



Sharing Our Pathways

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Alaska Federation of Natives ♦ University of Alaska ♦ National Science Foundation ♦ Rural School and Community Trust

The Hills on the Telaquana Trail

by Frank Hill



Growing up, my Dena'ina grandmother, Mary Ann Trefon, lived with our family periodically in Iliamna and spoke of walking the Telaquana Trail. She, with others, would travel from the community on Telaquana Lake to Kijik to trade furs for staple goods like flour, sugar, tea and tobacco. Entire families, or groups of families, traveled together. In the summer, they would walk the Telaquana Trail, carrying their supplies on backpacks. Dogs also wore backpacks in summer and in winter were used with sleds and harnesses. The Lake Clark area Dena'ina were aptly called the

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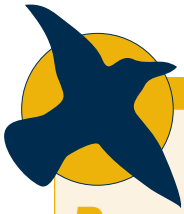
There are many aspects of cultural knowledge that form the basis for Alaska Native peoples' ability to thrive in their respective environments, among these are the traditional trails.

Throughout Alaska there are trails which have been used by Native people for generations. These overland trails were often the most efficient and safe route for people to travel. They provided routes to hunting and fishing grounds, seasonal camps, for trading between Native groups or, with the arrival of Europeans, to trade with them.

One of the prominent trails in Dena'ina Athabascan country in southwest Alaska is the Telaquana Trail. It is a 50-mile route through the mountains and river valleys between the old village on Telaquana Lake and the Dena'ina village of old Kijik on Lake Clark. This trail has been used by the Dena'ina for hundreds of years.

Contents

The Hills on the Telaquana Trail	1
The Molly Hootch Case	4
Songs and Legends	9
MapTEACH	10
Future Teachers of Alaska Program ..	11
Inupiaq Region:	
Summer Camp for Teachers	13
Athabascan Region:	
Parenting Video	14
AINE Institute on Learning Styles .	15
Southeast Region	
Alaska Native Education Forums ..	16



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“Walking Dena’inas,” due to their ability to cover long distances on foot. It has been said that my grandmother’s husband, Trefon Balluta, would walk the entire length of the 50-mile trail in one day!

In June 2003, I spent 9 days with my brothers Pete and Lary Hill and Pete’s wife BJ, hiking and camping along the Telaquana Trail. Lake Clark National Park Ranger and Historian John Branson joined us for the last few days. We camped on Turquoise Lake, about halfway along the length of the trail, and spent the days hiking and exploring different parts of the trail. Dena’inas know Turquoise Lake as “Vandaztun Vena,” which translates as “caribou hair lake” and the



Mulchatna River running out of it, as “Vandaztutnu,” or “caribou hair stream”. As is evident in the Dena’ina names, the area is known for the migration and river crossing for the Mulchatna caribou herd, one of Alaska’s largest. Our intent was not just to camp and explore, but also to appreciate our Dena’ina ancestors’ hardiness and spiritual connection to the land they traversed. Another reason was to discover, for ourselves, the love for this part of the world that our Dena’ina mother shared with our Finnish father during their first years together.

We flew to Telaquana Lake with a float plane from Iliamna that required

us to carry no more than a forty-pound pack each, due to the plane’s weight restrictions. We had lightweight synthetic clothing and tents, therma-rest mattresses, freeze dried foods, aluminum and titanium cookware, hand-held GPS, VHF radios, first aid kits and waterproof maps. No, we didn’t forget matches!

In contrast to our Dena’ina ancestors’ simple and practical traveling and camping gear, we looked like we had supplies and equipment enough for a year-long safari! Unlike our huge backpacks, our ancestors traveled light, thereby allowing them to carry more supplies home. Their shelters were constructed where they camped overnight and their trail food was probably dried salmon and moose

meat. A day’s walking along the trail ended in places with natural shelters, fresh water and a supply of firewood. As they walked, Dena’inas would collect grass, twigs, birch bark, and dry pieces of wood. When they arrived at their day’s end camp, they would already have dry fire-starting materials.

We found the early June season on the Telaquana Trail could provide food enough for someone to survive. During a spring traverse of the trail, our ancestral Dena’ina had available ducks and geese, ground squirrels, ptarmigan, trout and dried berries. Caribou, mountain sheep and bear were also regulars in the area. We found the same abundance of “survival food” when we were hiking in the area.

When we were finally able to determine that we were actually on the Telaquana Trail, it was easy to follow. There were no trail markers, telling us where we were, what we were looking at, or pointing out traditional

animal river crossings or other natural features or activities. The trail followed the natural terrain, keeping to high dry ground, always heading toward a sighting on the horizon.

As we walked along the trail, we imagined our ancestors walking along with us; we were seeing the same sights, hearing the same birds and animals and feeling the same sun and breeze on our faces. We stopped in natural resting places to make tea and have mid-day snacks. In some locations we used the same fire pits originally made by our ancestors. We found remnants of things that fell off packs or broke along the way: a piece of non-native wood, a spent 30.30 cartridge, a piece of a broken cast iron stove (imagine how that was carried or hauled!)

At the end of each day, beside a clear rocky stream, we cooked on fire fed with wood we collected around camp or during the day's walk. We camped in the same vicinity our ancestors did when they were in the area. We found it by following a stream from its outlet at the lake shore. Waist-deep circular hollows, lined with large tundra-covered stones, became our "conversation pit". A foot below the surface of the pit, we found smoke-covered stones, and piles of charcoal. We were certain that the original users of this fire pit were our Dena'ina ancestors. We each contributed our different dehydrated meals to be cooked in one common pot; in the same manner as the Dena'inas sharing their meals together.

Our usual end-of-day activities prior to heading for our tents and sleeping bags included tea and talk. Conversations around the campfire, teacup in hand, in that sheltered campfire area easily turned into discussions of our ancestors, their stories, legends and knowledge of the area. With only the ptarmigan talking, geese calling and the sound of the nearby creek, it was not difficult to imagine that these birds' ancestors and the



creek were making the same sounds for our ancestral Dena'ina as they too fell asleep.

One day we hiked to Spirit Rock, a well-known landmark along the trail. Its imposing black, house-sized 30-foot height could be seen hours before we reached its base on the high upland treeless tundra. Dena'inas used this landmark as a day's-end destination and resting place. An opening on one side was large enough to build cooking fires. Another cave-like opening was large enough to provide shelter for several people. Our friend John showed us a stash of rolled up birch bark in a rock crevice, stored there years before, that was used to start fires. Located near a small lake, Spirit Rock was an ideal landmark and resting place.

The Iditarod, Chilkoot, Nabesna and Telaquana, are trails familiar to some of us in Alaska. Look at a detailed map of Alaska and note the dotted lines. Likely they are trails used first by the Native peoples of the area. They traverse lands from Brevig Mission to Shishmaref, Akiak to Russian Mission, Livengood to Ft. Hamlin, Discoverer Bay to Kazakof Bay on Afognak, the Duncan Canal Portage and Atqasak to Barrow. In many cases,

these trails later became routes for European explorers, miners, railroads and highways. These represent only a few of hundreds of trails in traditional Native history. All have stories and many have songs which may still be in use today. In Howard Luke's book, *My Own Trail*, which is about his life in and around Fairbanks and the Chena River area, there is a detailed map showing all of the places in his ancestral area that are important to him. Each place has a story and is significant.

In sharing this story, it is our hope that it will encourage others to visit with Elders about important trails in their cultural area and hear stories or events associated with those trails. Perhaps you will travel on some of those trails as your ancestors did. Doing so will enrich your lives, honor those who established and used those significant trails and, in the process, reconnect you to your ancestral lands and lifeways.

The last traditional chief of Batzunletas in the Ahtna Region, "Iizin Ta" or Charley Sanford (1876–1945) said: "After I die, burn all my material wealth; the only thing of true value to pass to future generations is a trail, a song and a story". ✨

Thirty Years Later: The Molly Hootch Case

by Stephen E. Cotton, Attorney, Andover, Massachusetts, ©2004

Speech to University of Alaska Symposium, February 27, 2004

When I was invited to speak here, I was immediately reminded of a story the former president of the University of Massachusetts tells. He was sitting in his living room when his teen-aged daughter poked her head in and asked, “Where’s Mom?”

He replies, “She’s out shopping. Something I can help with?”

“Just wanted to ask her a question,” says the daughter.

“Well,” says Dad, “Maybe I can answer it.”

“No thanks, Dad,” says his daughter. “I really didn’t want to know that much about it.”

When I was invited, I was almost as crestfallen as that young lady’s father. I thought to myself, “You want me to talk about the Hootch case, but we’ve only got two days?” And that was before she told me there would be other speakers!

I represented the plaintiffs in this case—the kids in the villages—for ten years: from 1973, the year after Chris Cooke filed the lawsuit (and the same year he left Legal Services) through 1983, by which time the consent decree was almost fully implemented. A lot happened in that time, and I can only touch on some of it. So what you’re going to get from me is a highly selective blend of history, law and advocacy. I’d like to help set the stage for your discussion of today’s educational challenges by inviting you to relive with me, for just a few minutes, that critical turning point in the history of rural education.

History

Chris filed the lawsuit in 1972. He got help from lawyers at the Center for Law & Education at Harvard University. That was a national legal services back-up center, funded by the same federal program which funded Alaska Legal Services, precisely for the purposes of helping local legal services lawyers like Chris with lawsuits involving educational issues.

Early in 1973, Chris had asked the Superior Court in Anchorage to rule on the State Constitutional claim. That motion was denied in October of 1973, just after I started at the Center for Law & Education and began working on the case.

In January, 1974, the Superior Court threw out the State Constitutional claim altogether, and in February, 1974, Chris took the lead in appealing the lower court’s decision to the State Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, my focus was on the alternative claim that was part of the original suit: the claim that the State of Alaska was discriminating against Native kids in rural villages by failing to provide them with local high schools.

So the case was following two separate tracks: Chris, even though he had left Alaska Legal Services, was spear-

heading the appeal to the Supreme Court, and I was working on the discrimination claim. My local co-counsel for many years, I want to add, was Bruce Twomley who was then at Alaska Legal Services—a great lawyer—and a wonderful friend, who unfortunately was not able to join us today.

My work involved research into the history of Alaska Native education. It involved taking sworn testimony from State education officials (including Marshall Lind, who in my 30 years of practicing law was and remains my favorite defendant.) It involved sifting through thousands of pages of official documents in various State offices. And most importantly, it involved going to the villages to meet with parents, kids, boarding school graduates and dropouts, teachers and principals throughout the State.

Before settlement negotiations began in 1975, I had visited folks in more than 40 villages in every corner of the State, talking with hundreds of people and—more to the point—listening to them. And by the time I wound up my work on the case, I had been to something like 65 villages—many of them 3, 4 or 5 times—sleeping on the school floor or in people’s homes, listening to them for hours at a time in village meetings or over the kitchen table.

What Did We Find Out?

First, as we had claimed, there was overwhelming evidence that Alaska was in flagrant violation of the Equal Protection Clauses of both the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article I, Section 1, of the Alaska Constitution. Both of these clauses required the State to give equal treatment to Native kids and non-Native kids, and when it came to the provision of local high schools, the

State just had not done so.

That violation had deep historical roots, going back to the early 1900s and even before. Alaska had a segregated school system in the early 1900s, just like in the deep South of the Lower 48. There were segregated schools in Juneau, Douglas and Sitka. In 1929–30, there were segregated schools in Bethel, Nome, Egegik, Chitina, Ft. Yukon and a dozen other communities. Whites in one school, Natives in another, right in the same small village.

Going back to that era, Congress put its stamp of approval on the dual school system: under Federal law, the Territory was responsible for white schools, while the Federal Government would run the schools for Eskimos and Indians.

Each system ran its own elementary schools—separate, and not necessarily equal—but while the Territory generally extended its schools to teach high school students, the Feds took a different approach: the so-called intellectually advanced Native kids were plucked from their villages and sent to boarding schools for a vocational education. In the beginning, they were sent to the Lower 48, but that was a disaster for the kids. So in 1925 the Feds established three boarding schools in Alaska. In 1947, after World War II, the Naval Air station at Sitka was decommissioned, and converted into the Mt. Edgecumbe boarding school. When Edgecumbe became overcrowded, hundreds of kids were sent out of State, just like in the 1920s, to go to high school in places like Chemawa, Oregon and Chillico, Oklahoma.

But while Native kids, if they wanted to go to high school, were bounced around the State or the rest of the country, white kids were treated differently. They got to go to high school where they lived. In 1958–59, just to give you a snapshot, there were 34 public high schools in Alaska. Only 6 were more than 50% Native.

All the rest were predominantly white.

When Alaska became a state, the vestiges of the dual system lived on. The Federal government still operated dozens of elementary schools and didn't have much interest in building local high schools. And the State, which operated all of the predominantly white schools as well as some of the schools in Native communities, had a policy of not building high schools in the so-called BIA villages—that is, the dozens of Native villages where the Bureau of Indian Affairs

... there was overwhelming evidence that Alaska was in flagrant violation of the Equal Protection Clauses of both the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article I, Section 1, of the Alaska Constitution.

ran the elementary schools.

And the State didn't just inherit a discriminatory system. The State actively discriminated when it came to providing—or not providing—high schools in the communities where it ran the educational show. And that was happening right into the 1970s.

The State constructed a new high school for 23 mostly white kids, grades 9–12, in Thorne Bay, in Southeast, complete with a gym, a chemistry lab, a workshop, a home economics room and classrooms—at a time when there were 48 Native villages with larger high-school aged populations and no local high school.

The State provided local high school instruction for eight kids in Whittier, five kids in Gustavus, five in Port Alice, one or two in Paxson, but not in the dozens of Native villages with equal or greater numbers of high school aged kids. Barrow didn't get a four-year high school until 1974–75, when the enrollment was 161.

This kind of unequal treatment was actively going on even while we gathered evidence. In the highway community of Anderson Village, where most of the kids were white, they were bussed every day to and from school in Nenana, where most of the kids were Native. We found letters in the State's files from white parents, complaining about the long bus ride and about sending their kids to school with Native youngsters. So what did the State do? It immediately started phasing in a high school program in Anderson village, starting with just eight students in 1971–72, and rising to 52 students in 1974–75, when a new school was finished.

At that point, there were at least five Native communities with larger high school aged populations. If those kids wanted to go to high school, they couldn't get home for months. But the State built a new high school for the white kids of Anderson Village, so that they'd be home in time for dinner.

The cumulative effects of this unequal treatment were stark. As of 1976, when the Consent Decree was signed, there were 2,663 Native kids of high school age in 126 villages which had an elementary school but no high school. There were only 120 non-Native kids, statewide, in a similar situation—and almost all of them were in logging camps in Southeast.

That meant that 95% of what the Department of Education classified as “unhoused” children—that is, high school aged, with a local elementary school but no high school—were Native. Only five percent were non-Native.

Put another way, while the State had managed to provide local high schools for 6300 Native kids statewide, it had failed to do so for 2700 others, leaving close to one-third of Native high-school-aged kids without local high schools to go to. But with 28,000 non-Native high schoolers

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in the State, only 120—less than one half of one per cent—did not have a local high school to attend.

That all adds up to discrimination. It was constitutionally forbidden. And it was just plain wrong. Under a large number of United States Supreme Court decisions, the State's legal obligation was to eliminate every last vestige—that is, every trace—of the dual school system, every lingering effect of unequal treatment. In short, to provide local high schools.

That was the heart of our case. And on evidence no more powerful

than what we were gathering, courts elsewhere in the country had virtually taken over entire school systems to ensure the eradication of discriminatory treatment.

What we also found was heart-wrenching evidence of just how bad the State's boarding home and dormitory programs were for the majority of students. I'm not blind to the success stories from Mt. Edgecumbe, Chemawa and some of the other programs; I'll leave those to others, for one reason: I represented people in the villages, and during the period of my travels to those villages, not once did anyone at the village level express concern about preserving a boarding program. The concern they had was getting a local high school

At the time the Consent Decree was signed, there were 32 boarding programs operating, with a total of 850 students, and there was one dorm in Bethel, with 175 students. But there had been more.

The State, since 1966, had focused its energy on getting hundreds of kids back from Oregon and Oklahoma to educate them in Alaska. This was seen as a big step forward, the State shouldering its responsibility for Native education. At least, that was the view in Juneau, Anchorage and Falls Church, Virginia. Say that again? Falls Church, Virginia?

Yes, because that's where the consultants came from: Training Corporation of America (TCA). Their report to the State declared that "the ideal high school must have at least 500 students." TCA recommended setting up six boarding schools with dormitories for 650 students. And TCA was frighteningly candid about the real objective: the elimination of Native villages. That's right: the recent statement I saw in the paper the other day by a local state senator has a long and discredited history.

TCA said that a regional high school would "act as a magnet to which Na-

tives are drawn." "[M]ovement to the larger centers of population is one essential ingredient in the adjustment and acculturation of the Alaskan Native," said TCA. And TCA approvingly declared, "Residence in urban areas appears to accelerate the breakdown of old village patterns, patterns which may retard the development of rural folk into a disciplined and reliable workforce."

Now these are the experts, right? After all, they're from Outside and right near our nation's capital—so they could see for themselves, for example, how the movement of African-Americans from the rural South to urban areas like Detroit, Chicago and Washington, D.C. had solved all the economic and social problems of African-Americans in the United States. To be blunt, their theory was nonsense.

But if you are in the Alaska Department of Education, on the receiving end of this arrogant and racist report, what do you do with it? Apparently, you start implementing it.

The State opened boarding schools in Nome (1966), followed by the Kodiak boarding school in 1967, and the \$8-million Bethel boarding school in 1972. But even before finishing the Bethel school, the State had abandoned its plan for the remaining three schools recommended by TCA. The regional schools were instant disasters.

I didn't document the disaster—Judith Kleinfeld did. Her 1973 study, *A Long Way From Home*, should be an inspiration to any of the students, educators or researchers in this room who want to know whether the research you do can affect public policy. Because Judy's work did.

She looked at the dropout rates—42% in a single year in the Bethel dorm, 65% over 2 years in the Anchorage Boarding Home program. She looked at the dismal academic performance these schools inspired. And,

Editor's Note

Earlier this year, on February 27 and 28, 2004, an educational symposium entitled, *Thirty Years Later: A Look Back at the Molly Hootch Case and Forward to The Future of Rural Schooling in Alaska* was held in Anchorage. The purpose of the symposium was to consider options for a quality education in rural Alaska by examining the current rural education system and revisiting the issues around the Molly Hootch case. In an effort to offer readers an opportunity to reflect on the history and impact of this pivotal lawsuit affecting Alaska's rural education system, a three-part series outlining the case and the current direction of various educational related initiatives is included in this and the forthcoming *Sharing Our Pathways* newsletters. The first part of this series is a reprinting of the speech delivered at the symposium by attorney Steve Cotton, who along with attorney Chris Cooke, was involved in the lawsuit. The speech illustrates the educational and legal issues of the case and the context of the era.

with a consulting psychiatrist, Dr. Joseph Bloom, she examined the social and emotional problems the students experienced. Some of Kleinfeld's findings are quoted word for word in the settlement of this case. In the end, the State had no choice but to agree that she was right.

Her research was a starting place, but I heard the stories directly from the mouths of so many, many kids and parents in the villages. The wrenching experience of going so far from home and family. The pressure to drink. The loneliness. Boarding home parents who themselves drank, abused students and treated them like servants. The lost opportunity to speak their own language, to learn traditional skills just to be at home. Entire villages echoed with the silence of a whole generation of teenagers gone, for 9 months out of the year. It was a rotten system. And a lot of policymakers in Juneau and Anchorage just didn't get it.

Why not? To a very large extent, up and down the political power structure of the State, including the educational establishment, no one ever bothered to ask people in the villages, systematically and sympathetically, what they wanted for their communities, for themselves and for their kids.

Those who asked didn't listen. Those who listened didn't care. Those who cared failed to act.

I'll just give you one outrageous example. I took the deposition of a State official in Anchorage who worked for the State-Operated School System (may it rest in peace). That was the agency in charge of public education in the Unorganized Borough from 1971 to 1975.

This fellow's job was to "train" advisory school boards in the villages. And, under pressure from the Hootch lawsuit, he was also the one who "handled" (I guess that's the right word for filing something away and ignoring it) any requests from villages to establish a local high school.

I was pressing him on why, even when he went out to villages, he hadn't seemed to pick up on their desire for a local high school and he was giving all sorts of evasive responses. Then we took a break, he sort of sidled up to me and said, "Steve, you don't understand what it's like. When you visit an Eskimo village, you talk for awhile and no one from the village says anything. Then someone grunts, and that's the decision." Discrimination was not just an artifact of Alaskan history; it was an ongoing problem that infected decision-making even as the lawsuit was going forward.

And it was reflected in policies that continued on their disastrous course. True, slowly by ones and twos, new village schools were being built. But while Bruce and I were taking depositions, the State was hell-bent on pursuing one more scheme that our clients in the villages told us was just as hare-brained as earlier boarding programs.

This plan was to have so called "area schools" serving several villages. The plan, developed without any input from villages, involved building dormitories in one village (in at least one case, the only wet village in the area), and then taking kids from surrounding villages and having them live in the dormitories. In 1975, when negotiations began, the State was pushing very hard on this idea. So we went out to every village and talked with parents and students. No one in the villages thought that it was wise to put every one of their teenagers from the surrounding villages into just one village, leaving the kids without parental supervision. Parents envisioned big trouble in the host village, and a lot of unsupervised and dangerous attempts by homesick kids to get home. So people in the villages were adamant in their opposition to this plan, and after a lot of table-thumping and stormy negotiations, the State finally abandoned it.

The Settlement

Let me talk just a bit about the negotiations and the settlement.

The Alaska Supreme Court handed down its decision, dismissing that first claim about schools being "open" to all, in May, 1975. But the Court very pointedly gave a green light for us to proceed with the claim of racial discrimination. We were already neck-deep in evidence to prove that claim, and we were continuing to gather more.

In August, 1975, the State's lawyers asked us whether we might be willing to settle the case and they proposed spending \$20 million on new high school construction. The negotiations began.

Years later, long after the settlement was in effect, we were handed a memorandum that the attorney general had sent to the governor recommending that he authorize the start of settlement negotiations. It seemed clear from that memorandum that the Attorney General was concerned about losing. And, as courts throughout the country had shown, once a school system loses a discrimination case on this scale, it was often a judge that, in effect, ended up running the system. The State did not want that to happen.

These were difficult negotiations. They were hard-fought. There were angry sessions, one or the other side would occasionally walk out of the room and suspend the talks. And, at times, we had to go back out to villages to ask specific questions, because the State kept proposing alternatives to local schools. Would village parents agree to daily transportation by airplanes? What about daily transportation by hovercraft? And on and on. The decisions on such questions were made by the villages, and we fought like hell on their behalf.

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One whole set of battles arose when the State created the 21 new Regional Education Attendance Areas that, after a transitional year, took over from the State-Operated School System in 1976 - just when a settlement, if we could get to one, would take effect.

The Bush Caucus, Native leaders, the State Board of Education and Marshall Lind were all pushing to create the REAAs and to maximize their power. A settlement of the Hootch case would vastly expand the budgets, the staffs and the responsibilities of the REAAs (which the REAAs and their supporters all favored), but there was one nettlesome problem they saw with the settlement. The lawyers for the plaintiffs, Bruce and myself, wouldn't agree to the State's plan to let the REAAs decide which villages would get schools. Nor did the State want to require the REAAs, by enforceable regulations, to pay attention to villages in planning what would be taught in the new schools.

We wouldn't budge. And for one simple reason: People in the villages were sick and tired of having someone else deciding for them where their kids would go to high school. For once, they wanted to make that decision on their own, at the village level. And instead of someone else imposing a curriculum of "acculturation," they wanted the school system to at least sit down and talk to them about some of the things that should be taught in school.

Within the villages, there was a lot of mistrust of the new REAAs, and no sentiment at all for trusting them to make the right decision for each and every village about whether to have a high school.

That was a hard-fought issue in the negotiations, but in the end the State acceded to what our clients wanted. In each and every village, the decision as to whether to have a local

high school would be made by the village, and no one else. And, for a three-year period after a new high school was established, the REAA would have to go through a process of planning and evaluation involving the village advisory school board.

The settlement agreement was signed in September, 1976. The name of the case changed. It was no longer, officially at least, the Molly Hootch case. Molly's village had gotten a high

That very fall, basically overnight since the decree was signed in September, 42 new high school programs opened in rural Alaska.

school, and the original plaintiffs were no longer of high school age. So a new list of plaintiffs from six villages was substituted, with Anna Tobeluk's name at the top of the list. She lived in the village of Nunapitchuk, and her high school career had ended after the ninth grade because that was all the BIA chose to offer in her village.

And while we were retooling the list of plaintiffs, we had to make a change on the list of defendants, since the State-Operated School System no longer existed. Someone's name had to go on top of the new list of defendants, and since I was doing the drafting, I thought I'd let Marshall have the honor. So the case was officially renamed Tobeluk v. Lind.

The settlement contained two parts. The first was a Statement of Agreed Facts, which set forth in more detail the history of discrimination I have outlined to you. We insisted that the State agree on these facts for a number of reasons—first and foremost among them being that, in the event of any backtracking, the court would see the strong legal argument for enforcing a far-reaching remedy.

The second part was the consent decree, which incorporated regulations that the State would have to enforce. The decree gave each and every one of the 126 villages the right to decide on whether or not to have a high school, and it spelled out the physical features of the new schools. It set out a process for determining the amounts to be budgeted for construction. And, after a modification we insisted on in 1981, it set out a very detailed three-year process for village involvement in planning and evaluation of the curriculum in each of the new high schools.

The decree took effect immediately. Of course, there were no new facilities and the money for them was a year or two away. But it did require that high schools had to be provided "as soon as practicable" in any village which wanted them and could find the space for classes.

Now a lot of officials were just clueless about what to expect. Marshall's #2 in the Department of Education told me he thought fewer than half the consent decree villages would opt for a local high school. Other school administrators told me they had expected only a handful of villages in their districts would want local high schools.

That very fall, basically overnight since the decree was signed in September, 42 new high school programs opened in rural Alaska. Let me say that again. One hundred twenty-six villages were covered, and one-third of them—forty-two—somehow found space somewhere in the village to start some kind of program. Once the State was legally prohibited from getting in the way, the floodgates opened.

One of those start-up programs was in Nunapitchuk. Anna Tobeluk was back in school. I visited her and her classmates that winter and they were attending classes in an unheated clinic building, wearing parkas and

(continued on next page)

Songs and Legends: Alaska Native Oral Literature and Alaska Native Interviews

The Rasmuson Library at the University of Alaska Fairbanks and the Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library have cooperated on a project to digitize, *Songs and Legends: Alaska Native Oral Literature* and *Alaska Native Interviews*, which are original oral history recordings produced in the mid-1970s.

The CD sets feature recordings of approximately 800 selections in 10 languages by more than 175 people from nearly 40 Interior and Northern villages. They provide an invaluable view of the lives, languages, traditions and events of Alaska's Native communities in the Northern region at a critical point in their recent history.

The CDs can be played on either an audio player or a computer. An index of the recordings is available both in print and on a CD that can be accessed and searched on a computer. The

index is also available on the ANKN web site at www.ankn.uaf.edu. Sets are being distributed to 23 libraries, school districts and organizations throughout Alaska. Additional copies of the set of 88 CDs are available at cost from the Oral History Program at Rasmuson Library, UAF.

The project was supported in part by a grant from the Alaska Humanities Forum, National Endowment for the Humanities, the Alaska Federation of Natives (AKRSI), the Alaska Library Association and the Alaska State Library.



Questions or comments can be directed to:

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Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library
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mitten, and proud to show off what they were doing in class. Three years later, by which time 66 new high schools had opened, she graduated from Nunapitchuk High School. There's a wonderful picture of her, smiling and holding her diploma, that was published in *Alaska Native News*. Anna died later in a tragic boating accident, and the high school was renamed for her—Anna Tobeluk Memorial High School.

In the end, 105 villages got local programs and one went for daily transportation. Ninety-one of the 105 local programs went through the twelfth grade. Three villages became ineli-

gible because of declining enrollments. A total of 16 villages chose not to have local high school programs (although six later changed their minds and had programs). The largest village electing not to have a program was St. George on the Pribilofs, which elected to board kids at St. Paul (a consent decree village which did want a local program). In all, 92 villages had new facilities constructed, at a total cost of \$137 million.

The last major school to be built was on Little Diomedé, which I had visited a couple of times during the course of the litigation. That school, for between 20 and 30 students, cost

\$4.2 million making it the most expensive consent decree school and I assume the most expensive school per capita anywhere in the United States. But if ever there was a community that has a claim to preserving its culture, its identity, and its location, surely it is Diomedé, where humans crossing the land bridge to this hemisphere may first have set foot some 11,000 years ago.

It was fitting, too, that the last Tobeluk site is a community where, looking across the International Date Line, the view is always of tomorrow. Because that, after all, is what this case was about. ✨

MapTEACH: Mapping Technology Experiences with Alaska's Cultural Heritage

by Tim Olsen, De Anne Steven, Patty Crow and Jackie Fenno

MapTEACH is an informal science education project sponsored by the National Science Foundation that has just begun to work with Elders and community members in Alaska to look for new ways to tell old stories about the landscape.

The 3-year project will develop a place-based educational program for middle- and high-school students in Alaska that emphasizes hands-on experience with spatial technology in conjunction with traditional activities. It will draw upon the combined expertise of teachers, education researchers, remote sensing specialists, geoscience professionals, Native Elders and others with traditions-based knowledge, and will be piloted in the Minto, Nenana, Nome and Fairbanks areas. Students and teachers will work directly with professional geologists, and will be presented with a chance to authentically emulate scientific activities at a novice level, using real data in a real-world setting. This work is based on the conviction that incorporating cultural knowledge into technology-intensive studies through the use of geospatial science will serve as a bridge between old and new perspectives on the natural landscape and highlight the continued relevance of traditional teachings in the modern world.

A lot of involvement along the way is needed. Guidance and perspective from Elders who know the land intimately is key for success. Assistance and coordination from community leaders will facilitate a quality project. Enthusiastic teachers to pilot approaches for young people to learn and explore Alaska, outside of the confines of everyday school sched-

ules and buildings, are critical. Involvement of young people who recognize their place and relationship with the land and are willing to prepare now to eventually become the Elders of the future will be our best measure of success.

While in Old Minto on the Tanana River this summer the highlights of the MapTEACH experience were numerous. We especially enjoyed walking with the Elders through the woods as they easily shared some of their stories and memories. We welcomed the difficult questions about the geology that were asked one of the project geologists, by local women curious about land formation and earthquakes. Along with the Elders, we were particularly satisfied to see an old summer route, long gone unused but not forgotten, once again visited by the Minto boys as they were the first to paddle their canoe along the trail in a long time. We realized the extent of knowledge about the landscape the girls possessed as they explained more about places along the river than our high-tech GPS units could show us. Giving us valuable insight, we heard from parents about what they expect and hope for their children. We feel fortunate to have this chance to work with

so many good people on this ambitious quest to help Alaskans find the best new ways to tell their old stories—blending lifetimes of knowledge and a relationship with and respect for the land, with contemporary technical tools and western science.

If you are interested in MapTEACH, you may follow this project through a series of articles published in forthcoming issues of *Sharing Our Pathways*. If you live in one of the pilot communities where MapTEACH has already begun—Minto, Nenana, Nome and Fairbanks—we look forward to meeting and visiting with you. We ask for your counsel, guidance, patience and sense of humor. As a pilot project, mistakes will be made and lessons will be learned.



MapTEACH is a collaborative project carried out by the University of Alaska Fairbanks, the Alaska Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. For more information see www.mapteach.org or contact us via Tim Olsen at the Environmental Remote Sensing Center, ph: 608-262-1585; De Anne Stevens and Patty Crow at the Alaska Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys, ph: 907-451-5020; or Jackie Fenno at the UAF Geography Department, ph: 907-474-7494 ✨

Future Teachers of Alaska Program

by Ac'arralek Lolly Carpluk, with contributions from regional Future Teachers of Alaska Clubs

The University of Alaska Statewide Future Teachers of Alaska (FTA) program received continued funding for Year Two with three partner school districts piloting Future Teachers of Alaska organizations: Lower Kuskokwim School District, Bering Strait School District and Nome Public Schools. An FTA project director oversees all the FTA activities within their particular school district. They recruit for FTA coordinators who, in turn, recruit for students to participate in the FTA clubs. We are thankful that many of last years' FTA project directors and coordinators are returning for Year Two. Year One accomplishments are exciting to share. In an effort to recruit additional youth and encourage others to join or be involved with Future Teachers of Alaska, the three regional FTA clubs are profiled here.

Nome Public Schools

Through the voices of youth involved, Nome Public Schools Future Teachers of Alaska club summarizes their first year activities as:

Siqazuaq Iskuuqti held its first meeting on January 30, 2004. We meet every Friday after school, and use Parliamentary Procedure to conduct our meetings. One of the first things we did was to elect officers. At the end of the year, we had twenty-seven members. Some of the reasons that we have for wanting to become teachers are:

- So I can try to get more kids into college
- To have fun with the kids when they learn
- To teach kids about stuff they don't know
- To know that I help the leaders of the future
- I like to teach people how to do things
- I enjoy being with kids

- When I babysit I always try to teach what I learn
- There should be more Native teachers.

NPS Vision statement (adopted March 5, 2004):

All schools in Alaska will employ teachers who are competent and who respect students. This will be displayed by the following:

- *Teachers have high expectations of the students.*
- *Teachers care about the community and the students.*
- *Teachers incorporate the cultures of all students.*
- *Teachers are honest and fair.*
- *Teachers are friendly and make learning fun.*
- *Teachers understand human behavior and classroom management.*
- *Teachers are strict but flexible.*
- *Teachers know how to teach using different methods.*

We have studied the Standards for Alaska's Teachers. We are developing our philosophies of education. For example, Rachael Bauman's philosophy is, "As a teacher, I would make learning interesting, fun and exciting. I would also act professionally. If my students had a problem with the way they were learning, I would try my best to fix it."

Bering Strait School District

by Sue Toymil, Former District FTA Project Director (Current FTA contact is Peggy Wolfe)

Congratulations to all the students in our district fortunate enough to belong to one of 14 FTA clubs. Bering Strait School District is one of three districts that has been awarded a three-year grant from the Alaska Native Education Program, United States Department of Education.

What does that mean to each student attending Bering Strait Schools?

It means we have an educational partnership among parents, our communities, the Alaska Federation of Natives and the University of Alaska to support students to become teachers and return to teach in their communities.

It also means that 14 of our 15 sites have a certified teacher FTA coordinator that is willing to work toward recruiting students at all levels that are interested in teaching as a career and improving achievement in reading, writing and math.

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Reasons to Join FTA Clubs

1. Have fun with peers reaching for the same goal—to teach children.
 2. Work on standards in four areas.
Career Development
Cultural Awareness
Service Learning
Personal/Social/Health
 3. Gain teaching and leadership experience during fund raising, tutoring in classrooms, shadowing a teacher and recruiting other students.
 4. Participate in video or audio conferences featuring Alaska Native teachers as role models, other FTA club members, Native authors, etc.
 5. Observe and practice the interview process.
 6. Attend the statewide job fair in Anchorage with other FTA Clubs from other districts.
 7. Attend a national educational conference.
 8. Attend a summer institute in Fairbanks or Juneau offering college experience focused on academics in reading, writing, math, and art.
- We are proud to be in partnership with the above named organizations helping grow our own Alaskan teachers and leaders. Thank you for your support.

Lower Kuskokwim School District

One of LKSD's Future Teachers of Alaska club member's reasons for wanting to become a teacher:

Why I Want to Be a Teacher

by *Hannah O'Brien*

"I want to be an art teacher. I want to be an art teacher because I want to show how much fun art can be. To show them techniques, how to mix colors, give them ideas of what to draw and a whole bunch of other things.

It also seems like fun to be a teacher. You always get to teach people new things, and you learn new things to.

I know it won't be easy, but it sure seems like fun. I also want them not to have a bad life. By teaching them art it might keep them out of drugs, drinking, smoking and all those other bad things.

By being a teacher I can make a difference in peoples' lives. I can teach them something new every day of school. I know I like school; I want other people to enjoy school. I want them to say, "Yes Ms. O'Briens' class is next." I want them to be excited about school, because they need it.

Those are most of the reasons why I would like to be an art teacher."

We would like to heartily thank the FTA partner school districts—especially the superintendents, assistant superintendents, business managers, project directors, coordinators, Elders, students and parents, the FTA Advisory Committee, FTA Planning group, Alaska Teacher Placement Career Expo, Preparing Indigenous Teachers for Alaska's Schools Program Director and students, Institute for Social and Economic Research

staff, Rural Educator Preparation Partnership faculty and Alaska Federation of Natives organization for creating meaningful, educational and exciting opportunities for students to gain experience and support in learning about becoming future teachers. Through our combined efforts, we hope to see many of these students continue on to receive their certification and return home to become their communities' teachers. ✨

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Inupiaq Region: Ilisagvik College Hosts Summer Culture Camp for Teachers

by Jana Harcharek and Fannie Akpik

In July Ilisagvik College hosted a summer culture camp that drew interested teachers and others spanning from California to Massachusetts and Hawai'i to the Anchorage area. Offered by Ilisagvik as a three-credit course titled "Inupiaq Land Use Values and Resources" this Arctic Subsistence Education and Experience gave participants the opportunity to learn how to hunt bearded and ringed seals, caribou, observe polar bears, walrus, harbor porpoises, gray whales, and waterfowl of many kinds including the endangered Stellar's Eider in the surrounding area.

Students participating in the course received hands-on experience with the preparation and butchering of seal and caribou meat. They made dry meat and seal oil and learned to preserve bearded seal-skins for future use. They also gained knowledge of the gathering of coastal edible and medicinal plants. Students also learned how to take care of caribou together with how to remove the hind leg tendons for making sinew. The making of "Eskimo Doughnuts" was also a popular highlight.

Course objectives were to offer students opportunity to participate in traditional, cultural, and subsistence land use activities under the guidance of experienced instructors, guides, Elders and hunters. During camping, traveling, hunting and food gather-

ing experiences, students learned first hand how the Inupiat subsisted from the land, ocean and river, and about skills and technologies employed to carry out these activities effectively.



Participants carry a caribou carcass to camp.

Course outcomes were to: gain first hand knowledge of Inupiaq land use values; be exposed to subsistence culture - history and practice; learn Inupiaq vocabulary, terminology, and basic language usage related to subsistence; learn how to use maps to study topographical features of the land, understand the significance of traditional subsistence camp locations and the locations of rivers; develop observational skills; acquire knowledge of arctic plants, animals and traditional weather predicting methods as well as survival techniques. Participants also had to write daily jour-



Fannie Akpik who was one of three camp instructors, participant Steven Peavy and Guide Vernon Brower pose for a quick photo. Elder Rosabelle Rexford and Jana Harcharek of the North Slope Borough School District were the other two instructors. Paul Bodfish of the village of Atqasuk and Nagruk Harcharek of Barrow were the other two guides.

nals upon which they will develop presentations for sharing with the general public at their home venues.

Participants were comprised mainly of teachers from the Inupiat Heritage Center's partner institutions that include the New Bedford and the Peabody Essex Museums in Massachusetts, the Bishop Museum in Honolulu, Hawai'i, Alaska Humanities Forum ROSE Urban/Rural Teacher Exchange Program in Anchorage and the University of Alaska Museum in Fairbanks. Beverly Hugo, Inupiat Heritage Center ECHO Grant Manager and her daughter Mary Ellen also accompanied the group in the spirit of cooperation and partnership. Based on evaluations, the camp was a success enjoyed by all!

Katherine Gaudet of New Bedford says the course was intellectually stimulating. She says "Absolutely! I was learning new things every second of the day. I couldn't write them down fast enough!" She also said it was a life changing experience that she is grateful for having had the opportunity to participate in.

The camp was made possible by a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. ✨

Athabascan Region: Parenting Video

by Heather Taggard

Families across Alaska will soon have the opportunity to watch a valuable new Athabascan parenting video on DVD thanks to a grant-funded project designed to teach family values in the Athabascan tradition.

The video, entitled, “Ch’eghutsen, an Athabascan Parenting video,” emphasizes raising a healthy family within the traditional Athabascan values set forth by Elders from Interior Alaska villages.

The 45-minute DVD begins with an introduction by author Adeline Peter-Raboff from Arctic Village. She uses her own life experience growing up in Fort Yukon to illustrate how families can overcome stressful situations and grow together. She emphasizes the importance of nurturing children, reducing stress and positive parenting in raising a strong family.

“Healthy families are the cornerstone of a healthy, vibrant community,” she said, and talks of the responsibility each Athabascan has in honoring the spirit and traditions of Alaska Native people as part of the survival of the culture.

In addition to identifying causes of stress such as lack of work, relationship problems or seasonal depression, she offers suggestions of how to overcome stressful situations by caring for oneself, maintaining a healthy lifestyle and accepting love from friends and family in order to provide love and security for children. By identifying the causes of stress, the producers of the video hope to relieve families from the illness, abuse and trouble that come from daily family functions and demanding situations.

In the heart of the video, Elders from Minto, Huslia and other Interior villages share their life experiences in

raising strong families. Chief Andy Jimmie, an Elder from Minto, said, “Hunting and fishing have always been my favorite things to do, but when I do it with my parents it means a lot more.”

“Ch’egutsen’,” the title of the project, is a core value in the Athabascan way of life and a key element in raising children.

“It’s a very strong word—*ch’eghutsen’*,” said Sarah Silas, from Minto. “It’s love. Not like worldly love, but very, very supreme love. That’s very important to show love to children, especially when they’re small and growing up. If they know they’re loved, they’ll pay more attention to what you tell them. A little love will do great and mighty things.”

Planning and production of the video began about two years ago when Marilyn Eggleston of the Resource Center for Parents and Children received a grant from the Alaska Children’s Trust to make a video that paid special attention to the needs of Alaskan families.

Using the Athabascan values, including respect for Elders and others, respect for the land, love for children, honesty and fairness, humor and cooperation and responsibility to village among others, the video provides excellent resources for guiding families.

“They’re core values for any family of any culture,” said Eggleston. “It’s all about being there for each other.”



In order to produce the video, Eggleston called on Odin Peter-Raboff for production needs. Peter-Raboff, who co-owns 360 Productions and works as Youth Development Specialist for Tanana Chiefs Conference, jumped at the chance to help when a friend at RCPC contacted him about working with Eggleston.

“From the first visit I understood what Marilyn wanted,” said Peter-Raboff, who directed and edited the project. “She wanted to make a culturally-relevant parenting video using parenting resources she had gathered.”

“From my experience and knowledge of the region I knew this project was a perfect match for me,” he said.

Equipped with a list of questions provided by Eggleston, Peter-Raboff flew to Interior villages to begin interviewing Elders and families.

“I relied heavily on my connections,” said Peter-Raboff, “friends I had made over the years visiting villages.”

The first stop was Huslia in February 2003, where Geneva Sam facilitated interviews with local families and found him a place to stay. After that, Peter-Raboff flew all the way to San Francisco, California to begin the editing process.

Working with top-notch producers in California gave Peter-Raboff the feedback he needed to produce a professional video. From there he decided he needed more interviews from village families throughout all seasons of the year.

He went back to Minto for final
(continued on next page)

Athabaskan Region:

AINE Summer Institute on Learning Styles

by Bob Maguire

In 1906 my wife's grandfather, Oscar Nictune, Sr., was recruited for school in Bettles at the age of five so they would have the minimum ten students required to have a territorial school. He entered a world totally different from anything he had known in his childhood.

He began his formal educational experience with only his Inupiaq name of Quyaag and with the Inupiaq language as his preferred method of communicating. All this soon changed as his teacher, a woman new to Alaska, decided for him that he needed a "real name"—that is a proper English name. Thus she gave him the name Oscar—her nephew's name who lived in Ohio. Oscar was probably taught in the preferred method of his teacher sitting in a desk with written material only in English presented with verbal directions and explanations. In Western education, this is historically often how teaching was approached and it is primarily an auditory way of giving

instruction. The preferred learning modes of those 10 students was then, most likely, not taken into account in the teaching style of the teacher.

Each one of us can learn, no matter how or when material is presented to us. But learning styles-based research tells us that we can learn much more and retain it longer if we are taught using multi-sensory approaches, taking into account a variety of approaches such as the preferred time of day, temperature and physical position among others.

This past June nearly forty certified classroom teachers from both the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District and the Yukon-Koyukuk

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interviews where Robin Frank and her brother Darrell took time on Darrell's birthday to give him a ride to Old Minto where he talked to Robin.

Aside from the parenting knowledge he gathered for the video, Peter-Raboff said he met people he would never have met and learned things he would never have received if it weren't for the project.

"It was right after completing the project that I learned I was expecting to have a son myself," said Peter-Raboff with a smile. "It was funny that I would go through all this research and studying of families and at the end would have my own first

child."

"Whatever I do for my next project I better be careful," he jokes. "Sometimes you can get too deeply involved with your projects. But in this case, it really helped me."

The video was funded by a grant from the Alaska Children's Trust. Parenting information was provided by the Resource Center for Parents and Children. A limited number of the videos are available on DVD or VHS through RCPC.

For more information or to order copies of the video contact RCPC at 1-800-969-7272 or visit:

www.rcpcfairbanks.org



School District participated in a two-week class focused on learning styles. The class was a direct result of a grant received by the Association of Interior Native Educators from the U.S. Dept. of Education in October of 2003. This three-year grant is designed to train 180 teachers in the two participating school districts on how to implement learning styles in their classrooms to increase student learning and achievement.

Learning styles is based on the research model developed by Dr. Rita Dunn from St. John's University in New York. This model, called the Dunn and Dunn model, is based on several research-based concepts, such as most individuals can learn, everyone has a preferred learning style, most teachers can learn to use learning styles as a cornerstone of their instruction and most students can learn to utilize their learning styles strengths when learning new or difficult materials. Research has also shown the need for classroom instruction to reflect tactile, kinesthetic, auditory, and visual elements in every lesson to accommodate the individual student's areas of strength.

The 2004 Summer Institute on Learning Styles was an action-packed two weeks of instruction. Some forty teachers were excited about learning how to design classroom environments where individual learning styles could be utilized, and there was much sharing of ideas across grade levels and subject matter areas.

This fall three partner teachers (Sharon Attla, Marie Dayton and Karen Dullen) were hired under the grant. They will assist the teachers attending the 2004 summer course in implementing a learning-styles classroom. The vision of developing a cohort of classroom teachers skilled in implementing the many aspects of learning styles is beginning to be a reality. The next two years promise to be an exciting time here in Interior Alaska.



Southeast Region: Alaska Native Education Forums

by Andy Hope

A series of three Native education forums were held in Juneau during the summer of 2004. The forums were sponsored by Sealaska Heritage Institute, Alaska Native Brotherhood (ANB) Camp No. 2, Alaska Native Sisterhood Camps No. 2 and No. 70 and the Tlingit and Haida Indians of the City and Borough of Juneau.

The purpose of the forums was to develop goals, strategies and action plans to improve Native educational achievement. Ted Wright and Andy Hope provided a context for the forum series in the issues raised in former *Sharing Our Pathways* articles, "A Native Charter School for Juneau" Vol. 9 Issue 2 and "Goosú We Drop-outs?" Vol. 9 Issue 3.

The first forum took place on June

15 at the ANB Hall in the Andrew Hope Building. Approximately fifty people attended the first forum, which featured presentations entitled, "Improving Academic Performance" by Dr. William Demmert and the "Status Report of Southeast Alaska Native Education" by Dr. Ted Wright. Participants broke into work groups and developed recommendations.

The second forum of the series

took place on July 13. Approximately 75 people attended. Participants broke into groups and discussed a draft of the Native Education Task Force template. Following this session, participants agreed to form four working groups: Current Issues, Transforming Higher Education, Native Language/Culture Immersion Schools and Early College High School/Native Charter School. The working groups met between forums and presented their recommendations/action plans at the August 6 forum.

For a detailed description, Juneau's local newspaper, *The Juneau Empire*, published stories on June 17 and July 14 on the first two Native education forums. These articles can be found at: http://www.juneauempire.com/smart_search/. In addition, the resources presented at the forums, as well as the working group's goals and action plans will be posted on the Alaska Native Knowledge Network website later this fall. ✨

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