

the council

Dena' Hena' Hénash • Our Land Speaks

Vol. 46, No. 09

A REPORT TO THE MEMBER TRIBES OF TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE

September 2021

Tribal Governance in *Fish and Wildlife*

Tanana Chiefs Conference has been listening to the concerns of tribes and fishing families throughout the region and we are determined to ensure you have access to sound, clear information on the health of Yukon River salmon. Recently we created

the Tribal Resources Commission, combining the Hunting and Fishing Task Force (HFTF) and the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (YRITFC) in an effort to improve our communication, outreach, and responsiveness to those we serve. This

will also allow us to use our staff and resources more efficiently and effectively to meet the numerous demands upon us to protect our traditional ways of life. We ask for your continued support as we navigate our new structure and work to build our team.

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Are you travelling to ANMC for care and need assistance from the TCC Customer Experience Team?

Please call 907-451-6682 x1918 (between 8am-5pm) During after-hours and weekends, please call 907-451-6682 and ask for the after-hours Travel staff.



The TCC Customer Experience team works closely with the medical teams at the Alaska Native Medical Center (ANMC) to ensure TCC patients receive clear communication about their

care, experience, safe discharge plans, and can access support if concerns arise while at ANMC. Please reach out to our TCC Customer Experience Team if needed.

Win Up To \$5,000 Cash!

Anyone living in Interior Alaska who is fully vaccinated can enter to win!

Learn more on **Page 3!**



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MISSION STATEMENT

Tanana Chiefs Conference 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 Alaska Native people.

VISION

Healthy, Strong, Unified Tribes



TCC EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Donald Honea Sr./Ruby
1st Traditional Chief

Trimble Gilbert/Arctic Village
2nd Traditional Chief

PJ Simon/Allakaket/Galena
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Peter Demoski/Nulato
Elder Advisor

Alex Hanna/Minto
Youth Advisor

CHIEF'S REPORT



Dear Tribes and Tribal Members,

As we move into fall, I would like to wish everyone a safe hunting season. Our summer here at TCC was very productive, and I greatly appreciate the time our Tribal leaders have dedicated to Team TCC on matters regarding our Tribe's issues and concerns. We are here to serve you and always welcome your input.

Hunting season is here; please remember to practice personal safety:

- Remember to wear your personal flotation device while out on the water.
- Take the survival gear you may need, including warm clothes, food, ammunition, water, axe, rope, twine, and a tarpaulin (tarp).
- Tell others where you will travel to and for how long. Always leave a trip plan with a reliable person so others can be notified if you do not return home when you are expected.
- Bring a communication device for emergencies such as a cell phone (if there is a cell signal where you are going), SAT phone, VHS radio, or an InReach communicator.
- Bring extra fuel for your boat or vehicles if you plan on traveling long distances.
- Do not consume alcohol or drugs when you are out hunting.
- As always, enjoy yourself and have fun with your family and friends.

Unfortunately, the Delta variant of COVID-19 has spiked in Alaska and across the nation and once again, we are taking up safety measures such as wearing a mask, social distancing and limiting in-person gatherings. Viruses change over time, and the Delta variant is a lot more contagious than the original COVID-19 virus. The current vaccines provide protection against the Delta variant and reduces the risk of hospitalization, and death associated with contracting the disease. There are cases of vaccinated people contracting the Delta variant, and for the most part, they are not as sick as those who are not vaccinated.

TCC health officials strongly encourage everyone who is eligible to get vaccinated. TCC has announced a vaccine incentive giveaway to thank those who have been vaccinated, and to encourage interior residents to get their vaccine. More information can be found on our website: www.tananachiefs.org/vaccine-giveaway. I would also like to encourage everyone to continue wearing a mask and practicing social distancing.

Last month we received shipments of donated salmon which has been distributed to tribal communities. Thank you to those who made the donations possible and assisted with the delivery of this much needed food source. Over the last thirteen years there has been a steady salmon decline, and a rapid decline within the last three years. It will take time and effort for our salmon to recover. When we work together, we can help ensure a future with salmon for our children.

Our children are our future, and we wish our students much success as they go into the school year. This fall, we are pleased to support the students in Anvik, Grayling, Holy Cross, Eagle, Tanacross, Beaver, Kaltag, Nulato, Hughes, and Rampart with back to school backpacks. Each fall there is a rotation of village students who are supported.

We are working together each day to the benefit of our Tribal members and Tribes, and continue to work to achieve our vision of *Healthy, Strong Unified Tribes*.

Anaa Baaseé,
PJ Simon
Chief/Chairman

VACCINE INCENTIVE GIVEAWAY

Tanana Chiefs Conference is proud to sponsor a COVID-19 Vaccine incentive program designed to motivate residents in Interior Alaska to get their COVID-19 vaccine! **All residents living in Interior Alaska who are fully vaccinated** for COVID-19 can enter to win. Our goal is to vaccinate everyone possible—to protect our elders, our youth, and all of our communities.

What are the Prizes?

You only have to enter **once** to be considered for the monthly drawings and the grand prize drawing!

Monthly Drawing

The incentive giveaway will include monthly drawings. Each month 16 total winners will be drawn: 4 rural adults, 4 urban adults, 4 rural youth and 4 urban youth. If you've won a monthly drawing, you are not eligible for a second monthly drawing, but you will be put back into the drawing for the grand prizes. Winner's vaccine status will be verified before awarding prizes.

ADULTS (Age 18 and over)

- \$500 Cash
- Beaded Gloves: made-to-order in your size and preferred colors

YOUTH (Age 17 and under)

- Apple iPad Air and a \$25 Gift Card
- Nintendo Switch plus a \$100 Gift Card
- Wireless Beats Headphone
- \$300 Amazon Gift Card

Grand Prize Drawing

On **December 15th, 2021**, 5 grand prize winners will be awarded. For each prize, there will be a rural and an urban winner.

- **1st Grand Prize:** Trip for 2 anywhere Alaska Airlines flies (up to 40,000 miles per ticket) plus \$1,500 cash
- **2nd Grand Prize:** \$5,000 in cash
- **3rd Grand Prize:** \$2,500 in cash
- **4th Grand Prize:** Male or Female Parka made-to-order in your size and preferred colors plus \$1,000 cash
- **5th Grand Prize:** Beaver Fur Hat made-to-order in your size and preferred colors plus \$300 cash

How to Enter:

All you have to do to enter is complete the short online questionnaire on our website. You only have to enter the contest once to be entered for the monthly and grand prize drawings. Duplicate entries will be deleted.

Website: www.tananachiefs.org/vaccinegiveaway



Up to \$5,000 Cash



A Nintendo Switch



An Apple iPad Air



A \$300 Amazon Gift Card and Many More!



First FDA Approved COVID-19 Vaccine

On August 23, 2021, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the first COVID-19 vaccine. This is a critical big milestone in our battle against the COVID-19 pandemic. FDA approval demonstrates a vaccine has gone through and passed the FDA's high-quality, rigorous standards for both safety and efficacy.

The vaccine has been known as the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine, and will now be marketed as *Comirnaty*. It has been FDA approved for the prevention of COVID-19 disease in individuals 16 years of age and older.

The vaccine will be continued to be available under the emergency use authorization (EUA), for individuals 12 through 15 years of age and for the administering of a third dose in certain immunocompromised individuals.

Currently, vaccine trials are being conducted for kids younger than 12 and it's possible that the COVID-19 vaccine will be available for kids under the age of 12 before the end of 2021 under the EUA.

With the highly contagious Delta COVID-19 variant, the importance of vaccination cannot be overem-

phasized. COVID-19 vaccines have shown to be effective at drastically reducing the likelihood of severe disease (hospitalization) and death from the virus that causes COVID-19. The vaccine helps to teach our immune systems how to recognize and fight the virus, and it typically takes about 2 weeks after the last dose in a vaccination series for the body to build protection (immunity) against the virus. Three vaccines (Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson) are widely accessible and are available to everyone at no cost.

COVID-19: *The Delta Variant*



Alaska has seen a recent surge in COVID-19 cases, which is attributed to the new mutation of the original COVID-19 virus strain called the 'Delta Variant'.

This variant has proven to be more infectious than previous strains of the virus, which means that cases have the potential to climb faster than they have in the past. TCC Health Services are monitoring the progress of the new variant closely, with new information being provided each day. Below we have answered some commonly asked questions about the new variant.

How is the new variant different from the original COVID-19 virus strain?

- **It is more contagious than previous strains** – causing upwards of 2 times as many infections.
- **It may cause more severe illness.** In two different studies from Canada and Scotland, patients infected with the Delta variant were more likely to be hospitalized than patients infected with Alpha or the original virus strains.
- **People are becoming infectious faster.** It is estimated that those who contract the new strain become infectious 2 days sooner than previous strains.
- **It is difficult to contain.** Because people are more likely to become

infectious prior to diagnosis, isolation and contact tracing – it is more difficult to prevent the spread of infection with the delta variant.

- **Fully vaccinated people with Delta variant breakthrough infections can spread the virus to others.** However, vaccinated people appear to be infectious for a shorter period.

Why should I get the COVID-19 Vaccine if I can still catch the virus and transmit it?

Those who have already received the COVID-19 vaccine can still become infected with the new variant and spread it to others. However, like other variants, the amount of virus produced by Delta breakthrough infections in fully vaccinated people also goes down faster than infections in unvaccinated people. This means fully vaccinated people are likely infectious for less time than unvaccinated people. Additionally, those who received the vaccine have proven to be less likely to become extremely ill, get hospitalized or die when infected.

Who is at the greatest risk of becoming ill from the new variant?

Unvaccinated people remain the greatest concern. Although breakthrough infections happen much less often than infections in unvaccinated people, individuals infected with the Delta variant, including fully vaccinated people with symptomatic breakthrough infections, can transmit it to

others. CDC is continuing to assess data on whether fully vaccinated people with asymptomatic breakthrough infections can transmit. However, the greatest risk of transmission is among unvaccinated people who are much more likely to contract, and therefore transmit the virus.

Are healthcare facilities prepared for another surge in cases?

Last year, healthcare facilities encouraged the public to 'flatten the curve' to ensure that healthcare facilities are not overburdened. The need to prevent this is even more prevalent now than it was at the beginning of the pandemic. This is due to limited ICU beds and a shortage in healthcare workers because of the burnout that was experienced by many frontline workers last year. In August, Alaska saw several patients medevac'd to outside states due to the lack of ICU beds in Anchorage.

What can the public do to prevent the spread of the new variant?

Tanana Chiefs Conference is urging the public to tighten their safety precautions in order to slow the spread of the virus. This means wearing your mask when out in public places, practicing social distancing when around others, washing and sanitizing your hands frequently and most important – get your vaccine! The United States has an abundance of COVID-19 vaccines available to the public for free, so if you haven't received your vaccine – please schedule an appointment today.

Tribal Offices: *Current Open Positions*

After receiving feedback from Sub-Regional leadership, the Council Newsletter will be featuring open Tribal positions in villages. All positions will be submitted from the Tribal Offices.

NENANA Vacancies open as of 08/16/2021:

- **Project Manager**
- **After School Coordinator**

Contact the Nenana Tribal Office to apply: 907-832-5461



Tribal Governance in *Fish and Wildlife*

Continued from front page

The Hunting and Fishing Task Force

HFTF consists of volunteer advocates who show up and speak up to make a difference. Over the last 5 years they have worked with roughly 200 advocates who have attended workshops and provided testimony in state and federal regulatory meetings to protect traditional hunting practices. Our volunteer advocates are the key to our success.

The HFTF works to influence all aspects of the stewardship of our wildlife and fisheries upon which we rely. Building a strong, effective statewide network which has allowed us to have greater impact in state and federal arenas, joining forces to protect traditional hunting practices that provide for the wellbeing and food security of our people.

HFTF Current Priorities:

- Supporting tribes to ensure adequate opportunity for food security

in fall hunting season

- Native American Rights Fund/TCC Federal Subsistence Program CFR Review
- Federal Subsistence Wildlife Regulatory Cycle - Community Hunt Definitions, Designated Hunter Restrictions, 25D West Moose Closure Review, Minto Registration Hunt.
- Board of Game – Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area, Numerous Statewide Regulations
- Scoping for Self-Governance Contracting with Refuges in Region

The Yukon River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission

The YRITFC is founded on an Intertribal Constitution. Upon Tribal ratification of the Constitution by Resolution Tribes become members. Each member Tribal Government appoints their Commissioner to the Commission by authorizing resolution. The Commissioner has the authority

to vote on behalf of the member Tribe. Currently there are 28 member Tribes.

YRITFC Current Priorities:

- Tribal Education and Outreach Campaign
- Salmon Science and Management
 - In-River Data Collection – Midriver Sonar
 - Bycatch and Ocean Management
 - Area M Genetics
 - North Pacific Fisheries Management Council Subsistence Statewide Coalition.
 - Hatchery Fish Impact Studies – Pink Salmon
- Ally Relationships – Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association, Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council, Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, Association of Village Council Presidents.
- Ecosystem wide accountability – strategy and summit planning

Fish Distribution: *Contact Your Tribe!*

Tanana Chiefs Conference is responding to the 2021 Yukon River salmon crisis now as one of our highest priorities. Our intention is to help support our communities residing on the Yukon River and are being most affected. In early August TCC made several distributions of king and

chum salmon across our villages, and will ship more salmon in the coming months. **Please contact your Tribal Council office about local distribution** once it arrives in your community.

We are also making efforts to secure and distribute salmon to Tribal members residing in the Fairbanks area,

starting with our Elder population. Depending on salmon availability, we will distribute more salmon to Fairbanks area families.

We want to recognize and thank our partners across Alaska, as well as a Doyon, Limited for their contributions. Enaa baasee'!

Yukon River Salmon: 2021 Run & Looking Ahead

Yukon River salmon numbers have plummeted over the last decade – significantly impacting the ability of Yukon River tribes and fishing families to provide for our people, and practice and pass down our traditional ways of life. In an effort to rebuild the salmon population, tribes and fishing families along the Yukon have made many sacrifices – leaving fishcamps empty, reducing the number of salmon harvested, and sometimes not harvesting salmon at all. Despite these efforts, Yukon River salmon continue to decline.

So what is happening to Yukon River salmon?

The answer isn't simple, with many factors contributing to their decline. The 2021 Yukon River king salmon run is estimated to be 13% below the forecast; the Canadian-origin Yukon River king salmon run is expected to come in about 42% below the forecast. The difference from the forecast may be due to king salmon dying during their migration up the Yukon River. Studies indicate that the overall decline in Yukon River king salmon is most likely tied to changing climate conditions in the Yukon River and northern Bering Sea.

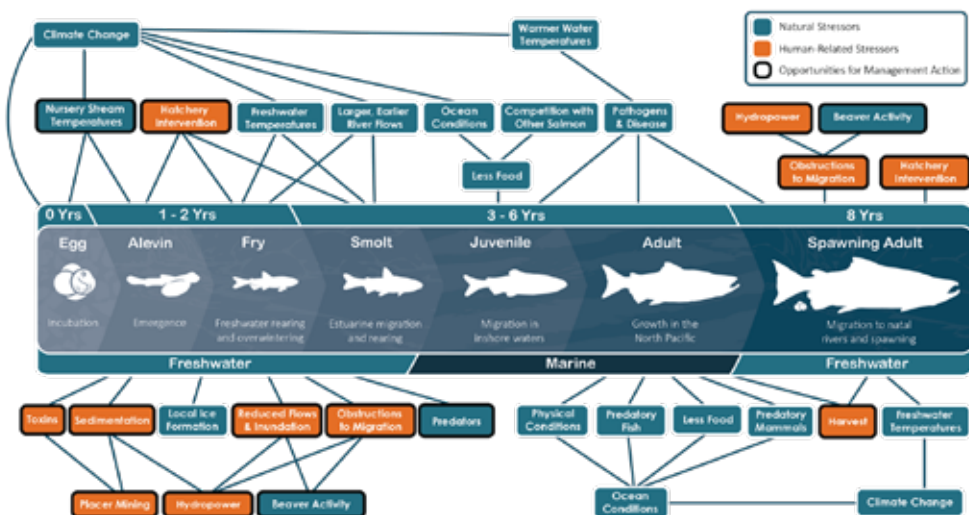
What is TCC doing?

We here at TCC work to influence all aspects of salmon fisheries as we take a closer look at: escapement goals; commercial and trawler by-catch; ecosystem evaluations; ocean health - sea surface temperature, ice melt, sediments runoff, and plankton blooms; habitat, predators and salmon food health; impact of pink and hatchery salmon; freshwater survival; community-based data collection; king salmon productivity; and mid-river sonars. Highlights include:

- Yukon River Fisheries Drainage Association (YRDLA) and Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association (YDFDA) is drafting a **2021 Disaster Declaration** with support from YRITFC and AVCP.
- The HFTF and the YRITFC have established strong relationships throughout the State, including a Tribal consortium addressing activities in the Bering Sea. The consortium meets bi-weekly and prior to North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) meetings to **increase the voice of traditional Alaska Native fishing communities and families.**
- The US Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF &G) believe environmental factors such as the observed **warm water temperatures in tributaries and the mainstem Yukon River and/or the effects of the parasite Ichthyophonus may be causing increased loss of incoming Yukon River King salmon.** USFWS and ADF&G collected samples this season (on salmon caught in a test fishery or in legal 4-inch gear) to test

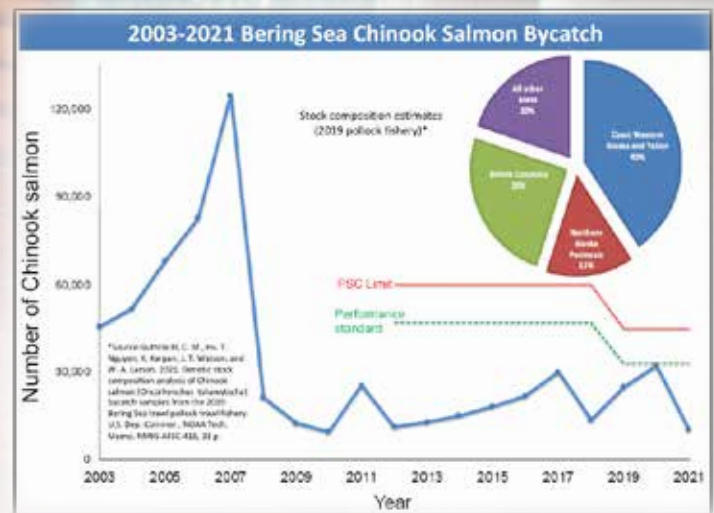
for prevalence and severity of Ichthyophonus, results of these studies and suggestions for future research will be discussed at winter meetings.

- A YDFDA study of outmigrating juvenile king and chum salmon and body condition suggests **early freshwater growth may be an important indicator of survival to adulthood.**
- ADF&G and USGS studies are examining Yukon River salmon stress hormones and heat stress effects. In addition, ongoing assessment projects (sonars, weirs, aerial surveys, test fisheries) collect information on salmon making it back as adults and heading to their spawning grounds, including run timing and stock composition (age, sex, length). Water and temperature data that can be examined over time to look for trends is also being collected.
- Juvenile salmon research in the Bering Sea has led to an effective and fairly accurate model for forecasting adult returns of Yukon River king salmon three years ahead. This model indicates **the 2022 run may be similar or smaller than the run size in 2021. We are expecting declining run sizes again next year.**



For more information on the salmon decline we recommend reviewing the Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim Sustainable Salmon Initiative report – created by TCC, Kawerak, AVCP, NOAA, BSFA and ADFG. The report can be found at <https://www.aykssi.org/> and includes a review of historical data and recommendations for improving salmon management and restoration through a collaborative and inclusive process.

Continued Effort to Reduce Bering Sea King and Chum Bycatch



Tanana Chiefs Conference recognizes today's salmon disaster has been shaped by the significant damage of the large historical bycatch on the Bering Sea. TCC will continue to advocate to reduce the Chinook (King) and chum salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fisheries. Bycatch means the fish that are unintended to be caught, like in the Bering Sea the vessels seek pollock, a white fish for commercial sales and accidentally catch salmon. Today, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) manages the high-seas pollock fisheries and ground fish trawl fisheries as well as the bycatch of King and chum salmon.

King salmon bycatch peaked at 121,638 fish in 2007, an alarming number compared to the 1999-2012 averaged 38,624 fish per year. At that time, Bering Sea fishers came together to ensure proper management of bycatch and management continues to improve.

Brief Overview of Advocacy

2011 Amendment 91- After intense advocacy from TCC and our allies, the NPFMC reduced the performance standards and hard caps for bycatch, lowering the bycatch limit by 25%. This Amendment also established two King salmon bycatch limits for the pollock fishery as well.

2014 Petition for Emergency Action and Rulemaking- TCC and the Association of Village Council Presidents jointly submitted a petition to the Secretary of Commerce and the NPFMC to implement an emergency regulation for the 2014 season with the goal of reducing the overall

King salmon bycatch cap by 66%. We successfully argued that the current cap levels did not meet the obligation under the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) and the federal trust responsibility to tribes.

2016 Amendment 110- TCC and our allies advocated for this new amendment that was designed to further minimize King salmon bycatch at low levels of salmon abundance and to incorporate chum salmon bycatch reduction measures in the Bering Sea pollock fishery.

From 2016 - 2020- TCC staff served for four years on the advisory panel to the NPFMC and brought our indigenous perspective forward for deliberation to the Yukon Salmon issue.

April 2021- TCC provided written comments to the NPFMC on April 2, 2021. Written comments provided an overview of the low salmon runs of both the chinook and chum runs that left many families without fishing opportunities for the past several years.

Continuing on our Path

From the years of advocacy with our allies and partners, today the genetic testing indicates the 2020 Bering Sea bycatch total to be: 32,294 King salmon and 320,478 chum. Every vessel in the pollock fishery is required to have 100% observer coverage, observers count every salmon caught which provides a precise count of salmon bycatch.

In addition to the work with the NPFMC, TCC has also been actively involved for over six years with influencing the reauthorization of the MSA,

the federal statute that created the NPFMC and the national standards the Council implements.

Currently the MSA includes "commercial" and "recreational" priorities and TCC seeks to include "subsistence" as a third priority. In addition TCC seeks language to ensure management decisions are based in **science** rather than industry wishes. Recently a group of allies worked together to include language within a draft of the MSA to include two tribal seats on the NPFMC.

While our work and ally building has greatly reduced bycatch in the Bering Sea, the Alaska pollock fishery is one of the most valuable in the world and our efforts around bycatch will continue.

Invitation to Advocate

The Yukon River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission is working with statewide partners and NPFMC on providing an informal training on the NPFMC process prior to the start of the meeting, October 4-16, 2021 / Hilton Hotel – Anchorage, AK. Limited travel scholarships are available to attend the training and council meeting to provide testimony.

(Council's October meeting is set to be hybrid with the Council meeting in person but the Advisory Panel and Science and Statistical Committee meeting virtually. Members of the public could attend in-person to the Council meeting, with virtual participation and testimony as an option. The final determination on hybrid v. virtual will be made shortly.)

Please call Ben Stevens or Brooke Woods (Wright) at 907-452-8251 with any questions.

An Open Letter To Our Potential Head Start Families

We are excited to invite you and your children back to in person services this fall. It has been more than a year since we were able to hold in person classroom sessions or have in person home visits for many of you, but now we can!

Working closely with the medical team at Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center, the following plan was approved, and there are extra steps we have taken to ensure that you and your children and your loved ones stay as healthy and safe as possible.

You may expect the following to occur:

1. **Each family will be given a specific drop off and pick up time.** This is to reduce over-crowding, and also allows our staff a little extra time to conduct a thorough daily health check in with you, where in addition to the usual questions such as “how did (your child’s name) sleep? Anything we need to know today about how (your child’s name) is feeling? **They will also be asking the following questions:**

- Any fever over 100.3?
- Any cough?
- Any sore throat?

Please be sure to take your child’s temperature every morning before they come to school, and keep them home if they display any of the above

symptoms.

2. **Your Teachers will be wearing a face mask.** Many of them have chosen to be vaccinated.
3. **Your classroom has a minimum of two Hepa Filter Air Purifiers** to help move and purify the air. The filters are replaced frequently.
4. **Each child has 2 personal water bottles to use in the classroom;** one is for everyday use, and the other is in case the first one gets soiled.
5. **Extra cleaning has been implemented in the classroom.** Not only have your teachers been instructed in proper cleaning methods, and know the differences between cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting, they also get to do that with all natural, non-toxic cleaners.
6. **Meals will be pre-plated,** to cut down on possible contamination, but they will still be eaten “Family Style” with small groups and pleasant conversation.
7. **Your Family Visitor will take every precaution above before entering your home,** and visits will be spaced with enough time between to allow for cleaning.

We have room for 229 children to help them get ready for Kindergarten. *Have you applied?*

Looking forward to serving YOU!

2021 Wildland News: Type 2 Contract Crew



In 2020 Bureau of Land Management, Alaska Fire Service awarded 3 contracts for Type 2 wildland fire crews, and now this year there have been another 3 contracts for Type 2 crews awarded as well. The new contracts include contracts awarded to TCC and Nulato Hill Enterprises, LLC.

With the 3 new contracts, the current list of AFS Type 2 wildland fire contractors includes:

- Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments, with assembly points in Fort Yukon, Venetie and Arctic Village
- Capstone Fire & Safety Management, with assembly points in Minto and Tanana
- S. E. S. Fire, with assembly points in Huslia, Hughes and Allakaket

- Tanana Chiefs Conference, with assembly points in Shageluk, Grayling, Anvik, and Holy Cross. Shageluk is within Alaska Division of Forestry region, but close to these other villages
- Nulato Hills Enterprises, LLC, with assembly points in Kaltag, Nulato, Koyukuk, Galena, and Ruby
- Capstone Fire & Safety Management, with assembly points in St. Mary’s, Marshall, Mountain Village, and Pilot Station

Each contractor will be in charge of hiring, training, and equipping the firefighters, and ensuring that personnel and gear are at the assembly points when tasked by BLM to deploy on Type 2 Contract Crew fire assignments either in Alaska or to the lower 48 states. The new contract crews will not be a part of the Type 2 EFF crew rotation. Due to not enough remaining qualified EFF responders in the AFS regions, BLM AFS will not administer the Type 2 EFF Crew program any longer.

Dental News: Why Is There a Wait List At The Dental Clinic?

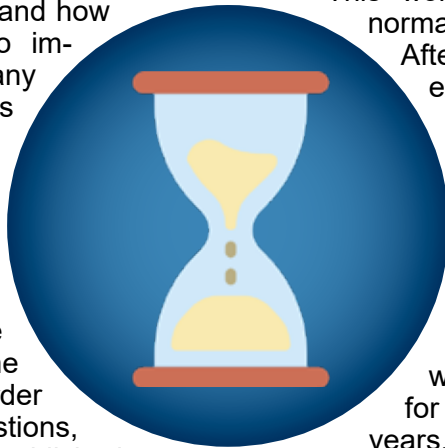
Last month, the TCC Dental Clinic asked patients for feedback on the services they provide and how they may be able to improve. There were many excellent comments, suggestions and questions regarding what services are provided in Dental, what types of filling material we use, how appointments are scheduled, and how the wait list works. In order to answer these questions, short articles will be published each month focusing on each of these specific areas. The first question we want to address is the wait list.

The wait list serves two significant purposes. First, it serves as our recall exam list, reminding us of when patients are due for their follow up exam. Each patient's recall time frame is unique to them and based on a number of factors, but most often our patients will have a 2 year recall. Patients with diabetes, children, and certain other unique circumstances may be given a 1 year recall.

The second role of the wait list is it helps us to be fair and consistent when we make appointments for exams. We want to make sure that those patients waiting the longest are the next ones contacted for an appointment. When making appointments, Dental staff call patients from the wait list in the order they were put on. If we are unable to reach someone, we will leave a message and try again before moving down the list. Don't worry though, if we miss you and you call us back later, you're still eligible for an appointment and will be given one at that time.

If your exam is current, meaning you had one in the last 2 years, you can make appointments for all the routine care needed. Once all of the planned treatment is completed, your name will be added back to the exam wait list. In the meantime, if you have any urgent needs, our Dental Urgent Care Clinic

is available for same day care.



This works beautifully under normal circumstances. After patients have their exam and all the work is completed, then they are added back to the wait list. Usually, treatment can be completed in 1-3 months. The patient is then back on the wait list and when they are due for their next exam in 2 years, they are contacted for an appointment. Unfortunately, COVID-19 caused a significant disruption in our process and we were unable to do normal exams or routine care for many months. Because of this, we are almost a year behind in contacting patients for their recall exam appointment.

We are taking several steps to address this backlog:

1. We completed a comprehensive review of the exam wait list going back to January 2018 to make sure that all patients were contacted.
2. We are currently contacting patients who may not have been notified of their position on the list.
3. We are actively recruiting for new dentists, recently hiring one new provider and sending two new students to become Dental Health Aide Therapists.
4. In addition, as the COVID situation continues to evolve, we continue to adjust the schedule to maximize the number of available appointments for our patients.

We know this year was challenging in many different ways and getting healthcare was one of them, but we're confident that with the changes we've made, we will make progress in this area. We will continue to look

for other areas to improve and reduce the wait list as quickly as possible. We greatly appreciate your patience and understanding as we work through the backlog of care that resulted from COVID-19. If you have any questions about your status on the Dental exam wait list or would like to have your name added to the list, please reach out to the Dental Front Desk.

Did You Know?

- TCC Dental Travels **130 weeks each year** to 26 rural villages in the interior between September and May.
- The team **travels Monday – Friday, with extended hours** to provide care to the rural population.
- **Multiple types of dental providers** (dentist, hygienist and Dental Health Aide Therapist (DHATs)) travel & coordinate throughout the season to increase care provided.
- Dental gear, weighing **over 1000 lbs** in approximately 15 boxes gets shipped 2 weeks prior to for flying trips.
- **Dental services offered:** exams, oral cancer screenings, routine fillings, extractions, pediatric care (exams, cleanings, head start screenings), adult cleanings, fluoride applications, advanced treatment planning (for crowns, bridges, dentures)
- DHATs offering full time dental care in **sub-regional clinics of Galena, UTHC and Nenana**
- **UTHC dental clinic** now has Nitrous Oxide ("laughing gas") available when the dentist travels to UTHC
- **Same sterilization and infection control practices** in rural clinics as at CAIHC
- To reduce the spread of COVID-19, **extra precautions are used**, such as testing employees prior to travel, pre-appointment screening, and use of medical grade HEPA filters

To Contact The Dental Clinic:

TCC • Health Services • Dental Clinic
(907) 1-800-478-6822 • (907) 451-6682 Ext. 3200

The Importance of Power Cost Equalization

What is the Power Cost Equalization (PCE) Program?

PCE was established in 1984 as a permanent solution for rural Alaska, while large investments were being made in urban energy projects. PCE “equalizes” electric rates to the average of the cost of power in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau. Despite deep program cuts to reduce the cost of PCE, annual funding battles continued until the “PCE Endowment” was established in 2000. Having now grown to ~\$1 billion, all PCE costs come from the Fund’s earnings.

A few years ago, the administration took the unprecedented step of “sweeping” this fund into the Constitutional Budget Reserve, effectively eliminating the hard-won PCE endowment. The 2019 Alaskan legislature reversed this action but it was a bitter battle. PCE pays for only 16% of the cost of rural electricity but its impact is enormous. Loss of funding would result in doubling of most residential electric bills and tripling most community facility bills (water treatment, clinics, streetlights etc.).

Cost of 500 kWh before/after PCE in...

Community	w/out PCE	w/PCE
Anchorage	\$101	
Fairbanks	\$111.75	
Juneau	\$78.50	
Kodiak	\$69	
Galena	\$300	\$115
Hoonah	\$300	\$135
Huslia	\$285	\$130
Igiugig	\$460	\$175
Venetie	\$450	\$285
Yakutat	\$475	\$295

Contact Your District Representatives!

The Legislature and the Governor must understand that PCE is critical to the well being of rural Alaska!

District 6

Representative Mike Cronk;
Senator Click Bishop

Contact via email:

rep.Mike.Cronk@akleg.gov;
senator.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov

Contact via phone:

1-800-491-4527 (Cronk);
1-800-336-7383 (Bishop)

Represents the following communities:

- Arctic Village
- Beaver
- Birch Creek
- Chalkyitsik
- Circle
- Dot Lake
- Eagle
- Ft. Yukon
- Healy Lake
- Manley
- Minto
- Nenana
- Northway
- Rampart
- Stevens Village
- Tanacross
- Tanana
- Tetlin
- Tok
- Venetie

District 40

Representative Josiah Patkotak;
Senator Donald Olson

Contact via email:

rep.Josiah.Patkotak@akleg.gov;
senator.Donald.Olson@akleg.gov

Contact via phone:

1-888-288-3473 (Patkotak);
1-800-597-3707 (Olson)

Represents the following communities:

- Evansville
- Alatna
- Allakaket
- Hughes

District 39

Representative Neal Foster;
Senator Donald Olson

Contact via email:

rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov;
senator.Donald.Olson@akleg.gov

Contact via phone:

1-800-478-3789 (Foster);
1-800-597-3707 (Olson)

Represents the following communities:

- Huslia
- Koyukuk
- Galena
- Ruby
- Nulato
- Kaltag

District 37

Representative Bryce Edgmon;
Senator Lyman Hoffman

Contact via email:

rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov;
senator.Lyman.Hoffman@akleg.gov

Contact via phone:

1-800-898-4451 (Edgmon);
1-866-465-4453 (Hoffman)

Represents the following communities:

- Grayling
- Anvik
- Shageluk
- Holy Cross
- Takotna
- Nikolai
- McGrath
- Telida

Selina Alexander Gifts a *Vest Fit for a Chief*

Alaska Native artist Selina Alexander recently presented Chief/Chairman PJ Simon with a new moose hide vest. The vest was custom designed specifically for Chief Simon who worked with Selina to decide what beadwork designs to feature on the vest. Each design represents something special to Chief Simon. The

raven flying on the back of the vest symbolizes a childhood dream that he had where a raven swooped him up and took him back in time to see his ancestors, the martin on the front is a depiction of a lucky spotted martin that he caught years ago, and the cabin and cache represent his dream scenario as a hunter

and trapper – living out on the land.

Chief Simon and Tanana Chiefs Conference would like to thank Selina for creating and designing this beautiful new vest for the Chief to wear as he represents our region.

Selina Alexander is a Koyukon Athabaskan artist from Huslia.



VET COLD WEATHER DRIVE

The Fairbanks Vet Center is offering cold weather gear for any homeless/at risk Veterans*!

September 17th, 2021 • 12:00pm - 4:00pm

Fairbanks Veterans Park (next to Sadler's Home Furnishings)

***Proof of military service is required**

COVID-19 safety PPE (masks) will be available

This event may be rescheduled to a later date due to the current COVID case levels



Connection.
Camaraderie.
Community.

Contact the Vet Center for eligibility and gear size availability

Fairbanks Veteran Center

540 4th Ave, Suite 100 • (907) 456-4238

THE COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

122 First Avenue, Suite 600
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Phone: (907) 452-8251 ext. 3424

Fax: (907) 459-3884

communications_dept@tananachiefs.org

www.tananachiefs.org

Letters to the Editor, other written contributions and photo submissions are welcome. However, space is limited and program-oriented news has priority. We reserve the right to edit or reject material. Letters and opinions are not necessarily the opinions of Tanana Chiefs Conference. Material submitted anonymously will not be printed.



Tanana
Chiefs
Conference



Find Your Purpose

Join Our Team:
www.tananachiefs.org/careers

Village Vacancies

- **Alatna:** Community Health Aide/Practitioner-Itinerant, Tribal Administrator - Onsite Supervisor, Tribal Workforce Development Specialist
- **Allakaket:** Community Health Aide/Practitioner, Community Health Representative, Village Public Safety Officer
- **Anaktuvuk Pass:** Behavioral Health Aide
- **Anvik:** Substitute Elder Nutrition Cook, Village Public Safety Officer
- **Arctic Village:** Home Care Provider, Substitute Elder Nutrition Cook, Tribal Administrator - Onsite Supervisor, Village Public Safety Officer
- **Chalkyitsik:** Behavioral Health Aide, Community Health Aide/Practitioner, Tribal Family Youth Specialist, Village Public Safety Officer
- **Circle:** Community Health Aide/Practitioner, Substitute Elder Nutrition Cook, Tribal Family Youth Specialist
- **Dot Lake:** Behavioral Health Aide, Community Health Aide/Practitioner
- **Eagle:** Community Health Aide/Practitioner, Home Care Provider
- **Evansville:** Elder Nutrition Cook, Community Health Aide/Practitioner
- **Fort Yukon:** Preschool Assistant Teacher, Preschool Lead Teacher
- **Galena:** Infant/Toddler Teacher,
- **Nurse Practitioner - Primary Care, Physician Assistant - Primary Care, Service Desk Technician**
- **Grayling:** Family Visitor, Village Public Safety Officer
- **Healy Lake:** Community Health Aide/Practitioner, Tribal Workforce Development Specialist, Village Public Safety Officer
- **Holy Cross:** Family Visitor, Home Care Provider, Tribal Workforce Development Specialist
- **Hughes:** Community Health Aide/Practitioner - Itinerant, Family Visitor
- **Huslia:** Preschool Assistant Teacher
- **Kaltag:** Tribal Administrator-Onsite Supervisor, Tribal Family Youth Specialist
- **McGrath:** Preschool Assistant Teacher, Tribal Workforce Development Specialist
- **Minto:** Behavioral Health Aide, Community Health Aide/Practitioner
- **Nenana:** Infant/Toddler Teacher, Preschool Assistant Teacher, Tribal Administrator - Onsite Supervisor, Tribal Family Youth Specialist
- **Northway:** Home Care Provider, Village Public Safety Officer
- **Nulato:** Home Care Provider, Preschool Assistant Teacher, Substitute Teacher/Assistant Teacher, Village Public Safety Officer
- **Old Minto:** Traditional Counselor, Primary Counselor
- **Rampart:** Behavioral Health Aide,
- **Community Health Aide/Practitioner**
- **Ruby:** Behavioral Health Aide, Community Health Aide/Practitioner, Substitute Elder Nutrition Cook
- **Shageluk:** Family Visitor, Tribal Administrator -Onsite Supervisor
- **Stevens Village:** Community Health Aide/Practitioner
- **Tanacross:** Community Health Aide/Practitioner
- **Tetlin:** Behavioral Health Aide, Community Health Aide/Practitioner, Family Visitor, Preschool Lead Teacher, Village Public Safety Officer
- **Tok:** Alternate Resource Coordinator, Assistant Crew Boss, Clinical Support Staff/Medical Assistant, Coordinator/Instructor Mid Level Practitioner, Physician Assistant - UTHC, Service Desk Technician, Urgent Care RN Advanced, Wild Land Firefighter Type II Crew Member
- **Venetie:** Tribal Administrator - Onsite Supervisor, Village Public Safety Officer

Region- Wide Vacancies

- Community Health Aide/Practitioner - Itinerant
- Behavioral Health Clinical Associate - Fairbanks

LABOR DAY HOLIDAY CLOSURE

Monday, September 6th, 2021:

- CAIHC Urgent Care Clinic will be **OPEN** 8:00am - 6:00pm
- Bertha Moses COVID Testing Center will be **OPEN** 8:00am - 4:00pm
- *All other services will be **CLOSED** in observance of the Labor Day Holiday.

Tuesday, September 7th, 2021:

- CAIHC Urgent Care Clinic will be **OPEN** 8:00am - 6:00pm with Pharmacy, Laboratory Services, and Radiology Support
- Bertha Moses COVID Testing Center will be **OPEN** 8:00am - 4:00pm
- Dental Clinic will be **OPEN** 8:00am - 4:00pm
- *All other services will be **CLOSED**.

SUBMIT YOUR PHOTOS FOR THE 2022 TCC CALENDAR!



DEADLINE TO SUBMIT IS OCTOBER 15th, 2021

Go to: www.tananachiefs.org/2022-tcc-calendar-submissions/
Fill out the form, upload pictures, and give a caption and you're done!

COVID TESTING LIMITS

With the recent increase of COVID -19 cases in Alaska, the calls to the Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center have increased significantly for requests for COVID testing tests and for COVID vaccines.

Please understand that the Central Schedulers will be asking screening questions to evaluate if a patient will need to be triaged. When requesting a COVID test it will take a minimum of 2 hours for the orders to be processed – appointments will be scheduled no less than 2 hours later after the time the patient calls for the appointment. COVID Test results will be provided 3 to 7 days from the day of being tested.

Update as of August 6, 2021

JOBS LISTED WERE OPEN AS OF AUGUST 19, 2021