# GLACIER BAY

Land Reborn:
A History of Administration and Visitor Use in Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve

## PART ONE: SCIENCE AND MONUMENTALISM, 1879-1938

### Chapter I:
## Indigenous People

In the fall of 1879, John Muir canoed up southeast Alaska's Inside Passage from Fort Wrangell to Glacier Bay, accompanied by the Rev. S. Hall Young and three Tlingit guides. On this first of four visits to Glacier Bay, Muir spent several days exploring the large fjord's various inlets and tributary glaciers, deeply inspired by the treeless, glacier-polished terrain. A keen observer of glaciated landforms, Muir instantly recognized that this watery basin rimmed by high mountain ranges and devoid of mature forest was the scene of a phenomenally rapid and sustained glacial recession. The constant crack and rumble of ice breaking off of the unstable glacier fronts further impressed him with the area's extraordinary dynamism. Muir, like many others who followed him, found in Glacier Bay a unique setting for contemplating how the land might have looked as it emerged from the Ice Ages.

The scientific interest and scenic splendor of Glacier Bay would define most visitors' responses for generations after Muir first brought Glacier Bay to the attention of the American public. These two features--the land's scientific and scenic values--would be enshrined in the presidential proclamation that established Glacier Bay National Monument and entrusted its administration to the NPS in 1925, nearly half a century after its discovery by Muir. The NPS in turn sought to enhance visitor appreciation of the area's scientific and scenic values by developing interpretive programs, attractive visitor accommodations, and alternative means of access to points of interest.

Few Americans today would argue with the basic worthiness of this dedication of the land. During the past generation, as environmental awareness has burgeoned, the farsightedness of early preservationists in working to set aside certain pieces of nature for the enjoyment of future generations has become more and more manifest. Increasingly, we appreciate the labors of these individuals whose ideas, now so much a part of the mainstream, were novel in their own day. But if environmental awareness has changed our perceptions, so too has our appreciation of cultural diversity. Amidst a growing sensitivity in American society to diverse cultural viewpoints, we now recognize more keenly than in the past that the scientific and scenic values vested in Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve were culturally defined and quite alien to the area's indigenous people, the Tlingits of southeast Alaska.

### ***Foundations of a Dialogue***

John Muir's relations with his Tlingit guides in 1879 was in fact the beginning of a dialogue about wilderness and the relationship of humankind to nature in Glacier Bay that continues to the present day. Although Muir and the Indians shared a basic reverence for nature, their ideas of nature were quite different. To Muir, nature was the embodiment of the divine spirit,

intrinsically harmonious, and a source of inspiration. Humankind appeared to Muir to be hell-bent on disrupting nature's harmonies. Human beings could escape this role only by entering the natural landscape as observers, conscientiously leaving all natural processes alone. In Glacier Bay, cresting the wind-whipped waves in his dugout Tlingit canoe that fall of 1879, Muir looked upon the surrounding mountains as reflections of a divine perfection, infinitely enhanced by the very absence of humanity. "After witnessing the unveiling of the majestic peaks and glaciers and their baptism in the down-pouring sunbeams," he wrote, "it seems inconceivable that nature could have anything finer to show us." [1] This was a land reborn from the ice, pristine, free of the footprint of "Lord Man."

Muir admired his Indian companions' nature religion; on a later trip to Glacier Bay he would write in his journal, "To the Indian mind all nature was instinct with deity. A spirit was embodied in every mountain, stream, and waterfall." [2] But here the similarity of their thinking ended. The Tlingits did not separate humankind from the natural world; indeed, they drew their cultural identity from their connection with the land. Glacier Bay was "the Hoonah breadbasket," or "the main place of the Hoonah people." [3] The Tlingits' relationship to the environment was rooted in a seasonal pattern of resource extraction for their subsistence needs, and interpreted through oral traditions describing their ancestors' long association with particular places and totem animals.

The Tlingits formed a curious impression of Muir, the Americans' first emissary in this particular cultural exchange. At Muir's insistence, and despite the lateness of the season, they were taking the naturalist and the Presbyterian minister to the place they called Sitadaka, so barren and desolate that they had to pause near the entrance to stock the canoe with firewood. Wherever the party beached the canoe and set up camp, Muir stuffed his knapsack with notebook and woollens and went scrambling up the glacier-scoured slopes. Returning to camp with eyes aglow, he seemed in a fever of excitement to reach each new, wild vista. He was undaunted by rain and sleet, seizing every moment to explore the higher domain. The Tlingits, trying to place Muir's behavior within their frame of reference, wondered if he were communicating with evil spirits that resided in the mountains. When the minister, S. Hall Young tried to explain that Muir was seeking knowledge, one of the Tlingits grumbled, as Muir remembered it, "Muir must be a witch to seek knowledge in such a place as this and in such miserable weather." [4]

Muir, for his part, was impressed by the Natives' generosity, hardiness, and prowess with a canoe, but superstitions appeared to be their bane. They displayed an exaggerated fear of natural phenomena which seemed to make them as much the intruders, the exotics, in nature as he. Indeed, in writing his lyrical account of the trip for a San Francisco newspaper soon afterwards, Muir tended to picture the Natives in opposition to the natural world around them: huddled together in a circle of firelight, crowded inside a smoky hut at a seal hunting camp, fleeing the breaking icebergs in their cedar canoes. This contrasted with Muir's solitary wanderings on the bare slopes high above camp where, symbolically at least, he was closer than they to God and nature. [5]

Considering that the Tlingits of the nearby village of Hoonah would eventually lose their best hunting and fishing grounds to the NPS, it is ironic that this people had such an intimate encounter with America's premier preservationist, and that Muir had as his guide the most esteemed seal hunter of Hoonah, a man he called Sitka Charley. Certainly neither party put much effort into understanding the nature thought of the other, and their communications were often crude. Young later recalled how the famous naturalist conveyed to the Tlingits his sensibility about killing wild animals. Whenever the party saw a deer grazing along the shoreline or a flock of ducks overhead, and his guides tried to draw a bead on them, Muir

would "take pleasure in rocking the canoe." The Natives, Young wrote, reacted to this behavior with "some annoyance and a great deal of astonishment." [6]

A century after Muir, communication between preservationists and Tlingits is still frought with difficulty. The main point of contention has always been the concept of wilderness, which lies at the heart of preservationist thinking and sticks in the craw of the people who call the area their homeland. The people of Hoonah, though practically disregarded by preservationists until the 1940s, were nevertheless an important part of the area's ecology from the time of Muir's first visit until at least the mid-twentieth century. Since then, their role in the ecology of Glacier Bay has diminished as they have been discouraged or prevented from pursuing subsistence activities within the national monument. Increasingly, however, these Tlingits have sought to retain or recover certain hunting and fishing rights in the area. The fundamental challenge for the Hoonah Tlingits has been in gaining recognition of their historical connection with Glacier Bay and their different cultural outlook on the land.

From the Park Service's standpoint, the dialogue has been complicated by the need to determine which Tlingit organizations legitimately represent the Tlingits' interests in Glacier Bay. While few NPS officials ever disputed that a certain group of Tlingits had strong historical ties to Glacier Bay, the problem of defining that group was exceedingly difficult. Whatever official contact the NPS had with the indigenous people of the area had to take into account three different levels of Tlingit political organization. First, there were the "tribal" divisions long recognized by federal officials and missionaries, which corresponded to the Tlingits' thirteen principal winter villages (including Hoonah) and their respective hunting and fishing territories. Second, the Alaska Native Brotherhood and its offspring, the Tlingit-Haida Central Council, represented the whole Tlingit people and the village of Hydaburg in the Tlingit and Haida land claim suit against the United States. Third, the aboriginal clan divisions with their respective hunting and fishing rights probably constituted the most important form of political structure from the Indians' point of view, but only came to impress NPS and other federal officials as the aboriginal rights of Alaska Natives became an important issue after the 1930s. For the most part, the NPS found the "tribal" or village level of Tlingit organization the most appropriate to deal with (although the tribal designation was gradually dropped after the 1930s, so as not to confuse these entities with the "Tlingit and Haida Tribes" named in the Tlingit and Haida Jurisdictional Act of 1935). [7]

This followed the pattern established by other federal agencies in southeast Alaska. As the United States gradually increased its administrative control over Alaska Natives in the late nineteenth century, the Americans found the permanent winter villages of the Tlingit Indians to be the most accessible social unit among the Tlingit and Haida peoples. Each Indian village in southeast Alaska possessed a certain territory recognized by all the other village groups. The Tlingit word for these groups is kwaan; the Americans referred to them as tribes, while recognizing that the many Tlingit tribes composed a single large culture group.

The political significance of the village group, or kwaan, increased in relation to the growth of American administration. The Americans established missions, schools, and hospitals in the Tlingit villages, and eventually encouraged the Tlingits to elect village councils according to the American pattern of town government. Hoonah had its own mission and school in the 1880s, and elected a village council in 1917. After Congress extended the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) to Alaska in 1936, many Native villages, including Hoonah, formed so-called "IRA governments" in order to qualify for credit programs and undertake business dealings. Hoonah's IRA government was headed by an elected mayor.

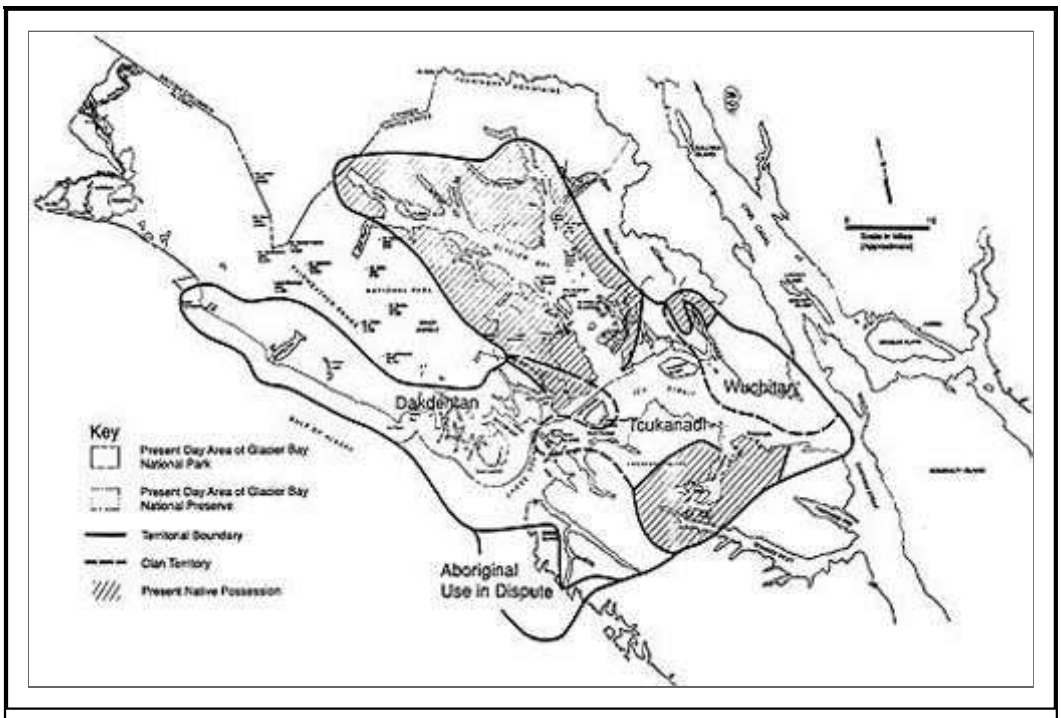
NPS officials had no direct contact with the people of Hoonah before 1939. Beginning in that year, they dealt with the Hoonah Tlingits through either the mayor's office or the village school

teacher, who was an employee of the Alaska Native Service and a white. NPS regulations subsequently granted certain privileges in the national monument to the Natives of Hoonah. This legal definition of the indigenous group by race and place of residence continued until the Hoonah Tlingits' privileges were revoked in 1974.

Yet the village group, or kwaan, was never the autonomous political unit that the system of Indian administration in southeast Alaska implied it to be. The Tlingits divide themselves into two moieties, one associated with the raven and the other with the wolf (or the eagle in the north). Each moiety in turn embraces a large number of clans. The clan is the strongest social unit among the Tlingit people, each clan having its own distinct legends, totem animal, hunting and fishing grounds, and level of prestige in the Tlingits' caste system. The larger clans are spread between two or more kwaans, and each kwaan comprises two or more clans of opposite moieties. The hunting and fishing territory of each clan, therefore, forms only a portion of the kwaan territory, and in the case of the larger clans, extends into other kwaan territories. Clans are subdivided into clan houses, which traditionally shared a large, multi-family house in the village in winter and moved from camp to camp more or less as a unit during the spring, summer, and fall. [8]

Traditional Tlingit marriages involve partners from clans of opposite moieties. In the past, these exogamous marriages functioned to create ties of kinship between clans within a kwaan. A female ordinarily joined the house group of her male marriage partner, but the couple's offspring took the mother's clan name. A Tlingit marriage also bestowed rights on the female partner's brothers to use the hunting and fishing places owned by the male partner's clan house. In this way, clan territories saw about equal use between actual clan members and the wives, children, and brothers-in-law of male clan members, all of whom belonged to another clan. [9]

The Hoonah kwaan includes several clans. John R. Swanton listed six clans, three of each moiety, in 1904. Frederica De Laguna named nine clans. [10] Theodore H. Haas and Walter R. Goldschmidt, investigating Tlingit possessory rights for the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1946, produced the first detailed map of the Hoonah kwaan territory and subdivided the area into just three clan territories of the Tcukanadi, Dakdentan, and Wuchitan clans (Map 2). [11]



Hoonah Territory as Shown by Haas and Goldschmidt, 1946. *(click on image for an enlargement in a new window)*

In recent years, NPS officials have discussed Native issues with Tlingit individuals representing every level of Tlingit social and political organization from the clan to the village traditional council to the Hoonah mayor's office to the Tlingit-Haida regional corporation. An incident in 1979 revealed how perplexing it can be to determine who has authority to speak for the area's indigenous people. George Dalton, Sr., a Hoonah Tlingit elder, planned to present the story of his people's ancestral association with Glacier Bay as a gift to the national monument. Dalton wanted the NPS to have the story in the archives and for interpretive use. Several Tlingits were involved in the preparation of the gift, first making a tape recording of Dalton's oral edition of the story, then transcribing the tape, then translating the transcription from Tlingit into English. Superintendent John F. Chapman invited a number of local dignitaries to attend a ceremony at Bartlett Cove where Dalton would present the gift. Shortly before the planned event, Andrew Johnni, another Hoonah Tlingit, sought legal assistance through Sealaska Corporation to prevent the conveyance of the Glacier Bay story. As the superintendent investigated the background of this dispute, he learned that the story was allegedly the property of the Tcukanadi clan and could not be expropriated by the Kagwantan clan to which Dalton belonged. Johnni, a Tcukanadi, informed Superintendent Chapman that it was tribal law that no person could tell the legends of another clan as long as people from that clan were still living, and his clan was prepared to take legal action if the NPS tried to go forward with the ceremony. Consequently, Chapman called it off. [12] Although the two clans had been associated in the village of Hoonah for more than two hundred years, their legends and respective territories remained distinct.

## ***Aboriginal Use and Occupation of Glacier Bay***

Aboriginal use and occupation of Glacier Bay has been documented by a variety of sources, including ethnographic accounts, interviews with Hoonah Natives made in 1946 in connection with legal claims, archeological surveys conducted primarily in the 1960s, and correlations between the oral traditions of area Tlingits and the geological and climatological record. Together, these sources indicate that ancestors of the Tlingits had winter village sites in what is now Glacier Bay prior to the last cycle of glacial advance and retreat, and that Hoonah Tlingits used most of the area now enclosed in Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve during the past century and a half or more. In addition, Natives of Yakutat used the narrow coastal shelf area in what is now the national park from Dry Bay to Lituya Bay.

Although archeological sites often provide the strongest evidence of aboriginal use areas, they are rare around Glacier Bay. Not only did the recent glaciation erase all but the last two hundred years of cultural remains around Glacier Bay, but the rebound of the land as the great weight of ice melted off has raised the ancient shorelines well into the treeline, making it very difficult to locate prehistoric camps that were once situated on the water's edge. Nevertheless, a survey of the Glacier Bay region by archeologist Robert E. Ackerman during three field seasons in the 1960s did uncover one prehistoric site at Ground Hog Bay near Point Couverdon on the north shore of Icy Strait. This site indicated human occupation of the area 9,000 years ago by an earlier culture. Nearby, at a place called Grouse Fort, Ackerman found evidence dating from 500 to 900 years ago that revealed the development of a material culture more like that of the Tlingits of the historic period. [13]

The Glacier Bay story of the Tcukanadi clan recalls a time when the basin held a glacier and freshwater lake at one end, from which a large river flowed to the sea. Geologists have found

evidence of such a lake in what is now the East Arm of Glacier Bay, while ecologists have discerned from relic tree stumps the prior existence of a lowland spruce and hemlock forest. [14] The clan legend tells of an ancestral village in this valley where the Tcukanadi, together with three other clans, enjoyed an abundance of all kinds of salmon. Their occupation of this place came to a swift end when a teenage girl of the village, weary of her confinement during menstruation, whistled through some charmed fish bones to beckon the glacier's spirit. Once set in motion, the glacier was unstoppable. The people held a council and decided they must abandon their village while the girl, Kaasteen, would remain as a sacrifice. According to Amy Marvin's rendering of the story, they waited till the end to depart, sitting in their canoes while water flooded the village and the house containing Kaasteen "slid downward...to the bottom of the sea before their eyes." At that moment the clan chief sang a song with the refrain "pity my house" and "pity my land." The four clans separated, and while three established villages at points along Icy Strait, the fourth clan, the Tcukanadi, went to the present site of Hoonah. [15] The Glacier Bay story, handed down from generation to generation by oral tradition, makes no pretense of dating these events. It seems that the Tcukanadi possess a cultural memory of a distant time before the Little Ice Age, several centuries ago.

It is now estimated by geologists and plant ecologists that this recent glaciation reached its maximum extent in the eighteenth century, completely filling the bay and giving the channel to the south its name of Icy Strait. The first explorer to chart this shoreline was Captain George Vancouver, who recorded in 1794 a slight indentation "terminated by a solid, compact mountain of ice, rising perpendicularly from the water's edge." By the time of John Muir's exploration in 1879, the ice mass had receded about fifty miles up the bay, exposing a terrain largely denuded of vegetation and land mammals but rich in marine resources. Hair seal congregated near the face of the glacier, feeding on the abundant shrimp that grew in the upwelling meltwater emanating from the glacier's terminus and finding sanctuary from killer whales on the icebergs. Sea birds nested on the islands of the bay, while the tides washed edible sea weeds onto the gravelly beaches. In the lower part of the bay where approximately one hundred years had passed since the ice had melted, new vegetative growth included berry bushes and other edible plants. The vegetation provided ground cover and forage for new populations of marmot, mountain goat, and deer. Freshwater streams supported new salmon stocks. Hoonah Natives would later recall that their parents and grandparents regarded Glacier Bay as "a kind of storehouse for the people of Hoonah." Hoonah families built numerous smokehouses for seasonal use and stayed at these locations for several weeks at a time. [16] By the end of the nineteenth century there is evidence from several ethnographic sources that Glacier Bay was the recognized hunting and gathering territory of the Tcukanadi clan of Hoonah. Other clans of the Hoonah kwaan claimed neighboring areas around Excursion Inlet, Dundas and Taylor Bays, and the outer coast--all in what would eventually become the national park.

The Tlingits were a trading people; the island and mainland kwaans had access to different resources, and their large canoes made possible trading expeditions over long distances. Moreover, the coastal environment generally provided such an abundance of resources, particularly salmon, that the Tlingits could build up stores of food each year and pass the dark, wet winters in their snug houses. Thus they were sedentary gatherers, with a relatively high population density, some specialization of labor, and a rich material culture. The wealthier Tlingits owned slaves. [17]

When stores ran low in early spring, a Tlingit family group would pack the canoe and venture out of the village, beginning with a seal hunting expedition of several weeks' duration. By April, the group could be gathering green plants and edible roots or the potatoes they had planted on some sunny hillside the previous year. [18] In May they might go on a trading expedition, followed in June by berry-picking and gathering birds' eggs. In late June and July,

during the first salmon run, the men fished and hunted seal while the women dried the meat and seal skins and rendered the seal oil. August was devoted to more food storage and in September they followed the second salmon run. Late fall was the time for hunting and trapping. Finally, as winter approached, they returned to the village for a season of potlatches, trading expeditions, crafts, and repairing of fishing gear. [19]

The Tlingits' view of nature was essentially animistic. All physical objects--glaciers, mountains, heavenly bodies--had spirits. Human beings made their way in the world by treating these spirits respectfully, either communicating with the spirits directly or through their shamans. Animals had a prominent place in this spirit world; they possessed souls essentially like those of human beings in that their souls inhabited the body and could be reincarnated after death. In her magisterial work on the Yakutat Tlingits, the ethnologist Frederica De Laguna writes:

> The world of animals, to an even greater extent than that of plants and the rest of personified nature, was part of man's moral world. Through the relationship between sib and totem, many species were also drawn into the human social order and were, in a sense, members of the sibs that claimed them as "friends." Particular species also played distinctive roles because of their importance in shamanism, in foretelling the future, or because they were supposed to possess some other special character or power. [20]

It was in their relationship to animals, particularly the animals they hunted, that Tlingits most clearly demonstrated a religious or devotional view toward nature.

Ethnohistorians have tried to reconstruct how various Indian groups' religious beliefs affected their exploitation of natural resources. The problem is a difficult one. There is always a disparity between what human beings preach and what they practice. Moreover, the earliest ethnographic records come from fur traders and missionaries whose presence among the Indians betokened a time of change, if not upheaval, in aboriginal societies. By the time John Muir recorded his impressions of his Native companions in 1879, the Tlingits had been in contact with Russian, British, and American traders for more than three generations; they had been ravaged by several epidemics, notably a smallpox epidemic of 1835-39; and they had been introduced to Christianity, first by the Russian Orthodox Church, then by American Presbyterians. The most important consequence of European contact was the dependent relationship that Tlingits gradually developed toward the fur companies as they became conditioned to modern manufactures. To earn the cash with which to purchase European and American manufactures, Tlingits hunted sea otter, hair seal, deer, and other animals for the commercial value of their furs and hides.

These economic pressures notwithstanding, the Tlingits' moral relationship to the natural world predisposed them to patterns of resource use that twentieth-century whites and Natives would label conservationist. The term could be misleading. Tlingits tried to use all parts of the animals they killed and to kill only what they could consume. This practice was not due to concern about the supply of game and the public welfare, but because they sought to earn the animals' favor in order to bring themselves luck and future hunting success. Tlingits imposed rules against visiting certain seal or sea otter hunting grounds during the spring pupping season. Whites might construe this as a conservation measure to ensure a new crop of pelts for subsequent harvest, but the Tlingits were actually motivated by concern that the herds would easily scare at this time of year and permanently leave the area. [21]

While some whites were impressed by Alaska Natives' restraint in hunting, other whites reported numerous instances of what they judged to be wanton slaughter of game by Natives. The Tlingits, like any other people, were able to adapt their religious beliefs as the situation

demanded, and the hide and fur market introduced economic incentives for hunting animals in larger numbers. At the turn of the century, as deer hides fetched from ten to twenty cents apiece in southeast Alaska, large numbers were slaughtered for their hides alone. In 1895, a customs official reported three Indians in southeast Alaska who shot 175 deer along the shoreline from their canoes in only two days. [22] In 1904, a field agent for the New York Zoological Society reported how Native and white hunters cruised among the islands in small boats either hunting the deer with jack-lights or running them into the water with dogs where they were shot while swimming. The field agent found the bodies of deer "piled up on the wharves like cord-wood." [23]

In terms of commercial value, the sea otter overshadowed all other resources in southeast Alaska in the nineteenth century. Tlingits readily competed with Aleut hunters in obtaining the furs and selling them to Russian, British, and American buyers. After Russia sold Alaska to the United States in 1867, American schooners were known to cruise the Inside Passage laden with rifles, cloth, liquor, and other manufactures to exchange for sea otter pelts at the various Tlingit villages. Tlingits also went to Sitka by canoe to trade with the Americans. In 1880, the ranking American officer in Sitka commented that the Hoonah Natives had killed 127 sea otter in a single expedition to the outer coast that spring. With the pelts selling for $50 to $200 each, Captain L.A. Beardslee thought the 600 to 800 people of the Hoonah tribe would be "kept very comfortable from this resource alone." [24]

Like Native hunting of big game, the extermination of sea otter throughout most of the animal's range in Alaska in the nineteenth century flew in the face of the Tlingits' "conservationist" practices. It was a dubious legacy, a classic case of overexploitation, what historian Calvin Martin termed, in his study of Indians and the fur trade in eastern Canada, "a monumental case of improvidence." Martin assumes that the fur-trading Indian had some knowledge of wildlife population dynamics, that the Indian "was simply too skilled a hunter to overlook the ultimate consequences of wildlife overkill." [25] If this were true, it was indeed a paradox.

The Tlingits had other explanations for abundance and scarcity of animals, however, based on how hunters treated the hunted animals and how obliging the hunted animals were in return. There is no reason to assume that Tlingit hunters anticipated the extirpation of the sea otter. While white fur traders could apprise themselves of annual harvest records maintained by the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, and more importantly, could comprehend sea otter hunting in a wider context of fur trading on the frontier, Tlingits operated under different cultural assumptions. These ideas persisted up to the waning years of the sea otter trade, as was evident in a speech by Chief Koogh-see of Hoonah to the governor of Alaska on December 14, 1898. "We make our living by trapping and fishing and hunting, and white men take all these places away from us; they constantly interfere with us," Koogh-see told the governor.

> Now not very far from where I live is Lituya Bay, where our people, our ancestors, used to go hunting for sea otters and hair seals. Now that place is taken away from us. Great many schooners going there. White people are there now. These white men, when they make camp, they make lots of smoke. That scares animals, sea otters especially. That ground is very good for sea otter hunting. We went up there, 20 or 30 canoes and hunted around all summer and did not get any. The smoke scares the animals away. And when we talk to those white men they say the country does not belong to us, belongs to Washington. We have nothing to do with that ground. All our people believe that Alaska is our country. [26]

In Koogh-see's mind, whites were occupying the land and driving away the sea otter through ignorance or lack of respect. Wood smoke, not overhunting, was the cause of the animal's disappearance.

Even if individual hunters might have suspected what was really happening to the sea otter population, their culture had no acceptable means of social control to limit each hunter's take of the sea otter. There was, for example, a custom in regard to salmon streams, in which the leader of a clan house could forbid fishing for a time in order to ensure that a certain number of salmon went upstream to spawn. [27] The only social control in regard to sea otter grounds, however, was the recognition of clan territories, and there is evidence that even this social control was breaking down in the face of market demand. [28] Within the clan, there was no authority for restricting the hunt. It is precisely such restriction of the individual by the group that forms the basis of conservation. As Garrett Hardin observed in his well-known essay, the only way to avoid "the tragedy of the commons"--the abuse of a common resource--is by "mutual coercion, mutually agreed upon." [29]

After the sea otter, the hair seal was the most valuable marine mammal to the Tlingits at the end of the nineteenth century. Natives sold seal oil in Sitka for twenty-five cents per gallon and made mocassins from the hides for sale in the new tourist trade. The meat and oil from the seal accounted for a large part of the Tlingits' subsistence, especially in Hoonah, where the Natives were renowned for their stealth in the seal hunt. Hoonah Tlingits sometimes camouflaged their canoes with white sheets draped over the gunwales. Frank O. Williams hunted hair seal every place in Glacier Bay where the animal was found. Interviewed in 1946, he recalled how the hunters would lie in their small sailing boats amidst the pan ice when the ice unpacked in the spring. Albert Greenewald, whose father was German and mother was Hoonah Tlingit, remembered hunting hair seal in Geikie, Tarr, and Muir Inlets and north of the Beardslee Islands. In Muir Inlet there was a pupping ground where the hunters went ashore and killed the seals by clubbing. [30]

Ethnologist George B. Grinnell described the seal hunters he observed in Yakutat Bay in 1899. The men hunted in pairs in small, light canoes. The man in the bow was armed with a gun or spear. After approaching as close to a seal as they could without alerting it, the hunters waited patiently until it dived into the water, then paddled toward the spot and waited for it to surface. If the seal surfaced within range and the aim was good, both men would paddle furiously to reach the animal before its lungs filled with water and it sank. [31]

Grinnell reported that while the men hunted, the women skinned, butchered, and cooked the seal. First they removed the skin and pinkish-white blubber from the carcass. Then spreading the hide hair-side down on a board, the women stripped the blubber, rolling it into one large piece. They cut the blubber into strips and slowly rendered it into oil in a large cooking pot. They stretched the hide over a wooden drying frame, and dried the ribs, flippers, intestines, and other parts of the seal carcass over a fire. The Tlingits consumed every part of the seal, including the brain. Grinnell wrote that the seal hunting ground at Yakutat Bay was shiny with grease and littered with the bleached bones of previous seasons' kills, and he counted some 500 seal carcasses from the present hunt.

Lieutenant C.E.S. Wood joined a Native seal hunt in Taylor Bay in April 1877. These hunters used a spear with a detachable barbed head. They fastened the head to the shaft by a plaited line made from sinew, and tied a marking buoy to the end of the line. With this adaptation, the hunters lost fewer seals to sinking. These hunters had camps scattered along both shores of the bay, one or two families to a camp. [32]

Muir also provides a glimpse of a group of about fifteen seal hunters whom he visited in 1879. It was in late October, and the hunters were laying in a winter supply of meat and skins. As it was cold and wet, these Natives invited Muir, Young, and their four Tlingit guides to join them around their fire, and the six guests crowded in amongst the oily boxes and bundles. "The circle

of black eyes peering at us through a fog of reek and smoke made a novel picture," wrote Muir afterwards. [33]

The Native seal hunting camps became something of a tourist attraction in the 1890s as steamers cruised up the Inside Passage as far as Glacier Bay. Tourists were intrigued by the sight of the white canvas tents half-covered with seal skins on drying racks, the smoke of cooking fires rising from the ceiling vents. The camps could be hives of activity, the women processing the meat and skins, the old men tending the pots full of blubber, the small children playing games. One white woman described her visit to a Hoonah tent where she learned of the Tlingits' fondness for boiled seal flippers. "We peered into the family kettle and saw the black flippers waving in the simmering waters like human hands," she wrote. "It looked like cannibalism, but the old man who was superintending the stew said, `Seal! Seal all same as hog.'" [34]

It was salmon, however, that were the mainstay of the Tlingits' subsistence economy. Traditionally the Tlingits fished for salmon near the stream mouths during the spawning runs in early and late summer. Most fish were caught by traps placed in the stream, weirs built across the stream, gaff hooks, or spears. Each clan house owned a salmon stream, and the head of the house group usually owned a smokehouse in which the salmon were dried during inclement weather. Men caught the fish while women prepared the fish for smoking or drying. There were numerous smokehouses in lower Glacier Bay, Dundas Bay, and Excursion Inlet where the house groups made their summer camps or sheltered on their seal hunting expeditions.

Beginning with the construction of the first two canneries in southeast Alaska in 1878, commercial salmon fishing began to exert a growing influence upon Tlingit culture and land use patterns. Cannery operators initially acknowledged Tlingit clan ownership of the various streams by paying the headman of the clan for their use. In the early days the canneries procured salmon the easiest way possible, by throwing a few logs across a nearby spawning stream and blocking the salmon run. As the salmon gathered beneath the barricade it was a simple job to dip them out into a scow and transport them to the cannery, although the result could be the extinction of that particular salmon stock. By 1889, when thirty-seven canneries were operating in southeast Alaska and the total salmon pack had grown to 700,000 cases, the destructiveness of this method became so apparent that Congress passed a law making it illegal to build any obstructions in any of the rivers of Alaska for the purpose of impeding the run of salmon to their spawning grounds. [35]

This law, the first conservation act in Alaska, ignored Tlingit claims to the various streams and effectively outlawed the use of weirs. Henceforward, canneries had to get their supply of salmon from open water fishing. This involved modern technology: seine and gill netter fishing boats or large fish traps. In the 1890s, Tlingits still fished the streams according to their traditional methods and sold salmon to the canneries directly from their canoes, thus blending their subsistence fishing with some minimal involvement in the commercial fishery. The quantity of salmon they harvested commercially by traditional methods was negligible compared to what the fishing boats brought in, however.

Around the turn of the century Tlingits began working alongside Chinese and Filipinos in the canneries and with white Calfornians, Oregonians, and Washingtonians on fishing boats. These activities gradually supplanted their traditional pattern of going to their fish camps and berrying grounds for the summer. [36] They built their own fishing boats, and the salmon packing companies sold the Native fishermen outboard motors and nets on credit on the condition that a fisherman would make yearly payments to the company from his earnings for that year's catch. [37] By World War I, most adult male Tlingits worked each summer on commercial fishing boats, while a substantial number of Tlingit women and children worked each summer in the

canneries. A government study estimated the total Tlingit income from the commercial fishing industry in 1913 at $225,000, or about $50 per capita. This was 91.5 percent of their total income. Conservative estimates of their income from other sources were: labor, $10,000; furs, $7,000; basketry, $4,000; a total of $21,000, or 8.5 percent of their total income. [38]

Hoonah Tlingits worked in the canneries at Excursion Inlet, Dundas Bay, and Hoonah and seined for salmon in Icy Strait and Cross Sound. Relatively little commercial fishing took place in Glacier Bay. The more time they put into commercial fishing, the less time they had for traditional hunting and gathering in Glacier Bay. Although no hard data exist on levels of resource use for this period, the amount of time that Natives spent in Glacier Bay certainly declined in the first three decades of the twentieth century, particularly during the summer season. Nevertheless, many Hoonah Tlingits continued to use their clan hunting and fishing grounds in Glacier Bay, to maintain their smokehouses, to run their traplines, to gather gull eggs, seaweed, and berries, and here and there to cultivate a vegetable garden.

## ***Acculturation and Subsistence***

The process of acculturation acted upon Tlingit subsistence use patterns in a multitude of ways. The adoption of European-style clothing reduced the Tlingits' need for hides and furs. A taste for bread, canned fruit, and vegetables altered the Tlingits' demand for large quantities of meat and seal oil. The market economy and Christianity introduced the Tlingits to a radically different way of thinking about plants and animals. Schools, hospitals, and jobs drew the Tlingits to the larger villages, while new technology--particularly firearms and outboard motors--shortened the time they spent away from the village procuring winter supplies of food. A trend toward single family households may have subtly changed the way food harvests were divided up among the clan.

At the time of Muir's first visit to Hoonah in 1879, there were from four to six winter villages belonging to the Hoonah kwaan, of which Hoonah was the largest with a winter population of 600 to 800 people. The village then consisted of thirteen large clan houses built along the shore. In 1880 a trader built a store in Hoonah and the following year the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions established a school there. Soon almost all the Hoonah Tlingits passed their winters in the village of Hoonah. [39]

By the 1880s most Tlingits wore European-style clothes, hunted with guns, and used a variety of iron and steel tools. Many grew vegetable gardens. Some Tlingits found work in the mines or made jewelry, moccasins, and other handicrafts for the new trade in curios for tourists. The Tlingits' dietary mainstays were salmon, halibut, seal oil, and venison, but they now cooked with iron pots and often supplemented these native foods with garden vegetables and store-bought flour. [40]

Many Tlingits, especially the younger ones, converted to Christianity during the 1880s and 90s despite the Presbyterian mission's denigration of much of traditional Tlingit culture. During the 1890s and early 1900s many Tlingits joined the Russian Orthodox Church instead because of its more tolerant attitude toward native customs, but in the village of Hoonah the Presbyterian church remained dominant. The Hoonah chief Koogh-see alluded to Christian influence on his people's environmental thinking when he addressed the Alaska governor in 1898.

> In all this country long time ago before we ever saw white men, our fathers and grandfathers told us we owned it. In those days we had our own customs. We believed and done things our way in those days, but lately missionaries come here and commenced to tell us different. They tell us that everything that is on this

> earth, wood, water and everything else, is created by God. The trees grow for the purpose that we can make use of them and make houses of. And different animals were created by God for purpose of giving us clothing and food. Now deers is made for purpose to eat, bears and other animals also.... [41]

These words by Koogh-see suggest a tension between Christian teachings and the Tlingit belief system, as if Koogh-see was acknowledging that Native ideas had to be unlearned. This may have been for the governor's benefit. Later in his speech Koogh-see seemed to be asking for his people to be left alone. Most Tlingits who accepted Christianity did not relinquish their traditional beliefs and did not dwell upon contradictions between the two belief systems. If the speech is ambiguous on this point, however, it makes another point very clear: the Presbyterian church introduced the Natives of Hoonah to the Christian view of nature as something for man to subdue and use for his own benefit. Nature was a collection of objects, unsacred.

Beginning in the 1880s, most Hoonah Tlingits were eager for their children to attend school and get an education. The Presbyterian mission ran the school in Hoonah until the early twentieth century, when the U.S. Bureau of Education took it over. Some Hoonah children boarded at the Sheldon Jackson Indian School in Sitka. The school curriculum emphasized vocational training, with girls being taught how to sew and bake bread and boys being instructed in carpentry. Schools affected the Tlingits' subsistence use patterns in at least two ways: by acculturating the young, and by limiting the amount of time that parents of school-age children could spend away from the village.

Hoonah was one of the last Tlingit villages to see the old clan houses replaced by single-family dwellings. As late as World War I most Hoonah Tlingits still lived in large clan houses. These plank buildings stood in a line along the beach, a clan crest adorning each entrance, with four to eight families living in each one. At the same time, the village had its own moving picture theater. [42]

The school teacher, missionaries, and local administrators interpreted the trend toward single-family households as encouraging signs of "Americanization." In a similar vein, the school teacher reported in 1917 that the Hoonah Tlingits had voted 150 to 7 in favor of establishing a village council, and that the new government was strongly progressive, having managed to discourage all tribal dances, potlatches, and excessive beer drinking the previous winter. Moreover, the people had required all newly elected councilmen who were married by Native rites to be remarried by a minister before they could take their offices. [43]

In summary, the Hoonah Tlingits found many elements of their culture under assault in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the decline of their subsistence hunting and gathering must be placed within this broad context. Acculturation took many forms--from exploitation of new opportunities such as the fur trade offered, to assimilation of American ideas and cultural practices such as the missionaries introduced, to outright renunciation of certain Tlingit ideas and cultural practices that the white society had stigmatized. The effects of acculturation on subsistence were relatively indirect, resulting from a shift in economic priorities and a trend toward fixedness in the community. The fact that Native rituals associated with hunting and fishing and food preparation largely escaped direct attack by the dominant culture in the same way that Native living arrangements, religion, and social relations came under assault may have reinforced the cultural meaning of those activities for the Tlingits at the same time that the Tlingits became less occupied with them. Certainly Alaska Natives in recent times have strongly asserted as much; whether the Hoonah Tlingits responded in this way to the acculturative process in the early twentieth century must remain conjectural. [44]

## ***The Hoonah Tlingits and the Creation of the National Monument***

In 1925, the federal government established Glacier Bay National Monument without regard to the biological or legal implications of Native use of the area. The Natives' role in the ecology of Glacier Bay should have been of vital interest. The scientists who were most familiar with Glacier Bay knew that Natives exploited the resources there. Yet no one addressed the ecological consequences of prohibiting or countenancing Native hunting and fishing in the area once it became a national monument. The preservationist position taken by the American Association for the Advancement of Science was characteristic. Noting the "undisturbed" condition of the coastal forest and regenerative plant growth around Glacier Bay, the AAAS declared that the highest purpose for this land was that it be "permanently preserved in an absolutely natural condition." [45] One would infer from the AAAS's resolution and numerous other statements by conservation groups that Natives came and went in Glacier Bay without leaving the slightest impression on the environment.

The reasons for this oversight are fairly obvious. The preservation movement in the United States had little previous experience in dealing with this problem because by the time the movement gathered momentum in the 1890s, few Indians in the United States were hunting and gathering any longer in the rugged and scenic areas coveted by the preservation movement. There were a few exceptions--Grand Canyon and Glacier national parks, for example--but most lands in the United States that were set aside as national parks had long since been ceded to the federal government by the indigenous Indian peoples. Whatever lordly role Indians once played in the ecology of these areas they had long since abdicated when they moved onto reservations. The areas that preservationists revered as pristine wilderness were in most cases "widowed land"--missing their human constituent. [46] Early preservationists equated places of national park quality with tracts of uninhabited, "undisturbed" wilderness, thereby severing primitive man from their conception of nature, or at best, consigning him to a "benign" sort of influence. [47]

Federal officials were similarly remiss in ignoring the Natives' aboriginal title to the land. Although the principle of Indians' aboriginal title was well established in American law, its application to Alaska was less clear. Both the treaty of cession between Russia and the United States in 1867 and the Organic Act of 1884 protected the possessory rights of Alaska Natives, yet the federal government had avoided treaty-making and the establishment of Indian reservations in the territory. Tongass National Forest was created in 1907 without prior cession of Tlingit aboriginal title, and the proclamation establishing Glacier Bay National Monument in 1925 followed the same pattern. The only official acknowledgement of Native rights in the area was a reference in a General Land Office report to "numerous Indian allotments." [48]

This oversight is likewise explicable given the complexion of federal Indian policy in the 1920s. Three decades after the Dawes Severalty Act, allotment of land to individual Indians remained the centerpiece of the federal government's longstanding effort to detribalize Indians and assimilate them into American society. A number of Tlingits were assigned allotments in the vicinity of their house group's salmon streams and smokehouses, the expectation being that they would clear the land and farm it. While Tlingits were still being allotted land in southeast Alaska in the 1920s, commercial fishing was increasingly viewed as a more promising route of assimilation than farming for the village-dwelling Alaska Natives. In 1926, Congress provided for the survey and platting of Eskimo and Indian villages in Alaska and the issuance of deeds to Alaska Natives for individual house lots within surveyed town sites. [49] The hope was that the Native villages would thrive and the Natives' dependence on hunting and gathering for subsistence would recede as they became assimilated.

Many Tlingits in the 1920s entertained rather similar hopes. They too wanted their villages to thrive and their people to gain an equal footing in the larger society. They found an effective voice in the Alaska Native Brotherhood, a Tlingit fraternal organization and leadership council with local camps established in most Tlingit villages, including Hoonah, by the 1920s. The ANB held annual meetings and elections, formed committees, passed resolutions, and printed a newspaper, The Alaska Fisherman. The ANB's political agenda was strongly assimilationist in the 1920s, with particular emphasis on equal education and voting rights. It is unclear when the ANB first became interested in Tlingits' aboriginal rights, but it was probably some years after the establishment of Glacier Bay National Monument. It appears that the Tlingits made no organized political protest against the national monument in 1924 or 1925. [50]

It is difficult to surmise how individual Hoonah Tlingits responded to the creation of the national monument. Were they aware of it? Many white residents of Juneau, miffed by the Park Service's nondevelopment of the monument, would later claim that years passed before they even learned of its existence. Glacier Bay was of course closer and more important to Hoonah than Juneau, but many adult Tlingits had limited command of English and conceivably remained ignorant of the monument for some time. If they were aware, did NPS jurisdiction mean anything to them? Again, there is reason to doubt it. The land surrounding their village belonged to the Tongass National Forest, yet Forest Service jurisdiction was of no practical significance to them in the 1920s. They may have assumed that Park Service jurisdiction would be equally benign. If they did understand the purpose of the monument, did they empathize? This would seem most unlikely. Hoonah Tlingits had by now seen a welter of white attitudes toward nature, from tourists' squeamishness in their seal hunting camps to fur traders' avarice for sea otter pelts, from Muir's search for knowledge to prospectors' search for gold. It would not be surprising if they regarded the national park idea, even at that early date, a little cynically. American civilization had much to offer them, but in their connection to the land Tlingits would hold fast to what was familiar.

Hunya [Hoonah] Sealer's Camp, Glacier Bay, 1899. *(John Burroughs, John Muir, and George Bird Grinnell, Narrative, Glaciers, Natives, Harriman Alaska Series, Volume I (Washington, Smithsonian Institution, 1910), 164.)*

The Native fishing village of Hoonah as it appeared c. 1898-1907. View is to southeast; Port Frederick is on the right. Most of the buildings in the photo burned in 1946. *(Case and Draper, in University of Washington Collection, photo NA 2475.)*

Hunya [Hoonah] Seal Hunters, Glacier Bay, 1899. *(John Burroughs, John Muir, and George Bird Grinnell, Narrative, Glaciers, Natives, Harriman Alaska Series, Volume I (Washington, Smithsonian Institution, 1910), 141.)*

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Last Updated: 24-Sep-2000