

Reflections of a “Native” Anthropologist

by Deanna Kingston,
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Current Project

- Co-PI's Carol Zane Jolles and Herbert Anungazuk
- Carol's idea and funded by Arctic Social Science, NSF
- Partners include
 - Carol (gave advice on how to improve relationships with KINC)
 - Communities of King Island, Wales, and Diomedede
 - Herbert Anungazuk
- Native American Rights Fund helped KINC develop its “King Island Intellectual and Cultural Property Rights Policy”

King Island Placenames (Cultural Geography)



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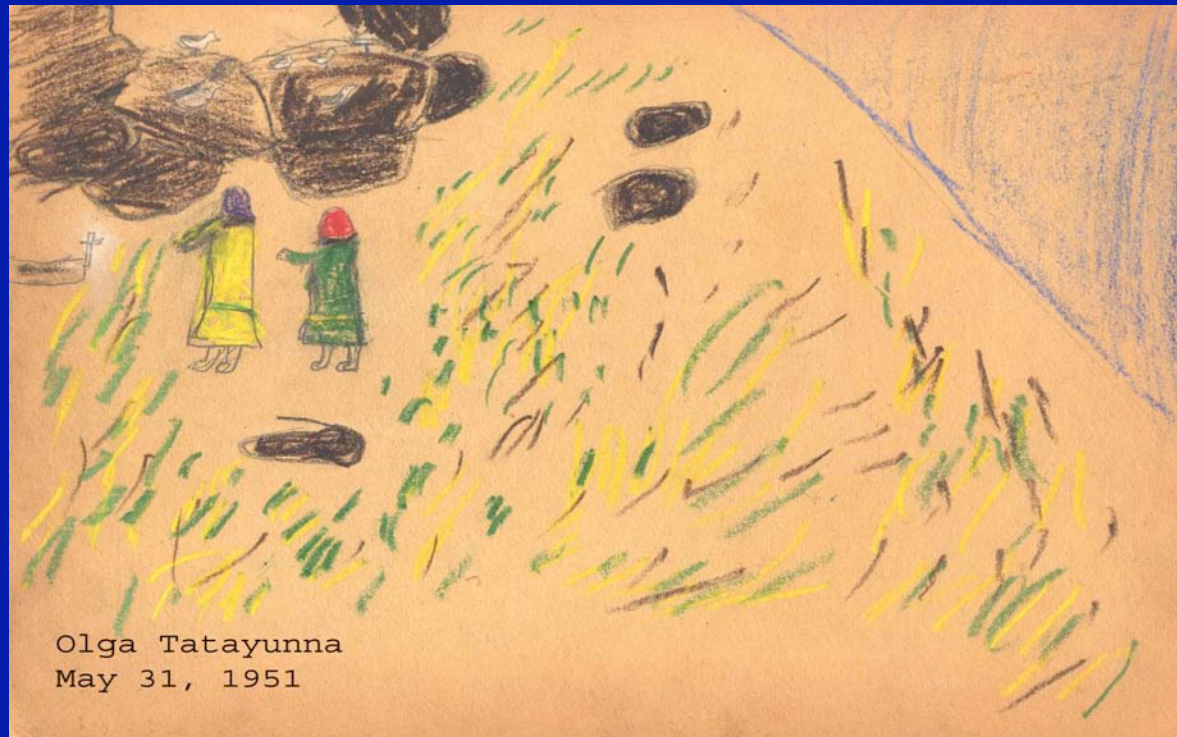
- Recorded 5 hours of interviews
- Documented >50 placenames, which were translated in 2001 by Teddy Mayac and Larry Kaplan
- But many placenames also referred to subsistence activities

**King Island Placenames
(Cultural Geography)**



Biogeography

Biogeography

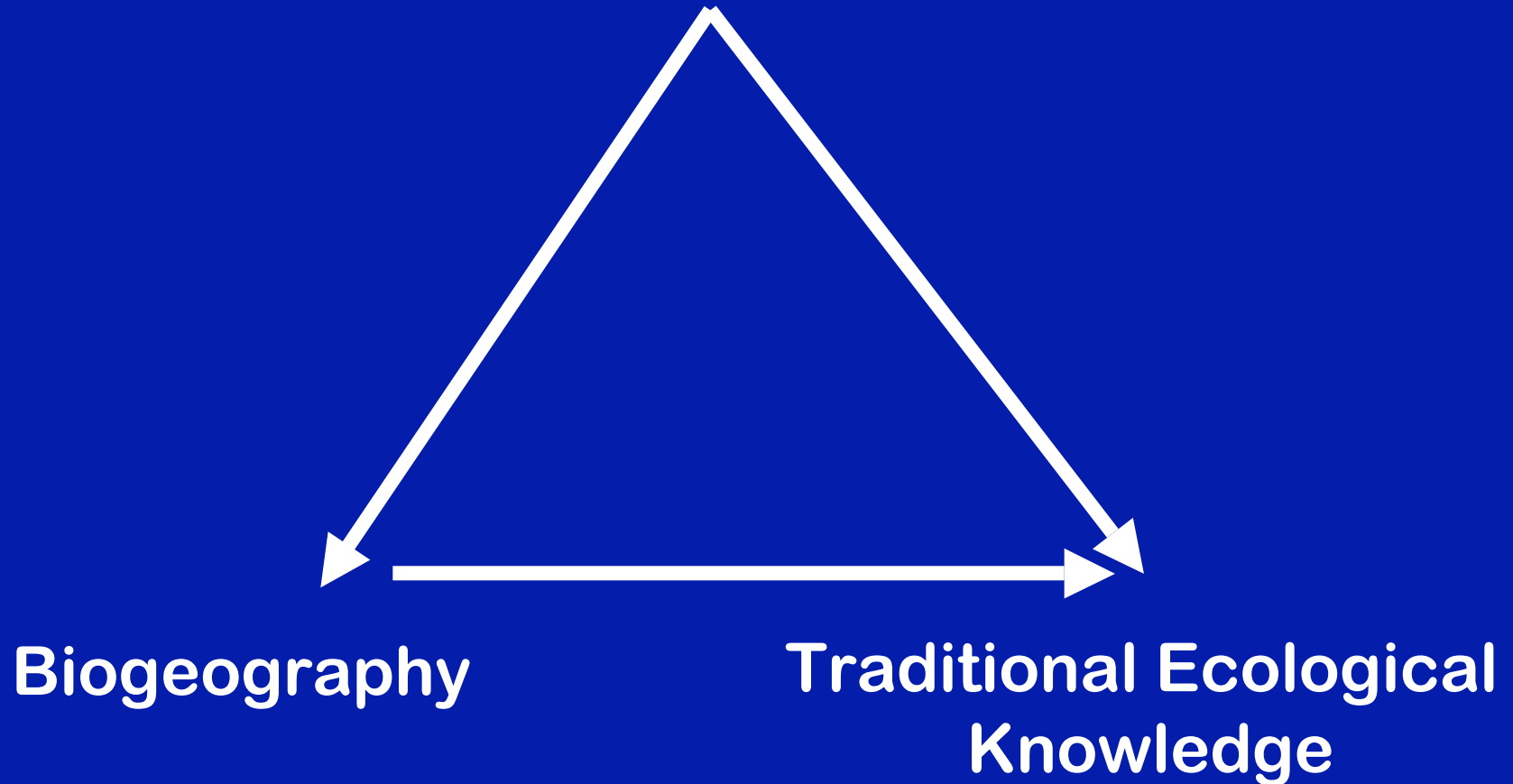


Olga Tatayunna
May 31, 1951

- Hunting and gathering of food was a primary theme in the interviews.
- Topics should be explored with biological (in addition to anthropological) techniques.

- Elders also recounted such things as:
- “That old man, Mazeonna, was a good weatherman. He knows every cloud that’s going to happen. He look up there, when they are getting ready to go to Nome, and my brothers would tell [him], ‘See if it’s going to be okay if we go.’ So, he go look up there. Sometimes, he says, ‘It’s going to be bad weather today.’ Then, once in awhile, ‘Now, time to go!’ So they start packing everything down there on those rocks, [they] try to get it all on the boats [so we could go to Nome]” (1999:1A:9).

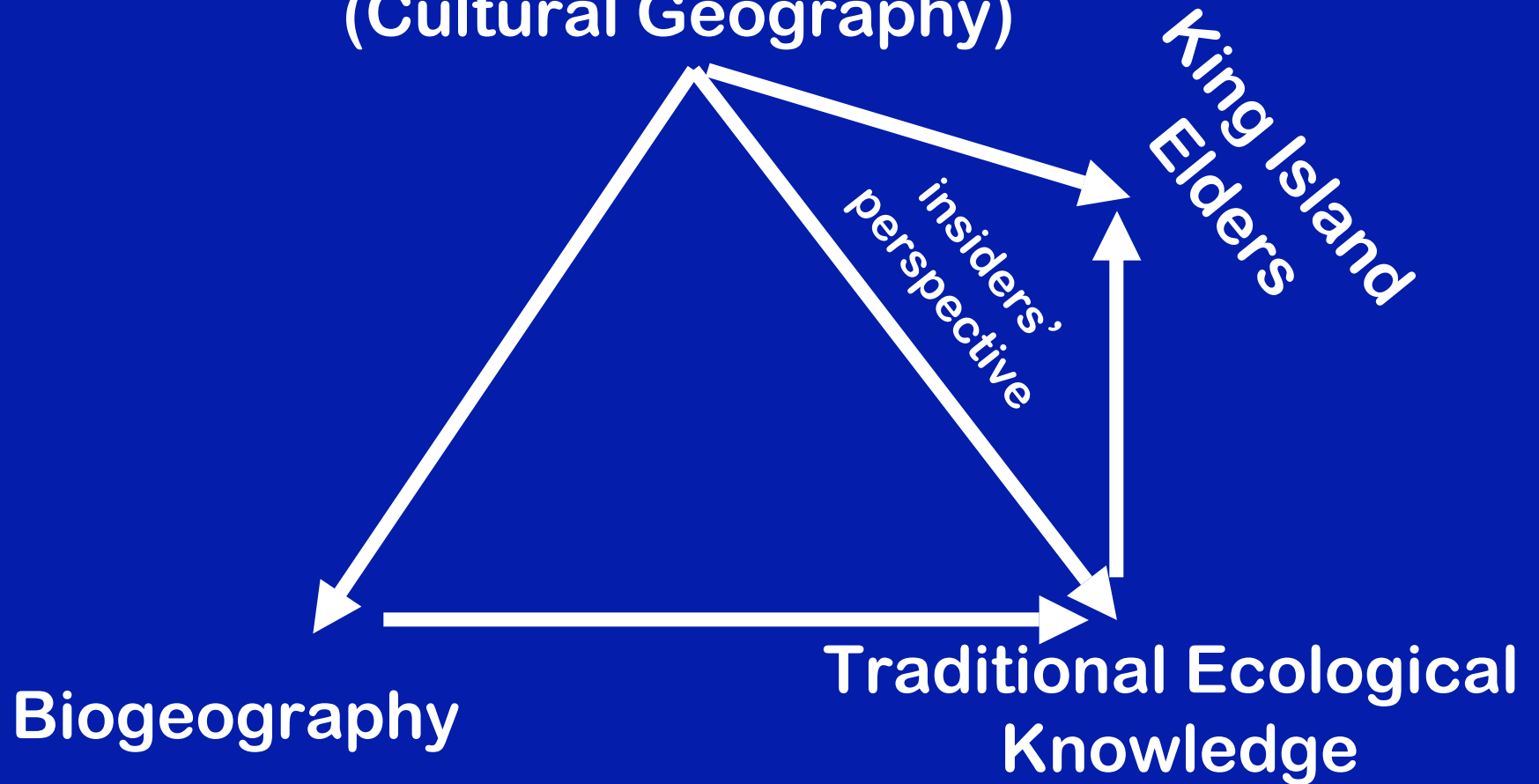
King Island Placenames (Cultural Geography)



Why “biogeography” and TEK?

- As a result of the 1999 interviews, it became readily apparent that placenames could not be discussed without also discussing subsistence practices and TEK.
- In addition, Kingston realized that she did not have the knowledge of plants and animals that could help King Islanders document this knowledge.
- Title of project is “Documenting the Cultural Geography, Biogeography, and Traditional Ecological Knowledge of King Island, Alaska”

King Island Placenames (Cultural Geography)



King Island Elders & Community Members

- Will be seen as equals by Western research team
- Stems from both the “King Island Intellectual and Cultural Property Rights Policy” and NSF’s Office of Polar Programs’s “Principles of Conduct for Research in the Arctic”
- The research was requested by an elder and at least 15 elders will go to King Island
- At least 35 adult community research assistants and community youth interns will assist with the research
- Western scientists will come to King Island with the expectation that they will learn from elders
- Logistics, safety, and choosing community researchers are completed in consultation with the community.

Why an insider's perspective?

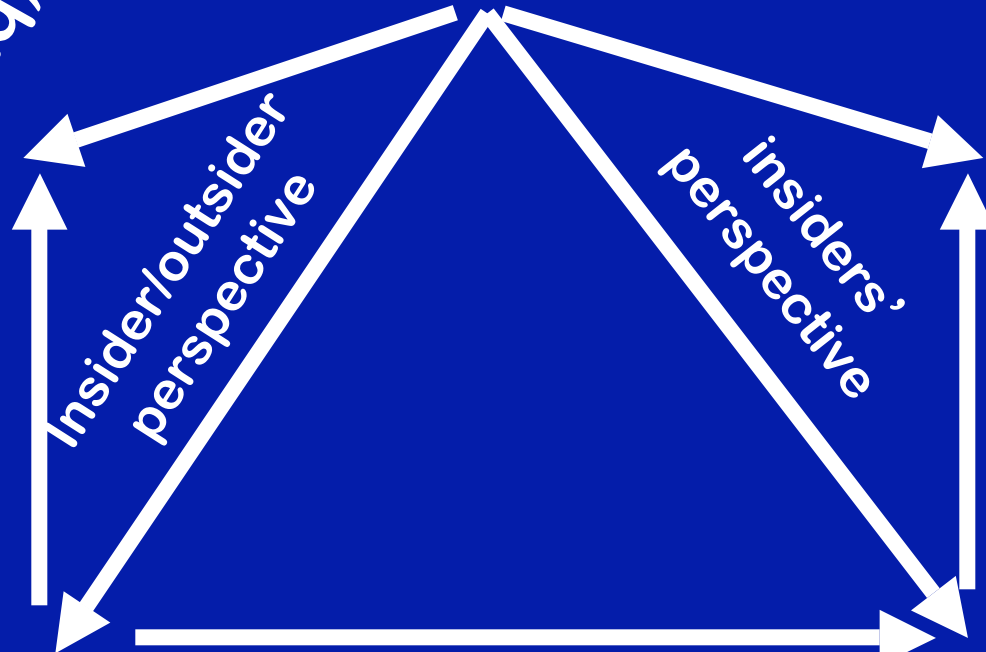
- We wanted community involvement from all age levels: this is their cultural heritage, after all. Kin-based teams will conduct the research.
 - Elders grew up on the island and learned how to live in this isolated place.
 - Many young members of the community have never been to King Island. We also felt that they should be exposed to both TEK and WSK as co-equal ways of knowing.
 - Adult research assistants were needed, particularly to help with elders and to supervise youth.

King Island Placenames

(Cultural Geography)

*Deanna
(Paniataaq)*

*King Island
Elders*



Biogeography

Traditional Ecological
Knowledge

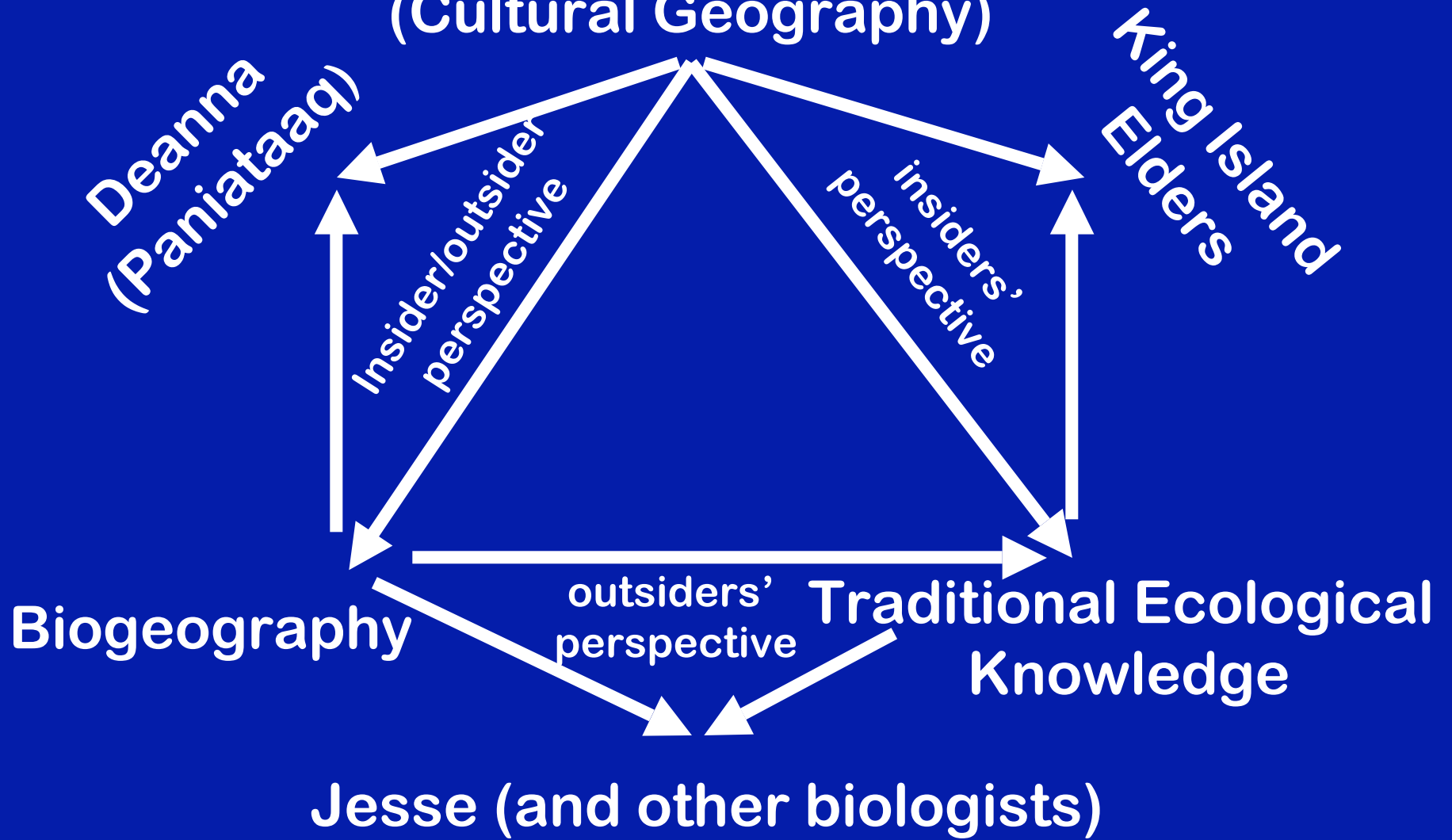
Deanna (Paniataaq)

- Descendent of the King Island Inupiaq Community and raised in Oregon
- Ph.D. in Cultural Anthropology from the University of Alaska Fairbanks (dissertation on the King Island Wolf Dance)
- Favorite subdiscipline is folklore
- Will lead Western social scientist team, including a linguist, archaeologists, and a videographer.

Why an insider's/outsider's perspective?

- Bridge between
- Outsiders:
 - Knows Western educational and funding systems
 - Able to conduct anthropological and folkloric research
 - Knows scholarly jargon necessary to convince the rest of the social science team to put KINC's needs and desires first.
- Insiders:
 - sensitive to community perspectives
 - have a good kin-based working relationship with KINC

King Island Placenames (Cultural Geography)



Jesse Ford (and other biologists)

- Jesse Ford
 - A general ecologist
 - Interested in TEK and particularly in bridging TEK and WSK (Western Scientific Knowledge)
 - Will lead the Western scientific team
- Other biologists include a sea bird specialist and a marine mammalogist

Why an outsiders' perspective?

- For better or worse, King Island community members are part of the wider Western society and must learn to navigate Western society, which favors knowledge generated by scientific methods.
 - youth will be exposed to Western science worldview and scientific methods
- Having Western scientists involved gives research a certain credibility from the standpoint of dominant Western society.

Conclusion

- It is hoped that this multiethnic, multidisciplinary project will be carried out in mutual respect with the goal of creating products that are useful to the King Island Native Community.
- This doesn't mean that the academic community will not also benefit – just that the KINC's needs and desires remain central to our investigations.

Acknowledgements

- Sincere appreciation and gratitude go to Marie Saclamana, who first suggested the placename research and who opened her home to an insider/outsider.
- Appreciation must also go to the King Island Native Community and the King Island Native Corporation for supporting this research.
- A huge thank you to Anna Kerttula, Program Officer of the Arctic Social Science Program, National Science Foundation, for recommending this project for funding, taking a chance on a young scholar, and as a result, nearly bankrupting her budget.
- And, finally, the entire research team thanks the National Science Foundation, Office of Polar Programs, for funding this project under OPP—032???