



HISTORY

Prior to its establishment as a permanent, year-round community, the area around Deering was used and occupied by people known as the Inmachukmiut, or the people of the Inmachuk River. In Inupiaq, the village is called Ipnatchiaq. When a mission school (K-8) was built at the present village site, people began staying throughout the seasons, so their children could attend. People from Kugruk Lagoon – 10km east of Deering – joined them there.

When gold was discovered in the river drainage, miners set up a mining camp not far from the traditional Inupiat settlement. Capitalizing on the opportunity, the community formed a supply station, selling supplies to would-be miners. Mining affected the character of the area, however, and not to everyone's liking. In response to the influx of miners, and their effect on the community and its resources, missionaries moved the original school – along with 2/3 of the population – to establish Noorvik in 1914, though many families eventually returned.

Reindeer herding was introduced by missionaries and supported by the United States government as means to prevent starvation in lean times, and to provide occupation among local people.

Somewhat incidentally, Deering was named for a schooner, the Abbie M. Deering, which was in the area. The ship, mentioned in Rudyard Kipling's Captains Courageous, journeyed from Brazil, through the Straits of Magellan, to San Francisco (where "Kotzebue Sound" was on everyone's lips, and the boat changed hands) and on to the fabled gold fields of the Seward Peninsula. It joined the legion of the shipwrecked in 1903, on a reef in the Aleutians.



Climate and Topography

Situated on a spit in the Kotzebue Sound, Deering's landscape is treeless coast and riverine drainage. The winters are long and cold, and the summers short and cool, but light, due to the "midnight sun." Summer temperatures reach highs of around 65 degrees, and winter temperatures dip to minus 19, though wind whipping off of Kotzebue Sound will drive it lower.

Transportation Services and Facilities

Air—Accessible year-round, Deering Airport (DRG or DEE), is a public, general aviation airport, and one of 256 airports owned and maintained by State of Alaska DOT&PF, the largest aviation system in North America. It is just over a mile outside of town, and has a 3300' long, 75' wide, gravel-surfaced runway, with a 3300' long, 75' wide gravel-surfaced runway.

Daily passenger flights from Kotzebue cost around \$250.00 and take about one hour, often stopping in Buckland on the way to Deering. At least two airlines (Bering Air, Hageland Aviation) have regularly scheduled passenger service.

Air freight brings in all goods which do not come via summertime barge. The one airline providing freight-only service is Ryan Air. Rates from Kotzebue to Deering, as of Jan. 2010 are below.

MINIMUM	1-499#	500-999#	1000-4999#	5000#+
\$20	\$.80	\$.76	\$.72	\$.68

Land—ATV's and snowmobiles ("sno-gos," "snowmachines") are the most common form of ground transportation in Deering., though there are some trucks. The village is not connected to any other communities by rail or permanent road, though in winter there are flagged ice trails connecting Deering to Candle, Buckland, Shishmaref, Nome and Kotzebue.

Water/Marine—From its location on the coast, Deering has easy access to marine travel; in summer, small boats are used for subsistence hunting and fishing, and barges are able to reach the village. Bulk fuel and most large items or shipments arrive in Deering via barges operated by Crowley Marine Services and Northland Services, which are able to navigate Kotzebue Sound July through mid-October.

Northland Services estimates the following costs for delivery of these sample shipments:

LOCATION

Deering is situated at the mouth of the Inmachuk River, on the north side of the Seward Peninsula, and is approximately 60 air miles from the regional hub, Kotzebue. Deering is on a sand and gravel spit a mere 7 feet above sea level.

THE PEOPLE

The Inmachukmiut are the people of the Inmachuk River, and are Inupiat. Inupiaq, the indigenous language, is part of the Eskimo-Aleut language family, and Malimiut is one name for the dialect traditionally spoken in Deering.

133 people live in Deering (AK DCED, 2008), primarily Inupiat. The population of Deering has, since 1900, fluctuated when gold prices have changed. The median age in 2000 was 27. People participate in a mixed economy, with a strong emphasis on traditional subsistence resource use. A significant portion of residents' protein is derived from moose, bearded seal (ugruk), and caribou, supplemented with other fish, beluga whales and small game.

GOVERNMENT

The City of Deering is a second class city, incorporated with the State of Alaska in 1970. It is one of eleven communities making up the Northwest Arctic Borough (NAB). Where traditional leadership and customs held sway since time immemorial, in 1945, the village voted to form the Native Village of Deering tribal government, under the auspices of the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA).



Auto ¹	Household Goods ²	Dry Groceries/ cubic foot	Dry Groceries/100 lbs.
\$6027.35	\$15,932.91	\$1,451.92	\$1,078.43

1 – Auto rate based on auto not exceeding 19’x84”x90” (LxWxH)

2 – Household goods rate based on 20’ container, shipper load count and secure minimum weight of 10,000 lbs.

Local Governmental Services

Water—The Inmachuk River is the source for the village’s water, and the City of Deering operates the water system. It is pumped from the river, then treated and collected in an insulated storage tank. From there, water is delivered via cart to home tanks or is hauled to homes; only the school and medical clinic have piped water. Residents pay \$20 per 100 gallons, or \$25 per 100 delivered gallons. Commercial entities pay \$.30 per gallon.

The city-run washeteria charges \$5-\$6 per each washer load, \$3 for each dryer load, and \$3 per shower.

Sewer—Deering has a piped, vacuum sewer system, operated by the City of Deering. Sewage lift stations draw sewage to a city sewage lagoon. Each household pays \$85 per month for the service, though that figure can change from month to month.

Solid Waste Disposal—A City of Deering-operated landfill is available for individuals to take their solid waste to. It is a Class 3, permitted landfill.

Public Safety—No local police or public safety or tribal officers are located in Deering. The village relies upon the Alaska State Troopers stationed in Kotzebue to attend to law enforcement needs. There is a holding cell at the public safety office. The Deering Volunteer Fire Department responds to local fire emergencies.

Other Services and Utilities

In addition to the facilities and services below, Buckland has one grocery store, three small stores and a community hall.

Health Services—Maniilaq Association’s Community Health Aide/ Practitioner program (CHAP) operates a village health clinic in Deering, newly constructed in 2005. The Maniilaq Health Center, in Kotzebue, is the nearest hospital, and serves as the medical hub for the region’s clinics. Telemedicine also connects the Deering clinic to medical personnel in Anchorage, at the Alaska Native Medical Center, run by the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium.

Electricity—Ipnatchiaq Electric Company – a city and private partnership - provides electrical power to Deering via diesel generators with a 453 Kilowatt capacity. Rates are approximately \$.40/kwh, and Power Cost Equalization (PCE) assists with residential electricity costs.

Telecommunications—Kotzebue-based OTZ Telephone Cooperative provides a in-state telephone service to Deering residents and businesses, and long-distance service is provided through a combination of AT&T, Anchorage-based GCI and Kotzebue-based OTZ Telephone. Internet service is provided through Inutek.net, a cooperative effort between OTZ, Maniilaq Association and Anchorage-based GCI Communications.

NANA Regional Corporation, Inc. (NANA) is one of the 13 Regional Alaska Native corporations created pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). NANA’s mission is to provide economic opportunities for its more than 12,000 Iñupiat shareholders and to protect and enhance NANA lands. Join the hunt at www.nana.com.



SCHOOLS

The Deering School is part of the Northwest Arctic Borough School District, serving 48 students from grades K-12.

Telephone Service	Residential	Business
Basic local service (single landline) – Includes taxes, fees. Additional charges for optional features	\$25.00/mo.	\$35.00/mo.
Long distance	\$.15/min. + \$5/mo. fee	\$.18/min.

Cellular phone service	Plans with unlimited minutes begin at \$39.95/mo.
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DSL Internet	256K Download	1.5mbps download
	\$25/mo	\$45.50/mo

*Internet service discounts are provided to customers with OTZ long distance and/or cellular phone plans.

Media

Deering receives KOTZ’s 720 AM signal, connecting the village to regional as well as national public radio programming. Individuals also keep in contact throughout the region using personal VHS radios.

Employment/Economy

As a mixed cash and subsistence economy, residents live on a combination of natural resources and cash income. Employers include the Native Village of Deering (tribe), the City of Deering, Maniilaq Association, the Deering School (NWABSD), NANA Regional Corporation, the United States Post Office, local stores and area airlines. Several residents work at the Red Dog Mine, located within the region. Residents also derive income from the creation and sale of arts and crafts and trapping.

Housing

There are roughly 90 residential structures in Buckland. Almost all are occupied. The median home value in Buckland is \$83,300. The median rent is \$600. The average family household size is 5.2 persons. It is a growing, family-oriented community.