

***Capturing Conversations about Climate Change:
How successful external collaboration might model better internal
collaboration among units of the Alaska & Polar Region Collection,
University of Alaska-Fairbanks***

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A unique range of collaborative engagements with federal agencies, native corporations, bush communities, and local organizations distinguish the work of the Alaska & Polar Regions Collections at the University of Alaska – Fairbanks (APR). This collaborative landscape has much to do with the physical and political geography of Alaska and the way in which Alaskan lands were managed and distributed after statehood in 1959. Specifically, the legislation guiding Alaska Native land claims (ANSCA 1971) and the development of conservation areas (ANILCA 1980) looked at land as both a physical and cultural resource. Assessments of historical use and ownership incorporating anthropological and archaeological methodologies created unique community involvement, and the resultant documentation displays a broad range of formats and diverse provenance.

This paper will address two issues: *first*, the unique collaborative opportunities that exist in Alaska, based on the scenario described above, particularly in terms of documenting traditional life ways and land use; *and second*, the issue of internal and external collaboration as practiced at a large special collection in a state university. Our project roster suggests that we are better at collaborating with outsiders than we are at collaborating with each other. How do we begin to talk about the connections we make to *everyone but each other* and use that narrative to shape better communication and coordination within the department?

Specifically, I will describe APR collaborative digital projects that investigate ice conditions and climate change, and which capture conversations between scientists and local inhabitants and elders witnessing those conditions. I'll also review a project with the US National Park Service and native communities in the Yukon - Charley Rivers National Preserve (<http://jukebox.uaf.edu/YUCH/index.htm>) which was initiated by *one* unit within APR, and discuss impacts on the other *nine* units in the department. I will outline what that project revealed about internal communication issues, and talk about strategies that are fostering better internal communication within a faculty reporting structure that does not support formal communication within the department.