

NOV. 27, 1980
221 E. 7th ST.
APARTMENT 111
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501
(907) 272-8268

Dear Dr. + Mrs. Raup,

Surprised from where this letter came?! I arrived here Thu. 18 to head-up planning for renewable natural resources in the States Dept. of Natural Resources. I applied for this job months + months ago + could hardly believe it when I learned that I had gotten the position. Though I am Resources Forester in the Division of Forest, Land, + Water Management, I will be responsible for planning in Forests, Fisheries, Wildlife, Rangeland, and Recreation.

What a challenge this is! Already, I can begin to observe resemblances between working in Alaska + a developing nation! Everything seems to be in a state of transition - no one seems to know what the situation is or where it is going! Hence, the role + importance of Planning; and it's about time! The little house across the street is a manifestation of this phenomenon. Within 100 feet of where I am sitting in a modern condominium, this steep-roofed, 12'x12' wood framed structure with two 55-gallon fuel oil drums latched onto it, undoubtedly reflects the residences of several years ago. Precious little zoning if any in Anchorage.

Since knowing that I had the job up here, I have been thinking of you both and all the time you spent in this part of the

world, and the many² hours we spent in front of the library fireplace in Shaler Hall discussing your experiences. In our library here, the first literature I found was Harold Lutz's on the role of fire in Alaska's vegetation. How a question concerns what happens if fire is kept out of the landscape and relegated to a minor environmental factor? I have to wonder about some of the statistics being picked around up here, though I'll admit I haven't yet first hand experience to develop something better. For example, the total land area of Alaska is 365.5 million acres, a figure I do not doubt, but of that only 28 million acres are considered "commercial forest land" with a minimum of 20 cu. ft. of growth/acre/year being the criterion. My gut feeling tells me that the potential of Alaska to produce wood is being grossly underestimated, and is it because the influence of fire is being misinterpreted. Anyway, challenges are many, and I'd really appreciate your counsel.

Blanchie is in Alabama and will be coming up later. We'll probably rent our house, I hope to a very appreciative family, and put much of our belongings in storage. Though I want to work here as long as it takes to get the job on the road to satisfactory + continuing progress, we still want to "hang loose" and keep our flexibility. The apartment I have rented is ideal and I'm sure will

fit into our plans in that it is ideally located in that I can walk to work, is very comfortable, warm + secure, furnished with main components, and has all we really need. Getting Blanchie up here with an automobile presents an interesting exercise. An automobile is a necessity if you want to get out of Anchorage at a reasonable cost + not be dependent upon public conveyance, flying, etc. And we surely want to get around, and there is so much to see to which one can drive. Then when you want to go really out-of-the-way, flying is the only way to get there, and this can become expensive. Our plans tentatively are for Blanchie, Kathy, and Suzanna, granddaughters, to drive either to Seattle or Prince Rupert, ferry to Haines, AK where I will meet them. I'd like for all the family to visit with us eventually. The week before I came to Alaska, we had a nice get-together at Kathy's in Hearne, Texas, an old cotton town in the Brazos River valley about 20 miles west of College Station. They have a delightful house, a remodeled farm house, on 6 acres of land overlooking the Brazos. Mike with his Daughter Mariah and Son Matthew + Scott came over from Austin. Blanchie, Tim, + I were there, along with Kathy, Suzanna, and Lewis, Kathy's Husband. We had a ball and who wouldn't under such ideal circumstances. Two beautiful days weatherwise in the mid 70's.

Two big geese, chickens, two red bone hounds with 8 puppies, and a tank (reservoir) in which to catch blue gills + sunfish as fast as you could bait the hook! We smoked 3 chickens + 30 some fish in the Bar-B-Q under a tremendous spreading post oak. This was our first real get together ever + we had a good time. If you are ever that way you should visit with Kath. They said to hell with Houston + moved to the country where Lewis works for a local oil company pumping + gauging oil. The oil fields in the area are a beehive of activity - the most in years. Blanche, Tim, + I then drove back to Auburn + I left the next day for Alaska.

I had another wonderful experience recently. You may or may not remember that I was essentially blind in my right eye and had been most of my life - congenital. Anyway, last summer I developed glaucomaⁱⁿ it due to a cataract. I underwent surgery during which the lens was removed. A lens implant was not feasible since the pocket into which it fits had deteriorated - Instead I have a soft contact lens on the eye. My vision, with the help of glasses, is practically normal for my age - my glasses are mostly for reading - farsightedness! Ain't that fantastic. I still have stitches that must be removed so I must contact an ophthalmologist.

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here soon. How fortunate can a guy be?!

Dr. Raup, the challenges here are tremendous. I am confident the reason I got the job was because of my broad, basic, training in the fundamentals and the nature of my work experience. I sincerely believe it's the proof of your conviction that fundamentals are fundamentals are fundamentals, and that a person well grounded can practice forestry or any of the other endeavors associated with the renewable natural resources. Since my job will cover the gamut of renewable resources, I'm looking forward to seeing a whole lot of Alaska, and as you know, there is a great deal of it. So I'm asking for suggestions, reading references, specific sites to visit etc.. Have you read McPhees "Coming Into the Country"? Blanche + I read it + it is a great book!

The Native Corporations are extremely interested + I want to get with them since the State should be offering services. As you know, with the Alaska Native Settlement Act, the Natives received 44 million acres and 1 billion dollars. Most of the Corporations, groups of villages, need help in managing their lands.

Dr. + Mrs. Raup, you guys have a nice holiday season. If you are ever coming up this way, plan to stay with Blanche + Ma. Blanche probably won't be here until Spring, getting things all worked out. Ma + Ma + Ma will be a real chore, but if anyone can do it, Blanche can.

Please give my regards to all the folks in Pittsburgh + The Harvard Trust. In love, but still lonely with such a radical change in life style.

Take care.

Love,

Boony

I'll be in Seward
tomorrow.

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