

Caring For Kodiak's Unprovenienced Artifacts

An Understanding between

The Alutiiq Museum and _____

Name Here

INTRODUCTION

The Kodiak archipelago has an unusually rich archaeological record. More than 1,000 ancestral sites spanning the past 7,500 years document the heritage of the Alutiiq people. Because many of these sites hold well-preserved assemblages of artifacts and many are eroding – artifacts are a common find. Kodiak Islanders have been collecting artifacts for generations and many families have personal collections.

Since its inception in 1995, the Alutiiq Museum has worked to preserve Kodiak's archaeological resources by educating the public about their value, leading field research projects, and involving volunteers in the study and preservation of archaeological resources. On Kodiak there is now a growing respect for Native heritage and a recognition that artifacts have value – not just as curios, but as items of Alutiiq ancestry.

PURPOSE

Renewed respect for Alutiiq heritage has led to the return of many amateur artifact collections. The Alutiiq Museum is continually offered old collections, many of which have little or no provenience information. The museum cannot legally acquire these items, as their title is unknown. However, the museum feels a strong stewardship responsibility towards these collections. This understanding between the Alutiiq Museum and all of Kodiak's major landowners (federal, state, municipal, and Alutiiq), establishes a set of guidelines for dealing with unprovenienced archaeological materials from the Kodiak archipelago and names the Alutiiq Museum as an appropriate entity for their care.

TERMS

In recognition of the Alutiiq Museum's unique role as a cultural center, an educational institution and an archaeological repository we, _____, recognize the Alutiiq Museum as an appropriate entity to care for unprovenienced archaeological collections from the Kodiak archipelago. We understand that in accepting such materials, the museum may unknowingly accept materials inappropriately taken from lands owned or managed by our organization.

In return for this recognition, and for the trust we are placing in the museum to care for archaeological resources for the public good, we understand that the Alutiiq Museum will;

1. Add unprovenienced archaeological artifact offered by donors to its teaching collection only, following the guidelines of its board approved collections policy. No unprovenienced artifacts will be added to the permanent collection; and
2. Document unprovenienced artifacts with catalog numbers, inventories, etc. to maintain a professional record of the objects entrusted to the museum's care; and
3. Share unprovenienced artifacts with the public through hands-on educational programs, exhibits, and short-term loans; and
4. Return any unprovenienced artifacts to their rightful owner should ownership be determined; and
5. Provide a summary of the unprovenienced artifact collections in the museums care upon request; and
6. Continue its efforts to promote archaeological site preservation and discourage the collecting of artifacts by amateurs through public education, heritage preservation programs, professional field research, and advocacy.

Signature of Landowner or Representative	Title	Date
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Signature of Museum Representative	Title	Date
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