

**ORIGINAL COLONISTS  
Of the  
MATANUSKA COLONIZATION PROJECT  
OF 1935**

**Listed by State and County**

The following is a list of the approximately 200 families\* who were sent to Alaska from the cutover region of Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin in 1935 to take part in the Matanuska Colonization Project in Alaska. Many of these young families also included children, so the total number of participants was over 1,000.

The government, aware that the distance and difficulties involved in the Matanuska project might be overwhelming for some families, offered to pay their way back to their homes in the Midwest if they decided to leave the colony within the first year. A number of families took the government up on this offer, particularly during the first summer, so there are still Matanuska Colony families to be found in the Midwest. Juster Hill Productions conducted interviews with colonists throughout Minnesota, Wisconsin, and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan; many of their descendants still live there, as well.

Over 150 people were interviewed during the making of *Alaska Far Away*. Not all the interviews could be included in the film. However, the original full-length interviews, along with written transcripts of the interviews, are being donated to the Palmer Historical Society in Palmer, Alaska, to create a permanent oral history archive of the Matanuska Colony.

**LEGEND:**

- \* The exact number of families varies according to different historical accounts.
- + Family featured in *Alaska Far Away*
- # Members of family interviewed by the filmmakers

## MATANUSKA COLONISTS FROM MICHIGAN – By County

Alcona County	#	LOYER, Joseph and Naomi	Missaukee County	SCHUTT, Claus and Hattie
Antrim County		ZOOK, Harold and Clara		BOICE, Harold and Lona
Benzie County		DINGMAN, William and Mildred	Montmorency County	MacNEVEN, Leon and Lorraine
		HOPKINS, Roy and Ada	Muskegon County	CARTER, Clifford and Dorothy
Charlevoix County		NEWVILLE, Irving and Lila		PORTER, John and Alice
Cheboygan County		ENNES, Max and Lila	Ontonagon County	ELLSWORTH, Lester and Sonia
		DREGHORN, Lawrence and Grace		HOGANSON, Harold and Mayme
		DURFEY, Robert and Gladys		+ ONKKA, Dave and Saina
		MARTIN, Clyde and Arbutus		SMITH, Martin and Margaret
Chippewa County		SULLIVAN, Francis and Elizabeth	Oscoda County	+ CAMPBELL, George and Onabel
		FOX, Waldo and Mable		+ FRANK, Darrell and Lois
		HUNTLEY, Walter and Beatrice	Presque Isle County	HOEFT, John and Adeline
Clinton County		BENNETT, William and Ruth		PIASKOWSKI, Frank and Frances
Delta County		PARLETTE, Paul and Violet	Roscommon County	COUSINEAU, Charles and Reba
Dickinson County	#	LARSH, Emil and Gertrude		FITZPATRICK, Theodore and Leona
		+ STEBBINS, DeWayne and Evelyn		WAY, Sherman and Esther
		WILDING, John and Viola	Schoolcraft County	WILSON, Amadee and Leah
Gogobic County		NUTILLA, Eino and Betty	Wayne County	ROTZ, Fred and Emma
		PAKONEN, Russell and Madelene	Wexford County	CASLER, William and Elsie
		PARKS, Clarence and Beulah		LIPKE, Henry & Mary
Houghton County		ANDERSON, Walter and Garret		PORTERFIELD, Ernest and Almeda
		GREENE, Clarence and Alida		SPENCER, Milan and Margaret
		JOHNSON, Harold and Fannie		<b>68 families total from Michigan</b>
Ingham County		DAVIS, Harold and Edith		
Iosco County		McCORMICK, Martin and Margaret		
Iron County		HIGGENBOTHAM, Robert and Clara		
		JOHNSON, Arvid and Edith		
		RETALLIC, Arthur and Alice		
		STURDY, Norris and Leona		
		# WIRTANEN, Eino and Fannie		
Kalkaska County		VAN WORMER, Howard and Bernice		
Keewenaw County		JACOBSON, Adolph and Mable		
		LAAKO, Henry and Ruth		
Manistee County		KALLIOSARI, John and Letta		
		+ SNYDER, Thomas and Freda		
		USHER, Robert and Helen		
Marquette County		VENNE, George and Irene		
		LA VALLEY, Edward and Florence		
Menominee County		MANGINEN, Walter and Vivian		
		CHANEY, Escar and Louise		
		FOSTER, Kenneth and Marion		
		HAVEMEISTER, Arnold and Emmy		
		HYNEK, William and Neville		
		PFEIFF, John and Clara		
		QUARNSTROM, Clarence and Sadie		
	SPENCER, Nelson and Olive			

## MATANUSKA COLONISTS FROM MINNESOTA – By County

Beltrami County		KIRSCH, John and Rose	St. Louis County	+	EMBERG, George and Evelyn
Carlton County	+	BENSON, Henning and Irene			GIBLEN, Theodore and Jennie
		BERGAN, Leonard and Alice		#	ISING, William and Marie
	+	HEMMER, Patrick and Cora			JAHR, Paul and Emma
		McKECHNIE, Loren and Edna			JOHNSON, Johan and Irene
	#	PETERSON, Otto and Meryle		+	KINDGREN, Oscar and Saima
		SANDVIK, Ingolf and Agnes			LEPAK, Thomas and Irene
		SMITH, Lauren and Nellie			LUND, John and Margaret
		VASANOJA, Laurence and Helen			MEEHAN, John and Viola
Cass County		COOK, Clyde and Jessie			MEIER, Carl and Edith
		KENSER, Grant and Gertrude			OLSON, Hilmer and Gwendolyn
		OLMSTEAD, Vernon and Pearl			OLSON, Walter and Minnie
Crow Wing County		STRANG, Eldred and Helen			POWELL, Ores and Lorenzie
Hennepin County		ALEXANDER, Harold and Frances			ROSSITER, Henry and Mary
		ENGBRETSON, Oscar and Johanna			RUDELLE, Charles and Ada Ellen
	#	HESSE, Claude and Helen	Washington County		LEE, Francis and Eugenie
	+	PIPPEL, Walter and Melva			<b>67 families total from Minnesota</b>
		RORRISON, Laurence and Vera			
Itasca County	+	FRANCE, Grant and Iva			
	#	KERTTULA, Oscar and Elvi			
		MOSES, Arthur and Blanche			
		SAARELA, Matt and Olga			
Kanabec County	+	BELL, Lloyd and Dorothy			
		CHRISTIANSON, Martin and Leota			
		FISHER, Otto and Frances			
		HACK, Arthur and Mabel			
		SPLITTGERBER, Herman and Violet			
Koochiching County		JENSEN, Henry Peter and Edna			
		LARSON, Fred and Laura			
	+	LEMMON, Gilford and Catherine			
	+	LEMMON, George and Josephine			
		POOR, Chancy and Julia			
		POORE, Marion and Esther			
Lake of the Woods County		REBARCHEK, Raymond and Edna			
	#	VICKARYOUS, Anthony and Alys			
Mille Lacs County	#	CARSON, Arnold and Hortense			
	#	DOUGHTY, Glendon and Hulda			
	#	ECKERT, Virgil and Lillian			
		FREDERICKS, Allen and Lenore			
		JONES, Vernon and Eleanor			
		LEANDER, Rudolph and Inez			
		MOSS, Edward and Myrtle			
		PATTEN, Claire and Margaret			
	+	SJODIN, Clarence and Alice			
	#	WILKES, Ray and Ruth			
Pine County		FREDERICKS, Albert and Audrey			
		HOLLER, John and Gertrude			
		KLINEPIER, Kenneth and Elverta			
		SIEBER, Joseph and Albertina			
		STEPHAN, Vincent and Elizabeth			
	+	SWANDA, Frank and Minnie			

<b>MATANUSKA COLONISTS FROM WISCONSIN – By County</b>				
Ashland County		MATTSON, Runnar and Eleanor	Price County	LA ROSE, Henry and Clystia
		NOVAK, George and Catherine	Sawyer County	ANDERSON, Clarence and Clara
Barron County		BEYLUND, Oscar and Irene		+ DELAND, Edgar and Helen
		DRAGSETH, Joe and Velma		JOHNSON, Clinton and Doris
		+ PUHL, Joseph and Blanche		McKENDRY, Howard and Edith
		SORENSEN, Clarence and Vivian		+ WALPORT, Paul and Ethel
Bayfield County	#	BILLER, Robert and Dorothy	Taylor County	GULBERG, Bernard and Beatrice
		COVERT, Albert and Catherine		WEILER, Nicholas and Elsa
		FERGUSON, Walter and Mabel	Trempealeau County	+ HERREID, Leonard and Ella
Burnett County		RUNYON, Scottie and Irene		MILLER, Neil and Margaret
Sheboygan County	+	HERMON, John and Hilda	Vernon County	HENRY, Francis and Ella
		SCHIEBL, Gus and Elethea	Washburn County	+ ANDERSON, Chris and Grace
Douglas County		BRADLEY, John and Sylvia		CLAYTON, Walter and Rose
		CONNERS, George and Edith		# JOHNSTON, James and Lillian
		ELLISON, Carl and Ruth		LA FLAM, Claire and Emma
		KOENAN, Henry and Bernice		NELSON, Arthur and Isobel
		LAKE, John and Magdalene		<b>68 families total from Wisconsin</b>
		RASCHKE, August and Anna		
		REITAN, Bernard and Alice		
		SMITH, William and Alice		
		UBER, Lawrence and Alice		
Dunn County	#	HAMANN, LeRoy and Gretchen		
Florence County		DEAN, Ballard and Marion		
		JENSEN, Harry and Viola		
		TAYLOR, Neil and Violet		
Forest County		ARNDT, Lawrence and Ella		
	#	HESS, Frank and Florence		
	#	MONROE, Lester and Mary		
Iron County		JUVETTE, Eugene and Mary		
Lincoln County		LENTZ, Joseph and Zuleika		
	#	LENTZ, William and Viola		
		SCHULTZ, William and Martha		
		YOHN, Victor and Manila Bay		
Marinette County		HUSEBY, Einer and Inez		
		RING, Frank and Lucille		
Oconto County		BAILEY, Ferber and Ruth		
		BARRY, Earl and Louise		
	#	CAMPBELL, Harry and Theodora		
	+	CHURCH, John and Julia		
		KURTZ, Cecil and Mary		
	#	NELSON, Paul and Margaret		
Oneida County	+	BOUWENS, William and Lulubelle		
		BROWN, Otis and Grace		
		ERICKSON, Carl and Inga		
		GRIESE, Raymond and Hazel		
		JOHNSON, Victor and Klaria		
		ROUGHAN, Henry and Minnie		
		SEXTON, Allan and Minnie		
		SOYK, Martin and Gennette		
		WORDEN, Wesley and Margaret		
Polk County		ARCHER, Pearl and Dorothy		
		NICHOLS, Harry and Virgie		