

# Job Training Attitude Survey

## Western Alaska Fisheries Disaster Region

October 5, 2001



State of Alaska

Tony Knowles, Governor



Department of Community and  
Economic Development

Deborah Sedwick, Commissioner



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With assistance from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Employment Security; the Alaska Human Resources Investment Council; and, job training professionals associated with organizations throughout Western Alaska.



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**U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economic Development Administration**

## Introduction

### Background

Beginning in 1997, salmon fisheries in Western Alaska experienced a series of years of substantially reduced runs. To make matters worse, the prices paid for these salmon are declining in world markets as a result of increased production of farmed salmon. Consequently, the State of Alaska declared the Western Alaska region to be an economic disaster area. As part of the response to this situation, the federal Economic Development Administration awarded a grant to the Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development to develop a Western Alaska economic diversification strategy. The goal of the strategy is to promote diversification in the region's base economy, which to a large extent is narrowly focused on the salmon fisheries industry. A component of the grant agreement for this project is to survey resident fishers in the declared disaster area to determine their attitudes regarding job training for employment opportunities that could either supplement or replace their current fisheries employment.

### Survey Process and Methodology

For purposes of this study, the declared Western Alaska region was divided into eight areas, comprised of U.S. Census Areas:

- Aleutians (Aleutians East Borough and Aleutians West Census Area)
- Bethel Census Area
- Bristol Bay Borough
- Dillingham Census Area
- Lake and Peninsula Borough
- Nome Census Area
- Wade Hampton Census Area
- Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area

The names and addresses of resident fisher persons living in these areas were determined using 1999 permit holder and crew license information collected annually by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Based on this information, there were 2,942 permit holders, and 4,238 licensed crew living in these eight areas. For this survey, individuals who held both a permit and a crew license were included only in the permit holder group to avoid duplicate mailings.

The goal of the survey methodology was to obtain a set of responses that could serve as a reliable representation of the attitudes and opinions of all fisher persons in the disaster region. Based on the lack of personal telephones in many rural Alaska communities, and the high costs and time considerations associated with a face-to face survey, it was decided to undertake a mail survey approach. The survey instrument was designed in cooperation with state and local job training professionals who work on job training and employment efforts in the fisheries disaster area, and who will be key users of the survey results. The survey instrument was field tested with several fisher persons to obtain their feedback.

Surveys were mailed to about half of permit holders (1,500) and crew persons (2,000) who were randomly selected from the complete lists. To ensure that each of the eight areas within the region was fairly represented, surveys were mailed to each area in proportion to the number of permit holders and crew persons living in the respective areas.

Based on previous experience with low survey response rates in rural Alaska, three cash rewards (\$1,000, \$500, and \$250) were offered to randomly selected respondents who completed and returned the survey.

A first mailing of the survey was mailed in mid-April, 2001. This was followed by a "reminder" post card ten days later. Those people who did not respond to the first mailing were sent a second mailing of the survey in mid-May. 32% of permit holders and 28% of crew persons responded to the first mailing. An additional 12% of permit holders (total of 44%) and 9% of crew persons (total of 37%) responded to the second mailing. As a result of this exceptionally high response rate, the prospect of diminishing returns per effort, and, the fact that the fishing season was beginning, it was decided to forego a third follow-up survey mailing. The table at right presents the number of survey responses by area and type.

Area	Permit Holder	Crew	Total
Combined Aleutians	20	67	87
Bethel	192	206	398
Bristol Bay	46	51	97
Dillingham	134	150	284
Lake and Peninsula	42	68	110
Nome	47	51	98
Wade Hampton	141	141	282
Yukon Koyukuk	45	9	54
<b>Total</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>743</b>	<b>1,410</b>

While the number of surveys mailed to each of the eight areas, and to each type of respondent in those areas, were by design proportional to the overall populations being measured, the responses that came back were in somewhat different proportions. Crew persons responded less readily than permit holders, and some areas responded less readily than others. Consequently, to provide a more representative picture of the total disaster area response, adjustment weights were developed, for each area and type of respondent, and incorporated into the analysis where total disaster area characteristics were to be represented. Because no reliable information is available concerning the gender, ethnicity and education level of the overall fishing population in the disaster area, no weighting factors were developed for those characteristics.

A relational database was developed to contain the survey responses and facilitate analysis. The survey responses were keyed into the database and then crosschecked by other individuals for accuracy. A number of reports were generated from the database to provide basic tabulations of the survey responses by region, type of respondent (permit holder or crew), gender, age, ethnicity, and education level, as well as cross-tabulations examining possible correlations of respondent answers to the various survey questions. The data from these reports was exported to spreadsheets for charting purposes and analysis.

### **Non-Respondents**

The information contained in this report reflects the attitudes and opinions of those people who made the effort to respond. But what about the attitudes of those people who did not respond? It is possible to speculate somewhat about this group's thinking by examining trends in the responses to the first survey mailing compared to the responses for the second mailing. The assumption is that the direction of such trends would tend to indicate the kind of responses that could have been expected from non-respondents if they had responded.

In general, the responses to the second mailing were more "negative" than responses to the first mailing. For example, when asked if they were interested in training in the area of fisheries, 46% of respondents to the first mailing answered "no," while on the second mailing 51% of respondents answered "no." On five of the six questions in the survey regarding choices such as

this, respondents to the second mailing answered more negatively, though not substantially so. Based on this assessment, the presumption is that the responses of those people who did not respond to the survey would probably be somewhat more negative than the sample of people who did respond. This implies that the overall findings presented in this report are probably somewhat more positive than would be expected if the entire fishing population had completed and returned the survey. However, even if this were the case, the survey revealed a very high level of interest in job training for this population, much higher than had been expected based on anecdotal information available before the survey.

### **General Conclusion**

Because of the large response, the results of this job training attitude survey represent a fairly good picture of the thinking of the fishing population in the fisheries disaster region. This survey can serve as a reasonable basis for planning and development of job training programs to meet the needs of the people in the region. There was an unexpectedly high level of interest in job training, and a large number of respondents indicated they were interested in new kinds of employment, either to replace or supplement their current employment in commercial fishing. This clearly points to the need for expanded job training services and facilities in the region. A summary of major findings of the survey are presented on the following two pages.

## Major Findings

### Characteristics of the Respondents:

- ♦ **Age:** There appears to be somewhat of a “baby boom” effect in the resident fishing population with a substantially greater number of fishers in the 36-45 age group compared to those who are coming behind – there are about 43% fewer fishers in the 26-35 age group.
- ♦ **Ethnicity:** Most survey respondents indicated they were Alaska Native (91.5%) compared to 64% in the general population of the region.
- ♦ **Gender:** About 79% of all respondents were males and 21% were females. The percentage of females varied from 12% in the Bethel Census Area to 40% in the Bristol Bay Borough.
- ♦ **Education:** Overall, 40% of respondents had at least a high school degree, about 20% had some college education, and about 5% had a college degree.
- ♦ **Years Fishing:** Permit holders owned their permits for 17.5 years on average. Crew persons worked as crew for an average of 11.5 years.
- ♦ **Paid Employment:** 36% of respondents had no paid employment besides fishing in 2000. 21% worked at a full-time job other than fishing.
- ♦ **What Kind of Other Paid Employment:** When respondents were asked to describe what other paid employment they had besides commercial fishing, the most common response was laborer (15% of those who described their other work), closely followed by carpenter (13%). Other common responses were utility operators and maintenance (8%), store clerk (7%), equipment operator (6%), social services

(5%) and custodian (5%). About 3% reported they were teachers, and another 3% indicated they worked as teacher’s aides.

- ♦ **Income:** 24% said commercial fishing represented “almost all” of their income from paid employment. 66% said that commercial fishing represented “not much” of their total paid employment income.
- ♦ **Dependency on Fishing:** Crew persons were slightly more dependent on commercial fishing for their paid income than were permit holders.
- ♦ **View of the Future:** About one-third of respondents believed that fish runs and prices would not be returning to earlier levels. Only half as many (16%) thought things would improve. About half of the respondents said they didn’t know what was going to happen.

### Respondents Attitudes and Opinions:

- ♦ **Job Training:** About 70% of respondents said they were interested in some kind of job training.
- ♦ **Fisheries Training:** Respondents were about evenly divided regarding their interest in training for new opportunities in fishing. The fact that about half the fishers were not interested in training within the fishing business may signal a wariness of respondents regarding the future of fishing as a profession.
- ♦ **Preferred Fisheries Training Choices:** When asked to identify what specific training respondents were most interested in, leading interests included new fisheries technology,

improving quality, fish processing, marketing, and the proper maintenance of nets and fisheries equipment. Thirty people indicated they would like to pursue a career in fisheries biology.

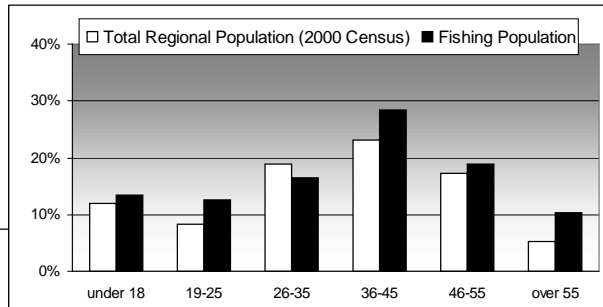
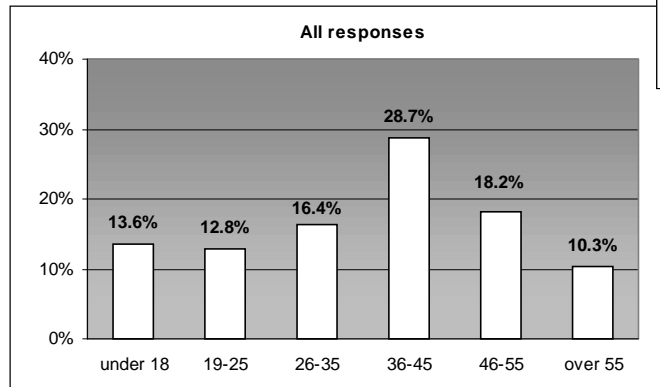
- ♦ **Low Interest in Fisheries Training:** The respondents least interested in fisheries business training were those aged 19 to 25 (41%).
- ♦ **Seafood Processing and Marketing:** The highest level of interest in training in the areas of seafood processing and marketing was the Lake and Peninsula area (41% very interested). Least interested were the Bethel area (33% not interested) and Bristol Bay (38% not interested).
- ♦ **Get Out of Fishing:** Overall, almost 40% of respondents said they were ready to get out of fishing and do something different. Only 11% of respondents said they were not interested in working at a job other than fishing. This is a very surprising result based on prior anecdotal information from the field and is another indication that the string of poor fishing years in Western Alaska is weighing heavily on people’s attitudes about commercial fishing.
- ♦ **Region Least Interest in Fishing:** In contrast to their high level of interest in seafood processing and marketing, respondents in the Lake and Peninsula Borough region indicated the lowest percentage of interest in continuing only to fish (4%), and the highest number of people who said they were ready to do something different for a living (51%).

- ♦ **Crew Less Interested in Fishing:** Crew persons were somewhat more inclined to do something different than fishing (46%) than were permit holders (32%). This result was expected based on the larger investment that permit holders have in the fisheries.
- ♦ **Fishing and View of the Future:** People who were of the opinion that fish runs and prices would not be returning to previous high levels were much less likely to be interested in training for new fisheries opportunities or training in seafood processing and marketing. These same people were also much more likely to indicate that they were ready to get into some employment other than fishing.
- ♦ **Popular Training Choices:** The most popular training choices by far were in the fields of construction work and mechanics. These were followed in order of interest by training in computers, electrical skills, transportation, building maintenance, office administration, metal work and accounting.
- ♦ **Least Popular Training:** The least selected choices were training in clerical work, food services, health services, graphic arts, sales, arts and entertainment and personal care.
- ♦ **Regional Training Choices:** Respondents from the different regions generally responded about the same regarding interest in job types. Notable exceptions were a significantly greater interest in the Alaska Peninsula and Aleutians areas for training related to oil and gas and transportation employment; and a relatively smaller degree of interest in the Bethel, Wade Hampton and Nome areas regarding computer training compared to other regions.
- ♦ **Native Training Choices:** Native respondents indicated somewhat more interest than non-Natives in the job training options of construction, accounting, clerical, food services, personal care and social services – options that generally reflect current employment opportunities in rural Alaska.
- ♦ **Non-Native training choices:** Non-Natives indicated significantly greater interest than Natives in the training areas of administration, arts and entertainment, graphic arts, oil and mining, sales, science and lab work, and wood products.
- ♦ **Previous Job Training:** 44% of respondents indicated they had experienced some job training. Most regions were similar in the pattern of their response, with between 40% and 50% of respondents reporting they had previous job training. Exceptions were the Aleutians area where only 30% had previous training, and the Nome area where 60% indicated previous training experience.
- ♦ **Job Training Led to Job:** 73% of respondents who had taken job training indicated that the training had led to a job. Success in job training leading to a job appeared to be the case across all regions.
- ♦ **Travel for Training:** 70% of respondents said they would be willing to travel to undertake job training. An additional 17.7% indicated they could do so if the training location were in their region. Generally, responses were very positive (between 60% and 80%) across all regions, age groups, education levels, gender and ethnicity.
- ♦ **Move for Employment:** 49% indicated they would be willing to move to another town to get a job and an additional 17% (for a total of 66%) would be willing to do so if it was a location in the same region of Alaska.
- ♦ **Commute to Employment:** Over three-quarters of all respondents said they would be interested in commuting to their place of employment. Respondents indicated generally high interest across all regions in commuting, age groups, and education levels, and regardless of differences in gender, ethnicity or whether they were permit holders or crew persons.
- ♦ **Commuting Decision:** Overwhelmingly, the primary factor in decisions about commuting was “job pay.” This was followed at a great distance by consideration of the kind of job. Job location was the least important factor.
- ♦ **Willingness to Travel:** Alaska Natives generally expressed somewhat more willingness than non-Natives to travel for training, move to another community for a job, and commute.

**Characteristics of the Survey Respondents**

**Age**

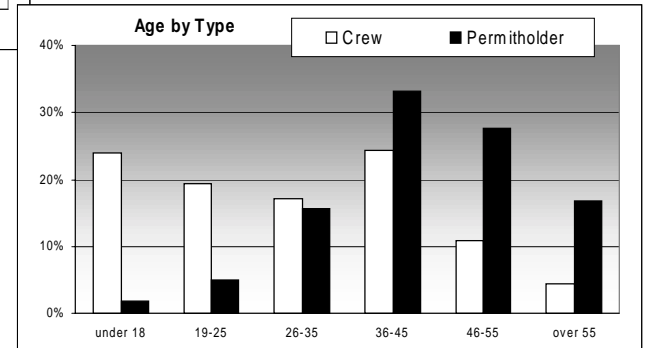
The largest group of fishers by age is the 36-45 age group. There appears to be somewhat of a “baby boom” effect in the fisher population with a substantially greater number of fishers in this 36-45



As would be expected, there is a clear pattern regarding age and whether a person is a permit holder or a crew person. There are few young permit holders, and people who are still fishing into their 40s are more likely to be permit holders rather than crew persons.

age group compared to those who are coming behind – there are about 43% fewer respondents in the 26-35 age group.

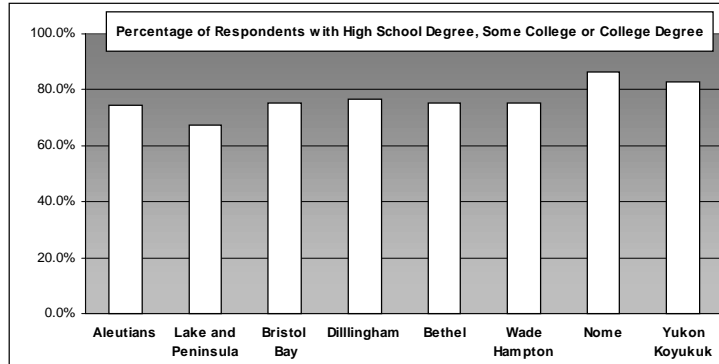
This somewhat mirrors, but is more accentuated than, the population as a whole for this region as determined by the 2000 U.S. Census.



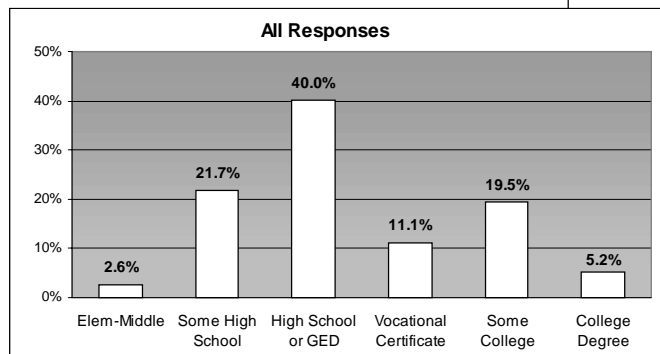
**Education**

Overall, 40% of respondents had at least a high school degree, about 20% had some college education, and about 5% had a college degree. About 10% of both crew and permit holders indicated they had received a vocational certificate.

Respondents were well educated across all regions. Between 67.6% and 87.5% of them had

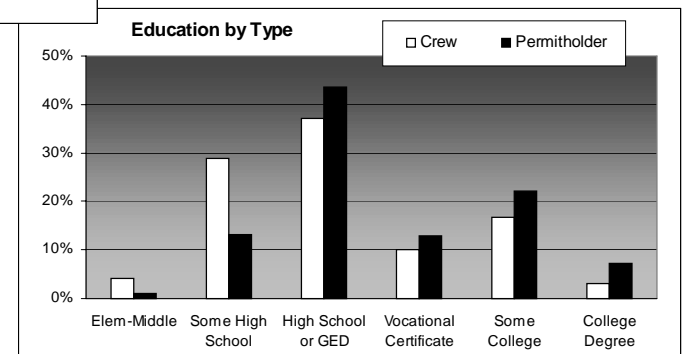


The education levels of crew and permit holders were similar, although permit holders were somewhat more likely to have a high school or college education. Respondents who said they had only an elementary school education or some high school were more likely to be crew, which is to be expected given that crew make up the largest part of the lower age groups.



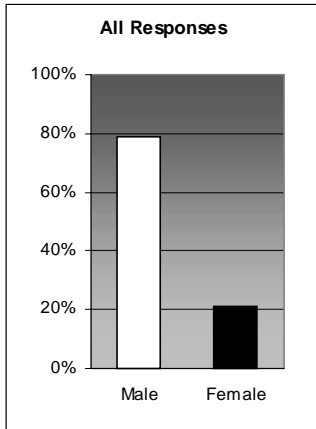
a high school degree or more. Nome region respondents reported the highest level of education.

Non-Native respondents tended to have more college-level education than Native respondents. About 60% of Natives had a high school degree or college education compared to about 85% for non-Native respondents.

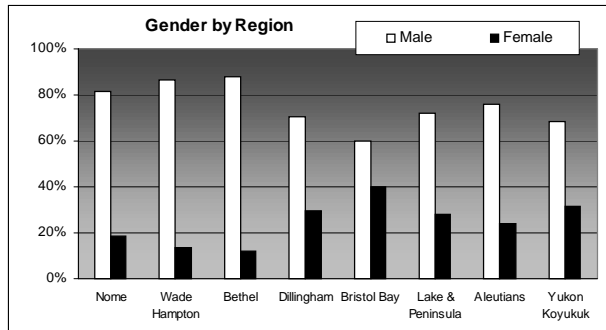


## Gender

About 79% of all respondents were males and 21% were females. The percentage of females varied from 12% in the Bethel Census Area to 40% in the Bristol Bay Borough.

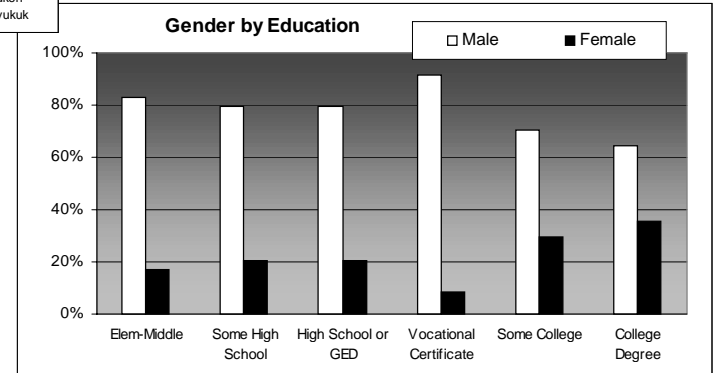


Looking at permit holders and crew persons separately, the ratio of male to female was similar – about 80% of all crew persons were male, and the same was true for permit holders. However, taken on a regional basis, there was



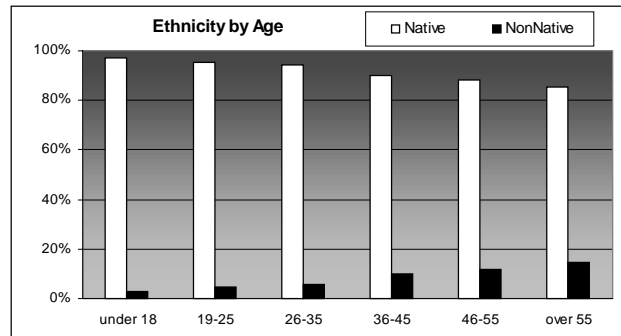
significant variation. Among females, the split between permit holders and crew varied significantly by region. The Yukon Koyukuk had the highest percentage of women permit holders with almost 88% of female respondents indicating that they were permit holders. In the Bethel Census Area, 25% of the female respondents indicated they were permit holders.

Women respondents as a group tended to have a higher levels of education than did male respondents. Male respondents were about three times more likely to have a vocational certificate than were females.

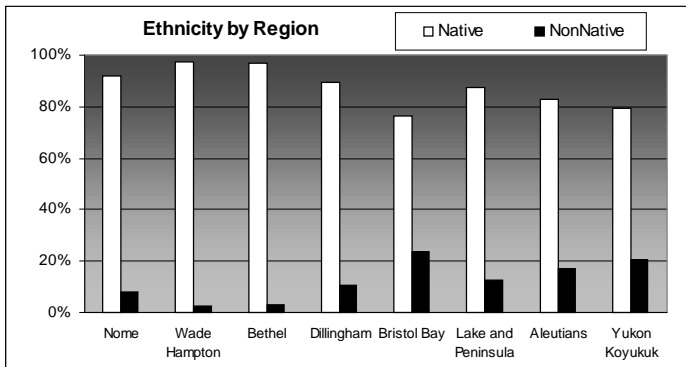


## Ethnicity

Overwhelmingly, survey respondents indicated that they were Alaska Native (91.5%). The 2000 U.S. Census indicated that Alaska Natives account for about 64% of the total population in this region. This is an indication of the relative importance of fishing to the Native population in western Alaska. Bristol Bay

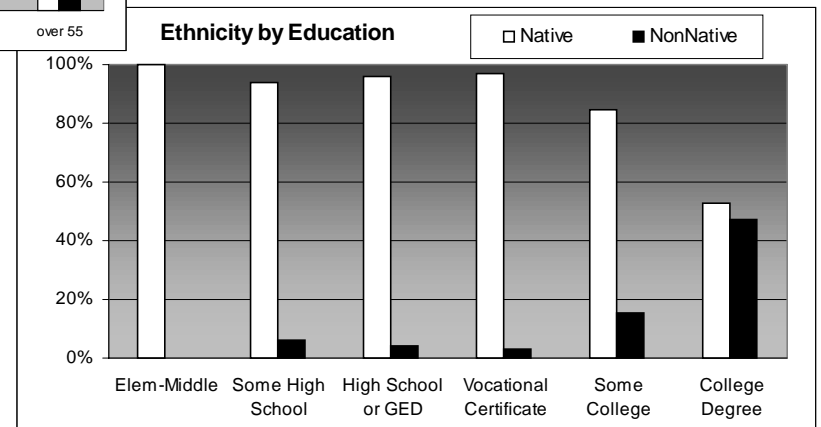


Respondents who reported having a college degree were evenly split between Native and non-Native. There was little to differentiate crew and permit holders and crew, or males and females, based on ethnicity.



Borough residents had the highest percentage of non-Native respondents (22%).

There was a consistent, but slight, trend towards increasing percentages of non-Natives in older age groups.

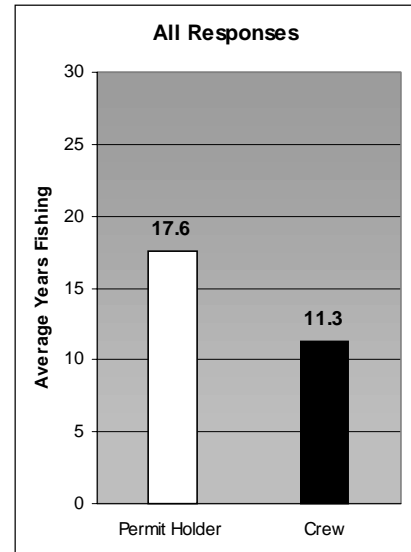
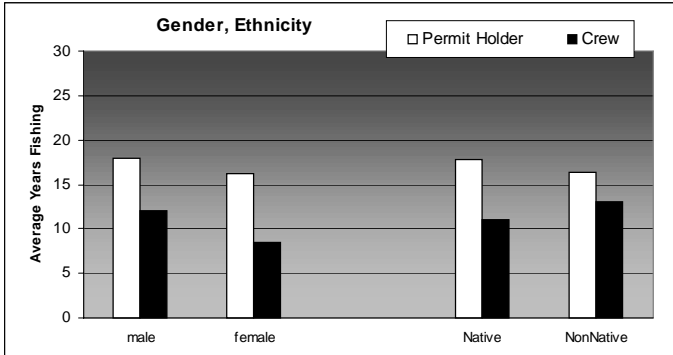
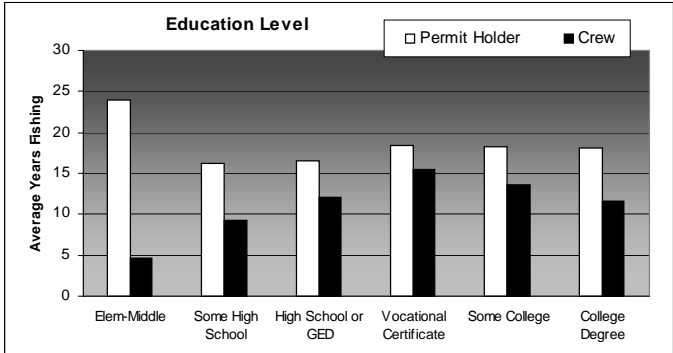
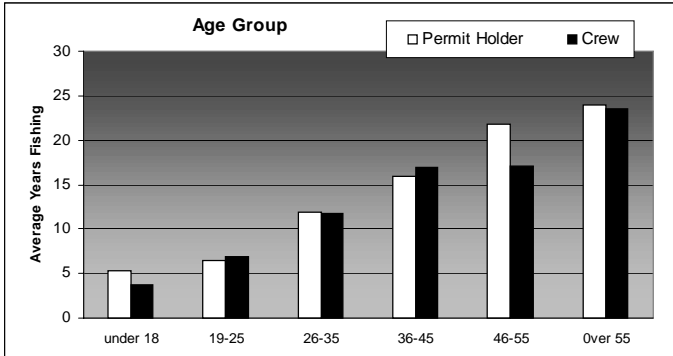
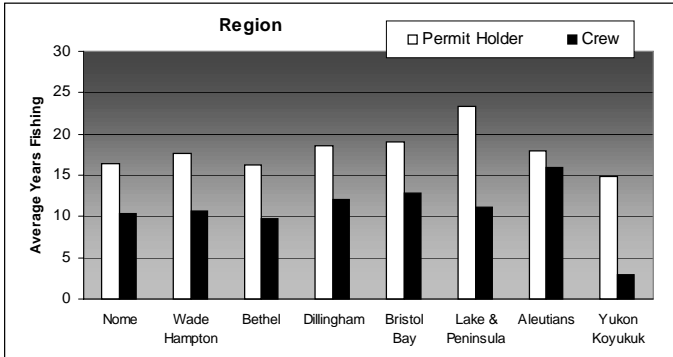




**Years as a Permit Holder or Crew Person**

Respondents who were permit holders indicated that on average they had owned their permits for 17.5 years. Respondents who were crew persons indicated they had worked as crew for an average of 11.5 years. Across all regions, the average length of time that permit holders had held their permits was similar, generally between 15 and 19 years, with the exception of Lake and Peninsula Borough where respondents have had their permits for an average of 23 years. In most regions, the average number of years of working as a crew person was reported to be between 10 and 13 years. The exceptions were the Aleutians where the average was 16 years and the Yukon Koyukuk where the average was 3 years.

Male permit holders and crew on average have worked more years in the fisheries than their female counterparts.



## Paid Employment Besides Commercial Fishing (2000)

Overall, 36% of respondents indicated they had no other paid employment besides fishing in 2000. 20.6% responded that they worked full time at a job other than fishing. 31.5% reported working at part-time work and about one-third of that number (11.8%) reported working a seasonal job besides fishing. The Aleutians region reported the highest percentage of fishers with no other paid employment (51.7%) while the Yukon-Koyukuk region reported the lowest percentage (23.1%).

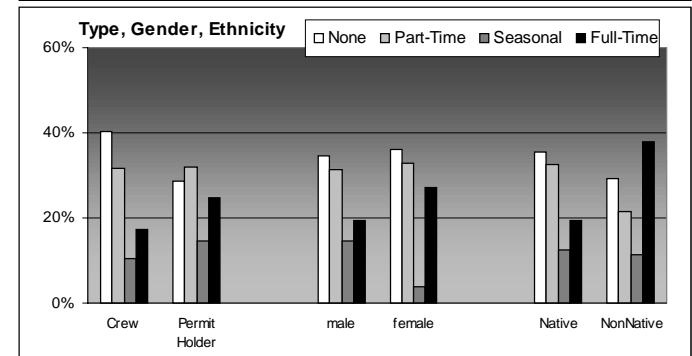
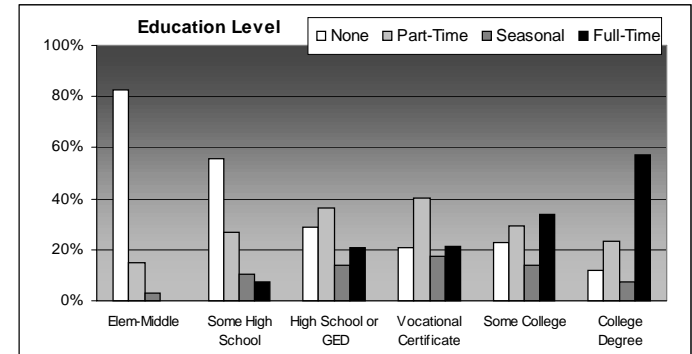
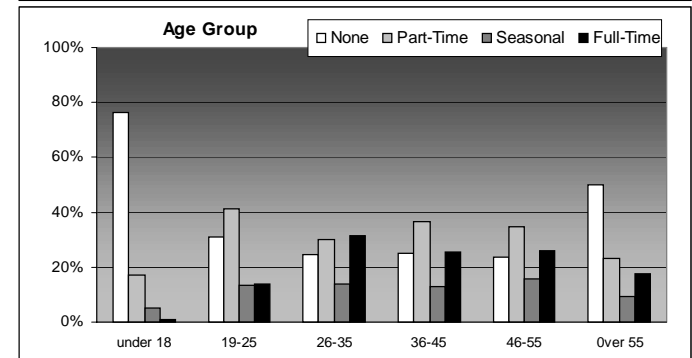
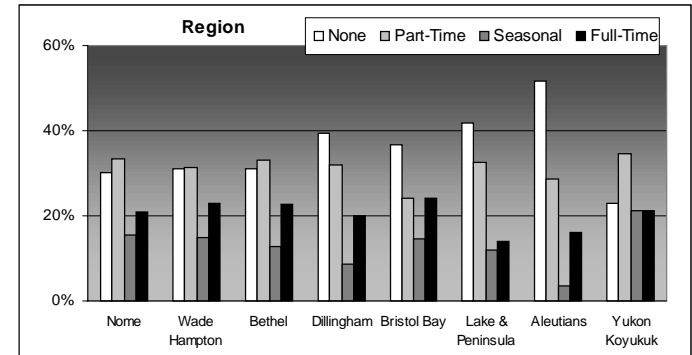
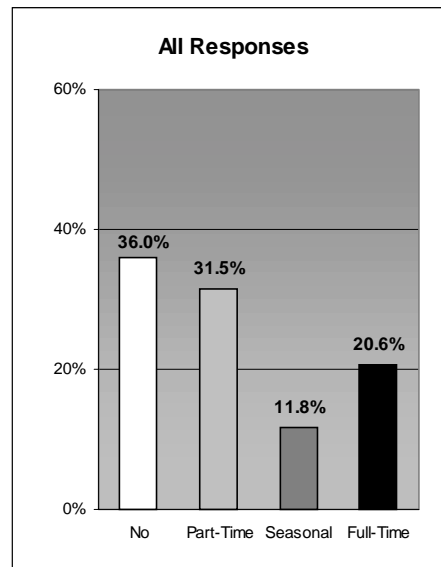
There was a clear correlation between the education level of the respondents and whether or not they reported having other employment besides commercial fishing. With increasing education levels, respondents were less likely to report “no other employment” and more likely to report “full-time” employment in addition to their commercial fishing.

Regarding age groups, as expected, the very young mostly reported “no other employment” (76.6%), and those over 55 also largely responded with this answer (50%). The 19 to 25 age group appeared to be growing into the world of full-time jobs. The remaining age groups, across the middle years of life (26 to 55), shared a consistent pattern with respect to employment other than fishing.

Crew persons were substantially more likely (40.4%) than permit holders (28.7%) to have no

other employment, and less likely to have a full-time paid employment besides fishing. Females were more likely to have a full-time job than were males, and indicated they worked at far fewer seasonal jobs. Non-Natives respondents were about twice as likely (37.9%) to have other full-time paid employment compared to Native respondents (19.5%).

When respondents were asked to describe what other paid employment they had besides commercial fishing, the most common response was laborer (15% of those who described their other work), closely followed by carpenter (13%). Other common responses were utility operators and maintenance (8%), store clerk (7%), equipment operator (6%), social services (5%) and custodian (5%). About 3% reported they were teachers, and another 3% indicated they worked as teacher’s aides.

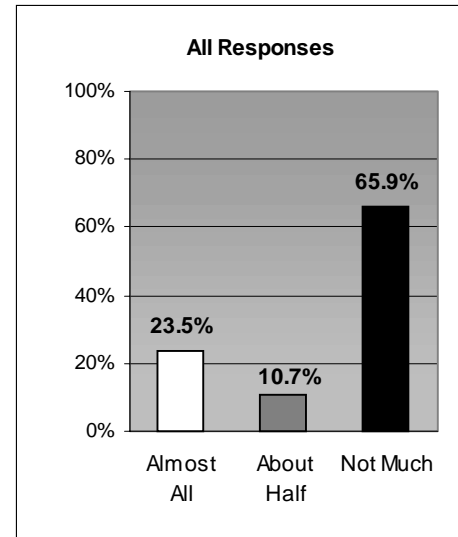
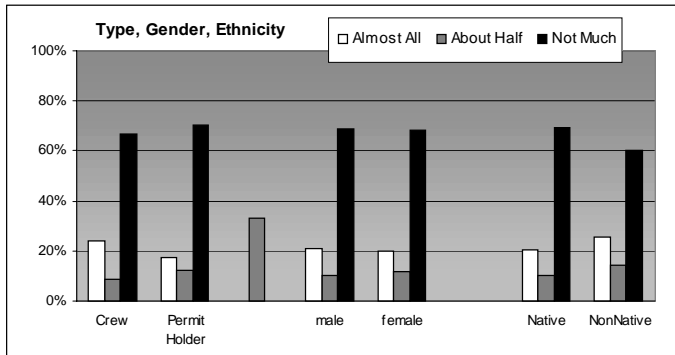
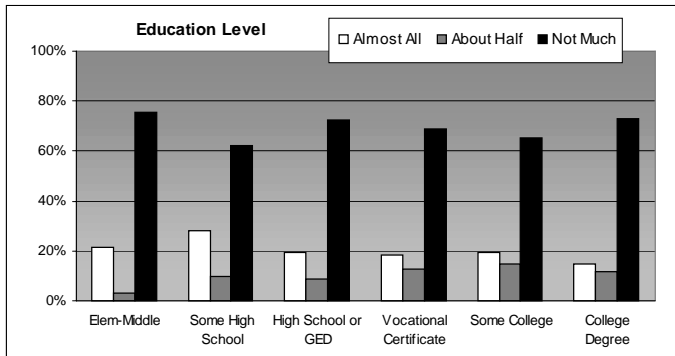
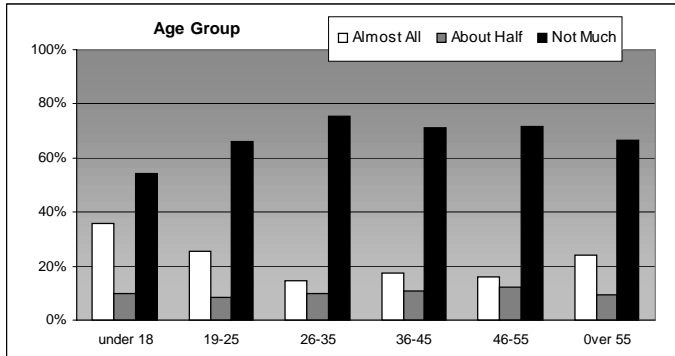
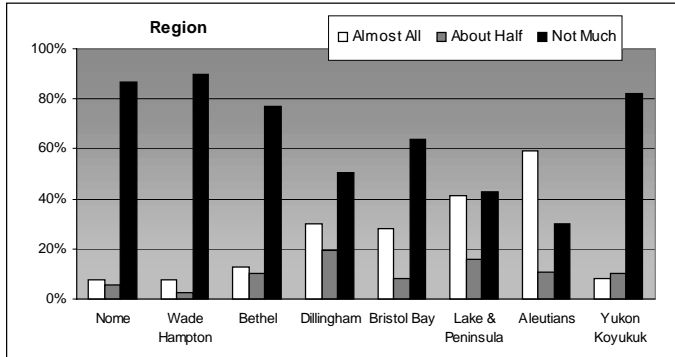


## How Much of Paid Income Was Commercial Fishing (in year 2000)

Overall, 23.5% of respondents indicated that commercial fishing represented “almost all” of their income from paid employment. 65.9% said that commercial fishing represented “not much” of their total paid employment income. Respondents in the Bristol Bay area regions (Dillingham and Aleutians Census Areas, and Bristol Bay and Lake and Peninsula Boroughs) were clearly the most reliant on commercial fishing with between 30% and 60% of respondents indicating they received almost all their paid income from commercial fishing.

Among respondents, younger people and people over 55 indicated they were somewhat more reliant on commercial fishing as their main source of paid income. There appeared to be little correspondence between a respondent’s education level and what portion of their paid income was derived from commercial fishing.

Crew persons who responded indicated they were slightly more dependent on commercial fishing for their paid income than were permit holders. Male and female respondents were essentially identical in this regard. Non-Natives indicated they were somewhat more reliant on commercial fishing for paid income (39.8% either half or almost all) compared to Native respondents (30.6%).



## Will Fish Runs and Prices Return to Previous Levels

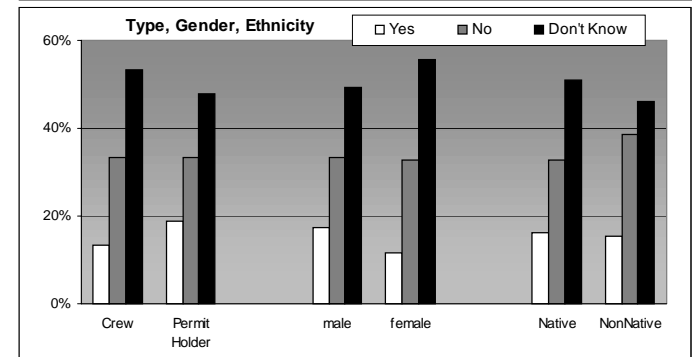
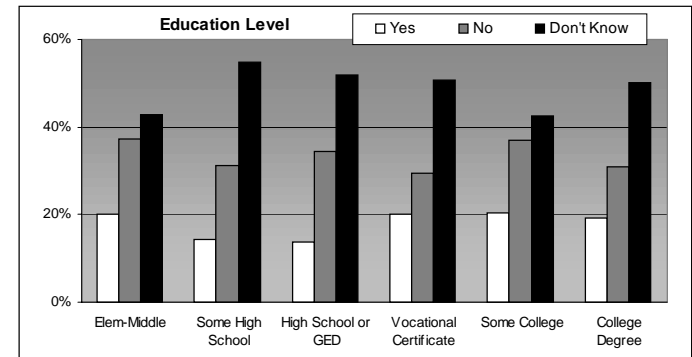
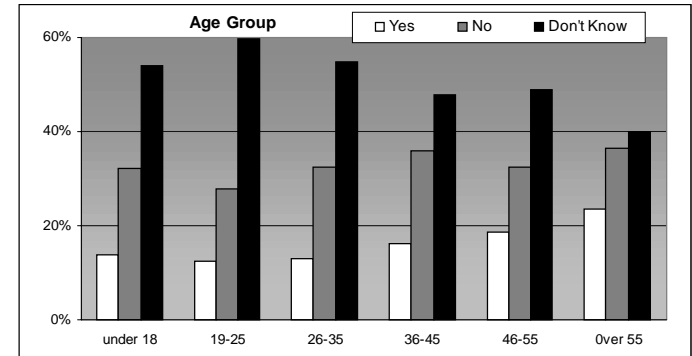
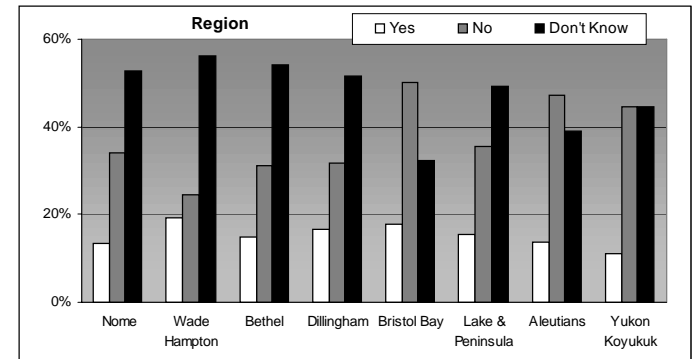
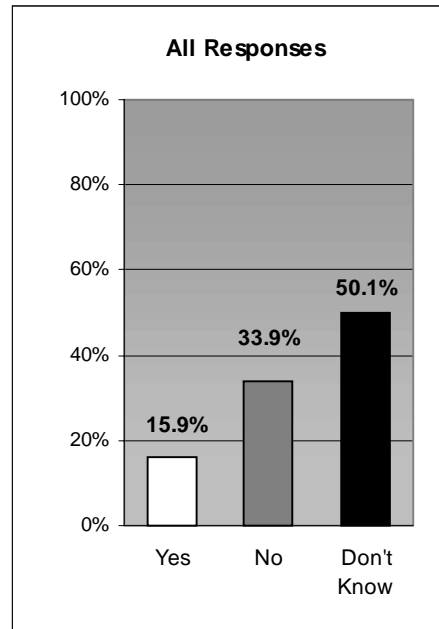
Overall, the response to this question was generally pessimistic. About twice as many people (33.9%) believed that fish runs and prices would not be returning to earlier levels, compared to those (15.9%) who thought things would improve. Half of respondents reported they didn't know what would be happening. Regions that stood out were the Bristol Bay Borough and the Aleutians and Yukon-Koyukuk areas, where about half of all respondents thought that fish runs and prices would not be returning to previous levels.

There was a tendency to be more optimistic with increasing age. People with some college education or a college degree were somewhat more optimistic than were those people who indicated their education level as some high school, or a high school degree.

Permit holders were slightly more optimistic about things improving (19%) compared to crew persons (13.4%); and male respondents tended to be more optimistic (17.3%) than female respondents (11.6%). Non-Natives were slightly more pessimistic about the return of fish runs and prices than Native respondents.

There was a strong correspondence between responses to this question and how people responded to the other survey questions regarding their interest in training and other employment. People who were of the opinion that fish runs and prices would not be returning to previous high levels were much less likely to be interested in training for new fisheries opportunities or training in seafood processing and marketing. These same people were also much more likely to indicate that they were ready to get into some employment other than fishing.

On the other hand, based on the responses to this survey, there appeared to be little correlation between a respondent's opinion about future fish runs and fish prices, and their attitudes about moving or commuting to another location for work.



### Respondent Comments

At the end of the survey, respondents were offered the opportunity to provide comments or suggestions regarding job training opportunities for Western Alaskans. Over 550 people did so. Following is a small sample of their comments.

- ✓ I believe the risk management and business skills inherent in the fishing industry translate well into white and blue collar trades, with the proper training. — Nome, permit holder
- ✓ I need job training because our fishing is what we live off of and when there is no fishing there is no us. We will all have to move. — Sand Point, crew
- ✓ The state needs to expand transportation infrastructure to be successful in the future. Otherwise everyone will have to move out. — Saint Mary's, permit holder
- ✓ I know my brother in law, sister and her fiance would all like training. They are all in Anchorage because there were no jobs in the village. We need financial help- not minimum wage jobs. — Shaktoolik, crew
- ✓ At my age training is not interesting to me, but if I was younger it would be. — Kipnuk, crew
- ✓ In the beginning there was not much job training around here. Only after they started having fishing disasters in the area and now it is in training in fishing field areas. It should expanded to different jobs that are needed in the area that people live in, or jobs that might be needed in the future like high tech jobs. — Bethel, permit holder
- ✓ I think that with all the fish and game resources in rural Alaska, helping western Alaska people develop into the tourist industry would be a natural business opportunity. — Dillingham, permit holder
- ✓ We need more computer and Internet jobs out in the bush. — Mountain Village, permit holder

- ✓ People should get training, but be prepared to leave Western AK because there are no jobs. — South Naknek, crew
- ✓ We need computer technology that will allow jobs in the home, and need to convince someone we need better Internet access to rural Alaska to get jobs going. — Nome, permit holder
- ✓ Finding a job in the village has been so hard for me that I have moved to Anchorage to find a job, but the job I am currently taking isn't paying me enough. — Napakiak, crew
- ✓ In the Chignik area we have access to many kinds of seafood besides salmon, but no markets or high transport cost limits the fisheries. We need people to learn the path to markets we all know are there. — Chignik Lagoon, permit holder
- ✓ They should have more than one person from each community go to training so they will feel more comfortable. — Chignik Lagoon, crew
- ✓ Encourage small business like a bakery, part sales, and maintenance to make communities more self-sufficient. — Emmonak, permit holder
- ✓ There are a lot of unemployed people in my region that want training. I, for one, need and want training but think that I (and a lot of others who want training) don't know how to find it for different jobs. If the opportunity existed, there would be some interest.. — Elim, crew
- ✓ Need more skilled local people to work in their community rather than people coming in from outside of our region and take over the local jobs. — Kongiganak, permit holder
- ✓ I think training should be OUT of the region to show village people that there are other places to work and live. — Kotlik, crew

- ✓ We need someone working in the community to promote training, and help fill out forms. — New Stuyahok, permit holder
- ✓ Due to poor prospects I acquired a job in the early spring of 2000 at the local utility company. However, if the fishing industry picks back and it again becomes possible to sustain a comfortable lifestyle I would rather be fishing for a living. — Sand Point, crew
- ✓ Western Alaskans need to learn and determine their own fate. Regional control of our resources is imperative to our survival. Change may be constant, but we can be a big part of the decision. — King Salmon, crew
- ✓ I believe any job training and employment would be better than disaster relief programs. — Naknek, permit holder
- ✓ Would like to be able to take my kids with me to training in another location as I am a single parent. — Nunam Iqua, permit holder
- ✓ More undergraduate students with some college background who are in poor economic areas should be given the opportunity to complete their studies via the internet at below normal communication charges and good incentives for completion. Most of us are in debt due to the fact that we do not have rich family members to pay our way. — Akiachak, crew
- ✓ There is a need for more refresher courses. — Unalakleet, permit holder
- ✓ Along with job training there needs to be more education against drugs and alcohol and more emphasis on responsibility to employers. Employees need to be more dependable. — Marshall, permit holder
- ✓ I would like to attend a voc. training program in AK, but I need help finding different types of funding that might be able to help me pay for classes, housing, transportation, etc. — Kipnuk, crew

## Interest in Training for New Opportunities in Fishing

Overall, respondents were about evenly divided regarding their interest in training for new opportunities in fishing. This response, that half the fishers were not interested in training within the fishing business, may signal a wariness of respondents regarding the future of fishing as a profession. When asked to identify what specific training they were interested in, 524 individuals responded. Leading areas of interest included new fisheries technology (20%), improving fish quality (20%), and marketing (8%). Thirty people (6%) indicated they would like to study fisheries biology.

On a regional basis, the Nome region was most interested in fisheries business training with almost 70% responding “yes.” The Lake and Peninsula, Dillingham, and Aleutians areas were next with just less than 60% indicating an interest. Respondents in the Yukon-Koyukuk and Bethel regions expressed the least interest in fisheries business training (40%). When we looked at the age groups in these respective regions we found these leanings in these regions generally across all age groups. That is, within regions, people at all age groups were generally consistent in their response to this question.

By age, the respondents most interested in fisheries business training were those under 18 (60%). The respondents least interested in this type of training were those aged 19 to 25 (41%). Based on responses to another question later in the survey, this age group

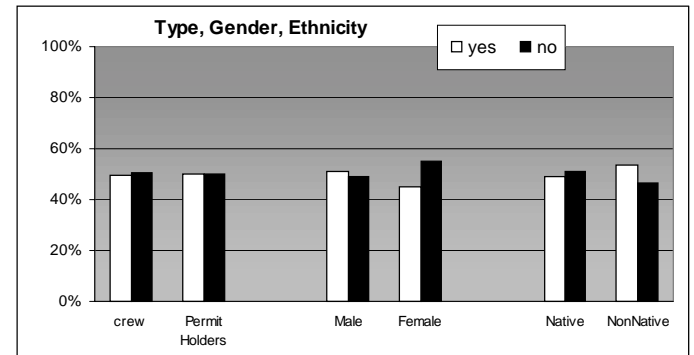
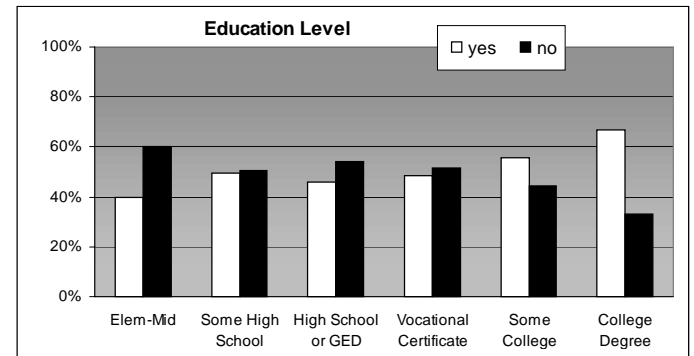
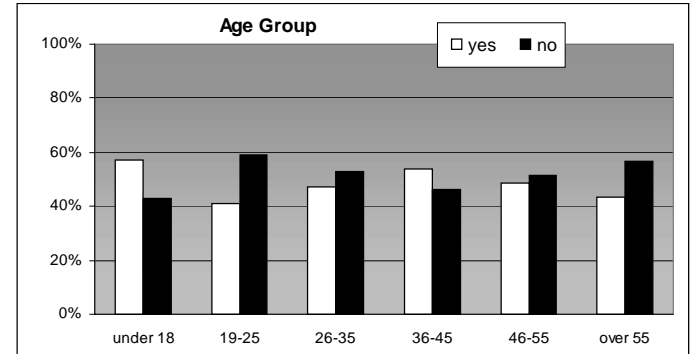
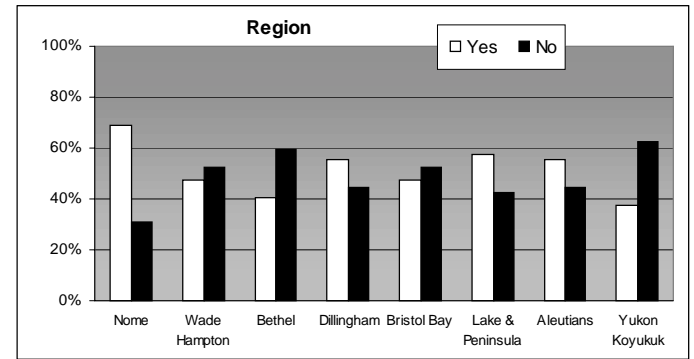
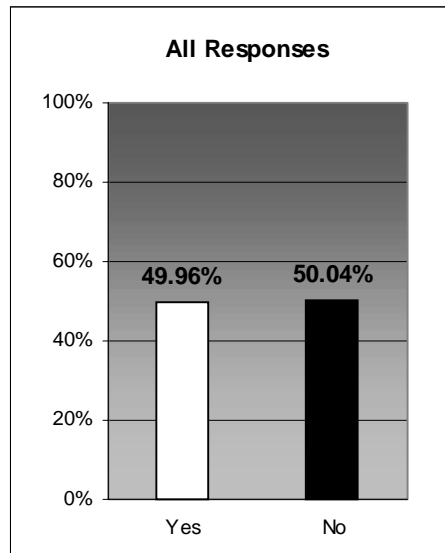
was the most pessimistic about fish runs and prices returning to levels experienced before the current string of poor fishing years. Those over 55 were also generally less interested in training for new fishing business opportunities.

By education level, there was a correlation between education and interest in fisheries training. Respondents with a high school degree or vocational certificate were somewhat less than 50% interested in this kind of training, while 57% of those with some college were interested, and 64% of respondents with a college degree were interested. College graduates, as a group, were also the most optimistic about the return of fish runs and prices to previous levels.

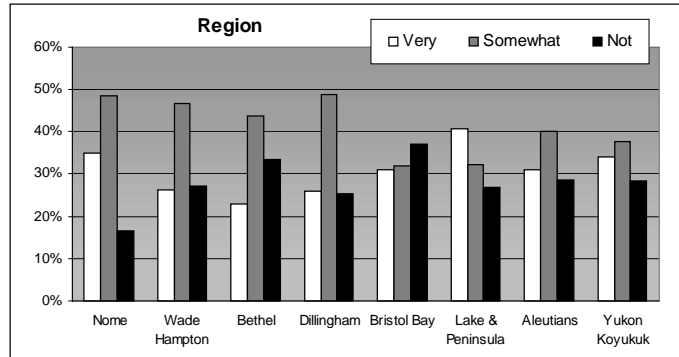
On the whole, the interest in fisheries training indicated by both permit holders and crew was essentially identical at about 50%.

Female respondents expressed slightly more interest than males did, and non-Natives expressed slightly more interest than did Native respondents.

Elsewhere in the survey, respondents were asked if they thought fish runs and prices would return to levels experienced prior to the disaster. Overall, those who answered “no” to that question indicated far less interest in training for new opportunities in fishing – 43.8% compared to 63.6% of those who thought fish runs and prices would return to previous levels.

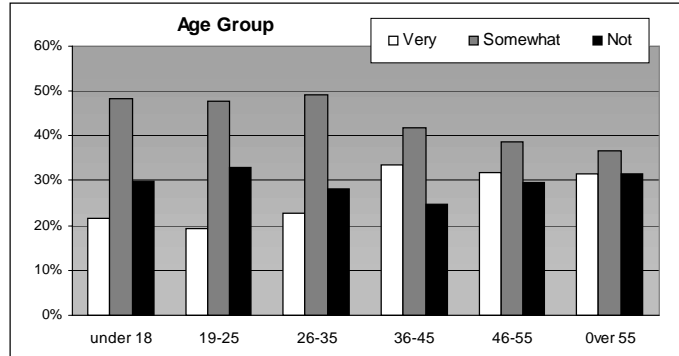


**Interest in Training to Prepare and Market Seafood**



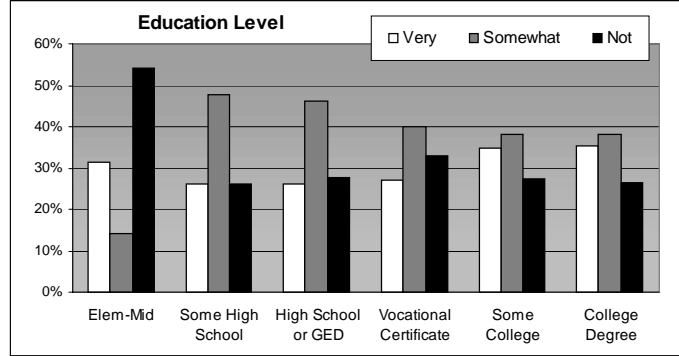
Overall, over 71% said they were either very (28%) or somewhat (43.3%) interested in training in the areas of seafood processing and marketing. This response was counter to a popular notion that fishers are generally not interested in this aspect of the fisheries business.

Male respondents were more than twice as likely as female respondents to say they were “very interested” in this training.

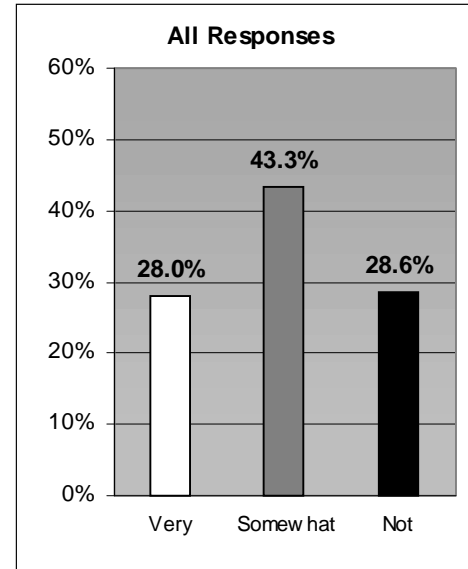


On a regional basis, Nome area respondents indicated the most interest in this kind of training with only 17% of respondents saying they were not interested in this kind of training. (The Nome region also indicated the highest interest in fisheries training in the previous survey question.) The highest level of “very interested” was expressed by respondents in the Lake and Peninsula area (41% very interested). Least interested were the Bethel area (33% not interested) and Bristol Bay (38% not interested).

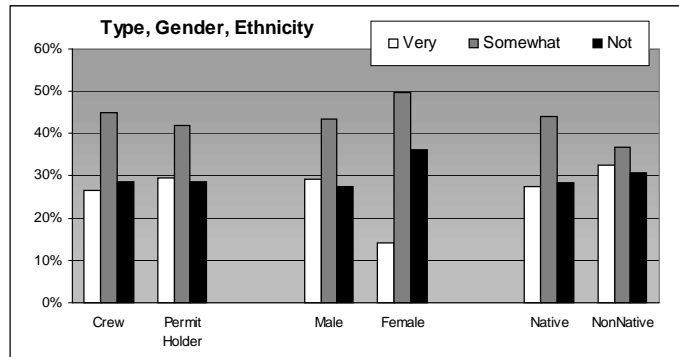
Elsewhere in the survey, respondent’s were asked if they thought fish runs and prices would return to levels experienced prior to the disaster. Those who answered “no” to that question indicated much less interest in training to prepare and market seafood – 14.8% compared to 35.9% of those who thought fish runs and prices would return to previous levels.



By education level, those with only elementary or middle school education indicated the least interest (54.3% not interested). However all age groups expressed similar levels of “very interested,” ranging from 26% to 35%.



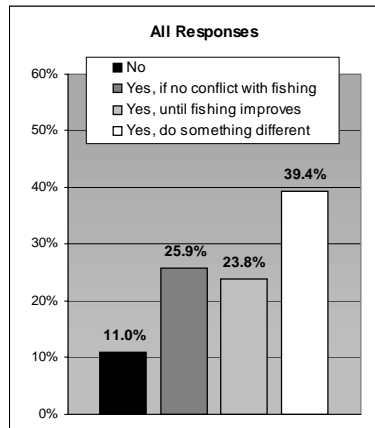
About 30% of respondents over the age of 35 indicated they were “very interested” in this kind of training, while only about 20% of those under 35 indicated they were “very interested.” There was essentially no difference in the interest expressed by permit holders and crew persons.



## Interest in Working at a Job Other Than Fishing

Overall, only 11% of respondents said they were not interested in working at a job other than fishing. Almost 40% said they were ready to get out of fishing and do something different. This is a very surprising result based on prior anecdotal information from the field and is another indication that the string of poor fishing years in western Alaska is weighing heavily on people's attitudes about commercial fishing. 27% indicated they would be interested in doing other work if it did not interfere with fishing, and 23% said they would be interested in other work, but just until fishing improved.

In a previous question almost half of respondents said they were not interested in training for new fisheries opportunities. By cross tabulating the results of these two questions it was found that respondents who indicated they were not interested in fisheries training were 50% more likely to also indicate they were ready to work at something other than fishing.



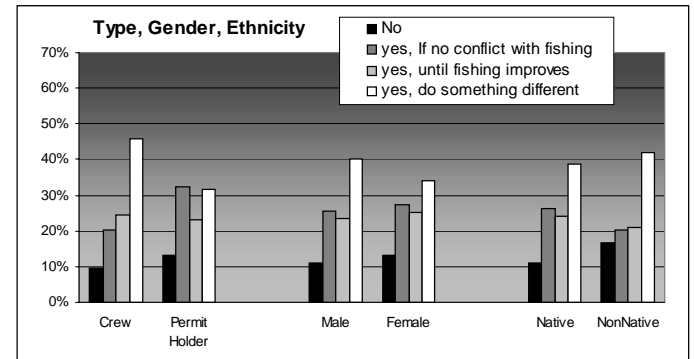
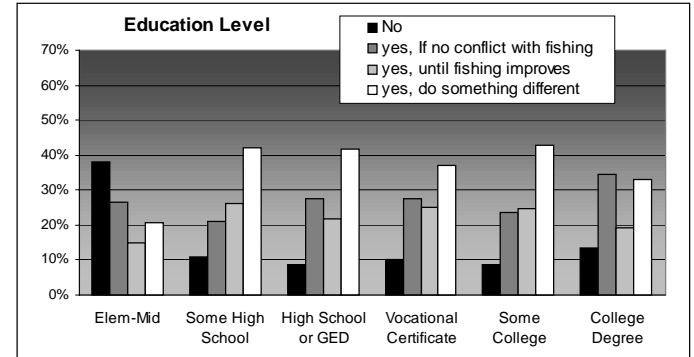
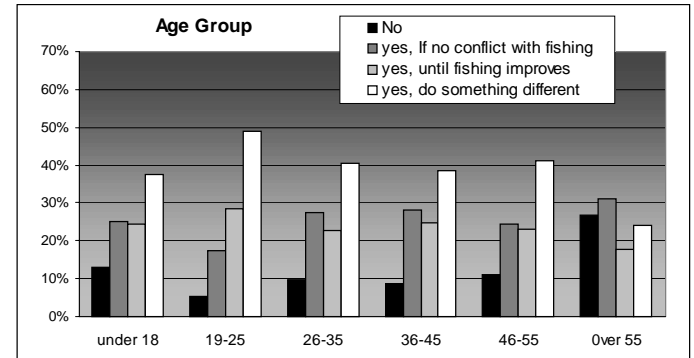
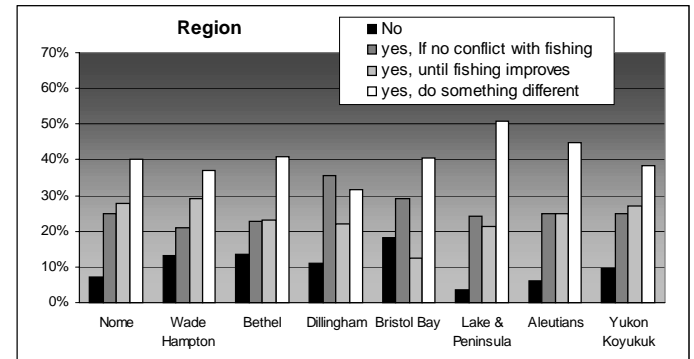
With regard to regions, the Bristol Bay Borough region indicated the highest percentage of respondents who did not want to do work other than fishing (18%). The Lake and Peninsula Borough region had the lowest percentage of respondents who wanted to continue fishing (4%) and the highest number of people who said they were ready to doing something else for a living (51%). This may reflect regional concerns about resource availability related to recent federal management decisions associated with steller sealion protection.

As might be expected, respondents over 55 of age expressed markedly less interest in doing something other than fishing. The very youngest age group also indicated somewhat less interest in doing work other than fishing when compared to respondents with ages between 19 and 55, who expressed fairly similar patterns of interest in work other than fishing.

With the exception of those respondents with only an elementary or middle school education, all education level groups demonstrated similar patterns of responses to this question, although those with college degrees indicated slightly less interest in doing other work. In contrast, those with the least education were almost four times as likely to indicate that they had no interest in doing some other kind of work than commercial fishing.

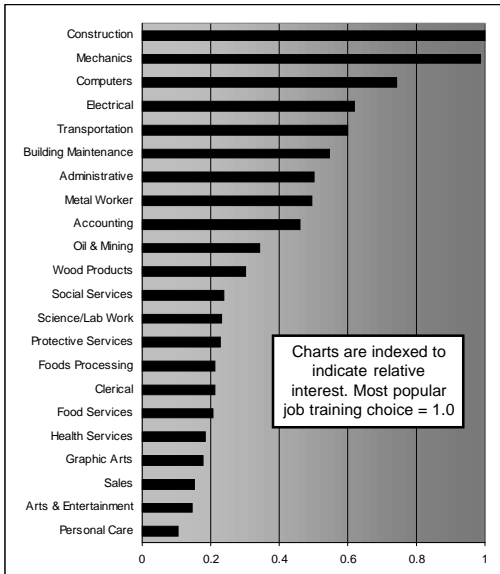
Crew persons were somewhat more inclined to do something different than fishing (45.7%) than were permit holders (31.5%). This result was expected based on the greater investment that permit holders have in the fisheries. Female respondents indicated they were somewhat more interested than their male counterparts in doing other work.

Elsewhere in the survey, respondents were asked if they thought fish runs and prices would return to levels experienced prior to the disaster. Those who answered "no" to that question indicated much greater readiness to do something different than fishing – 49.9% compared to 30.5% of those who thought fish runs and prices would return to previous levels.





## Interested in What Kinds of Job Training



Overall, the most popular training choices by far were in the fields of construction work and mechanics. These were followed in order of interest by training in computers, electrical skills, transportation, building maintenance, office administration, metal work and accounting. Compared to training in construction, only about one-third as many people indicated an interest in training in the oil and mining industry or the wood products industry. The least selected choices were training in clerical work, food services, health services, graphic arts, sales, arts and entertainment and personal care. These

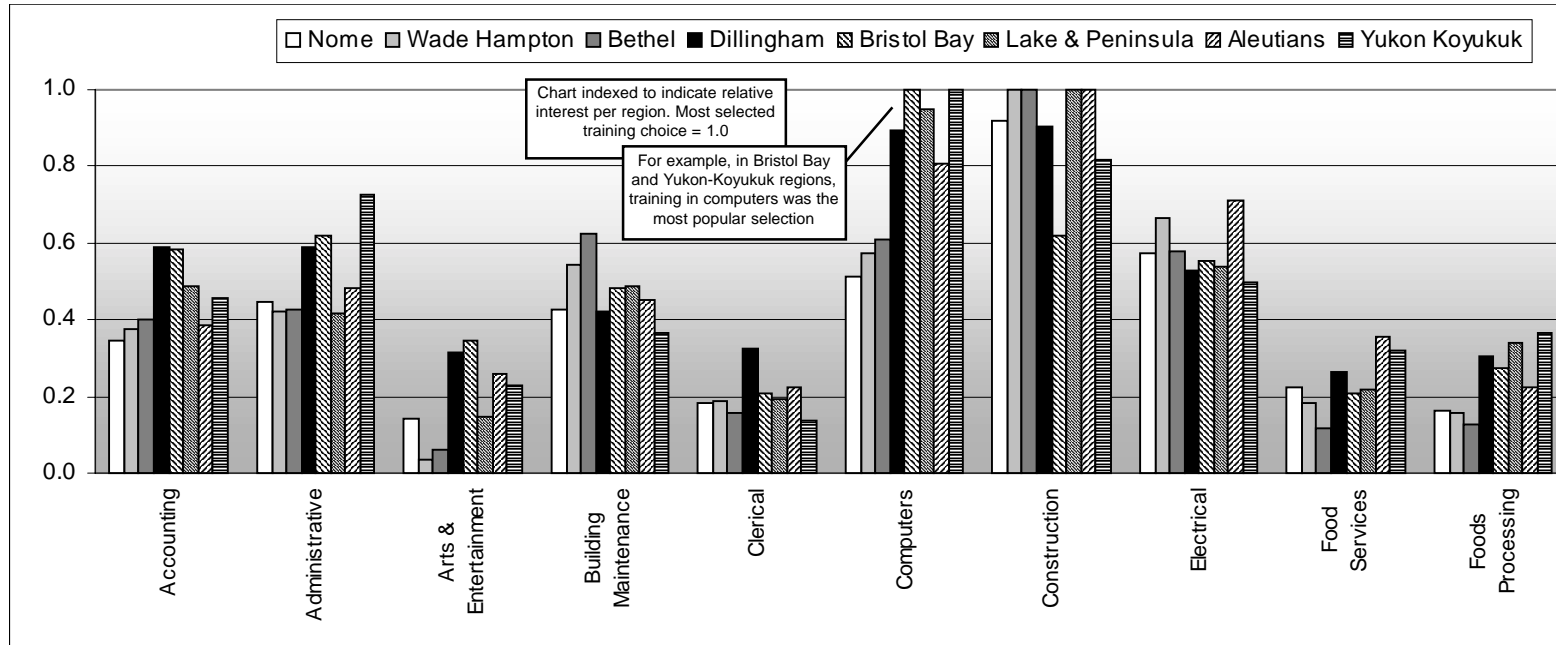
related to Oil and Gas and transportation employment; and a relatively smaller degree of interest in the Bethel, Wade Hampton and Nome areas regarding computer training compared to other regions.

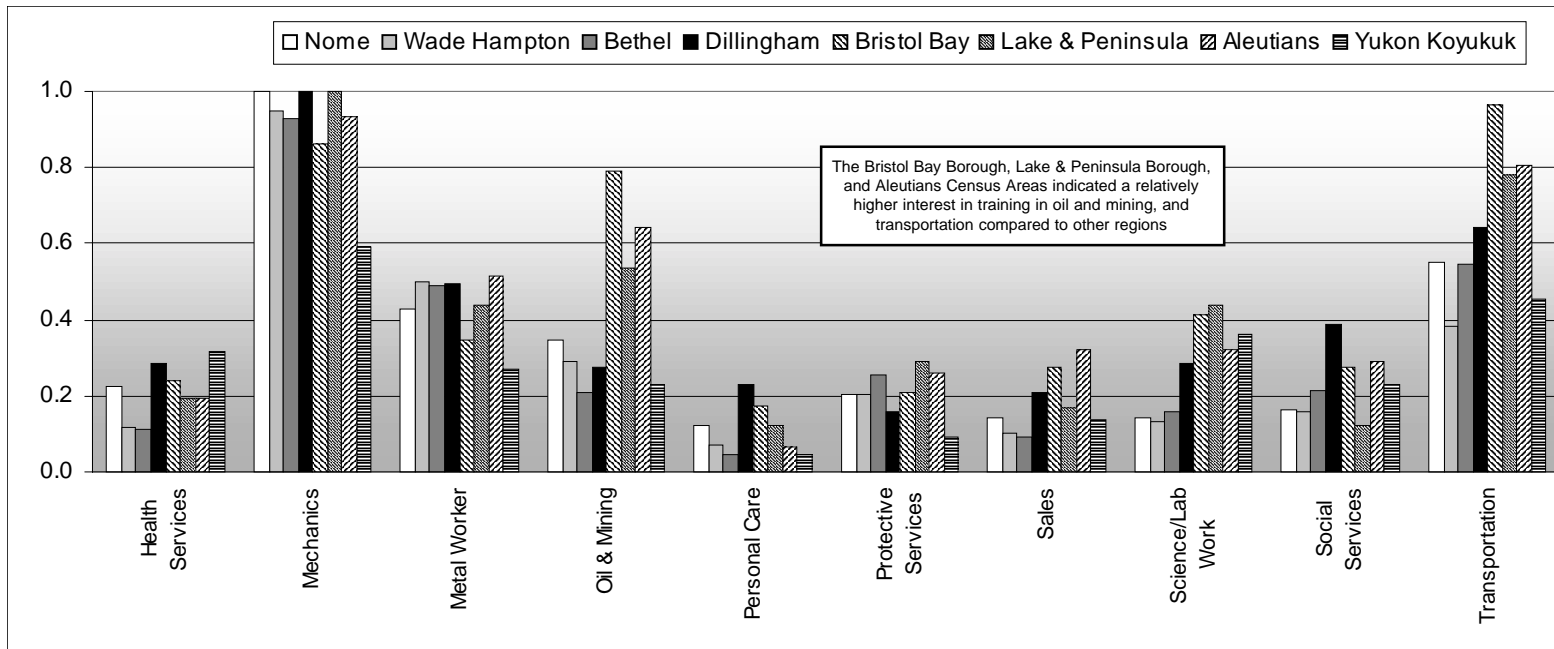
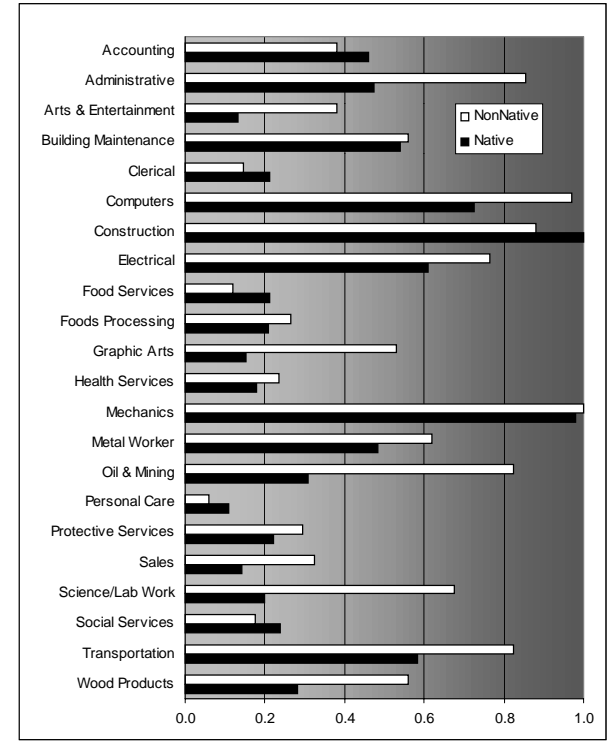
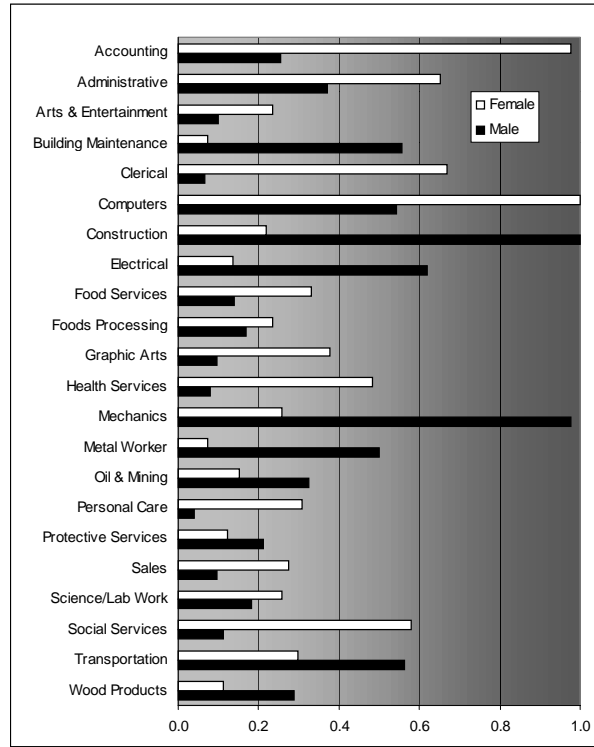
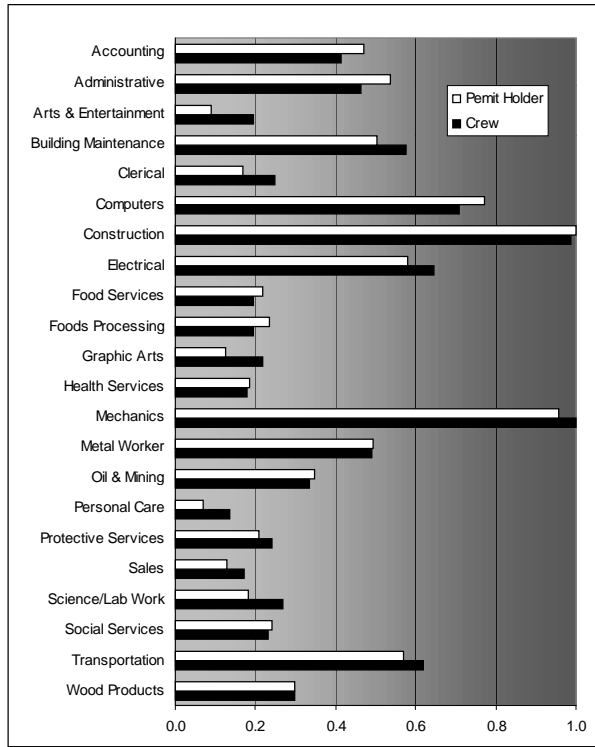
There were substantial differences between male and female respondents, generally following traditional gender-oriented patterns of employment. Females showed much greater interest in various office-skills training areas such as clerical, accounting administrative and computers. Females also showed significantly greater interest in care and service training such as social services, health services, food services, personal care, sales and graphic arts. Males expressed much greater interest in training in the construction trades, transportation and building maintenance.

There was generally little difference between permit holders and crew regarding preferences for any of the options for job training. Comparing the training preferences of Native and non-Native respondents, non-Natives indicated significantly greater interest in the training areas of administration, arts and entertainment, graphic arts, oil and mining, sales, science and lab work, and wood products. Non-Natives also indicated somewhat more interest in training with computers, electrical work, metal work and transportation than Native respondents did. Native respondents indicated somewhat more interest than non-Natives in the job training options of construction, accounting, clerical, food services, personal care and social services – options that generally reflect current employment opportunities in rural Alaska.

overall results largely reflect the preferences of the male respondents who represented almost 80% of all respondents.

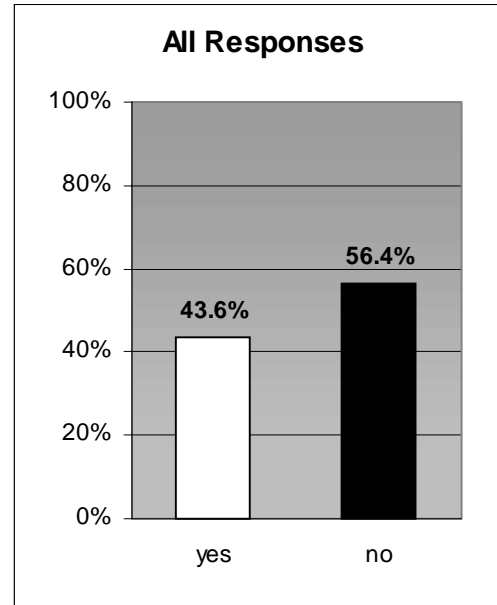
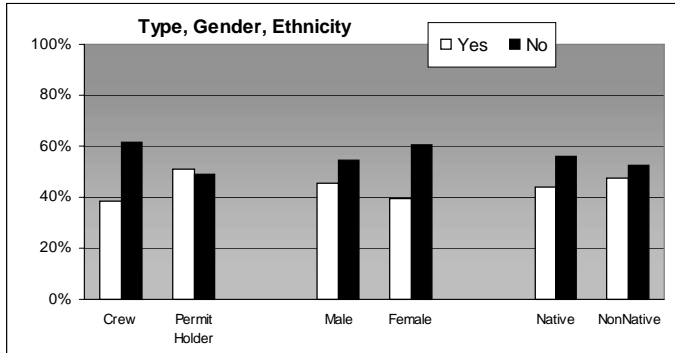
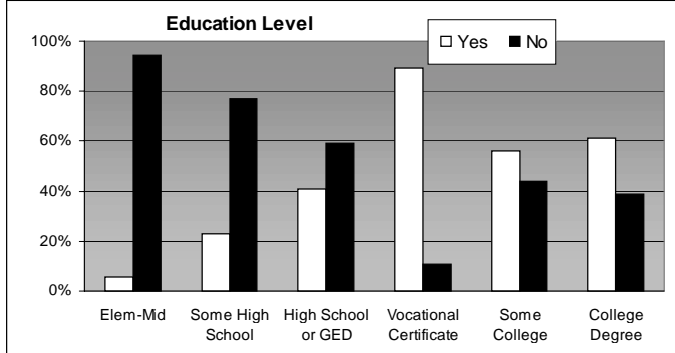
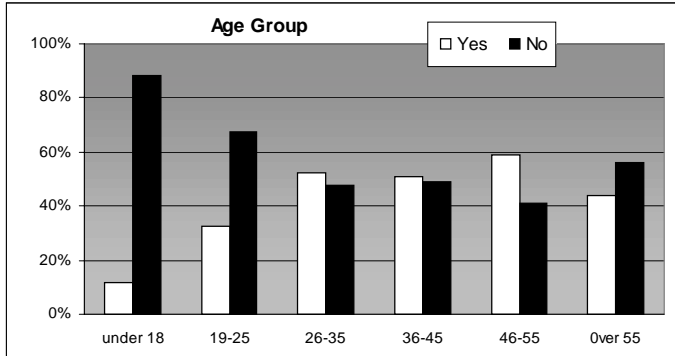
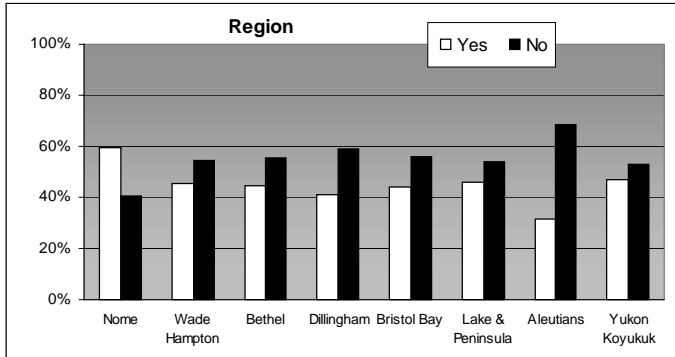
Respondents from the different regions generally responded about the same regarding interest in job types. Notable exceptions were a significantly greater interest in the Bristol Bay and Lake and Peninsula Boroughs, and Aleutians Census Area for training





### Previous Experience with Job Training

Overall, 43.6% of respondents indicated they had experienced some job training. Most regions were similar in the pattern of their response, with between 40% and 50% of respondents reporting they had previous job training. Exceptions were the Aleutians area where only 30% had previous training, and the Nome area where 60% indicated previous training experience.



As would be expected, increased experience with training was generally correlated to age of the respondents with the exception of respondents aged over 55 who, as a group, had less job training experience than people between the ages of 26 and 55. Education level of the respondents also correlated with job training, with the greatest experience being reported by people with a vocational certificate – almost 90% of which indicated having experienced some job training.

Permit holders reported somewhat more job training experience than crew. Female respondents indicated they had slightly less job training experience than male respondents did. Native and non-Native respondents indicated about the same level of experience (40%).

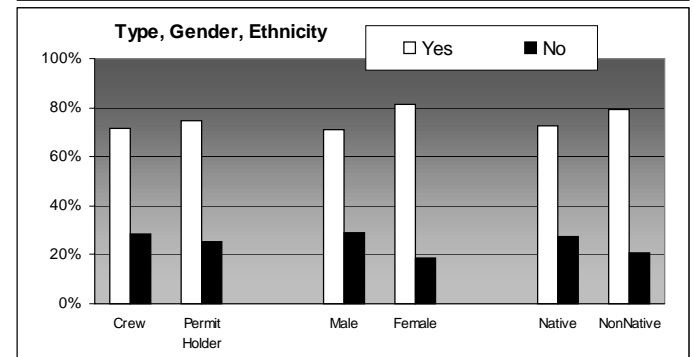
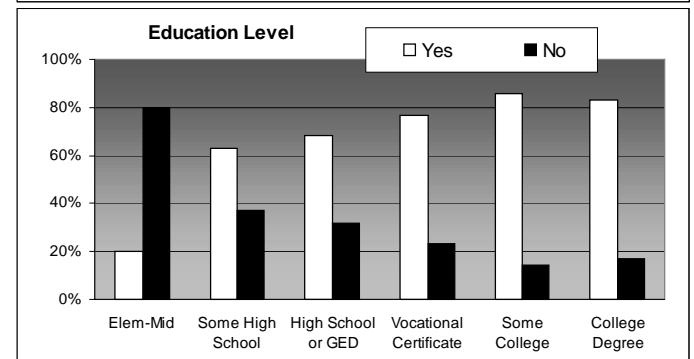
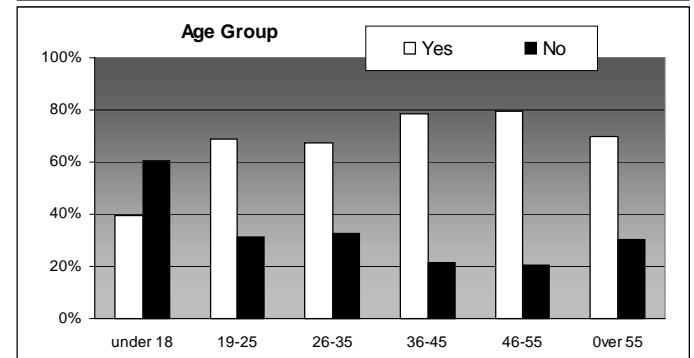
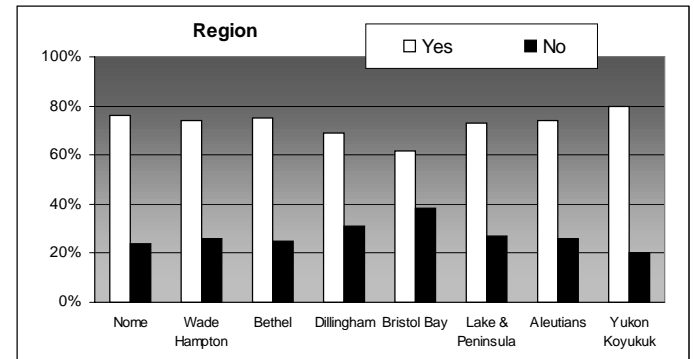
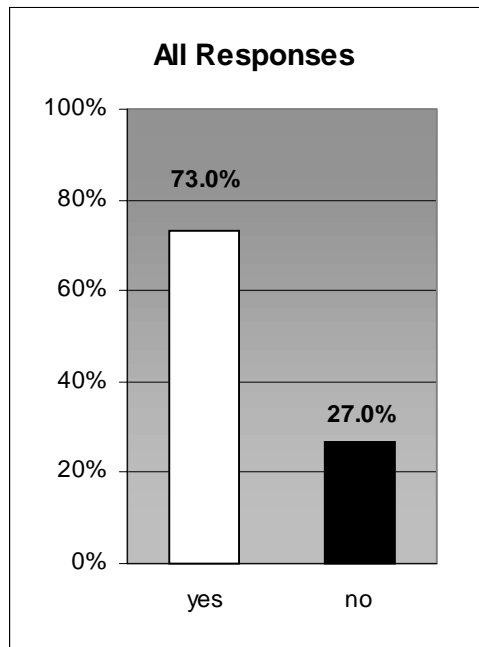
## Did Previous Job Training Lead to a Job

Overall, 73% of respondents who had taken job training indicated that the training had led to a job. Success in job training leading to a job appeared to be the case across all regions, with success rates ranging from 60% in the Bristol Bay Borough to 80% in the Yukon-Koyukuk region.

This was also true for all age groups over 18. It is likely that many of the under-18 age group would be returning to school rather than seeking a job. Education level generally correlated with success in training leading to a job. People with only an elementary or middle school education had the least success in finding a job after training, reporting only a 20% success rate for this group.

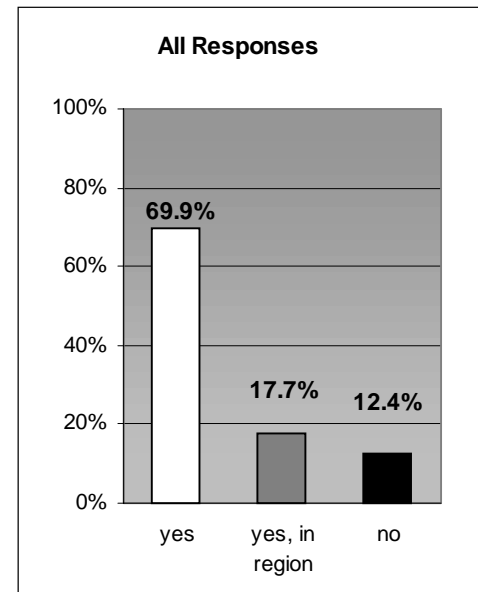
According to the survey responses, there was little difference in success in finding a job after training based on whether the respondent was a permit holder or crew person.

Male respondents were less successful (71.1%) than females (81.4%) and Native respondents were slightly less successful as a group (72.6%) than non-Natives (79.3%) in job training leading to a job.



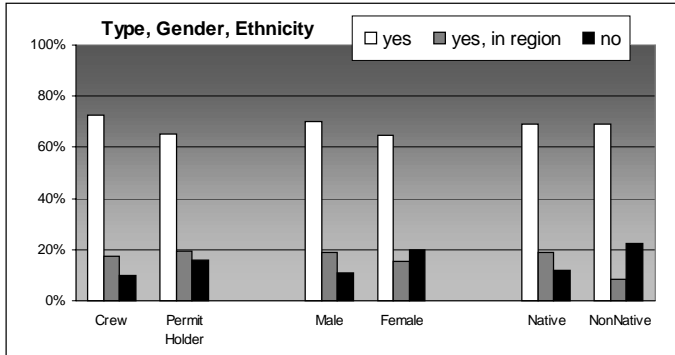
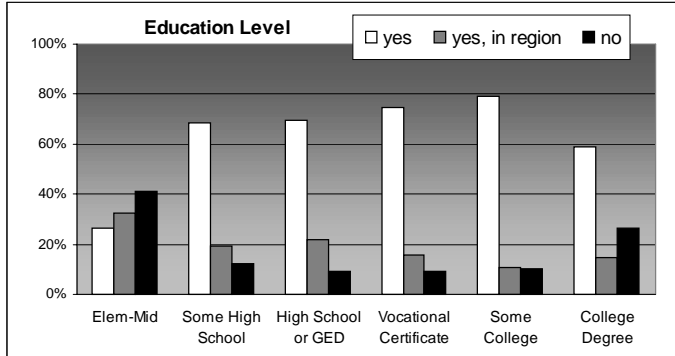
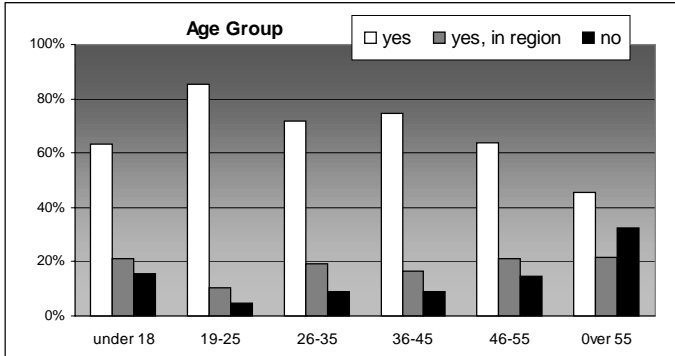
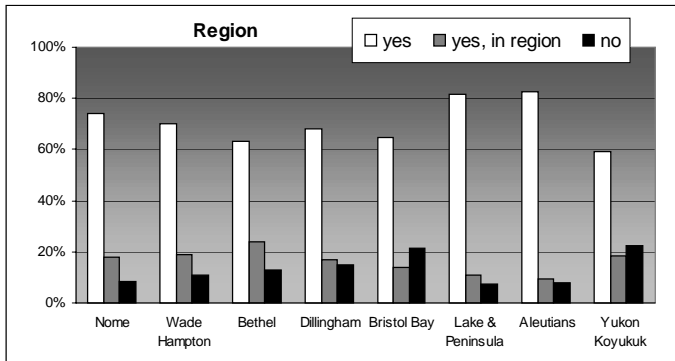
## Willing to Spend Time Away From Community for Job Training

Overall, 69.9% of respondents said they would be willing to travel to undertake job training. An additional 17.7% indicated they could do so if the training location were in their region. Generally, responses were very positive (between 60% and 80%) across all regions, age groups, education levels, gender and ethnicity. Notable exceptions were people with only an elementary or middle school education, and people over 55 years of age, who are more inclined to stay close to home. Respondents from the Yukon-Koyukuk were the most likely to indicate they would not travel for training (22.2%).



Interestingly, for whatever reason, people with college degrees, who expressed the greatest interest in training in earlier survey questions, indicated substantially less willingness to travel for training than did those with less education (except for those with only elementary or middle school education).

Crew persons were slightly more flexible in their attitude towards travelling for training. Female respondents were slightly less inclined to travel for training than were males. Native respondents were slightly more inclined to travel (88.1%) than were non-Natives (77.8%), if the training were limited to being “in the region.”



## Willing to Move to Another Community for Employment

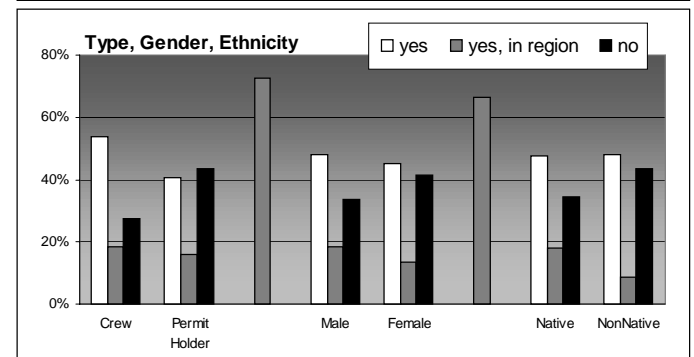
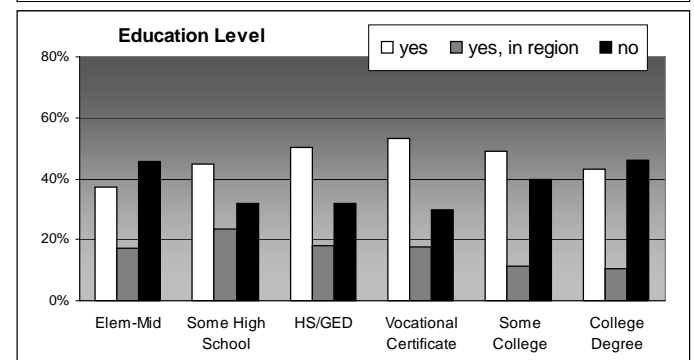
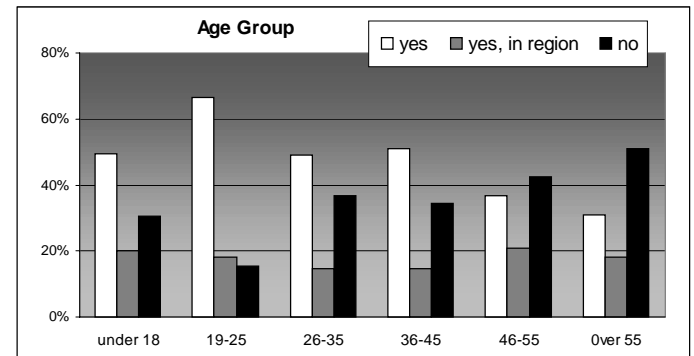
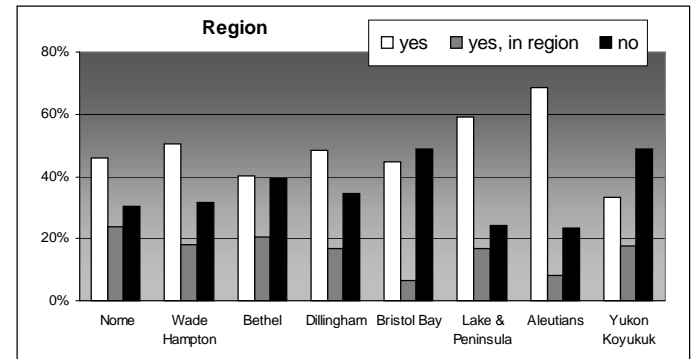
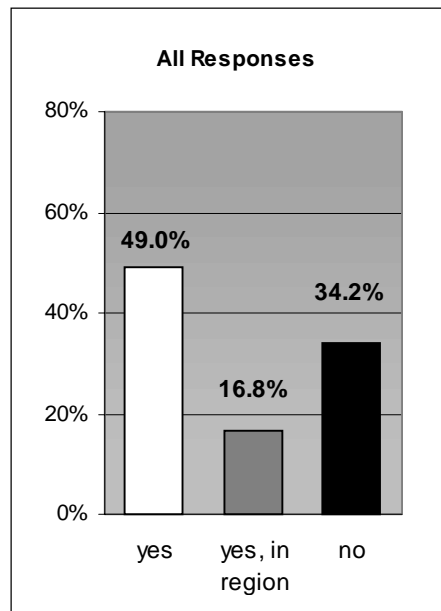
Overall, 49% indicated they would be willing to move to another town to get a job and an additional 16.8% (for a total of 65.8%) would be willing to do so if it was a location in the same region of Alaska. This is a surprisingly high figure considering the widely held “conventional wisdom” that rural Alaskans have very strong ties to the land. This could be another indication of the substantial effect that the fisheries disaster years have had on the attitudes of residents of western Alaska. Only 34.2% of respondents said they would not be willing to move to another town for purposes of employment.

Respondents in the Lake and Peninsula Borough and the Aleutians region indicated the highest level of mobility (about 75% if the move were within the region). Respondents in the Bristol Bay Borough and the Yukon-Koyukuk region indicated the most resistance to moving, with almost 50% of respondents reporting they would not move for a job.

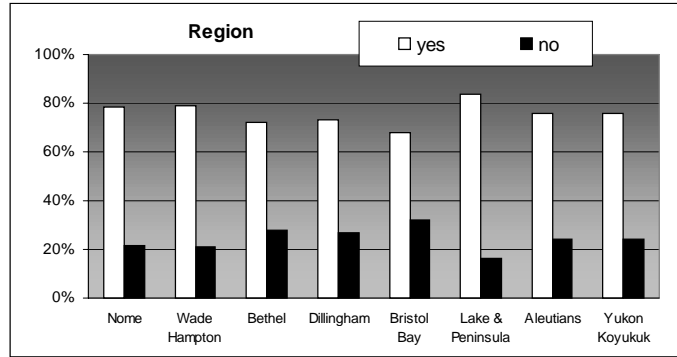
Younger people tended to express more willingness to move for a job, with the 19-25 age group reporting the greatest willingness (84%, if within region) and those over 55, the least willing (though even in this age group, half indicated a willingness to move to a job within the region.)

As was the case in the previous question about traveling for training, the least willing to move for a job were those with a college degree.

Crew persons indicated they were more willing to move for work (72.5%) than permit holders (56.5%). This may be because permit holders have permits for a geographic fishery. Males were slightly more mobile (66.5%) than females (58.6%). Natives indicated they were somewhat more mobile (65.7%) than non-Natives (56.5%).

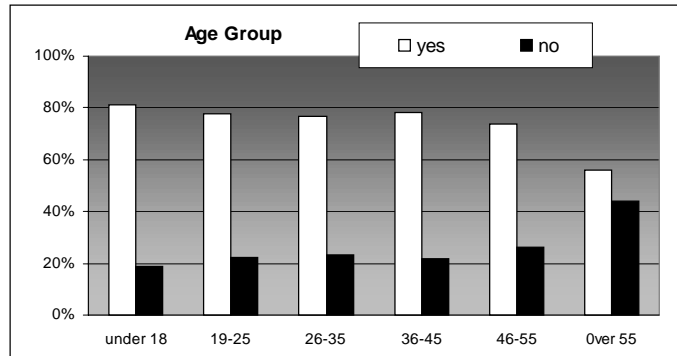


## Interest in Commuting to Place of Employment

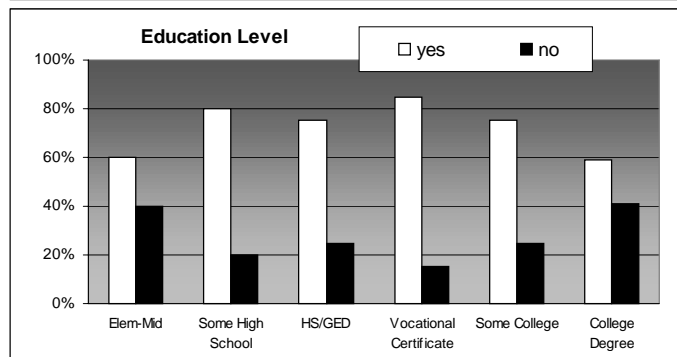


Over three-quarters of all respondents said they would be interested in commuting to their place of employment (for example with a schedule such as two weeks away and two weeks at home). Respondents indicated generally high interest across all regions, age groups, and education levels, and regardless of differences in gender, ethnicity or whether they were permit holders or crew persons.

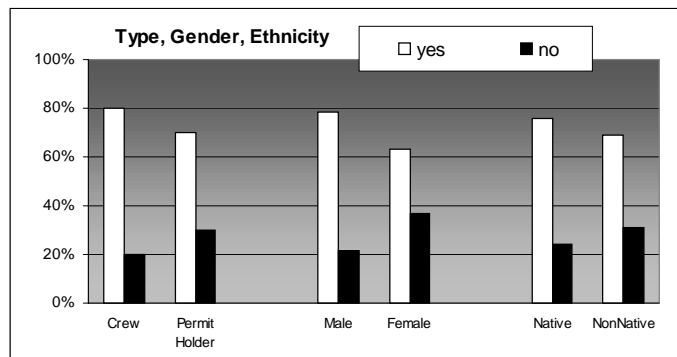
Native respondents indicated consistently more willingness to travel than non-Natives as reflected by responses to this question and the previous two questions. 75.9% of Native respondents indicated they were interested in commuting compared to 68.9% of non-Native respondents.



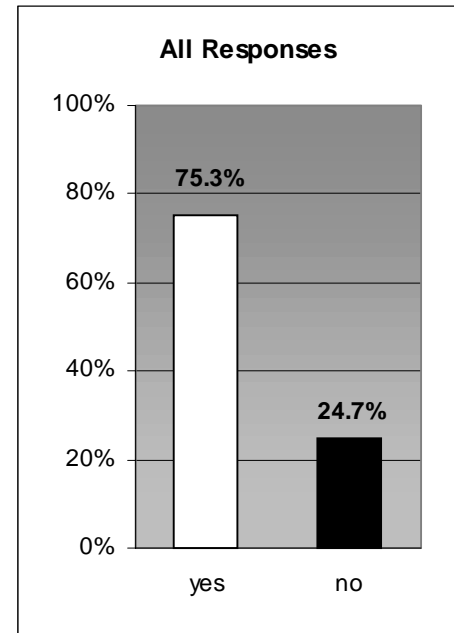
People over 55 years of age were about twice as reluctant to commute as all other age groups. Still, a majority of those over 55 (55%) indicated an interest in commuting.



As was the case with the previous two questions, regarding travel for training and moving for employment, respondents with a college degree and people with only an elementary or middle school education indicated that they were clearly less inclined to travel than were all other education-level groups.



Crew persons were somewhat more interested (79.8%) than permit holders (70.2%), and male respondents were more interested (78.4%) than females (63.4%).



## What Most Influences Decision to Commute

The pattern of choice was generally similar for all respondents regardless of region, age, education level, gender or ethnicity. Overwhelmingly, the primary factor was “job pay.” Respondents indicated far less concern about the kind of job that would be involved. Job location was the least important factor. Apparently, as long as those who choose to commute can spend a substantial time at home, they are willing to focus their job goals on pay, with much less regard for the kind of work they do, or where they have to do it.

Respondents from the Bristol Bay Borough indicated the least concern about the location of commuting employment (1.5%). Interest in job pay was also highest for Bristol Bay Borough respondents. Concern about commuting job location was generally less in the Alaska Peninsula and Aleutians areas compared to other regions. Respondents in the Nome region had the highest interest in what kind of job they would be commuting to (29.3%).

Among age groups, the youngest (under 18) expressed the greatest concern (19.3%) about the location of the commuting job. Both the youngest and the oldest age group (over 55) expressed more concern about the kind of job they were commuting to (about 28%) than did those age groups in between.

Respondents who said they had only an elementary or middle school education were more concerned about the kind of commuting job (38.1%) and less concerned about job pay (42.9%) than all other education-level groups. People with college degrees also indicated somewhat less interest in job pay than other education-level groups.

