

Ahtna Kansas

SPRING 2017



Kluti-Kaah shareholder
Sam George points to
ANCSA land selection areas.

**ANCSA TO PIPELINE - A 40 YEAR
PARTNERSHIP P. 10**

**AHTNA'S FIGHT FOR ITS LANDS
AND SUBSISTENCE RIGHTS P. 12**

Ahtna Construction and Primary Products Corporation
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Ahtna, Inc. and Ahtna Netiyé' senior management team



Michelle Anderson
President, AI



Kathryn Martin
Senior VP, AI



Tom Maloney
CEO, AN



Roy J. Tansy Jr.
Executive VP, AN



William M. Tisher
CFO & VP of Finance, AI



Joe Bovee
VP of Land and Resources, AI



Douglas Miller
VP of Human Resources, AI



Matt Block
General Counsel

Ahtna Subsidiary Presidents



Craig O'Rourke
President, AGSC & ADB



Brenda Rebne
President, AFSI & APSI



Vicky Dunlap
President, ASTS & ALL



Susan Taylor
President, KEC, AKHI & ATSI



Tim Finnigan
President, AES & AEI



David O'Donnell
President, AC&PPC

If shareholder-owners would like to submit articles for the next issue of the Kanas, the submission deadline is June 2, 2017.

For questions or more information about the Kanas, please contact the Media and Communications office: Shannon Blue at (907) 230-7058 or sblue@ahtna.net



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

AHTNA RELEASES NEW MISSION, CONSOLIDATED VALUES

Dear fellow shareholder-owners,

Our Board of Directors has approved a simplified mission statement for Ahtna and revised corporate values.

Our new mission statement reflects the business interests of our operational entities as well as Ahtna's role as a protector of our people's lands. Our mission statement tells the world what matters to us as a corporation and leads us to do our best work in the interest of our shareholders.

Revised mission statement:

Wise stewardship of Ahtna lands and responsible economic growth for future generations of Ahtna people.

Our values set the standards by which individual and team performance are measured and reviewed. They are embedded in all facets of our business and how we operate. Our new set of values consolidates ten values into five that better define what is important to our success as individuals, as shareholder-owners and as business people.

Revised corporate values:

1. Respect – We appreciate our connectedness to all

2. Unity – We are One Team, One Ahtna
3. Safety – Safety first, the right way, every day
4. Quality – We exceed expectations through excellence
5. Integrity – We do the right thing

Our strong, memorable and inspiring vision statement will remain the same: Our culture unites us, our land sustains us, our people are prosperous. Our vision speaks to our core values, purpose and what is most important to Ahtna.

The past quarter has been busy. We were thrilled when Governor Bill Walker talked about the Gulkana lands transfer in his State of the State address. If you missed it, here is

what he said: "For more than 50 years, the village of Gulkana has been seeking to regain ownership of their ancestral land and burial sites through a 12-acre State land transfer. In June, I visited Gulkana and walked the grave sites with Traditional Chief Fred Ewan. Mr. Ewan turned 100 on

August 13th, and my goal is to complete the land transfer before his next birthday." With August 13 approaching quickly, we are working diligently with the State and Gulkana to move this initiative forward. Thank you, Governor Walker.

In July 1974, Ahtna and Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. launched a unique and special partnership by entering into an Omnibus Agreement that gives each reciprocal benefits and creates special opportunities. In a joint venture with

Continued on page 4



First Ahtna President Robert Marshall, right, and Senator Ted Stevens, left, sign Ahtna's first land claims check.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - *Continued from page 3*

Trans-Alaska Engineering Company, Ahtna Construction began construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) and laid the first section of pipe on March 27, 1975, at the Tonsina River. In this issue of the Kanas, we celebrate the 40th anniversary of TAPS and the profound impact it has had on our company and shareholders.

One of our current TAPS employees was in the right place at the right time to save a life. Anthony Giovanni, an Ahtna Construction project team member, pulled into the Hub in Glennallen to fuel up. When he went inside to have the fuel pump activated, he walked into a medical crisis involving an elderly man who was in cardiac arrest. It turned out that Anthony was the only one who knew CPR, thanks to his training with Ahtna Construction, and he was able to keep the man alive until Troopers arrived and took over. What a fantastic story — and what a testament to the importance of training. Anthony, thank you for a job well done.

We started highlighting our region's diverse villages last issue. This time, we visit Chistochina, which remains the most traditional of the Ahtna villages, where subsistence is a way of life and mushing a passion for most of its 93 residents. Next quarter, we will showcase Chitina and welcome suggestions from community members and leaders on what to highlight.

The June 3, 2017, Annual Meeting of Shareholders is just around the corner. The annual report and proxy materials will be mailed by April 21, and shareholder-owners who submit their proxies by the early-bird-proxy deadline of May 12 will be eligible for the special early-bird drawing. Once again, you will be able to vote online. There is one change to the

pre-meeting activities this year. Only one candidate forum will be held in the region on April 26. It will be videotaped and made available for viewing online. We have more information on the Annual Meeting and Candidate Forum later in this Kanas.

Author Bill Simeone concludes his series on Ahtna's heritage and ANCSA in this issue of the Kanas. In it, he quotes Nick Jackson who told him that ANCSA changed our people. Bill writes that Nick "coined a term, Cuc'uun tsezdaen, literally, 'We became a different people.'" The Ahtna History book, which is being funded by Ahtna and authored by Bill, is scheduled to be published later this year. The book will include information on our corporate and leadership history, land use and cultural practices.

As a final note, congratulations to all our Employees of the Year. You are fantastic! Our hard-working employees are the reason we have turned in such sterling financial performances in recent years.

Tsin'aen,



Michelle Anderson, President
Ahtna, Incorporated



Ahtna
2016 Employees of the Year



Chris Vaden
General Superintendent,
Ahtna Construction & Primary
Products Corporation



Patrick Royce
Project Manager, Ahtna
Design Build, Inc.



Kelly O'Meara
Southwest Environmental
Business Director, Ahtna
Environmental, Inc.



Matt Flynn
Senior Project Manager,
Ahtna Engineering
Services, LLC



Brian Cantrell
Chief Engineer, Ahtna
Facilities Services, Inc.



Brett Larson
Environmental Scientist,
Ahtna Government Services
Corporation



Ed Tisdell
Risk Manager, Ahtna, Inc.



Jesse Sanchez
Electronics Tech Maint II,
Ahtna Support & Training
Services, LLC



Jason Lewis
Chief of Security, Ahtna
Technical Services, Inc.



CEO'S MESSAGE

SATISFIED EMPLOYEES DELIVER GREAT RESULTS

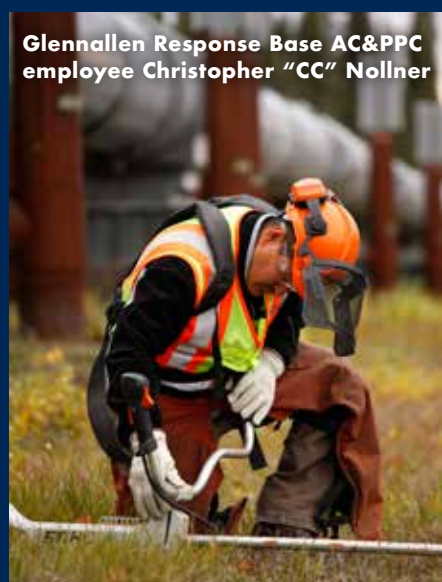
Dear Shareholder-owners,

We just finished our annual audit, and I am pleased to report that Ahtna's total revenues grew from

\$188 million in 2015 to \$218 million in 2016. This is an increase of 16 percent despite Alaska being in a recession and overall 8(a) government contracting being down by approximately 20 percent.

We want to do even better next year. Our goal for 2017 is to increase revenues to over \$230 million. It is exciting to be in growth mode and the more successful we are in securing new work, particularly in Alaska, the more shareholder-owner benefits we can provide. In 2016, the total shareholder-owner wages and benefits paid increased 19 percent over the previous year.

A priority for our Board has been to increase work in Alaska, where most of our shareholder-owners live. Alaska is in a deep recession, with 9,000 jobs lost in the past year, but we still grew our Alaska revenues by 32 percent in 2016. Our Board always reminds management that "being prepared" is a part of Ahtna culture and, because of that mentality, we were ready for the Alaska downturn. A major part of that is our renewed contract with Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. through Ahtna Construction and Primary Products Corp. and an expansion of work to include a mining and materials contract. Our Alaska Native hire rate is 42 percent on this contract, the highest among all the Alyeska contractors. Our challenge now is to attract and train new shareholder-owners into these high-paying jobs.



Glennallen Response Base AC&PPC employee Christopher "CC" Nollner

Ahtna was one of three Alaska Native corporations invited to speak at Gov. Bill Walker's Alaska LNG summit. An estimated 15 officials from about 10 companies in Japan, Korea and Singapore attended the March 3 conference in Girdwood. The companies represent a big share of the long-term liquefied natural gas market in Asia, according to Keith

Meyer, president of the Alaska Gasline Development Corp.

Roy Tansy Jr., executive vice president Ahtna Netiyé', delivered Ahtna's presentation, which sparked lots of inquiries. Arctic Slope

Regional Corp. and Doyon also presented, along with Alaska agencies, lawmakers and businesses, who explained details about the project.

The state is currently looking for new customers and other partners for the \$45 billion project.

It was an honor to speak about Ahtna at the 2017 Alaska Native Studies Conference at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The theme of this year's conference was "Sustaining Indigenous Livelihoods," so it was most fitting that our own Samuel Johns served on a panel of three young Alaska Natives leaders. Samuel created a Facebook page and movement called "Forget Me Not" to help the homeless and let them connect to their families and friends. The keynote speaker at the conference was Nobel Peace Prize nominee Dr. Sheila Watt-Cloutier, a Canadian Inuit activist.

In the first quarter of the year, many of our groups are preparing for their seasonal operations to kick off. Our engineering and environmental teams, for example, are planning barges, manpower and safe execution for crews going to remote locations throughout the state. Our performance matters and Ahtna has proven to be a team that delivers.

Our subsidiaries are all focused on expanding their work and AhtnaSTS scored big when it won a five-year, \$10.6 million Artillery and Chemical Trainer Simulator Support contract. The work will occur in Germany, Korea, Oklahoma, Texas, Missouri and Florida.

Huge storms in California brought an end to the five-year drought but created problems of their own, including devastating flooding and the need for some communities to evacuate. Our Elk Hills fieldwork has been set back by a month or two, and our Sacramento Storm Water Pollution operations staff has been busy responding to needs.

We are still examining the results of our Tolsona exploratory gas well as well as the overall gas potential of the Copper River Basin. A lot of valuable knowledge was gained on Tolsona.

Finally, I would like to give a big shout-out to my colleagues. Our exceptional staff continues to amaze us and we were glad to hear that they, too, are satisfied with their work at Ahtna. A staggering 99 percent of employees surveyed reported that they are passionate about their work.

What a fantastic testament to our family of companies.

Tom Maloney, CEO
Ahtna Netiyé', Inc.

SUBSIDIARY SPOTLIGHT

CONTRACT PROVIDES NEW REVENUE STREAM, EXPERIENCE FOR MORE WORK

In June 2013, Pacific Gas and Electric Co. (PG&E) awarded Ahtna Government Services Corp. a five-year Master Service Agreement (MSA) for Best Management Practices (BMP) Installation and Post-Construction Site Restoration Services. In California, construction projects and industrial facilities require project owners to protect the immediate environment and waterways from sediment and harmful pollutants during active construction.

To date, Ahtna has supported more than 300 projects managed by PG&E's gas transmission team to improve public safety by upgrading current gas-line infrastructures. Notable projects include the Valley Fire Restoration, which involved providing BMP support and restoration services during the 2015 California wildfire season, which burned over 70,000 acres in Lake County. Another notable project is the current Potrero Storm Water Treatment System project. Ahtna coordinated the design and managed the installation of a water treatment system for one of PG&E's industrial facilities in San Francisco in collaboration with Terraphase Engineering. The design involved installation of an electrocoagulation equipment system to treat sediment-laden stormwater run-off and construction of site improvements.

Currently, the BMP program is in its fourth year, and according to AGSC Project Manager Archie Robasto, we intend to be an active bidder when the contract is up and win another seat as a reputable MSA holder, expand our current network of subcontractors and self-perform a larger share of the current workload. In addition, we plan to expand the program to other markets in land and housing development, general commercial construction and other large utility companies.

Revenue during the first year of the BMP program started at \$315,000 and, by the end of 2016, total revenue grew to \$2.3 million.



Ahtna coordinated the design and installation management of the Potrero Stormwater Treatment System in San Francisco with Terraphase Engineering.

STAR AWARDS



Ahtna's **Heide Lingenfelter** provided preliminary first aid assistance when an employee began choking and showing signs of distress. When her attempt to dislodge the obstruction was unsuccessful, she immediately got help from **Bruce Cain**, who provided first-aid care until the initial crisis was over. Bruce then accompanied the employee to the local urgent care clinic for further evaluation.



When AhtnaSTS Food Service Cook Sonia Alvarez reported a fire on the tilt skillet to AhtnaSTS Cook Supervisor **Josefa Beal**, Beal turned off the gas valve, grabbed the correct fire extinguisher and stood by in case the fire continued, thereby preventing the fire from spreading, protecting the staff and saving the skillet from further damage.



Ahtna, Inc. Board Chairman Nick Jackson, left, Ahtna Construction and Primary Products Corporation (AC&PPC) worker Anthony Giovanni, center, and AC&PPC President David O'Donnell

FUEL STOP SAVES A LIFE AT THE HUB

Anthony Giovanni saved a life because he had the right training.

An Ahtna Construction and Primary Products Corporation (AC&PPC) project team member, Giovanni pulled into the Hub in Glennallen to fuel up. He went inside to ask the clerk to turn on the fuel pump, when he saw an older man on the floor with people around him.

"I assumed he fell or fainted and went to the cash register to wait my turn," Giovanni recounts. "The clerk was on the phone trying to get the paramedics. That's when I knew the situation was worse."

"Then his wife says he stopped breathing and asked if anyone knew CPR? Eight people in this building and nobody knew CPR. They all looked at me and asked if I knew. That's when I told them to get out of my way and I got down and did what I was taught in training, and got him to stop turning blue and breath again. I had to do this twice because he stopped breathing on his own. I continued CPR until the State Troopers showed up and took over."

The Trooper administered CPR until EMS arrived and transported the man to the Crossroad Medical Center. He was later sent to Anchorage for additional medical attention.

“IF AHTNA HAD NOT GIVEN ME THE TRAINING, I WOULD HAVE BEEN ANOTHER PERSON IN THAT BUILDING WITHOUT KNOWING HOW TO DO CPR. AND FOR THAT I THANK YOU FOR ALL THE TRAINING YOU GIVE US.”

Hub Gas Station Cashier Wanda Bell credits Giovanni's action in saving the stricken man's life.

Jim Fowler, site supervisor for AC&PPC, summed up his reaction in a single word. "WOW!"

Giovanni says he just did what he was taught to do. "If Ahtna had not given me the training, I would have been another person in that building without knowing how to do CPR. And for that I thank you for all the training you give us."

TRADITION REMAINS DRIVING FORCE IN CHISTOCHINA



Photo courtesy of Brianne Island

Finn Drinkwater mashes his way into the finish of Chistochina Fun Days 2016.

Overshadowed by Mount Sanford and just miles from America’s largest national park, Chistochina remains the most traditional of the Ahtna villages, where subsistence is a way of life and mushing a passion for most of its 93 residents. It is home to the Cheesh’na Tribe.

An Alaska Department of Fish and Game survey found that 93 percent of the households successfully harvest wild resources each year, primarily salmon, moose and berries, caching 522 pounds of food per household. That averages to 199 pounds per person.

Chistochina is located at mile 32.7 on the Tok Cutoff, 42 miles northeast of Glennallen. It began as an Ahtna fish camp and later became a stopover place for traders and trappers. When the Valdez-Eagle Trail was constructed during the gold rush to Eagle in 1897, miners used the traditional trail past the village.

The Charley family may well be the first family of the village, led by matriarch Lena, who starred in the 2014 premiere of the highly popular Bizarre Foods on the Travel Channel. Host Andrew Zimmern joined Lena and Ahtna Board Director Franklin John and shareholder-owners Edna Charley, Evelyn Beeter and Jessica Denny for a dinner of moose-head stew and moose bone marrow.

Zimmern calls Lena “a living link to the past, where hunting, fishing and trapping were not done for sport, but for survival. Lena is an amazing woman who is keen on passing down

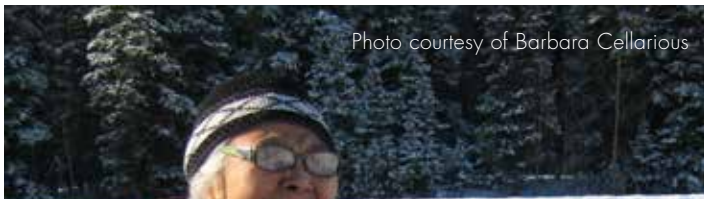


Photo courtesy of Barbara Cellarius



Charley family matriarch Lena enjoys the races at the Chistochina Fun Days.



Photo courtesy of Brianne Island

Young musher Keeghan Titus races the trail at Chistochina Fun Days 2016.

traditional knowledge, customs and language to her children and younger generations.

"Lena still participates in the family moose hunt, which is central to the family's way of life. It provides the raw material for cooking, preserving and for making clothes. She is a master when it comes to transforming the moose's hide into gloves and boots that are worn throughout the community. It's a labor of love, about a month-long process of scraping, stretching and smoking the hides into something malleable. She even uses the same natural softener employed by ancient peoples all over the world – animal brains."

Lena was one of Alaska's premier mushers for nearly half a century, a tradition shared by Sy Neeley, Lemmie Charley and now Iditarod musher Heidi Sutter, who operates KMA Kennel, "home of 19 happy huskies." Sy recalls growing up with working dog teams in Chistochina. "They were big teams. Big, heavy dogs. ... They were like Clydesdales and Percherons. You don't take Arabians out in the field." The dogs hauled supplies from the Copper Valley's trading posts.

Longtime musher Lemmie saved the life of another musher in the Copper Basin 300 Race by packing her in his sleeping bag and taking her to safety. When he arrived at Summit Lake Lodge, his boots were frozen to his feet and he had to sit in a bathtub of cool water to peel them off.

Today, that mushing tradition is commemorated in the Chistochina Fun Days, which features six- and four-dog sprint races and one-, two- and four-dog junior races – all for a purse of \$5,000. Chistochina residents Evelyn Beeter, Agnes Denny and Jerry Charley are all avid dog mushers who run the four- and six-dog races.

In fact, Evelyn outraced everyone in the four- and six-dog races this year, while youth winners included Zoey Erhart, Titus Blackard and Sadie Blackard.



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
**FRANKLIN JOHN'S
MOOSE HEAD STEW**
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**1 MOOSE HEAD
DRY ONION SOUP MIX
RICE**

Skin head. Cut off the nose and burn the hair off. Cut or scrape the meat off the bone and dice the meat into small chunks. Heat water in a pot, put in all meat. Dice the moose's nose and add. Let boil 4 to 6 hours. Add package of dry onion soup mix and add rice at the end.

INTERNSHIPS AVAILABLE

The Ahtna Land and Resource Department is offering two-week internships for two Ahtna shareholder-owners this summer. The positions will be based out of Ahtna's Glennallen headquarters. Some lodging assistance will be available for those from outside of the Glennallen area. High school youth between 15-18 years old who are interested in pursuing a fulfilling career in land and natural resource management in Alaska are encouraged to apply. Previous interns have assisted Land Department staff in various projects, including campground and trail maintenance, wildlife improvement projects, land surveying, forestry and soil data collection and light carpentry and landscaping duties. Most of the work will be performed outdoors and will begin in June or July. You can apply online for the internships at ahtna-inc.com/shareholders/employment

Edward Greybear, Shawn Beshaw and Edward "Hunter" Lenard served as Land Department interns in 2016.



AHTNA AND ALYESKA: A SHARED VISION



For the pipeline to cross the Tazlina River, crews constructed a 1,200-foot suspension bridge. | Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. photo

When first oil flowed into the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System on June 20, 1977, it was the close of one chapter for Ahtna and the beginning of another. Ahtna Construction laid the first section of pipe on March 27, 1975, at Tonsina River and continues to be a prime contractor for Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. today. This special partnership has helped ensure the safe passage of the more than 17 billion barrels of oil that have moved from the North Slope to Valdez. The pipeline is also part of our region as it passes through 197 miles of lands we have traditionally used, 55 miles of Ahtna-owned land and four of our villages. This year we celebrate the 40th anniversary of first oil and our long-standing relationship with the pipeline and its operator.



A special relationship that spans four decades

**By Tom Barrett
President, Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.**

The story of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) for the past 40 years has fundamentally been a story of hard-working people and deep business partnerships, grounded in shared visions of opportunity and success. Ahtna has been among Alyeska's most important partners, going all the way back to construction and startup. We cross your lands and we both benefit from a long-standing, deep and memorable relationship.

Like Alyeska, Ahtna Construction and Primary Products Corporation have been in business for over four decades. Alyeska and Ahtna Construction and Primary

THAT LED TO OPPORTUNITY AND SUCCESS

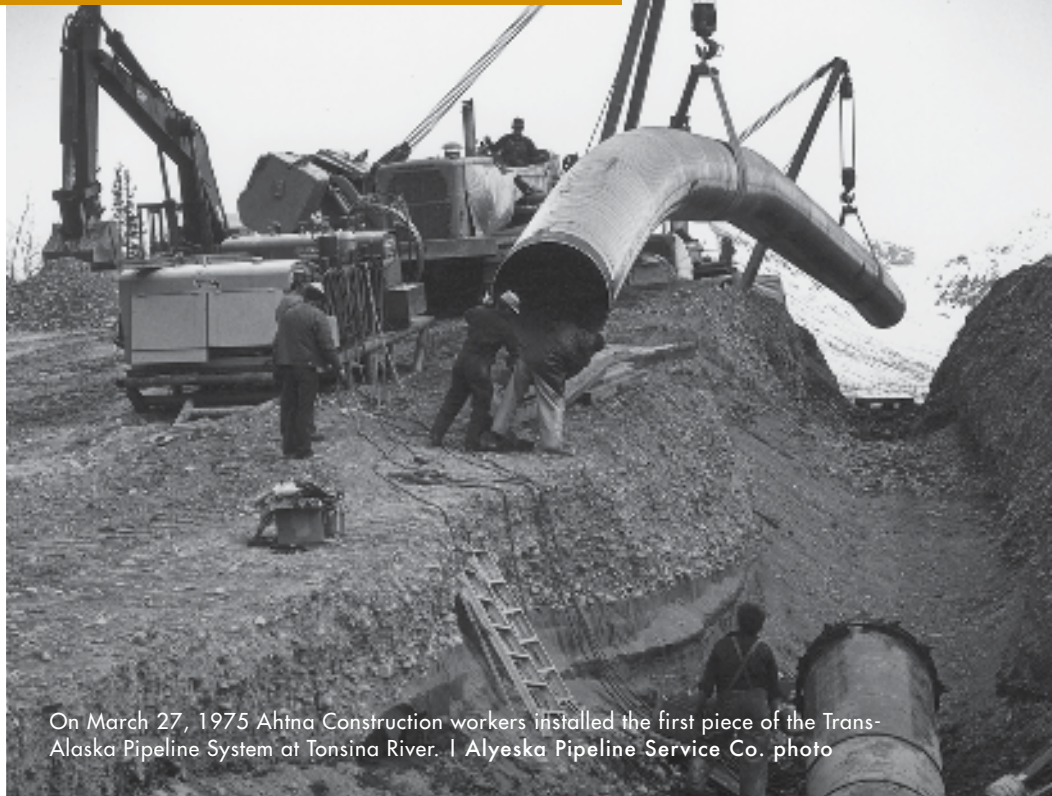
Products Corporation both started operations during a formative time in Alaska's history. Following the discovery of oil on the North Slope, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and the Pipeline Authorization Act combined to create new opportunities for Ahtna shareholders and all Alaskans.

In July 1974, Alyeska and Ahtna launched a unique and special partnership by entering into an Omnibus Agreement that gives each other reciprocal benefits and creates special opportunities. Subsequently, Ahtna Construction, in a joint venture with Trans-Alaska Engineering Company, began construction of the pipeline, laying the first section of pipe on March 27, 1975 at Tonsina River.

We appreciate that the TAPS right-of-way crosses 55 miles of fee simple/title Ahtna lands. This includes the four Ahtna villages of Gulkana, Gakona, Tazlina and Kluti-Kaah. TAPS also crosses the Gulkana, Klutina, Tonsina and Tazlina rivers, which in turn flow into the Copper River. Also in the Ahtna region, TAPS scales formidable Thompson Pass in the Chugach Range. Some 197 miles of TAPS are within Ahtna's traditional areas. Thank you for sharing your lands with us.

In the 42 years since first pipe was laid, the tireless efforts of the Ahtna people and their deep knowledge of their region's lands have benefited TAPS operations. The significance of our connection is honored with a special signing of a renewed Declaration of Friendship any time there is a major leadership transition at either company.

Today, Ahtna Construction performs work all along the 800 miles of TAPS – from civil construction to pipeline maintenance to emergency preparedness and oil spill response. Specialized work has included supporting mainline integrity investigations, high-point vent investigations and cathodic protection



On March 27, 1975 Ahtna Construction workers installed the first piece of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System at Tonsina River. | Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. photo

improvements – work that's critical to the system's safety and reliability and our shared commitment to environmental protection.

Ahtna shareholders help staff TAPS' Glennallen Response Base. Several Ahtna families have had three generations employed on TAPS. This statistic speaks to the real opportunities afforded to the region's people through the pipeline, and affirms that Ahtna shareholders are true contracting partners invested in TAPS' success.

In addition, many of Ahtna's leaders of today played critical roles early on during the Omnibus Agreement negotiations and pipeline construction. They worked with Alyeska to ensure that special consideration would be given in contracting and Native hire opportunities. Four decades later, they continue to serve and work in Ahtna's best interests. Current Board Chairman Nicholas Jackson and Directors John Craig and Roy Tansy Sr. were involved in those early days, and we thank them for their steadfast commitment, valuable insights and lasting partnership.

The long-term health and sustained safe operation of TAPS is critical for our economy and for all Alaskans. And our contractor business partners, 75 percent of which are headquartered in Alaska, are critical to TAPS sustainability. Along the pipeline, we often celebrate that TAPS teamwork excellence.

On TAPS, we are focused on the safety of our employees and our facilities, protecting our environment, and on innovative efforts to move our producers' oil more efficiently in a tough business environment. I know many of the same conversations are ongoing at Ahtna, where employees are focused on providing safe, environmentally responsible services and long-term goals that support reliable and cost-effective pipeline services that benefit Ahtna and its shareholder-owners.

That close collaboration with shared goals and visions can fuel us into the next 40 years of operations. We look forward to continuing our special relationship, maintaining our commitments and delivering on our shared vision long into the future.

Ahtna land claims and subsistence

‘We became a different people’

EDITOR’S NOTE: This is the last in a series of historical sketches by Bill Simeone. You can contact Bill at wesimeone2@gmail.com.

By Bill Simeone

In the 1940s, the forced removal of Ahtna families at Dry Creek and the destruction of Gulkana village showed the Ahtna they had become strangers in their own land. In the years following World War II, the Ahtna organized and became politically active, joining the Alaska Native Brotherhood (ANB) in 1954, forming Ahtna T’aene Nene’ in 1965 and, in 1972, both the Copper River Native Association (CRNA) and Ahtna, Inc.

Alaska Native land claims had simmered since long before statehood, but the Statehood Act of 1959 set in motion a process that would convey millions of acres to state ownership. For many Alaska Natives, this was an ominous threat that only increased their determination for a land settlement. Roy Ewan described the situation:

“All up and down the highway we saw non-Natives moving in, claiming 160-acre homesteads and taking all the best land. There were some who were good and conscientious and tried to respect the places where Natives picked berries and had campsites. Others just moved right in and took over, even though camp sites were clear evidence of past use.”

First land claim filed

John Billum Sr. filed the first Ahtna land claim with the Indian Claims Commission in 1951, but his claim was never acted upon. Ahtna T’aene Nene was formed to implement an Ahtna claim, and discussions began about the possible boundaries using Billum’s earlier filing as a starting point.

In 1966, Walter Charley, Oscar Craig, Jack Larson, John Billum Jr., Roy Ewan, Harding Ewan and Markle Ewan attended the first meeting of the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN). At the meeting, AFN resolved to ask the Secretary

of the Interior to impose a land freeze to stop state land selections until Native claims were resolved. The Secretary of the Interior imposed a land freeze at the end of the year halting state land selections and development of an oil pipeline that would carry North Slope crude oil across Ahtna territory to Valdez. The land freeze pushed Congress, the president, and the state to settle, and the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) was signed in December 1971.

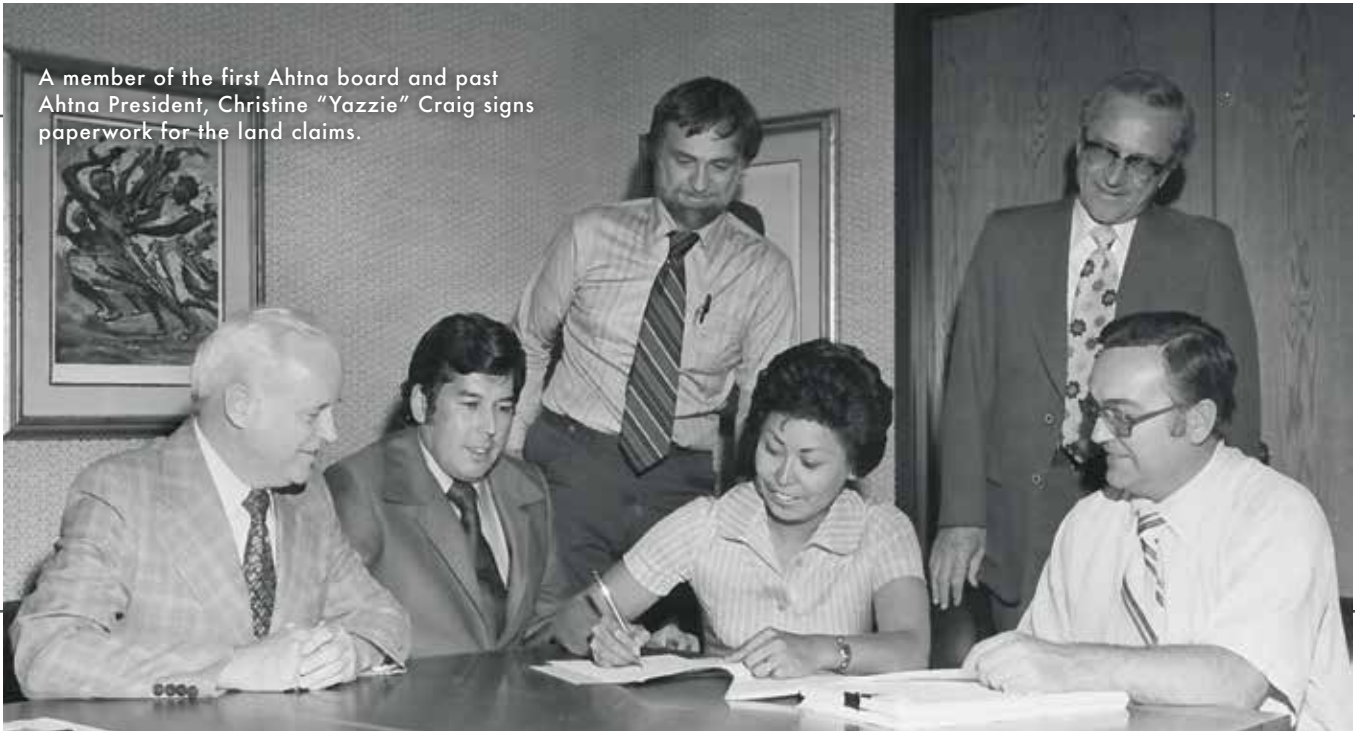
Under ANCSA, the Ahtna were entitled to land and monetary compensation. These benefits accrued through business corporations formed along the boundaries of 12 regional Native associations listed in the settlement. CRNA was one of those 12 associations. The CRNA board became the interim board of Ahtna, Incorporated, which was formed in June 1972 with Robert Marshall as president.

ANCSA a two-edged sword

Looking back on ANCSA, Ahtna Elders have made various observations. Roy Ewan said ANCSA was not a land giveaway: “We base our claims on aboriginal right, aboriginal use of the land. Our claims are just like anybody who would put in a claim for insurance policy or something like that. I want that to be clear because this was not a gift from Congress or anything.”

Millie Buck found it hard to understand how ANCSA was a settlement for land the Ahtna had always thought was theirs and she said the transition from koht’aene to shareholders was difficult. “Really, it’s really hard. We’re not corporation people. And now we’re called ‘shareholders’ where we used to be ‘koht’aene,’ you know, ‘people.’ Now we’re ‘that’s a shareholder.’ I don’t like that word. I’d rather be called what we used to have before. I feel that ‘shareholder’ ... is just

A member of the first Ahtna board and past Ahtna President, Christine "Yazzie" Craig signs paperwork for the land claims.



cold – a cold word. 'Koht'aene' is much different; it means people. Somebody with real heart, you know a real person."

Nick Jackson said ANCSA changed the people and he coined a term, "Cuc'uun tsezdaen," literally, "We became a different people." He said, "We came from fish camp to wearing ties and whatever."

Fighting for subsistence rights

Subsistence is the one outcome of ANCSA that disappoints Roy Ewan. He said, "We should have made it all part of the settlement. We were misled, I would say, by our congressional delegation and our governor at that time."

ANCSA "extinguished" aboriginal hunting and fishing rights, but Congress directed the state and federal government to protect that right. Alaska Natives were successful in establishing a rural subsistence priority on federal lands as part of the 1980 Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). The state amended its subsistence law in 1982 to comply with ANILCA, but the Alaska State Supreme Court judged the law unconstitutional in 1990 and since 1992, the federal government has managed wildlife resources on all federal lands within the state.

Rallying around Katie John

In 1983, Ahtna Elders Katie John and Doris Charles petitioned the Alaska Board of Fish to allow fishing at Batzulnetas, which the state had closed to fishing in 1964. When the Board refused, Katie and Doris filed suit. Eventually the state opened the fishery, but the two women said the regulations were too restrictive. In Katie's eyes, fishing at Batzulnetas was part of the legacy she would leave

to her grandchildren. Ultimately, a federal court ruled in Katie and Doris's favor.

The "Katie John case" became a rallying point for Alaska Native subsistence rights. Their victory forced fisheries managers to open a fishery at Batzulnetas and it pushed the federal government into assuming a more active role in the management of subsistence fisheries and expanded its jurisdiction to more than half of Alaska's navigable waters.

Not ANCSA, ANILCA or federal management has fixed the problem of subsistence for the Ahtna. Thousands of non-Native people still flock to the Copper River Basin to hunt and fish. To protect their cultural identity, the Ahtna have filed lawsuits, participated in the public process instituted by the state and petitioned Congress. Finally, in 2016, the Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission (AITRC) signed an agreement with the Secretary of the Interior to begin a demonstration project for cooperative management of fish and wildlife resources on federal lands in the Ahtna region. Under this agreement, AITRC can implement community harvest permits for the taking of wildlife species that the Ahtna have traditionally harvested in their own homeland.

In 1988, Pete Ewan explained why subsistence was so important.

"Well, first I say that I am going to talk about our subsistence, our Indian rights in Alaska, and in our village, and in every village in Copper River, from Chitina village to Mentasta. Our subsistence and our hunting, means it's our lifetime use. We were raised up with what we have been doing now, hunting, we don't start this now. Our subsistence is the main thing for us, what we have been using and we were raised up with, animals and all that stuff."

SHAREHOLDER SPOTLIGHT

LOOKING FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF DANCERS

The Ahtna Heritage Foundation (AHF) received a three-year grant last year from the Administration for Native Americans for the Ahtna Heritage Dance Project.

The project gives Ahtna youth the opportunity to learn about traditional songs and dances, language, stories and the sharing of cultural knowledge from Ahtna Elders. An Ahtna Heritage Committee of Elders, youth, other cultural leaders and the project team will guide the program. Lacayah

Engebretson was hired as the project director last December. Mark Johns was hired as the activities coordinator and dance instructor in late February.

AHF will be hiring two more part-time dance instructors, as well as forming the Ahtna Heritage Committee and beginning dance workshops. AHF is very grateful for the support that the Ahtna people have shown for the project thus far and looks forward to seeing the results of a successful project.



Rachel Ewan and her son visit with Chief Fred Ewan during the 2016 Annual Meeting.

SUBMIT YOUR FAMILY NEWS

Thank you all for the birth announcements and other family news. We've received so much great news from you that we will now be featuring a new section in the E-Kanas titled "Family news." Please submit your news and photos to news@ahna.net. Your continued input helps make the Ahtna Kanas the awesome newsletter it is. Keep em' coming!

SALMON PART OF LIFE'S CYCLE FOR THE AHTNA



Eric Stevens uses a fish wheel to catch salmon.

A photographer for Salmon Life, a storytelling initiative by the Salmon Project, traveled to the Ahtna region to explore the role Copper River salmon play in the lives of five families.

Of all the people who fish for Copper River salmon, "The Ahtna Athabascans have been here the longest," Tursy Ann Smelcer tells the photographer, Nathaniel Wilder.

"A mother of four and a grandmother, Tursy lives alone not far from the river that characterizes her summer," Wilder writes. "After living in Anchorage for many years, she was drawn back to the valley to live the 'quiet salmon life' and just have a place to be. Now she stays busy all summer with salmon. 'It feels like I'm missing out when I don't do something with salmon every day,' she beams."



Tursy Ann Smelcer at her fishcamp on the Copper River.

Eric Stevens operates a fish wheel on the river at a place he calls "the best spot on the river." Eric shares his catch with Elders and family members. "I love the feeling of cutting up fish to provide the community," he tells Wilder.

Paul White was born and raised in Glennallen, but lives in Copper Center now. "He's more than willing to share his salmon sequestering processes with me as he's in the middle of a multi-day canning operation and welcomes the break," Wilder writes. "'We kipped 40 reds and four kings this year. We can about 120 jars a year or so between Tim and I.' White tells Wilder. "'It's a 10-day process from catching to cleaning to smoking to canning.'"

"Tim" is Tim Sundlov, who shares a smokehouse and fish wheel with Paul. "Harvesting gets you outside and connects you to the land and seasons," he tells Wilder. "This lifestyle has kept me in Alaska. You just can't do this in the Lower 48."

Faye Ewan, "an Elder of Kluti-Kaah village (the Native name for Copper Center), has strong feelings about her rights here. 'Our people are the fishtail people,' she says. 'We go way back. We never had a limit for fish when we were young. When we had extra we could give it away. Now we only have 500 fish per family of two. It doesn't go that far. We exercise our sovereignty on our land, as a people. Part of our right is to fish here. It's how we survive and it's been a sustainable way of life.'"

The Salmon Project celebrates wild salmon's place at the heart of Alaska life, and the diverse ways it is present in residents' values, culture and landscape.

You can read Wilder's entire story and see his photos at <http://salmonlife.org/archived/stories/copper-river/>



ANNUAL MEETING SLATED FOR JUNE 3

The 2017 Annual Meeting of Shareholders will be held on Saturday, June 3, at Glennallen High School. Registration begins at 8 a.m. with call-to-order at 9 a.m.

Shareholder-owners will be mailed their annual reports and proxy materials by April 21. As in previous years, shareholder-owners will be able to vote online. Instructions will be mailed in April.

Shareholder-owners who submit their proxies by the early-bird proxy deadline of May 12 will be eligible for the early-bird prize drawing.

You can find more information about this year's and previous years' annual meetings at www.ahtna-inc.com/shareholders/annual-meeting-of-shareholders or contact Shareholder Services Manager Eileen Ewan at (907) 822-3476 or shservices@ahtna.net.

Candidate Forum

This year, one Candidate Forum will be held in Gakona on April 26. The meeting will also be recorded and made available online for viewing. Instructions were sent earlier this month for viewing the forum online. The candidate forum is an opportunity for shareholder-owners to get to know the board candidates. It is Ahtna's hope that shareholder-owners will use the information provided at the forum to help them make more-informed decisions regarding whom they want to elect.

Annual meeting temporary hires

Ahtna is accepting applications for:

- Set-up/take-down crew members
- Cooks/helpers
- Greeter/Elder assistant
- Custodian
- Runners
- Camera/video
- Medic/first-aid station
- Youth servers to assist Elders with drinks, meals and snacks (must be 14-19 years of age, attend mandatory server orientation June 2 and wear black pants, white dress shirt and good shoes to annual meeting)

Please visit <http://ahtna-inc.com/shareholders/employment> to apply for any of the positions. If you have not previously set up an online application, you will need to set up your online employment profile. Multiple applications can be filled at once. Simply check all the boxes next to each position.

If you have any questions, please contact Shareholder Development at 907-822-3476 or shdevelopment@ahtna.net or the Ahtna Human Resources Department at (907) 868-8250 or ahtnajobs@ahtna.net.

LAND MANAGERS VOLUNTEER ON THE CB300

For the past two years, Team Ahtna has volunteered to help with the Sourdough checkpoint for the Copper Basin 300.

Known as the toughest 300 miles in Alaska, 38 mushers start and end in Glennallen after five legs that stretch from Meiers Lake Lodge to Mendeltna Lodge. Sourdough is the first checkpoint and, at 70 miles from the starting line, it's one of the longest legs of the race.

With temperatures well below zero throughout the race, Ahtna and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) volunteers play a vital role in the race by setting up the checkpoint with warming tents, burn barrels, wood and warm stew for the mushers. They also helped set up staging areas for dog teams and organized the food drop station. Volunteer checkers were available around the clock and provided satellite phones for communication with race central, which helped provide important updates to anyone watching the race online or from afar.

Ahtna volunteers included Bruce and Shirley Cain, Isaac Cain, Darren Billum and Albert Craig.

Ryne Olson powered past three-time champion Allen Moore to capture the race. Olson, 28, came from behind in the final 60-mile stretch from Tolsona Lake Resort checkpoint to the finish. The transplanted Colorado resident now calls Two Rivers home.



Sourdough checkpoint volunteers include, from left, Nick Weber and Denton Hamby, outdoor recreation planners with the BLM Glennallen Field Office, and Darren Billum, Ahtna maintenance technician. Photo by Bruce Cain

SUBMIT GRADUATE GIFT REQUESTS TO GET RECOGNIZED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING

Shareholder-owners receive a congratulatory gift for graduation of high school or college. Check out the form below and submit the request by May 20 so we can celebrate your achievements at the Annual Meeting on June 3.

Here's how it works:

Go to: <http://ahtna-inc.com/shareholders/shareholder-services>. Under Shareholder Forms, select Graduate Information Form.

Use this form to apply for a congratulatory gift provided by Ahtna to its shareholder-owner graduates. It's a simple one-page document.

Requirements for the gift include:

- Must be a shareholder-owner
- Must be receiving a high school diploma/certificate of attendance/certificate of completion, GED, or associate, bachelor, master or doctorate degree
- Must submit all documents as required within one year following graduation or receipt of degree, diploma or certificate. Required documents include graduate information form, W9 form and copy of diploma or degree
- Please note that Graduate Gift Requests are managed under a separate program from Class L Stock and require their own submission of proof of graduation

Approved applicants will be officially recognized at the Annual Meeting; however, gifts will be tendered upon receipt of all necessary documents, at the discretion of management.

The gifts are as follows:

- High school Certificate of Attendance/Completion \$150
- Diploma/GED \$200
- Associate Degree \$250
- Bachelor Degree \$350
- Master Degree \$500
- Doctorate Degree \$750

Contact Carlene Pete at Shareholder Records for questions. Send the form and required documents via fax at (907) 822-3495, by email at cpete@ahtna.net or by mail to:

**Carlene Pete
Graduation Form
PO Box 649
Glennallen, AK 99588**

PROPOSED SETTLEMENT PRESERVES PUBLIC ACCESS

The State of Alaska and Ahtna, Inc. have been engaged in settlement discussions regarding the Klutina Lake Road off the Richardson Highway near Copper Center. Ahtna sued the State in 2008, alleging trespass, and the State counterclaimed to have the court decide the existence and scope of the right-of-way. Before starting a long and contentious trial, the State and Ahtna decided to see if they could settle the case.

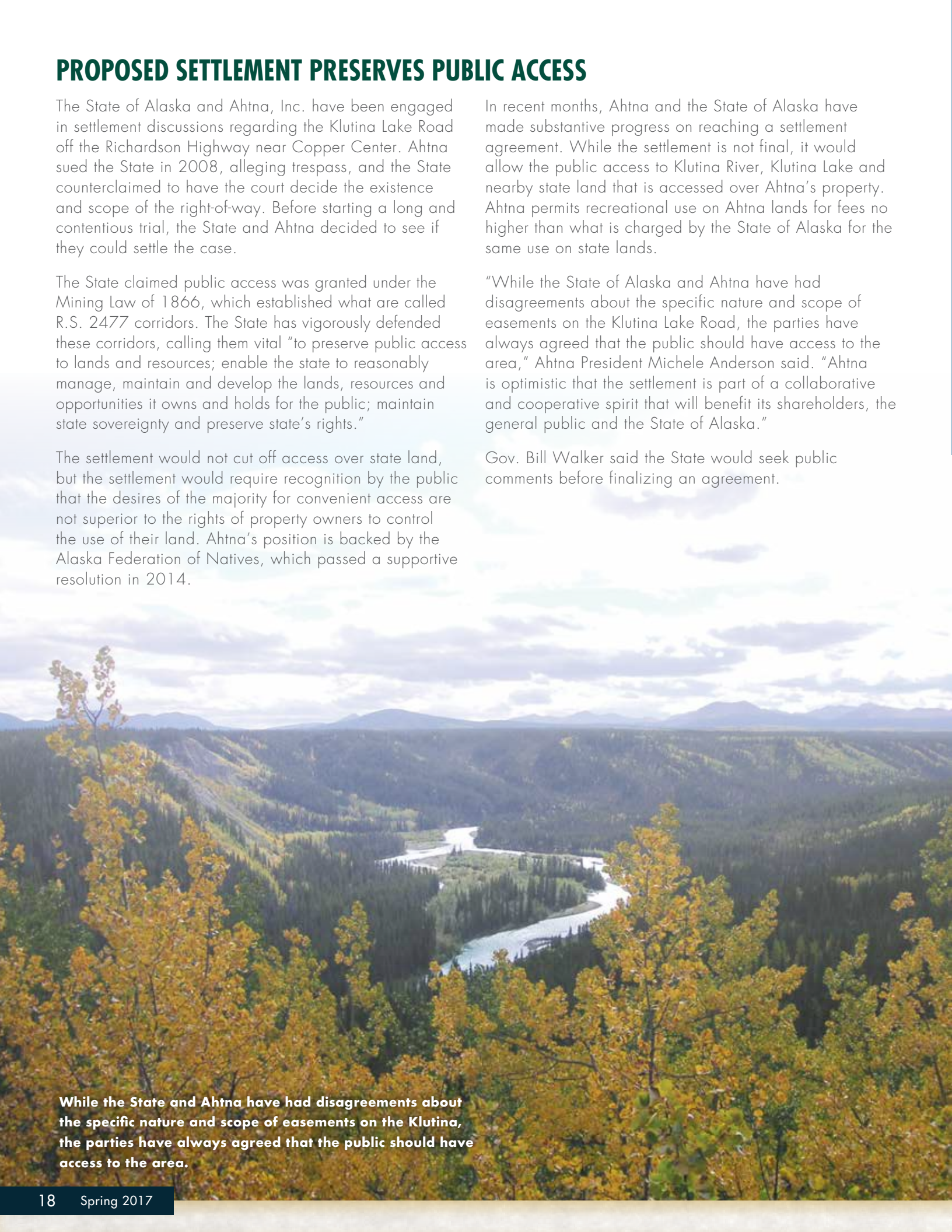
The State claimed public access was granted under the Mining Law of 1866, which established what are called R.S. 2477 corridors. The State has vigorously defended these corridors, calling them vital "to preserve public access to lands and resources; enable the state to reasonably manage, maintain and develop the lands, resources and opportunities it owns and holds for the public; maintain state sovereignty and preserve state's rights."

The settlement would not cut off access over state land, but the settlement would require recognition by the public that the desires of the majority for convenient access are not superior to the rights of property owners to control the use of their land. Ahtna's position is backed by the Alaska Federation of Natives, which passed a supportive resolution in 2014.

In recent months, Ahtna and the State of Alaska have made substantive progress on reaching a settlement agreement. While the settlement is not final, it would allow the public access to Klutina River, Klutina Lake and nearby state land that is accessed over Ahtna's property. Ahtna permits recreational use on Ahtna lands for fees no higher than what is charged by the State of Alaska for the same use on state lands.

"While the State of Alaska and Ahtna have had disagreements about the specific nature and scope of easements on the Klutina Lake Road, the parties have always agreed that the public should have access to the area," Ahtna President Michele Anderson said. "Ahtna is optimistic that the settlement is part of a collaborative and cooperative spirit that will benefit its shareholders, the general public and the State of Alaska."

Gov. Bill Walker said the State would seek public comments before finalizing an agreement.



While the State and Ahtna have had disagreements about the specific nature and scope of easements on the Klutina, the parties have always agreed that the public should have access to the area.

CONDOLENCES

In loving memory of our shareholder-owners who have passed

Kristina M. Clark
Samuel M. Cole
Grace M. Hill
Mary Levshakoff

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL

Apr 21 - Proxy Mail Out


Apr 21 - Class L Deadline


Apr 22 - Tazlina SVO
Tri-Annual

Apr 26 - Board Candidate
Informational Meeting,
5-8 p.m., Gakona

MAY

May 8 - AITRC Board,
10 a.m.

May 9 - Shareholder
Committee, 9 a.m. 

May 9 - Audit and Finance
Committee, 1 p.m. 

May 10 - Land Committee,
9 a.m. 

May 12 - CRNA Annual
Meeting, Cantwell

May 14 - Mother's Day

May 18 - Mentasta, 5 p.m.

May 18 - Glennallen
Graduation, 7 p.m.

May 19 - Kenny Lake, 6 p.m.

May 29 - Memorial Day

May 31 - Katie John Day

JUNE

June 1 - AI BOD, 9 a.m.,
Glennallen

June 2 - Election Committee
and Rules Committee, 9 a.m.,
Glennallen

June 3 - AI Annual
Shareholders Meeting, 9 a.m.,
Glennallen

June 10 - Chitina Native
Corp. Annual Meeting

June 12 - AITRC Board, 10
a.m.

June 18 - Father's Day

June 19 - Ahtna Day



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