus as the arctic environment rapidly changes. A multi-disciplinary assessment of body conditions and health-related parameters was initially planned, with biological samples being collected on both sides of the Bering Strait. The workplan and activities were adjusted several times due to weather related problems, as well as new strategies and new methods. The project coordinator Dr. Cheryl Rosa and collaborator Gay Sheffield were unable to travel to the sites in Chukotka to collect the needed samples due to weather and other obstacles several years in a row. In consultation with the Beringia Program, the project workplan was adapted to reflect a change in methodology. Instead of traveling to Chukotka to collect samples, which had proven to be an ineffective and unpredictable method, the cooperators held a workshop in Anchorage in March of 2012. Native hunters and leaders attended the workshop and learned how to correctly collect the samples themselves. These samples would then be transferred to Dr. Rosa for the final analysis. With the workplan change, accomplishing the final goal of a thorough health analysis is unlikely, so the deliverables for this project have also been adapted to reflect the reality of the situation. The project is now considering the training and teaching of a valuable and marketable skill that can be utilized in the future as a major project benchmark. With the adjustments, the final results will include a thorough account of the workshop, the training methods, the implications for future research and sample-gathering, and some follow-up with workshop participants. These are expected in early 2015, as the follow-up needs to be done after the completion of a successful field season in order to establish and analyze the effectiveness of the chosen training methods. Per the agreement with the National Park Service, the coordinators and cooperators (Kawerak) are aware that any biological samples and subsequent results that are conducted in the future as a continuation of this project are property of the NPS and will be submitted under this agreement.

CONTINUING FROM FY 2005**Finding the Lost Dances**

Partner: Native Village of Kotzebue

Contact: D'Anne Hamilton

Collaborators:

- Tribal government of the Qikiktagrukmiut peoples, Kotzebue, Alaska
- Russian Native youth dancers, New Chaplino and Provideniya, Russia
- Throat Singers in New Chaplino, Russia
- Inuit Circumpolar Conference, Barrow, Alaska

Location: Kotzebue, Alaska; and New Chaplino and Provideniya, Chukotka

Duration: 1 year (extended until January, 2011)

Funding: \$38,667 in 2005, \$26,307 in 2006, \$40,860 in 2007, and \$45,320 in 2008

SUMMARY: This was originally a cross-cultural exchange program between Alaska Native youth of Kotzebue and Russian Native youth of the Chukotka region. The 2006 agreement (now called "the Lost Dances") was a continuation of the 2005 project "Arctic Teens Speak Out." Kotzebue students met with traditional young dancers in New Chaplino and Provideniya during youth exchanges designed to focus on the shared and "lost" dances. They established connections and shared impressions about life in their own communities. The visit was entirely documented on video. In editing the film footage following the exchange, producer Norman Jayo worked the Kotzebue youth and actively engaged with the kids in order to teach them valuable and marketable skills. They were then involved in all subsequent filming, editing and producing for this project. The kids also learned post-production skills as they assisted in creating parts of the documentary of the dance project. The project lead, D'Anne Hamilton, along with several of the original youth participants presented some film footage at the 2011 Beringia Days Conference in Nome. A 60-minute film is the eventual deliverable from the 2 projects, as well as several other smaller clips that complement the final film and could be utilized by parks. The project has now long since ended and the deliverables have been due. The project leads have delayed the delivery of the documentary for technical reasons, and have explained that the products would exceed the original expectations because there were now 2 stories and the editing necessary to increase the quality of the videos was taking longer than anticipated. One is the original project and the shared dances from the youth exchange, and the other documentation of the students growing up on camera and becoming skilled in video recording, production, editing. It will also explore where the "kids" are at now, and how being involved in this project changed the course of their lives. The most recent update from the cooperator is that the editing continues, but that the 2 films will be ready in August of 2014.