



Nay'dini'aa Na' Kayax' (Chickaloon Native Village)

Chickaloon Native Village, Nay'dini'aa Na', our name in Ahtna, meaning “the river with the two logs across it”, is a vibrant, innovative, and culturally rich Ahtna Athabascan Tribe located in Sutton, one of the most picturesque communities in Southcentral Alaska, about a 90-minute drive from Anchorage, along the Glenn Highway, Scenic Byway. Surrounded by snow-capped mountains, glaciers, and lush boreal forests our Tribe has occupied this area for the past 10,000 years. However, threats to our culture, language, and traditional way of life have been unwavering for the past hundred years. Chickaloon Native Village was one of the first Tribes to be affected by outside development.

Dating as far back as 1900, Chickaloon Village's traditional territories have been subjected to large scale resource extraction including coal, copper and gold mining, oil and gas drilling, and logging. The Glenn highway and railroad construction also impacted Chickaloon's Tribal lands negatively. Alcohol and diseases such as polio, tuberculosis, and the Spanish flu, brought in with development, almost wiped out our Tribe. During the 1930s through the 1950s, the United States government established and enforced a mandatory educational system intended to assimilate Alaska Natives. Many of the Tribe's children were taken from their families and placed in boarding schools throughout the state. Because of this, the Tribe experienced negative socialization, abuse, neglect and years of separation from their families. The boarding school experience created a generation of people (now Elders) deprived of their cultural traditions leaving them with a legacy of internalized oppression and shame.

As a response to the environmental and social injustice suffered by Chickaloon Village Tribal citizens, coupled with the passing of the Alaska Native Claims and Settlement Act (ANCSA) of 1971, our Elders re-established the Chickaloon Village Traditional Council (CVTC) in 1973, to reassert the Tribe's identity, cultural traditions, economic self-sufficiency and to reunify our citizens. The mandate for the Council was: To restore our traditional worldview by rejuvenating our traditional Athabascan culture, values, oral traditions, spirituality, language, songs, and dance. Chickaloon Native Village gained federal recognition in 1973 and on November 24, 1982, according to Federal Register Vol. 58, No. 202. We are governed by a nine-member Traditional Council (CVTC), tasked to reassert the Tribes identity and cultural traditions, and create economic self-sufficiency for the Tribe.