

News from the ALASKA CENTER FOR APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY

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Our mission is to promote research and education for Alaskans in sustainable economic development

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BIONEERS IN ALASKA CONFERENCE A GREAT SUCCESS!

"Our collective steps are having an impact." "Thank you so much for the hope." These were a couple comments following the first "Bioneers in Alaska: Creating Sustainable Communities" conference, held October 15-17 at the University of Alaska Anchorage.

What a great gathering! How timely to organize forward-thinking Alaskans around themes of hope, inspiration and camaraderie! Almost 300 Alaskans, from Kotzebue to Juneau, met to discuss positive things happening statewide to move our communities toward "sustainability." One highlight was a keynote address by Father Michael Oleksa, and additional inspiration came from the diverse group of plenary speakers - like Amy Goodman, Terry Tempest Williams, Jay Harman and Thomas Linzey - provided via satellite from the main Bioneers conference in San Rafael, California.

ACAT worked with Alaska Earth Institute, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation and Chickaloon Village Environmental Protection to bring the annual Bioneers conference (www.bioneers.org) to Alaska. While Bioneers had over 50 applications for new "satellite" sites, they accepted only four - bringing the total number of satellite site to 15 nationwide. Ours was the first satellite site west of the main conference, which meant we had to schedule things a little differently to accommodate time zone challenges. I was primarily responsible for registration, event banking, and arranging for the conference web site (www.sustainak.org/akbioneers). I also helped organize two of the nine local sessions (Renewable Energy and Closing Loops in our Businesses/Communities). (Check the conference web site for titles of the

other local sessions.) Many, many "partner" groups helped advertise the conference through their own internal networks.

A HUGE debt of gratitude goes to our conference sponsors, including Eric McCallum (Arctic Wire Rope and Supply), AHFC, U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, Alaska Conservation Foundation, UAA Environmental Studies Program, ITS Alaska Computer Services, UAA Environmental Health and Safety Program, Agnew Beck Consulting LLC, and the Alaska chapter of the American Planning Association. We were very fortunate to garner the support of so many sponsors and in-kind donors, which greatly helped to defray conference costs.

People are already asking ACAT to help stage a larger conference next year! There are many, many potential topics for locally-developed sessions. We will be looking for people who have a keen interest in expanding the "sustainability" network to help develop local sessions and also help with general conference organizing. If you're interested and/or want to know more, just give me a holler!

CONFERENCE FEEDBACK

"I had not heard of the Bioneers until a member of a writing group I am in said that Terry Tempest Williams was speaking at the Bioneers Conference. I looked at the program and decided to go for the entire three days. When I left Sunday evening, I had more hope for the future of the earth and its peoples than I have had for many years. I look forward to next year's conference which I imagine will easily double the size of this year's conference, if all who attended tell a few other people about it and let them know when it will be next year.

Great job putting this together. Thank you so much for the hope." [Ron - Anchorage]

"This gathering reminded me that our collective steps are having an impact. This conference not only highlights the gains we are making within a sustainability movement, show us that there is a better way, but more importantly, brings us together. I hope that Alaska can again be a satellite site for the annual BIONEERS conference. This is a gathering that all Alaskans benefit from." [Katherine - Anchorage]

"The Bioneers conference helped reinforce my passion to teach the importance of wilderness and the role sustainable communities can potentially play. The people I met reminded me of the power and creativity each individual can unleash and when we meet, a huge positive force evolves that causes ripples on a global scale. I am still surfing that wave. Thank you." [Pam - APU student]

ANNUAL MEETING - January 2005

We normally hold an annual meeting in October, but the Bioneers in Alaska conference caused a necessary delay. (Perhaps next year we can combine the two?) So I'm working to schedule a meeting in January in Wasilla. For a presenter I've contacted Brent Petrie, with the Alaska Village Electric Cooperative, to talk about their efforts at establishing wind/diesel systems in several villages (see note below). I will send a meeting announcement as soon as we can arrange something.

ACAT EXPLORING POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIP WITH VCRS

Valley Community for Recycling Solutions has approached ACAT about the potential for ACAT to serve as Project Manager for the planning and construction of their new recycling facility now in the design stage. This could be an exciting partnership, as VCRS not only wants to develop a state-of-the-art recycling building and expanded processing capabilities, but also wants to incorporate "appropriate technologies" like energy efficient construction and design, renewable energy systems, and innovative water and "waste" treatment systems. The facility is intended not only for materials recycling, but education and demonstration. We believe, with proper planning and built-in flexibility, this could be a model project benefiting VCRS, ACAT, and all Alaskans. Stay tuned!

TRUCK AVAILABLE FOR MEMBER USE

Do you have an occasional need for a pickup? To haul compost or lumber or whatever? I just wanted to let members know that I have a mid-size pickup with a lumber rack available for use. It sits around quite a bit these days, since I finally broke down and got a small (hybrid!) car. So if you need it, please give a call. (The lumber rack comes off, if need be.) It'd be great to see our "community" use a truck like this communally. Give Mark a call at 907-376-6275 (home), 373-0909 (ACAT) or email at m.masteller@acat.org.

NEW WIND PROJECT IN ALASKA

Northern Power Systems, Inc. announced in mid-October that it will ship seven of its 100-kilowatt cold-weather wind turbines to the Alaska Village Electric Cooperative, based in Anchorage. The turbines will be shipped next summer and installed in three Alaska villages, two of which are on St. Lawrence Island in the Bering Sea. See the [Northern Power press release](#).

ACAT LOANING LIBRARY

Here's a list of books we have on "sustainability" topics. There's no need for these to sit on my shelf if someone might want to borrow them. So if there's a book you'd like to borrow, let me know and we can work out something.

Cradle to Cradle - William McDonough and Michael Braungart
Natural Capitalism - Paul Hawken, Amory Lovins, Hunter Lovins
The Ecology of Commerce - Paul Hawken
Eco-Economy - Lester Brown
Hubbert's Peak - Kenneth Deffeyes
Believing Cassandra - Alan AtKisson
Waking up In Time - Peter Russell
Beyond the Limits - Donella Meadows, Dennis Meadows, Jorgen Randers
The Future of Life - Edward O. Wilson
Upsizing: The road to zero emissions, more jobs, more income and no pollution - Gunter Pauli
Just and Lasting Change - Daniel Taylor-Ide and Carl Taylor
The Natural Step for Business - Brian Natrass and Mary Altomare
Dancing with the Tiger - Brian Natrass and Mary Altomare
The Humanure Handbook - Joseph Jenkins
Microfarming at High Latitudes - Michael Kircher

Alaska Log Building Construction Guide - Michael Musick
Alaska Housing Manual - Michael Musick, et al.
Fuel Cell Technology Handbook - Gregor Hoogers (ed.)
Ecological Medicine - Kenny Ausubel (ed.)
Economics of the Environment - Robert Stavins (ed.)

YOUR FEEDBACK APPRECIATED!

Don't be shy about providing feedback - about this newsletter, ACAT's programs or projects, whatever. Since I've started putting the newsletter in the body of an email, it doesn't LOOK as fancy, but it's more universally readable. I'm sure some computer whiz could fancify it and keep it readable. A small future challenge. It'd be great to hear from you, about anything!

JOIN US!

Did a good friend send you this newsletter? Help expand the network of folks working to create the Alaska we want to live in! Go to our (developing) web site (www.acat.org) for a membership form, and join up!