

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

☒ 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

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".

DESCRIPTIVE - 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/>) for factual information about the place name.)
- 1967. First linguistic documentation of the name, by Michael Krauss working with Moses Charlie (Alaska Native Language Archive).
- 1974. First publication of the name (*Minto-Nenana Athabaskan Noun Dictionary*, by Michael Krauss. Fairbanks: Alaska Native Language Center).
- 1980. First published survey of Lower Tanana place names. (*Native place names of Minto Flats and vicinity*, Central Alaska, by Elizabeth Andrews, Chad Thompson, and Peter John. Fairbanks: Tanana Chiefs Conference and Minto Village Council.)
- 1991. Name mentioned by Peter John in connection with an historic raid (Alaska Native Language Archive, recording ANLC2531).
- 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).
- 2001. Name first appears in University of Alaska Fairbanks catalog.
- 2001. Name mentioned by Hester Evan in oral history description of an historic raid (ca. 1843) at a settlement here (Alaska Native Language Archive, document TN981K2001).
- 2008. University of Alaska Board of Regents endorse name Troth Yeddha' Park for 7-acre open space east of UA Museum (see Attachment C).
- 2011. Name discussed at annual meeting of USGS Council of Geographic Names Authorities, Honolulu, Hawaii.
- 2012. Comprehensive inventory of 1060 Lower Tanana place names, including several names based on the word *troth*. (*Lower Tanana Athabascan 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 Date: 4/20/12
University of Alaska Fairbanks, Geophysical Institute
PO box 74776, Fairbanks, AK 99709
907-590-1927 / robert.charlie@gi.alaska.edu
- 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

TNC956AL1956

Title: According to Mama

Contributor(s): Anderson, Laura David (author); Loftus, Audrey (author);

TNMN961K1962c

Title: [Miscellaneous Minto-Nenana notes, 1962-1969.]

Contributor: Krauss, Michael E. (author);

TNC961MKK1962

Title: [Laura Anderson, Aug. 5, 1962.]

Contributor(s): Kari, James (author); Krauss, Michael E. (author); McKennan, Robert A. (author); Anderson, Laura David (speaker);

TNC961K1969b

Title: [Notes on Chena dialect.]

Contributor(s): Krauss, Michael E. (author); Anderson, Laura David (speaker);

TNMN961K1974a CD

Title: Minto-Nenana Athabaskan Noun Dictionary, Preliminary Version.

Contributor: Krauss, Michael E. (author);

TNMN979T1979a

Title: [Minto place names.]

Contributor: John, Peter (author); Thompson, Chad L. (author); Titus, Matthew. (author);

TNMN973ATJ1980 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);

TNMN981KK1981

Title: [Place names.]

Contributor: Kari, James (author); Krauss, Michael E. (author); Titus, Matthew. (author); Titus, Robert (author);

TNMN981K1984a

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 Athabaskan 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.

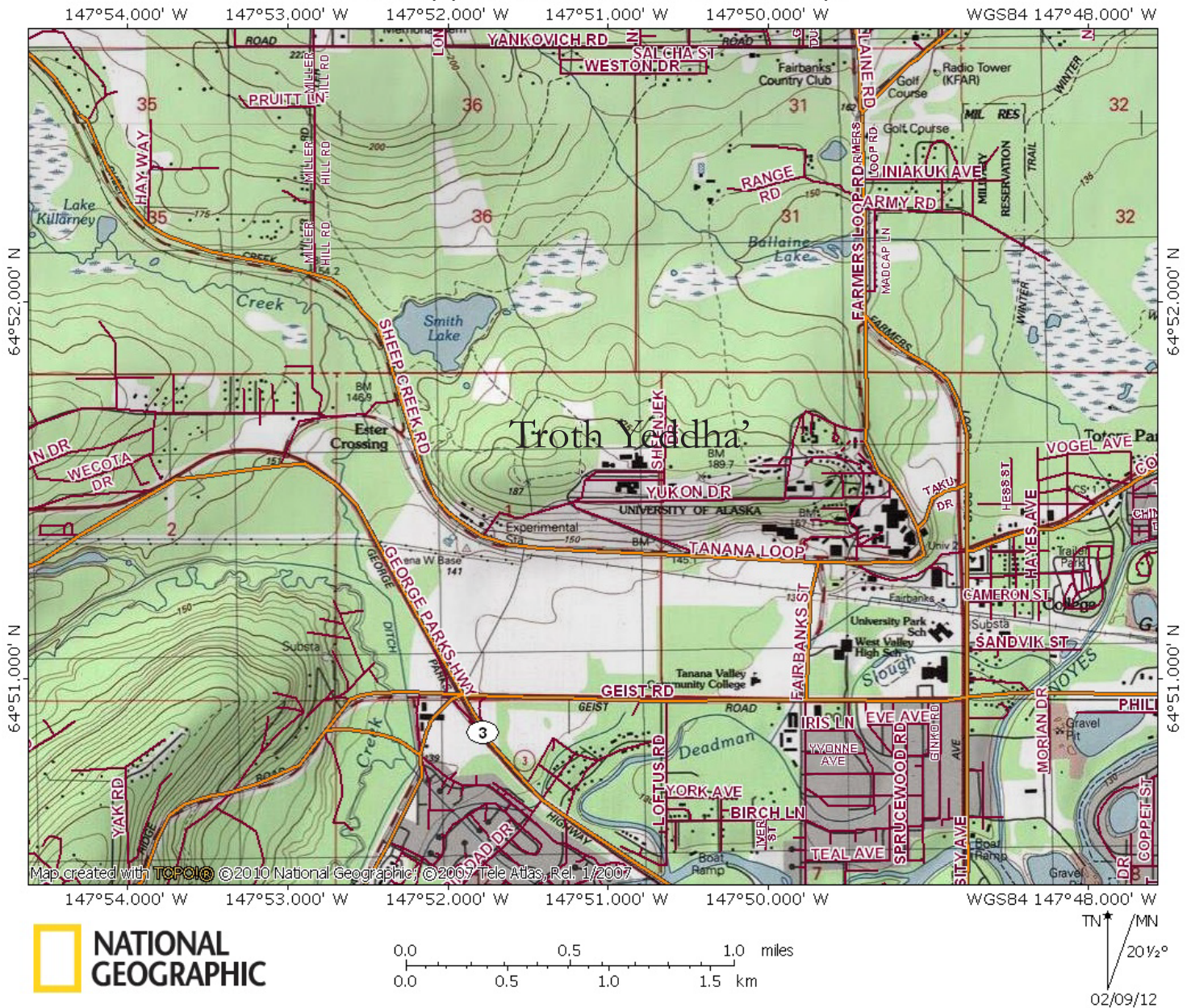
<http://www.uaf.edu/anlc/troth/peterjohn/index.xml>

1991. Mobley, Charles M. *The Campus Site, A Prehistoric Camp at Fairbanks, Alaska*. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press.
1997. Troth Yeddha' – Alaska Range viewshed. Brochure. Interior-Aleutians Campus
1998. Creamers Field Visitors Center. Map on display with Lower Tanana place names.
1998. *Troth Yeddha'* poster. Interior-Aleutians Campus.
1999. Krupa, David Joseph. Finding the Feather: Peter John and the Reverse Anthropology of the White Man Way. Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Wisconsin.
2001. UAF Catalogue *Troth Yeddha'* essay, annually since 2001. See http://www.uaf.edu/catalog/catalog_08-09/overview/troth_yeddha.html
2005. Troth Yeddha'. Rural Student Services brochure.
- 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>
- 2011 Troth Yeddha' summary at ANLC website. <http://www.uaf.edu/anlc/troth/>
- 2012 Troth Yeddha' dancers <http://talkingalaska.blogspot.com/2012/03/troth-yeddha-dancers.html>

Attachment B

Map: placement of proposed name on ridge

TOPO! map printed on 02/09/12 from "Untitled.tpo"



Attachment C. 2008 Troth Yeddha'
Park documents (3 pages)



Steve Jones, Chancellor
(907) 474-7112
(907) 474-6725 fax
chancellor@uaf.edu

Office of the Chancellor

320 Signers' Hall, P.O. Box 757500, Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-7500

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 22, 2008
TO: Mark Hamilton, UA President
FROM: Steve Jones, UAF Chancellor *Steve Jones*
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)

cc: 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)

dln/memoHamiltonrqsttonameTrothYeddha

America's Arctic University

UAF is an AA/EQ employer and educational institution.



Division of Design and Construction

590 University Avenue

P.O. Box 758160

Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-8160

(907) 474-5299, FAX (907) 474-7554

Total Project Cost	--
Approval Required	Full BOR

MEMORANDUM

TO: Joseph Trubacz
Chief Financial Officer
Associate Vice President
Finance Operations

THROUGH: Kathleen Schedler
Associate Vice Chancellor
Facilities and Safety *Kathleen Schedler* *SW*

FROM: Mike Ruckhaus
Sr. Project Manager

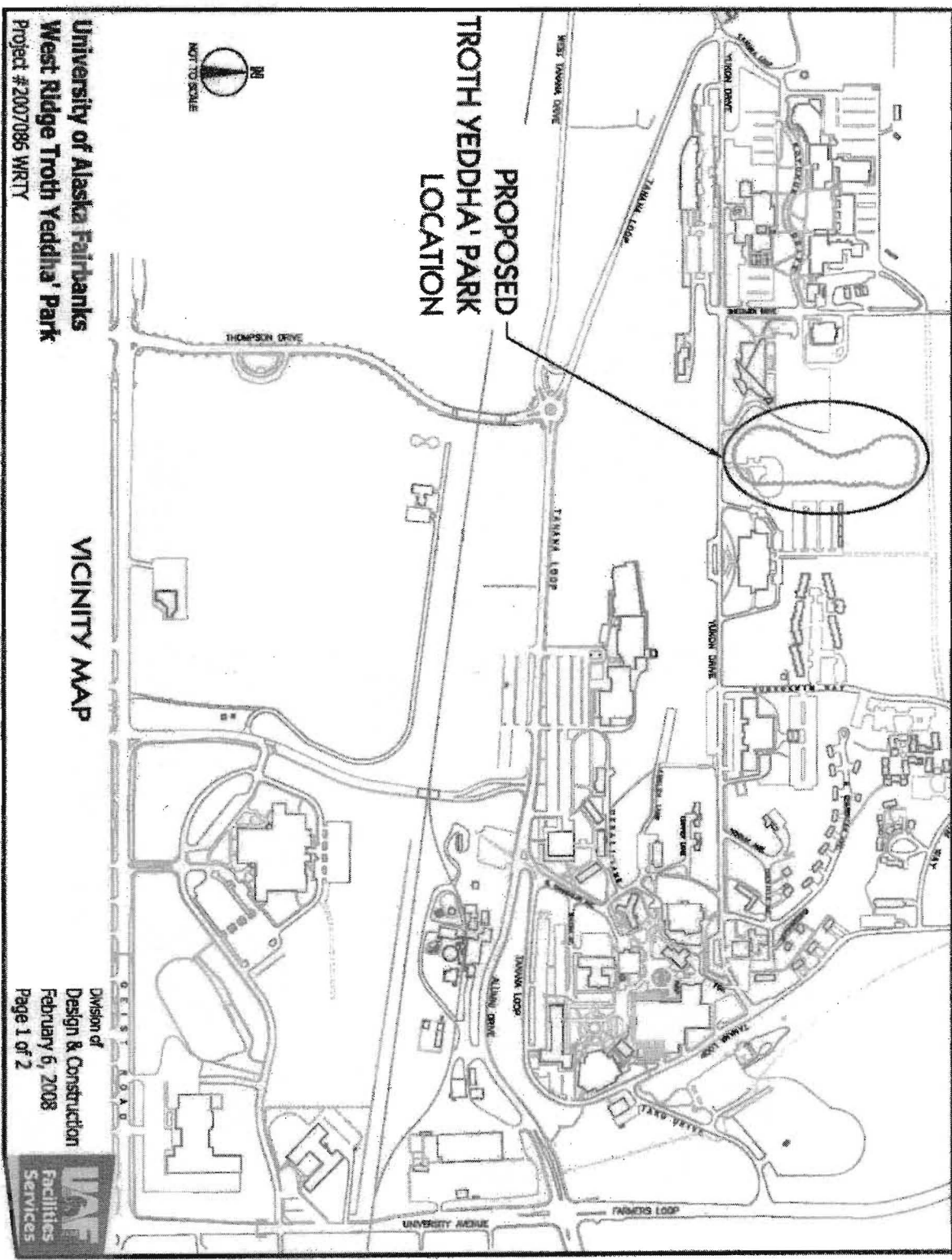
DATE: January 11, 2008

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



Master Planning Committee
of
University of Alaska Fairbanks

MEMORANDUM

Date: December 7, 2011

To: Brian Rogers, Chancellor


Approved _____ Date 12/6/11

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



College of Rural and Community Development
Interior-Aleutians Campus
Harper Building-PO Box 756720, Fairbanks, AK 99775-6720
Phone: (907) 474-5439 – Fax (907) 474-5208

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,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Annette Freiburger'.

Annette Freiburger, Coordinator, Nenana Center, IAC
Chair, Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Native Education

Tanana Chiefs Conference

Chief Peter John Tribal Building

122 First Avenue, Suite 600

Fairbanks, Alaska 99701-4897

(907) 452-8251 Fax: (907) 459-3850

SUBREGIONS

UPPER

KUSKOKWIM

McGrath
Medfra
Nikolai
Takotna
Telida

December 19, 2011

LOWER YUKON

Anvik
Grayling
Holy Cross
Shageluk

Board of Regents

University of Alaska

202 A Butrovich Building

P.O. Box 755300

Fairbanks, AK 99775-5300

UPPER TANANA

Dot Lake
Eagle
Healy Lake
Northway
Tanacross
Tetlin
Tok

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 Yedha'. 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.

YUKON FLATS

Arctic Village
Beaver
Birch Creek
Canyon Village
Chalkyitsik
Circle
Fort Yukon
Venetie

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.

YUKON KOYUKUK

Galeña
Huslia
Kaltag
Koyukuk
Nulato
Ruby

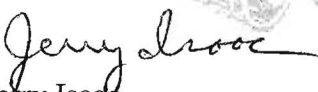
I appreciate the efforts of Robert Charlie, Dr. James Kari and Annette Freiburger for forwarding this proposal. I hope that this is one of many efforts to officially recognize the names that the Athabascan people have given to the landscape that they knew so well.

Sincerely,

YUKON TANANA

Alatna
Allakaket
Evansville
Fairbanks
Hughes
Lake
Minchumina
Manley Hot
Springs
Minto
Nenana
Rampart
Stevens Village
Tanana

TANANA CHIEFS CONERENCE


Jerry Isaac
President



Brian Rogers, Chancellor
(907) 474-7112
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uaf.chancellor@alaska.edu
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Bob Shefchik, Executive Officer
(907) 474-7489
(907) 474-7475 fax
rrshefchik@alaska.edu

Office of the Chancellor

320 Signers' Hall, P.O. Box 757500, Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-7500

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 22, 2011

TO: Pat Gamble
President, UA

PKG *Sincerely in support.*
Send to BOR for approval.
RRS

FROM: Brian Rogers
Chancellor, UAF

Brian Rogers

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

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 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, and 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.

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 Yeddha'*.

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



Michael Fleagle, 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 Athabascan, 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 Athabascan, 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 Athabascan 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

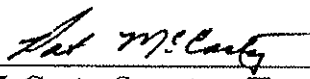
Whereas, recognition of the place name *Troth Yeddha* reinforces several core themes of UAF and of the University of Alaska system, and as an official name it would appear on USGS maps, UAF campus maps and signs, or on privately published brochures, and guide maps, and

Whereas, Athabascan 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 Athabascan elders who have recognized a connection between this ancient Athabascan 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

