

Empowering Adaptation to Global Change



Stuart Chapin

Professor Emeritus of Ecology, Institute of Arctic Biology

CURRENT RESEARCH

How fostering self-reliance reduces community dependence on external assistance in Alaska and globally

Alaska's climate is changing at twice the global average rate. In addition, Native communities in rural Alaska occupy the most extensive area of poverty in the United States, yet they pay the highest costs in the country for fuel, food, and other commercial goods. All the while, state and federal funding to support infrastructure and social programs in rural Alaska is declining. Nonetheless, Native people living in these communities are proud of their ability to live off the land and sea and to adapt to change. Dr. Stuart Chapin, of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, collaborates with these communities to identify their vision for long-term sustainability and adaptive strategies to meet global-change challenges. By matching technical expertise from the university with community-identified grand challenges, communities are empowered to become more self-reliant by solving their own problems and adapting to change. In addition, Alaskan communities serve as a case study to show how other communities can thrive in adverse conditions globally.

The environmental, economic, and social challenges faced by communities in rural Alaska are broadly similar to issues faced by developing nations throughout the world except that Alaska has the financial resources to solve these problems if cost-effective pathways toward self-reliance can be defined and implemented. Dr. Chapin collaborates closely with his team, including Todd Brinkman and Krista Heeringa, to address effects of climate, fuel costs, community engagement, and more. Their research therefore uniquely integrates multiple dimensions of global-change impacts, leading to practical solutions for long-term self-reliance. Through passionate community...

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AFFILIATION

 University of Alaska Fairbanks

EDUCATION

- Ph.D. in Biological Sciences 1973, Stanford University
- B.A. in Biology 1966, Swarthmore College

AWARDS

- Member National Academy of Sciences
- Sustainability Science Award
- Usabelli Award, 2000
- Outstanding Faculty Member, 2002
- Univ. of Alaska Lifetime Achievement Award, 2012

RESEARCH AREAS

Environment, Ecology, Clean Energy, Clean Energy

FUNDING REQUEST

Your contributions will support the continued research of Dr. Stuart Chapin, of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, as he collaborates with communities to empower them to become more self-reliant by adapting to change. Your donations will support the research and implementation of solutions to enhance self-reliance in communities. In choosing to donate, you will play a role in empowering rural Alaskan communities!