

YRITWC E-Currents



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From the Alaska Executive Director

As summer transition into fall, YRITWC is wrapping up it's field season of water sampling, river temperature monitoring, permafrost active layer monitoring, river erosion monitoring and other miscellaneous fieldwork in the watershed. This has also been completed by the summer interns. We thank Temyka Ayuluk, Leah Shaffer and Charles Thorpe for all their hard work they have completed during their summer internships as well as the Alaska Community Foundation, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Charlotte Martin Foundation which financially supported YRITWC to able to provide these internship opportunities.

Letters have been sent to our member tribes and Canadian First Nations to request those tribes willing to host a 2023 Summit. We are looking forward to hearing back from interested tribes with their interest or questions.

YRITWC will be providing water science data to the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association in their quest to address the decline in salmon within the Yukon River watershed. This project will span over the next five years. We are looking forward to working jointly with YRDFA on this issue.

October brings the Alaska Federation of Native Convention back in person this year. We hope to many of you should you be traveling to Anchorage. Please feel free to stop by for a visit at our office located at 201 East 3rd Avenue.

Theresa Clark

Welcome to the YRITWC!

My name is Wes Goodwin 1/2 Inupiaq from Kotzebue and 1/2 Lakota from the Pine Ridge Reservation. I've provided technical writing for grants and reports to city and tribal entities in northwest Alaska and wrote grants for our regional non-profit specializing in capital projects. I have a background in communications having been a Program Director, Operations Assistant and Announcer for the local public radio station and serving the borough government as Communication's Coordinator/Assistant to the Mayor.

I graduated from a rural high school and raised my children in rural Alaska. I am the father of 6 children and 9 grandchildren. As an enrolled member of my village's tribe and shareholder of my region's for profit corporation, I hope to bring my understanding of the challenges of being stewards to the land, air and water that all living things depend on.

I am hoping to utilize my past work experience and understanding of living in rural Alaska to help the YRITWC meet its vision & mission and look forward to meeting the people we serve.



I have been hard at work reading about water governance and water stewardship in Alaska. The overall goal of my 12-week internship is to collect information that will help the Watershed Council and its partners increase the level of protection on the Yukon River Watershed. To do this, I have been researching a few different topics: Alaska water law, Federal water protection policies, and the Rights of Nature movement. Fueled by lots of snacks, chocolate, and hot coffee, I am looking for anything that could potentially help the Watershed Council and its member Tribes protect the Yukon River. For options that don't seem like they'll work for Alaska, or in the context of the Yukon River Watershed, I'm trying to figure out why. This information will be presented at the four workshops that the Science Department team is planning to host later this year in communities in the Yukon River Watershed.

When I feel like I'm getting stuck reading about water governance and stewardship, I switch gears and start to research different tools, resources, and grants that may help with watershed conservation and education. I am putting these resources into a spreadsheet that will be shared by the Watershed Council. In this spreadsheet I'm also writing about active watershed councils all around the United States, and their projects, successes, and challenges. Seeing what other Watershed Councils are doing to protect the quality of their water and the species that depend on their watershed gives me hope and new ideas. These Watershed Councils also usually have links to great resources that could be helpful to us too.

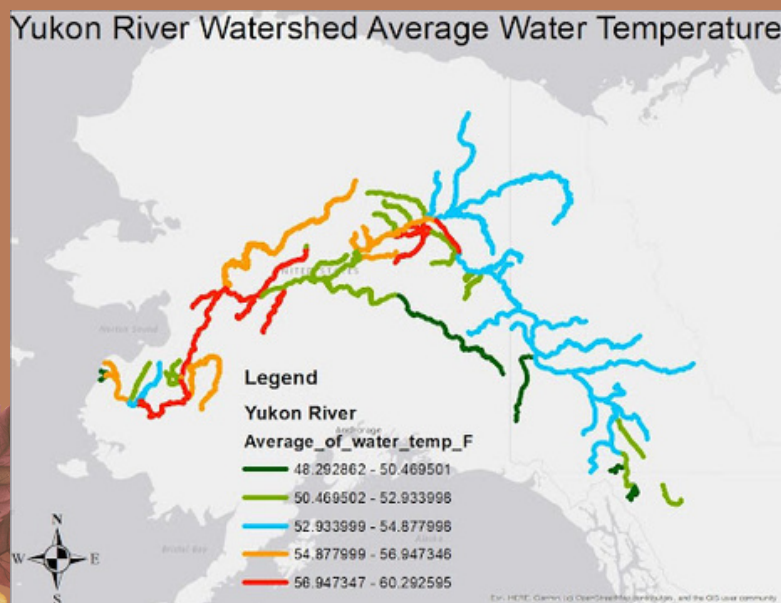
Sometimes I feel like I can't possibly sit at my desk and look at my computer any longer. When that happens, I go into the office's lab room and put together water sampling kits, test water samples' turbidity and alkalinity, or do the very exciting job of washing used sample bottles.

I have about four weeks left of my internship, and in that time I'll be doing a couple more trips into the field and summarizing all my research into a presentation for future workshops and webinars.

Leah Shaffer

Hello, I am Charles Thorpe, an intern for the watershed council. I have been working on water quality trends and climate predictions for the upcoming workshops. I am taking Ion data, USGS data, and SNAP's Climate Predictions to illustrate water quality trends in the watershed. I will then present the results with my fellow coworkers and provide an in-depth analysis of the results. In order to give a clear image of Yukon River's future. I am also putting all the predictions and trends maps into ArcGIS story maps that will give in depth explanations into each trend and predictions and why it is important. An example of my work can be seen in the picture, where I have the average water temperatures in summer. From all of my work, I hope to show how the Yukon River is fairing for all life in the watershed.

Charlie Thrope



Hello everyone! I have had a jam-packed summer of travel! Updating the YRITWC brownfields inventory and getting the new sites in the inventory. I traveled to Alakanuk, Huslia, Venetie, Arctic Village, Marshall, and Grayling! In Alakanuk, Venetie, and Arctic Village I updated the brownfields inventory and got some new pictures. While in Huslia worked on getting samples of what was inside of drums that have been there for a while! was in Marshall I got water samples and updated some inventory there. Grayling is my upcoming trip where they are going to have a hazwoper class and I will be there to help with that and work on some brownfield sites there. Some out-of-state travel I did this summer was going to the Brownfields National Conference in Oklahoma City! I learned a lot and am excited to use what I learned there here. Some pieces of training I finished this summer were getting lead and asbestos awareness.

Jordan Finney



IGAP Spotlight



Name: Eric Alstrom

Tribe I work for: Yupiit of Andreafski

Years worked in IGAP: 8 years

Proudest Accomplishment in the program: Getting a youth environmental club started with the local school district and science teacher before the pandemic, with the partnership of YRITWC and UAA was able to check our local fish for heavy metals and mercury levels, and elected on to the EPA Region 10 Tribal Operations Committee (RTOC) Alaska Seat 3.

Motivation for work: My motivation to continue my work is the health of both our people, community, and environment. Almost everything that is flown or barged into the community stays in the community landfill. With the advances in technology, we can also connect to more people both in and outside the community that involves environment information, concerns, and training.

YRITWC's IGAP Year Review

Kari Eschenbaer Young

Happy fall everyone! This is one of my favorite times of the year as the colors change to various autumn hues. Even though I'm never quite ready for winter, I do love this cooler and slower transition period. I hope you all are enjoying this season as well. As September ends, YRITWC's IGAP fiscal year comes to a close as well. With most closing periods I like to reflect on the overall experience. Thinking back on this past year, I wanted to highlight some of the work that YRITWC was able to accomplish through our IGAP program this past year.

This year, our IGAP program was able to provide water quality support through various avenues. These avenues include water quality training, providing personalized technical assistance to more than 15 individual Tribal environmental professionals, creating and assisting with QAPPs (Quality Assurance Project Plans) for Tribes to conduct environmental sampling with federal grant funds, and supporting water sampling throughout the watershed with logistical support. In addition, our IGAP program was able to assist two Signatory Tribes with sampling and lab analysis for local environmental concerns.

Additionally, we have been able to continue outreach and education with our EPA IGAP funds. This includes creating educational material (such as the activity page that you'll find at the end of this newsletter), newsletter content including highlighting awesome IGAP workers throughout the Yukon River Watershed, two social media campaigns sharing information about the environment, holding six webinars for IGAP personnel in the watershed, and sending out a monthly listserv to nearly 100 Tribal environmental staff with updates and opportunities from YRITWC and other organizations.

Lastly, our IGAP program aims to support and work with our Signatory Tribes. This year we provided one-on-one technical assistance related to Tribal grants to four communities. Additionally, I finished our grant year by creating a SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) template to make available to IGAP programs. YRITWC staff under the IGAP program have also worked on writing grants to expand the work of the Science program as well as undergo trainings to grow as professionals by attending trainings and conferences.

Overall, it's been quite the year and I'm proud of what we were able to accomplish, even with myself being out on maternity leave earlier in the year. Honestly, it's working with YRITWC's Tribes and seeing amazing IGAP work getting done throughout the watershed that keeps me motivated with the work I do. So thank you to all those Tribal environmental professionals out there who are working hard to do better their community!



The Andreafski River, photo captured by Kari Young while assisting with water sampling with Yupiit of Andreafski's IGAP Environmental Program Director, Eric Alstrom

Goodbye YRITWC

Tasha Mockta

I have been very fortunate to have worked for the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council the last several years and my time here has come to an end. I am leaving to pursue finishing my degree at APU in Marine and Environmental Sciences. Along with furthering my education, I am a new mom and would like to spend time with my kids and enjoy every milestone that comes along the way.

It has been a great honor to work with all those within the Yukon River Watershed and those outside as well outside of the organization. I am so lucky that I have been able to start off as an intern and move my way up to the Brownfield Department. I have met the kindest, warm, and welcoming people during my time here and you all will not be forgotten. I will take the knowledge and advice that you have given me and move forward and hope to pass that on in my future endeavors!

If you would like to reach out to me, my personal email is tasha.nicole.mockta@gmail.com! Thank you YRITWC and to all the beautiful Indigenous People of the Yukon River! It has been such an honor to with with you all! You will be greatly missed!

National Brownfield Conference Presentation



It was lucky enough to be apart of a panel at the National Brownfield Conference held in Oklahoma City this year in August. The panel was called 'Approaches to Tribal Brownfield Stewardship: Tales of Renewal and Resilience from the Pacific Northwest.' I discussed the Brownfield Department and the two grants that YRITWC Brownfield Department has been awarded (the STRP and the Community-Wide Assessment grant).

I talked breidly about what departments the YRITWC departments and what we do and who we work with. I felt fortunate to be able to represent Alaska, since i feel that the representation is bare to none at conference such as these.

I felt that it was important because Alaska needs more representation and needs to be incoperated more into larger conference such as this so we can move towards gaining more sessions that are applicalble and useful to us!

ACTIVITY PAGE

What's up with WATER QUALITY?

Did you know?

'Live with and respect the land, sea, and all of nature' is one of many shared Traditional values of Alaska Native people.

Water quality can be thought of as a measure of the suitability of water for a particular use based on selected **physical, chemical, and biological** characteristics.

Water in Alaska

See the translation for the word 'water' in Native languages across Alaska.









Yupik : meq **Deg Xinag** : te

Tanacross Athabaskan : tuu

Gwich'in : chuu **Alutiiq** : taangaq

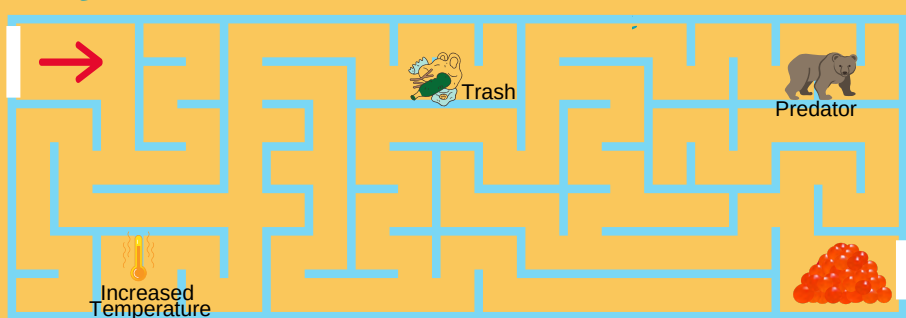
Koyukon Athabaskan : too

Activity Directions: Draw a line to the property on the right that connects it to the water characteristic it belongs to. Answers can be found on the bottom of the page.

<p>Physical Related to the appearance of water.</p> <p>Chemical A characteristic of water that can be observed in a chemical reaction.</p> <p>Biological Related to living organisms.</p>	<p>Example</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/>	<p>Odor </p> <p>pH  Measurement of the acidity or basicity of a liquid.</p> <p>Algae  A diverse group of aquatic organisms that have the ability to conduct photosynthesis.</p> <p>Temperature </p> <p>Turbidity  The cloudiness or haziness of a liquid.</p> <p>Bacteria </p> <p>Hardness  The amount of dissolved minerals such as calcium and magnesium in water.</p> <p>Local Observation </p>
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Help the pink salmon make it's way through the obstacles it faces in the river so it can reach it's spawning ground.



Answers: Lines drawn from Physical should have been Temperature, Turbidity, and Local Observation. Lines drawn from Chemical should have been pH and Hardness. Lines from Biological should have been Algae and Bacteria.