

E-Currents

YUKON RIVER INTER-TRIBAL WATERSHED COUNCIL NEWSLETTER



WORD FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As spring approaches, we here at the Watershed Council, are preparing for a busy field season of water sampling and monitoring, brownfields inspections and reaching out to the Watershed communities. Also coming up during the 2023 summer, YRITWC will be holding the 2023 Biennial Summit. The Nenana Native Council has graciously agreed to the Watershed Council to hold the Summit there in Nenana. Dates are set for the summit to be held the week of July 24, 2023. We ask that tribes watch their mail for more information on this upcoming event. Janet Angaiak has been hired as the Summit Coordinator. Individuals who would like more information are encouraged to contact her at 907 258-3337 or jangaiakeyritwc.org.

SAVE THE DATE

YRITWC's 2023 Biennial Summit will be held in Nenana on the week of July 24th.

For more info contact Janet Angaiak at jangaiak@yritwc.org

On behalf of YRITWC, I would like to extend our appreciation and well wishes to Kari Young. Kari is the Indian General Assistance Program (IGAP) Coordinator for YRITWC and has worked with all of the tribes and communities within the Watershed. After six years of services, Kari is leaving the organization for personal pursuits and future opportunities. We all will miss her and wish her and her family the best in her pursuits.

As breakup nears, I encourage Watershed residents to prepare for any potential flooding that may become possible and look forward to seeing many of you in Nenana at the Summit.

-Theresa Clark

The Newest Additions to YRITWC

CHAD

Environmental Specialist

Hi, my name is Chad Cook and I'm a new Environmental Specialist at the YRITWC. I'm from the traditional and ancestral territory of the Lenni-Lenape people. I'm thankful to be contributing to the YRITWC's Drinking Water Improvement Program. I'm looking forward to providing technical assistance to communities within the Yukon River Basin in hopes of making sure everyone has access to clean drinking water to support the health and well-being of local residents.



JANET

Event Coordinator

My name is Janet Angaiak. I was raised in the village of Tununak on Nelson Island along the Bering Sea and left after my highschool graduation and returned back to my home village in 2012 and moved to Anchorage in 2022. I am currently a Temporary Event Coordinator for the upcoming 2023 Biennial Summit that will be held in Nenana, Alaska. I love doing all sorts of activities, and I have never had a specific entertainment that I personally like so I love doing new things. I can be reached at jangaiak@yritwc.org.

Newest Additions Continued

BEN

Brownfields Technician

Hi Everyone,

My name is Ben Brandeberry, I am the new Brownfields Technician over here at the YRITWC. I am originally from Anchorage and have lived in SE Idaho for the past four years. I am graduating in early May with a B.S in Geology. What brought me to YRITWC was an interest in environmental science; I would like to learn more about EPA policy and working with the EPA. I am excited to get out to the villages this summer and meet you all! Reach Me at bbrandeberry@yritwc.org.



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Angaiak at jangaik@yritwc.org

Brownfields News



On the left is Jordan Finney the Brownfield Coordinator and on the right is our new Brownfield Technician, Ben

Hello from the Brownfields Department! It was fantastic seeing everyone at the TCC and ATCEM conferences. YRITWC had a great time meeting up with everyone in person again. We have some exciting things coming up so read up! In early April we had our second webinar “Clean up Dollars”, this was about where to find the money for clean up, different cleanup or infrastructure grants available, and how YRITWC can help during that process.

Also in April, we had our Qualified Environmental Sampler training, held in Anchorage, this was a 4-day intensive training that taught participants how to properly take samples and they walk out with a certificate! We already held our Brownfields 101 Webinar, but don't worry, the webinar was recorded and is available from our website. Check facebook for the link!

Summer is coming, the ground is thawing, snow is melting, birds are chirping and you know what that means..... Field Season! Please check your email and wait by your phone so that we can schedule a site visit to your community! And remember, If you think there is a site in your community that could be a possible brownfield always feel free to reach out to the brownfield staff. Jordan Finney: jfinney@yritwc.org or Ben Brandeberry: bbrandeberry@yritwc.org.

Thank you all and here's to a great summer!

-Jordan Finney & Ben Brandeberry

Science Department News

Hello from the Science Department,

We have quite a lot of news to talk about. One piece of news is about our Water Resilience Workshops that we've been hosting. Kari Young and Edda Mutter worked together with several partners to help enhance Chevak's local online atlas, named the Nunaput Atlas. Other pieces of news is our Science Director, Edda Mutter and Environmental Technician, Charles Thorpe, went out to the fields to do Snow Sampling. Finally, IGAP has a new "IGAP Spotlight" for this newsletter. Please read on to find out more about our exciting news. We look forward to this summer and working with all of you once again.



Charles Thorpe on the right, and Edda on the left. Getting ready to do snow samples



This image comes from our Water Resilience Workshop in Nenana. Thank you all for your participation.

About the Water Resilience Workshops

by Edda Mutter & Charles Thorpe

Hello, this is Charles Thorpe here to bring news about the Water Resilience Workshops that Edda Mutter, Temyka Ayuluk, and myself have hosted thus far and will continue to host. So far, we have hosted two workshops that were held in Fairbanks and Nenana. For the Fairbanks Workshop we had participants from Fort Yukon, Venetie, and Beaver. During the Nenana Workshop we had participants from Fort Yukon, Nenana, Russian Mission, Circle, and Tanacross. We have two more workshops scheduled, one in Galena on May 2nd and 3rd. The other one will take place in Anchorage on May 9th and 10th. After the workshop, we will have water quality training that will happen on May 11th and 12th. The goals of these workshops are to discuss historical, current, and future climate, water resources and landscape changes in your region's as well as what action we can take to plan for sustainable water resources for the upcoming generations.

Just to give you an idea, about some of our community conservation topics for example, during the Fairbanks workshop, landscape changes have been discussed by participants that certain areas changed from grasslands and turned wetter into tundra ponds. This led to discussion about how these changes impact infrastructure like landfills and more. At the Nenana workshop, participants discussed drinking water abundance for the present and future. A common point of discussion was potential threats to water quality and water abundance. For the workshop in Galena, we hope to understand how the Koyukuk River and the middle region of the Yukon River has changed over time and areas of concern for peoples in this region. That way we can better understand and serve the Koyukuk and Middle Yukon River Communities. While in Anchorage, the upcoming workshop is tailored to the Lower Yukon River and Coastal Communities. At that workshop, we hope to understand local area changes overtime and peoples' areas of concerns as well. If you would like to participate in the Anchorage Workshop please contact me at cthорpe@rtiwc.org or contact Edda Mutter at emutter@ritwc.org.



Chevak Youth Present at ATCEM



One of the Chevak 6th grade students shares the video she created with Elder interviews at ATCEM.

By Kari Young & Edda Mutter

YRITWC and the Exchange for Local Observations and Knowledge of the Arctic (ELOKA) partners have been collaborating on a National Science Foundation-funded project. Under this project the Chevak Traditional Council, Chevak School and the YRITWC partnered to enhance Chevak's local online atlas, named the Nunaput Atlas. The Nunaput Atlas is a "community driven, interactive, online atlas for the Chevak Traditional Council and Chevak community members to preserve environmental observations, scientific data collection and Indigenous Knowledge, to share their stories about the land"; Through this project, YRITWC was able to contract an Alaskan non-profit organization called the See Stories which specializes in digital storytelling and education. The See Stories staff worked directly with educators and youth in Chevak to teach and guide them through conducting interviews and to create videos back in November. The students interviewed Elders and created short videos on various topics such as the tundra, the local harbor, fish camp, and more. In the future, the videos will be making their way onto the Nunaput Atlas.

In March, six of the students attended and presented at the Alaska Tribal Conference on Environmental Management (ATCEM) in the Youth Track. The six Chevak 6th graders introduced themselves and their videos before they were played in the session that was filled with conference attendees. The students answered questions from the audience afterwards. YRITWC staff member, Kari Young, along with See Stories Director, Marie Acemah, and Chevak 6th Grade Teacher, Roger Reisman, also discussed their role in the project. In addition, the students attended some of the other conference sessions and enjoyed learning more about permafrost and Typhoon Merbok as well as watching Indigenous performances at the conference. It was a successful experience indeed!

We would like to thank everyone who has shown support towards this project. We would also like to thank our partners who made it successful: Chevak Traditional Council, Chevak School, ELOKA, See Stories, and especially Cynthia Paniyak, Roger Reisman, Marie Acemah,

Can YRITWC Assist you with your Water Quality Needs?

By Kari Young & Edda Mutter

The ice is thawing and the snow is melting which means one thing.. summer is coming! As your IGAP program may be preparing for summer work, please note that YRITWC is here to assist and partner with you if needed. YRITWC can provide technical assistance and answer any water quality questions you may have whether it's about starting a water quality monitoring program, equipment to use, or any questions you may have. Additionally, through the Indigenous Observation Network (ION) we can help provide equipment and supplies to your Tribe to meet water quality monitoring needs. We also have limited funds to help Tribes sample any water that may be of concern in their community. If you are interested in learning more about water quality monitoring or would like to freshen up your knowledge, YRITWC is holding two Water Quality Trainings along with Water Resilience Workshops in early May, one in Galena and the other in Anchorage. If you have any questions or would like more information about the training or water quality monitoring, please contact the YRITWC Science Director, Edda Mutter, at emuttereyritwc.org.



YRITWC IGAP SPOTLIGHT

NAME: STANLEY TAYLOR

TRIBE YOU WORK FOR: NATIVE VILLAGE OF TETLIN

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN IGAP OR SIMILAR WORK: 3
YEARS

**PROUDEST ACCOMPLISHMENT COMPLETED THROUGH
YOU IGAP PROGRAM:** ANNUAL SPRING CLEAN UP.

SOMETHING THAT MOTIVATES YOU IN YOUR WORK:
GREAT GRAND KIDS SAFETY.



With Greetings, There are Farewells

Kari's Farewell



After over six years with Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council, I have decided to close this chapter in my life to move onto a new one. While it's a bittersweet change, I leave YRITWC with years of wonderful memories and a changed person. It's challenging to write exactly how I feel after my time here at YRITWC and explain the gratitude that I hold but I will try my best.

When I first started working for YRITWC I had limited experience with IGAP, grants, and water quality. Through training, learning from others, time, and experience, I thankfully was able to grow in my position at the organization as well as an individual. I believe that the work I accomplished in my time here was able to serve the mission of the organization as well as the communities of the Yukon River Watershed. Some of my favorite memories over the years including canoeing portions of the Yukon River and working with communities along the way, leading environmental education activities for youth, getting frostbite while doing snow measurements with Edda, and working with some hardworking IGAP and Tribal staff. I have learned so much from so many individuals during my time at YRITWC and I want to thank everyone who has taught me and hosted me over the years, especially all the Alaska Native and First Nation peoples that I have been lucky enough to have worked with. It has truly been a pleasure to work with so many wonderful partners over the years. I have learned and been inspired by great work happening all throughout the Yukon River Watershed region.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me on social media or at my personal email: kari.eschenbacher@gmail.com. Thank you to YRITWC and all the terrific partners out there. I feel so blessed to have gotten to know you all!

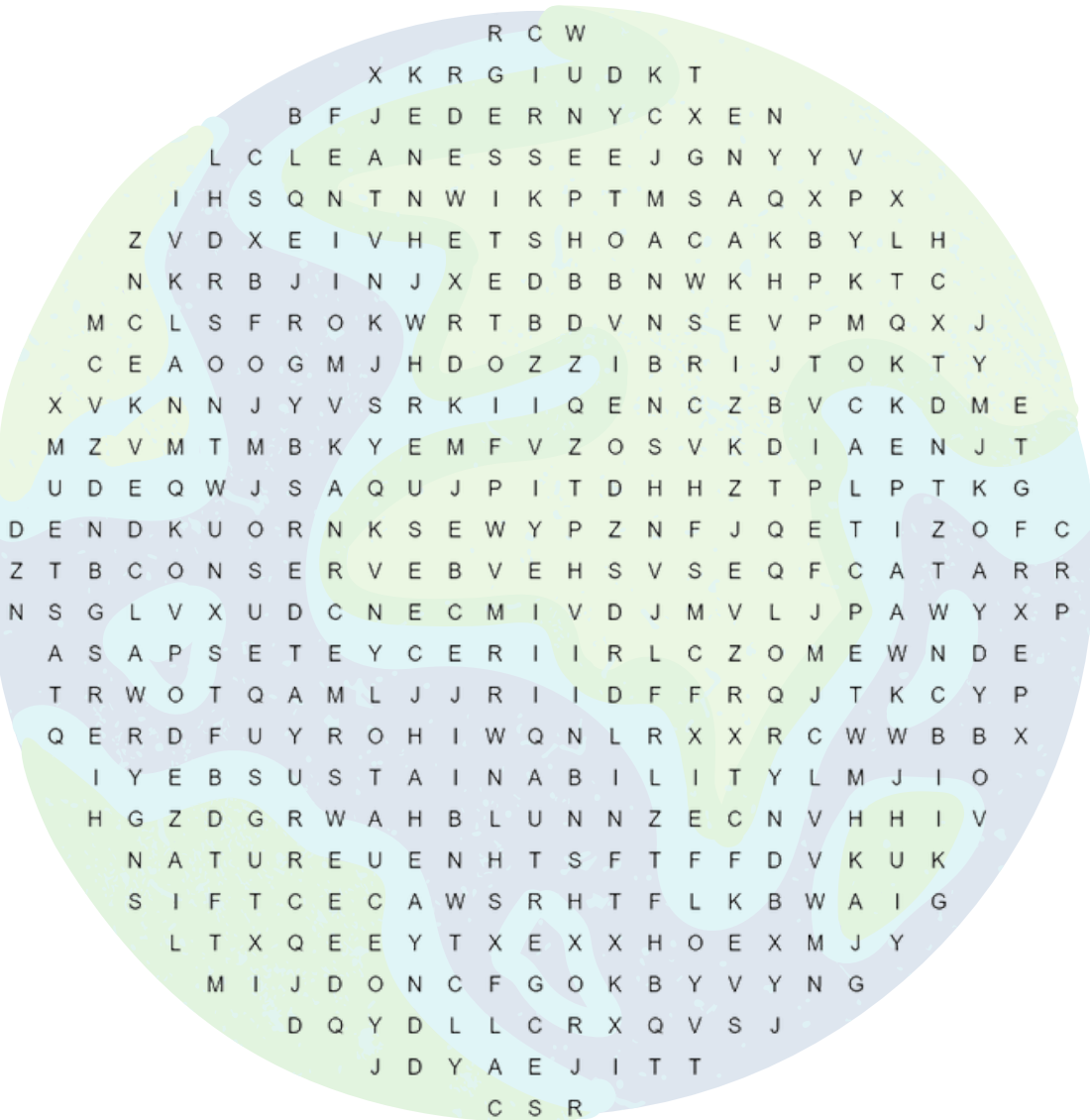
-Kari Young

ACTIVITY PAGE



Did you know?
The Yup'ik word for earth is nuna. And the Gwich'in word for earth is nan.

Word Search



Word Search Instructions:

Find and mark all the words from the list below hidden inside the puzzle. The words may be placed horizontally, vertically, or diagonally.

- EARTH
- WATER
- NATURE
- AIR
- RECYCLE
- GREEN
- REUSE
- REDUCE
- CONSERVE
- CLEAN
- LAND
- RESPECT
- RESPONSIBILITY
- ENVIRONMENT
- PROTECT
- SUSTAINABILITY

Reciprocity is the practice of exchanging with another for mutual benefit.

List 3 ways the Earth gives to you:

List 3 ways you give to the Earth:
