PROPOSAL TO NAME A GEOGRAPHIC FEATURE IN ALASKA

ALASKA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Department of Natural Resources

Office of History and Archaeology 550 West 7th Ave., Suite 1310
Anchorage, AK 99501-3565
(907) 269-8721 oha@alaska.net

ACTION REQUESTED

_X new name
__application change
__name change
__other

DESCRIPTION:

- Proposed name:  Troth Yeddha'
- Type of feature:  ridge
- Evidence the feature is unnamed:  Unofficial designations include “West Ridge”, “Lower Campus” and “College Hill,” but none of these has official status in GNIS. Moreover, these unofficial names refer to particular sub-regions of the ridge as opposed to the entire feature.

LOCATION:  ridge at the site of University of Alaska

Distance and direction from nearest community or prominent topographic feature:
one-quarter to three-quarters of a mile west of College, Alaska

Borough:  Fairbanks North Star Borough  USGS map: Fairbanks D-2

USGS map: Fairbanks D-2

Latitude: 64° 51.663’ N  Longitude: 147° 51.170 W  Elev: 614’

Section: 1 to 6, Township: T1S  Range: R2W to R1W

TYPE OF PROPOSAL:

LOCAL USAGE - Is the proposed name in local use? Yes (see description)

State the number of years known by recommended name:
Traditional Athabascan name of unknown antiquity, first recorded in 1967 by linguist Michael Krauss.

State variant spelling and/or usage if known:
Troth Yetth, Tro Yeddha’, Troyeddha’, Troth Yedda, Tsoł Yedla’, Tsoł Teye’

Is there local opposition or conflict regarding the proposed name?
The proposed spelling Troth Yeddha’ is widespread and is preferred by Lower Tanana Athabascan speakers and the Alaska Native Language Center. The name is being submitted without a generic term such as “Ridge”.

1
DESRIPTIVE - Provide information about the feature and why the proposed name is appropriate:

_Troth Yeddha’_ is widely recognized as the traditional Lower Tanana Athabascan name for the ridge on which the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus is located. _Troth Yeddha’_ means ‘Indian potato ridge.’ The parsnip-like root of the plant *Hedysarum alpinum* is an emergency vegetable food for Alaska Athabascans. Given that archaeological occupation of the Campus Site dates to 3000 years BP (Mobley 1991), the name _Troth Yeddha’_ may be of great antiquity. Regardless of its age the name has been repeatedly mentioned in modern times, as indicated in the following brief chronology:

- 1956. Laura Anderson (1902-1974, the last speaker of the Chena dialect), described how her mother gathered Indian potatoes in the lower Chena River area. (See Attachment A for this and other sources; also see [http://www.uaf.edu/anlc/troth/](http://www.uaf.edu/anlc/troth/) for factual information about the place name.)
- 1998. Name appears on widely-circulated poster distributed by University of Alaska Fairbanks Interior-Aleutians Campus.
- 1998. Name appears on visitors center map at Creamers Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge (Alaska Department of Fish and Game).
- 2008. University of Alaska Board of Regents endorse name Troth Yeddha’ Park for 7-acre open space east of UA Museum (see Attachment C).
- 2012. Comprehensive inventory of 1060 Lower Tanana place names, including several names based on the word _troth_. (*Lower Tanana Athabaskan Place Names*, compiled by James Kari. Fairbanks: Alaska Native Language Center; 105 pp with 3 reference maps.)

COMMEMORATIVE - _NOT APPLICABLE_

OTHER - Provide information about the feature and why the proposed name is appropriate:

Official recognition of the place name _Troth Yeddha’_ reinforces the University of Alaska Fairbanks core theme to “connect with Alaska Native communities through contemporary and traditional knowledge.” Athabascan Elder Robert Charlie, one of the last speakers of
the Lower Tanana language, noted that use of the name will “recapture the ancient view.” Official recognition will support the growing unofficial use of the name on the campus.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:
Do other property owners adjacent to the feature endorse the proposed name?
(See Attachment D, letters of support)

PROPOSERS:
1) Robert Charlie
   University of Alaska Fairbanks, Geophysical Institute
   PO box 74776, Fairbanks, AK  99709
   907-590-1927 / robert.charlie@gi.alaska.edu
   Date:  4/20/12

2) James Kari
   Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks
   1902 Hilling Ave., Fairbanks, AK  99709
   907-374-1808 / james.kari@alaska.edu

3) Annette Freiburger
   Coordinator, Nenana Center, Interior Aleutians Campus
   616 Slater Dr., Fairbanks, AK  99701
   907-474-5826 / ajfreiburger@alaska.edu

ATTACHMENTS
A. List of sources on Troth Yeddha’
B. map: placement of proposed name on ridge
C. 2008 University of Alaska materials on Troth Yeddha’ Park
D. Letters of support
Attachment A. SOURCES ON TROTH YEDDHA’

1) ANLC Archive catalogue entries on Lower Tanana place names or with citations of the name Troth Yeddha’
   grouped chronologically

TC956AL1956
Title: According to Mama
Contributor(s):  Anderson, Laura David (author);  Loftus, Audrey (author);

TNM961K1962c
Title: [Miscellaneous Minto-Nenana notes, 1962-1969.]
Contributor:  Krauss, Michael E. (author);

TN961MKK1962
Title: [Laura Anderson, Aug. 5, 1962.]
Contributor(s):  Kari, James (author);  Krauss, Michael E. (author);  McKennan, Robert A. (author);  Anderson, Laura David (speaker);

TN961K1969b
Title: [Notes on Chena dialect.]
Contributor(s):  Krauss, Michael E. (author);  Anderson, Laura David (speaker);

TNM961K1974a  CD
Title: Minto-Nenana Athabaskan Noun Dictionary, Preliminary Version.
Contributor:  Krauss, Michael E. (author);

TNM979T1979a
Title: [Minto place names.]
Contributor:  John, Peter (author);  Thompson, Chad L. (author);  Titus, Matthew. (author);

TNM973ATJ1980  CD
Title: Native place names of Minto Flats and vicinity, Central Alaska.
Contributor:  Andrews, Elizabeth F. (author);  Thompson, Chad L. (author);  John, Peter (author);  Kari, James (editor);  Titus, Matthew. (speaker);

TNM981KK1981
Title: [Place names.]
Contributor:  Kari, James (author);  Krauss, Michael E. (author);  Titus, Matthew. (author);  Titus, Robert (author);

TNM981K1984a
Title: Chena area place names.
Contributor:  Kari, James (author);

TN981K1984b  CD
Title: Athabaskan Place Names in the Fairbanks Area.
Contributor: Kari, James (author);

TN985B1985
Title: The Old Country: Alaska Native Place Names tell History of an Ancient People
Contributors: Bishop, Sam (author)

TN981K1990d
Title: Some Lower Tanana Athabaskan Place Names in the Fairbanks Area
Contributor: Kari, James (author)

TN987D1990
Title: [Lower Tanana place name map]
Contributor(s): Drozda, Robert (compiler);

TNMN981K1991c CD
Title: Lower Tanana Athabaskan Listening and Writing Exercises.
Contributor: Alexander, Evelyn (author); Charlie, Isabel (author); John, Peter (author); Kari, James (author);

TN981K1994 CD
Title: Lower Tanana Athabaskan Dictionary, first preliminary draft
Contributor: Kari, James (compiler);

TNMN981KC1995
Title: [Chena area place names.]
Contributor: Charlie, Isabel (author); John, Peter (author); Kari, James (author);

TN998L1998
Title: My Own Trail.
Contributor(s): Luke, Howard (author);

TN981K2001
Title: Tsoł Teya’ Khach’enadle’inenh (The One Who Hid Out at ‘Indian Potato Hill’: A Tanana Valley War Story)
Contributors: Evan, Hester (speaker) Kari, James (recorder) Charlie, Isabel (translator)
See http://www.uaf.edu/anlc/troth/hester_evan_story.pdf

TN981K2012
Title: Lower Tanana Athabascan Place Names
Contributor(s): Kari, James (editor); Holton, Gary (developer); Parks, Brett (developer); Charlie, Robert (reviewer);

2) Other sources: articles, brochures, web sources
1991 Peter John's 1991 remarks about a retaliatory raid at Troth Yetth.
http://www.uaf.edu/anlc/troth/peterjohn/index.xml


2010 Native Placenames of the Fairbanks Area. Digital map at ANLC website http://www.uaf.edu/anlc/fairbanks/

2011 Troth Yeddha' lends name to new dance group talkingalaska.blogspot.com/.../troth-yeddha-lends-name-to-new-dance.html

2011 Blessing at Troth Yeddha'.wmv - YouTube. See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XnFexzDq68E


Attachment B
Map: placement of proposed name on ridge
DATE: January 22, 2008

TO: Mark Hamilton, UA President

FROM: Steve Jones, UAF Chancellor

RE: Naming Opportunity on UAF Campus -- Troth Yeddha' Park

I am requesting your endorsement of naming the open space on Yukon Drive, between the Reichardt Building and the UA Museum of the North, as Troth Yeddha’ Park. Attached is a detailed project description, including maps of the area, prepared by UAF Facilities Services in support of this naming opportunity.

Thank you for considering this request. If you are supportive, I look forward to your advancing this naming opportunity to the Board of Regents for their action.

SBJ

Attachment (as stated)

c: Ro Bailey, UAF Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services (w/ attachments)
Jake Poole, UAF Vice Chancellor for Advancement (w/ attachments)
Kathleen Schedler, UAF Assoc. VC for Facilities Services (w/ attachments)

d: mem/Hamiltonpriormsg/TrothYeddha
### MEMORANDUM

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Total Project Cost</th>
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<td>Approval Required</td>
<td>Full BOR</td>
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TO: Joseph Trubacz  
Chief Financial Officer  
Associate Vice President  
Finance Operations

THROUGH: Kathleen Schadler  
Associate Vice Chancellor  
Facilities and Safety

FROM: Mike Ruckhaus  
Sr. Project Manager

DATE: January 11, 2008

SUBJECT: Naming Approval  
Project Name: Troth Yeddha' Park  
Project No.: WRTY 2007086

In accordance with Regents' Policy 05.12.080, approval by the Board of Regents is required for this project. Your prompt review of this project would be greatly appreciated.

Requisite materials are enclosed.

CC: Ro Bailey  
Vice Chancellor  
Administrative Services
Date: December 7, 2011

To: Brian Rogers, Chancellor

From: Deb Horner, Co-Chair
       Derek Miller, Co-Chair

Re: MPC Recommendation 2011-18 – Naming of Troth Yeddha

The MPC supports the proposed naming of the ridge that runs east/west and is the site of the University of Alaska Fairbanks and UA systemwide offices as Troth Yeddha. This recognizes the connection between the ancient Athabaskan place name and the mission of the University of Alaska.

The UAF Naming Guidelines procedures shall be followed prior to submission of the proposal to the United States Geological Survey.

Motion made by Lydia Anderson, Seconded by Scott McCrea.

Motion passed unanimously.

Thank you.

DEM
December 15, 2011

Board of Regents
University of Alaska
202 A Butrovich Building
P.O. Box 755300
Fairbanks, AK 99775-5300

Dear Regent Members:

I am honored to serve as the Chair of the Chancellor’s Advisory Committee on Native Education (CACNE) at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. CACNE meets once a month and is a very effective advocate for promoting issues of importance to Native students, staff and faculty on the UAF campus.

At the September meeting of CACNE Robert Charlie, Athabascan Elder from Minto, and Dr. James Kari, retired linguist, Alaska Native Language Center, presented the idea of submitting a proposal to the U.S. Board of Geographic Names to officially name the hill where the University of Alaska Fairbanks is located. ‘Troth Yeddha’ is the traditional Athabascan name known in Native culture. The hill does not have an official registered name.

The membership of CACNE voted unanimously to support moving this proposal through the proper channels of the University prior to submitting the proposal to the U.S. Board of Geographic Names. Collectively, we believe that it is appropriate to recognize names of importance in the landscape of the traditional people of Alaska.

Please recognize this as a letter of support for this action. As an Athabascan woman who has lived in Fairbanks all of my life, and as Chair of CACNE, I would very much appreciate your support for this historic act.

Respectfully,

Annette Freiburger, Coordinator, Nenana Center, IAC
Chair, Chancellor’s Advisory Committee on Native Education
December 19, 2011

Board of Regents
University of Alaska
202 A Butrovich Building
P.O. Box 755300
Fairbanks, AK 99775-5300

Dear UA Regents:

I have been asked to write a letter of support for the official naming of the hill on which the University of Alaska Fairbanks is located, on behalf of Tanana Chiefs Conference, to the Athabascan name of Troth Yeddha'. I am happy to support this effort, and applaud the University of Alaska for recognizing that this important place has significant history with the Interior Athabascans. It is a place where our ancestors gathered from various regions to meet and share information.

I understand that there is not currently an official name for the hill, so registering the name with the U.S. Board of Geographic Names will be a great source of pride for the first people of the Interior.

I appreciate the efforts of Robert Charlie, Dr. James Kari and Annette Freiburger for forwarding this proposal. I hope that this is one of many efforts to officially recognize the names that the Athabascan people have given to the landscape that they knew so well.

Sincerely,

Tanana Chiefs Conference

Jerry Isaac
President
DATE: December 22, 2011
TO: Pat Gamble, President, UA
FROM: Brian Rogers, Chancellor, UAF
RE: Naming of Ridge Troth Yeddha'

I am requesting your endorsement of naming the ridge that runs east/west and is the site of the University of Alaska Fairbanks and UA systemwide offices as Troth Yeddha'. Attached is a detailed project description and background material that would be included in the February 2012 Board of Regents' agenda.

Regents' Policy 05.12.080.D allows the president to determine if a naming is "significant" enough to be advanced to the Board of Regents for their approval. I would submit that this naming is "significant".

Thank you for considering this request. If you are supportive, I look forward to your advancing this naming opportunity to the Board of Regents for their action.

BDR
Attachment

cc: Pat Pitney, UAF Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services
    Kit Duke, Associate Vice President, Facilities & Land Management
    Jeannie Phillips, Executive Officer, Board of Regents

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DOYON, LIMITED

BOARD RESOLUTION NO. 2012-31

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT – TROTH YEDDHA'

WHEREAS, the 2,250 acre ridge where the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) is located has no official place name recorded through the United States Geological Survey (USGS); and

WHEREAS, in 1994 Chief Peter John of Minto gave a talk at the first Alaska Native Summit about the importance of Troth Yedda, identifying this ridge as a meeting place of the Athabascans of the Tanana Valley; and

WHEREAS, Troth Yedda' means “Indian potato ridge” (the plant Hedysarum alpinum) in Lower Tanana Athabaskan, and Troth has been the most important vegetable food for the Alaska Athabascans; and

WHEREAS, considerable documentary evidence has accumulated about this name from ten or more expert speakers of dialects of Lower Tanana Athabaskan, dating as far back as 1962, and for twenty years there has been increasing use of the name Troth Yedda’, including reference to the name in the UAF Catalog since 2001, on numerous maps, posters and brochures, a recently formed Athabaskan dance group at UAF identifies as The Troth Yeddha' Dancers, and the 2007 designation of space for the Troth Yeddha’ Park was adopted by the University of Alaska Board of Regents; and

WHEREAS, recognition of the place name Troth Yedda’ reinforces several core themes of UAF and of the University of Alaska system, and as an official name it would appear on USGS maps, UAF campus maps and signs, and on privately published brochures and guide maps; and

WHEREAS, Athabaskan Elder Robert Charlie of Minto has proposed that the aboriginal name Troth Yedda’ be submitted to the Alaska State Board of Geographic Names as the official name for this ridge, conveying this name proposal on behalf of the late Chief Peter John and other Tanana Valley Athabaskan Elders who have recognized a connection between this ancient Athabaskan place and the mission of the University of Alaska.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of Doyon, Limited supports the submission of the proposal to the Alaska State Board of Geographic Names as the official name for the ridge where the University of Alaska Fairbanks is located to be officially named Troth Yedda’.

ADOPTED and DATED this 25th day of February 2012 at Fairbanks, Alaska.

Michael Pleagle, Secretary
Doyon, Limited
TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE  
Executive Board of Directors  
Resolution No. 2012 - 03

Place Name UAF Hill “Troth Yeddha”

Whereas, the 2,250 acre ridge where the University of Alaska Fairbanks is located has no official place name recorded through the US Geological Survey (USGS), and

Whereas, in 1994 Chief Peter John of Minto gave a talk at the first Alaska Native Summit about the importance of Troth Yeddha, identifying this ridge as a meeting place of the Athabascans of the Tanana Valley, and

Whereas, Troth Yeddha’ means “Indian potato ridge” (the plant Hedysarum alpinum) in Lower Tanana Athabaskan, and Troth has been the most important vegetable food for the Alaska Athabascans, and

Whereas, considerable documentary evidence has accumulated about this name from ten or more expert speakers of dialects of Lower Tanana Athabaskan, dating as far back as 1962, and for twenty years there has been increasing use of the name Troth Yeddha’ including reference to the name in the UAF Catalog since 2001, on numerous maps, posters and brochures, a recently formed Athabaskan dance group at UAF identifies as The Troth Yeddha’ Dancers, and the 2007 designation of space for the Troth Yeddha’ Park was adopted by the University of Alaska Board of Regents; and

Whereas, recognition of the place name Troth Yeddha’ reinforces several core themes of UAF and of the University of Alaska system, and as an official name it would appear on USGS maps, UAF campus maps and signs, or on privately published brochures, and guide maps, and

Whereas, Athabaskan Elder Robert Charlie of Minto has proposed that the aboriginal name Troth Yeddha’ be submitted to the Alaska State Board of Geographic Names as the official name for this ridge, conveying this name proposal on behalf of the late Chief Peter John and other Tanana Valley Athabaskan elders who have recognized a connection between this ancient Athabaskan place and the mission of the University of Alaska,

Therefore be it resolved, that the Executive Board of Directors of Tanana Chiefs Conference supports the submission of the proposal to the Alaska State Board of Geographic Names as the official name for the ridge where the University of Alaska Fairbanks is located to be officially named Troth Yeddha’.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this resolution was duly passed by the Tanana Chiefs Conference Executive Board of Directors on 3/8/2012 at Fairbanks, Alaska and a quorum was duly established.

Pat McCarty, Secretary/Treasurer