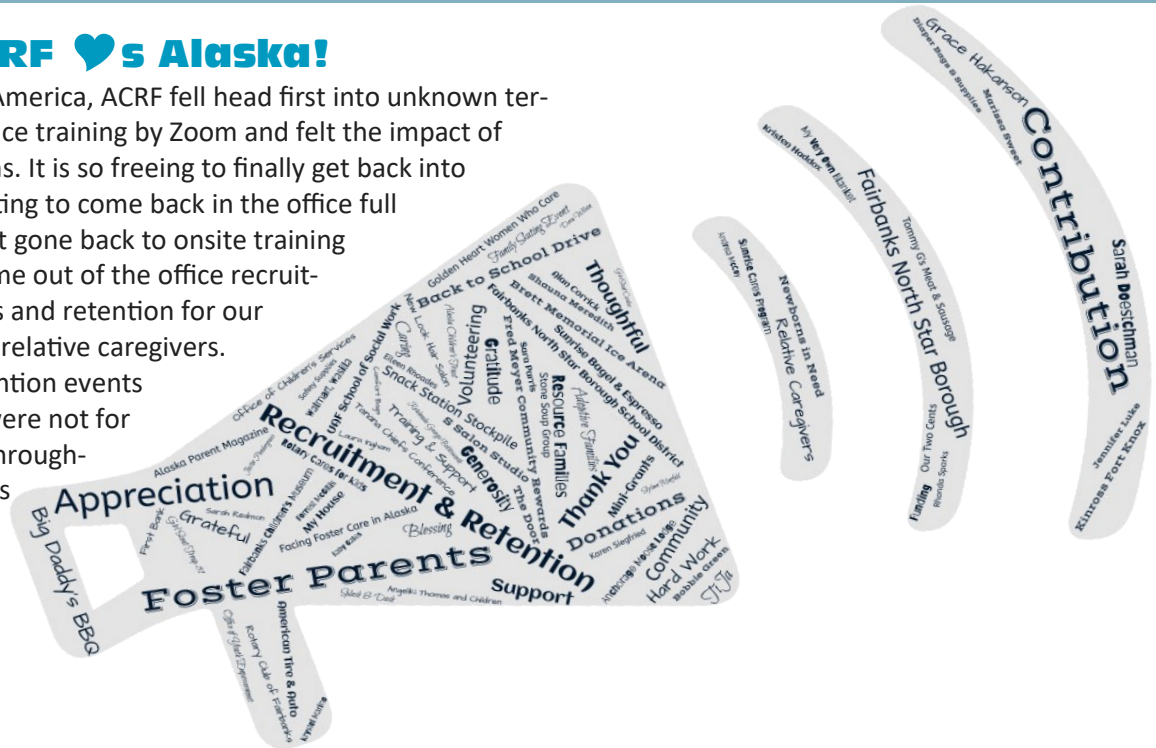


Greetings from Alaska Center for Resource Families

ACRF provides support and training for foster, adoptive, guardian and relative caretakers in Alaska

ACRF ♥s Alaska!

Since 2020, like the rest of America, ACRF fell head first into unknown territory. We learned to embrace training by Zoom and felt the impact of what hunkering down means. It is so freeing to finally get back into a groove where we are starting to come back in the office full time! Although we have not gone back to onsite training quite yet, we have done some out of the office recruitment for new foster parents and retention for our amazing foster families and relative caregivers. These recruitment and retention events would not be possible if it were not for our amazing communities throughout Alaska. These businesses and individual donors deserve a huge shout. THANK YOU, Y'all are AMAZING!
(see page 7)



GRANT NEWS

ACRF is thrilled to receive several grants this year to help us in special projects and we want to give a big shout out to our funders.

- **Thanks to Kinross Fort Knox** for a grant that will help us fund post-adoption mini-grants for families and to assist in our series of collaborative trainings with Tribal organizations in Alaska regarding cultural and permanency issues.
- **Thanks to the Alaska Children's Trust** for a grant to assist our Connection Café Resource Family Support Group in the Mat Su Valley. Lots of great things planned for this upcoming year!
- **Thanks to the Fairbanks North Star Borough** for an ARPA grant to assist with recruitment & retention of foster families in the FNSB. We are planning a fun event with the Fairbanks Ice Dogs so stay tuned!
- **Thanks to Interior Community Health Center** for a grant to fund our project for raising awareness around "Food Insecurities in foster Children." Our first phase was encouraging families to offer Snack Stations to help make children more comfortable and secure in a foster home.

Hello from the Resource Family Advisory Board!



The Resource Family Advisory Board met in March to work on recommendations for its three initiatives as well as hearing from OCS Leadership including Director Kim Guay and Travis Erickson, OCS Division Operations Manager. RFAB members heard the report of OCS plans to develop a centralized placement unit to help with getting information to families. RFAB also heard a report about the shortage and high turnover of OCS workers, sparking a discussion about how this cascades down to foster families. The RFAB also sent out a survey to Alaska foster families and received about 160 responses in regards to each of the areas addressed by the three initiatives they are working on. These responses were considered as the Board began developing suggestions and recommendations regarding the initiatives. RFAB continues to work on these initiatives through the fall hoping to wrap up work at the October face-to-face meeting.

RFAB Three Initiatives:

1. Seek Strategies to Make Recommendations To Promote Retention and Recognition of Current Foster Homes.
2. Promote and Increase Effective Communication Between Resource Families and OCS.
3. Address Issues Regarding Supporting Resource Families Who Are Parenting Youth With Higher Needs. ■

1.0 CREDIT SELF-STUDY

Licensed foster parents can read the following article and earn foster parent training credit by filling out the quiz and returning it to the Alaska Center for Resource Families, 815 Second AVE STE 202, Fairbanks AK, 99701 or FAX to 1-907-479-9666.

“New Foster Care Regulations” Effective July 1, 2022

NOTE: ACRF has added the newly updated Understanding the Regulation Series on our website, we encourage you to go to <https://www.acrf.org/self-study/self-study-resources/written-courses> to learn more about the new Individual Training Plan (ITP). There are 10 units worth 1.0 training credit each.

In the past eight years, efforts have been made to update and consolidate the State of Alaska regulations guiding foster care licensing. These regulations were approved and went into effect on July 1 for all newly licensed foster homes. Foster homes with licenses issued before July 1, 2022 fall under the previous regulations until renewal or conversion. **A Question and Answer Session with OCS Licensing on Zoom is also being planned on September 21 at Noon and then again on September 27 at 6 p.m. Contact acrf@nwresource.org to register or more information.**

One big change is that the foster care regulations are now all in a section by themselves (Section 67) and that makes it easier to figure out what applies. The highlights below are not the only changes in the regulations, but certainly are the ones that impact foster homes the most.

1. **CHANGES IN TRAINING REQUIREMENT** (Reference 7AAC 67.130) Instead of a set number of hours each year required for training, each foster home will develop an Individual Training Plan (ITP) with their licensing worker and caseworker at the time of initial licensure or renewal. This will be developed to strengthen the foster parent's ability to meet the needs of each child placed in the foster home. The ITP will be approved by the regional licensing supervisor and families can obtain training either through the Alaska Center for Resource Families or other identified sources. All training, regardless of where obtained, must be related to the training needs identified on the ITP and must be reported to ACRF to meet the training requirement. Remember, if you were licensed before July 1, 2022, you would still need 10 to 15 hours of training for your household for your current license year until your renewal. At that time, you will develop an ITP based on the needs of the children in your home.
2. **FOSTER HOME CAPACITY** (Reference 7AAC 67.210) Responding to Federal legislation that restricts the use of foster group homes, new regulations limit a foster home's capacity to six children, this includes the foster parent's own children. The foster home may only exceed six children in certain circumstances and a general variance will be required. These include: (1) a parenting youth needs to remain with the youth's child; (2) siblings are to stay together; (3) a child with a meaningful relationship with a family wants to stay with that family.
3. **ALTERNATE CAREGIVER** (Reference 7AAC 67.120) Do you need respite? Or are you using someone to watch your children while on vacation? That is now referred to as an ALTERNATE CAREGIVER and here is what you need to know. Foster parents should designate an alternate caregiver when the foster parent will be away from the foster home for more than 24 hours and must provide notice and contact information to the licensing specialist and the child's caseworker. The use of an alternate caregiver may not exceed 48 hours in a calendar week unless approved by the department and a foster parent may not designate an alternate caregiver for longer than 14 days. An alternate caregiver must be at least 18 years of age to care for children younger than 15 years of age and must be at least 21 years of age to care for children at least 15 years of age and under 18 years of age. Here's the biggest change. An alternate caregiver must have a valid background check. Other foster parents have that check, but an unlicensed alternate caregiver needs to have a valid background check, so plan ahead and find out from your social worker about how to get those background checks completed.

4. **BABYSITTERS** (Reference 7 AAC 67.120) Babysitters do not require a background check. A foster parent may utilize a babysitter for short-term, intermittent care. A babysitter is not required to have a background check, but must meet the following conditions: (1) be at least 16 years of age and, (2) provide only short-term or intermittent care; which means no longer than six consecutive hours without the permission of OCS.
5. **NOTICE IN ADVANCE** (Reference 7AAC 67.150) Foster parents must provide notice to the child’s caseworker at least 14 calendar days in advance when requesting placement change of a child. In circumstances where the health or safety of a household member would be endangered by the child’s continued residence at the foster home, or in the event of an emergency affecting the foster home, a 14-calendar-day notice is not required. If the department must relocate a child to another placement setting, the licensee shall cooperate with the department throughout the relocation process.
6. **CRITICAL INCIDENT** (Reference 7AAC 67.180) Foster parents should report critical incidents immediately or as soon as reasonably possible to the licensing specialist and to the child’s caseworker, during normal work hours; or the department staff who are responsible for after-office hours intake and on-call services. Critical incidents refer to two kinds of situations: those that involve the child (severe injury, need for medical treatment, pregnancy, runaway, need to use physical restraint, physical assaults against family members, property damage by child, etc.) and those that involve your licensing (adding a new family member, moving, change in address or phone, applying to be a child care home, etc.) The situations involving the child usually are reported to the caseworker and the situations with your licensure are usually to your licensing worker. You can always report after hours to Central Intake (1 -800-478-4444). ■

QUIZ!

“New Foster Care Regulations” Effective July 1, 2022

If you read the above entitled article and want foster parent training credit applied to your training requirement, fill out the following questionnaire and FAX it to 1-907-479-9666, mail to ACRF, 815 Second AVE STE 202, Fairbanks, AK 99701 or email to acrf@nwresource.org.

Name: _____

Provider#: _____ Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

1. After reading this material, please list two (2) main nuggets of information you learned from the course.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
2. After reading this material, think about how this information can be useful to your foster parenting experiences. Please list two (2) specific ways you may use this knowledge in your home.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____

TBRI TIPS: TBRI in the Classroom

"Capture their heart and you can take their behavior anywhere."

–Dr. Karyn Purvis

Have your child's back. Be their voice in the classroom and partner with their teacher to ensure their needs are attended to. Share relevant diagnostic information. Explain sensory needs. Share resources. Equip and empower their education team.

Eighty percent of children from hard places have sensory issues. Suggest lighting changes, flexible seating, wiggle seats and fidgets for the classroom. Remember movement calms the brain.

Download Chapter 4 of The Connected Child book and share it with your teacher. Helping them understand the role of fear in behavior and giving the skills to disarm it will work wonders to help calm your child's behavior. Post the following link in your browser. <http://child.tcu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/The-Connected-Child-Chapter-Four.pdf>

Stabilize Blood Sugar- Stabilize Behavior: Advocate that your child has a high protein snack every two hours. Don't let the hangries take over. Bring snacks for the class if needed. Your teacher will appreciate it!

Keep a Hydration Station: Keep the neurotransmitter glutamate from spiking. Dehydration is related to learning issues, aggression, and mood regulation. Keep those water bottles full and accessible!

Team Up with your Teacher: They are tired too and want your child to succeed. Don't overwhelm them with information. Take two or three tools and help them implement them, then introduce a couple more.

Show up! There is power in just being there. Volunteer in your child's classroom. Get to know his classmates. Your presence may calm and help your child focus. You will also gain invaluable insight into what is happening in the classroom!

Are you interested in more TBRI Tips?

Sign up today and you will get a monthly TBRI Tip developed and delivered to your email inbox by Brenda Ursel, M.S., TBRI Educator

To subscribe please email
bursel@nwresource.org

THE ALASKA CENTER FOR RESOURCE FAMILIES P.A.R.K.A PROGRAM

PARKA stands for Preparation and Adoption Readiness for Kids in Alaska
PARKA is a project of Northwest Resource Associates

Let PARKA Adoption Preparation and Support Professionals help you navigate the road to Adoption through the State of Alaska foster care system.

We know the Road
Let us Guide the Way
ACRF PARKA Program

No Charge to Families
Available Statewide
Professional Support
Flexible Learning

Equipping and supporting families who want to adopt through the Alaska foster care is what we do best. Email Bursel@nwresource.org for more information

PARKA We Know the Road!

Preparation and Adoption Readiness for Kids in Alaska (PARKA) is a small intensive, dynamic adoption preparation program.

PARKA serves twenty families a year who are interested in becoming the healing adoptive family for a legally free child through the State of Alaska foster care system. The children matched through this program are usually school aged and/or sibling groups. There is no fee for the PARKA program and support is offered at all levels to help the child thrive in your family. Enrollment is open to families statewide. (Solid internet service required.)

Interested in learning more?

Contact Brenda Ursel at bursel@nwresource.org for more information

Introduction to Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) via Zoom

9am-Noon, Wednesday & Friday, November 2 and 4

This training is specifically targeted to Alaska's foster and adoptive families. Other families are welcome to join, but we ask you email specific family circumstances first so our trainer can chat with you to make sure this training will be helpful.

To register: acrf@nwresource.org or 907-279-1799.
Check our Training Schedule at www.acrf.org for handouts.

MONTHLY RESOURCE FAMILY TRAINING SCHEDULE:

ACRF Teleconference Schedule, September through December 2022

Tues. Sept. 13th, 7-8pm **Teen Series: Sex, Drugs & Social Media—Part 2** Jodi von Brandt

Tues. Oct 11th, Noon-1pm **Teen Series: Sex, Drugs & Social Media—Part 3** Maria VanOrd

Wed. Nov 9th, Noon-1pm **Discussing OCS Regulation Changes Regarding Supervision & Childcare** Maria VanOrd

Tues. Dec 6th, Noon-1pm **Discussing OCS Regulation Changes Regarding Discipline** Rachel Hanft

Please call in 5 minutes early to give us your contact information so we can record your attendance, or stay on the line and speak to the facilitator after the teleconference ends. Check the www.acrf.org teleconference training calendar prior to the teleconference for posted handouts or PowerPoints.

Call 1-800-944-8766, Participant Code 26867#

Check www.acrf.org Teleconference Training Calendar prior to the teleconference for posted handouts or PowerPoints



Statewide Foster and Adoptive Support Group

3rd Thursday of each month at 6pm via Zoom

Next : September 15: Advocating for Children in School

Join us for a chance to talk with other foster and adoptive parents, discuss issues or concerns, get advice and tips, or to share in supporting this group of amazing people and the hard work that they do!

Please call or email for Zoom meeting link or phone number. acrf@nwresource.org 1-800-478-7307 or 907-479-7307.

FASD Caregiver Support Group— Sponsored by Stone Soup Group

Last Thursday of each month from 9-10am via Zoom

September 29 Topic: Discussion on Interdependence: Adult Children- Living and Thriving.

Parents and caregivers of those affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) are welcome to join us!

Please register for this caregiver support group

<https://www.stonesoupgroup.org/event/fasd-support-and-discussion-group-upcoming/>



STATEWIDE ZOOM: Let's Talk ICWA

First Thursday of the Month: October 6, November 3 and December 1 from 4-5pm

Designed specifically for foster and pre-adoptive parents across Alaska to learn about ICWA (Indian Child Welfare Act) and to have a chance to get your questions answered. Come learn and get your questions answered! Co-Sponsored by the Office of Children's Services and ACRF.

Contact us for Zoom meeting link at acrf@nwresource.org 1-800-478-7307 or 907-479-7307.



Wednesday, September 28

9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Zoom

Educational Considerations for Resource Families

Statewide WebiConference

Sponsored by Alaska Center for Resource Families

ACRF Resource Family

Book Club!

READING BETWEEN THE LINES:

The Connected Parent by Karyn Purvis

Club meets on Mondays by Zoom:

October 10

November 14

December 12

Noon - 1pm or 6-7pm



Come and join us for a fun relaxing book club! Each month we will read a portion of the book and have a meaningful discussion of what we read. A limited amount of books are available to borrow.

To register call 907-279-1799

or sign up by email at acrpsc@nwresource.org

CONNECTION CAFE'
Support Group for Foster & Adoptive Parents

In-Person Mat-Su
First Tuesday
Beacon Hill 1951 N Hemmer Rd.
Potluck - Kids Welcome - Doorprizes

Virtual Statewide
Third Thursday
Email for zoom link:
acrf@nwresource.org

FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT TRAINING:

Building Families Through Adoption via Zoom (Two upcoming classes)

6 - 8pm, Tuesdays & Thursdays: Five Sessions: September 13, 15, 20, 22 and 27
and again

10am - Noon, November 29, December 1, 5, 7 and 9

Building Families through Adoption aims to prepare potential adoptive parents for the realities and joys of adoption. All potential adoptive parents are welcome but it is particularly valuable for persons wanting to adopt from Alaska's foster care system.

Adoption Information Forum via Zoom

6 - 7pm, Monday, November 14

Learn more about adoption options in Alaska!

Adopting Through OCS via Zoom

6:30 - 8:30pm, Tuesday, November 15

This zoom class will include information about adopting through the foster care system and reviews the "nuts and bolts" of what families need to know.

Core Training for Resource Families via Zoom

6:30 - 8pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays—7 Sessions: October 20, 25, 27, November 1, 3, 8, 10

Core Training for Resource Families helps you gain a better understanding of the child protection process, the special needs of your children in foster care and your role as a foster parent. It is also a great way to meet other foster parents and hear their ideas about fostering and adopting!

Core Training for Relative Caregivers via Zoom

6:30 - 8pm, Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays

5 Sessions: October 17, 24, November 3, 8, and 10

Core Training for Relative Caregivers will help you understand the child protective system, know what your role is as a foster parent to your relatives, and help connect you with resources to support your care for the children in your home.

Please call or email to pre-register and get the Zoom access information:

acrf@nwresource.org 1-800-478-7307 or 907-479-7307

BECOMING A FOSTER PARENT ORIENTATION

Statewide Resource Family Orientation

via Zoom, Wednesdays 6-7:30pm:

September 14

October 12

November 9

December 14

Telephonic, Thursdays:

September 15, Noon-1pm

October 20, 7-8pm

November 17, Noon-1pm

December 15, 7-8pm

**IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE WITH COMPLETING THE APPLICATION
AN OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL HOUR IS PROVIDED AT THE END OF EACH OF THE ABOVE SESSIONS.**

To learn the steps to becoming a foster or adoptive parent call 1-800-478-7307 to pre-register.

FOR THE TELEPHONIC ORIENTATION CALL:

1-800-944-8766 then you will be asked to enter a code; please enter: **26867#**

Note: Don't forget to press the # button! If you call in before the group leader, you will hear music, stay on the line.

Every quarter we discover so many **special people, organizations and businesses** to thank! We can't tell you enough how much **we appreciate you**. We want you know how much **you impact our agency**—Without you it certainly **would not be possible for us to give** to our foster homes, our caregivers caring for their relatives and our adoptive families across the state of Alaska. **We hope you recognize how truly important you are!**

Training and Support: Thank you to all our **fabulous families who spoke on our panels** at the Child Welfare Academy, in helping to train the new OCS workers and for participating in our Webi-Conferences. These include: **Bobbi Green, Dora Wilson, Alan Corrick, Grace Hakanson, Jennifer Luke, Kristen Haddox, Rhonda Sparks, Fawn White, Sarah Redmon, Laura Ingham, Sarah Doestchman, Sara Parris, Andrea McCoy and Facing Foster Care in Alaska Members**. Thank you **Karen Siegfried and Shauna Meridith** for leading the Connection Café and online Zoom Support Group in Mat-Su. Thank you for your time and commitment to supporting our families!

Volunteers for Drives: ACRF would like to give a huge shout-out and thank you to the **Southeast Region** for organizing the **Back to School Drive**. We appreciate the time and coordination it took for everyone involved to advertise, accept and distribute all the items. Thank you **Skyleen Merfeld** and all the **Southeast Branches** and department **staff** with **First Bank!** Thank you **Southeast OCS-Forrest McGillis** and **all the other staff** for coordinating!

Volunteers for Special Projects: A huge thank you to our **resource family volunteers** who are such an important part of several of our projects! Thank you **Kristen Haddox** for leading our **Snack Station Stockpile (Food Insecurities in Foster Children) Project in Fairbanks**.

Foster Parent Appreciation: Thank you **Rotary Cares for Kids** for **sponsoring** this year's **Fairbanks Picnic** and to the **Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints** for **hosting** this year's **Anchorage Picnic**. Thank you to these donors for their donations for door prizes, services, information tables, and for their time volunteering: **Splash & Dash, American Tire & Auto, Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center, Fairbanks Children's Museum, S Salon Studio, Stone Soup Group, TiJa, Tanana Chiefs Conference Child Protection, Eileen Rhoads with New Look Hair Salon, Fairbanks North Star School District, Pavva Inupiaq Dancers, Tommy G's Meat and Sausage, Big Daddy's BBQ, Alaska Zoo, Alaska Massage Clinic Beacon Hill, Grizzly Dogs Food Truck, Olive Garden, Red Robin, Mylords Floral, Bear Tooth, Humpys, Title Wave Books, Get Air, Krystel Marino with The Door, Justin Pendergrass with My House, Marissa Sweet with Office of Youth Empowerment, and Retchenda George-Bettisworth with UAF School of Social Work.**

Donations: We appreciate our community organizations and service groups that support the work of ACRF. We would like to **thank and spotlight these organizations** for the support they have given ACRF programs. **Sunrise Cares Program** for their **1-Day Fundraiser**, **Golden Heart Women Who Care** for their **generous donation** individually and as a group, **Rotary Club of Fairbanks** for a donation toward **safety supplies**, the **Anchorage Moose Lodge** for the donation toward **infant diaper bags and supplies**, **Walmart of Wasilla** for **planting supplies and seeds**, the **Brett Memorial Ice Arena** for **donating space** in Mat-Su for a **family skating event**, **Angeliki Thomas and her children** for **fundraising through Our Two Cents** for generous supplies of **comfort bags for foster children**, **Tanana Chiefs Conference** for donating several **baby gates**, **Girl Scout Troop 81** for their donation of **Girl Scout Cookies**, **Alaska Parent Magazine** for the donation of a **half page recruitment Ad**, **Newborns in Need** for their donation of **diaper bags and wipes** for use in emergency placement, **My Very Own Blanket** for the donation of **multiple blankets**, **Sunrise Bagel & Espresso** for **gift cards**, and to **everyone who linked ACRF to your Fred Meyer Community Rewards Program**.



Northwest Resource Associates
Alaska Center for Resource Families
815 Second Avenue Suite 202
Fairbanks, AK 99701

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ACRF STAFF DIRECTORY

Northern Regional Office 8:30am-4:30pm

Rachel Hanft, Family Support Specialist
Kendall Musser, Rural Outreach Coordinator
Melody Jamieson, Adoption Support Specialist
Areli Miller-Mackey, Project Assistant
Dee Dee Keyser, Resource Coordinator

Anchorage Regional Office 8:30am-4:30pm

Aileen McInnis, Director
Maria VanOrd, Family Support Specialist
Brenda Ursel, Adoption Support
Debbie Laflamme, Resource Family Associate
Lissa Rylander, Database Coordinator

Mat-Su Regional Office 9:30am-3:30pm

Jodi von Brandt, Family Support Specialist
Erin Monarch, Adoption Support Specialist

www.acrf.org



Consider Supporting ACRF By Doing What You Do Every Day!

There are many ways to support Alaska Center for Resource Families just by shopping as you normally do, or by choosing to shop at these locations and selecting us as your Non-Profit of choice.

Link your Fred Meyer Rewards Card to Alaska Center for Resource Families and you still earn reward points and ACRF receives a donation! Shop at smile.amazon.com and when you choose Northwest Resource Associates as your charity, ACRF will earn while you shop, at no additional cost to you!



ACRF Northern Region

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479-7907/FAX: 479-9666
Toll-Free: 1-800-478-7307

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Email: acrfsc@nwresource.org

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Wasilla, AK 99654

376-4678/FAX: 376-4638

Email: acrfsc@nwresource.org