



2021

# Chalkyitsik Community Plan

“Diikwaiik’it zhit zhehk’aa naii gwinzii gwagwandaii ts’a kwanchu’ehdan chan tr’agwandaii. Ch’anjaa naii jidii yeenaadai’ gooyuughwan geegoovołtin ts’a’ nats’aa googwiindai’ geediigwaatan ts’a’ chan diinaa gwagwaandak. Yeena dai’ nats’aa tr’agwiindai’ ts’a’ juk drin nats’aa tr’agwandaii hah ni’laa drn tee gwaanchy’aa zhit tr’agwandaii. Jii nan kat jidii nin gwandaii ts’a’ chan jidii nan kat nahshii kwahn tr’agwandaii ts’a’ juk drin jidii gwitr’it nihleejuk t’iinchy’aa aii t’ii tr’agwiheendaii chan ahragwaa’eh ihzhik chan diineenjii gwiinzii. Diikwaiik’it zhit gwiinzii than tr’agwandaii, ts’a’ gwinzii chan diikwaiik’it lahgweddhaa. Jidii nan kak kwan gwarandaii nizii. Diik’eejit naii nats’aa tr’agwandaii ts’a’ jidii tr’agwaraheendaii t’eegwaachy’aa ahgwagwaa’eh yeendaa diikwaiik’it “zhit gwiheezyaa geenjit. Diizheh kaa’ naii zhat diik’ee goorahjik ts’a’ zhat kwaiik’it tr’igwich’ii geet’agwiindhan.

Chalkyitsik Village Council

Tanana Chiefs Conference

1/29/2021



## Acknowledgements

A very special thank you to the community members, youth, leaders, staff, Chalkyitsik Tribal Council and Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) who worked passionately and in unison on the Chalkyitsik Community Plan.

Mahsi' Choo, (Thank you very much)



**CHALKYITSIK VILLAGE COUNCIL**  
P.O. BOX 57, CHALKYITSIK, ALASKA 99788  
TELE: 1-907-848-8117 FACSIMILE: 1-907-848-8986



**Resolution # 2021-21 Adopting Community Plan**

**Whereas**, this Community Plan is important to the future growth and development of Chalkyitsik; and,

**Whereas**, this plan was created through a public process which captured the values and goals of our community: and,

**Whereas**, this plan is a tool that helps us manage change in our community: and,

**Whereas**, this plan is intended to coordinate future community development and service delivery; and,

**Whereas**; it is understood that this document was created for public use and will be made publically available and,

**Whereas**, we ask all public, private, and non-profit entities serving our community to recognize and use this plan; and,

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the parties of this resolution agree to work together to pursue the values, goals, and vision express in this plan.

**Certification**

We hereby certify that this resolution was duly passed and approved by the Chalkyitsik Village Council.

Stephanie Herbert  
Stephanie Herbert, First Chief

Brittany Henry  
Brittany Henry, Secretary/Treasurer

Feb 19 2021  
Date

1 Feb 2021  
Date

## Contents

Acknowledgements.....	2
Résolution .....	3
Executive Summary.....	8
Vision.....	9
Values.....	10
Assets .....	11
Community Profile .....	17
History.....	17
Culture .....	17
Location.....	18
Climate .....	18
Population and Demographics.....	18
Governance and Public Administration .....	19
Chalkyitsik Village Council.....	19
VPSO/ Law Enforcement.....	20
Corporations and other entities.....	21
Chalkyitsik Native Corporation .....	21
Doyon, Limited .....	22
Tanana Chiefs Conference .....	23
Denakkanaaga.....	24
Doyon Foundation .....	25
Council of Athabaskan Tribal Governments .....	26
Our History.....	26
Emergency Services .....	27
Public Utilities .....	28
Water and Sewer .....	28
Solid Waste .....	28
Communications .....	30
Telephone .....	30
Cable .....	30
Internet .....	30
Power/Energy .....	31

Bulk Fuel.....	31
Electric.....	31
Public Facilities.....	32
Clinic.....	32
School.....	33
Tribal Leaders of Tomorrow.....	34
Community Hall .....	35
Washeteria.....	36
Post Office.....	36
Economy.....	37
Local Store and Businesses .....	37
Composition of Employment .....	37
Housing .....	38
Current Housing Situation.....	38
Housing Barriers.....	38
Transportation .....	39
External Transportation .....	39
Internal Transportation.....	39
Land Use and the Environment .....	40
Land Ownership .....	40
Geography.....	40
Environmental Concerns.....	40
Flooding.....	41
Food Security .....	41
Wild Fire.....	42
Subsistence .....	43
Community Well-being .....	44
Churches .....	45
Elder Care Programs .....	45
Accessibility.....	45
Additional Education.....	45
Cultural and/or Seasonal Gatherings.....	45
Works Cited.....	47

Survey Questions .....	48
General Questions .....	49
Appendices.....	57
Aerial View of Chalkyitsik.....	57

## Tables of Figure

Figure 1 VPSO Building.....	20
Figure 2 Chalkyitsik Native Corporation .....	21
Figure 3 Chalkyitsik Transfer Site .....	28
Figure 4 CVC Recycle Center .....	29
Figure 5 Alice Moses Chalkyitsik Health Clinic.....	32
Figure 6 Chalkyitsik School.....	33
Figure 7 Tribal Leader of Tomorrow .....	34
Figure 8 Community Hall.....	35
Figure 9 Washeteria .....	36
Figure 10 Post Office .....	36
Figure 11 Chalkyitsik Native Corporation .....	37
Figure 12 DOT Garage/Council Storage Shed .....	37
Figure 13 Chalkyitsik Log Cabin .....	38
Figure 14 Chalkyitsik Roads.....	39
Figure 15 Flood Waters.....	41
Figure 16 Fire Crew in Chalkyitsik .....	42
Figure 17 Ice Fishing.....	44
Figure 18 Community Planning Meeting Activity .....	48
Figure 19 Photo Courtesy to the BLM Fire Crew, Sam H. 2019 .....	57



## Executive Summary

In 2020 the Chalkyitsik Village Council went into a contract with Tanana Chiefs Conference community planner program to update our existing 2020 community plan. Brittany Henry was hired to be the community planner for Chalkyitsik.

Through the continued community planning efforts, the people of Chalkyitsik were able to successfully define their vision, values, assets, and goals for the future. Those in Gwich'in were created and written in the first Chalkyitsik community plan, in two thousand and nine by: the Chalkyitsik Village Council. Several sections of the plan have been translated into Takudh by Brenda Kaye of Old Crow, Yukon using the Vuntut Gwich'in dialect.

The Chalkyitsik Community Plan is a reflection of their efforts and is intended as a tool to guide future growth.

## Vision

“Diikwaiik’it zhit zhehk’aa naii gwinzii gwagwandaii ts’a kwanchu’ehdan chan tr’agwandaii. Ch’anjaa naii jidii yeenaadai’ gooyuughwan geegoovoltin ts’a’ nats’aa googwiindai’ geediigwaatan ts’a’ chan diinaa gwagwaandak. Yeena dai’ nats’aa tr’agwiindai’ ts’a’ juk drin nats’aa tr’agwandaii hah ni’laa drn tee gwaanchy’aa zhit tr’agwandaii. Jii nan kat jidii nin gwandaii ts’a’ chan jidii nan kat nahshii kwahn tr’agwandaii ts’a’ juk drin jidii gwitr’it nihleejuk t’iinchy’aa aii t’ii tr’agwiheendaii chan ahragwaa’eh ihzhik chan diineenjii gwiinzii. Diikwaiik’it zhit gwiinzii than tr’agwandaii, ts’a’ gwinzii chan diikwaiik’it lahgweddhaa. Jidii nan kak kwan gwarandaii nizii. Diik’eejit naii nats’aa tr’agwandaii ts’a’ jidii tr’agwaraheendaii t’eegwaachy’aa ahgwagwaa’eh yeendaa diikwaiik’it “zhit gwiheezyaa geenjit. Diizheh kaa’ naii zhat diik’ee goorahjik ts’a’ zhat kwaiik’it tr’igwich’ii geet’agwiindhan.

“Our community is made up of healthy sober families. Elders share their ancestral wisdom and traditions. In our daily lives, we live with both traditional values and modern amenities. We subsist and survive off the land while enjoying ample economic opportunities. Our community is self-sustaining. We use our natural resources appropriately, and our resources are stable. Our youth learn subsistence skills and traditions, ensuring the continued survival of our community. We raise our families here and enjoy living here throughout our lives.”

## Values

- Gwiinzii tr'agwandaii ts'a' kwanchu' tr'idinii kwaa gwinjik tr'agwaandaii.
- Kaiik'it gwich'in naii goozhin nizii.
- Diich'anjaa naii nats'aa gwagwiindai' geediigwaatan jii gwagwaraa'eh eenjit. Jii nats'aa tr'agwiindai' gaagwiheendaii gwit'eegwaachy'aa aii k'it gwiriheendaii geenjit.
- Ch'iyuukhwan naii digigii gihil'ee.
- Diik'eejit naii gwiintsii gooveegoo'aii, yeendoo diikwaiik'it k'aaganahtyaa eenjit.
- Zhat kwaiik'it zhit zheh k'aa naii ni'ts'agiinyaa ts'a' gwiinzii nilak'aganaatii.
- Diinan, tr'al tat ts'a' yeenaa dai' nats'aa tr'agwiindai' aii k'it juk drin nats'aa deegwiindhan ky'aa tr'agwandaii
- Jii kwaiik'it shrii natr'igwihee'aa eenjit gwitr'it'arahgwah'in.
- Diikheh kwai' naii jii kwaiik'it eenjit gwiinzii gwitr'it'agwagwah'in.

- A healthy sober lifestyle
- Community members with good attitudes
- Our Elders, who maintain and share our traditional practices and values
- Strong parents who respect their children
- Our youth because they are important to the future of our community
- Family stability in our community
- Our land, wilderness, and our freedom to pursue a traditional, semi-subsistence lifestyle
- Meaningful work that contributes to the community
- Good leadership

- Zhat kwaiik'it gwitch'ii naii gooveeshroonchy'aa ts'a' chan gwinzii aakin k'aganahtii
- Diitsii ts'a' diich'anjaa naii tr'ihl'ee
- Diikheh kwai' naii gwiinzii diineenjit gwitr'it'agwagwah'in
- Nijin gwatch'aa k'eech'arahtryaa ts'a' ch'ookwat zheh goo'aii diineenjit gwiinzii
- Zhat Chalkyitsik diik'eeriinjik ts'a' diizheh k'aa naii zhat gwagwitch'ii.
- Jii Chalkyitsik kwaiik'it goo'aii zheegwaanyaa ts'a' chan khahtrilch'i' kwaa ts'a' chan than goo'aii.
- Zhat kwaiik'it dinjii naii tthak nihlaa giindaii ts'a' tr'anaajat kwaa gwiinzii.
- Zhat diikwaiik'it tthak ni'ts'ariinyaa ts'a' chan diikwaiik'it geelin tseenehdahn goo'aii k'it t'oonchy'aa.
- Tr'ał tat dii'ehjyaa dhah'aii ts'a' zhat gwa'an nats'aa nan kak tr'agwandaii ahragwaa'ih

- Residents are very nice and hospitable
- We honor our Grandfather and Elders
- We have good leadership
- We enjoy having public facilities – like the washeteria and the store
- We grew up in Chalkyitsik and our families reside here
- Chalkyitsik is quiet, slow-paced, and secluded
- We know everyone in the community, and there is a feeling of safety
- A supportive, helpful, and strong community spirit surrounds us
- The wilderness is our backyard where we can practice a subsistence lifestyle

---

## *Community Goals and Objectives*

---

- 1 • Housing
- 2 • Infrastructure
- 3 • Elders & Youth
- 4 • Traditions & Culture
- 5 • Education

---

# HOUSING

---

## GOAL #1: CHALKYITSIK HAS SAFE, AFFORDABLE, AND ENERGY EFFICIENT HOUSING AVAILABLE TO ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Objectives: To create new road behind the existing housing uptown which is a secured location for building new homes.

Objectives: Conduct a housing needs assessment to determine the community's housing needs.

Objectives: Host community meeting to present housing needs assessment; and partner with CBDO to plan the housing project

Objectives: Apply for ICDBG funding to construct two new houses.

Objectives: Begin construction of two energy efficient homes.

Project Lead: Chalkyitsik Village

---

# INFRASTRUCTURE

---

## GOAL #1: CHALKYITSIK HAS A NEW MULTI-PURPOSE COMMUNITY BUILDING TO PROVIDE INCREASED QUALITY OF SERVICES; A PLACE OF GATHERING; TRIBAL OFFICE SPACE; AND A COMMUNITY KITCHEN

Objectives: Host community meeting to gain input on the Multi-Purpose Building; what the building should house and location

Objectives: Partner with Corporation to secure Land for the building site

Objectives: Seek funding for design and cost estimate

Objectives: Apply for ICDBG grant and seek other funding opportunities

Objectives: Begin construction of Multi-Purpose Community Building

## GOAL #2: CHALKYITSIK HAS SAFE RELIABLE WATER AND SEWER TO ENSURE THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND SANITATION NEEDS ARE MET FOR ALL RESIDENTS

Objectives: Collaborate with TCC and Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) or Village Safewater to conduct a needs assessment or feasibility study to determine which system will fit the current environmental and housing conditions

Objectives:

Seek funding to begin the phases of the water and sewer project

## GOAL #3: CHALKYITSIK HAS A HEATED GARAGE TO IMPROVE EMERGENCY RESPONSE TIME

Objectives: Apply for EDA planning grant for developing design for a frame building

Objectives: Discuss with community what the garage will withhold and figure budget

Objectives: Seek funding and for designer too

---

# ELDERS & YOUTH

---

**GOAL #1: CHALKYITSIK YOUTH WILL HAVE A WARM AND SAFE PLACE TO HOST ACTIVITIES**

Objectives: Obtain COVID relief building for Elder/Youth usage

Objectives: Hire a youth attendant to provide support and supervision to youth activities  
CPR trained/ETT

Objectives: Create an activity committee

Create a student council to plan activities and other fun gatherings

---

# TRADITIONS & CULTURE

---

**GOAL #1: CHALKYITSIK IS A HAPPY AND SAFE COMMUNITY WHO TEACHES OUR TRADITION AND ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN CULTURAL PRACTICES**

Objectives: Seek funding; Alyeska, Flyers for funding, bi-yearly, airlines, raffles, concession stand

Objectives: Hire mentors for seasonal activities

Objectives: Hire an alternate mentor/teacher for activities



---

# EDUCATION

---

**GOAL #1:** To increase participation in higher education and vocational training

Objectives: Work with TCC Employment and Education Program to determine the needs

Objectives: Work with training centers to enroll students in heavy equipment, hand tools, table saws, etc.

Objectives: Host a community career fair

Objectives: Invite originations to the career/job fair

## Community Profile

### History

For thousands of generations, the Draanjik Gwich'in occupied the area stretching from the mouth of the Black River to the headwaters of the Salmon, Black and Grayling Rivers. Traditionally, Chalkyitsik or Jałgiitsik (both meaning "fish hooking place") was known to the Draanjik people as a seasonal fishing camp.

Beginning in the early 1900's, the Draanjik people began settling in Salmon Village (70 miles upriver from Chalkyitsik). In the late 1930s, a boat carrying construction materials for a school was forced to unload in Chalkyitsik due to low water. The establishment of a school in Chalkyitsik drew in Draanjik families from the surrounding area and by 1969 the village had 26 houses, two churches, a store and a community hall.

### Culture

Chalkyitsik is one of 14 Gwich'in Athabascan communities that extend from northeastern Alaska in the U.S. to the northern Yukon and the Northwest Territories of Canada. Other Gwich'in villages include: Aklavik, Arctic Village, Beaver, Birch Creek, Canyon Village, Circle, Eagle, Fort McPherson, Fort Yukon, Inuvik, Old Crow, Tsiigehtchic, and Venetie. The indigenous language of the region is Gwich'in (or Takudh). English is the most common language spoken in Chalkyitsik; however the preservation of the Gwich'in language continues to be very important to the community. Gwich'in people share a collective identity based on common history, language, culture, and traditions. The tradition of hunting, fishing, trapping, and berry picking continues to be an important part of the Gwich'in lifestyle. Other cultural activities include beading, drumming, canoe and snowshoe making, skin tanning, and storytelling.

There are 47 different Athabascan languages. The languages are located in Alaska, Canada, Western US, Southwest US, and Mexico. In Alaska, there are five different dialects of the Athabascan language. Those dialects are: Koyukon, Lower Tanana, Tanacross, Upper Kuskokwim, and Upper Tanana. Chalkyitsik speaks the Upper Yukon Gwich'in dialect. If all the Gwich'in dialects were the same I think there would be more fluent speakers.

Anglican missionaries arrived in the Yukon Flats region in the mid 1800's. Today, most Gwich'in communities are Episcopalian rather than Anglican. The fiddle was first introduced to the Gwich'in in the mid-1800 by French and Orcadian fur traders employed by the Hudson Bay Company in Fort Yukon. Since that time, fiddle music and dance has become an integral part of Gwich'in celebrations.



## Location

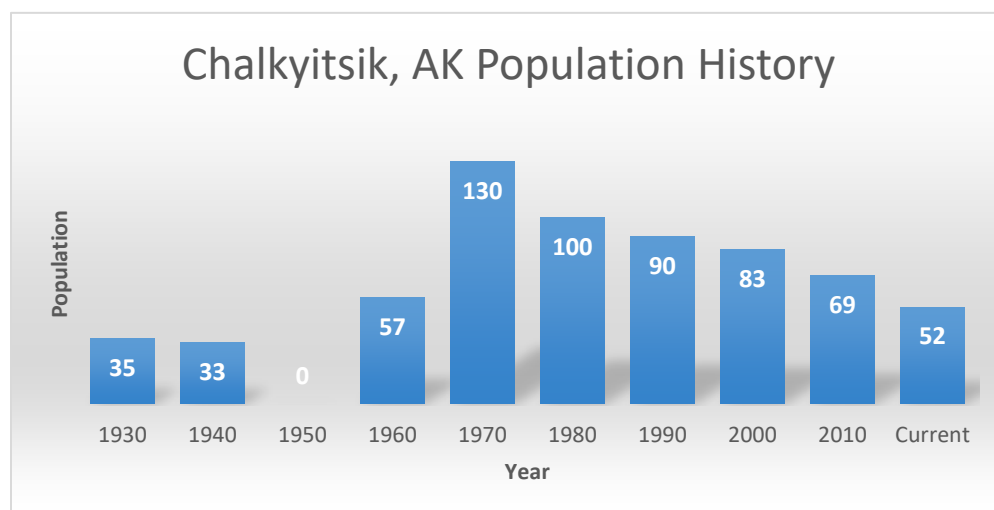
Chalkyitsik is located within the Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge on the south bank of the Black River. Location-Chalkyitsik is located on the Black River about 50 miles east of Fort Yukon. Latitude: 66.6504, Longitude: -143.7279. Chalkyitsik consists of 9.1 square miles Sq Mi Land 0.00 Sq Mi Water 0.00.

## Climate

<sup>1</sup>Chalkyitsik has a continental arctic climate, characterized by seasonal extremes of temperature. Winters are long and harsh, and summers warm and short. The average high temperature during July ranges from 65 to 72 °F. The average low temperature during January is well below zero. Extended periods of -50 to -60 °F are common. Extreme temperatures, ranging from a low of -71 to a high of 97 °F, have been measured. Annual precipitation averages 6.5 inches, and annual snowfall averages 43.4 inches. The Black River is ice-free from mid-June to mid-October.

## Population and Demographics

According to US Census, Chalkyitsik first appeared in the 1930 Census as a village named Fishhook. The chart below depicts the history of US Census for Chalkyitsik.



In 2019, the population count in Chalkyitsik was 79. The community is 99% Alaska Native, a majority of them (approximately 90% are enrolled members in the Chalkyitsik Tribal Council).

The community of Chalkyitsik has seen a decrease in its population in recent years due to the number of people leaving to find employment. Within the last five years the count remained between the 70-79 range of the population counts. The decrease is also due in part to the number of elders and residents in the community who have passed and people moving away.

Today, January 2021, the population is approximately 52 total. There are twenty-four females and 8% of the females are children. There are twenty-eight males and 6% of the males are children. Out of the population there are approximately seven elders in the village.

---

<sup>1</sup> Tanana Chiefs Conference, 2021

## Governance and Public Administration

### Chalkyitsik Village Council

The Chalkyitsik Village Council (CVC) is a federally-recognized tribe, consisting of a six-member Council and 12 staff. The CVC is the local governing body within the boundaries of Chalkyitsik. Council positions include the first chief and six members (annual terms). Tribal council elections are held each January. Those interested in applying for a position must be a current tribal member and have lived in Chalkyitsik for the prior year.

The Village Council staff positions are: Tribal Administrator, Bookkeeper, Roads Director, Natural Resources, a 638 Programs Director, Tribal Court Clerk, IWCA worker, Health Aide, Domestic Violence, Power Plant Operator, Water Plant Worker, Environmental, and a custodian worker.

The Tribe administers numerous grants and contracts, including P.L. 93-638; IRR Transportation, HUD Housing Program; and Environmental. The P.L. 93-638 Self-Governance program includes Indian Child Welfare, Higher Education/Vocational, Natural Resources, and Tribal Enrollment. The electrical and washeteria utilities provide other revenues.

The Chalkyitsik Village Council adopted Tribal By-Laws, Constitution, and drafted Tribal Governance Codes. The 2020 new council members have been

Since the community doesn't have a local city government, the Tribe also operates and manages the following utility services:

- Water Treatment Plant
- Washeteria
- Piped Water and Sewer (for the school, tribal offices, and clinic)
- Landfill
- Electricity supply and distribution
- Equipment Rentals
- Building Rentals

### VPSO/ Law Enforcement

The community has monthly Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) visits into the community. The VPSO program is operated by the Tanana Chiefs Conference. Additionally, an Alaska State Trooper will make periodic visits. Emergency response for the community is dependent on weather conditions, but in serious situations response is generally within an hour. There is a VPSO building that is vacant without an officer. The building is still in need of completing currently there is a house frame, with a door and windows only.



*Figure 1 VPSO Building*

## Corporations and other entities

### Chalkyitsik Native Corporation

The Chalkyitsik Native Corporation was incorporated with the passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) of 1971. The corporation has a board of directors and a land manager that are responsible for overseeing village corporation lands and for making land available for community purposes. Section 14(c) of ANCSA provides that the village corporations allow for the transfer of land to individuals for home or subsistence uses; non-profit organizations such as churches; tribal government for community expansion; and the State Department of Transportation for existing airport purposes. The store employs three workers; a general manager, a clerk, and a daily gas pumper. The only way the store is able to sell gasoline is by having someone manually pump the gas daily when it is sold. The store is open from Monday through Saturday, 1pm-4pm and on Saturdays 1pm-3pm. Gas is pumped an hour before closing each day.

The Board of Directors for the Chalkyitsik Native Corporation include: A president, vice-president, secretary/treasurer, and three board members. The location of the managers' office was once upstairs of the store building in Chalkyitsik. In 2018 the office moved downstairs in the same building due to the board of director's decision making on managing the corporations' budget. There are approximately 150 Chalkyitsik Native Corporation shareholders.



Figure 2 Chalkyitsik Native Corporation



### Doyon, Limited

Chalkyitsik is part of Doyon Limited, the Alaska Native Regional Corporation for Interior Alaska, established in 1972 under the Alaska Native Claim Settlement Act (ANCSA). From provisions under ANCSA, Doyon is entitled to receive approximately 12.5 million acres of land across Interior Alaska, making Doyon the largest private landowner in Alaska. Doyon has, to date, received title to nearly 10 million acres. The land is mainly around the 34 villages within the TCC region. Doyon has over 20,000 shareholders.

### DOYON VISION:

*Leader In All We Do*

### DOYON MISSION:

To continually enhance our position as a financially strong Native corporation in order to promote the economic and social well-being of our shareholders and future shareholders, to strengthen our Native way of life, and to protect and enhance our land and resources.

### DOYON VALUES:

Financially responsible

Socially and culturally responsibility Alaska Native people

Pride and respect in Native ownership

Commitment to the long-term

Honesty and integrity

Commitment to excellence

Respect for employees

Commitment to employee safety and sound environmental practices





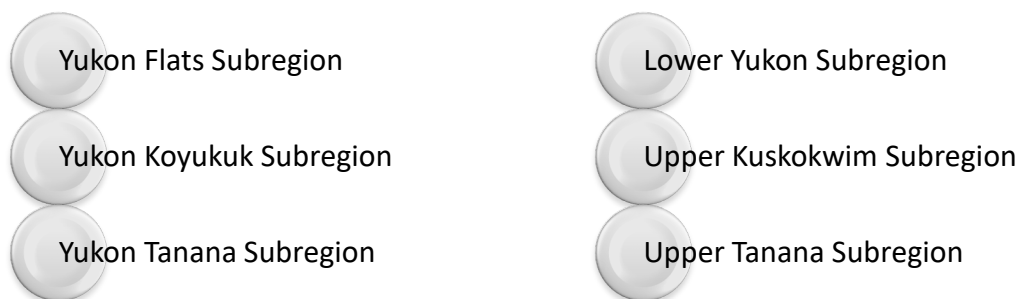
### Tanana Chiefs Conference

Tanana Chiefs Conference was officially formed in 1962 and incorporated under Alaska State Law in 1971. TCC, organized as Dena' Nena' Henash or "Our Land Speaks;" is an Alaska Native nonprofit corporation, charged with advancing Tribal self-determination and enhancing regional Native unity. TCC provides a unified voice in advancing sovereign tribal governments through the promotion of physical and mental wellness, education, socioeconomic development, and culture of the Interior.

TCC provides services while balancing traditional Athabascan and Alaska Native values with modern demands. TCC's objectives are to provide health, social, and economic services to the native people and villages of interior Alaska, known as the TCC region, using federal, state, and local resources. TCC is comprised of three core departments: Administration, Health Services, and Tribal Client Services.

Within those core departments, TCC offer services in the following categories: Tribal Development; Self Governance; Housing; Public Safety Officer; Natural Resources; Client Development; Elder Nutrition; Employment and Training; Child Development; Child Protection; Head Start; Staff Development; Vocational Rehabilitation; Work Assistance Program and ASAP; Dental; Quality Management; Laboratory; Contract Health; Registration; Environmental Health; Pharmacy; Medical; Family Medicine; Family Medicine RN; Specialty Clinics; Radiology; Community Health Outreach Program; Home Care Provider; Behavioral Health; Old Minto Family Recovery Camp; Psychiatry; SBIRT; Paul Williams House; Community Health Aide Program; Patient Hostel; Eye Clinic; Housing First; Wellness and Prevention; and Willow House.

The Tanana Chiefs Conference region covers an area of 235,000 square miles in Interior Alaska, which is equal to about 37 percent of the entire state, and just slightly smaller than the state of Texas. Within our region are six subregions:



Within our six subregions are 39 villages, for an approximate population of 6,700. TCC also serve clients in the Fairbanks area.





# Denakkanaaga, Inc.

## Denakkanaaga

Denakkanaaga, meaning “Our People Speak” in Denaakk’e (Koyukon Athabascan), a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization serves as the voice for the Interior Native Elders in the Doyon and Tanana Chiefs Conference region. Denakkanaaga acts on behalf of the elders, working to ensure their concerns are addressed regarding topics such as Native cultures, traditions, languages, subsistence and social issues. As the population, over the age of 65, grows within Interior Alaska, Denakkanaaga works with other organizations to maximize efforts to advocate for Native Elders.

### DENAKKANAAGA CORE VALUES/COMMITMENTS:

United Voice

Keep Native voice stronger together for positive action

Continue traditions, art, cultural values, language, and subsistence life

Unity among Native organizations and people

### DENAKKANAAGA CORE PROGRAMS:

Peer support for each other (elder to elder)

Support/mentor the next generation

Cultural programs

Regional voice on issues/concerns

There is currently one member from Chalkyitsik on the Denakkanaaga board



## Doyon Foundation

Doyon Foundation was established in 1989 by Doyon, Limited as a separate non-profit organization.

Mission: Provide educational, career and cultural opportunities to enhance the identity and quality of life for Doyon Shareholders.

Vision:

Financial Sustainability

Effective and Collaborative Strategic Partnerships

Organizational Excellence

Every Shareholders' Dream is Realized

Strong Demonstration of Indigenous Language, Culture and Values

Doyon Values:

Dene - Culture, Language, Work Ethic/Way of Life, Intergenerational Well-being/Connectivity

Integrity - Transparency, Honesty, Accountability

Quality- Excellence, Focus, Proactive, Measurable results, Innovative

Community- Raising Healthy and Happy Native Children, Supporting, Mentoring, Shared Vision within the Community

Identity- Who We Are, Where We Come From, Discipline, Respect



## Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments

Created in 1985, the Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments (CATG) is a consortium of 10 tribal governments in the Yukon Flats region. Based in Fort Yukon, CATG is managed by a Board of Directors that is comprised of Chiefs from each of its member villages. Chalkyitsik currently has 151 tribal enrollees.

The CATG Early Headstart program began in 2019 of July for Chalkyitsik, employing one family advocate or Home Visitor is the same but in the process of changing job title. The employee Pamela Joseph works with pre-natal women and children up to three years of age. They are also in the process of changing the age to up to five years of age. They also had a Chalkyitsik resident working as their Family Advocate Itinerant but due to the pandemic she was laid off unable to perform job duties that require travel and the local villages travel bans.

## Our History

---

### *Exercising Tribal Powers*

---

According to its constitution, CATG is “to conserve and protect tribal land and other resources; to encourage and support the exercise of tribal powers of self-government; to aid and support economic development; to promote the general welfare of each member tribe and its respective individual members; to preserve and maintain justice for all...”

The power would be in the tribes, which would decide for themselves where to pool their efforts, and where to act individually. They agreed to operate on a consensus basis, with each village, from tiny Birch Creek (population 30) to Fort Yukon (700) having one vote. If one village strenuously objected to any course of action, even though the others all voted in favor, that action would be dropped or tabled.

**“...a reflection of our people’s  
ability to overcome and  
survive throughout the many  
thousands of years of  
existence.”**

**– RANDY MAYO, CHAIRMAN**

## Emergency Services

Each resident's household have access to smoke detector alarms, carbon dioxide detectors, and fire extinguishers provided by the Village Council. For prevention of wild fires and village safety the village Council hired local laborer workers for brush cutting in the Summer of 2020. Multiple workers cleared up the village corners where brush prevented seeing other drivers, and everywhere around the village to prevent fire outbreaks.

In the event of an emergency communication between residents is slightly bad. There is currently no health aide and that has a high impact. The Clinic building keys when a health aide is not in Chalkyitsik would usually be in the village Council office. An idea would be to get the code on the door working and have the leaders and ETT certified residents only know that code. Typically, the ETT providers and past health aides would go to the patient's home and evaluate their condition. Need better communication and resources when it comes to an emergency.

## Search and Rescue

In the case of a search and rescue, the community would all get together to help and work together on finding the missing person/people. There is a resident that has his pilot license and an aircraft in the community. Whenever something goes wrong residents would search with their ATV's, snow machines, and boats depending on the season.

## Public Utilities

### Water and Sewer

The washeteria, health clinic, tribal council office, school and teacher housings are the only buildings connected to the water and septic system. Residents primarily use outhouses or honey buckets in their homes. The “sweet smelling toilets” project of 2015 had two residents interested in the water hauling system where they continue to haul water for a short supply of running water to flush their toilets and a running sink water. In 2020, the Chalkyitsik Village Council got awarded a planning grant for water and sewer for one hundred twenty-two thousand five hundred dollars to service 31 homes.

### Solid Waste

A site has been selected, and the Chalkyitsik Native Corporation has transferred ownership of the approximately 10-acres of land to this site, to the Chalkyitsik Village Council. In 2018, a new dump site was constructed along with making a new road leading to it. In the summer of 2020, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) worker hired residents to upgrade from trash barrels to a dumpster box for each household. Sewage is disposed of outhouse holes in the ground where people dump their buckets.



Figure 3 Chalkyitsik Transfer Site

The Chalkyitsik Village Council operates an Indian General Assistance Program (IGAP) which promotes local environmental initiatives. These include recycling batteries, aluminum cans, and other recyclables; completing an environmental assessment of the village and campsites; pursuing funding for a burn box and a waste oil burner, developing a Solid Waste Management Plan, and closing our existing dump and opening our new landfill. Chalkyitsik is working with ANTHC to put a self-haul system in each home for water n sewer system.



*Figure 4 CVC Recycle Center*



## Communications

Chalkyitsik residents have relatively reliable telephone and internet service. Residents are kept informed of current events through the KZPA radio station (Fort Yukon), and mail which is delivered whenever Wright Air Service schedules their flights to the village (it changes every so often). A way of communicating in the village among residents without landline telephones is handheld radios which was very useful in 2020 during people's quarantine weeks.

### Telephone

The telephone service used is through United Utilities. Satellite phones is another great resource for the community, when people go out hunting and camping, they are able to call their families at home. Some of the public facilities have long distance in their phone plan through United Utilities other than that residents use calling cards to call out of town.

### Cable

Satellite TV is available through Dish and regular air TV channels (Antenna TV) channels include: 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, and 9.4 for the regular channels. Dish channels vary upon residents' package bundles they buy.

### Internet

Internet options available include: through the phone line United Utilities, Hugh's Net, and GCI. Chalkyitsik residents are working together to upgrade the current Internet service by going through HughesNet Gen5 from Microcom.

## Power/Energy

### Bulk Fuel

There are three facilities in the community that have bulk fuel storage tanks. One the Chalkyitsik Village Council which has 40,000 gallons tank. Two the Tsuk Taih School which is also a 40,000 gallon tank and third the Chalkyitsik Native Corporation has a 10-20,000 gallon tank. The current cost per gallon for gasoline is \$8.00, \$6.00/gal for diesel, and \$250.00 for 100lbs of propane. Depending on the amount of fuel consumed and the season fuel is often delivered to the community roughly 4-8K gallons monthly. Chalkyitsik has a bulk fuel upgrade grant from the Alaska Energy Authority that's scheduled to begin spring 2021.

### Electric

Chalkyitsik Village Council operates Chalkyitsik Energy Systems which provides electricity to all local houses at \$.95 per kilowatt hour and \$1.15 to the community facility buildings.

The Power Cost Equalization Program (PCE) is a state program that offsets a percentage of household electrical costs thereby alleviating some energy costs.

The community's source of power is through the village generator and PCE program for electricity. The Bookkeeper operates the electricity payments and the Roads Director does meter readings on the electricity in each home. Residents have power-cards to keep their electricity going. The cost of electricity per household varies. There is currently no community plan on how to run or operate community utilities. The village council got awarded thirty thousand through the Alaska Energy Authority through Wells Fargo, grant to upgrade the street light poles in the community due to only a few working in the village. The date for the upgrade to the existing electrical infrastructure lightening poles is scheduled to take place the month of December of 2020.





## Public Facilities

### Clinic

The Alice Moses Chalkyitsik Health Clinic was constructed in 2011. Currently there is no local health aide. A monthly provider comes to the village to see patients and there are itinerants who come and work in the clinic as well.

The old clinic space, located in the Washeteria building, is now the communities Post Office. The new clinic is connected to the water and septic system.



*Figure 5 Alice Moses Chalkyitsik Health Clinic*

The clinic continues to provide basic primary and preventative health care services including: health education, immunizations, well baby checks, routine health screening; simple lab services; blood draws; emergency medical services and trauma stabilization; chronic health condition monitoring; and treatment for common colds and other minor ailments. Additional medical and dental care is provided once or twice a year by traveling doctors and dentists from Chief Andrew Isaac Health Clinic. In the past the community did not receive any dental care services in the community, after listing it as a priority in their previous plan the Chalkyitsik Tribal Council worked with Tanana Chiefs Conference so now dental care services are offered one to two times a year. Patients requiring more advanced care travel to Fairbanks.

For the services not listed the community members either travel to Fort Yukon or mainly Fairbanks for advanced health needs. Emergency medivac planes take about an hour and half to respond to an incident, the patient then gets seen at the Fairbanks Memorial Hospital for emergencies and the plane there takes

over 45 minutes. Due to having no health aide in the village is an issue for emergencies Chalkyitsik has a handful of people that are ETT certified but usually the first chief and tribal administer (TA) get involved, the TA or other council employee, Bookkeeper has access to the council building where the clinic keys are usually at when the building is vacant.

## School

The Yukon Flats School District operates the Tsuk Taih (Martin Hill) School and employs two teachers, a bilingual teacher, principle, and four teacher aides, along with one cook, a janitor and maintenance man. In the 2020/2021 school year there are currently 14 students. The facility contains three classrooms, a



Figure 6 Chalkyitsik School

library (also used for a classroom), an art room, lockers, bathrooms, a gym, kitchen, office space which is also used for a classroom, and a loft upstairs of the art room. In recent years there have been some threats of the school closing, due to number of students and coronavirus. This year 2021, has been the first in years that the school has not faced any closing threats due to the lack of number students. The Tsuk Taih School has been the only school in the interior that has been open during the pandemic as well because of the village lockdown but continue to take precautions and follow guidelines.

The School board consists of a president, vice-president, and three members. One of those members is from Chalkyitsik, AK.

**Our Mission** is to cultivate and nurture the social, physical, spiritual, and academic growth of all students by utilizing the rich local culture, language, and community/family partnerships so that students can be healthy contributing members of society.

The Yukon Flats school district is spread across the vast northeastern region of Alaska known as the Yukon Flats. The northernmost community, Arctic Village, sits at the base of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in the foothills of the Brooks Range. Our other communities are either along the Yukon River or navigable tributaries of the Yukon. The Yukon Flats has currently six schools in the district. Those include: Arctic

Village School, Cruikshank School, Tsuk Taih School, John Fredson School, Fort Yukon School, and the Circle School.

### Tribal Leaders of Tomorrow

Yukon Flats School District -  
Demonstration Grant for  
Children and Youth

Where community volunteers from each school site in the district join state-of-the-art committee to increase student achievement throughout the Yukon Flats School District. There is one parent volunteer from Chalkyitsik; with Project Director: Helen Cheek



*Figure 7 Tribal Leader of Tomorrow*

The Tribal Leaders of Tomorrow project is designed to improve student and parent satisfaction with overall education. Nearly 47% of Yukon Flats students are chronically absent. Modern education does not feel relevant. Making education applicable to student lives is the only way to improve satisfaction for students and families.

#### Goals:

- Raise student achievement, and college and career readiness, through expanded choices of culturally sensitive educational options.
- Establish an array of supports for K-12, to strengthen student academic, social and life skills.
- Expand Career and Technical education options and availability.

#### Objectives:

- Provide age appropriate digital tutoring for student K-12 during school and after hours.
- Develop an afterschool STEM camp and Technology camp.
- Secure a relationship with AVTEC, Alaska's Institute of Technology
- Provide funding for students to attend EXCEL
- Establish a relationship with Pipeline Training Center
- Develop on-line CTE courses
- Explore educational opportunities with Department of Fish and Games and of Agriculture
- Align district cultural and language courses with tribal priorities and cultivate additional options for student participation
- Develop Arts and Crafts camps to be offered 2-3 times per year.



## Community Hall

The community hall was renovated in approximately two thousand and sixteen and recently installed a new wood stove in 2020. The need for water and sewer in the building will increase good and safe hygiene. Additional need would be creating a community playground.

The Village Council employees and First chief host the annual Spring Carnival every Spring. During the carnival there would be a concession stand that sells hamburgers fries, pretzels etc., a few of the races include; A tea-making contest, wood chopping, snowshoe race and much more. The annual Election is held each January at the community hall where they have a potlatch and dance to celebrate and encourage new positions as leaders for the community. The community hall has almost all of the events hosted there or at the school.



Figure 8 Community Hall

## Washeteria

There are two staff employees, one power/water plant operator who is also the maintenance man, and one custodian. With the COVID19 happening, the custodian cleans in the mornings and nights every day. There is a signup sheet with times slots for residents to abide by in order to shower/laundry. There is three showers but only one works. There is four washers and two dryers. One sink that residents use to haul their own hot water for home baths, dishes, etc. Residents equally utilize both shower and washers/dryers. With the open hours being from 8am-8pm with hours divided between showers and laundry the number of residents that use the facilities on a weekly basis is everyone first come first serve. The Village Council has plans to renovate the current washeteria building as well as the Council building through Tanana Chiefs Conference distributions.



Figure 9 Washeteria

## Post Office

The United State Postal Service for Chalkyitsik is contracted out to a local resident. Daily mail is delivered every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursdays via local airline. There is only one staff which is the post master. She recently had to move the location of the P.O., due to the old building ceiling. The ceiling started to slowly cave in but she moved out before anything too serious. The new location of the post office is in the washeteria building into the old Domestic Violence office and shelter. She is charged \$150.00 a month for rent. The hours of operation are 12pm-4pm. There is no plan to build a new post office building facility.



Figure 10 Post Office



## Economy

### Local Store and Businesses

There is one store in Chalkyitsik, which is operated by the Chalkyitsik Native Corporation. The stores sell canned and boxed foods/essential items, basic supplies, and fuel which is all freighted by plane.



Figure 11 Chalkyitsik Native Corporation

### Composition of Employment

There are few opportunities for year-round employment in Chalkyitsik. The Yukon Flats School District, Chalkyitsik Village Council, Chalkyitsik Native Corporation, Tanana Chiefs Conference, and Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments are the primary employers in the village. Seasonal opportunities for generating income include firefighting and traditional arts (mainly beadwork and crafts), and trapping though that market has been declining. The coronavirus is being underway but has created a job position in the community, "COVID worker". The Village Council had multiple people switching off and on every two weeks for whenever there were residents under quarantine. The job consists of working for four hours each day and the rate - \$25/hr. Another year-round opportunity for generating income includes wood vendors along with all of TCC's assistance.



Figure 12 DOT Garage/Council Storage Shed

## Housing

In 1994, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development began supporting numerous housing projects in Chalkyitsik through the Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG) Program. The block grants were made available by the American Indian Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act of 1996 (NAHASDA).

The Chalkyitsik Housing Authority was established in 2012 when the tribe decided that residential homes needed weatherization and new homes for tribal members. The tribe became the contractor for the American Indian Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act of 1986 (NAHASDA) funds.

### Current Housing Situation

In 2020, there are a total of 64 number of homes. 30 are occupied housing units in the community. Almost all of the residents housing needs are not being met. They all have electric wiring issues and overall needs to be modernized. Some homes are caving in (the floors) and some need to be weatherized, some are overcrowded. More than half the houses are owned but there are a handful of people that pay rent to live in their hometown.

### Housing Barriers

The number one housing barrier is funding and no housing program. The HUD program was last active in Chalkyitsik in 2018. Other barriers include: land, logs, transportation for gathering material, and carpentry skills. Chalkyitsik failed to submit proper reports on time every year to the housing program. The village council is waiting for HUD for approval of housing grants but if approved for those, it would be ducted for the outstanding bill with HUD.



*Figure 13 Chalkyitsik Log Cabin*

## Transportation

### External Transportation

There are no roads to/from Chalkyitsik. Air travel in/out of the village is limited to two flights throughout the week and on Saturdays occasionally, which originates in Fairbanks and passes through Fort Yukon and Birch Creek. Wright Air Service started flying to Chalkyitsik in 2018.

The state-owned and maintained runway is approximately 3,200 feet long by 90 feet wide, and it is constructed to add another 1,000 feet to comply with regulations.

Only small boats are able to navigate the Yukon River, which is extremely shallow. In the winter the river freezes and serves as an ice road to/from neighboring communities.

Common reasons people travel is for shopping or visiting family in friends in Fort Yukon and elsewhere. With the pandemic getting more serious each day residents do not travel due to the travel ban.

### Internal Transportation

Chalkyitsik has small, unpaved roads that connect residents and public facilities. Most residents use ATV's or snow machines; however, there are few cars in the village. There is a trail that residents use during the winter to get to the nearest village; Fort Yukon. The most recent road updates completed in Chalkyitsik were the location of the new dump site road.

Common transportation safety issues/concerns are a few roads in the community that are dangerous to drive on. Those include the "gravel yard trail" which is a trail from a gravel pit leading uphill from the back of the village to the uptown road near the school. That road is dangerous to drive on and disrespectful to the deceased in some opinions. There used to be a trail on top of the gravel pit that has been moved due to safety concerns.



Figure 14 Chalkyitsik Roads



## Land Use and the Environment

### Land Ownership

The Chalkyitsik Native Corporation owns 69,120 acres.

### Geography

Boreal forests dominate the landscape with black spruce, white spruce, balsam poplar, paper birch, and trembling aspen. Black spruce forests often grow in permafrost where drainage is poor. Common understory shrubs include bog birch, Labrador-tea, crowberry, and blueberry. Feathermosses are common. Many wet depressions are dominated by alder and willow swamp communities. The low shrub layer typically includes currants, high and low bush cranberries. Blue joint, sedge, horsetail, and marsh five-finger are common herbs. Sedge tussock communities dominate the coldest, wettest sites on the Mosses and berries are present here. Well-drained alluvial soils support mixed forests of white spruce and paper birch. Natural levees support a forest of white spruce and balsam poplar. Here understory consists of alder and willow, prickly rose, and high bush cranberry. Tall willow, birch, and alder communities are scattered throughout the region.

Nearby rivers include the Salmon River, Grayling River, Little Black, Porcupine, and Bull River.

### Environmental Concerns

Chalkyitsik, like other arctic communities, is experiencing climate change impacts. Local residents have observed numerous environmental changes including declining numbers of both caribou and fish.

The Arctic Climate Impact Assessment conducted a study of climate change and its effects on the indigenous people who depend on subsistence activities for survival; the report states that climate change challenges food security as well as cultural and social identity. In addition, both people and animals will increasingly be exposed to higher levels of UV rays, which affect human health in a number of ways: increased chance of skin cancer, premature aging, cataracts and other eye disorders, and immune system damage.

Boreal forests are moving farther north- displacing native plant species by increasing the amount of invasive species. Changes in local plant life also increase the risk that people and animals will be exposed to airborne toxins and to new pollens, allergens and illnesses.

As the local climate changes, essential traditional land use patterns will need to be modified by local hunters, land ownerships, and commonly the local residents. Utilized plants and berries may no longer be found in their traditional locations. Likewise, animals will alter their migration routes as they search for food- challenging hunters to travel to unfamiliar hunting grounds.

According to the Alaska Climate Change Strategy, a sustained period of warming occurred in Alaska between 2000 and 2005. During that same time period, the number of forest fires, which directly threaten lives and property, increased. Less direct effects of forest fire – and the dust it creates- include negative impacts on the respiratory system, especially for those with asthma or other health disorders.

Finally, warming weather affects hunting activities. As the temperatures rise, hunters will encounter new weather patterns leading to increased weather unpredictability, and to travel danger due to melting ice and other snow conditions.

## Flooding

Each spring Chalkyitsik faces the threat of flooding from the river break-up. Floods pose numerous risks to the community including the potential for spreading solid waste from dumps, abandoned outside privy pits, and sewage lagoons around the community– exposing residents to toxic substances and contaminating drinking water sources. In the Spring of 2020, the river filled the ponds, “Jessie’s lake”, the baseball field that is never filled with water, and covered some roads with water. A couple in the community had to paddle out of their home due to all the water. Approximately, 5 homes were affected by the flood in 2020.



*Figure 15 Flood Waters*

## Food Security

Food security is when everyone always has access to enough food that is safe, culturally appropriate, and nutritious.

There are a handful of gardeners in the community. There is also a community garden located outside of the church every year. Approximately 85% of the people in Chalkyitsik hunt, fish, and gather food.

Food sources in the community are;

- 10% - local store
- 15% - Ordered on the Internet or by mail
- 70% -Wild Harvested (including fishing, hunting, and gathering)
- 5% - Locally grown in home gardens

## Wild Fire

<sup>2</sup>Alaska's summer 2019 fire season was one for the record books. 110 Lower 48 crews and personnel from 46 states, Puerto Rico and Canada fought Alaska wildfires. In a typical fire season, Alaska has about 500 fires that burn about 650,000 acres. On Aug. 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019 a total of 614 fires had burned approximately 2.4



*Figure 16 Fire Crew in Chalkyitsik*

Alaska. On July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019, the Alaska IMT2 (Black) took command of the Chalkyitsik Complex from the IMT3 that had previously been managing the incident. The complex consisted of 4 fires: Frozen Calf Fire #367, Bearnose Hill Fire #407, Tractor Trail 2 Fire #348, Tettjajik Creek Fire #424.

Due to the remote location and

limited capacity in the community of Chalkyitsik, the ICP was established in the Tanana Middle School in Fairbanks with a large staging area in Chalkyitsik.

The whole summer of 2019 there was heavy smoke and residents could barely see outside of their homes.

Twenty-eight fires burned within the Upper Yukon Fire Management Zone, but most were not threatening people or property. Eight of the fires are staffed with firefighters, who continue to focus on village safety, prepare firelines and lay hose near cabins and allotments. Here is a summary of the more significant fires that burnt in the Yukon Flats and surrounding areas:

Chalkyitsik Complex, Tractor Trail, Frozen Calf Fire, Bearnose Hill Fire, and Tettjajik Creek – 236,970 acres, 173 personnel were assigned to the complex.

The crews that were in Chalkyitsik improved indirect dozer lines to the south and west of the village with hose lays in preparation for potential burnout operations. Firefighters hauled away brush and test sprinkler systems set up throughout the village. Chalkyitsik was under a temporary flight restriction (TFR) along with some of the surrounding area to provide a safe operating environment for the firefighting aircraft.

---

<sup>2</sup> AK Fire Pios

## Subsistence

Subsistence plays an extremely important role in Chalkyitsik's local economy. Moose, caribou, sheep, salmon and whitefish provide a relatively stable source of food which community members rely upon.

The rich habitats of the surrounding lowlands support moose, black and brown bears, wolf, and caribou. Smaller mammals include wolverine, lynx, red fox, beaver, snowshoe hare, mink, muskrat, weasel, marten, red squirrel, and porcupine. Upland birds include northern hawk-owls, great horned owls, rough grouse, spruce grouse, boreal chickadees, and red poles. Runs of king and chum salmon spawn in clear water streams each summer. Other fish supporting the region include northern pike, whitefish, burbot, and grayling. Migrating birds converge on the Flats, arriving from four continents including various species of ducks, geese, and cranes. The region has one of the highest nesting densities of waterfowl in North America.

In the early 1990s, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (AFG&G) estimated Chalkyitsik's wild food harvest to be 514 pounds per person annually (1.408 pounds per person daily). By contrast, Fairbanks' wild food harvest was estimated at 16.0 pounds per person annually (0.044 pounds per person daily) clearly indicating the importance of subsistence to the lives of Chalkyitsik residents.

Elders report that in recent years the annual return of caribou and moose is decreasing. In 2002, AFG&G developed the "Yukon Flats Cooperative Moose Management Plan" to address the issue of diminishing moose numbers -- along with a plan to increase those numbers.

Chalkyitsik Village Council has a Natural Resource Director to maintain the tribal to tribal consultation process with various agencies to protect our land, water and animals within our area and work with the environmental department on mapping our traditional hunting/trapping areas.

Chalkyitsik is a part of the Yukon Flats Advisory Committee. The committee represents the subsistence interests for the communities of Chalkyitsik and Fort Yukon. There are two designated seats for each community. In 2014 we only had one person on this committee from Chalkyitsik. As of January 2015, both advisory committee seats for Chalkyitsik are vacant.

### Cultural Facts on Respect for Animals:

<sup>3</sup>The Athabascan people are comprised of a wide variety of cultures and tribes, each with their own beliefs and traditions. However, one common belief is the deep connection that the Athabascan people have to the land and animals. Animals are a sacred part of the Athabascan culture and there are many stories about the animals and their importance. In Gwich'in they say "gwintl'eeaddaachii" which roughly translates to "they give themselves", as it is the belief that animals give themselves to the hunters. In return for giving themselves, the hunters show respect and give thanks to the animal for ensuring that their family and community is fed and clothed. "We have to understand and take care of what God gives us, and try to be true with what he gives us" – Chief Peter John, Animal songs

---

<sup>3</sup> YFSD Bilingual Teacher (Gwich'in)



## Community Well-being



*Figure 17 Ice Fishing*

The community has a list of annual activities that the Village Council, Tsuk Taih School, and volunteers hold each year. A few of them are the Chalkyitsik Spring Carnival, Graduations, 4th of July, Halloween, Christmas, New Years, Easter, Thanksgiving, Summer Camp, Election, Midnight Sun, Summer events, and Spring clean-up day.

In the summer, the community has an annual Midnight Sun baseball event after playing multiple baseball games a lot of members would go and swim in the Black River at midnight. Other summer events include; fishing derbies, largest bear head, and in the Spring the Environmental person would hold an annual clean-up day and pay children who fill up a bag of trash \$3-\$5.00. The School and Village Council both hold holiday events for Halloween, Christmas, New Years, Easter, and Thanksgiving where either both would come together and make one big potlatch or most times have different dates for each community holiday dinners.

The community had a local playground years ago near the community hall, but was tore down due to the need of an upgrade. There was new equipment for the new playground but parts got stolen and was never built so now there is only one playground which is outside the Tsuk Taih School. We have a youth center but it has a poor heating system and needs to be renovated and upgraded. Recent attempts for renovation was painting the outside and inside of the building but now needs a reliable worker to have it open to the children. That building is now being used as the covid-19 building for the community until the actual COVID-19 building will be built this coming summer.

## Churches

Anglican missionaries arrived in the Yukon Flats region in the mid-1800. Today, most Gwich'in communities are Episcopalians rather than Anglican. Church services are held once a week, usually on Sundays, officiated by a Deacon. The Diocese of Alaska sends a bishop periodically to Chalkyitsik.

## Elder Care Programs

The Chalkyitsik tribe ran an elder meal program, for years the "Elder Cook" position has been vacant. In the past it was being funded by Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC), which is now in process of the

Chalkyitsik Village Council attempting to take the position over instead of it being a TCC job hire. I believe the past employee or employees would deliver meals to the elder's homes three times out of the week. Approximately, six elders in the community would benefit from the program. It is a paid position and a great way to honor our Elders!



## Accessibility

List of the places that have wheel chair ramps include: Tsuk Taih School, washeteria, Clinic, Village Council, Community Hall building,

old rec center for kids, and the CNC Store. The washeteria ramp was built in 1998, the rec center ramp is the only one that is in very bad condition. The other ramp locations are in decent conditions.

## Additional Education

The Chalkyitsik Village Council (CVC) has funds available for Higher Education, Adult Vocational Training, Adult Basic Education (General Equivalency Diploma (GED)), and Direct Employment. The 638 Programs Director is in charge of all higher education applicants and assists them throughout their schooling. The 638 worker also looks for opportunities for members and posts all the trainings/scholarships/etc. for the residents of Chalkyitsik and out of town tribal enrollees.

## Cultural and/or Seasonal Gatherings

Every year the community of Chalkyitsik holds a traditional camp dedicated to all the kids and named after the late David Salmon, Kids Camp. It is located two bends upriver from Chalkyitsik on the Black River. This year's guests were unable to attend the camp and teach the kids some of the Interior elders' knowledge of the Athabascan way of life. A lot of people from the surrounding villages usually attend the camp and the village would invite talented individuals to come and teach their talents and skills.

This year the community of Chalkyitsik still held their annual Kids Camp. The camp is for one week long and without any guests or members able to attend there were hardly any events for the kids. There was still card games, swimming, sewing, elders talking, fishing, board games and volleyball. The camp ended



sooner than it was supposed to due to people not attending but the kids definitely wanted it to last longer. The camp has usually two cooks, a camp boss, teachers for events, and boat drivers.



Every Holiday season the village has potlatches held for Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's, or whenever the community just wants to get together and have a big dinner the residents. Also on Easter there would be a gathering and a resident has an annual golden egg hunt where there would be a hundred or fifty dollars in the egg along with holding another Easter egg hunt for the kids.

## Works Cited

Akfirepios, AKFIRESPIOS. "Upper Yukon Zone Remains Warm and Dry." *AK Fire Info*, 14 July 2019, [akfireinfo.com/2019/07/14/upper-yukon-zone-remains-warm-and-dry/](http://akfireinfo.com/2019/07/14/upper-yukon-zone-remains-warm-and-dry/).

Alaska Census and Population Maps, [live.laborstats.alaska.gov/cen/maps.cfm](http://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/cen/maps.cfm).

Bower, Trisha. "Chalkyitsik Landfill." *Facility View*, Solid Waste Information Management System, 33 Mar. 2019, [dec.alaska.gov/Applications/EH/SWIMS/ModFacility.aspx?siteId=443](http://dec.alaska.gov/Applications/EH/SWIMS/ModFacility.aspx?siteId=443).

Bowie, Lance. "About." *Yukon Flats School District*, 2020, [yfsd.org/](http://yfsd.org/).

"Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing ." *Commerce.alaska.gov*, State of Alaska, [www.commerce.alaska.gov/cbp/businesslicense/search/License](http://www.commerce.alaska.gov/cbp/businesslicense/search/License).

"Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development Division Of Community And Regional Affairs." *Repository*, 2009, [www.commerce.alaska.gov/dcra/dcrarepoext/Pages/CommunityPlansLibrary.aspx](http://www.commerce.alaska.gov/dcra/dcrarepoext/Pages/CommunityPlansLibrary.aspx).

Elders, Interior. *Yukon Flats Indigenous Language Revitalization Institute*, 2018, [www.ygs-catg.org/](http://www.ygs-catg.org/).

Harrel, Sam. "Chalkyitsik Complex." *Sam Harrel Public Information Officer Photos - InciWeb the Incident Information System*, Public Information Officer, 8 Aug. 2019, [inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/photograph/6494/59/](http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/photograph/6494/59/).



## Survey Questions

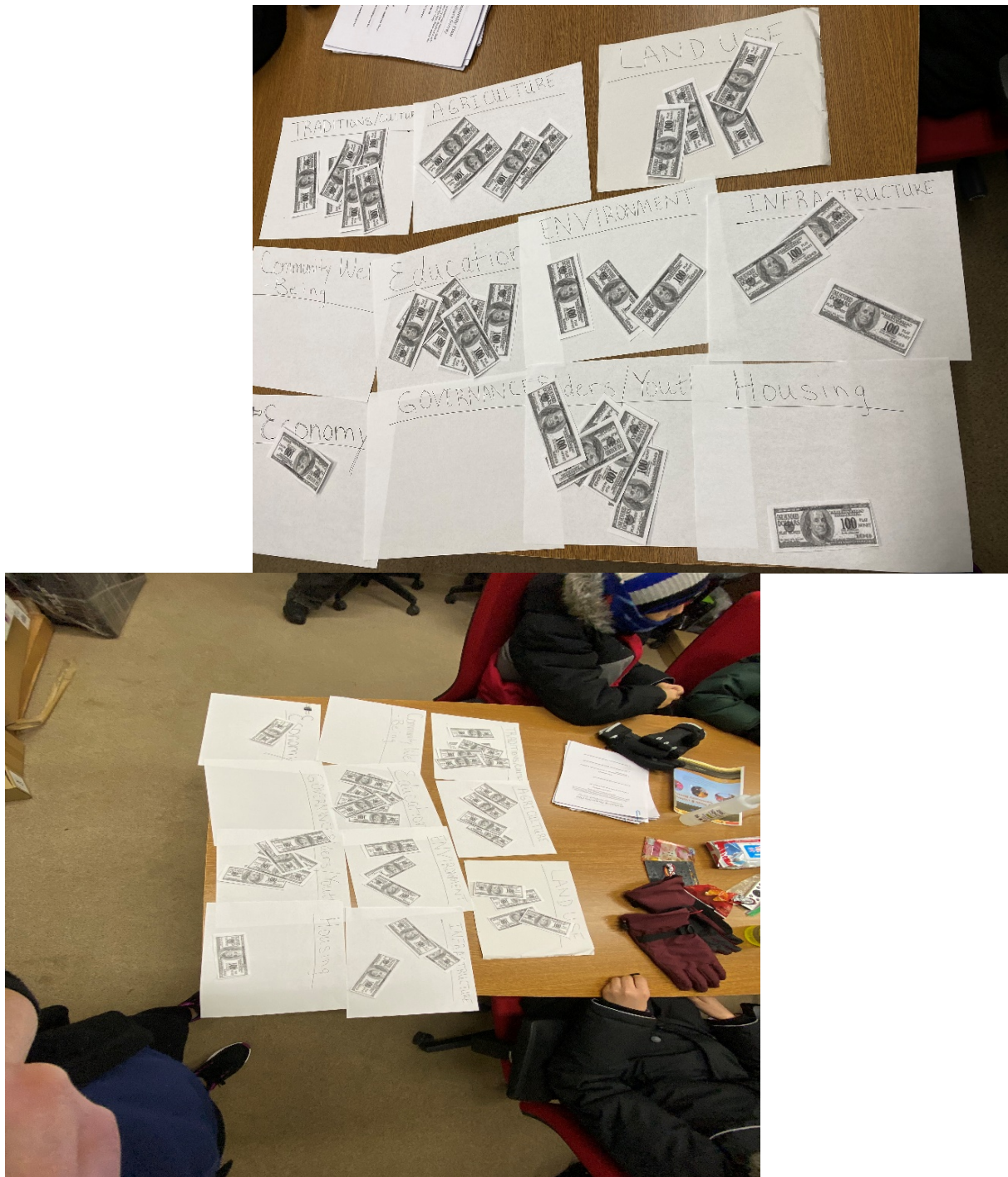


Figure 18 Community Planning Meeting Activity

## General Questions

### **What do you enjoy most about living here?**

- Draanjik (the Black River)
- Peace and quiet
- Beauty & Serenity
- Remote
- Living among family
- Its home
- Going out in the woods w/ATVs
- Living off the land
- Enjoying my home
- The outdoors, the people

### **What do you like least about living here?**

- No running water
- Not having own house
- Lack of internet signal
- Not much activities
- Not much to do
- Fresh produce not being accessible
- Coldness
- Limited resources
- Freight charge

## Infrastructure

### **Do you have cell service? If no, would you like to have service?**

- All results were yes to cell service (most listed it as a top three priority)

### **How satisfied are you with your current Washeteria?**

- Very good
- No complaints
- Needs new showers + tub
- Renovation
- 3- stars
- Prefer token machine rather than buying them at the office which is closed on weekend

### **What are your concerns with the current Washeteria?**

- Bigger washers, more shower and dryers
- Energy cost

- Ice buildup on the roof of the building during winters/spring
- We all share it. Needs to be taking serious cleaning/maintaining
- Walk ramp
- Better maintaining
- Hi high capacity washers
- Water freezing during winters

## Education

### Would you like to attend a job training?

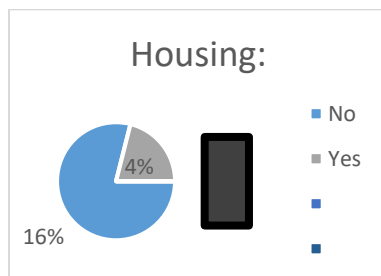
- Yes! (most answered response)
- Already have a job
- For younger ones
- No

### What type of education or training are you interested in?

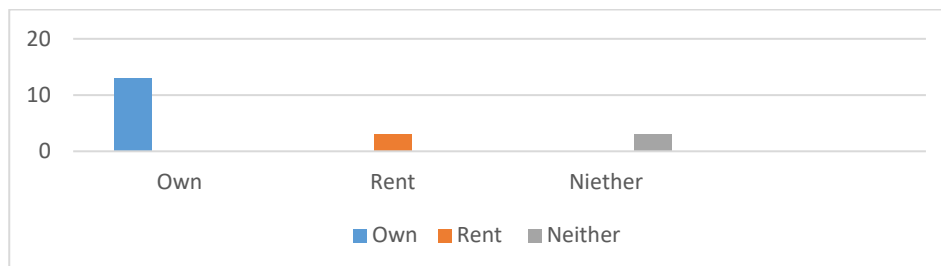
- Construction (most answered response)
- Grant writing
- Culinary arts
- Welding, Education, trades, bring trains here some don't want to leave, anything and all, Carpentry, monitor maintenance, heavy equipment, electrical wiring, computer tech, big buck job trainings

## Housing

### Are your housing needs being met?



### Do you rent or own a house?

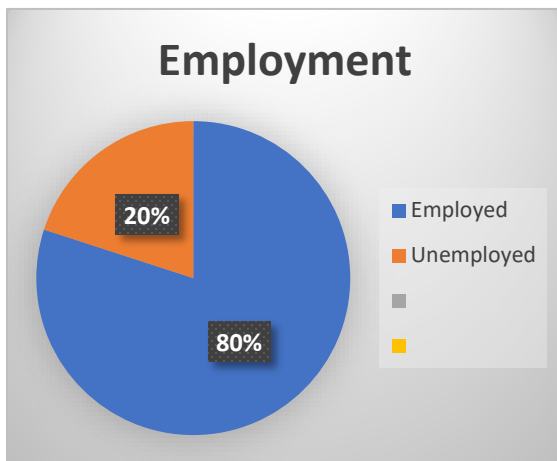


## Economy

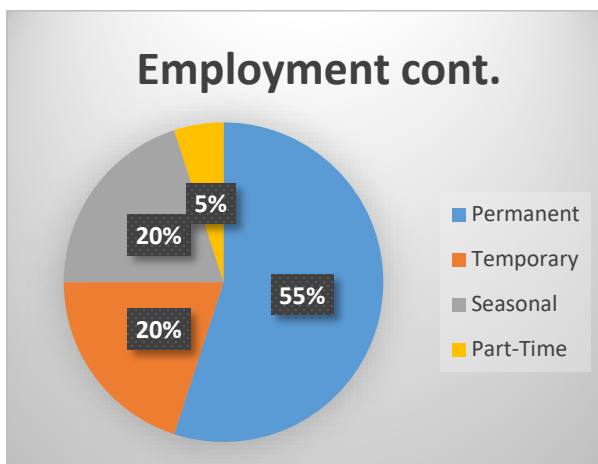
### Are you employed?

#### If not, what are the employment barriers for getting a job?

- Limited jobs
- None.
- This is for the employment for young people.
- 16 with no answer.
- Nothing.
- 



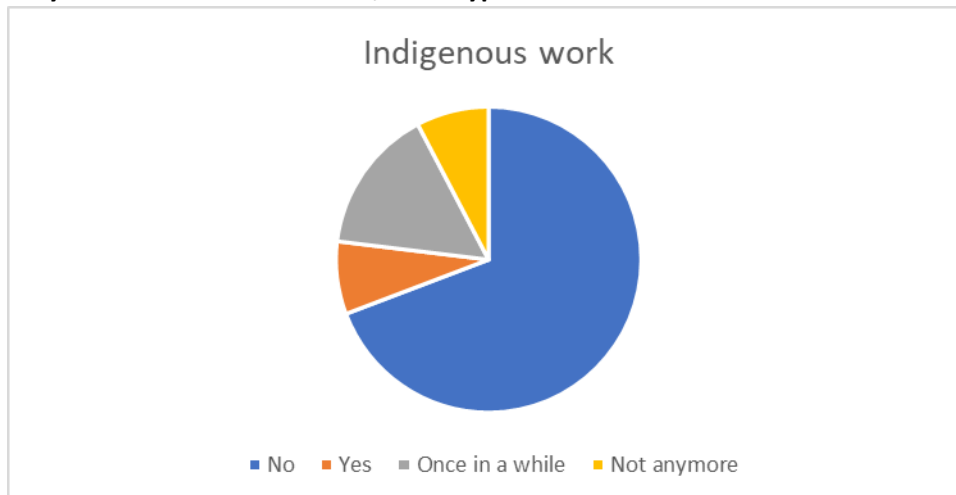
#### If employed, was/is the job:



### What are potential business opportunities for Chalkyitsik?

- Hunting guides, Air BnB
- Computer lab for higher-edu, Internet wifi @ youth building
- Coffee shop, bakery
- Trainings, more kid activities, more cultural activities

### Do you sell arts or crafts? If so, what type of crafts?



### Do you spend more money in the local store, in the city, or online shopping?

- 9 for in the city, 6 for locally, and 8 for online shopping.

### Environmental

#### What environmental concerns or issues do you have in Chalkyitsik pertaining to the air, water, land, and natural resources?

- Not sure about water quality.
- Land erosion, lakes drying.
- River contamination.
- Natural resources: like fire wood.
- To keep air, water, land, and natural resources clean.

#### Do you have environmental concerns that affect the village residents (fish and animal population, weather, water quality, dust, etc.)?

- Protection.
- Can't fish, less animals, there was a fire here last summer and haven't seen a rabbit since, small animals disappearing.
- Had an estimated test for lead levels and scored above average, may have been from the water.

- Ponds.
- Animal population like Marten and ptarmigan and muskrats. Permafrost is thawing which leads to un-level houses buildings.

## **Cultural Traditions**

### **What are cultural activities that your family participates in?**

- Fishing and hunting.
- Seasonal hunting, gathering and other activities.
- Harvesting.
- Jig dances/potlatches
- Kids camp. Indian Ed week.

### **What subsistence activities does your family participate in?**

- Lg/sm game hunting/preparing.
- Camping, boating, summer youth.
- Hunting in the Fall time.
- Berry picking.
- Winter, summer, spring and fall subsistence.
- 

### **Do you speak Gwich'in to your children? If so, how often?**

- 9 with "No" answers.
- Not often.
- Words that I know.
- I do, whenever they're here.
- No kids yet but the words I know from UAF and my grandma, I try telling people and speaking it/write it whenever.

### **What are some ideas you have for youth activities?**

- Trapping, survival, boots, gloves, making skills.
- Youth facility – WiFi, game, study hour, movie night, etc.
- Adopt an elder for stories, have lunch together, take walks, boating & snow machine to see the land, learn to pick medicine plants.
- Youth center to hire someone to run it, and have games and snacks, sewing class, setting snares, go out and teach them how to snare. Fish through ice with a net. Also, fish through ice. How to survive out in the woods.
- Rec hall, youth council, native dancing, arts and crafts classes.

## **Health and Wellness**

### **How satisfied are you with the current Health/Mental services?**

- Mental health and health services interrupted by COVID.
- They're good when available.
- Satisfied with health, but more men/women need to apply for health training = lack of help for mental.
- Needs permanent health aide.
- Need a change and stop running all the health aides out of town with complaints etc.

### **Do you feel that the Health and /or Mental Health services provided to you are adequate?**

- 4 for no.
- 4 for mostly.
- 5 for yes.
- 2 for enough.
- 2 with no answers.

### **What are your concerns with the current Health Services?**

- Need prevention and screening – health fair.
- Very concerned, no permanent health aide.
- Communication when provider is here – it takes longer to respond to help from FBK.
- Can't be seen unless your half dead.
- Put a code on the CIK Clinic door for emergencies, have chiefs, leaders, and ETT people know only, instead of everyone running around town looking for keys and employees don't like giving their keys to anyone. Saves time!

### **What kind of Health/mental health programs would you like to see in Chalkyitsik?**

- Counseling for these hard times.
- Programs like smoking ed, alcohol, education on drugs, stress, + have some mentors.
- Fitness gym.
- CPR, Health classes for the young folks.
- Talking circles, men and women (separately) with making traditional tools or sewing sled. etc.

**Are there any youth programs in Chalkyitsik? If no, what can be done to make a successful youth program?**

- No. Create a youth council and let them come up with what they want.
- None what so ever, the council need to put together for kids to do something after school. They have youth building and community hall, but no one is doing anything.
- Mentors needed.
- No, start one with what there is, start from bottom on up. It always works.
- Need a leader and a place.

**Goal Areas**

**What are some projects that can be done to improve Chalkyitsik?**

- Internet. Re-wire residential homes. Fix peoples windows and doors. Fix peoples windows and doors. Fix people stove monitors.
- Help individual make homes to be built. Electricity lights in streets, learn to play instruments.
- There are so many have to start somewhere, one at a time.
- A gym with weights.
- Running water for households.

**What are your top three priorities for the community?**

- 1.) Homes (new or repair current) 2.) Infrastructure 3.) Fitness building + equipment.
- Work, having fun, getthing along with each other.
- Health, fitness, nutrition.
- Improve housing, lower energy cost, save the world.
- Communication, work together and take care of all.

**What do you want Chalkyitsik to look like or see happen in the next 5 years?**

- Youth facility, playground, ice rink.
- Cell service, better nutritional stuff/food, fitness program.
- More jobs for people, better housing, better store, library, active community center.
- Help each other. Support the youth. Build leaders.
- Develop houses w/running water, for the youth a coffee shop sell pastry+ etc.

**What about in 10 years?**

- Plan sessions to make long range plans.
- New homes for people.
- Healthy thriving community.



- College facility or training facility, focus on the youth.
- Expand the housing + roads.

**What areas Chalkyitsik can improve on? What can be done to see that these things happen?**

- The council (CVC) people with jobs at CVC should not be on the council.
- Team work! Communication.
- Put an ATM somewhere.
- To put in for houses + more activities for adults and children.
- New houses – expansion.
- 5 with no answers.
- Building upgrades, need grant writer.
- Involve the community.
- Higher education + training.
- More community events.
- More community involvement.
- Youth facility CVC could provide funding/building/wi-fi.
- Anything.
- Listen to people's comment! Teach the young to be trained on different job skills. Use the community hall for activities.

## Appendices

### Arial View of Chalkyitsik



*Figure 19 Photo Courtesy to the BLM Fire Crew, Sam H. 2019*