

# Ahtna Tribal Energy Plan and Technical Assistance Project

Indian Energy Program Review  
November 17, 2016



Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission  
Karen Linnell, Executive Director

# Organizational Chart





# Purpose and Mission

Core Purpose:

**“Traditional resource stewardship.”**

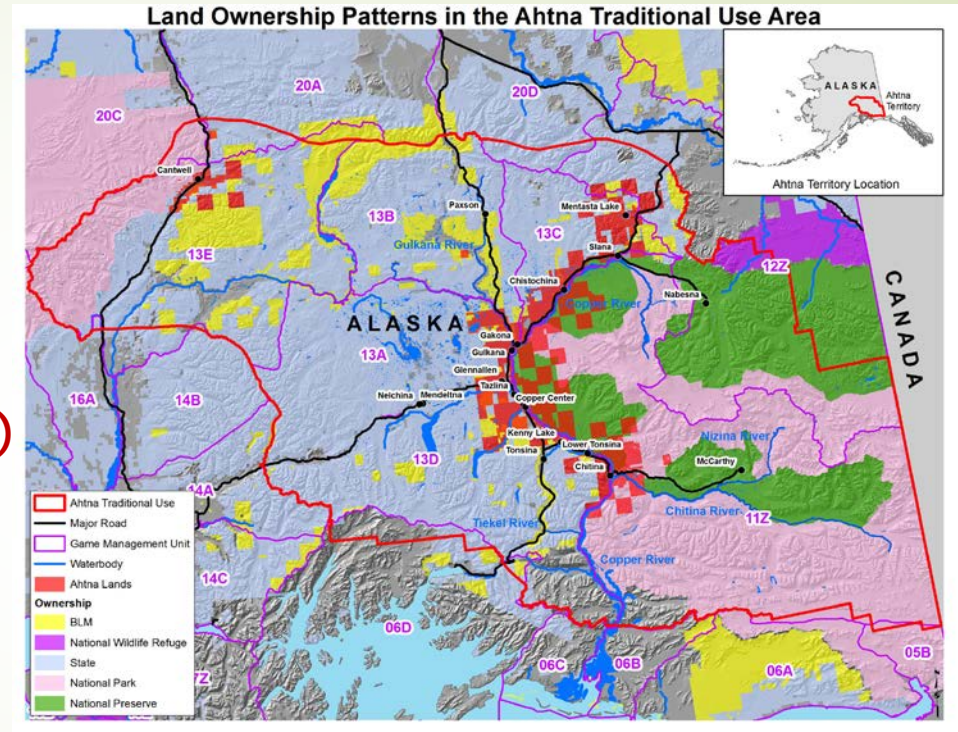
Mission Statement:

**“With self-determination we will conserve, develop and use our resources for the maximum sustained benefit of our people.”**

To be the governing body for Ahtna’s customary and traditional natural resource use and conservation. (bylaws)

# Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission

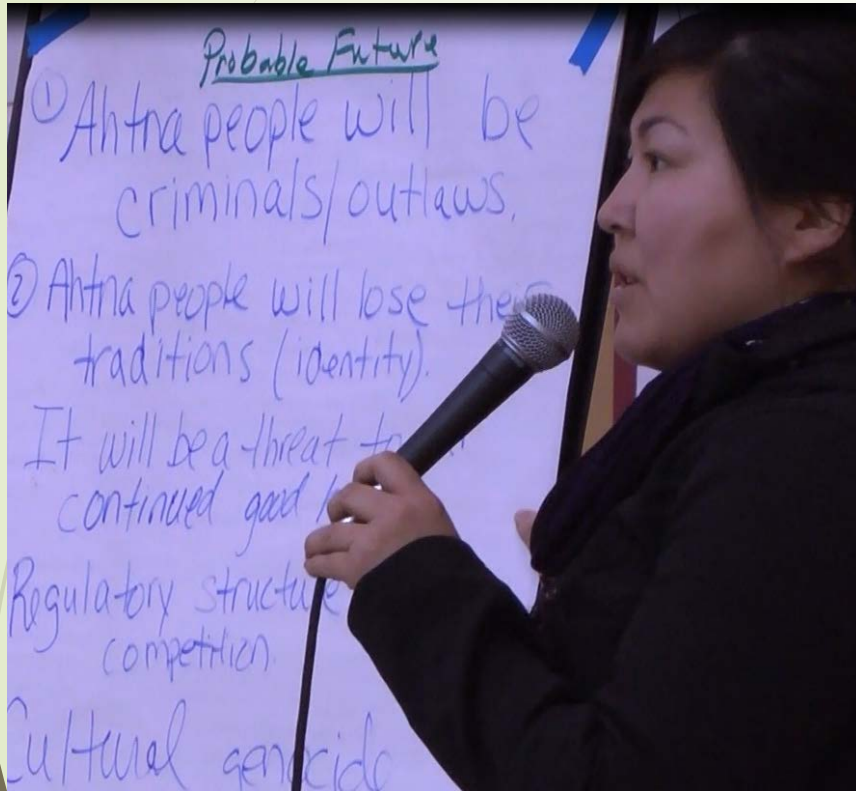
- 8 Ahtna Tribes, Ahtna, Inc. and Chitina Native Corporation
- **Our Traditional Territory is approximately 45,000 square miles of land (28,700,000 acres)**
- South-central Alaska
  - The Copper River Basin
  - 5 mountain ranges
  - 2 National Parks: Wrangell-St. Elias & Denali National Parks
  - Five major highways (500+ miles state road)
  - The Copper River watershed is the 4th largest in Alaska



# Our Economy

- ▶ There are eight federally recognized tribes in the region; Cantwell, Mentasta, Cheesh'Na, Gakona, Gulkana, Tazlina, Kluti-Kaah and Chitina.
- ▶ Population for the Ahtna Territory is 3,682 (2010 Census Data)
  - ▶ 890 Tribal Members in the 8 villages
  - ▶ 1,512 The total population (all ethnicity) for these Villages
- ▶ Median household income for these villages ranges from: \$13,802 Chitina to \$104,375 in Gakona.
- ▶ The cost for diesel fuel in the Ahtna Region is 3.02 per gallon on November 15, 2016,
- ▶ Recently published unsubsidized residential cost for electricity is
  - ▶ \$0.604/KWH on the AP&T system (Mentasta, Cheesh'na),
  - ▶ \$0.655 on the Chitina Electric system (Chitina),
  - ▶ \$0.2415/KWH on Copper Valley Electric (Gakona, Gulkana, Tazlina, & Kluti-Kaah)
  - ▶ \$0.17/KWH on Golden Valley (Cantwell).

# The Ideal Future



Search Conference, 2013

- ▶ Manage our own resources on our OWN homelands.
- ▶ Grow our own professionals to manage resources
- ▶ For all people to be supportive of our resource management



# Current Initiatives

- ▶ Ahtna Tribal Energy Plan and Technical Assistance Project (ATEPTAP)
- ▶ Tribal Wildlife Management Demonstration Project
- ▶ Tribal Stewardship Planning
- ▶ Moose and Caribou Habitat Planning & Moose Habitat Enhancement
- ▶ Biomass Pellet Mill in Gulkana (USDA RBEG)
- ▶ Conservation Innovation Grant (USDA CIG)
- ▶ USFWS Partners Program
- ▶ Water Quality Monitoring in the Copper River System
- ▶ Copper River Salmon Protection
- ▶ Community Resource and Fire Protection Plans

# Gulkana's Pellet Mill



**Governor Walker visits  
the Soaring Eagle Pellet  
Mill. – June 29, 2016**





# Technical Accomplishments

Basic idea: create the best maps, data, & management plans

- 28 million acre ecologically based GIS system developed
- Vegetation Analysis and Moose and Caribou landscape HSI models developed – Tazlina done
- Wildlife Program Development Plan – How to do it
- Various habitat projects completed -ongoing



# ATEPTAP Project Objectives

- ▶ Develop an Integrated Biomass-Moose Browse-Fire Protection Plan for Each Village
- ▶ Update the regional energy plan and develop an integrated Energy Plan for Each Village's High Priority Energy Opportunities, focused on weatherization and renewable solutions.
- ▶ Develop a Regional Tribal Energy Technical Assistance and Outreach Program.
- ▶ Provide on-site training, outreach and planning assistance to each Village Council as requested.
- ▶ Sponsor quarterly regional training sessions in community energy and resource stewardship planning.



# Project Summary

- ▶ Currently the Ahtna Inter Tribal Resource Commission (AITRC) priority is to develop an integrated biomass program that will incorporate:
  - ▶ sustainable biomass production that fits with
  - ▶ building fuel breaks and fuel reduction projects around our communities while
  - ▶ creating moose habitat wherever possible.

This is our food, fuel, fire protection (FFFP) initiative.

The goals of this initiative are sustainable and affordable heating fuel through linking affordable heating fuel, improved moose habitat and community wildfire protection.



# Partnership Development

**Partnerships are key to SUCCESS.**

- Working with UAF Tribal Management Program on Tribal Stewardship Planning
  - Partnering Tribes with Ahtna, Inc. and Chitina Native Corporation (land owners)
- Contracted with Copper Valley Economic Development Association (ARDOR) to provide Technical Support and update Regional Energy Plan
- Strong partnership with NRCS
  - EQIP projects & program support
  - Soils Surveys
- Strong partnership with USFWS in Partners Program
- Joint ADF&G, AITRC, AI browse survey training



# Landscape Partnerships Working Together

- GIS data sharing & collaboration
- Working together to develop a Landscape fire strategy for safety and habitat enhancement
- Landscape Resilience – reduce catastrophic fire risk
- Biomass Plan

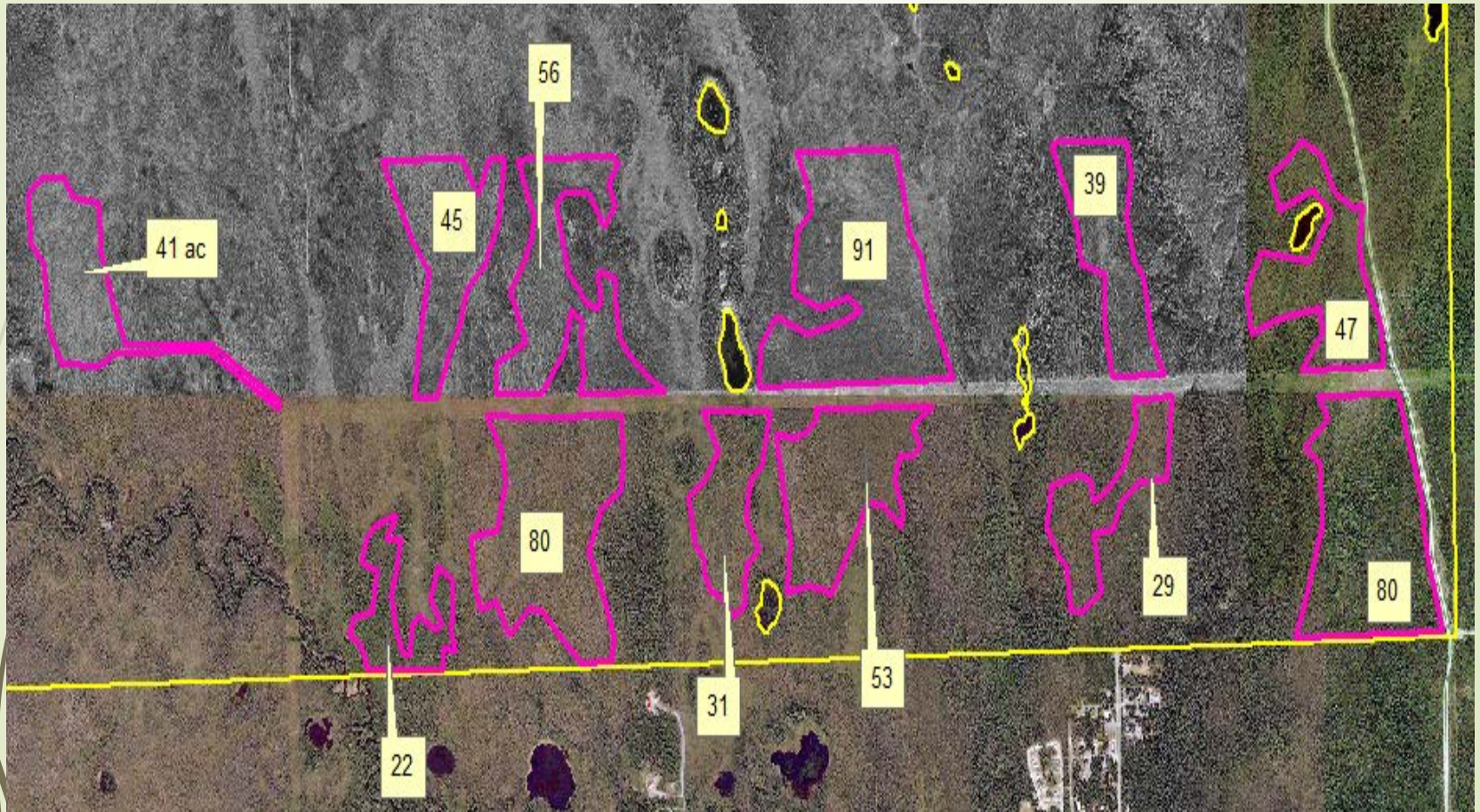
# Partners in Action



**Moose browse training  
with ADF&G, BLM and  
Ahtna.**



# Linking Habitat, Biomass & Fire Protection




# Tribal Stewardship Planning



- Steward = someone who protects or is responsible for money, property, etc.; a person whose job is to manage the land and property of another person
- Stewardship = the conducting, supervising, or managing of something; *especially* : the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care <stewardship of natural resources> - Merriam-Webster





# Significant Changes

**AITRC, Tribes, Ahtna, Chitina, and CRNA are working together on a Tribal Stewardship Plan**

- ▶ Participate as cultural and technical experts
- ▶ AITRC/Tribes/Ahtna are building the most impressive model of cooperation to create the capacity to engage in resource management
- ▶ Integrated moose habitat enhancement, biomass production, fire safe communities strategy – Village based plans in development
- ▶ Update the Regional Energy Plan to include Village Priorities.



# Questions?

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