

Elder Interview Questions: Our Water

Hello and welcome. I am _____, a Local Education Coordinator with the Chugachmiut Heritage Program. Today is _____ and we've invited _____ to contribute to the cache of Elder interviews we are collecting for the Heritage Kit on watersheds called "Our Water." This interview will be recorded using an Apple iPad Air 2 and a Zoom H4n audio recorder recording at 48 Ghz/16Bit.

Could you please introduce yourself?

I'm _____ and I was born in 19__ in _____. My father was _____ and my mother was _____.

- 1) What does water mean to you?
- 2) Do you know it as a different word or term?
 - a) Eyak or Sugt'stun words?
- 3) What would you like younger generations to know about our water?
 - a) Important places
 - b) Critical animals, birds, fish, etc.
 - c) Any other concerns such as; sayings or stories about taking care of our water?
- 4) In your lifetime have you noticed changes in the water?
 - a) How did you live before you had running water?
 - b) How did you make sure you had clean water?

- 5) How does water provide for you and your community? (Besides drinking water)
- 6) How does the area where the “freshwater meets the saltwater” (also described as “the place where life begins”) provide for you?
- 7) What foods do you collect (plants, fish, shellfish, etc.) from this area?
- 8) Do you feel that our water can be dangerous to the safety of your community?
 - a) How?
 - b) Are you aware of past events that affected the water? What caused this particular event?
- 9) In the past were there any areas in your community that you knew of, or noticed, that needed to be protected and why?

This curriculum kit “Our Water” is looking for Elders traditional ecological knowledge on changes they have seen in the Chugach Region’s Watersheds. We would like to ask you about your community watershed. Particularly foods gathered from the watershed, the importance of the estuary, dangers the watershed pose to your community, and finally, any environmental changes you may have observed in your watershed.

A **watershed** consists of glaciers, snowpack, streams, creeks and rivers that flow from the mountains, down the valleys, into lakes, ponds, and wetlands.

An **estuary** is where the fresh water meets the ocean.