



Chickaloon Village Traditional Council (Nay'dini'aa Na')

Chief Gary Harrison,
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Shawna Larson,
Vice-Chairwoman

Lisa Wade
Secretary

Doug Wade,
Treasurer/Elder

Kari Shaginoff,
Member

Sondra Shaginoff-Stuart,
Member

Philip Ling,
Member

Karol Dixon,
Executive Director

Serena Martino,
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CHICKALOON NATIVE VILLAGE AWARDED \$50,000 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE TRIBAL HERITAGE GRANT TO RESEARCH AND PROTECT DENE CULTURAL SITES IN THE MATANUSKA WATERSHED

Chickaloon, Alaska | October 2, 2020 - - A National Park Service Tribal Heritage Grant has been awarded to Chickaloon Native Village (CNV), a federally-recognized Ahtna Dene (Athabascan Peoples) Tribe based in southcentral Alaska, to conduct a survey and inventory of Dene cultural sites in the Matanuska Watershed.

CNV's Ahtna name is Nay'dini'aa Na' Kayax, meaning "the village at the river with the two logs across it." Chickaloon Village Traditional Council (CVTC) is the village's governing body. For thousands of years Ahtna Dene have stewarded the land and resources within the Matanuska Watershed, the Talkeetna Mountains and the Chugach Mountains. Starting in 1900 this watershed has been exploited by "economic opportunists" and 'settlers' for furs, coal, gold, and more, leading to significant environmental and cultural impacts. For the last twenty years CNV's traditional ancestral homelands have experienced rapid community growth and development. CVTC departments and programs are actively working to mitigate the negative and harmful social and environmental impacts as a result of this rapid growth.

According to historical accounts, for many generations the Matanuska Watershed has been the ancestral territory and an important area supporting the lifeways of the Ahtna koht'aene (Ahtna Peoples) of CNV. Unfortunately, there have been very few cultural resource surveys conducted in the watershed. Lisa Wade, CVTC Secretary says, "this scientific archaeology study will add to the oral history documentation of our ancestral connections to the landscapes, important cultural sites and resources within the Matanuska Watershed." CNV seeks to add to its cultural resource inventory through identifying, locating, and studying high priority cultural resource sites and landscapes of the watershed before they are further destroyed.

This project builds upon initial inventories conducted by researchers for CVTC in 2017-2019 which reinforced Tribal documentation of ancestral land use patterns by identifying dozens of previously-undocumented cultural sites.

For more information please contact CVTC.