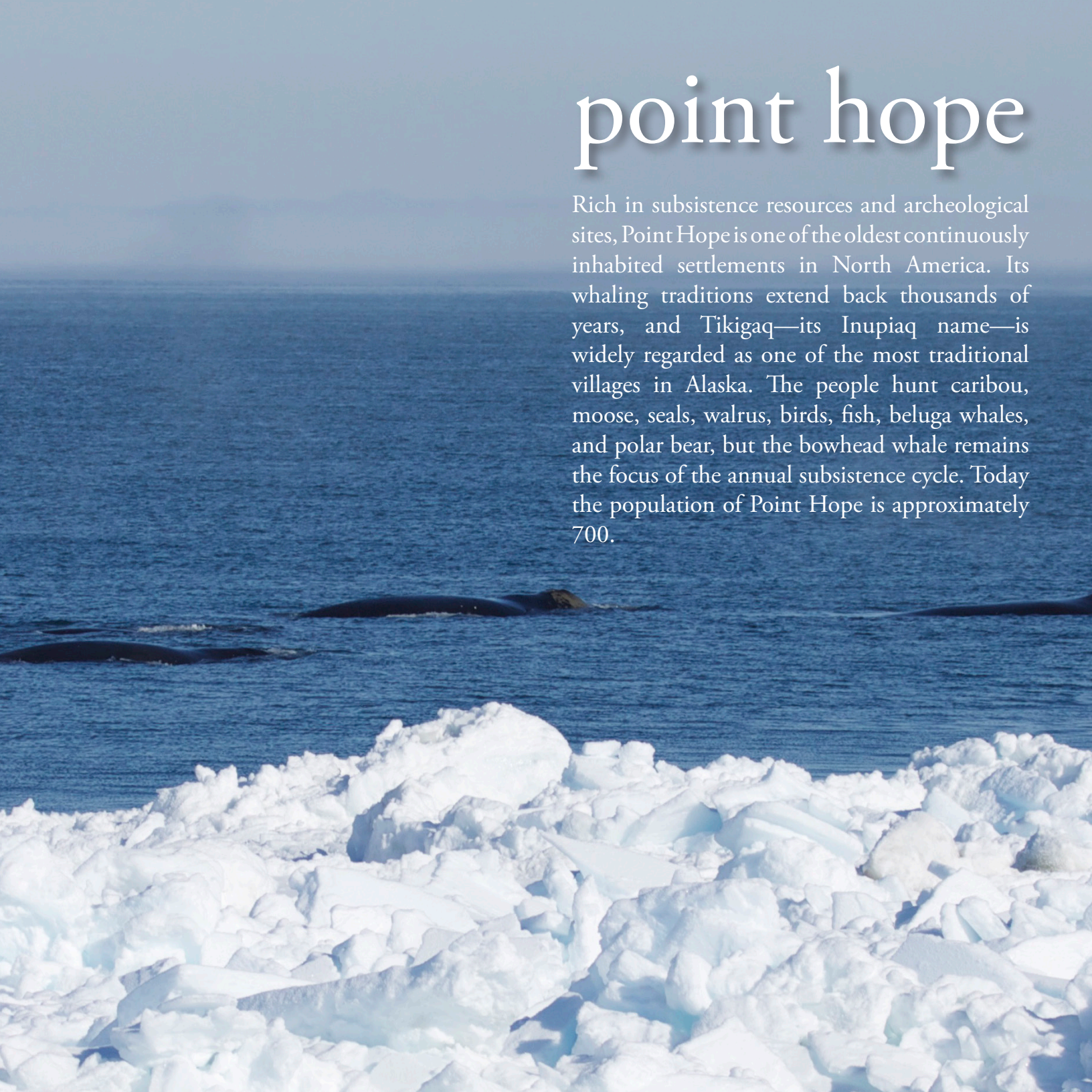


point hope

Rich in subsistence resources and archeological sites, Point Hope is one of the oldest continuously inhabited settlements in North America. Its whaling traditions extend back thousands of years, and Tikigaq—its Inupiaq name—is widely regarded as one of the most traditional villages in Alaska. The people hunt caribou, moose, seals, walrus, birds, fish, beluga whales, and polar bear, but the bowhead whale remains the focus of the annual subsistence cycle. Today the population of Point Hope is approximately 700.



nuiqsut

A photograph of three whalers on a boat during a sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright orange and yellow glow. The whalers are wearing dark parkas and are holding long wooden poles. The water is dark and choppy.

The village of Nuiqsut has a population of approximately 380 people. The Barrier Islands to the east of Nuiqsut are a productive area for hunting marine mammals, and the fall whaling sites of Cross Island and Narwhal Island have a long history. Today, Nuiqsut whalers travel to Cross Island in late August and early September to begin whaling. This long journey takes them past the oil fields surrounding Prudhoe Bay and into the often icy waters of the Beaufort Sea. The hard work of the journey and the hunt is rewarded when successful whaling captains share the whale with the community and other villages at Thanksgiving and Christmas, and at Nalukataq the following spring.

kivalina

The village of Kivalina sits on a narrow gravel island near the mouth of the Wulik River on the northwest coast of Alaska. Although the permanent village is less than a century old, the whole coast of this region has long been used for whaling and other hunting camps. In addition to whaling, Kivalina residents hunt caribou, sheep, walrus, seals, beluga whales, birds, and fish. Kivalina has close ties with Point Hope, sharing many of the same festivals and whale distribution customs. The village has a current population of approximately 350 people.



Photo courtesy Jenny Evans.

kaktovik

Kaktovik has long been a place of trade, as indicated by its English name, Barter Island. The settlement's Inupiaq name, spelled Qaaktugvik, means "Place to net fish." Caribou, sheep, muskoxen, bears, birds, seals, and whales are also taken for subsistence. While the present settlement was established early in this century, the region is dotted with old village sites and hunting camps. Today, the population of Kaktovik is about 230. Kaktovik whalers hunt in the fall, going out from the village in search of bowheads. Near the village are many ancient whale bones, as well as bones from whales taken in recent years. As in every community, the meat and maktak of the bowhead whale are highly prized in Kaktovik, providing a large and necessary component of the subsistence food for the village.



A photograph of a snowy, rocky landscape. The foreground is covered in a dense field of small, white, rounded snowdrifts or rocks. A long, dark shadow is cast across the snow from the upper left towards the center. The background shows more snow and some darker patches, possibly rocks or ice. The overall scene is bright and cold.

savoonga

Fifty miles to the east of Gambell along the north coast of St. Lawrence Island lies the village of Savoonga. Originally a reindeer herding camp, today Savoonga is about the same size as Gambell. Family ties between the two villages are strong. Each year, the first whale caught on the island is divided equally between the two villages regardless of which village actually lands it. Savoonga hunters travel fifty miles across the island to the ancient village and whaling site of Pugughileq each spring for the bowhead hunt. In addition to bowheads, Savoonga residents subsist on walrus, polar bears, seals, birds, and fish. With changes in sea ice in recent years, Savoonga and Gambell now hunt in the late fall and winter as well as the spring.

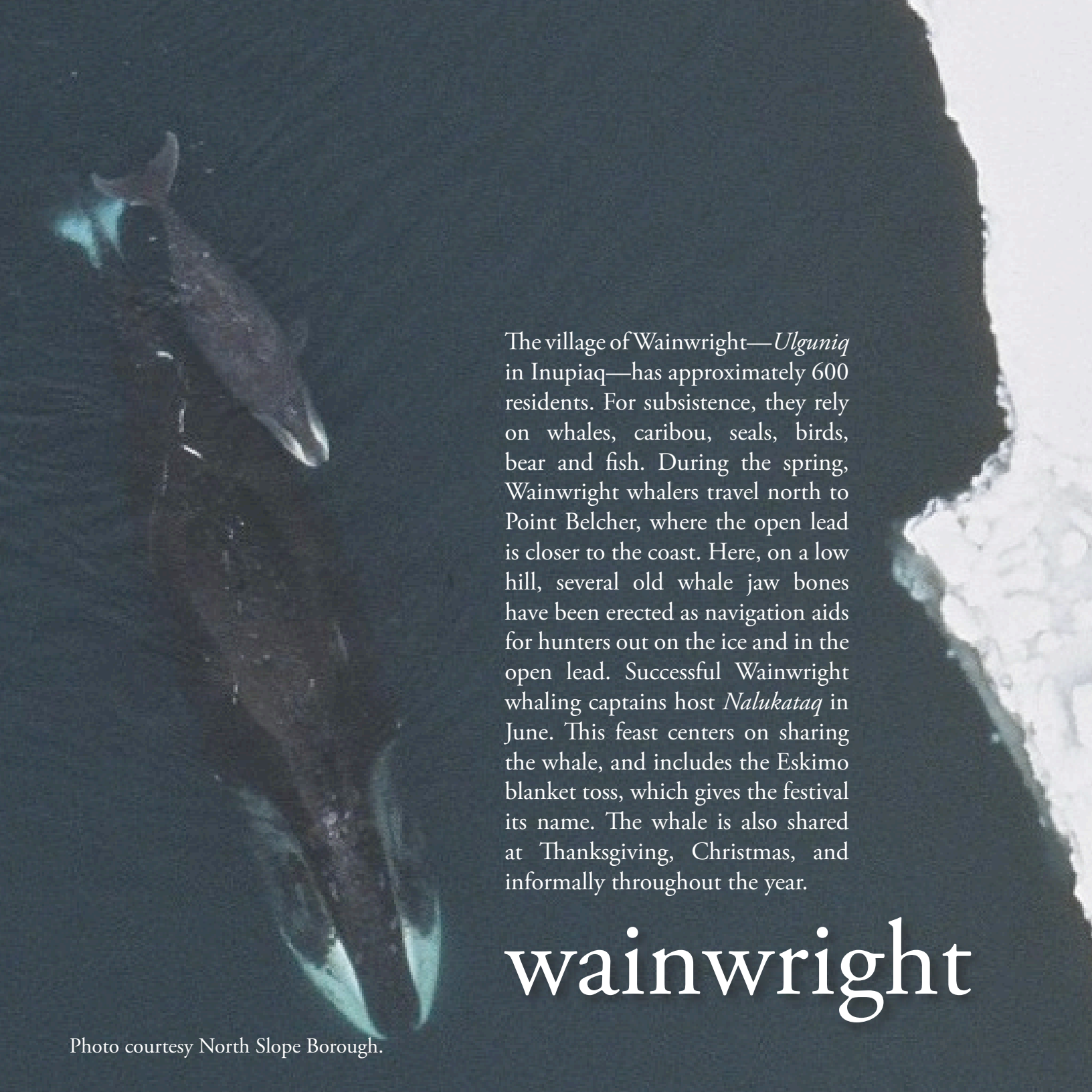
Photo courtesy Jenny Evans.



utqiagvik (barrow)

With a population of approximately 3,500, Barrow is Alaska's largest subsistence whaling community. Seat of the North Slope Borough and home of the AEWFC office, Utqiagvik also has several sites of great archeological significance, and continues to have a strong subsistence tradition. Hunting and sharing Native foods is a central part of life, and skins and meat can be seen curing throughout the town. Residents of Utqiagvik take whales, caribou, seals, walrus, bears, birds, and fish, and like all subsistence hunters they are active year-round. Barrow's whale hunt takes place in both spring and fall. Following the spring hunt, successful captains host Apugauti and Nalukataq, drawing people from throughout the region to take part and enjoy the celebration and the sharing. The whale is shared at other community events, such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, potlucks, as well as in people's homes.

Photo courtesy North Slope Borough.

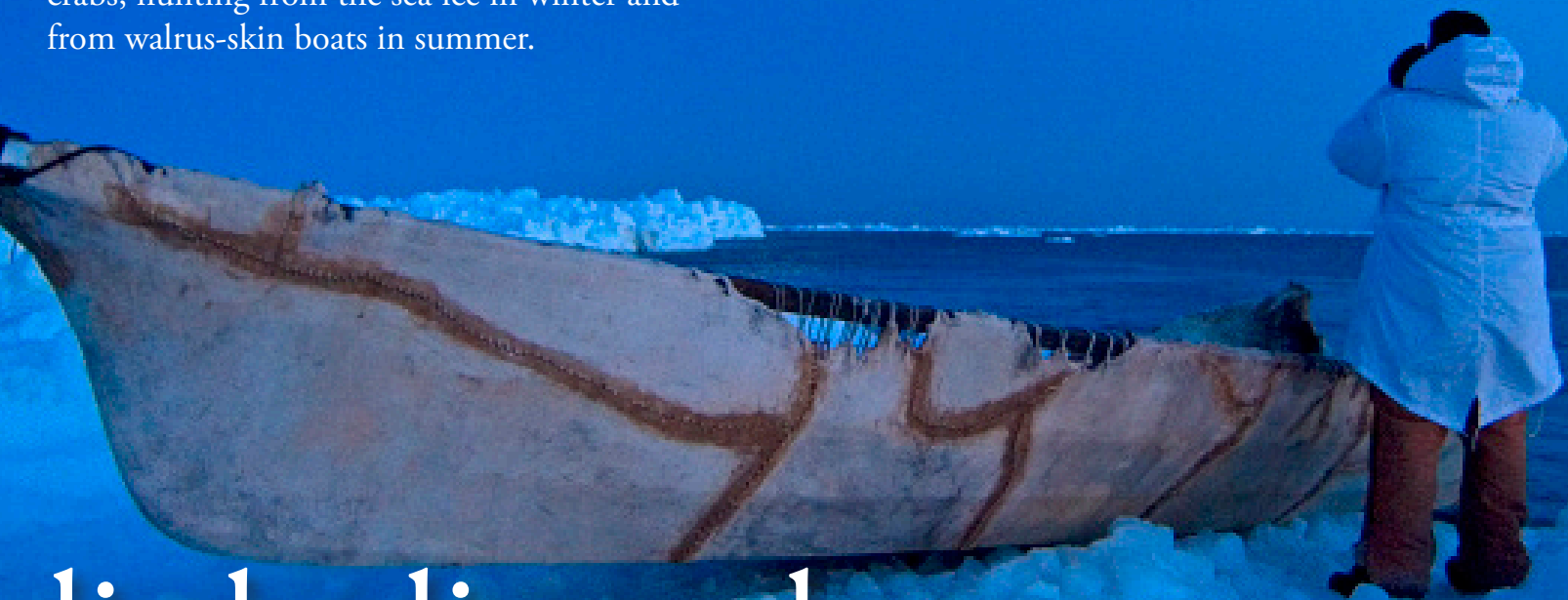


The village of Wainwright—*Ulguniq* in Inupiaq—has approximately 600 residents. For subsistence, they rely on whales, caribou, seals, birds, bear and fish. During the spring, Wainwright whalers travel north to Point Belcher, where the open lead is closer to the coast. Here, on a low hill, several old whale jaw bones have been erected as navigation aids for hunters out on the ice and in the open lead. Successful Wainwright whaling captains host *Nalukataq* in June. This feast centers on sharing the whale, and includes the Eskimo blanket toss, which gives the festival its name. The whale is also shared at Thanksgiving, Christmas, and informally throughout the year.

wainwright

Photo courtesy North Slope Borough.

In the middle of the Bering Strait, the island of Little Diomede rises sharply from the sea. There is no room for an airstrip on the island, so planes to the community of *Ignaluk* can land only in winter on a plowed stretch of sea ice between Little Diomede and its neighbor, the Russian island of Big Diomede two miles to the west. Because of its remoteness, Little Diomede was not included in the formation of the AEWFC and its needs were not taken into account in determining the bowhead quota for Alaska Eskimos. In 1992, Little Diomede was formally recognized as a whaling community. Like Wales, Little Diomede has a population of approximately 170. Residents take walrus, seals, polar bears, birds, fish and crabs, hunting from the sea ice in winter and from walrus-skin boats in summer.



little diomede

The background image shows two traditional walrus-skin boats, known as angyapik, on a body of water. The boats are constructed from walrus skin stretched over a wooden frame. Each boat has a tall mast with a flag. The flag on the right boat is white with red diagonal stripes and the letters 'JA' and 'AL' are visible. The flag on the left boat is white with a red circle and some text. The water is blue with white-capped waves. In the distance, there are low, hazy mountains under a pale sky.

gambell

Located on a gravel point on the northwest tip of St. Lawrence Island, Gambell is an ancient village site and an excellent location for hunting. For centuries, residents of *Sivugaq*—the Yupik name for both the village and the island—have taken bowheads. In addition, fish and crab can be caught near shore, birds nest on nearby cliffs, and walrus, seals, polar bears, and whales are abundant in the waters and on the ice around the island. St. Lawrence Island whalers use large walrus-skin boats, called *angyapik*. These are powered by sail and paddle. Gambell has a population of approximately 500, most of whom are St. Lawrence Island Yupik.

point lay

The village of Point Lay is located near the Chukchi Sea about 175 miles southwest of Barrow. With a dwindling population in the 1960s and 1970s, Point Lay was not among the original nine villages to receive a quota when the IWC formally recognized the Native subsistence bowhead hunt in 1978 and authorized the landing of 12 whales. Even as the population grew over the next several decades, villagers bore the burden of traveling significant distances to other whaling villages to participate in bowhead hunts as a means to provide meat for their families. It was not until 2008 that Point Lay became officially recognized as a whaling village and provided with its own quota. In addition to the bowhead, the Inupiat of Point Lay subsist on seal, walrus, beluga, bowhead, caribou, and fish as staples of their diet.



wales

As the point of mainland North America closest to Asia, Wales has long been a site of travel and trade between the two continents. Ancient artifacts, grave sites, and village mounds show the long history of settlement at *Kingigin*, the Inupiaq name for the village. For local hunters, the Bering Strait is a productive area for marine mammals, migratory birds, and fish. On land, people hunt moose and herd reindeer. With approximately 170 residents, Wales is one of the smallest of the whaling communities. Its whaling traditions extend far back, and as the only whaling village on the Seward Peninsula, when a whale is taken, the whaling feast in Wales attracts visitors from many communities in the region. These guests return home with full sled loads of meat and maktak, extending the network of sharing far up and down the coast.

