



# National Museum of Forest Service History Newsletter

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May 2011

## Afognak Island Alaska 1892 Forest and Fish Culture Reservation

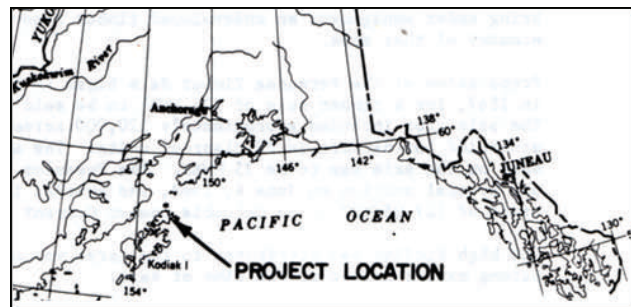
**By David Wanderaas**

*Wanderaas, University of Montana forestry graduate, was assigned to Afognak Island, Chugach National Forest, Alaska from 1977 to 1980. He was the last Forest Service forester assigned to Afognak (1980). He continued on the Chugach NF until 1988, then transferred to the Lewis & Clark NF, Montana (1988 – 2008). Wanderaas retired from the U.S. Forest Service in 2008 and lives in Harlowton, MT. The author is grateful to John Mattson, retired Chugach National Forest, archaeologist, for his assistance in earlier research of the Afognak Island story.*

### The 9<sup>th</sup> Forest Reserve The Original 'First National Refuge'

With the stroke of President Benjamin Harrison's pen on December 24, 1892, the 9<sup>th</sup> Forest Reserve nationally and the first Forest Reserve in Alaska, was established. This significant event in the story of American Conservation in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the nineteenth century was the result of growing awareness and concern by Congress, the President and the public to Alaskan issues. Salmon decimation was occurring along coastal waters from cannery operations, sea otters in ocean waters facing near extinction from overhunting, and fur seals being decimated on Bering Sea islands and on the high seas from exploitation and overhunting.

In 1889, responding to these concerns, Congress directed an investigation of Alaska fisheries by the US Fish Commission. The Commission conducted field investigations in 1889 and 1890, and affirmed that use of stream-wide nets, seines and fish traps by cannery operations was severely overfishing salmon streams. On Kodiak Island, the Commission found that the eight canneries on the Karluk River alone produced over half of the entire Alaska salmon pack of 1889, taking 4,000,000 red salmon from the ocean beach mouth of this one stream. And here they found next to nil escapement of salmon up the Karluk River to spawn for



**Afognak Island Alaska Location**

future salmon stocks. The Commission then investigated nearby Afognak Island and the Afognak River, and found only two canneries on the entire Island, an abundance of productive salmon streams, and the Afognak River a favorable site for a salmon hatchery. The Commission quickly published relevant reports and 'Papers', and in 1892 issued a voluminous report to Congress and the President, in which Fish Culturalist Dr. Livingston Stone recommended Afognak Island as an ideal location for "..... **establishment of a national salmon park or salmon reservation ..... to provide refuge for the salmon ..... and provide it quickly, before complications arise .....**".

The Afognak Forest and Fish Culture Reserve was proclaimed 'quickly' by President Harrison, under authority of the recent and fortuitous 'Act to repeal timber-culture laws, and for other purposes' of March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1891, better known as the 'Forest Reserve Act'. The last moment addition of **Section 24** to this Act by a House and Senate conference committee, gave the President authority to declare Forest Reservations. However, and most students of American forest conservation history are not aware of this, **Section 14** of this Act, as previously

# Museum News

By Gray Reynolds

## National Museum of Forest Service History

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The *Newsletter* is published quarterly for the members and supporters of the National Museum of Forest Service History, a non-profit corporation dedicated to preserving the history of the Forest Service and conservation.

### Membership Dues

Student	\$15
Individual	\$30
Family	\$55
Contributing	\$150
Sustaining	\$300
Organization	\$100
Lifetime	\$1,000

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## Capital Campaign News

This spring the Museum was active in attracting support for the capital campaign from corporations, foundations and federal agencies.

On May 5<sup>th</sup> we submitted a \$400,000 challenge grant application to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to support our programs to promote public understanding of the conservation legacy of the U.S. Forest Service, its cooperators and partners. A 3:1 match of these funds will create a total investment of \$1.6 million used to endow a Curatorial Fellow Position and support the construction of the *National Conservation Legacy and Education Center*. Dr. Richmond Clow, Dr. Aaron Shapiro, and Dr. Char Miller of our newly formed Panel of Historians and Social Scientists assisted in the development of the NEH grant narrative.

The development of the Curatorial Fellow position will enable graduate and post graduate students to spend 2-3 years with the Museum and then move on in their careers as alumni of our staff. In addition we will have the opportunity to add annual operating funds to this position to create a full-time position. NEH will announce its decision on the application this fall.

On March 29 Burlington Northern Santa Fe Foundation representative Barrett Kaiser presented the Museum with a \$50,000 grant during a reception hosted by the Missoula Downtown Association for local business leaders. We thanked BNSF for their \$50,000 commitment. The event was covered by local media, including The Missoulian, KPAX TV and KECI TV. Links to the media coverage are on our website at <http://www.nmfs-history.net/news/in-the-news.html>. In addition, we recently received a \$10,000 grant from The Charles Engelhard Foundation to support the campaign.

## Panel of Historians & Social Scientists Convene in Phoenix

Museum Board member and Panel Chair Patty Limerick convened the first meeting of the Advisory Panel of Historians and Social Scientists in Phoenix on April 14. The eight attending members of the Panel were joined by Dave Stack, Lynn Biddison and Steve Anderson to discuss the mission of the Museum and how the Panel will assist and support our programs. The NMFSH Board established the Panel to 1) Review the historical themes and messages to ensure they present an accurate and balanced historical view, 2) Serve as a forum to discuss and review the history of the Forest Service from a professional perspective, and 3) Identify potential projects or studies that might be appropriate for the NMFSH to undertake or support based on need to improve understanding of history of the Forest Service.

## Cookbook Opportunity

Our first book publishing effort has been very successful. Over 50,000 *Camp Cooking, 100 Years* cookbooks have been sold since the book was published in 2004.

The National Forest Service Museum in Missoula Montana is looking for a volunteer(s) with a love and knowledge of the National Forest Service to work with the Museum to solicit material from the Forest Service alumni to create a book dealing with the lore and recipes from the National Forest Service culture. Those helping will be credited with their contribution and given copies of the book that will eventually be published.

Please contact Dave Stack at the museum office (406-541-6374, [nationalforest@montana.com](mailto:nationalforest@montana.com))

agreed to by the House and Senate, declared that public lands in Alaska were closed to occupation and sale under certain conditions, including “... or if selected by the US Fish Commission on the island of Kodiak and Afognak, for establishing fish culture stations, ...” (emphasis added). Congress had paid attention to the 1890 - 1891 reports of the US Fish Commission!

Afognak was unique among early pre-1897 Reservations, in that it had immediate and defined management and purpose, being assigned to the US Fish Commission, to protect and preserve the fisheries, marine life, wildlife and vegetation. Other pre-1897 Reserves had no managing agency or defined purpose other than any “limits” set by the Presidential Proclamation. The **1897 Organic Act**, actually an appropriation bill rider, assigned management to the Department of Interior and defined Forest Reserve purposes as protection of watersheds and for long term supply of timber, while allowing other uses. For Afognak, following the 1897 Act, management became shared between the U.S. Fish Commission and the Department of Interior. In 1905, via the “**Transfer Act**”, Congress transferred management of Forest Reserves to the Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Forestry. By 1907 the Bureau was renamed as the Forest Service and, through a Act of Congress, Forest Reserves were renamed National Forests.

On July 23, 1907, the Chugach National Forest (NF) of Alaska was created by Presidential Proclamation of Theodore Roosevelt. On July 2, 1908, the Afognak Forest and Fish Culture Reserve was annexed into the Chugach NF by Executive Order, followed by Presidential Proclamation on February 23, 1909. The U.S. Fish Commission built its fish hatchery on Afognak Lake in 1907 to 1908.

The 1909 annexation clarified (some would say confused) the dual management situation: “**Since the withdrawal made by this Proclamation for Forest purposes and the withdrawal made by proclamation dated December 24, 1892, for the purpose of establishing fish culture stations and for the use of the United States Commissioner of Fish and Fisheries are consistent, both shall be effective upon the land withdrawn, but the withdrawal for fish culture stations and for the use of the United States Commissioner of Fish and Fisheries shall be the dominant one**”.

The first Forest Service forester of record to visit Afognak was Lage Wernstedt (about 1909), in charge of the Chugach NF for District (Regional) Forester William Langille. Wernstedt’s May 1910 report, labeled “**The**



**Karluk Beach Salmon Seining  
1889**

University of Washington Freshwater & Marine Image Bank

**Timber Resources of Afognak Island**”, estimated 450 million board feet of commercial timber, very knotty, and he recognized this was the original forest to cover Afognak. There is no other record of foresters to Afognak until 1923.

In 1924, Forest Supervisor W.J. McDonald reported on Afognak timber resources, and a proposed addition of the islands surrounding Afognak Island to the Chugach NF. He reported on a “*hurried reconnaissance made by the examiner in 1923*”, reporting that Afognak Island had approx 430,000 acres, approx 25% timbered, with an estimated 500 million board feet of saw timber and an additional 250 million board feet suitable for pilings, poles and cordwood. The timber stands varied from 10 - 15 to 40 thousand board feet per acre, lumber was knotty but sound, and 3 small sawmills were operating in the region (although not on Afognak Island). He reported consumption of lumber from the area was about 800 thousand board feet and 1,000 cords of firewood, mostly from Raspberry Island and used by the 8 canneries and 2 salteries in the Kodiak area.

Forest Supervisor W.J. McDonald then proposed the addition of the islands surrounding Afognak Island to the Chugach NF, including Shuyak, Marmot, Raspberry, Little Raspberry Group, Whale Island and Spruce Islands, for reasons of creating a logical administrative unit, consolidating and ending duplication of timber management into one agency, also numerous fox farmers now squatting on these islands were eager to get under authorization. However, the Department of Interior’s General Land Office (GLO) later objected and this proposal was dropped. McDonald also noted in 1924, at that time the federal fish hatchery employed about 30 men seasonally and produced 72 million fish eggs a year, and the settlements of Afognak Village had a population of 300 people.

In August 19, 1924, this dual management authority was

a challenge for Forest Service administration, and likely for Bureau of Fisheries managers also, per an August 1924 inspection and review conducted of the Chugach NF by the Assistant Forester (current title Deputy Chief) E.E. Carter. His report of August 19, 1924 to the D-8 District Forester (Alaska Regional Forester) was not complimentary to the Chugach or to the dual management of Afognak Island.

Regards the Afognak dual administrative status, this report went on to state “..... *As things now stand, the Forest Service has no administrative function on the Island and the Bureau of Fisheries says it cannot either grant or consent to special uses. As a result, when Mr. Imlach applied for a herring saltery special use to occupy possibly an acre above high tide line (probably much less) his application was refused..... The absurdity of this situation requires that we either get some real function of administration on the very large percentage of this Island which the Bureau of Fisheries is in no way using, or that we withdraw from it entirely. My preference is to take into the National Forest the adjacent islands which, with Afognak, constitute the most western timber belt in Alaska, and that equitable arrangements for administration of Afognak be worked out with the Bureau of Fisheries.....*”.

In an August 21, 1931 reply from Chugach Supervisor W.J. McDonald to Regional Forester Charles Flory, discussing recommendations for Afognak Island, McDonald noted “..... *that a very rough check of stumpage values for timber cut on Afognak Island can be obtained through a plan outlined by the Forester (Chief) and Commissioner O'Malley of the Bureau of Fisheries.... the timber..... will be of great value in the future economic development of that region..... I do not agree..... to give the Bureau of Fisheries exclusive control of the timber administration of Afognak Island..... I further recommend that no effort be made to eliminate Afognak Island from the Forest.....*”.

The December 30, 1933 Report on “**Extensive timber reconnaissance of Afognak Island and the small adjacent islands, made between April 20 and June 6, 1935, by J.P. Williams, Forest Examiner**” stated that use of the Afognak Fish Hatchery had been discontinued.

By letter of February 14, 1934, Acting Forester (Chief) E.A. Sherman replied to Alaska Territorial Congressman Anthony Dimonds' inquiry into the status of Afognak Island, noting “..... *The*



**U.S. Bureau of Fisheries Afognak Hatchery  
1914**

University of Washington Freshwater & Marine Image Bank

*reservation has the dual status of a fish culture station and a forest reservation. In the interest of economy and simplicity of administration, by cooperative arrangement between the Forest Service and the Bureau of Fisheries of the Department of Commerce, actual administration on the ground is looked after by the representative of the latter Bureau..... The climatic and topographic conditions in this Island are not such as would lead one to believe that the Island would be settled and used for agricultural purposes if thrown open to entry under the public land laws.....*”.

Finally, by letter of October 28, 1935 from the Secretary of Commerce to the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce stated that the fish culture station known as the Afognak Station was discontinued in 1933, and inasmuch as “..... *the appropriation for fish cultural purposes is no longer being legally maintained and that the withdrawal for forest purposes made by a Proclamation of the President, dated February 23, 1909, is now the only one which obtains..... the Bureau of Fisheries plans to remove its custodian, effective November 30, 1935, after which date control of the abandoned station will be completely under the jurisdiction of your Department*”.

And by reply letter of November 8, 1935 from Secretary of Agriculture H.A. (Henry) Wallace to Secretary of Interior Daniel C. Roper, “..... *In accordance with your suggestion, this Department after November 30, 1935, will take full control of Afognak Island as a part of the Chugach National Forest*”.

Thus ended the first chapters in the unique story of the original “**first national refuge**”. While we have mainly spoken of the fisheries and marine life, Afognak has and continues to be well known as a refuge of abundant wildlife resources also. Indigenous species include Kodiak brown bear, red fox, river otter, and ermine. Roosevelt elk were introduced to Afognak in 1929, Sitka

blacktail deer were introduced to the Kodiak/Afognak Islands in 1924 and 1930, and beaver, muskrats, martin, red squirrels and snowshoe hare have been introduced. All species have relatively healthy populations with yearly variations. Afognak is also home to the endangered marbled murrelet. Reindeer introduction was planned in 1912 - 1913 but did not occur due to heavy ash fall from the 1912 Katmai Volcanic eruption on the Alaska Peninsula, although reindeer were introduced to Kodiak Island.

Not surprising, the chapters after 1935 and leading to today, are just as unique and complex. Storylines in those later chapters include:

- The WWII era on Afognak and the US Army logging camp at Danger Bay, which provided lumber for the Aleutians campaign, and the abandoned Afognak Fish hatchery serving as a military recreation camp into the 1960s.
- The second fish hatchery on Afognak, the Kitoi fish hatchery, constructed at Kitoi Bay prior to 1964, is now managed by Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association.
- The 1964 earthquake and tidal wave causing devastating impact to Afognak Village (and to the Island), as subsidence of the shoreline resulted in forced establishment of a new town site at Port Lions on nearby Kodiak Island.
- 1968 U.S. Forest Service Perenosa Timber sale sold 525 Million Board Feet (MMBF) and a lawsuit is filed to stop the timber sale.
- 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) passed by Congress, beginning of Native land selections process which became controversial on Afognak and has taken years to resolve; ANILCA also stressed completion of State land selections under Alaska Statehood Act of January 3, 1959.
- 1974 Perenosa Timber Sale Environmental Review completed and reduced to 332 MMBF, logging camp constructed at old Army sawmill site, and logging and road building begin in 1974 - 1975. Timber sale area soon reduced as Native Corporation land claims were processed and selected lands were conveyed, and private Native logging activities begin.
- 1980 Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) passed by Congress; US Forest Service closes Afognak and Kodiak offices. Logging and road building continue in central



**Ocean Beach Spit, Estuary & Orthodox Church  
Northeast over Karluk, AK 1980**

David Wanderaas Personal Photograph

- Island area on lands conveyed to private Native ownership, and State land selections underway.
- In an unusual twist of history, ANILCA declared *“All public lands including submerged lands, adjacent to and seaward of Afognak Island from the line of mean high tide and the exterior boundary of the former “Afognak Forest and Fish Culture Reserve” ..... as reserved by proclamation dated December 24, 1892 ..... are hereby included within the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge ..... and the lands described in subdivision (d) of Sub-section (b) (2) ..... are hereby included within the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge .....”*. (emphasis added)
  - March 24, 1989 - 2011: Exxon Valdez oil tanker spill in Prince William Sound causes habitat damages to Afognak and Kodiak; civil and criminal settlements against Exxon provided monies to purchase mitigation habitat and conservation/public use easements on Afognak Island, including Afognak and Shuyak State Parks and additions, Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge additions, additional State lands, and conservation and/or public access easements on certain private Native Corporation lands. The American Land Conservancy, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and other conservation organizations have joined Federal and State and private Native Corporation managers in these efforts.

Thus a significant segment of the original Afognak **“first national refuge”** continues today as publically available conservation refuge.

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See AFOGNAK, page 7

# Capital Campaign Donations

3/29/2011 to 5/12/2011

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## Welcome New Members

3/29/2011 to 5/12/2011

Ann Forest Burns  
Jane Hanson

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## California History Display Threatened

Gil Davies is looking for a new home for historic artifacts now displayed in the Klamath National Forest supervisor's office. The supervisor is moving to a new office that lacks space for the collection. Gil prefers to find a local California Museum to accept the collection, but doubts that will happen. The NMFSH has contacted Gil to express interest in exploring the option of moving the artifacts to Missoula.

# Building Design Showcases Wood Construction

The *National Conservation Legacy and Education Center* building is designed to serve as a showcase for an educational exhibit of green building technologies. The building will use many wood-based construction materials, including timber harvested using sustainable forest management practices on federal, state and private lands. Throughout the Center's facilities, visitors will see firsthand the inventions and innovations developed by the Forest Service's Forest Products Laboratory and the forest products industry.

The NMFSH is exploring the feasibility of adding **Cross-Laminated Timbers (CLT)** to the building design. Potentially, this is an opportunity to interpret the use of a wood product new to North America and provide visitors a chance to see an active research monitoring project conducted by the Forest Products Laboratory.

Cross-laminated timber provides an innovative massive building system for single- and multi-family residential buildings, multi-storey residential and commercial buildings, buildings for business and industry, and for special applications in structural timber constructions. Cross-laminated timber is commonly applied for external and internal walls, ceilings and roofs.

The Forest Service, Binational Softwood Lumber Council (BSLC), and the USDA Natural Resources and Environment have been engaged in discussions about promoting the use of wood in non-residential buildings. The primary focus of this discussion is to



**CLT Panel**

explore the use of Cross-Laminated Timber (CLT) as a major component of the construction materials with a secondary focus of using a variety of wood products. Given such limited knowledge about CLT, there is a strong belief that demonstrating CLT in the NMFSH's building would provide a showcase for CLT and other wood materials and technological advances. CLT wood products have been in use in Europe, but are new to the North American market. <http://www.smartwoods.com/>

The Forest Service and the BSLC have agreed to meet with the NMFSH in Missoula to discuss the feasibility of using CLT products in the planned *National Conservation Legacy and Education Center*.

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## AFOGNAK, continued from page 5

The Afognak Island Alaska article is dedicated to Terry West, former Forest Service Chief Historian who passed away at the peak of his career and who was willing to print an Afognak history article in the Spring 1993 History Line, that was long on interest but short on located reference material; and to Susie Seville, an enthusiastic summer Forest Service employee on Afognak Island and a University of Montana Forestry School junior, whose budding life, and that of her brothers', were cut short by a fatal car accident in 1978 near Missoula, Montana.

The complete article, Afognak Island Alaska, Forest and Fish Culture Reservation 1892, with references, may be viewed on the National Museum of Forest Service History's website: [www.nmfs-history.net/news/featured\\_articles.html](http://www.nmfs-history.net/news/featured_articles.html)



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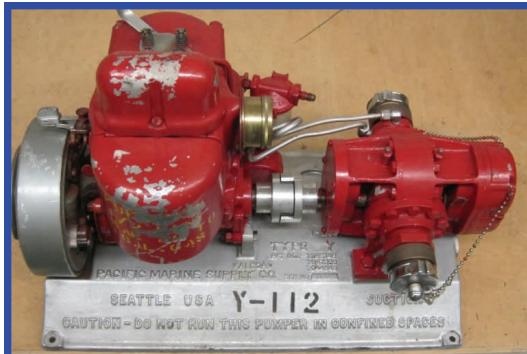
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### New Artifact in NMFSH Collection

Pacific Marine Portable Type Y Fire Pump

2010.25.1