

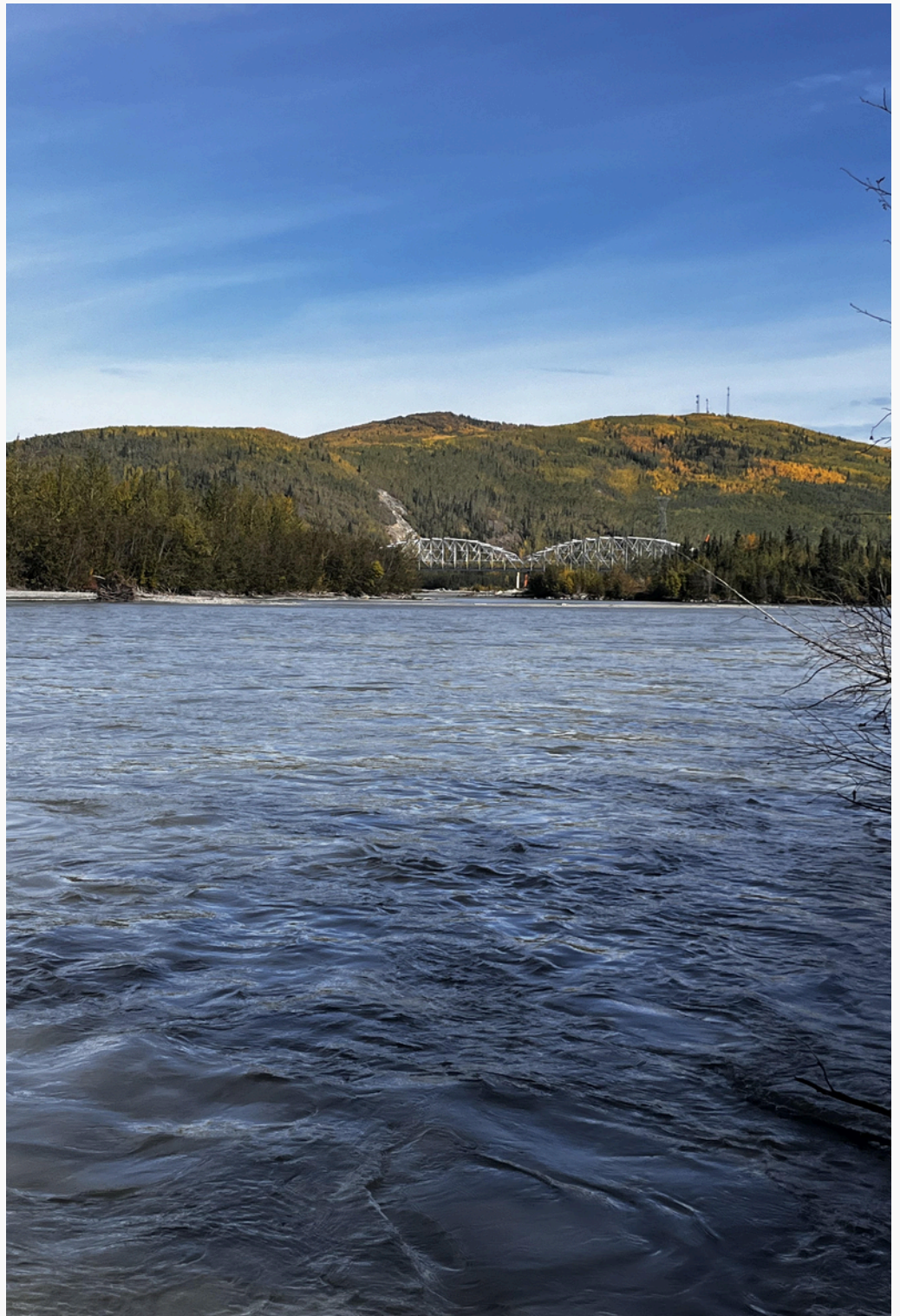
YRITWC E-CURRENTS



YRITWC

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS LETTER

Dear Watershed,

I hope this message finds you well. I'd like to take a moment to share some important updates from our recent work, as we continue our mission of protecting and preserve the health of our watershed.

I recently attended a water gathering with the Carcross Tagish First Nations discussing water governance strategies for the Southern Lakes, headwaters of the Yukon River. I also had the opportunity to meet with the Natural Resource Department representatives from Na-Cho Nyäk Dun First Nations to discuss the Victoria Gold's Eagle mining spill near Mayo, Yukon. I am pleased to share that cyanide levels in the McQuesten River have now returned to safe levels. The Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council (YRITWC) has conducted additional sampling at the Steward River below Mayo and Yukon River at Eagle Village.

In other positive news, the Brownfields Program has successfully secured an ANCSA grant to support cleanup initiatives in Tanana. We've also obtained funding to establish monitoring sites for water and soil samples near historic and current mining sites. If there are areas in your community that require remediation or attention, please reach out to us.

We are also excited to announce that YRITWC has secured new funding aimed at training and technical assistance in water, wastewater, and solid waste management. This funding will strengthen our communities' capacity to manage these vital resources effectively and sustainably.

At the 2019 YRITWC summit our Tribes passed a resolution opposing the Ambler Road. Recently the BLM EIS was approved with a no action alternative, however there is still alot of work to do opposing this road. The BLM D1 EIS was also approved for a no action alternative.

Looking ahead, planning is already underway for the 2025 summit, which will likely be held in Canada. I encourage everyone to ensure their passports are current, as this gathering will be an important milestone in our ongoing collaboration.

Thank you for your steadfast commitment to these initiatives and for your dedication to the future of our watershed. Together, we continue to make progress toward a healthier and more resilient environment for future generations.

With gratitude,
Theresa Clark





BROWNFIELDS



Tribal Response Program

Hey Watershed,

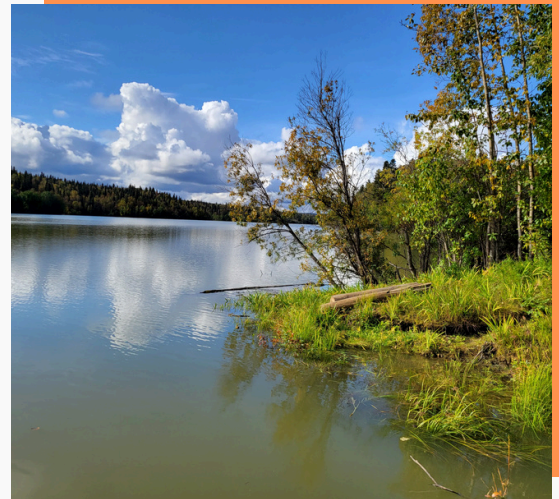
We hope that you have had a great summer with sunny nights and warm days. The brownfields department was able to see a lot of communities this summer, thank you Mentasta, Russian Mission, Scammon Bay, Hughes, Huslia, Nenana, and Minto for welcoming us into your village. We took plenty of photos and has some serious accomplishments for site specific work. The Hughes School and Community Tank Farm Phase II was a success, the report is finished and the ABCA is in the draft phase. In mid-August Jordan Finney and Ben Brandeberry attended the Tribal Lands Environmental Forum where Jordan gave a great presentation on our ongoing project in Grayling.

Remember if you have any brownfields of concern or would just like to learn more about our program or brownfields in general, our phones are always open!



Community Wide Assessment

Anna Godduhn has been wrapping up the community action plans for the three other Community-Wide Assessment grant communities. Huslia and Alakanuk have similar situations - abandoned barrels and tanks with a river approaching; and Russian Mission is working to replace two badly dilapidated city buildings. The action plans are no magic bullets, but should be useful in applications for additional assessment work, cleanup services, and redevelopment funding to reclaim the properties for community benefit.



Get in Contact



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HUGHES PHASE II SPOTLIGHT

By Ben Brandeberry

The Hughes School & Community Tank Farm has been a YRITWC project for close to 12 years now. The site was initially impacted by a large flood in 1997 that caused distribution pipping and other associated infrastructure to fail causing a fuel release around the Old Generator building and the School & Community Tank Farm.

YRITWC began its involvement in 2010, and the primary concern was the contamination surrounding Hughes Well and the community feared it could impact their water supply. With that in mind in 2012, with the ADEC, YRITWC led a cleanup around the Washeteria. Because of funding difficulties at the time, and the infrastructure surrounding the site, a full cleanup was not possible.

Fast forward to 2023, Cynthia Beatus, Tribal Admin in Hughes, approached YRITWC to finish the project. YRITWC Brownfield Department immediately began working on an EPA Targeted Brownfields Assessment, or "TBA application" which was awarded that spring.

Since then, YRITWC and the EPA were able to finish a Phase I ESA, and last summer complete a Phase II ESA which included 13 trenches and 3 temporary monitory wells. The Phase II report is still currently in the draft phase, but will soon be available along with an Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA). Once the ABCA is complete, we plan on assisting in applying for a Cleanup grant. The potential reuse is highly demanded teacher housing.



GRAYLING PHASE II SPOTLIGHT

By Jordan Finney



As the grant period for a key brownfield project approached its end, Jordan Finney, the Brownfields Coordinator for the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council, took proactive steps to ensure continued progress. Jordan reached out to the Center for Creative Land Recycling (CCLR), the Technical Assistance provider for EPA Regions 9 and 10, to explore strategies for maintaining momentum on the project. After careful consideration, Jordan decided to apply for the DEC Brownfields, Assessment, and Cleanup (DBAC) Service, a program designed to assist communities in tackling brownfield challenges.

With the Grayling site as the primary focus, the team developed a comprehensive plan that included removing the underground storage tanks and conducting an extended Phase II assessment. This phase involves sampling beneath the tanks and fully characterizing the site, laying the groundwork for an effective cleanup plan.

During a collaborative meeting with DEC, CCLR, and the project team, a strategic decision was made to use the remaining funds from the Community-Wide Assessment Grant to secure additional support from DEC. Rather than using the DBAC Service, DEC proposed utilizing their Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) program to address the site's needs.

The project is moving forward with enthusiasm as all necessary elements are nearly in place. The team aims to complete the sampling in either May or June of 2025, marking a significant step towards the site's cleanup and revitalization.



SCIENCE

ION Updated

By Edda Mutter

We had another successful Indigenous Observation Network (ION) monitoring season with over 100 water samples collected, deployed 15 water temperature sensors, and measured active layer depth from the headwater all the way down to the mouths of the Yukon River basin. Now the field season is over, I will be working on generating comprehensive community reports that summarize long-term trends of all your monitoring data over the next couple of months.

Please, feel free to contact me as I would love to hear from you on how ION monitoring data can support your community planning or funding application efforts.

Tsee Duu, Beaver Culture Camp

By Anna Godduhn

Science Department staff (Anna Godduhn, Theo Hamilton, and intern Anna Lee Bishop) were lucky to go to Tsee Duu, Beaver's Culture Camp, in July of 2024 with John Magyar of CalTech. John is one of the scientists working on an erosion study with YRITWC communities, including Beaver. It was a beautiful week of music, dancing, swimming, fishing, science, and stories. Our hosts, the youth of all ages – including our energetic elder teachers – and other guests were generous and there is no better way to learn a landscape than spending time on it. Thank you for hosting us at Tss Duu!!



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SCIENCE

By Anna Godduhn

Environmental Education

The Science Department produced two coloring and activity books for youth this fall: *Water and Watersheds* (~5 th ~8 th grade), and *Watersheds and Ecology* (~8 th ~12 th grade). The books don't need a teachers guide or a kit, so kids can work through them on their own, with a friend, or as a class with a teacher's guidance. We sent copies of each book to YRITWC signatory community schools and encouraged teachers to connect the science taught in school to the stories and observations students hear from their families. A few schools invited us to visit their classrooms and we've been able to visit two so far this fall: Arctic Village, and Hughes. We encourage you to visit your community's school to see if and how the books are being used – and maybe get involved by sharing your knowledge. Most teachers have a lot to learn, too!

You can find the links to the workbooks below!

Water and Watersheds

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-OLAjMEcTnWuLXg!jS4Byin7whGPhPzM/view?usp=drive_link

Watersheds and Ecology

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oAq79WAr1w0O9-92aKsepFJjBaDnpSmS/view?usp=drive_link

Arctic Village School Outreach





IGAP



New IGAP Introduction

Meet Rosalie Kalistook new IGAP Hire, Rosalie was born in Bethel and raised in Chefnak. She moved on to Bethel where she studied nursing, then environmental technician. She lived in Bethel from the mid 80s then recently moved to Anchorage. She has 4 children and 6 Grandkids.



Get in Contact



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IGAP Update

Waqaa, we had a busy summer in our department traveling to our signatory villages this summer to do some water monitoring, attend a health fair in Huslia, and participate in culture camps in Beaver and Tetlin, which we missed out on but got to meet with the tribe grants manager. A few weeks ago I sent out a survey to the villages asking how many of you would be interested in incorporating backhaul into their IGAP work plans, we can look into creating a planning team to start with. I am excited to start our new fiscal year with you all!!! If you need assistance with your GAP applications or quarterly reports or if you are new to GAP, call me... I will help you out however I can, and If I can't, I can forward you to someone who will answer your questions. Don't feel intimidated if you're new... we were in the same boat too. Have a safe berry and moose hunting season... be safe and don't forget to wear your PFDs while boating!

By Rose Kalistook



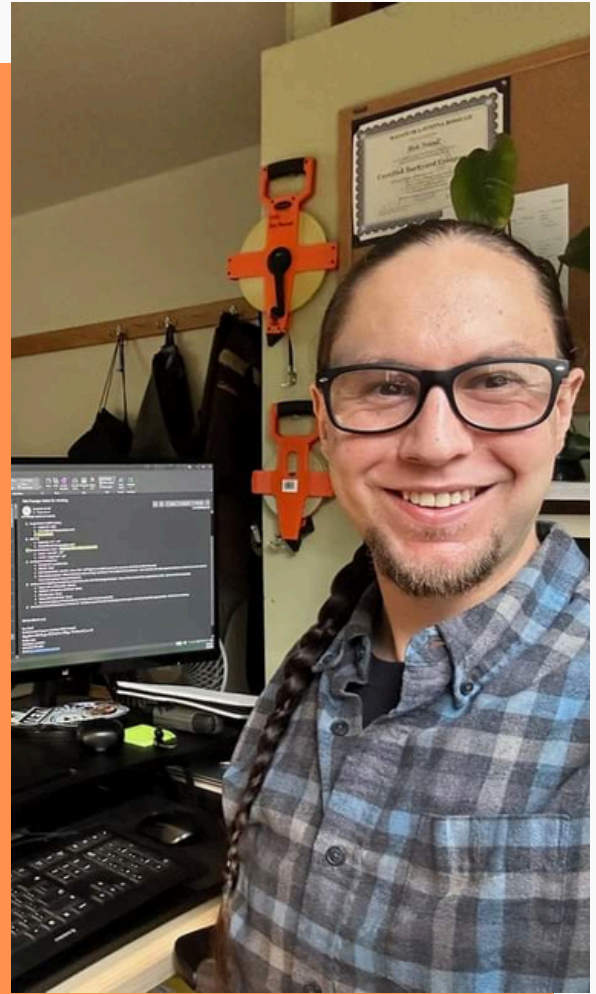


TRAINING & TA




Training & TA Program Coordinator

Benjamin Small serves as our new Environmental Program Coordinator. Ben grew up in northwest Washington State and is an enrolled member of the Mackinac Bands of Chippewa and Ottawa Indians. He has a background in Geology and Environmental Science, and has experience managing remote drinking water, wastewater, and storm water systems across both Alaska and the lower 48 states.



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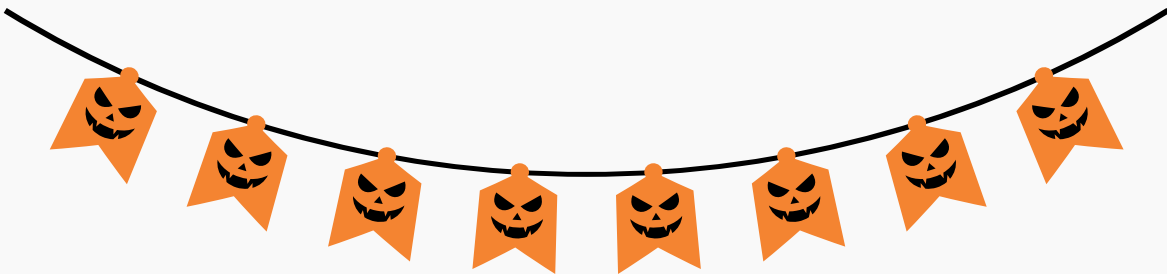


TRAINING & TA



New Grant for Waste Management

We're thrilled to have secured \$175,000 in funding to tackle waste management projects from October 2024 through September 2025! This grant will go toward creating waste reduction plans, training landfill operators, and gathering aerial photos to better map out landfills and water locations



Drinking Water and Watewater

So far in 2024, we've held four training sessions on safety and water treatment, with people joining us from Chevak, St. Mary's, and the Village of Eagle. Next year's grant includes training for two new waterworks interns from rural villages and QuickBooks financial training.



HONORING OUR PAST, PROTECTING OUR FUTURE

Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council



LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO PROTECT OUR WATER AND KEEP OUR TRADITIONS STRONG!

**ONE PEOPLE,
ONE RIVER**

▶▶▶ WATER IS LIFE

Water is essential for life—it keeps us hydrated, helps our plants grow, and supports all the animals and plants in the beautiful Yukon River Basin. But did you know that protecting our local and traditional drinking water sources is also a way to honor our culture and ensure a healthy future for everyone? Let's dive into how we can all play a part in keeping our water clean and safe!

WHY WATER QUALITY MATTERS

Our local water sources, like rivers, lakes, and streams, are more than just places to get water. They are part of our heritage and essential for our community's health. Clean water helps us stay healthy, keeps our traditions alive, and ensures that future generations can enjoy the same clean water we have today.



If you are concerned about the quality of your village's drinking water, we welcome your outreach!

Please contact Benjamin Small for more information!

bsmall@yritwc.org

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➤➤➤ WHAT THE EXPERTS RECOMMEND



To keep our water clean, experts like the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) and the Alaska DEC (Department of Environmental Conservation) suggest these simple steps:

1. Keep It Clean: Don't throw trash, chemicals, or anything harmful into our water sources. This keeps our water fresh and safe.
2. Protect the Land: Plant trees and shrubs around water sources. They help filter out pollutants and prevent soil erosion.
3. Check for Leaks: Fix any leaks in pipes or faucets. A small drip can waste a lot of water over time!

CULTURAL IMPORTANCE

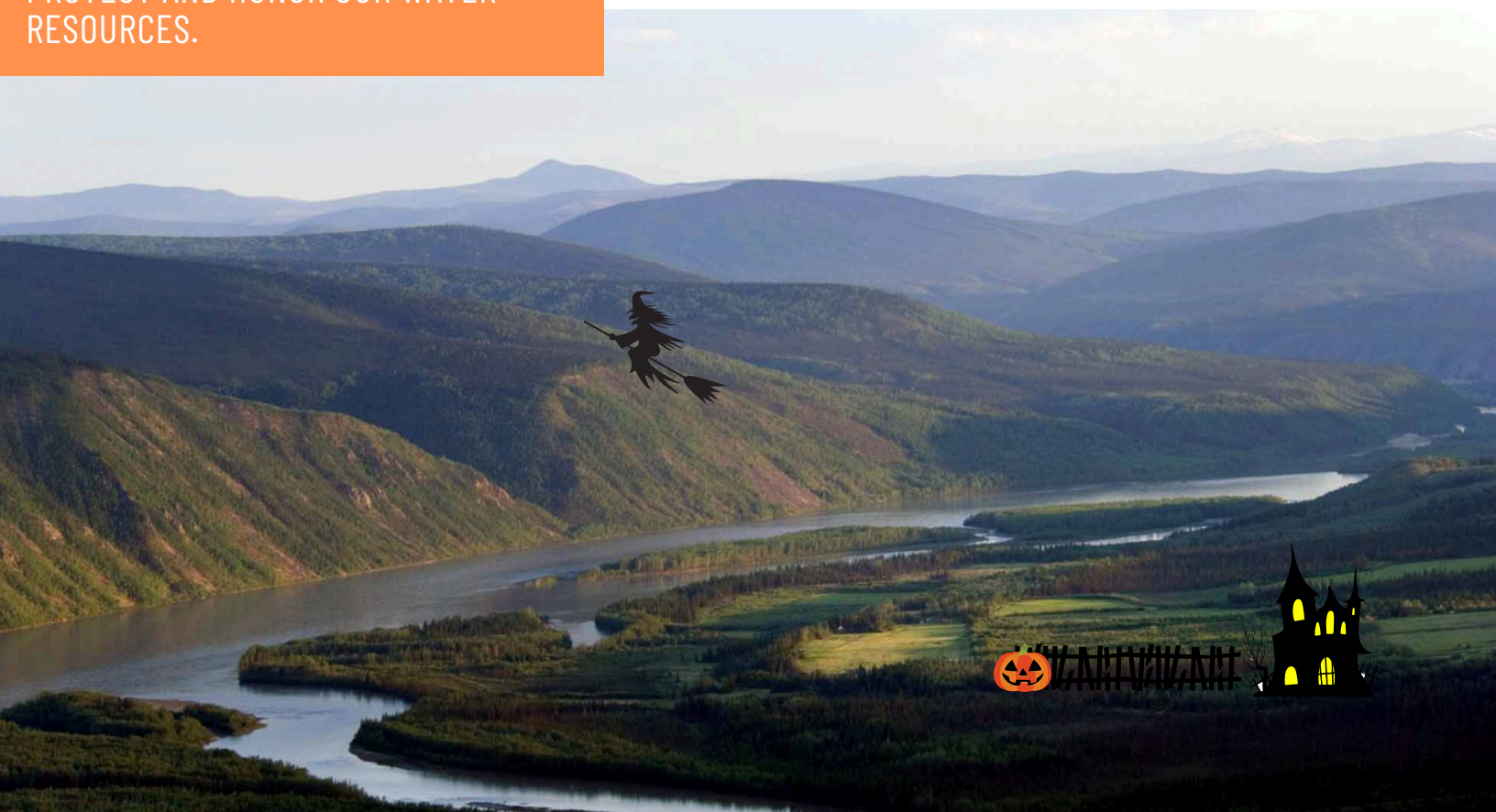


Our water sources are deeply connected to our culture and way of life. They are not just resources—they are sacred and have been cherished by our ancestors. By taking care of our water, we honor our traditions and ensure that our children and grandchildren will have clean, safe access to drinking water.

ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO LEARN ABOUT YOUR VILLAGE'S TRADITIONAL DRINKING WATER SOURCES IS BY TALKING TO THE ELDERS IN YOUR COMMUNITY. ELDERS HOLD VALUABLE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE SOURCES, AND THEIR INSIGHTS CAN HELP US BETTER PROTECT AND HONOR OUR WATER RESOURCES.

➤➤➤ RESPECT AND PROTECT

Once you know more about your village's traditional drinking water sources, it's important to respect and protect them. Follow best practices for water conservation and share this knowledge with others to help ensure that these vital resources remain clean and available for future generations.





Saving water doesn't have to be boring! Here are some fun ideas to help conserve water and get everyone involved:

1. **Water-Saving Challenges:** Have a family challenge to see who can use the least amount of water while brushing their teeth or taking a shower. The winner gets a special treat!
2. **Water Games:** Create games like "Water Relay Races" where teams have to carry water from one place to another without spilling. It's fun and teaches the importance of not wasting water!
3. **DIY Water Conservation Crafts:** Get creative with crafting! You can make your own rain-catching basins using clean, reused materials like old barrels, buckets, or plastic containers. These basins can collect rainwater that you can use for watering plants, cleaning, or washing clothes. It's a great way to recycle and save water!
4. **Share Your Innovations:** Once you've crafted your water-saving tools, share your inventions and ideas with other villages! Post photos and instructions on social media, like Facebook, or create a community bulletin board. It's a wonderful way to inspire others and learn new tips for conserving water. Be sure to share with the Watershed too!

»»» COMMUNITY ACTION

Get together with your neighbors and organize community clean-up days for local water sources. It's a great way to protect and honor our waters and spend time together. Plus, it's a great way to learn more about the importance of keeping our water clean.

Work with your Elders to document the information about traditional water sources. This could include recording stories, marking locations on maps, or creating educational materials to share with others.

»»» OUR MISSION

We, the Indigenous Tribes/First Nations from the headwaters to the mouth of the Yukon River, having been placed here by our Creator, do hereby agree to initiate and continue the clean up and preservation of the Yukon River for the protection of our own and future generations of our Tribes/First Nations and for the continuation of our traditional Native way of life.



MEET THE INTERNS



Deagen Carey - ACF

Hi, my name is Deagen Carey. I was born and raised in Anchorage, AK and am an Alaska Conservation Foundation intern working with the Yukon River Inter-Watershed Tribal Council. This May I graduated from the University of Portland with a degree in Environmental Science with a concentration in Earth Science. I have a deep love for the arts and you can often find me with clay splattered on my boots from throwing pottery. My hope is to develop a career with a focus on environmental justice and coastal resilience in Alaska.



Annalee Bishop - ITEP



My name is Annalee Bishop! I am from Northern Kentucky, and go to school in Berea, Kentucky. I am a rising senior at Berea College, majoring in Environmental Science and Sustainability. I am interning through Northern Arizona University's Tribes and Climate Change Program. This gives me the opportunity to collaborate with other students working all across the US through the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP). I'm so excited to spend my second summer here in Alaska working for YRITWC!!!! I am looking forward to learning more about traditional ecological knowledge and analyzing active layer data! In my free time I bike around town and explore the trail system! After I graduate, I hope to go to UAF for their Arctic Science Masters Program!

Board Members

Yukon Flats:

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Elder Advisors

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Benedict Jones

Eliza Jones

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Sarah James



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8 am - 4:30 pm

Upcoming Holidays:

Veterans Day: Nov. 11
Thanksgiving: Nov. 28
&29
Christmas : Dec. 25
New Years : Jan. 1



YRITWC

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Autumn

B A V H G T X S R D S T E F G I M K
Y P T M A E L S Y Y K J R B R B T K
P H Q K O L W X F U E C Y E L O D W
U S A E L O L O B A B L A D E H S Z
M L P R Y K S O R H V R L R J S X T
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K N P R U E P V B E N E Z W W B H W
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L L E A V E S R S V S Y Q Z X G V W
W I N D Y J K A U T U M N J D U R R
Y K V M B F M Q C H I L L Y U T G E

Autumn

Brown

Caribou

Chilly

Frost

Halloween

Harvest

Leaves

Moose

Orange

Pumpkin

Season

Trees

Windy

Yellow

