



Highlights of [GAO-05-719](#), a report to congressional addressees and the Alaska Federation of Natives

Why GAO Did This Study

This report responds to section 112, Division B, of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2004, which directs GAO to review federal programs benefiting rural communities in Alaska. After discussions with congressional staff, GAO agreed to examine federal programs benefiting Alaska Native villages. Specifically, this report (1) provides information on the amount of federal assistance provided to Alaska Native villages during fiscal years 1998 through 2003, (2) describes how selected federal funds have been used to assist Alaska Native villages, and (3) provides data on the number and average cost of houses built by villages and Alaska Native regional housing authorities.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-05-719.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact William B. Shear at (202) 512-8678 or shearw@gao.gov.

ALASKA NATIVE VILLAGES

Recent Federal Assistance Exceeded \$3 Billion, with Most Provided to Regional Nonprofits

What GAO Found

GAO's analysis of available data indicates that Alaska Native villages and regional Native nonprofits—including Native associations, and regional health and housing nonprofits—received over \$3 billion in federal assistance from fiscal years 1998 through 2003. Specifically, total federal funding included approximately \$483 million to 216 Alaska Native villages and about \$3 billion to 33 regional Native nonprofits. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) accounted for 63 percent of all funding over the period. According to federal and state officials, Alaska Native villages also likely benefited from federal funding to the state of Alaska and to cities and boroughs that contain villages, such as when federal funding is used by municipalities to provide water services. Based on data GAO obtained from the state of Alaska, during fiscal years 1998 through 2003, the state passed through more than \$105 million in federal funding to Native villages and regional Native nonprofits.

Based on available information for 13 programs GAO reviewed, federal funding was used to provide Alaska Natives with assistance in health care, housing, infrastructure, and other areas. For example, according to information from HHS, its Tribal Self-Governance Program was used by 13 regional Native nonprofits, three Native villages, four groups of Alaska Native villages, and one statewide Native health care provider to provide clinical services at tribally run hospitals and health clinics that had over 1 million total visits throughout Alaska in 2002. Another program, HUD's Indian Housing Block Grant, provided funds used by villages and regional housing authorities to build, rehabilitate, modernize, and operate single-family homes and multifamily housing properties. However, the extent of readily available information on how funds were used from the 13 programs GAO reviewed varied, in part due to different agency reporting requirements.

Results from GAO's survey of Alaska Native villages and regional housing authorities indicated that, during calendar years 1998 through 2003, responding entities constructed a total of 874 single-family units. GAO's survey indicated that the average cost of units constructed by responding entities varied by region and by whether they were developed by villages or housing authorities. For example, the 6-year average regional cost (in 2003 dollars) of all units constructed ranged from a low of \$138,944 per unit, or \$122 per square foot, to a high of \$305,634 per unit, or \$267 per square foot. GAO also found that the cost of new housing units developed by housing authorities was slightly higher than units developed by Native villages, and that regional housing authorities constructed more than three times the number of units compared with villages. However, various factors could account for differences in the cost and number of units completed among regions or between villages and regional housing authorities.