



Indigenous Place Names Movement

Presenters

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Partners

The project advisory committee members include the

- Alaska Native Heritage Center
- Anchorage Museum
- Anchorage Park Foundation (as the host organization for the project)
- Bristol Bay Native Corporation
- Cook Inlet Housing Authority
- Cook Inlet Region, Inc.
- First Alaskans Institute
- Huddle AK
- Municipality of Anchorage
- Native Village of Eklutna
- Providence Alaska
- Rasmuson Foundation
- Southcentral Foundation

History of the Movement



History of the Movement

Dach'Idlughet Hyighiyih~

The Story of How Eklutna Got its Name

Dena'ina Athabaskan Oral Tradition

"The Ahnta used to come to Eklutna.

Two sisters came out to the outlet of Eklutna Lake for trout, being without food, and they had gone up there for trout.

A trout swam into their trap.

It was a little trout, and they threw it back in the water upstream...

Those Ahnta women threw the little fish back in with its head facing upstream and [they said to it], "You go back to your mother and father. We might have saved ourselves [from starvation] by [eating] you. You tell him that you are too small..."

When that little trout told that [giant] underwater creature [what they had said], it [a giant fish] swam downstream.

It swam up from the bottom.

Only one creature stayed there.

A noise was heard in the water.

That creature under the water was starting to move around.

They [the girls] ran to the mountain.

That lake is between mountains, and then a [giant] fish swam up from below, and it swam out through the lake outlet.

It floundered along the creek; downstream the cliffs form a big canyon.

It swam into that canyon.

The water level dropped there and it died.

As it swam through the outlet, the water washed out the land and all over Eklutna [pieces of] all of that land remained.

That is why its name is 'By the Plural Objects' (Idlughet)

That is what they told me about it.

That is the Eklutna story that I know."

Eklutna Area told Sharm Pette this story, who recounted it to James Karl in 1985.

The story is passed on to its progeny, including in its traditional language.

In Sharm Pette's book, "The Story of the Upper Cook Inlet Dena'ina"

by James Karl and James A. Karl.

Eklutna Area was the Chief of Eklutna Village during the first half of the 20th century and his son, Mike Area, was his successor. In 1977 Eklutna Area built a hunting cabin at the east end of Eklutna Lake (Idlughet). The cabin was washed out by the West Fork of Eklutna River (Remained in 2007).

Eklutna Lake (Idlughet) continues to be a special place for the Eklutna people.

Remained in 2007.

Grass Creek-Chanshtnu

Fish camps, cabins, and houses belonging to Dena'ina once dotted the mouth and banks of Grass Creek, now known as Chester Creek.

How to make koo-ba:

- Remove head and tail
- Slice down the back side
- Do not cut through to belly

TIME TO KOO-BE: Koo-ba is made about one inch thickness of meat on the inside and outside. Koo-ba is made with a small amount of water and is good for eating. (Koo-ba is made with a small amount of water and is good for eating.)

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What's in a Name?

Before it was a lagoon, the mouth of Chester Creek included a large tidal estuary. Late Dena'ina elder John Sharm described Chanshtnu—now known as Chester Creek—as having "lots of grass with a creek coming through." That [name] means "Grass Creek."

A Way of Life

Dena'ina families, including those of Big Stephen, Theodore Vesil, and Eklutna Area, had fish camps, cabins, and houses along Chester Creek in the early to mid 1900s. Salmon runs were the main attraction, with salmon harvested, smoked, and dried here and families throughout winter. Families processed their catch side-by-side and visited with friends along this little-disturbed creek.

Dena'ina Elnena (Dena'ina Homeland)

The Dena'ina homeland includes what we now know as Anchorage. Long before European explorers arrived, the Dena'ina Athabascans lived here; many of them still do.

Qin Cheghitnu—"Crying Ridge Creek"

The Dena'ina name for Campbell Creek is "Qin Cheghitnu," which means "Crying Ridge Creek." It flows from Qin Cheghi—"Crying Ridge"—now known as Tanaina Peak, in the Chugach Mountains. Because much of the Dena'ina homeland is visible from Qin Cheghi, it was a mourning place where Dena'ina remembered and honored their ancestors and lost loved ones.



Qin Cheghitnu is one of over 120 Dena'ina place names in and around Anchorage that document their occupation of this land and stewardship of its resources.



Contents of 19th-century Dena'ina house, 1915.

Subsistence Foods

The salmon runs of Qin Cheghitnu and other creeks have sustained Dena'ina communities for countless generations. The Dena'ina traditionally harvested salmon (liq'a) and other fish from both salt and freshwater, using handmade weirs, traps, dipnets, and spears. They also depended upon many other resources, including moose, bears, porcupines, ptarmigan, spruce grouse, waterfowl, snowshoe hares, berries, and wild plants.

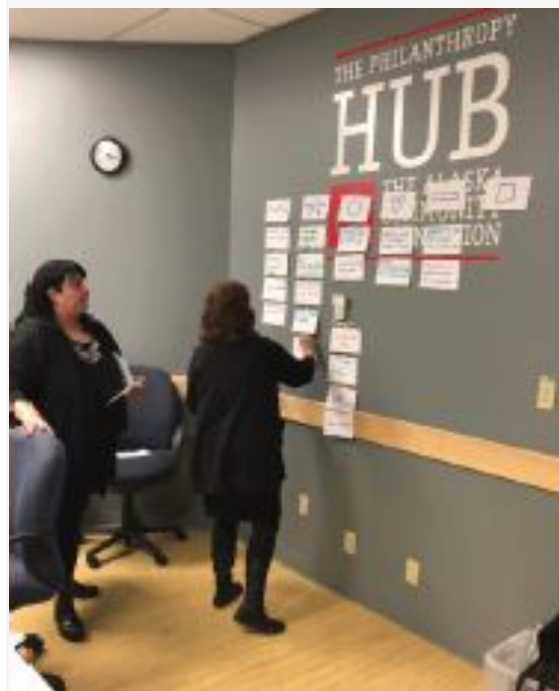
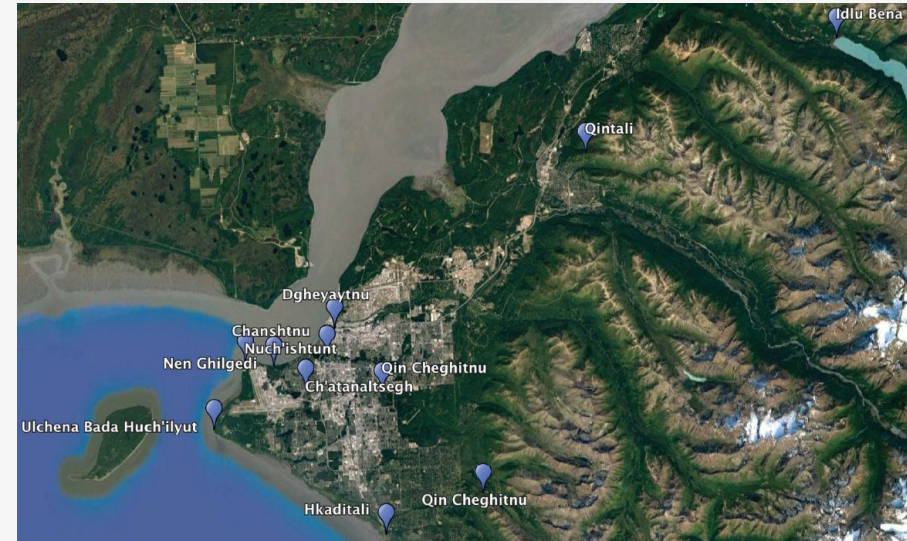
Respect

Dena'ina traditions, still practiced by many today, require caring for animals and plants which humans need for survival. From a traditional, historic Dena'ina view, fish, other wildlife, and plants are sentient beings, aware of human activities and demanding respect. To disrespect the non-human world is to court disaster—poor weather, famine, and even death might result. Respectful behavior includes never taking more plants or animals than needed, thorough use of harvested animals, never speaking about animals in a boastful manner, and handling animal remains carefully.



Drying salmon (liq'a) in a "koo-ba" fish camp, 1915.

History of the Movement



History of the Movement





Melissa Shaginoff

Artist and Curator

Project Updates





LOCATION MAP



LEVEL ONE PLACE NAMES
DENA'INA PLACE NAME SIGN

Denai'na Name	Location	Meaning
Dgheyaytnu	Ship Creek	A creek named after Stickleback – little fish used in soup
Chanshtnu	Chester Creek	Grassy creek
Ch'atanaltsegh	Fish Creek	Where yellow water comes out
Nen Ghilgedi	Earthquake Park	Rotten land
Nuch'ishtunt	Point Woronzof	Place protected from the wind
Ulchena Bada Huch'ilyut	Point Campbell	A battleground "where we pulled up the Aleutic's boat"
Qln Cheghi	Flattop Mountain Chugach State Park	Crying Ridge, a ridge along the north side of upper Campbell Creek near Flattop mountain
Qln Cheghitnu	Campbell Creek	The creek that comes from Crying Ridge
Hkaditali	Potter Marsh	Drift wood and other debris washed up in this area from ship wrecks
Idlu Bena	Eklutna Lake	By the two hills - two girls, lake monster
Qintali	Mount Baldy	Wide ridge
Chishkatnu nudghilent	Thunderbird Falls	Big ochre creek falls

LOCATION MAP

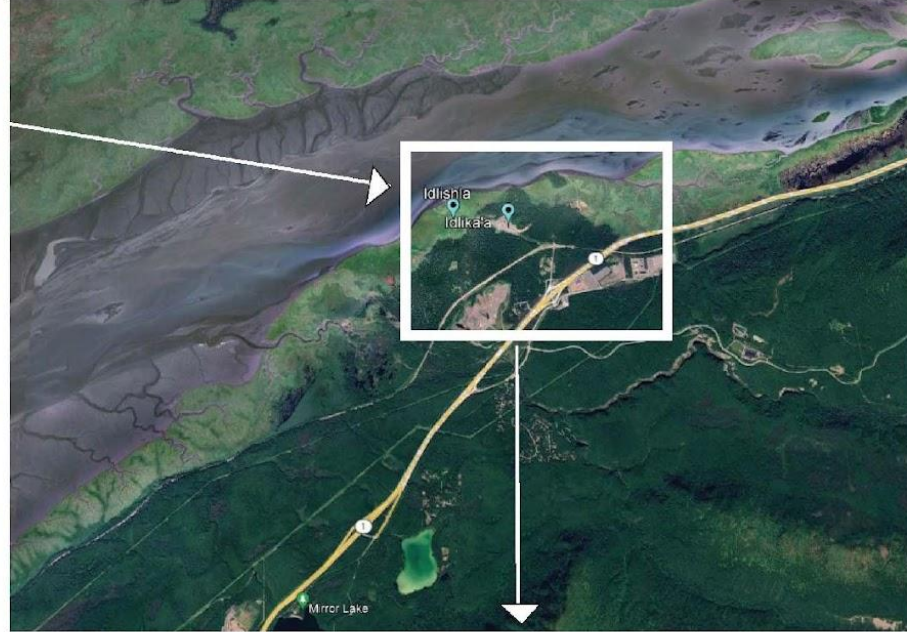


LEVEL TWO PLACE NAMES
DENA'INA PLACE NAME SIGN

Dena'ina Name	Location	Meaning
Idlughet	Eklutna Village	Dena'ina name for Eklutna Village
Idlishla	Hill near Eklutna Village	Smaller hill of two hill's near Eklutna Village
Idlika'a	Hill near Eklutna Village	Larger hill of two hill's near Eklutna Village
Idluytnu	Eklutna River	By the two hills or plural objects River
Ben Q'estsiq'	Eklutna Lake	Lake outlet
Yuditnu	Eklutna Lake	Golden eagle creek
Qunsha Qeneh	Eklutna Lake	ground squirrel house
Bendilent	Eklutna Lake	Creek that flows off of Eklutna glacier
Idlu Bena Li'a	Eklutna Glacier	by the plural objects lake glacier
K'anakatnu	Lower Peters Creek	No translation
Ch'eneftash Bena	Fire Lake	Creek where we sleep
Nuk'elehitnu	Eagle River	Fish run again creek
Dgheyay Ti'u	Arctic Valley	Stickleback headwaters
Nifkidal'iy	Lake Hood and Lake Spenard	The ones, the lakes that are joined together
Nutu'iy	Fire Island	The object that stands in the water
Qin Cheghi Kaq' Bena	Campbell Lake	The mouth of crying ridge lake
Nungge	Nunaka Valley	Upland area
Ggeh Betnu	Rabbit Creek	Rabbit Creek, literal translation
Q'isqa Betnu	McHugh Creek	Temporary snowshoe
Tut'uh	Turnagain Arm	Back water

INDIGENOUS PLACE NAME SIGNS

EKLUTNA LOCATIONS:



INSTALLED SIGN

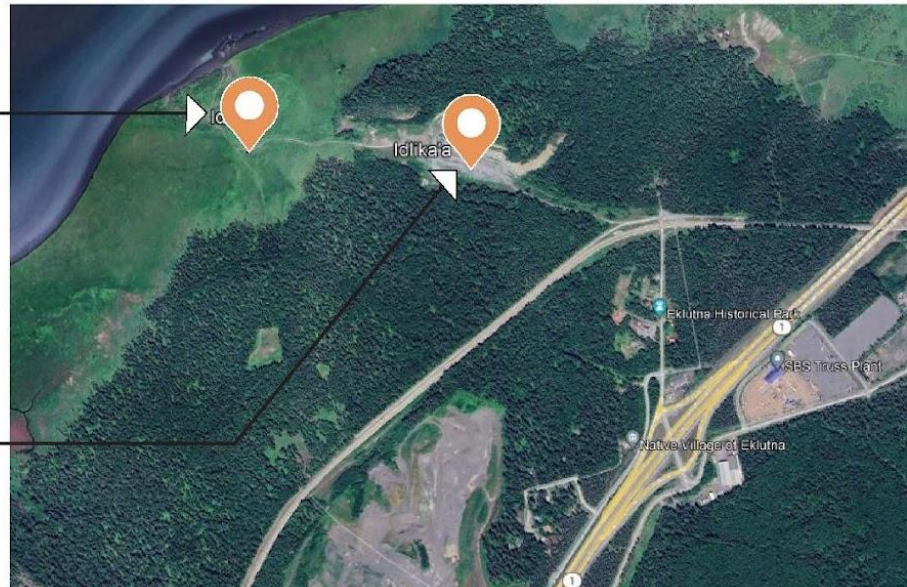


Idlishla

Meaning: Smaller hill of two hills near Eklutna Village

Idlika'a

Meaning: Larger hill of two hills near Eklutna Village



Project Updates

*Chanshtnu Muldoon Park
Chanshtnu Westchester Lagoon
Hkaditali Potter Marsh
Nuch'ishtunt Point Woronzof*



Project Updates



Opportunities to Move Beyond the Sign



Education



Virtual Identification



Celebration

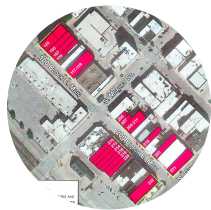


Other Ways to Amplify
Indigenous Identity

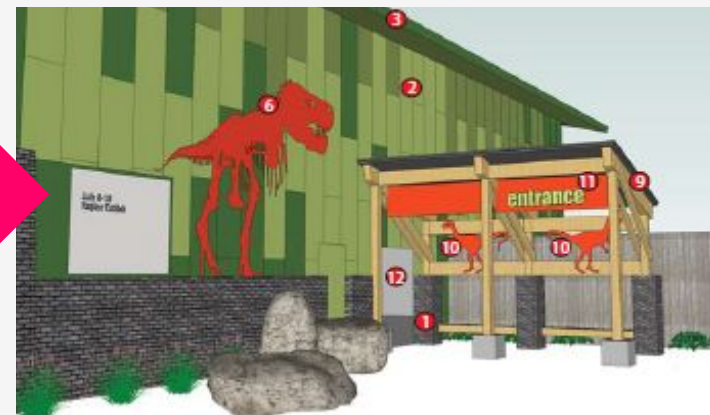
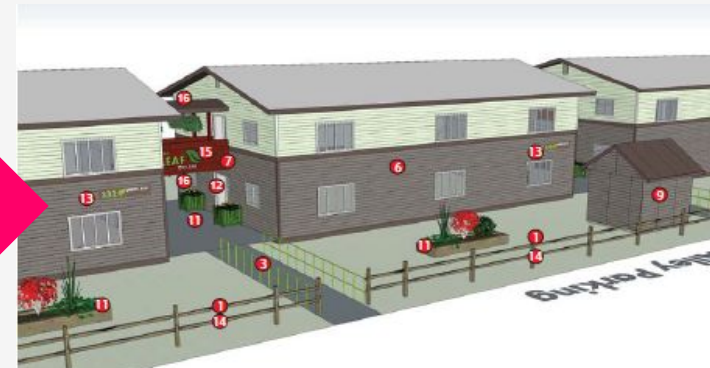


Downtown Wayfinding





Downtown Façade Upgrades



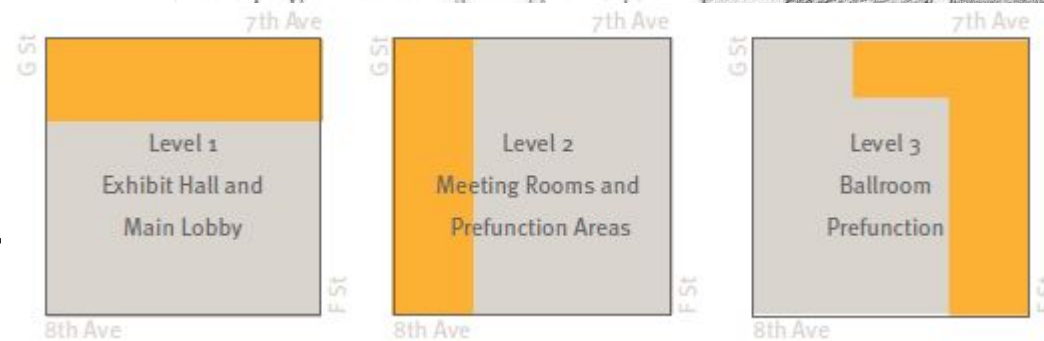


Indigenous Overlay to Parks





Dena'ina Center Indigenous Exhibit



Next Steps

Advisory Committee Meetings

Other

Thank You



Grant funding comes through the Mellon Foundation's Monuments Project and will fund the installation and celebration of 28 locations over the next four years.