



Mapping an Alaskan Village Nunapitchuk, Kuskokwim River Delta

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Introduction

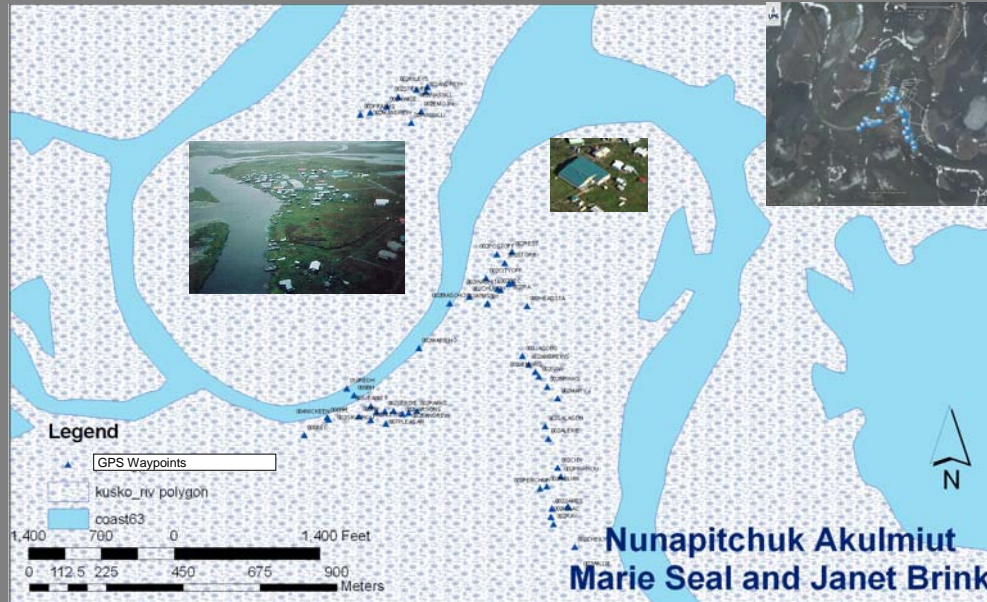
Nunapitchuk is a Yup'ik Eskimo village located on the Johnson River in western Alaska about 30 miles west of Bethel on the Kuskokwim River Delta. There are 3 villages within sight of Nunapitchuk. The area known as *Akulmiut* (a-gool-me-yoot).

On this poster you will find some maps that we made and a variety of information and photos that we hope will be interesting and informative.

Background

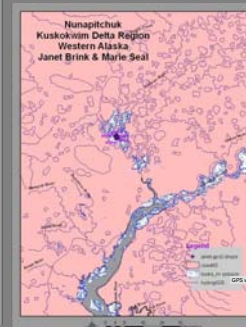
Nunapitchuk is getting very watery because the permafrost is melting. We might have to move to the bluffs. Some people don't like Nunapitchuk because of too many waters. Some people like Nunapitchuk because they go berry picking and hunting. During the summer times, people always go camping, berry picking, and hunting. Then in winter times we go jigging for salmon fish, pike, and other fish. Men go hunting for caribou, moose, and other animals that Yup'ik people eat. We have a lot of places to get food near our village. And when our parents were young they built a new school because more people started living here.

One of the villages next to us is Kasigluk; they are split into 2 villages. Akiuk was the old side and a lot of people moved to Akula because Akiuk is an island and everyone could not live there. Akiuk is 2.5 miles away and Akula is 3 miles away from Nunapitchuk. Atmautluak is 8 miles away from us. People moved from here to Atmautluak. Atmautluak is closer to Bethel and the Kuskowim River. Where we live today is not where Nunapitchuk started. Also, the other side of the river used to be called Akiacuaq, but it is now part of Nunapitchuk. You would not know this from looking at the maps there are of our area now.



Materials and methods

This fall we collected GPS waypoints of the buildings and homes in our village. Sometimes the weather was very cold and we had to go in people's houses to get warm. We wanted to have a better map of where we live. Our mentor teacher Carey Steele and Professor Cathy Connor at UAS in Juneau helped us to make the maps in ArcGIS and Google Earth.



Results

Google Earth has a picture of our village, but parts of it are wrong and some stuff is missing. Some of the boardwalks are even in the river on their photo. When we exported out waypoints into Google earth some of them ended up in the river! The last time they did a topo map that was only of our village was 1956. There is one that was made in 01/05/04, but it doesn't have details about Nunapitchuk. It's important to have a good map of Nunapitchuk.

When people go hunting they might use a GPS. In the wintertime, we can have a lot of blizzards. If someone is hunting and they have a good map of Nunapitchuk on there they should make it home safely.

Also, we want people to know that there are people living in Nunapitchuk. If there isn't a map how will they know we are here?

Reference

ATMS website <http://www.lksd.org/Nunapitchuk>

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Photo by Tom McKenna

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