Gwich’in Athabascan Place Names

Steese National Conservation Area, Draanjik River and Porcupine River

Matesi
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REPORT ON ATHABASCAN PLACE NAMES IN THE STEESE NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA, 
DRAANJIK RIVER AND PORCUPINE RIVER AREAS.

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by Joseph Matesi

CESU L14AC00089: BLM-AK UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS, ATHABASCAN PLACE NAMES
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“The history of this country is not known. Young people don’t know it, and old people die with it. I don’t want to die with it. I want the young people to have it.”

Nomina si nescis
perit et cognitio rerum.
If you do not know the names,
your knowledge of the things perishes.
Linnaeus, 1707 - 1778

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction ........................................................................................................................................... 2
History of Alaskan Gwich’in Place Name Research ................................................................. 3
Methodology ......................................................................................................................................... 6
Steeese National Conservation Area - Łuu Ddhah - White Mountains ......................... 10
Draanjik, Ch’ônjk - Draanjik River, Porcupine River ......................................................... 28
References and Sources .................................................................................................................. 30
List of Place Names: 
Ikhènejik, K’iidòtinjik - Birch Creek, Steese NCA ............................................................... 38
List of Place Names:
Draanjik - Draanjik River, Starting at the mouth of Porcupine River ...................... 61
List of Place Names:
Ch’ônjk - Porcupine River, starting at Draanjik K’ǭq (Black River Slough) ...... 100
Maps .................................................................................................................................................. 124
INTRODUCTION

This research by the Alaska Native Language Center (ANLC) at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) in cooperative agreement with the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Alaska State Office (BLM), is a Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU) project for the study of Athabascan place names. The extensive Gwich’in language area covers lands managed by the State of Alaska, Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) corporations, tribes, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the BLM, as well as large areas of the Yukon and Northwest Territories in Canada with multiple jurisdictions. The mapping of Native place names on much of these areas in Alaska is inconsistent as to solid editorial and linguistic standards. Documentation and preservation of Gwich’in place names benefit from ethnogeographic research conducted in phases with variable funding sources. An early State of Alaska-funded project (Caulfield 1983) was refined by Kari and Raboff in 2011 with USFWS funding and is here expanded with BLM funding.

The Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Network provides research, technical assistance, and education to federal land management. As a CESU partner, the University of Alaska Fairbanks serves the numerous disciplines needed to address natural and cultural resource management issues in an ecosystem context. The UAF’s Alaska Native Language Center in this project gathered data that can be used by the BLM management to inform better decisions about present-day land use activities and permitting, particularly in regards to subsistence activities. This data is timely, in that the BLM Eastern
Interior Field Office (EIFO) is developing a new Resource Management Plan (RMP) which includes land use decisions regarding the Steese Subunit and the Upper Black River Subunit. Gwich’in Athabascan place name data presented here is valuable in understanding and addressing contemporary issues pertaining to the management of these lands. The Steese Subunit of the BLM’s EIFO includes the Steese National Conservation Area (NCA) and the Birch Creek Wild and Scenic River. Nearby are approximately 41,000 acres selected by the Alaska Native Village of Circle. The Upper Black River Subunit comprises the estates, in whole or part, of at least three Gwich’in bands. Analysis of the place names provided by residents of Circle, Birch Creek, Chalkyitsik, and Fort Yukon reveals a detailed and complex array of data about contemporary and historic land and resource uses, distribution and seasonal availability of local resources, annual cycle of harvest activities, resource harvest methods, environmental conditions, traditional Native band distributions, and important aspects of a distinct world-view which shapes local perceptions and land and resource use patterns today.

**History of Alaskan Gwich’in Place Names Research**

The earliest written accounts of the Yukon Flats and surrounding uplands are the journals of Alexander Hunter Murray, who traveled down the Porcupine River in 1847 and established the trading post of Fort Yukon for the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC). He kept a daily journal of his activities, portions of which have been published by the Public Archives of Canada along with some of his sketches of the area and its people. Only one place name in Gwich’in is recorded: Chow-en-Chuke for Ch’oànjk (Porcupine River) (Murray 1910:33). Rev. Robert A. McDonald, the first Anglican priest to serve among the Alaskan Gwich’in, arrived in Fort Yukon in 1862 and remained for forty-two years. He became fluent in the language, developed a writing system, traveled widely, and translated the liturgy, hymns and gospel into Gwich’in. A typescript of McDonald’s journals prepared by Linda Johnson (1985) for the Yukon Native Language Center has an appendix of place names and locations.

In the 1950s, topographers for the United States Geological Survey (USGS) conducted fieldwork to gather place names for the new editions of the quadrangle maps. The scholars include Donald Orth, Tom Taylor, Pete Isto and others (Kari and Raboff 2011). According to Orth (1971), on the “Beaver” quad there are 37 Koyukon or Gwich’in names (21 of which are English translations of Athabascan names). On the “Fort Yukon” quad there are 48 Gwich’in names (23 of which are English translations). In the summer of 1956 additional place names were provided by men from Stevens Village and Fort Yukon to USGS topographer Tom Taylor. These names provide independent documentation of the oral Athabascan place name system (Kari and Raboff 2011). In the 1960s, Richard Mueller of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, Inc. developed a new writing system for Gwich’in, which is the basis for the ANLC Standard Orthography. Over a period of 20 years he gathered considerable linguistic and cultural material, including place names, most of which remain unpublished. Beginning in the 1970s, unpublished lists of place names have been collected by Debbie Miller (Arctic Village area), Craig Mishler (Venetie and Arctic Village) and Joe Matesi (Porcupine and Draanjik River areas).

Doyon Ltd.’s regional historic site survey through the ANCSA 14(h)(1) Program was conducted from 1975 through 1977 and is published in two volumes (Andrews 1977). For the Gwich’in language
area, the report contains about 47 Gwich’in place names or what appear to be English translations of Gwich’in names. Additional, unpublished place names that she collected are located in the Anthropology and Historic Preservation, Cooperative Parks Study Unit and ANCSA 14(h)(1) Collection, Archives of the Rasmussen Library, University of Alaska Fairbanks. Bill Schneider’s 1976 dissertation on the community of Beaver contains extensive information on land use and subsistence resources for Beaver, Stevens Village and Birch Creek. Another source that contains site location and archaeological information for Fort Yukon and Birch Creek is Slaughter (1984).

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game Subsistence Division sponsored the 1983 report Gwich’in Athabascan Place Names of the Upper Yukon-Porcupine Region, Alaska, by Caulfield, Peter and Alexander. On its five folded maps are listed about 857 Gwich’in names. With duplicate locations on the separate maps about 780 features are presented, obtained from the following communities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>1980 Population</th>
<th>Number of Contributors</th>
<th>Number of Recorded Names</th>
<th>Dates of Documentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arctic Village</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>Nov. 1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birch Creek</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Feb. 1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chalkyitsik</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>Oct. 1981</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


b Some overlap of documented names exists between communities.

from Caulfield (1983)

Caulfield wrote:

The report is preliminary in nature because documentation, translation, and refinement of the place name maps is an ongoing process; additional names undoubtedly are known by local resource experts in the study communities. Refinements and additions to the maps after a review period of approximately one year will allow the completion of a final report (Caulfield 1983).

There was no follow up and the preliminary report remains the only compilation resulting from that effort. The list of names requires review and additional names added. Some changes in spellings, translations, and locations are necessary. Out of approximately 857 place names collected, only 52 were obtained from Birch Creek, and the village of Circle was not included in the study.

Kari and Raboff (2011) published a compilation of Gwich’in place names for the western portion of the Alaskan Gwich’in language area, bringing together previous sources as well as additional material for Koyukon place names where the two language communities intersect. There are 858 features identified and named either in Gwich’in, Koyukon, or both.

For the advancement of Athabascan place names lists it is important to plan and define language area subsections so that place name sequencing can be ordered by drainages. Two complications with Gwich’in ethnogeography are the vast expanse of the Alaska Gwich’in
language area (over 80,000 sq. miles) and the extremely complex and dynamic waterways of the Yukon Flats (Kari and Raboff 2011).

Alaskan Gwich’in territory was divided into sections based on dialect and land use boundaries, as well as relative geographic ordering – downstream to upstream. In order to fit within its budget, the scope of the project was restricted to sections 1, 2, 3 and 4. The traditional Gwich’in lands in the Steese NCA, along with sections 5, 6 and 7, were left to future research. This current project is a continuation of Kari and Raboff (2011) in that it addresses the following areas:

1. Steese NCA, the gap between Section 3 and the Middle Tanana language region to the south;
2. Section 7 (Draanjik River and Porcupine River), which roughly corresponds to the Upper Black River Subunit of the BLM Alaska, Eastern Interior Field Office.

From Kari and Raboff (2011)

It is important to establish consistency in the field of Gwich’in place name documentation. Therefore, the numbering system in this report is a continuation of Kari and Raboff (2011), and the same ordering (ascending numbers going from downstream to upstream) is employed. Because the downstream-to-upstream orientation is consistent with the Gwich’in ethnogeographic perspective, and because this research in part focuses on the upper sections of Birch Creek within the Steese NCA, Section 3 (lower Birch Creek) is reviewed in this report. Sections 5 and 6, roughly corresponding to the Neets’ąįį Gwich’in estate, to date have not been reviewed and require further research.
**Methodology**

The methodology employed in this research combines conversational interviews and archival/library research. It was important to conceptualize the data in terms of cultural categories. Gwich’in culture, world view and identity are inseparable from the geographic setting. The very term *Gwich’in* means “dwellers of” a particular geographic area. The language relies heavily on a locational and directional system that organizes geographical descriptions according to the flow of the nearest major river system, regardless of compass direction. This means that speakers are constantly aware of their physical relationship to streams, rivers and other geographic features. In other words, the language helps to shape speakers’ intrinsic perception of the surrounding world and their presence in it. This leads to an intensely personal association with the land. The directional terms indicate three types of information concurrently in a single word: the direction itself (up above, down below, upstream, downstream, up from the shore, off at a distance and others); orientation (headed toward, headed away, located at a point, located in an area); and distance. In spite of the lack of graphic maps, Gwich’in awareness of the surrounding land and riverine features is pervasive, simply though the specification inherent in the locational system. In combination with place names, the system allows clear and distinct descriptions of places and routes. Most discourse in Gwich’in is couched in this framework.

Interviews were conducted with experts in Gwich’in geography in the communities of Fairbanks, Fort Yukon, Circle and Chalkyitsik. Interviews were recorded using digital audio recording devices while discussing place names with the aid of maps especially prepared for the interviews. In addition to formally interviewing consultants, any opportunity to ask about place names during the course of normal conversation was taken. This often yielded clarification about a particular toponym, and sometimes produced a name not previously recorded. It turns out that casual visits at homes, or around a campfire while traveling or hunting, have proven to be as productive as formal interviews, if not more so.

The Gwich’in language collection at the UAF’s Alaska Native Language Archive was searched for place names that occur in archived recordings and documents. Many are unpublished and some had not been previously transcribed. Additional archival, unpublished data were obtained from other collections at the Archives of the UAF’s Rasmussen Library, especially the Cooperative Parks Study Unit and ANCSA 14(h)(1) Collection. Additional information was obtained from the Hudson’s Bay Company Archives, a division of the Archives of Manitoba housed in Winnipeg.

The writing system used in this research is the ANLC Gwich’in Standard Orthography. The first Gwich’in orthography was developed in the 1870s by the Anglican missionary Robert McDonald. His writing system, called “Takudh” or “Tukudh” (pronounced in Alaskan Gwich’in as “Dagqo”), was used to translate and publish the Bible, hymns and a Book of Common Prayer as well as other religious works. Ironically, the term Takudh refers to the Takuth Gwich’in (Dagqo Gwich’in) a now dispersed band whose estate comprised the headwaters of Porcupine River. Furthermore, McDonald’s translations were heavily based on the Tsiigehtchic dialect at the eastern extremity of the Gwich’in language area, as it was spoken in the late nineteenth century. Even though it does not represent the
full range of sound distinctions in the language, many Alaskan Gwich’in learned to read these works and became literate, carrying on personal correspondence using this system. Today few Alaskan Gwich’in under the age of 60 know Takudh, but it persists as a liturgical medium and is enjoying a resurgence as part of an overall cultural renaissance.

Beginning in 1960, Richard Mueller of the Summer Institute of Linguistics developed a practical, phonemically adequate orthography for Alaskan Gwich’in. This was used in numerous Alaskan and some Canadian Gwich’in works published beginning about 1970. Speakers can usually learn to read it quickly, but few have learned to write consistently and accurately in it. Working at the UAF Alaska Native Language Center, linguists Katherine Peter and Jeff Leer addressed some problems with the Mueller orthography. The ANLC Gwich’in Standard Orthography which they developed is based on the Mueller orthography but with the following refinements.

Mueller treated the sequence of a glottalized consonant plus semivowel (for example, t’ plus y) as a distinct single phoneme with the glottal marker placed to the right of the semivowel (example: tly’ah “rope”). In contrast, the ANLC orthography treats the glides and semi-vowels as part of the nucleus of the syllable/vowel and so writes the glottal before the y (thus tl’yah).

Gwich’in is characterized by the development of Proto-Athabaskan constricted vowels into low tone, similar to Han, Upper Tanana and Navajo. Tone is phonemic, and is phonologically and morphologically conservative. In terms of segmental sounds (consonants and vowels) Gwich’in is one of the most phonologically innovative of the Athabaskan languages. Grammatical derivations that apply to verb themes are simplified due to phonological reduction and loss of stem-final consonants, and the Alaskan dialects are further characterized by word internal contractions. Even when syllables coalesce, however, the underlying tones are retained, giving rise to complex tone structures. In actual spoken Gwich’in one hears not two levels of tone or pitch, but many, because inherent lexical tones interact with the tone contours of utterances in complex but predictable ways. These rules of surface intonation are easily learned. For example, all sentence-final syllables in simple declarative sentences sound low, whether they are intrinsically low-toned or not. Because tone differentiates meaning just as segmental phonemes do, the modern orthography incorporates tone marks. Examples are:

| ih’aa ts’a’ | dinjii neekwaii | “two men” |
| ih’àa ts’a’ | dinjii neekwaii | “the man is vomiting” |

The following policies, regulations and legislation have influenced decisions and constraints during this research project.

The Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (P.L. 96-95; 93 Stat. 721; 16 U.S.C. 470aa) provides for the protection and management of archaeological resources, and regulates access to and disclosure of archaeological resources on federal and Indian lands to prevent looting and destruction. It requires notification of an affected Indian tribe if archaeological investigations proposed in a permit application would result in harm to or destruction of any location considered by the tribe to have religious or cultural importance. The Act directs consideration of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act in the promulgation of uniform regulations for the Act. The current report documents a
number of identified and potential archaeological sites on public and Indian lands that may be covered under the provisions of this Act.

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-601; 104 Stat. 3048; 25 U.S.C. 3001) establishes that lineal descendants, tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations have rights of ownership to “cultural items” (i.e., human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony, as defined in the Act), taken from Federal lands and Indian lands after the date of enactment. It requires identification of “cultural items” that were in Federal agencies’ and federally funded museums’ possession or control before enactment; establishes a requirement and process for agencies and museums to repatriate “cultural items” on request; directs the Secretary to form a review committee to oversee implementation; provides for imposing civil penalties on museums that fail to comply; authorizes grants of funds for tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, and museums to carry out the Act; requires the Secretary to promulgate regulations; and assigns to U.S. District Courts jurisdiction to adjudicate violations of the Act and to enforce the Act’s provisions. Place names are sometimes closely associated with “cultural items” and the current researchers have attempted to remain sensitive to this special relationship. In addition, although the place names catalogued in this report are not legally considered to be “cultural items” the researchers recognize that, in aggregate, they are the cultural and intellectual property of at least four federally recognized tribes. The Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich’in Tribal Government, the Chalkyitsik Village Council, the Birch Creek Tribe and the Circle Native Community should be consulted in any discussion about the dispensation and use of the data resulting from this research.

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-665; 80 Stat. 915; 16 U.S.C. 470) addresses preservation of historic properties, including historical and archaeological districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Some properties may be eligible for the National Register because of historical importance to a tribe, including traditional religious and cultural significance. A 1992 amendment to the Act (P.L. 102-575) explicitly directs that properties of traditional religious and cultural importance to an Indian tribe may be determined to be eligible for inclusion on the National Register, and that in carrying out its responsibilities under Section 106 of the Act, a Federal agency shall consult with any Indian tribe that attaches religious and cultural significance to such properties. Determining any property’s National Register eligibility follows a criteria-driven evaluation procedure specified at 36 CFR Part 60. This research has identified several sites which may qualify under these considerations, and further action should be considered.

The research involved with this study is compliant with standards set by the UAF Institutional Review Board (IRB) for conducting research on human subjects. It is the intent of the researchers to disseminate only such research data that may benefit the greater Alaska Athabascan community and cause no foreseeable harm.
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The Steese NCA was established in 1980 by Section 401(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), and encompasses a large portion of the eastern White Mountains in the interior of Alaska. To the north lie the Yukon Flats, to the south extend the Yukon-Tanana Uplands, and the east is bound by the lowlands bordering the Yukon River. The Steese NCA comprises approximately 1.2 million acres, and is divided into two units separated by State of Alaska lands and the Steese Highway. It is a component of the BLM’s National Landscape Conservation System, whose mission is to conserve, protect and restore nationally significant landscapes for their outstanding cultural, ecological and scenic values. For the Steese NCA those special values include Birch Creek Wild and Scenic River, and caribou calving grounds and home range (ANILCA 401(b)).

The landscape varies from alpine tundra to boreal forest in lower elevations and along the rivers. The NCA plays a major role in the annual life cycle of the Fortymile and White Mountains caribou herds, offering migration corridors, crucial summer calving grounds in high alpine tundra, and
winter ranges among black spruce boreal forests. A few areas provide year-round habitat for Dall’s sheep, an uncommon species in Interior Alaska.

Humans have been a part of the Interior Alaskan landscape for the last 14,000 years, making it one of the longest continuously occupied places in the western hemisphere (Potter et al. 2013; Smith, 2012). Small bands of hunter-gatherers, probably representing different populations through the millennia, inhabited these mountains and valleys (Tackney et al 2015). Throughout the time of human occupation across the Yukon river watershed, different cultures have come and gone or blended together. In the last 1,500 years, and perhaps for longer than that, the inhabitants of Interior Alaska used tools similar to the Native peoples at the time of western contact. Along with linguistic data and oral history, this continuity indicates that they were Athabascans (Dixon 2013: 117-120). The past two millennia are marked by changes in hunting technologies that stand out in the archeological record, particularly the introduction of bow and arrow technology that replaced the preceding atlatl and dart weaponry (Hare et al. 2004). Composite weapons, those that combined bone and stone, were made of microblades embedded on carved antlers or bone. It appears that the use of composite weaponry persisted alongside bow and arrow technologies in parts of interior Alaska longer than elsewhere in the subarctic (Potter 2008).

Smith (2012) notes that lanceolate point weapons such as arrows were designed to be lightweight and used at greater striking distances. Conversely, in close-encounter situations, for example when caribou were caught in the surround entrapment system, heavier composite weapons such as a thrusting spear would be more durable and suitable for taking many caribou. Bows and arrows allowed the hunters to kill prey from farther distances and decreased the need to hunt cooperatively in large groups. Group efforts, however, were more productive for taking larger quantities of meat. The best example among Athabascans is the caribou fence entrapment system used until shortly after contact. In caribou fence hunts, multiple caribou were caught and killed, and in these instances, a few multi-use larger weapons were more practical compared to shooting many animals with bow and arrows. This may explain how microblade weaponry lingered alongside bow technology.
Athabascan hunters seem to have relied on organic tools (like barbed arrow heads carved from bone) to a large degree, but they continued using chipped stone implements from several different types of rock for working tools. Stone tools are found at camps across Interior Alaska. A hint of the legacy and a reminder of the necessary, complex skills required to manufacture stone implements survive in place names throughout Athabascan territory. These toponyms refer to specialized types and characteristics of stone suitable to the manufacture of tools.

The majority of the known prehistoric sites in the Steese NCA are surface or shallowly buried sites, less than several centimeters in depth. Sites in the area are shallowly buried because freshwater streams did not carry and make available fine-grained sediments to be blown around and deposited over campsites throughout millennia. Many of the sites consist of a scattering of lithic knapping debris resulting from stone tool manufacture, sometimes including the actual shaped forms of tools themselves, either broken or complete. For the most part, the lithics show minimal or no lichen growth on the exposed surfaces. This pattern suggests that most of the prehistoric sites discovered in the Steese NCA do not exceed centuries or a millennia in age, and thus date to the late-prehistoric Athabascan Tradition. Many of these sites can be interpreted as a short-term campsite which also likely served as a hunting overlook for large game animals (Mills 2014). Taken together the known suite of flaking and overlook camps demonstrate a history of Alaska Native occupancy and foraging land use patterns in the Preacher Creek and Birch Creek watersheds. While the archeology does not convey
specific information about language groups in the late-prehistoric history of the White Mountains, the continuity of technologies suggests they were Athabascan hunter-gatherers who extensively occupied the lands now encompassed by the Steese NCA. Their foraging strategies would have been suitable to the landscape and its resources. Specifically, they would have focused on the acquisition of large ungulates that persist in the region, namely Dall’s sheep, moose and especially caribou. A model for understanding their life-style can be borrowed from the Neets’įį Gwich’in of the south slopes of the Brooks Range, whose nomadic subsistence economy of the early 20th century revolved around caribou hunting (McKennon 1965).

Oral history of the Gwich’in helps to fill in the blanks. David James, the son of Birch Creek Jimmy, was interviewed by Rick Caulfield of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in 1982 in the village of Birch Creek (ANLC6168). Concerning the name for the people living in Birch Creek Village he said that “Deenduu” was “not the right word.” He explained that designation originally referred to another group: “I don’t know how long ago. Long time ago! Some people living way back in the mountain.” Pointing on a map to the White Mountains south of Birch Creek, he said that he had learned from his father that those mountain dwellers were the Deenduu Gwich’in. “He said people living this part [Birch Creek and surrounding Flats] (were) Gwit’ee Gwich’in (‘those who dwell in the area underneath’). Not Deenduu. My father said this part not Deenduu. … Farther way back in the mountain, people used to live up around a village there.” When asked how long ago the Deenduu Gwich’in were living up in the mountains, he replied it was before his grandfather’s time. (His paternal grandfather died in middle age in 1897. His maternal grandfather was Birch Creek George, who settled in Old Village in 1898.) David James also said that the language that the original Deenduu Gwich’in spoke was Gwich’in.

So reconstruction based on oral history and the archeological record suggests that up to the middle of the nineteenth century the eastern White Mountains, including the Steese NCA, were the estate of a band of Gwich’in speakers with the ethnonym “Deenduu Gwich’in.” Their subsistence economy was based on caribou hunting, similar to that of the Neets’įį Gwich’in of the southern Brooks Range, or the Hwtthaayh Hwt’een of the Ketchumstuk Highlands. They would have made extensive use of upper Preacher Creek and the upper watershed of Birch Creek and its tributaries such as South Fork, Harrison Creek, Clums Creek, Sheep Creek, and so on. The site at Thomas Creek (CIR-00236) may represent a typical campsite of this band. Located on a low terrace at the confluence of the main Birch Creek and Thomas Creek, the site offers wood, birch bark, berries and other forest products, shelter in winter, safety from flood events, access to nearby upland summer caribou habitat, and winter caribou that may be seasonally present in the river valley as well as moose found in the vicinity. Trading networks and relationships in the prehistoric Athabascan period were well established (Schneider 1986; Fast 2002:140). It’s likely that the Deenduu Gwich’in were able to take advantage of their upland big game resources to trade with their neighbors (and probable relatives) such as the Gwit’ee Gwich’in, exchanging highly prized caribou skins, sinew and dried meat for products of the Flats like dried fish. For comparison, a sensitive insight into another Athabascan caribou-dependent culture is documented in Sharp (2015), Hunting Caribou.
In the first half of the nineteenth century, trade goods, although not abundant, were finding their way into the Yukon Flats from Russian sources on the lower Yukon, and from southeastern Alaska by way of intermediary groups such as the Han Gwich’in and Tutchone (Murray 1910; Simeone 1982). Zagoskin’s exploration in 1843 to the mouth of the Nowitna was the farthest upriver the Russians had reached, and their closest trading post was at Nulato. The first Europeans to have a physical presence in this region arrived at the confluence of the Porcupine and Yukon Rivers in the summer of 1844, exploring for the fur trade. Alexander Hunter Murray established the Hudson’s Bay post of Fort Yukon in 1847. For most Gwich’in people at the time, this would be their first contact with non-Natives, and many welcomed the presence of traders in their country. Responding to the British presence, the Russians extended their operations upriver to a seasonal trading fair at the mouth of the Tanana River. For the Hudson’s Bay Company, supplying the distant post on the Yukon River required as much as two years to ship trade goods from England to York Factory, then by York boat to the Mackenzie District headquarters at Fort Simpson, located at the confluence of the Mackenzie and Liard Rivers. From there it’s another 900 miles down the Mackenzie to Fort McPherson on the lower Peel River, a sixty mile portage across the mountains to Lapierre House, and another 320 miles down the Porcupine River to Fort Yukon. Goods were transported in York boats, manned by nine to eleven men, and all freight was packaged into standard ninety pound “pieces.” On the portages, the men would carry the pieces on their backs using a tumpline (Newman 1987).

The Anglican missionary Robert McDonald first arrived in Fort Yukon on September 23, 1862. His presence and missionary work were welcomed by both the Indians and the HBC employees, yet life was extremely difficult for him. In addition to frequent travel by canoe and dog team to Native camps, he participated in the hunting and fishing efforts necessary to procure food. Often he went hungry. By his second winter at Fort Yukon he was enduring lengthy periods of illness. The winter of 1864–65 saw near starvation conditions at the post and by summer McDonald was suffering constant chest pain. He wrote to his superiors, asking to be discharged from his appointment, and left Fort Yukon that August. He made it as far as Fort Simpson, headquarters of the Mackenzie District. His health had improved substantially; Native healers among his Indian travel companions had doctored him with tea made from the root of a plant he spelled toi-yahi “it saved his own uncle.” This is northern groundcone (Boschniakia rossica), in modern Gwich’in spelled doo’ii nahshìh (Teet’lit Gwich’in), du’ii nahshēe (Gwichya Gwich’in) or dee’ii nahshii (Alaskan) (André and Fehr 2002). Arriving at Fort Simpson, McDonald was convinced by Bishop Anderson to return to his work at Fort Yukon and
he made plans to travel back with the HBC brigade. As fall began to turn leaves yellow, they departed the District Headquarters, heading down the Mackenzie River (Johnson 1985).

In his journals, McDonald’s first mention of scarlet fever was on September 2, 1865: “several cases ... among the people of the Fort (Simpson)” including William Hardesty, the Chief Trader in charge of the Mackenzie District. That same evening, the HBC Brigade departed Fort Simpson loaded with winter supplies and trade goods for posts on the Mackenzie and Yukon Rivers. McDonald travelled with them; his journal tells the story. The majority of the boats’ crews were ill with what was thought to be influenza. As they traveled down river, it became obvious that the men were sick with scarlet fever. Deaths began to occur. (McDonald)

Scarlet fever is a highly infectious disease which is usually spread by the aerosol route (inhalation), but may also be spread by skin contact. No vaccine is known, but the discovery of penicillin and its subsequent widespread use has significantly reduced the mortality of this once feared disease. Most of the clinical features are caused by erythrogenic toxin A, a substance known to damage the plasma membranes of blood capillaries under the skin and produce the characteristic red skin rash. It is produced by the bacterium Streptococcus pyogenes (group A streptococci) when it is infected by a certain bacteriophage (a virus that infects and replicates within a bacterium). When Bacteriophage T12 infects S. pyogenes, it converts a harmless strain of bacterium into a virulent strain by inserting a gene into the bacterium’s genome, causing S. pyogenes to produce the toxin. Streptococci are spherical bacteria which are ubiquitous in the environment. Some streptococcal species are pathogenic, but many form part of the commensal human microbiota of the mouth, skin, intestine, and upper respiratory tract, neither harming nor benefiting the human hosts. S. pyogenes is an infrequent part of the skin flora but is the cause of many important human diseases, ranging from mild superficial skin infections to life-threatening systemic diseases including scarlet fever (Cunningham 2000).

The disease spreads from person to person via droplets expelled when an infected person coughs or sneezes. The incubation period — the time between exposure and illness — is usually two to four days. An infected individual experiences sore throat, high fever, a bright red tongue, paranoia and hallucinations. The rash is the most striking sign of scarlet fever. It usually appears first on the neck and face (often leaving a clear, unaffected area around the mouth). It looks like a bad sunburn with tiny bumps, and it may itch. It then spreads to the chest and back and finally to the rest of the body. In the body creases, especially around the underarms, elbows and groin, the rash forms classic red streaks. Septic complications due to the spread of streptococci in the blood are today rare due to antibiotic treatment. Untreated, the disease can progress to include ear and sinus infection, streptococcal pneumonia, pus collecting in the thoracic cavity, meningitis, and full-blown sepsis which is often fatal (Ryan 2004).

After ten days of travel, the Brigade arrived at the HBC post of Fort McPherson with trade items, correspondence, and germs. Awaiting them were members of the Teetl’it Gwich’in, Dagq Gwich’in and Gwichyaa Gwich’in (Mackenzie River Delta tribe). They were eager for trade before dispersing into the countryside for the winter, and lacking immunity they were highly vulnerable to infection. After trading, they left the Fort carrying the seeds of sickness and death to their relatives.
Five months later, on February 1, 1866, Andrew Flett, the Postmaster in Fort McPherson, wrote to his superior in Fort Simpson, William Hardesty, “Scarlet fever was brought here by the boats last autumn which reached this place on the 12th September. The disease spread most rapidly and extensively among the Indians and has proved a terrible scourge to them. Of the women and children many deaths to my knowledge has occurred among the Peel and Mackenzie River tribes. The Chief of each party was two of the victims.”

The two hunters that had been employed by the Company to provide the winter supply of meat for the Post fell ill a few days after they left the Fort for the usual fall hunt. They were found out in the woods by one of the Teet’it Gwich’in “in the most pitiful condition.” Although the summer fishery had gone well, producing 7,500 pounds of dried fish, the sickness killed most of the Post fishermen and the sole survivor was too weakened to harvest the fall runs. Earlier in the summer, hunters had some success procuring caribou. They arrived at the Fort in time to greet the Hudson Bay boats with their deadly cargo. The consequences were tragic. Flett, insensitive to Gwich’in nuances of grief, continues in his letter: “… owing to the death of one of the Chief’s son at the time the boats were to leave for Fort Simpson, the father under some superstitious notion threw away all the meat he had collected before the young man died; the others to show their affection followed the example.”

Without having its needs for meat and fish met, Fort McPherson went into starvation rations. Malnourished individuals, their immune systems compromised, were even more susceptible to the effects of the disease.

Peel River is now a poor place with respect to hunters, the best are all dead, and those now remaining are so encumbered with orphan children and sickness still raging among them that I have no expectation of getting provisions from them this spring. It was reported by some Indians from up Peel River, in the beginning of last month, that the Mountain Indians, a party of 38 men, only 6 are now living – their numbers are now so reduced that I don’t see how we are to get along in the future (HBC).

From Fort McPherson to Lapierre House on the Bell River, the freight was portaged across the Richardson Mountains, a distance of 60 miles of muskeg, alpine tundra, river crossings and boreal forest. For five days, men hired by the HBC carried “half-packs” of forty five pounds apiece, some men balancing a second one on top of the first. Payment for this laborious effort was fifteen beaver skins, or seven and a half dollars paid in goods (Dawson 1887:209). Those hired to make the portage must have started out after they were infected but before succumbing to the effects of the disease. Nevertheless, they brought the sickness across the mountains with them. By January of 1866, 34 deaths had occurred among the Lapierre House Indians, and another 20 deaths among the Vuntut Gwich’in. As at Fort McPherson, Lapierre House lost its hunters and was low on food. Many more deaths followed throughout the winter (HBC).

For the final leg to Fort Yukon, the HBC boat left Lapierre House on the 19th of September, James Sibbeston in charge. They traveled non-stop for two days, racing freeze-up, not camping until the evening of the 21st, “several of the boat’s crew not being well.” By the time they reached Khéetsik (mouth of Salmon Trout River), nearly all of the boatmen were ill. McDonald’s journal entries for the rest of the trip are a litany of increasing sickness. “Only four of eleven Indians able to work the boat.”
“Five in the boat very ill of scarlet fever.” “Several of the sick very ill.” They arrived in Fort Yukon on September 28. That evening heavy snow fell (McDonald).

In the fall of 1865, twenty-two years old James McDougall was an Apprentice Clerk for the Hudson’s Bay Company in Fort Yukon, the HBC’s most far flung post. In spite of his youth and inexperience, he had taken charge of the post that summer when his predecessor, Strachan Jones, requested to be transferred away from the Yukon following a dispute with the chief of the Draanjik Gwich’in. When the boat arrived that autumn with trade items and supplies for the winter, McDougall helped with the unloading (HBC).

The HBC boat that arrived that year was probably the same one described two years later by Frederick Whymper, who witnessed its arrival in Fort Yukon on June 26, 1867, and took its measurements. Its total length was 41 feet, the length of keel was 29 feet, the depth of gunnel to keel was 3 feet 2 inches, and the width of beam was 9 feet 6 inches. He wrote that when loaded with one hundred packs, totaling 4 ½ tons, the boat drew 2 to 2 ½ feet of water. (Whymper, 1868:220)

McDougall supervised the reloading of the boat with 19½ packs of furs and 4 packs of tanned hides, and sent it back up the Porcupine River to Lapierre House. The outlook for the winter was good. Indians around the Fort had been diligent all summer in collecting provisions. The Neets’aii Gwich’in brought in large quantities of caribou meat, and the Gens de Fous (Han Gwich’in) arrived from upriver with “a great deal of meat” just before freeze-up. Fishing had been good. Residents at the Fort were looking forward to a comfortable winter with plenty of food. But in November, McDougall sent a letter in the winter packet to Chief Trader Hardisty, describing a different situation.

The Indians on being paid when the boat arrived, left immediately for their respective wintering grounds all promising to hunt furs during the winter; but scarlet fever, which was brought here by the boat’s crew, broke out, and has, I am sorry to say, carried off nearly half of them, and amongst those many of our best provision hunters. Among the Youcon and Black River tribes alone upwards of sixty deaths have taken place, and by last accounts, there were many more who were not expected to recover. The disease has no doubt spread amongst the Gens des Large [Neets’aii Gwich’in] and middle Indians as a few of those two tribes who were ill here returned amongst them some time ago. Many of the Gens des Fous [Han Gwich’in] were here at the time the boat arrived and afterwards; and have most likely caught the
infection. I have asked Mr. James Flett to let you know if the sickness has spread amongst the Rampart Indians. The boat crew passed the night with them on their way down, and I believe some complained of being unwell on the following morning. There are now very few of the fort Indians left who can be depended on for provisions; and one most persevering of those belonging to the Youcon tribe, who were accustomed to visit the distant Indians in search of furs, has died (HBC).

Shâhnyaatì’ with some of his band had been at the Fort when the boat arrived, and stayed until October 5. By that time, deaths were beginning to occur at Fort Yukon. Kinseg, a Neets’aii Gwich’in, was one of the first, followed by Tsetlon a week later, then Jack Williams, an HBC employee. Children died. The disease spread rapidly and deaths began to occur every day. Three weeks after leaving the Fort, the forty individuals in Shâhnyaatì’s winter camp eight miles west of Fort Yukon were almost all sick, and many would die (McDonald).

In November, McDonald and some company men set out for the camp of Chutsugvihti, an influential leader and renown medicine man, located at a major fishing place on K’iidöotin Gwinjik (Lower Birch Creek). Arriving on the morning of the eighth, they found “nearly all the Indians ill of scarlet fever… There have been 3 deaths among them; one of them was Chutsugvihti, a man of some repute among the Kutch-kutchin.” McDonald found that 34 individuals were living in three lodges; cross contamination would have been inevitable. Later that month he visited a camp of Draanjik Gwich’in 70 miles east of Fort Yukon and found similar dire circumstances. Among the Neets’aii Gwich’in, at least 12 men, 8 women and 6 children were known to have perished by December 11. On March 13, 1866, McDonald writes in his journal, “At noon three Ttyoni and two boys arrived. They report the death of all the other men of that tribe (8) and several women. They are now but a feeble remnant” (McDonald).

Throughout the winter of 1865-1866 sickness continued among the various Gwich’in bands, with many more deaths. Early in July of 1866, McDougall wrote, “Sickness continued throughout the winter among the Indians and also among the people of the fort, and many deaths have taken place since the departure of the winter packet.” He counted up the number of confirmed dead among those who had a connection with the Fort: Youcon Indians 48, Black River tribe 19, Gens du Large 33, Gens de Middle 22, Rat Indians 26, and Gens des Fous 22 (HBC).

To understand these numbers it’s necessary to consider the total population of the region, but estimates are difficult. In 1858, the HBC’s Chief Factor James Anderson figured a total of 842 persons for six Gwich’in tribes trading into Fort Yukon. Another 337 were counted at Fort McPherson and LaPierre House, on the Canadian side. These numbers included women and children (Dawson 1887). Working off of these numbers, Osgood (1936) estimated that the entire Gwich’in population at the time of contact was about 1,200. Strachan Jones (1867) wrote that the entire Gwich’in nation was divided into about twenty-two different tribes: “They were once very numerous, but wars among themselves, disease, and famine have reduced their aggregate very much. One or two of the tribes are nearly extinct.” McKennan (1965) in discussing the population of the Neets’ai Gwich’in with whom he worked in 1933 summarized:
According to native traditions the population was much larger some four or five generations ago. ...My oldest informant also vividly recalled the devastating effects of the scarlet fever epidemic of the 1860s. Among the hardest hit were the Birch Creek tribes. One year after the epidemic, William Dall and Frederick Whymper travelled through the country on behalf of the Western Union Telegraph Company, to survey for a telegraph line extending from British Columbia through Alaska to Siberia. (That project was soon abandoned, following the first successful undersea cable laid across the Atlantic Ocean). They ascended the Yukon River as far as Fort Yukon, and later wrote about what they encountered.

There were formerly a few bands of Indians between the mouths of the Porcupine and Tanana, on the Yukon, but they have been swept away by scarlet fever. They were the *Tennu'th-Kutchín* or Birch Indians (*Gens de Bouleaux*) and the *Tatsáh-Kutchín*” (Dall 1870:431). “TENNUTH KUT-CHIN. [Deenduu Gwich’in] *Gens de Bouleaux*, or *Birch Indians* of the Hudson bay men. These people, with the Tatsáh-Kutchín, comprised a few bands of Indians allied to the Kutcha-Kutchín, who formerly wandered in the region between the rapids of the Yukon and the mouth of the Porcupine River, having their principal hunting-ground near the Small Houses. About 1863, however, they were all swept off by an epidemic of scarlet fever, introduced through contact with the whites, and there is now not an individual living of these two tribes (Dall 1877).

Following the epidemic, any survivors who would have been patching up their lives and communities would probably have to do so without the guidance of those most knowledgeable about the landscape, for disease disproportionately sweeps away the elderly. The shock of losing Elders goes beyond the loss of cherished family members, to affect the very survival of the band. Elders hold the knowledge and skills accumulated over generations necessary for successfully inhabiting their estate. In a single season, their collective wisdom which included detailed knowledge of resource locations and seasonal subsistence strategies would have vanished.

Why was Gwit’ee Gwich’in country, that portion of the Yukon Flats that encompasses the lower Birch Creek and Beaver Creek, repopulated by Athabascan people, but not the original Deenduu Gwich’in mountain country? Slaughter (1984:50) in writing about the culture shifts that occurred with the establishment of a trapping economy in the 1800s, theorized,

Dog traction, which is thought to have been introduced to the Yukon by Robert Campbell (Karimanski 1984:237), greatly increased mobility which may have partially offset the time spent away from traditional subsistence practices in the pursuit of fur. This gain in efficiency, however, was counterbalanced by efforts expended securing dog food. McKenman (1969a:96, 1969b:336) has convincingly argued that the introduction of dog traction in Central Alaska caused Native groups to stress fishing at the expense of large game hunting. This occurred because dried fish provided an ideal source of dog food. As a result, hunting and fishing bands settled into semi-permanent riverine villages at
good fishing locations. These transitions were made in areas where caribou were the principal large-game species sought.

Following the depopulation of the Gwit’ee Gwich’in and Deenduu Gwich’in estates, there would have been a stronger impetus to repopulate the former, where subsistence activities focused on fishing, with wide spread supportive resources such as beaver, muskrats, ducks and even moose. In contrast, the upland hunters would be primarily reliant of caribou. Among the survivors of the epidemic were some members of Shâhnyaatì’ s band, who had familiarity with the area and knew of highly productive fishing locations. In the second half of the nineteenth century they were exploiting the country upriver from Łiteet’ai (near Birch Creek Village) including the Van Juu (Medicine Lake) area. With the new emphasis on fishing in order to support dog teams, there would have been greater impetus to utilize these locations rather than re-establish a seasonal round in the mountains based on caribou hunting. In fact, it appears that the earliest settlements in the Birch Creek area in the second half of the 19th century were important fishing sites along the Lower Birch Creek: “Old Village,” Łiteet’ai Gwitsik and throughout the large, interconnected lake system to the south, especially Taataa, K’iilìk and Tsii Vavàn. Some or all of these sites were probably those fisheries that the Hudson Bay Post in Fort Yukon utilized, which would have made resettlement there even more likely. When Old Thomas, a son of Shâhnyaatì’ born in 1848, settled there, he built his cabin at the location where two HBC employees, Anderson and Less, previously had a cabin that they used as a fish camp (Schneider 1976). From this core area, the budding population was enhanced by emigrants from neighboring bands, especially from the Draanjik region. In 1898, George Loola (Birch Creek George) emigrated from the Draanjik country and built the second log cabin at Old Village. He married Caroline, the daughter of Old Thomas and his wife from Stevens Village, Harriet. Old Thomas arranged that marriage, and in 1900 he arranged a marriage for his son Net (or Ned) Thomas.

A Draanjik Gwich’in man by the name of John Ch’iiji’ Oontà’ living near present day Chalkyitsik died in 1887 leaving a widow and six children. Not long after that, the two oldest sons also died. The widow Mary was left with three daughters and a little boy. Life was extraordinarily difficult for them. They first moved to Shuman House for a while, then went down Porcupine River to Fort Yukon where Mary met with Old Thomas. She knew that he was a hard worker and well off, and that his second oldest son was unmarried. They arranged that one of her daughters, Julia, would marry Old Thomas’ son, Net. Mary and her little boy accompanied them back to Old Village. That was in 1900, and the little boy was Birch Creek Jimmy.

Later, Birch Creek Jimmy married Agnes, the daughter of Birch Creek George and his wife Caroline (Old Thomas’ daughter). Through her, many of today’s residents in Birch Creek are the descendants of
Shàñnyaatì’. Within two generations they expanded their land base through the Yukon Flats south of the Yukon River, encompassing the lower drainages of Beaver Creek and Birch Creek. Their land use extended into the foothills to the south as far as Luk Choo (Burman Lake). These people acquired the ancient designation “Deenduu Gwich’in,” even though the inhabitants of the Lower Birch Creek area in the Yukon Flats had previously been known as “Gwit’ee Gwich’in.” Since they exploited the country up Ikhènjik (main Birch Creek) and the area around Van Juu (Medicine Lake), the ethnonym is fitting, as they were now the furthest south, the closest to the winter sun, among all the Gwich’in bands. (In referring to the word Deenduu, James Kari (2011) wrote that the “spelling by Dall of the name and ethnonym is from Eastern Gwich’in, probably dendedh. This suggests that Denduu has the directional root, ndoo~nduu ‘ahead, perimeter, south.’”) However, many of the place names today in this region are probably ancient, predating the population losses of the mid-nineteenth century. David James, son of Birch Creek Jimmy and great-grandson of Old Thomas, and heir to their extensive land use knowledge, knew names for many geographic features for which he said the meanings were lost in time.

In the headwaters country of the upper Birch Creek and neighboring rivers, however, a different technology and life-style, based on upland caribou hunting, would have been required. This would have been less familiar to members of Shàñnyaatì’s band than were technologies appropriate for the Flats. Given enough time, it’s possible that the highland country would have been repopulated, if not by Gwich’in speakers then by a neighboring Athabascan group, very possibly speakers of Middle Tanana or Tanacross. The Hwtthaayh Hwt’een (“those who dwell in the dwarf timber”), who were the people of the nearby Ketchumstuk uplands, were successful and comfortable in pursuing an economy based on caribou hunting.
Only 27 years after the epidemic, however, other events intervened to change the demographics of the eastern White Mountains. In the summer of 1893, Pitka (or Poitka) Pavaloff and Sergai Cherosky (or Sorresco or Sonoiska), Koyukon-Russian “Creoles” who had formerly worked in the diggings on the Fortymile Creek, reported finding gold on Birch Creek. When the news of the discovery got back to Fortymile Post, it was received by a large number of discouraged, down-and-out miners. The prospect of a new district and a new chance to finally make their fortunes motivated them. Many, however, were destitute. The trader Jack McQuesten said that he would grubstake all who were willing to try the new district, and eighty men took up his offer. They floated down the Yukon River to a location 12 miles above the present town of Circle, built cabins and overwintered. They probably chose this location because the local Gwich’in people referred to it as Van Juu gwats’a’ tr’ag’hndii, “where the trail to Medicine Lake comes out.” In the spring, the ice jammed during break-up, resulting in a flood in which several of the cabins were actually swept away. The miners moved further down the Yukon to a location with slightly higher ground and built a new town, Circle City. When Pitka and Cherosky returned that summer to their discovery at what is now known as Pitka’s Bar (located at the mouth of Harrison Creek), they were followed by over 100 other miners who dispersed up and down Birch Creek and its tributaries. The White miners eventually seized Pitka and Cherosky’s claims.

In the early spring the prospectors had crossed the old Indian trail over Medicine Lake to the head of Birch Creek, had discovered gold and staked claims on Mastodon, Hog’em, Miller, Greenhorn, and Independence creeks. It was soon seen that Birch Creek was a paying district, and that there was room for a large number of miners; consequently almost all of the newcomers went to the new camp; the branches and gulches of Birch Creek were traveled by prospectors, and Circle City became the most important settlement in the interior (Spurr 1898:118).

In none of the early accounts by miners is found any mention of sharing the landscape with local indigenous people. Han Gwich’in and Gwichyaa Gwich’in individuals played a role in the early community life of Circle City, but up in the mountains there is no record of miners encountering upland caribou hunters. The government geologist Josiah Edward Spurr, under the auspices of the U.S. Geological Survey, traveled through the district three years after the initial discovery. He crisscrossed the area on foot, visiting upper Birch Creek, Crooked Creek, the headwaters of Preacher Creek and the intervening mountains. He was unable to provide an estimate of population, but his descriptions portray a district well peopled with miners (Spurr 1900).

In the summer of 1896 the Birch Creek district, partly owing to the fact that on the whole lower river considerable rain fell during the spring and summer, was in a flourishing condition, and formed a contrast to that of Fortymile. Most of the gulches were running, miners were working on double shifts, night and day, and many large profits were reported. On Mastodon Creek over 300 miners were at work, many of them expecting to winter in the gulch. Thirty-six claims of 500 feet front were being worked, the most important being the Discovery, one-half mile from the mouth, where 20 men were shoveling in, in double shifts (Spurr 1898:121).

From time to time, too, new creeks are discovered in this district, the latest being Carter or Butte Creek, which is one of the tributaries of the main Birch Creek. It raises about 10
miles southeast of Mastodon Dome, and is 10 to 15 miles in length. The first rumors started 30 men across the mountains in August, 1896, and they staked most of its length; but according to one man who returned to Harrison after the first rush, its richness has been greatly exaggerated (Spurr 1898:122).

In 1896, Circle City’s sole reason for existence was to support the miners in the Birch Creek mining district. Goods that had been shipped up the Yukon River were sent overland to the camps. The town had a store, dance halls, an opera house, a library, a school, a hospital, an American Episcopal church, a newspaper and a lumber mill. Federal officials stationed there included a United States commissioner, a marshal, a customs inspector, a tax collector and a postmaster. Its population was 700.

When White miners dispersed throughout the Birch Creek mining district, they did not displace an indigenous population. The land was already empty of humans. The Deenduu Gwich’in had suffered such large losses that they ceased to exist as a distinct band inhabiting their own estate. Evidence from contemporary written sources as well as Gwich’in oral tradition suggests that too many people were lost from an already small population, and although some individuals survived, the band could not sustain itself as a distinct entity. Survivors were absorbed by neighboring groups. Meanwhile, hundreds of non-Native miners poking into every nook and cranny of the eastern White Mountains altered the landscape. Caribou were harvested in unsustainable numbers. Streams were destroyed by placer operations and forests were leveled. The rivers were polluted and the local population of spawning Chinook salmon became extinct. Euro-American concepts of mining claims and land ownership were imposed. Trails were blazed and roadhouses were built. The area was no longer suitable for habitation by Athabascan groups dependent on a caribou hunting life-style. Intimate indigenous lore of the landscape was lost, including the system of place names that encodes local geographic knowledge. Those toponyms, and the world view they defined, are lost and irretrievable.
Today, a handful of Athabascan place names in and around the Steese NCA survive in three languages.

Gwich’in language place names in or near the Steese NCA:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place Name</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ikhèenjik</td>
<td>‘Birch Creek’</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ikhèenjik is the name of Birch Creek from its source to the Yukon River by way of the Upper Mouth Birch Creek. The anabranch Lower Mouth Birch Creek is called K’iidòotjinjik or K’iidòotin Gwinjik. Ikhèenjik is probably a very old word. Njik means “river.” The meaning of Ikhèe is not clear. Suggestions include “come back, return; winds in a tunnel (tall trees near the bank); long running; three (rivers) coming together.” None of these is strongly credible. The term in Eastern Gwich’in for ancient words with unknown meaning is ts’ií dèjj “stone age” implying an age of 500 years or more (Kritsch and André 1994:11). It’s probable that ikhèe is cognate with the corresponding Lower Tanana name otho/khotho and the Middle Tanana name aathaa. This suggests that the name derives from a time when a language with shared ancestry to today’s languages was spoken. Alternatively, an original name may have been borrowed from one of the languages into the others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thoo’ajj</td>
<td>‘East Crazy Mountains’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thoo’ajj is another ts’ií dèjj word, whose meaning is lost in time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Łuu Ddhah</td>
<td>‘White Mountains’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Łuu Ddhah literally means ‘ice mountains.’</td>
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Gwatłôhnjik

‘Preacher Creek’

This major stream takes its name from an important hillside called Gwatłh “area of mushy substance.” The late Stanley Luke told a story about it. “Long time ago people had their own way of worshipping, before preachers come around. People used to say there was one whole side of a hill, close to where Preacher Creek comes into the Yukon Flats, they call it Gwatłh. People, it’s said, used to go in there, after they die. One famous man was named Ch’itr’u Zhrii. That means ‘arctic tern moon.’ He’s a medicine man. His brother went up with the Crow people. They used to come down here, see, for trading, and go back up. Well, I guess it’s what you’d call a bad situation. He went up there with a woman; in the summer they got into fighting, and her people killed him up there. So it just happened that they [Ch’itr’u Zhrii’s band] were camped at that time right across from that hill, Gwatłh. Gee, in the evening, old Ch’itr’u Zhrii went out there and just listened. He heard his brother running over the hill up there singing. So he started speaking to the people in the camp. ‘Last summer my brother went up, and those guys up there did something, now my brother is over here running over that hill singing. Now it’s going to be war.’ In those day dentalium beads were just like money. He got a whole bunch of those beads and invite the whole tribe to war. A lot of people gathered. Then he told his servants, ‘bring me a pile of snow by the fire right here.’ So they did that. He said, ‘for the rest of all time, I’m gonna make those people’s place so it’s hard to make a living.’ So he made two shape of wolverine, out of the snow. Then he took a caribou skin bedding, cut piece of that, burned it in the fire for a while and tied it into a noose. Put them outdoor, and, oh, no more than a minute, he looked for it. Nothing! Now those people up that way, who killed his brother? Outdoor, their snowshoes, their toboggan everything wolverine just eat them up. They kill something out in the woods, the next morning it’s all eaten up by wolverine. Down to nothing! They all starved to death. Since that time that country is still hard to make a living. Right up to today yet.”

Shâñnyaa Vatthâl

‘Shâñnyaa’s fence’

A caribou fence, owned by the son of Shâñnyaathi’. The exact location is unknown, somewhere in the West Crazy Mountains. Reported by David James, Birch Creek, and in Caulfield (1983).
Lower Tanana is the language of Nenana and Minto. Their traditional use area includes in its eastern most extent the upper Beaver Creek and Chatanika and Chena Rivers. Elders recall stories of traveling over the passes to the Birch Creek watershed, and they have names for landmarks and important geographic features.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Otho No’</td>
<td>‘upper most Birch Creek’</td>
<td>This refers to the upper Birch Creek drainage or to the stream Birch Creek itself. The name was recognized by Peter John of Minto although he personally had never been there. It was pronounced Ktho No’ by Mathew Titus (Kari 2003).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K’lyh Del’anhde</td>
<td>‘where birch bark is gathered’</td>
<td>This feature is a creek on the trail from Chena River to Circle, exact location is uncertain (Kari, 2003).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tthako Yit’anhde</td>
<td>‘the one that has animal trail upon rocks’</td>
<td>This is the name for Mt. Prindle in the Lower Tanana language. It is the farthest east place name reported by Minto elder Peter John.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedzey T’okh No’</td>
<td>‘under caribou creek’</td>
<td>Middle Fork Chena River. Many of the Lower Tanana place names for this area suggest its importance as a source of caribou. The best example is Ch’eno “Chena River” which means ‘something river,’ or ‘you know and I know but we’re not going to say it out loud river’ referring obliquely to caribou calves, a resource so desirable that it would only be mentioned by hints and circumlocution (Krause, pers. com).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ts’eba T’asrde</td>
<td>‘spruce charcoal place’</td>
<td>A mountain between upper Beaver Creek and upper Birch Creek, exact location is uncertain (Kari 2003); possibly Rocky Mountain.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BLM Photo: Ikheenjik (Otho No’) below Harrington Fork
Middle Tanana was a distinct Athabascan language and had a syllable structure, prosody, and lexicon that separate it from both Lower Tanana and Tanacross to the upstream (Kari 2015). The language is now extinct. The last three speakers of Middle Tanana were Bessie Barnabus, her daughter Eva Moffit, both originally from Salcha, and Abraham Luke, originally from Goodpaster. Each of these speakers had worked with different researchers, and there are notes, audio recordings, and two ethnographic studies documenting the language including place names. It is possible to define a Middle Tanana Geographic Knowledge Area incorporating approximately 7,000 square miles, based on the corpus of place names recorded. In the mid-nineteenth century it seems there were three small Middle Tanana bands: one at Salcha, one at Goodpaster, and one on the Delta River and the south side of the Tanana River (Kari 2015).

Bessie Barnabus was born near the mouth of the Salcha River in the early 1880s and lived to be over one hundred years old. During her lifetime she traveled throughout the Salcha area. As a child she made at least four trips between 1894 and 1902 with her parents across the White Mountains and down Birch Creek to Circle for the purpose of trade. Walking, the journey would take about a month and a half. Thanks to her excellent memory, Kari (2015) was able to apply salvage ethnogeographic methods and reconstruct a Middle Tanana (Salcha dialect) ethnonymsic portrait of some parts of the Steese NCA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Aathaa Na’</strong></th>
<th>‘Birch Creek’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bessie Barnabus was recorded in several instances referring to Birch Creek as Aathaa Na’. Note that this is the same ethnonym that occurs in Lower Tanana as Otho No’ and appears to be cognate with the corresponding Gwich’in term Ikhèenjik. The etymology of Aathaa/Otho is not known.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984 recording:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>de’ Aathaa Na’ de’aadze’ Seegel hwts’en, Aathaa Na’ hwdii ts’e</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Aathaa Na’ (Birch Creek) comes from over there, on the Circle side is named Aathaa Na’”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>nge’ daatthiit deł aathaa Na’ hwdiit</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Upland to the lowlands is aathaa stream (Birch Creek) it is called”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>K’enk’e</strong></th>
<th>‘big knife’ according to Bessie Barnabus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most likely this is the mountain on the southern boundary of the Steese NCA from which three rivers flow: the Chena, Salcha and Birch Creek Rivers (65.09361 N, 144.63014 W). This 5,453 foot massif on the north-bound travelers’ left would be a major landmark. It sustains a population of Dall’s sheep and often has caribou in the fall.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Salcheege Na’ Aathaa Na’ Nilteth</strong></th>
<th>‘pass between Salcha River and Birch Creek’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The route taken was probably up the first creek on the left past Little Windy Gulch and over a low, easy pass to Puzzle Gulch, one of the headwater steams of the South Fork of Birch Creek.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984 recording:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Yaa daayige’ dadaa’ Seegel Ten t’oghel’eenn</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“And down below and downstream where they have the Circle Trail”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To study the traditional place names of the Upper Black River Subunit is to peer deep into the core of Gwich’in country and the culture of its people. Ch’ôonjik (Porcupine River) transects the heart of the Gwich’in homeland and is central to their traditional sense of spatial orientation in the world. Draanjik (Draanjik River) is so important that it provides eponymous identity to one of the nine major subdivisions of the Gwich’in nation. In *Hunters of the Northern Forest*, Richard Nelson wrote of the Draanjik Gwich’in (“those who dwell along Draanjik River”), the residents of the modern community of Chalkyitsik:

The river is of great importance for the people. First, it is a major source of food, from the fish and ducks of its waters to the bear and moose that are often hunted along it. The village water supply comes from the river... And the river is a major avenue for travel in both summer and winter. Besides all this, the Black River is something more. It is the essence of their country. It is a living entity on which they depend, and its constant changeability gives them something to watch and to talk about. The old men, who have lived along it since a very different time, often sit for hours at the bank just watching it flow by (Nelson 1973).

The topic of place names in the Draanjik River area is not just a story of long ago. It is also a modern story that encompasses contemporary culture including the current trend of language revitalization.
On May 29, 2013, Edward Alexander, Second Chief of the Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich’in Tribal Government, submitted a proposal to the U.S. Board of Geographic Names (BGN) to change the existing name “Black River” to the traditional Gwich’in name “Draanjik.” In the proposal he wrote,

There are a bunch of other “black rivers” in Alaska, but there is only one Draanjik. It is distinct, it is in local use, it is supported by local people, and it’s appropriate to name this river its traditional Native American name. The local Gwich’in people are called the Draanjik Gwich’in, it is that central to our identity.

On April 30, 2014, the proposal was approved by the BGN and the river was officially designated Draanjik River. The decisions of the BGN are universally adopted for all federal government publications, including maps, by a presidential executive order of 1890. “Draanjik River” therefore is used in this report to the exclusion of “Black River,” except where “Black River” is part of an already published title or quoted text.

Draanjik River and its watershed are considered by many Gwich’in to be a special homeland and sanctuary. Few non-Natives visit the area, while many residents of Chalkyitsik and Fort Yukon have strong attachments gained from generations of use. By many people is it thought of as “real Indian country.” Much of Gwich’in lands in Alaska support low to very low densities of moose. Draanjik River is a rare exception, and subsistence users from several Yukon Flats villages count on the fall hunt up Draanjik River to meet their nutritional needs. The river itself abounds in fish, including highly prized broad whitefish (Coregonus nasus), an endemic population of sheefish (Stenodus leucichthys), and spawning populations of three species of salmon. The distribution of place names illustrates the extent of traditional land use, with densities particularly high between Fort Yukon and Chalkyitsik, in a radius surrounding the latter and in the vicinity of Shuman House. The riverine distribution of names along the Draanjik and Porcupine Rivers reflects the importance of riparian habitat in Gwich’in culture.

As discussed earlier in this report, discourse in Gwich’in has the ability to evoke very specific spatial/geographic imagery, drawing on a system of landscape-based directional adverbs and postpositional parts of speech, together called locational terms, which modify verbs of motion and location. Kari (1996b:445) observed that “the locational precision that is attained when the place names are transected by the set of riverine directionals … functions much like a surveyor’s triangulation system.”

In an unpublished Master’s Thesis, Busch (2000) described how the central importance of Porcupine River in the Gwich’in world view was made clear to him when analyzing directional terms in a narrative written by Katherine Peter.

From a Neets’aii perspective, -nji’ (‘upriver’) most often refers to the east, rather than north as would be the case if the nearby East Fork Chandalar, or other north-to-south flowing waters, were the riverine reference. … This was a puzzle to me until Trimble Gilbert (1996) of Arctic Village told me that the Porcupine River, approximately 100 miles to the south, is the major drainage landmark for this usage.

Figure 4 depicts basic direction terms as described to me by Moses Sam (1996) of Arctic Village. Notice that ootthàn (‘downland’) and oondâk (‘upland’) indicate movement toward the bank of
Porcupine River and the Brooks Range mountains, respectively, confirming that a regional frame of reference is being employed (Busch 2000).

In this system, movement which is parallel to upriver travel on Porcupine River, even far to the north, is ‘upriver.’ Any southward movement is ‘downland’ or toward Porcupine River. Sight unseen, this major river establishes a speaker’s sense of orientation on the landscape.

Place name distribution is strongly riverine and lacustrine, reflecting the affiliation between Gwich’in culture and water bodies. The presence or lack of subsistence resources is also reflected in place name density. One expert from Porcupine River commented on the lack of a Gwich’in name for Campbell River, “No name for that. No fish in there. If there’s no fish, then there’s no name.” (Campbell River is a small tributary of Porcupine River located sixteen miles downstream from the international border.)

REFERENCES AND SOURCES

In additional to references cited, the following list includes sources from which place names were obtained. Some sources are literature, but most are individual experts, usually elders, who are knowledgeable about a particular region. Generally, these experts are drawing from a life time of travel and living off the land, and have not only their own experiences to draw upon but also those of previous generations. Those sources which are listed as ANL… or U…. are the catalog identifiers of unpublished items in the collection of the Alaska Native Language Archive, University of Alaska Fairbanks.

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Andrews (1977)


Andrews (1985)

ANLC3670a

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ANLC6014, Alaska Native Language Archive, University of Alaska. Recording of interview of Eva Moffit and Bessie Barnabas conducted by Jim Kari, September 14, 1984. Middle Tanana language place names of the Salcha River area, upper Birch Creek, and neighboring areas.

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Chalkyitsik Place Names 1, ANLC6167. Alaska Native Language Archive, University of Alaska. Recording of interview conducted by Richard Caulfield in Chalkyitsik on October 14, 1981, with David Salmon, Simon Francis, Steven Henry, Minnie Salmon and Walter Peter, Sr.

ANLC6168
Birch Creek Place Names 1 and 2, ANLC6168. Alaska Native Language Archive, University of Alaska. Recording of interview conducted by Richard Caulfield in Birch Creek Village on February 18, 1982, with David James, Neil James, Eddie James, and Walter Peter, Sr.

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ANLC6170
Birch Creek Place Names, ANLC6170. Alaska Native Language Archive, University of Alaska. Recording of interview conducted by Richard Caulfield in Birch Creek Village February 18, 1982, with David James, Neil James, Eddie James, and Walter Peter, Sr.

ANLC6601
Simon Francis Interview, ANLC6601, Alaska Native Language Archive, University of Alaska. Recording of James Kari and Francis discussing place names in the Interior Alaska region in Gwich’in and English. Interviews were conducted in Fairbanks on November 30, 2006 and February 3, 2007.

ANLC6602
Simon Francis Interview, ANLC6602, Alaska Native Language Archive, University of Alaska. Recording of James Kari and Francis discussing place names in the Interior Alaska region in Gwich’in and English. The interview was conducted in Fairbanks on October 25 and 31, 2006.

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Dall (1877)

Dall (1898)

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FT, pers. com.
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Kari (1996b)

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KU960S2004, Alaska Native Language Archive, University of Alaska. Ms. One page, Gwich'in place name map hand drawn by Reverend David Salmon of Chalkyitsik.

KU972Mi1986


KU972Mi1990


KU973L1999


KU973P1982

Katherine Peter, Gwich'in Place Names, KU973P1982, 1982. Alaska Native Language Archive, University of Alaska. Typescript. Transcribed from recordings made by Richard Caulfield, Alaska Department of Fish and Game; consultants include Isaac Tritt, James and Maggie Gilbert, Trimble Gilbert, Kias Peter, and Lincoln Tritt (Arctic Village, 226 place names); Hamel Frank, Dan Frank, Sarah Frank, Abraham Christian, Maggie Roberts (Venetie, 209 place names); Samson Peter Sr., Elliot Johnson Sr., Abel Tritt, and Simon Peter (Ft. Yukon, 80 place names); David and Sarah Salmon, Simon and Bella Francis, Sam and Lilly Herbert, and Steven Henry (Chalkyitsik, 235 place names, some transcribed by Minnie Salmon); and David James, Neil James, and Winston James (Birch Creek, 52 place names). Some comments by Peter and Jane McGary. 48pp.

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Contributors

Gwich’in speakers cited by their initials:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initials</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DJ</td>
<td>David James</td>
<td>Birch Creek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SN</td>
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<td>Old Crow</td>
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<td>Bill Stevens</td>
<td>Fairbanks</td>
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<td>EJ</td>
<td>Elijah John</td>
<td>Fort Yukon</td>
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<td>FJ</td>
<td>Freda Joseph</td>
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<td>HW</td>
<td>Henry Williams</td>
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<td>IJ</td>
<td>Isaac James</td>
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<td>AA</td>
<td>Adlai Alexander</td>
<td>Circle</td>
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<td>Richard Carroll, Sr.</td>
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<tr>
<td>KP</td>
<td>Katherine Peter</td>
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<td>Marilyn Savage</td>
<td>Fort Yukon</td>
</tr>
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<td>PH</td>
<td>Paul Herbert</td>
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<td>Sandy Roberts</td>
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<td>WS</td>
<td>William Salmon, Sr.</td>
<td>Chalkyitsik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KF</td>
<td>Kenneth Frank</td>
<td>Fairbanks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Teedlajj Zheh**

Source: ANLC6168  
Speaker: DJ

Translation: *water flows house*  
Location: Tanana (town)  
Latitude: 65.170993  
Longitude: -152.079008

**K’iidootin Gwitsik K’qo Gwachoo Gwitsik**

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  
Translation: *outlet of large stream at outlet of elevated birch bark*  
Location: downstream mouth of Lower Birch Creek Slough  
Latitude: 66.447438  
Longitude: -146.833388

K’iidootin Gwitsik K’qo Gwachoo Gwitsik (mouth of Lower Birch Creek Slough) empties into the main channel of the Yukon River about 25 miles upstream from Beaver, Alaska.

**K’iidootin Gwitsik K’qo Gwachoo**

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  
Speaker: IJ

Translation: *large stream at outlet of elevated birch bark*  
Location: Lower Birch Creek Slough  
Latitude: 66.428876  
Longitude: -146.710019

This is an anabranch of the Yukon River, about 14 miles long, which lies to the south of the main channel.

**K’iidootin Gwitsik Gwits’ji Njuu Choo Dha’aji**

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  
Speaker: IJ

Translation: *a large island lies in the presence of the outlet of elevated birch bark*  
Location: Large island that is formed by the main stem Yukon River and Lower Birch Creek Slough  
Latitude: 66.445304  
Longitude: -146.793388

Alternatively, the name can be translated as *a large island lies in front of the outlet of elevated birch bark.*
Ch’iiji Doo’aajj
Source: PW, pers.com.
Translation: 'antlers are hanging up'
Location: K’iidootin Gwitsik
Latitude: 66.444385, Longitude: -146.641983
Site

Ch’iiji Doo’aajj is the name of an old camp site belonging to John Luke, also known as Johnny the Frog, located on the west bank of the Lower Mouth of Birch Creek (K’iidootin Gwitsik). The old cabin, now partially collapsed, fronts on K’iidootinjik (Birch Creek). Both saw and axe cut logs were used in the construction. The logs were peeled on the inside and unpeeled on the exterior. Dual ridge poles supported a roof of split poles covered with soil. It is now the location of Native Allotment AKFF 013448A.

K’iidootinjik, K’iidootin Gwinjik
Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)
Translation: 'elevated birch bark stream'
Location: Lower Birch Creek
Latitude: 66.433002, Longitude: -146.556689
Stream

K’iidootinjik is the name for Lower Birch Creek, namely that part of Birch Creek that begins at #507 Neekhâráadlaajj (“The Splits”), flows past the modern community of Birch Creek Village, and empties into the Yukon River by way of #331 Lower Birch Creek Slough.

K’iidootin Gwitsik
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)
Translation: 'mouth of elevated birch bark'
Location: mouth of Lower Birch Creek
Latitude: 66.445022, Longitude: -146.640147
Stream Mouth

K’ii Dootin
Source: KU972M1990, KU972M1986
Translation: 'birch bark is hanging'
Location: The exact location is uncertain.
Latitude: 66.44673, Longitude: -146.59724
Site

K’ii Dootin was a small settlement or campsite, perhaps only seasonally occupied. It’s unclear when this site was inhabited. David James, the son of Birch Creek Jimmy, described it, "I don't know how far this side of the mouth [of Lower Birch Creek], there's a place they call it K’ii Dootin. That's the place a group of people (lived)." Elijah John said that he was born and raised there before his family moved to the Circle area. He described it as more like a campsite rather than a village.
The Athabascan tradition of marking camp sites by hanging something that is visible to travelers (in modern times, an empty can is frequently used) is captured in place names. There is a site named Ch'įį Dōo’ąjj ‘antler hanging up’ some distance below K’įį Dottin (there is another Ch’įį Dōo’ąjj near Chalkyitsik). There is a place called Ch’įįkitth’an Dōo’ąjj ‘skull hanging up’ near Fort Yukon.

**Teenjir Njuu**

- **Source:** ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)
- **Speaker:** DJ
- **Translation:** ‘island in the middle of the water’
- **Location:** Lake between Birch Creek and Canvasback Lake
- **Latitude:** 66.392783
- **Longitude:** -146.434951

Teenjir means "middle, half-way."

**T’eerinlii**

- **Source:** ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)
- **Speaker:** IJ
- **Photo:** USFWS
- **Translation:** ‘we placed them’
- **Location:** Canvasback Lake
- **Latitude:** 66.385111
- **Longitude:** -146.360821

**Teek’ii Zhit Van**

- **Source:** ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)
- **Speaker:** DJ
- **Photo:** USFWS
- **Translation:** ‘in dry brush lake’
- **Location:** Scaup Lake
- **Latitude:** 66.349122
- **Longitude:** -146.18071

There are three Native Allotments along the south shore of the lake.

**Njaa Dàk Choo**

- **Source:** ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)
- **Speaker:** IJ
- **Translation:** ‘ducks are molting’
  - IJ: ‘Njaa Dàk Choo means ducks are molting.’ Njaa are white-winged scoters.
- **Latitude:** 66.330225
- **Longitude:** -146.262215

**Gyuu Gdit, Gyu Gdit**

- **Source:** ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)
- **Speaker:** DJ
- **Translation:** meaning is uncertain
  - Gyuu means "worms."
- **Location:** ‘Silas’ Place” near Lower Mouth Birch Creek
- **Latitude:** 66.322406
- **Longitude:** -146.190616

Silas Alexander Sr.’s place, the location of Native Allotment AKFF 014727.
**Diiràq’ii Gehdit Van Něêkwajj**

Source: Caulfield (1983)  
Speaker: RJ  
*Photo: USFWS*  
Translation: *two lakes past someone stole a person*  
Location: lakes north of Deeràq’ii  
Latitude: 66.329601  
Longitude: -146.17988  
*Lake*

**Diiràq’ii**

Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)  
Speaker: DJ  
Translation: *someone (bushman) stole a person*  
Latitude: 66.305209  
Longitude: -146.065314  
*Lake*

DJ: "A woman was stolen from the family."

**Zhōh Van, Dick Vavân**

Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)  
Speaker: RJ  
Translation: *wolf lake*  
Latitude: 66.292058  
Longitude: -146.149073  
*Listen*  
*Lake*

The more recent name is for Richard James.

**Tseenjik**

Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)  
Speaker: DJ  
*Picture*  
Translation: *beaver river*  
Location: Beaver Creek  
Latitude: 66.27783  
Longitude: -146.410862  
*Stream*

Schneider (1976) p.219: "Birch Creek Jimmy noted that they sometimes traveled in the springtime via a short portage a few miles above the old Birch Creek Village to Beaver River. From here they would float down the Beaver River to the Yukon... In some springs they would follow Birch Creek to the Yukon and then travel directly upstream to Fort Yukon."

**Mohgii Van**

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  
Speaker: AA  
Translation: *monkey lake*  
Location: lake north of Deedzqajj Ghòò  
Latitude: 66.268969  
Longitude: -146.151245  
*Lake*

This is a recent name coined by Adlai Alexander.
Charlotte Vavàn
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  Speaker: AA
Translation: 'Charlotte's Lake'
Location: horseshoe lake east of Deedzaji Ghòo'
Latitude: 66.26275  Longitude: -146.11314

The lake is named for Charlotte Alexander, wife of Silas Alexander, Sr. whose trap line was located in the area.

Deedzaji Ghòo'
Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: MS
Picture
Translation: 'loon eggs'
Latitude: 66.260122  Longitude: -146.171004

Deedzaji Ghòo' is the center of the traditional subsistence area of the Silas Alexander family. His Native Allotment FF018824 is located on a peninsula that juts into the north shore of the lake. Pictured to the left is Silas Alexander, Sr. at this location in the mid-1970s. (photo by Roger Kaye)

Deedzaji is the common loon, Gavia immer.

Gwit’ee Van K’at
Source: Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: RJ
Translation: 'upon the lake in area beneath'
Latitude: 66.243677  Longitude: -146.19559

T’aa Teen’ee, T’aa Teen’ee Tthan Khaji
Source: Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: MS
Translation: 'water extends among cottonwood trees'
Latitude: 66.24453  Longitude: -146.46649

Native Allotment FF014754 is situated along the north shore of the lake.

T’aa Teen’ee Dak Khaji
Source: Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: MS
Translation: 'upper water extends among cottonwood trees'
Latitude: 66.235371  Longitude: -146.421296
Abraham Peter's camp. A large clearing with two buildings is located on the west bank of Beaver Creek just
downstream from the mouth of Big Creek. The camp itself is bisected by the boundary between two Native
Allotments, AKF 022806 on the north and AKFF 013409 on the south.

### Shohnjik Choo Gwitsik

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  
Speaker: AA  
Translation: 'big bear stream mouth'  
Location: mouth of Big Creek  
Latitude: 66.252287  Longitude: -146.562295

### Shoh Van K'at, Shoh Van

Source: Caulfield (1983)  
Speaker: AA  
Translation: 'on bear lake, bear lake'  
Location: large lake south toward hills off Big Creek  
Latitude: 66.172553  Longitude: -146.417389

Native Allotment AKFF 014033B is located on the southwest shore of the lake.

### Shohnjik Choo

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  
Speaker: AA  
Translation: 'big bear creek'  
Location: lower Big Creek  
Latitude: 66.24733  Longitude: -146.57678

### Shoh Van ts’a’ Khànlaajjí

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  
Speaker: AA  
Translation: 'flows to bear lake'  
Location: upper Big Creek  
Latitude: 66.199537  Longitude: -146.462159

### K’aii Luk

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  
Translator: AA  
Translation: 'willow fish'  
Location: lake northeast of Ninemile Lake  
Latitude: 66.257282  Longitude: -146.585651

This feature comprises two large lakes connected by a short slough.

### Ch’aghòo’ Teeraadal

Source: Caulfield (1983)  
Translation: 'we gather eggs on shore'  
Location: Two interconnected lakes north of Ninemile Lake.  
Latitude: 66.231104  Longitude: -146.635422

This feature comprises two large lakes connected by a short slough.
### Teeghan
Source: Caulfield (1983)
Location: Ninemile Lake
Latitude: 66.187723  Longitude: -146.662828

### Abraham Tsal Vavàn
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)
Speaker: AA
Translation: 'little Abraham's lake'
Location: Abraham Lake
Latitude: 66.188796  Longitude: -146.723743

This lake is named for the late Abraham Peter (pictured); his trap line is shown in Shimkin (1955) #61.

### Teeghoo
Source: Caulfield (1983)
Translation: 'round water'
Latitude: 66.105522  Longitude: -146.406471

### Teeghoo Ts'an Tr'igwin'ee
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)
Speaker: RJ
Translation: 'one that comes out from round water'
Latitude: 66.154459  Longitude: -146.475142

This is a small creek that drains Teeghoo, and empties into Shoh Van K’at.

### Ikhèenjik
Speaker: SR

Listen

**Photo credit:** Andrew Firman  **Photo:** BLM
Translation: 'comes back stream'
Location: Upper Mouth Birch Creek and Birch Creek above Neekhàrràdlajì

SJ: "Ikhèe means 'it comes back'". The name Ikhèenjik applies to the Upper Mouth Birch Creek, and upper Birch Creek upstream from the junction with Lower Mouth Birch Creek at Neekhàrràdlajì, see #507.
Slaughter (1984) p.120-121 & Map 13 notes “Three extant cabins and the outline of the floor of a fourth are located on the west bank of Upper Birch Creek at its confluence with the Yukon. The cabins are in various states of disrepair. The dwelling closest to the Yukon is in usable condition. This structure was used by Paul Soloman in the 1930s and 1940s. This area was used by Birch Creek Jimmy and others prior to the construction of the Soloman cabin.” Slaughter called this the Upper Birch Creek Settlement with visible clearings and trails, and it is located on Native Allotment F022252, belonging to Daniel Flitt. Schneider (1976), p. 343, writes about Charlotte Adams: “In the spring of 1933, Grandma was camped at the mouth of the Upper Birch Creek. Her sister, Sophie Paul, and husband, Fred Paul, had a camp there. Grandma remembers that Margaret Kelly, Big George, and her mother were also there. That summer, her daughter Florida was born, and in the fall, they came down to Beaver.”

Skully James: “That used to be a village. In the 40s, even 30s, it was a village. Big village, maybe twenty, thirty people lives there. And that's where the people that hunt muskrats from Circle, they hunt the lakes. They all come out [to the Yukon] with canoes. They pick them up with boats, take them up to Fort Yukon. That's how they work it. John Frog is one of them, John Sam one of them. By 1942 or 43, just two of them living there. There must be about ten cabins there about that time. Now there's only about one there now.”

Ch’itr’u’ Gwò’ Gwitsik 388
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011) Speaker: IJ
Translation: ‘arctic tern eggs outlet’
Location: mouth of Tajittro Creek
Latitude: 66.489822 Longitude: -146.076285

Ch’itr’u’ Gwò’ Gwinjik, Ch’itr’u’ Gwò’ Njik 389
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011) Speaker: IJ
Translation: ‘tern eggs stream’
Location: Tajittro Creek, Fivemile Creek
Latitude: 66.477704 Longitude: -146.042301

Ch’itr’u’ Gwò’ Gwitsik K’iidi’ Van Dhidlìi 390
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011) Speaker: IJ
Translation: ‘lakes that are downstream at mouth of tern eggs’
Location: lakes near mouth of Tajittroo Creek
Latitude: 66.467494 Longitude: -146.029184

Di’ Khaji Shoh Gin Dòotin Van 391
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011) Speaker: RJ
Translation: ‘downstream side bear fore-arm is elevated lake’
Location: lake west of Upper Mouth Birch Creek
Latitude: 66.397664 Longitude: -145.991451

This dried-up lake is mostly meadow, with only four small ponds of water remaining. Grasses, sedges and some willow fill in the remainder of the original lake.
Two small lakes and some small ponds are all that remain, the rest of the original lake has dried up and become meadow.

Abundant muskrats and njāā (white-winged scoters, locally called black ducks) are found on this lake. The name was recorded by USGS in 1956.

Typical of many lakes in this portion of the Yukon Flats, Ch’itr’ūu Ghōo’ Van has "dried up," or more properly drained out, probably due to the melting of underlying permafrost associated with a warming climate. The outlines of the previous lake are still visible, but the former lake has filled in with a succession of shrubs, sedges and grass.

The winter trail between Birch Creek and Fort Yukon crosses Oojyāa Tajjī. Chissovan, recorded for this lake in 1956 by USGS, refers to the resource chishshó ‘broad whitefish’ but it is not the actual place name.
Oojyaa Tajj K’oq
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)
Translation: ‘middle trail stream’
Location: creek into Chissovan Lake
Latitude: 66.401004 Longitude: -145.628366

Łajj Choo Kwai’ Van
Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)
Translation: ‘horse shoe lake’
Latitude: 66.37465 Longitude: -145.681702

K’aiiluk, K’aiiluk Van
Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)
Translation: ‘willow fish lake’
Latitude: 66.368111 Longitude: -145.636941

K’aiiluk Ti’ehnjik
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)
Translation: ‘willow fish slough’
Location: slough west of K’aiiluk
Latitude: 66.36834 Longitude: -145.67864

Han Gwajat
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)
Translation: ‘old river’
Latitude: 66.348835 Longitude: -145.659976

Han Gwajat is an old, cut-off meander of Birch Creek. A portion of it is a slough, containing water, but much of it has filled in with willows, sedges and grass. It's a good place for moose.

Khahlajj
Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)
Translation: ‘current flows up’
Location: Hat Lie Lakes
Latitude: 66.36207 Longitude: -145.577464

The winter trail between Birch Creek and Fort Yukon runs down one arm of Łajj Choo Kwai’ Van.
The winter trail between Birch Creek and Fort Yukon cuts diagonally across this lake.

Like many other lakes in this part of the Yukon Flats, T’oo’ Il is mostly dried up and filled in with small trees, brush and grass.

Like many other lakes in this part of the Yukon Flats, T’oo’ Il is mostly dried up and filled in with small trees, brush and grass.

The portage trail between Birch Creek and Beaver Creek is 1.1 miles long. There is a camp with buildings on each end of the portage.
Ndak Khajj K'òq
Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)
Translation: *'further back creek'*
Location: creek into Beaver Creek
Latitude: 66.24081 Longitude: -146.039348

In high water conditions it's possible to travel by canoe between Birch Creek and Beaver Creek by way of Ndak Khajj K'òq and Iltin Zhuu K'òq.

Iltin Zhuu K'òq
Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)
Translation: *'young pike stream'*
Location: stream 1 mile west of Chloya Lake outlet
Latitude: 66.237531 Longitude: -145.990385

In high water conditions it's possible to travel by canoe between Birch Creek and Beaver Creek by way of Ndak Khajj K'òq and Iltin Zhuu K'òq.

Nihts’ạ Ch’aghòoo’ Khilzhii K’òq
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)
Translation: *'they go around for eggs stream'*
Latitude: 66.264676 Longitude: -145.908222

Tr’ih Chiindlit Gwitsik
Source: Caulfield (1983), ANLC6168
Translation: *'tree squirrel's land on lake'*
Speaker: NJ
Latitude: 66.233533 Longitude: -145.874414

Tr’ih Chiindlit
Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: RJ
Translation: *'a canoe sank'*
Latitude: 66.239576 Longitude: -145.846326

Old Village
Source: ANLC6168, ANLC6170, Slaughter (1984), Schneider (1976)
Latitude: 66.25299 Longitude: -145.84082

Slaughter (1984) p.112-114 and Map 12. "The initial settlement in the Birch Creek area was on the left bank of Lower Birch Creek ... Informants indicate that the site may have been occupied as much as 100 years ago. The first person associated with the settlement was Old Thomas, a son of Shâhnyaat'î, although the dates of this occupation are not known. Also associated with the site at an early date was Birch Creek George, the son-in-law of Old Thomas, who settled here in 1898. The late Birch Creek Jimmy, one of the founders of the modern settlement, moved here in the early 1900s from the Black River area... The community moved to the Birch Creek Village site in 1916, although it was not until the establishment of the school there in 1962 that the community was occupied year around... A cemetery is reportedly located a short distance upstream from the Old Village site." Schneider (1976) lists the residents of Old Birch Creek Village as of 1900. Old Thomas, who was the son of Shâhnyaat'î, lived there with his wife Harriet, who was from Stevens Village. Their daughter Caroline and her husband George Loola (Birch Creek George, originally from Draanjik) lived there. Old Thomas' son Ned Thomas and his wife Julia also lived there, as did Julia's brother Birch Creek Jimmy. "Jimmy's father had died in 1987 and right after that two of his older
brothers died and then there was just himself to support the family. They depended on him and were kind of short all the time so after the marriage of his sister to [Ned] Thomas, Jimmy and his mother moved to Birch Creek; that was is 1900. "Julia's marriage to Ned Thomas had been arranged by Old Thomas at the request of Julia's mother. "This old man Thomas settled down here way before they came. He was well off, hard working man, kind of chief. Old Thomas met Jimmy's mother in Fort Yukon and she told him that she wanted one of her daughters to marry his son [Ned] Thomas."

Neegwaatthik
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  Speaker: RJ
Translation: 'fish weir is put across'
Location: fish trap site near Old Village
Latitude: 66.253153  Longitude: -145.842094

T'ooyah
Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: DJ
Translation: 'floating grass'
Location: Chloya Lake
Latitude: 66.218687  Longitude: -145.928396

Łuk Choo Van
Source: ANLC6170, Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: DJ
Translation: 'big fish lake'
Location: Burman Lake
Latitude: 66.076727  Longitude: -145.981642

Łiteet'aii, Łeedląjj
Source: Caulfield (1983), ANLC6168  Speaker: DJ
Translation: 'water courses meet'
Location: Birch Creek Village
Latitude: 66.262534  Longitude: -145.816489

"Fishnet Slough" By extension, Łiteet'aii also refers to the modern day Birch Creek Village.
I.J: "Down around the bend (from Birch Creek Village) there's a slough, coming from the lakes, where it split out, where this river and the sort of slough meet, that's what that means, Łiteet'aii, that's where that fish camp is." DJ: "See, the water going down stream together, where it come together."
At the confluence of Fishnet Slough and Birch Creek, the current becomes negligible, making an ideal location for setting fishnets. Slaughter (1984) p. 114-115 and map 12: "Birch Creek Jimmy Fish Camp. A fish camp once used by Birch Creek Jimmy is located on the north bank of the slough draining the Twin Island Lake system where it enters Birch Creek. This camp is presently being used. Facilities at the camp include an area framed for roofing with polyethylene or other light weight material and a table." The camp is on Native Allotment AKF 023054A.

Deech'yah Rahtsii

Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DJ
Translation: 'we get white-fronted geese'
Location: lake west of Birch Creek village
Latitude: 66.26626 Longitude: -145.832555
Lake

Nan Zhinlajj

Source: Caulfield (1983)
Translation: 'flows under ground'
Location: dry watercourse west of Deech'ya Rahtsii
Latitude: 66.277403 Longitude: -145.915244
Stream

No-more-see Van

Speaker: SJ
Translation: 'No More See Lake'
Location: lake north of Birch Creek village
Latitude: 66.269712 Longitude: -145.813388
Lake

APR: "A certain young lady was sequestered at this lake. When she finally left, she proclaimed 'I will never see that lake again.'"
**Ti’oo Dhaa Gwachoo**

Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)  
Speaker: DJ  

Photo: USFWS  
Translation: *warm grassy area*  
Location: First lake to the north of Birch Creek Village on the Fort Yukon trail.  
Latitude: 66.289143  
Longitude: -145.805257

**Teet’ai Gwinjik, Łiteet’aii Gwinjik**

Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)  
Speaker: DJ  

Photo: Picture  
Translation: *water-courses-meet stream*  
Location: Fishnet Slough, Birch Creek Slough  
Latitude: 66.247636  
Longitude: -145.816686

**Drah Dōodlii Van**

Source: ANLC6170, Kari, Raboff (2011)  
Speaker: DJ  

Translation: *racks are standing lake*  
Latitude: 66.251634  
Longitude: -145.829131

**Khaih Zhee Van**

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  
Speaker: RJ  

Translation: *goose house lake*  
Location: lake west of Taataa  
Latitude: 66.229253  
Longitude: -145.815854

**Kii Zhuu Nląįį**

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  
Speaker: RJ  

Translation: *flows (on) small rocks*  
Location: fish site on outlet of Taataa  
Latitude: 66.232315  
Longitude: -145.796696

**Taataa**

Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)  
Speaker: DJ  

Location: Source of Teet’aii Gwinjik  
Latitude: 66.227013  
Longitude: -145.755576

Taataa is a ts’aii dëįij word. David James stated that he did not know the meaning of Taataa, that the lake was named by people long ago and before his time.
Tajh Ghoo
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  Speaker: RJ
Translation: 'round hill'
Location: hill on south end of Taataa
Latitude: 66.216934  Longitude: -145.739788

K’iiluk K’qiq
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  Speaker: DJ
Translation: 'mosquito fish stream'
Location: Twin Island Lake outlet stream
Latitude: 66.207399  Longitude: -145.751184

K’iiluk, K’iiluk Van
Translation: ‘mosquito fish (lake)’
Location: Twin Island Lake
Latitude: 66.192175  Longitude: -145.797974

Teendit
Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: DJ
Translation: ‘narrow water’
Location: middle lake of Three Lakes
Latitude: 66.206153  Longitude: -145.854331

Tsi’i Vak’qiq
Translation: ‘Grampa’s stream’
Location: outlet of Tsi’i Vavan
Latitude: 66.202791  Longitude: -145.726563

Schneider (1976) p.338, BCJ: "In springtime, after break-up, they move back in the lake. Way back there is good fishing, back there in a narrow creek. They put in fish trap and when they get fish, they fix them good for winter, dry them real good. Then they move back to the village (old village) where they cache the fish for winter." Slaughter (1984) p.116 & Map 12, Twin Island Lake Fish Camp No. 4. "A presently favored fishing area is located on the east shore of Twin Island Lake opposite the southern most of the islands that give the lake its name... The attraction of this area is that fish movements tend to skirt the lake shore in the vicinity of the clearing."

McDonald made several visits to the Birch Creek fishery that supplied the Hudson Bay Company in Fort Yukon between 1863 and 1868. This fish camp at Twin Island Lake may be the main site of the 19th century fishery.

DJ: "last time the caribou came by it was like mosquitos standing around."

Slaughter (1984), p.115: "The outlet of Twin Island Lake flows northward where it is joined by a slough [Tsi’i Vak’qiq] draining the lake system to the east. An abandoned fish camp is located on the north bank of this slough at the point where the slough abruptly widens to the north. The Site sits back from the slough a few meters and is within a north-south oriented clearing. This area is perhaps 4-5 m higher than the surrounding terrain. The surface of the cleared area is covered with a very dense growth of grass and weeds."
Tsii Vavàn 471

Speaker: DJ, RJ
Translation: ‘Grandpa’s lake’
Location: lake east of Twin Island Lake
Latitude: 66.195065 Longitude: -145.7362

Slaughter (1984), p.114: "Twin Island Lake Fish Camp No. 1. Informants at Birch Creek Village indicated that a very old fish camp was located at the inlet of the large lake immediately east of Twin Island Lake. This site ... was explicitly stated to have been occupied prior to the arrival of Europeans." The site is on Native Allotment AKFF 012003B.

Recorded by Caulfield in 1983, David James alternated between Tsii Vavàn, Shii Vavan, and Shrii Vavàn. The general consensus among those participating in the interview was Tsii Vavàn, meaning 'Granpa's Lake.' Tsii may be an affectionate term or nickname, like "Grampa," for a particular individual. The Gwich’in word for grandfather -tsii is normally possessed, as in Diitsii "our grandfather."

Taatthqq ts’ąt K'qq Gwin’ee 472

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)
Speaker: DJ
Translation: ‘outlet stream from Taatthoo’
Latitude: 66.192065 Longitude: -145.69524

Taatthqq, Taatthoo 473

Speaker: DJ
Translation: ‘brown water’
Location: lake east of Tsii Vavan
Latitude: 66.188071 Longitude: -145.676113

Slaughter (1984), p.114, reports that there is an old fish camp site, which he refers to as Twin Island Lake Fish Camp No. 2, located near the outlet of this lake. "The use of this camp also reportedly predates the arrival of Europeans."

Tr’iluk Van 477

Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: RJ
Location: lake northeast of Taatthoo
Latitude: 66.193378 Longitude: -145.622728

K’it, K’it Van, K’ik Van 479

Speaker: RJ, IJ
Translation: ‘place lake’, ‘plate lake’
Latitude: 66.174412 Longitude: -145.572191

IJ says K’it; RJ says K’ik

Tajh Zhit Van 483

Source: Caulfield (1983)
Translation: ‘lake in hills’
Latitude: 66.144314 Longitude: -145.717261

David Englishshoe Vanâhkat 484

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)
Translation: ‘David Englishshoe’s Country’
Area

This area comprises some of the hill country south of Birch Creek.

Ch’ityahtsan Gwitsik 486

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)
Speaker: RJ
Translation: ‘outlet of smells like otter stream’
Latitude: 66.27372 Longitude: -145.7299
Stream Mouth
Ch’itryâhtsan Gwinjik

Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DJ
Translation: ‘something smells like otter stream’
Location: Discovery Creek
Latitude: 66.19294  Longitude: -145.506094
Stream

Ch’itryâhtsan

Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DJ
Translation: ‘something smells like otter’
Location: lake west of Discovery Creek
Latitude: 66.216639  Longitude: -145.661566
Lake

Ch’itryâhtsan Van Choo

Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DJ
Translation: ‘big something-smells-like-otter lake’
Location: large lake on Discovery Creek
Latitude: 66.187126  Longitude: -145.442516
Lake

Caulfield (1983) names it Ned Vavan (Ned's Lake) on the Fort Yukon map (FY/10). It is named after Ned (or Net) Thomas, son of Old Thomas and grandson of Shâhnyaatl”. Ned was married to Julia, the older sister of Birch Creek Jimmy.

Van Tik

Source: Caulfield (1983)
Translation: ‘three lakes’
Location: lakes west of K’it Van
Latitude: 66.174578  Longitude: -145.622051
Lakes

The winter trail from Taatthq to K’it Van cuts across the northeast corner of the northern most of the three lakes.
Van ɫizʉų
Source: Caulfield (1983)
Translation: ‘bad lake’
Latitude: 66.136063 Longitude: -145.682091

Tajjchoo
Source: Caulfield (1983)
Translation: ‘scaup duck’
Latitude: 66.059323 Longitude: -145.788928

Łuk Zhraįį
Source: Caulfield (1983)
Translation: ‘black fish’
Latitude: 66.114051 Longitude: -145.685506

Shàñnyaa Vatthāl
Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DJ
Translation: ‘Shàñnyaa’s caribou fence’
Location: fence in West Crazy Mountains, at the of head of Discovery Creek
Latitude: 65.838821 Longitude: -145.768232

Łeeldājj Neekhârâadlājjį, Łeeldājj Khârâadlājjį
Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DJ
Translation: ‘confluence revolving current’
Location: “The Fork”, where upper and lower mouth divide.
Latitude: 66.270158 Longitude: -145.508697

Birch Creek splits at this location into Upper and Lower Birch Creeks. This fork marks the upriver end of K’iidaytjik. Schneider (1976) p. 338, relates what Birch Creek Jimmy told him: "(from old village) they start to move to the Yukon River in the latter part of June before the salmon run. There they set up camp for the summer fishing. That was at a place that they returned to each summer. When they travelled to the fish camp they went up to the fork (Łeeldājj Khârâadlājjį) and then down the Upper Birch (Ikhèenjik) to the mouth. Then they travelled up-river about seven miles to their camp."

Gwatłohnjik Gwitsik
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)
Speaker: DJ
Translation: ‘mushy substance river mouth’
Location: mouth of Preacher Creek
Latitude: 66.128942 Longitude: -144.841828

Jacob Luke's camp was where Preacher Creek enters Birch Creek. Shimkin (1955) #52 has Jacob Luke’s trap line near Seventeenmile south of the Yukon River. Native Allotment AKFF 013349 is located here.
**Gwätłýñjik**

Translation: 'mushy substance creek'
Location: Preacher Creek
Latitude: 66.007443  Longitude: -144.840254
Stream
This major stream takes its name from an important hillside called Gwätłóh, where according to old time beliefs deceased people would go. In "Listen to Story" Stanley Luke tells the tale of the hill Gwätłóh, a famous shaman by the name of Ch’ítr’úu Zhrii, and how wolverine affected the Gwätłýñjik country. People who used to live in the mountains at the head of Gwätłýñjik perished from famine, according to the story, and now days that area is considered a place where it’s hard to make a living.

**Gwätłóh**

Translation: 'mushy substance area'
Location: A hillside along Preacher Creek near the beginning of the Yukon Flats
Latitude: 65.98538  Longitude: -144.986221
Landform
This hillside, according to old time beliefs, is where "people used to go in there, after they die."

The Reverend Robert McDonald in the summer of 1863 heard about a place called "Kotlo," on the banks of a small stream called Kootlonjik. "It is described by the Indians as marvellous noises as of human beings crying are said to be heard there when death is about to happen, then an arrow shot up the face of the hill always disappear from view before it falls." With two Indian companions he set out to visit the site on July 15, 1863. They traveled 40 miles up the Yukon, portaged over to Birch Creek and descended the stream two miles to the mouth of Gwätłýñjik. He records that the heat was intense and "the mosquitoes exceedingly troublesome." The creek was "craggy and shoaled" and it took a day to ascend to Gwätłóh. They camped and during the night noises from the hill disturbed his sleep. The next day he examined the place. "Ascended Kootlo hill, and had an extensive view from it; mountains seen stretching off to the south and southwest. Discovered some valuable fossil remains, a few of which I collected to take on my return."

Specimens he collected included ancient steppe bison (Bison priscus), muskoxen, and mastodons. "Made the experiment of shooting an arrow up the hill, but both bow and arrow being inferior I could not make a fair trial. Certainly the arrow was seen to fall."
Divii Ddhàa, Divii Ddhah

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)
Translation: *Dall's sheep mountain*
Location: Mount Schwatka and/or Victoria Mountain, "mountain, south of the Yukon River, 61 miles below Fort Yukon"
Latitude: 65.88287 Longitude: 147.24903

Kii Ddhàa, Kii Ddhah

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011), Schneider (1976) Speaker: RJ
Translation: 'stone mountain'
Location: Victoria Mountain
Latitude: 65.787788 Longitude: -146.911553

Schneider (1976) p. 436: "One of the most memorable experiences for Ida and her family is the winter they spent trapping with Paul Solomon and his brother-in-law and their families. This Indian family had a trap line over on the Beaver River by Victoria. That was in 1927."

Łuu Ddhah

Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983) Speaker: DJ
Translation: 'ice mountains'
Location: central White Mountains
Latitude: 65.66327 Longitude: -146.8744

The Caulfield map (1983) places this name on the West Crazy Mountains, but in the recording of the interview conducted in Birch Creek, David James seems to imply that Łuu Ddhah refers to the White Mountains in general.
Thoo’ajj

Thoo’ajj is a ts’ii deix word. The meaning is not known.

Source: ANLC6170, Caulfield (1983)

Yeetin

Schneider (1976), p. 343, writes about Charlotte Adams: "In 1929, she was camped at the mouth of Sucker River and from there traveled to a lake called "Ye Tin" (12 miles from Fort Yukon on the winter trail to Birch Creek Village). She remembers that Nathaniel Englishoe was just a young boy at that time and Herbert Peter had a cabin on the lake." The winter trail between Birch Creek Village and Fort Yukon crosses Yeetin.

Source: ANLC6168, Caulfield (1983)

Shàhnyaati’ Vatth’an’kit

Andrews (1977) p.304: "Gravesite of the famed Yukon Flats trading chief. It is reported that he died in 1892. As Gwich’in tradition dictated he was placed on a platform cache when he died."

Source: John (2015), Caulfield (1983)

Van Choo

Van Choo (2015)

Source: John (2015)

Translation: ‘big lake’
Van Juu

Source: John (2015), Andrews (1977)  
Speaker: IR, CJ  
Location: Medicine Lake  
Latitude: 65.497228  
Longitude: -144.519793

Andrews (1977) v.2, p. 117: "At Medicine Lake at a small peninsula burned rock and calcined bone were recovered from the surface. This site was located near an Indian cabin which was used at the time of the survey (Hadleigh-West 1965). Similarly, in 1934, localities at Medicine Lake revealed small refuse deposits and hearths, but no artifacts (Rainey 1939)."

In the late 1800s Shâhnyaaítí’ and his extended family were exploiting the country upriver from Liteet’áii including the Van Juu area. They didn’t live in one place but moved around. In his last years Shâhnyaaítí’ was living along Ikhèenjik in the Circle area, and at Van Juu, a place that was especially dear to him.

Danzhit Khànłąjįį

Source: John (2015), Roberts (2015)  
Speaker: IR, CJ  
Translation: ‘it flows into canyon’  
Location: Circle  
Latitude: 65.825556  
Longitude: -144.060556

The descendants of Shâhnyaaítí’ and his many children are numerous today among the residents of Circle, Birch Creek, and Fort Yukon. Those individuals have to this day kept alive the place names, love of the land, and cultural traditions of the Gwich’in nation.

Journalist Marilyn Savage asked the Gwich’in leader Clarence Alexander in a 2011 interview: “Why do you believe the way you do? That’s what’s interesting to me, so readers can say, ‘Oh, that’s why they’re fighting for their way of life.’” He answered, “Well, right off the bat I told you how I was born here. And you know, I heard, if you wanna go back, they asked the question of Shâhnyaaítí’. They asked him why? Dzqq geh’àn, dzqq nankat shagòodlit geh’àn, déinyaa! ‘Because this is the land I was born on.’ There’s no other reason. Oo’án ts’à’ gookwaa ts’à’. ‘There’s no other reason.’ There’s no reason other than that it’s the birthplace of who we are. Not because we live here, I didn’t say that. Don’t misunderstand what I said. Dzqq nankat, ‘on this land.’ Shagòodlit, ‘I was born here.’ That is the only reason I need, to tell me what I can do for this land that I was born on. Shâhnyaaítí’ said it. I am only reiterating what the great chief of all the chiefs said prior to me.”

The great Gwich’in chief Shâhnyaaítí’ (right) and his son William Pilot. Shâhnyaaítí’ was an adult and already a paramount leader in the Yukon Flats when he first met Europeans, the Hudson’s Bay entourage who arrived at the confluence of the Porcupine and Yukon Rivers in 1847 to establish the trading post of Fort Yukon.
Ch’ōonjik, Ch’oànjik, Ch’oodèenjik

Ch’ōonjik is a 916-kilometre (569 mi) tributary of the Yukon River. It begins in the Ogilvie Mountains, in the Yukon Territory of Canada. From there it flows north past the community of Old Crow, veers southwest into the U.S. state of Alaska, and enters the Yukon River at Fort Yukon. Ch’oodèenjik is the Old Crow pronunciation.

Gehdzèechū’ Njuu

Source: Caulfield (1983)  
Translation: “rabbit ear juice island”  
Location: Homebrew Island  
Latitude: 66.5974  Longitude: -145.26852

Gehdzèechū’

Source: ANLC6602  
Translation: “rabbit ear juice”  
Location: slough north of Homebrew Island  
Latitude: 66.62503  Longitude: -145.29315

Łuk K’ahdąįį

Source: ANLC6601  
Translation: ‘fish trap opening’  
Location: Hospital Lake  
Latitude: 66.57239  Longitude: -145.25964

Łuk K’ahdąįį K’qqįį

Source: ANLC6601  
Translation: ‘fish trap opening creek’  
Location: Joe Ward Slough  
Latitude: 66.57219  Longitude: -145.2868

Also known as Joe Ward Slough and John Ts’oo Vak’qąįį.
Deets’át K’qo
Translation: 'suckerfish stream'
Location: Sucker River
Latitude: 66.5853 Longitude: -145.11465

Deets’át K’qo Gwitsik
Source: Caulfield (1983) Speaker: MF
Translation: 'mouth of suckerfish river'
Location: mouth of Sucker River

Shryąh K’qo
Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993), ANLC6601 Speaker: RM
Translation: 'mouth of sheefish river'
Location: mouth of Eight Mile Slough (also called Nina Wallace Slough)
Latitude: 66.621 Longitude: -145.11236

Shryąh K’qo, Shryąh K’qo Gwitsik
Source: ANLC6601 Speaker: SF
Translation: 'sheefish stream'
Location: Eightmile Slough (also called Nina Wallace Slough)
Latitude: 66.60123 Longitude: -145.07682

Neeqqo Kwàn T’ee
Source: Caulfield (1983), ANLC6601 Speaker: SF
Translation: 'below fox dens'
Latitude: 66.5854 Longitude: -145.00927

Teek’ii Zhit Van
Source: Caulfield (1983) Speaker: MF
Translation: 'in dry willow lake'
Location: lake west of Bear Blanket Slough
Latitude: 66.59579 Longitude: -144.96662

Shoh Ts’át Ditltsuu, Shoh Ts’át Ditltsuu Njik
Source: Caulfield (1983), ANLC6601 Speaker: SF, MF
Translation: 'black bear blanket hanging up'
Location: Bear Blanket Slough
Latitude: 66.57753 Longitude: -144.9463

The translation of the Gwich’in name was adopted in 1956 by the USGS.

K’ilját Tl’in
Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993) Speaker: RM
Translation: 'rotten willow bend'
Location: bend on Porcupine River below Seventeenmile
Latitude: 66.65317 Longitude: -145.06285

RM: (above Shryąh K’qo Gwitsik) "... we're going up around the bend and there's a long bend there below Seventeen Mile they call K’ilját Tl’in."
**Dit&amp;#39;hdy&amp;#39; Tsik, Ch&amp;#39;it&amp;#39;hhdry&amp;#39;y Tsik**

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993), Caulfield (1983), ANLC6601

Speaker: RM

Translation: ‘downstream shallow stream mouth’?

Location: Seventeen Mile
Latitude: 66.63522
Longitude: -144.94681

Stream Mouth

RM: “...that’s not a creek ... that’s one of the mouths of Grass River.” The creek mouth is behind a gravel bar on the south bank of Porcupine River. A small settlement called “Seventeen Mile” was located here, on what is now Native Allotment FF014772A.

**Ch&amp;#39;it&amp;#39;hhdry&amp;#39;y Njik, Dit&amp;#39;hhdry&amp;#39;y Njik**

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993), ANLC6601

Speaker: SF, CA, RM

Translation: possibly ‘shallow stream’

Location: Seventeenmile Slough
Latitude: 66.62241
Longitude: -144.93437

Stream

**T&amp;#39;oochy&amp;#39;y Kak Gwitsik**

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993), Caulfield (1983)

Speaker: RM

Translation: ‘mouth of upon bed of grass’

Location: mouth of Grass River
Latitude: 66.62261
Longitude: -144.85794

Stream Mouth

This is the furthest upstream mouth of T&amp;#39;oochy&amp;#39;y Kat Gwinjik.

**T&amp;#39;oochy&amp;#39;y Kat Gwinjik**


Speaker: RM, MF

Location: Grass River
Latitude: 66.57541
Longitude: -144.67995

Stream

Slaughter (1984) p. 87 and Map 4: “The Grass River Settlement includes three cabins labeled on the Fort Yukon (C-2) map, at the confluence of Grass River and Eightmile Slough. The cabins have since been destroyed by fire.”

Richard Martin (1993): “Grass River split three different ways. Each one got different name. From that fork on up is the Grass River. That’s where I had my camp, see? Where it kind of splits that’s where I had my camp. They call it Grass River down to there. And then come out to the Porcupine River you all got different names.” The three mouths are, from downstream to upstream, Shryah K’oq Gwitsik, Dit&amp;#39;hhdry&amp;#39;y Tsik, and T&amp;#39;oochy&amp;#39;y Kat Gwitsik.

USGS recorded this translation name in 1956.
Theetaa Van  
Source: Caulfield (1983)  
Translation: "portage lake"  
Speaker: MF  
Latitude: 66.57965  
Longitude: -144.81833

Juu Laguuv Vanav  
Translation: "who is chilly lake"  
Location: lake off Grass River  
Latitude: 66.58593  
Longitude: -144.86962

Ch’eeluk Van  
Source: Stevens (2009), Peter (2001), Kari, Raboff (2011)  
Translation: "(type of) fish lake"  
Location: "Twentymile Lake" north of Sucker River and five miles south of Disease House  
Latitude: 66.525032  
Longitude: -144.769537

This lake was the location of Chief Esias Loola’s winter camp. Katherine Peter (2001:50): “In November the Chief would make a good-sized fishing hole through the ice; then he would make a good bedding of spruce boughs. He would place a blanket over his head and look for fish in the fishing hole while holding a fish spear and ready to strike.”

Ts’ik Kwän  
Source: Caulfield (1983), Stevens (2009)  
Translation: "disease house"  
Location: "Disease House"  
Latitude: 66.55998  
Longitude: -144.66776

BS: "Where Esau Thompson caught a cold; a joking name."

Ts’ik Kwän Ti’èhnjk  
Source: Stevens (2009)  
Translation: "disease house slough"  
Location: slough east of Disease House  
Latitude: 66.53104  
Longitude: -144.56934

Neeghaii Kwän  
Source: Caulfield (1983)  
Translation: "frog den"  
Location: lake off Grass River  
Latitude: 66.55998  
Longitude: -144.66776

Draanjik Kqoo  
Translation: "cache river stream"  
Location: Black River Slough  
Latitude: 66.65842  
Longitude: -144.7711

Draanjik  
Source: Caulfield (1983)  
Translation: "platform cache river"  
Location: Draanjik River (Black River)  
Latitude: 66.67485  
Longitude: -144.61063

Drah is a rack or platform cache.
Nji’ Khajji Draanjik Gwitsik

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)
Translation: ‘upstream platform cache river mouth’
Location: upper mouth of Black River
Latitude: 66.68484 Longitude: -144.69518

See also 801.1, T’oojatzhit Gwitsik. This name is reported in Kari, Raboff, 2011, but the attestation is uncertain.

T’oojatzhit Gwitsik

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993), Stevens (2011)
Speaker: RM
Translation: ‘mouth of in-roten-grass stream’
Location: upper mouth of Black River
Latitude: 66.68484 Longitude: -144.69518

Locally known as the “upper mouth of Black River,” it is not normally navigable by boats except in high water.

BS: “slough connecting Porcupine River to Black River.”
Ti’oojåtzhit Gwinjik 801.2
Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993), ANLC6601
Translation: ‘in-rotten-grass stream’
Location: slough connecting Ch’öonjik (Porcupine River) and Draanjik River, “Upper Mouth Draanjik River”
Latitude: 66.67869 Longitude: -144.64237
BS: "slough connecting Porcupine River to Black River."

Draanjik Yuundak Gwatsal 802
Source: Caulfield (1983)
Translation: ‘platform cache river upper little one’
Location: Black River Slough
Latitude: 66.81564 Longitude: -143.80394
This is a long, meandering, narrow slough off Porcupine River. The upper end is near Cheeghii Gwats’aq Tr’agôdhii, across the river from Joe Ward Camp, and the lower end is near Zheechoh Gho Tsil, about one mile downstream from the upper mouth of Vih’aan Nîl’éeráh’ee (Nine Mile Slough). It is named ‘Black River Slough’ on the USGS Black River Quad; however, in local use, the English term Black River Slough refers to the main channel of Porcupine River at the mouth of Draanjik (Black River) as marked on the USGS Fort Yukon Quad.

Draatsik 802.1
Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993), Caulfield (1983)
Translation: ‘platform cache river mouth’
Location: lower mouth of Black River
Latitude: 66.66477 Longitude: -144.72768
The main mouth of Draanjik (Black River), which empties into Black River Slough, and is regularly used by boat traffic between Fort Yukon and Chalkyitsik.

Dihch’j’ Vank’at Gwisiks 803
Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)
Translation: ‘mouth of old man on the lake’
Location: mouth of outlet of Old Man Lake
Latitude: 66.6325 Longitude: -144.79903
RM: Mouth of Old Man Creek “about three bends below mouth of Black River” on the south bank of Porcupine River.

Dihch’j’ Van K’at 804
Translation: ‘on old man’s lake’
Location: Old Man Lake
Latitude: 66.61999 Longitude: -144.77897

Slaughter (1984) p.82-85 & Map 4: “Drainage for the lake is provided by a single stream 1.6 km long originating at the eastern terminus of the lake. The stream empties into Black River Slough. …during periods of high water the entire length is navigable by river boat. …Old Man Lake was once a favored fishing area. People from the Black and Porcupine Rivers would gather here for open water fishing. The tendency was for old people to stay at the site, while more active individuals would travel to Fort Yukon for trade. It was the congregation of elderly people that gave the lake its name.” Old Man Lake is the site of several settlements. The East Settlement includes a cabin shown on the USGS Fort Yukon (C-2) map. A number of small cache pits were found around the cabin as well. A trail from this settlement leads to Chalkyitsik. The West Settlement is the oldest and included three cabins and a large clearing. In a brief survey nearby, Slaughter found a large chert flake, indicating that the site’s use is likely very ancient.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Latitude</th>
<th>Longitude</th>
<th>Area or Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old Man Lake</td>
<td>small lake west of Old Man Lake</td>
<td>uncertain</td>
<td>Fields (2015)</td>
<td>66.6206</td>
<td>-144.81224</td>
<td>Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lake near Black River Slough</td>
<td>'in behind brush lake'</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>66.63441</td>
<td>-144.78126</td>
<td>Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Man Lake area</td>
<td>'John Jonas' country'</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>Shimkin (1955), Kari, Raboff (2011)</td>
<td>66.61576</td>
<td>-144.7259</td>
<td>Area or Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lake south of T's'ilivi Zhit Van</td>
<td>'shallow lake'</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>66.63229</td>
<td>-144.75637</td>
<td>Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oxbow lake</td>
<td>'in spruce trees lake'</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>66.6444</td>
<td>-144.74038</td>
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<tr>
<td>lake east of Black River Slough</td>
<td>'in goose grass lake'</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>66.64762</td>
<td>-144.75384</td>
<td>Lake</td>
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<tr>
<td>lake south of Black River Slough</td>
<td>'black bear lake'</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>Caulfield (1983), Kari, Raboff (2011)</td>
<td>66.64581</td>
<td>-144.76399</td>
<td>Lake</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COD Van
Source: Caulfield (1983), Kari, Raboff (2011)
Translation: 'COD Lake'
Location: lake south of Old Man Lake
Latitude: 66.61102 Longitude: -144.7546
APR: Used as a landing site in the past for postal deliveries. COD means "cash on delivery."

T'oo Njuu
Source: Caulfield (1983)
Translation: 'grass island'
Location: lake east of Old Man Lake
Latitude: 66.62191 Longitude: -144.7193

Goondit, Gǫdít, Gǫhdít
Speaker: MF
Translation: ts'ii day word, the meaning is uncertain
Location: Koduit Lake
Latitude: 66.59125 Longitude: -144.63323

Dzan Khàtryà’ Van
Translation: 'muskrat defecated lake'
Location: lake northeast of Old Man Lake
Latitude: 66.62937 Longitude: -144.70407

Ninjii Dhàh Diteeltsuu, Ninjii Dhàa Teeltsuu
Source: Caulfield (1983)
Translation: 'lynx skin lying on water'
Location: lake south of Nachaa Neet'it
Latitude: 66.61697 Longitude: -144.6835

Nachaa Neet'it
Translation: 'your younger brother farted across'
Location: lake to east of Old Man Lake
Latitude: 66.62766 Longitude: -144.65582
It means 'your younger brother farted across' or 'your younger brother repeatedly farted.'

Nakhalchik
Translation: 'I'll take care of you'
Location: stream west of Cabin Slough
Latitude: 66.63764 Longitude: -144.6091
T'aaivii Van 817.1
Source: Caulfield (1983) Speaker: BS, MF
Translation: "canvasback duck lake" Location: lake north of Nachaa Neel'it
Latitude: 66.63966 Longitude: -144.64059

Steamboat Zheh 818
Source: Caulfield (1983), Slaughter (1984), ANLC6601 Speaker: BS
Translation: "steamboat house" Location: "Steamboat Cabin"
Latitude: 66.67001 Longitude: -144.57889
The site is located on Native Allotment FF014734. Across the river, on the southwestern shore of Steamboat Slough, is located Johnny Ross' Native Allotment AKF 025737A. Slaughter (1984), page 78: "A pentagonal-shaped cabin was built by early prospectors. The site received its name because of the fanciful resemblance of the cabin to a steamboat."

Ch'itr'úu Zhrajj Gwànljj, Ch'itr'úu Zhrajj Gwànljj Van 819
Source: Caulfield (1983) Speaker: MF
Translation: "abundant black arctic terns lake" Location: Black Currant Lake
Latitude: 66.60688 Longitude: -144.50525

Ch'itr'úu Zhrajj Gwànljj Njik 820
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011) Speaker: BS, MF
Translation: "abundant black arctic terns stream" Location: stream from Black Currant Lake
Latitude: 66.61737 Longitude: -144.39581

Ch'itr'úu Zhrajj Gwànljj Gwitsik 821
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011) Speaker:
Translation: "mouth of arctic terns are abundant" Location: mouth of stream from Black Currant Lake
Latitude: 66.63028 Longitude: -144.34173

William Saasa' (Saucer) Vavàn 822
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011) Speaker: BS
Translation: "William Saasa's lake" Location: lake 10 miles southwest of John Stevens Slough
Latitude: 66.65055 Longitude: -144.52709
William Saasa’ was the father of Henry Williams of Chalkyitsik.

John Stevens Vizhee 822.1
Translation: "John Steven's cabin" Location: 66.66356 Longitude: -144.4152
Site
This site is located on Native Allotment FF013412.
**John Stevens Viti’èhnjik**

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011), Shimkin (1955)  
Translation: *'John Stevens’ slough'*  
Location: John Stevens Slough  
Latitude: 66.68151  
Longitude: -144.44279

Oxbow lake north of Draanjik River; Shimkin (1955) #32 depicts John Stevens’ trap line. APR: John Stevens, Stephen Ch’ikwailtryah from Fort Yukon.

**Thaataa Neegwaanajj**

Speaker: BS, SF

**Nitchii Village**

Source: Stevens (2013)  
Speaker: BS  
Location: village site at John Stevens Slough  
Latitude: 66.67647  
Longitude: -144.43847

This site was the John Stevens family’s seasonal home camp, used regularly until the 1960s. See Bill Stevens, *Ch’adzaa Aghwaa, He Carries the Dance* (2013) for a complete description of life at Nitchii Village. Pictured to the left is John Stevens at Nitchii Village in 1960.

**Bill Vavàn**

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  
Translation: *'Bill’s lake'*  
Location: small lake northeast of Nitchii Village  
Latitude: 66.68474  
Longitude: -144.40927

This is a lake named for Bill Stevens.
### Maggie Vití'ẽhnjik

**Source:** Kari, Raboff (2011)  
**Speaker:** BS  
**Translation:** 'Maggie's slough'  
**Location:** slough north of Dats'an Van  
**Latitude:** 66.6569  
**Longitude:** -144.473

This slough is named for Bill Stevens' mother, Maggie Davis Stevens.

### Gwichyaa Zheé Gwats’a’ Taajj

**Source:** Caulfield (1983)  
**Translation:** 'trail toward flats house'  
**Location:** trail to Fort Yukon

### Paul Thomas Vatajji

**Source:** Caulfield (1983)  
**Translation:** 'Paul Thomas' trail'  
**Location:** southerly trail toward Grass River

### Dats’an Van

**Source:** Kari, Raboff (2011)  
**Speaker:** BS, MF  
**Translation:** 'duck lake'  
**Location:** lake to northwest of Náhtryáh Zhrajj Van (835)  
**Latitude:** 66.64813  
**Longitude:** -144.48672

### Sophie Vavàn

**Source:** Stevens (2009), Caulfield (1983), Kari, Raboff (2011)  
**Speaker:** BS  
**Translation:** 'Sophie's lake'  
**Location:** lake east and south of Tr’injáa Gajj Vak’oń  
**Latitude:** 66.66205  
**Longitude:** -144.2945

**APR:** Sophie Davis William Gaasheek’yuu. Wife of Peter William Gaasheek’yuu and later wife of Frank Ginnis Shahnyaa.

### Johnny Ross Vavàn

**Source:** Caulfield (1983), Stevens (2009), Stevens (2011), Shimkin (1955), Kari, Raboff (2011)  
**Translation:** 'Johnny Ross' lake'  
**Location:** Y-shaped lake northeast of Náhtryáh Zhrajj Van (835)  
**Latitude:** 66.65539  
**Longitude:** -144.40216

**Shimkin (1955) #31 depicts Johnny Ross' trap line. APR: Johnny Ross Ch’iji’ Oontà.**

### Náhtryáh Zhrajj, Náhtryáh Zhrajj Van, Nèhtryāa Zhrajj

**Source:** Caulfield (1983), ANLC6601, Stevens (2011)  
**Speaker:** BS, MF  
**Translation:** 'black wolverine lake'  
**Location:** Natrahazuivun Lake  
**Latitude:** 66.63744  
**Longitude:** -144.44837

**USGS recorded this name in 1956.**

### Cabin Slough

**Source:** USGS Map, Kari, Raboff (2011)  
**Speaker:** BS  
**Location:** Cabin Slough  
**Latitude:** 66.63038  
**Longitude:** -144.489

**USGS recorded this name in 1956. BS states that it has no Gwich’in name.**
Tr‘injaa Gajji (Gajji) Vak’qq
Source: Stevens (2009), Caulfield (1983), Stevens (2011)  
Speaker: BS, MF  
Translation: ‘skinny woman’s stream’  
Location: “Dry Lady Slough”, navigable slough  
Latitude: 66.66326  
Longitude: -144.31583

BS: "She was not a recent person, this is likely a very old name."

Tr‘injaa Gajji Van
Source: Stevens (2009)  
Speaker: BS, MF  
Translation: ‘skinny woman’s lake’  
Location: lake off Dry Lady Slough  
Latitude: 66.67485  
Longitude: -144.29196

Two Native Allotments are located along the lake shore.

Ch’itsligii
Source: Caulfield (1983), ANLC6601  
Speaker: SF  
Translation: ‘young birds’  
Location:  
Latitude: 66.67052  
Longitude: -144.19116

SF: "birds laid eggs here to prevent danger."

Jim Dodson Slough
Source: Stevens (2009), Kari, Raboff (2011)  
Speaker: BS  
Location: "Jim Dodson Slough" southwest of Łuk Van 848  
Latitude: 66.69301  
Longitude: -144.41029

APR: Jim Dodson was a 1950s airplane pilot.

John Gwilee Viti’ehnjik
Translation: ‘John Gwilee’s slough’  
Location: John Kwilik Slough  
Latitude: 66.63915  
Longitude: -144.25641

APR: The slough is named after John Gwilee Alexander Ch’it’eh of Fort Yukon, born ca. 1916.

John Gwilee Vavàn
Source: Stevens (2009)  
Speaker: BS, MF  
Translation: ‘lake on John Gwilee’s slough’  
Location: John Kwilik Slough Lake  
Latitude: 66.63441  
Longitude: -144.15663

Apple Vavàn
Source: Stevens (2009), Caulfield (1983), Shimkin (1955)  
Speaker: BS  
Translation: ‘apple’s lake’  
Location: Applevun Lake  
Latitude: 66.64218  
Longitude: -144.03855

BS: "Apple was the nickname of Enoch John of Venetie."
Johnny Ross Vit’it Khànlàjjì, John Ross Vidrik Dahalàljì
Source: Caulfield (1983) Speaker: MF
Translation: ‘John Ross’ riffle’
Location: John Ross Riffle
Latitude: 66.68837 Longitude: -144.22798
Hydrological Feature
USGS recorded this name in 1956.
Caulfield recorded "John Ross Vidrik Dahalajjì” from speakers in Chalkyitsik.

Łuk Van
Source: Stevens (2009) Speaker: BS, MF
Translation: ‘fish lake’
Location: lake north and west of Draanjik River
Latitude: 66.7035 Longitude: -144.38978
Lake

Tàįḥ Trò’o’ee
Source: Stevens (2009), Caulfield (1983) Speaker: BS
Translation: ‘hill that extends out (to water)’
Location: high ground on north bank of Draanjik River
Latitude: 66.7154 Longitude: -144.35943
Landform
BS: “Tàįḥ Trò’o’ee. From Łuk Van, in between Black (River) right there, there’s a nice, big, grassy area, like a bluff. And they call that Tàįḥ Trò’o’ee. And it means, taįḥ means “high ground,” trò’o’ee means “connecting to the river.”

Tàįḥ Trò’o’ee Gwà’àn
Source: Stevens (2009) Speaker: BS, MF
Translation: ‘vicinity of hill that extends out (to water)’
Location: small lakes north of 849
Latitude: 66.72054 Longitude: -144.36887
Area or Region
BS: “there are muskrat lakes here”

Dachan Kwaihtryah Sheihchyà / Khihihcyà
Translation: ‘English shoe sandbar’, lit., ‘wooden shoe sandbar’
Location: Englishshoe Bar
Latitude: 66.70753 Longitude: -144.26351
Site
The mouth of the slough on the south bank at this location is a traditional subsistence fishing site that provides abundant whitefish during the summer. Native Allotment FF013413 extends both on the north bank of the river and on the south side of the river encompassing the outlet of the slough. Sheih is a variant of khih “sand;” cf KP: khihihcyà “sandbar.”

Dachan Kwaihtryah Van
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011) Speaker: MF
Translation: ‘wooden shoes lake’
Location: lake south of Englishshoe Bar
Latitude: 66.69512 Longitude: -144.28698
Lake
This is an oxbow lake. The outlet to the river is within Native Allotment FF013413.

Billy Joe Vavàn
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011) Speaker: BS
Translation: ‘Billy Joe’s lake’
Location: lake northeast of Englishshoe Bar
Latitude: 66.72679 Longitude: -144.20942
Lake
BS: named for Billy Joe Netro, from Old Crow.
Esau Thompson Vizhee
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  
Speaker: BS, MF  
Translation: 'Esau Thompson's house'  
Location: Thompson Cabin  
Latitude: 66.69281  
Longitude: -144.15789

BS: "Esau Thompson, born about 1905, was raised by Chief Esias Loola. He lived here until the 1950s. He was very successful."

Esau Thompson Vanåhkåt
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011), Shimkin (1955)  
Speaker: BS  
Translation: 'Esau Thompson's country'  
Latitude: 66.657  
Longitude: -144.23026

Shimkin (1955), #39, shows Esau's Thompson's trap line to the south of Draanjik River in the upper Sucker River area.

T'l'oo Khånlii
Source: ANLC6602, Caulfield (1983)  
Speaker: SF  
Photo: USFWS  
Translation: 'grass floats on surface’  
Location: Graveyard Lakes  
Latitude: 66.72962  
Longitude: -144.27932

SF: "T'l'oo Khånlii, that's the main grass lake, big grass lake, there’s fish in there."

Tth'an K'it
Source: Andrews (1985)  
Translation: 'cemetery’  
Latitude: 66.729444  
Longitude: -144.247222

Andrews (1985): "At least 6 graves were reported to be located on high ground between the lakes. The surrounding lakes probably derive their name from the presence of this cemetery." The location on the map is only an approximation.

Tth'ak T'oo Khîl’ee, Tth’ak T’oo Khîl’ee
Speaker: MF  
Translation: 'favored bald eagle nest'  
Location: lake north of Draanjik River  
Latitude: 66.69573  
Longitude: -144.11397

Lake

Shrilzhit Gwachoo
Source: Salmon (2014), KU973P1982  
Speaker: WS  
Translation: 'big area in sphagnum moss'  
Latitude: 66.6565  
Longitude: -143.99387

Lake

The main winter trail between Chalkyitsik and Fort Yukon runs through the southern arm of this lake. Apple Van is one portage to the west. To the east, the trail continues through a muskeg-slough area known as Shrilzhit Gwitsik, then follows a portage to Ch’aatit. 

KP: shrii means “water flows through ground.” Another suggested translation is "sphagnum moss."
Shrilzhit Gwitsik

Source: Salmon (2014), KU973P1982
Speaker: WS, MF
Translation: 'mouth of in-sphagnum-moss'
Latitude: 66.65015 Longitude: -143.98193

The main winter trail between Chalkyitsik and Fort Yukon runs through Shrilzhit Gwitsik connecting Shrilzhit Gwachoo and Ch’aatrit Lakes. KP: shril means “water flows through ground.” Another suggested translation is ”sphagnum moss.”

Ch’iji Doo’ajji

Source: Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: MF
Translation: 'antler hanging up'
Location: lake south of Draanjik River
Latitude: 66.66668 Longitude: -144.00687

Native Allotment FF002681C is located on the southeast lake shore.

Agnes Vikihichyaa, Vikihchya

Source: Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: MF
Translation: ‘Agnes’ sandbar’
Latitude: 66.70027 Longitude: -143.95629

This feature is the location of Native Allotment FF013250.

Geerijjik

Source: ANLC6601, ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘try to grab (and miss)’
Location: a network of lakes and meadow, west of Ohdik
Latitude: 66.55827 Longitude: -143.9342

DS: “All this lake and meadow, they call it Geerijjik. You try to grab anything, and you miss, that’s what it means.”

Neerigwijn’ajji

Source: ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘they move it (a camp) to there’
Location: lake southwest of Ch’aatrit
Latitude: 66.63421 Longitude: -143.96568

Ch’aatrit

Source: ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘big whitefish’
Location: Chatritt Lake
Latitude: 66.64752 Longitude: -143.90423

Ch’aatrit is a complex lake system consisting of numerous long, narrow arms and bays, and interconnecting sloughs. It is a significant focus of subsistence activity, particularly trapping for muskrats and fishing for 'chihshhoo’ (broad whitefish). Five Native Allotments are located along the lake shore.

Veenjuu Alaa

Source: Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: MF
Translation: 'island is floating on it'
Location: lake with island west of Chalkyitsik
Latitude: 66.67657 Longitude: -143.84634

Tthan Khajj Ts’iiivii Nt’oo’ee, Tthan Khajj Ts’iiivii Nát’oo’ee

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘small timber near the river’
Location: Small Timber Lake
Latitude: 66.65599 Longitude: -143.83923
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place Name</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Photo</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dàk Khajj Ts’iivii Nt’o’o’ee</td>
<td>'further back (away from the river) small timber'</td>
<td>Lake</td>
<td>ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>DS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tájhi Hii’ee</td>
<td>'hill ends'</td>
<td>Big Timber Lake</td>
<td>ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>DS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Njuu Zhit Van</td>
<td>'in-the-island lake'</td>
<td>Lake</td>
<td>ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>DS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teegwilnají</td>
<td>'water broke through'</td>
<td>Lake</td>
<td>ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>DS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ti’ooyah Zhit</td>
<td>'in tall grass'</td>
<td>Lake</td>
<td>ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>DS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ts’iivii Zhit Van</td>
<td>'in-spruce-trees lake'</td>
<td>Lake</td>
<td>ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>DS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tth’ak Van</td>
<td>'osprey lake'</td>
<td>Lake</td>
<td>ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>DS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neeghaii Van</td>
<td>'frog lake'</td>
<td>Lake</td>
<td>ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>DS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K’áht’íi</td>
<td>'behind the high bank'</td>
<td>Lake</td>
<td>ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>DS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jàlk’titsik, Jàlgüitsik, Jàlk’it Gwitsik</td>
<td>'stream mouth of fishhook place'</td>
<td>Site</td>
<td>ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983), Nelson (1973), KU972Mi1986</td>
<td>DS, EJ</td>
<td>Brianna Herbert</td>
<td>Modern day settlement. A thorough description, including history, demography, and associated subsistence activities, can be found in Richard K. Nelson, <em>Hunters of the Northern Forest</em> (1973). The name is derived from Jàlk’it Gwitsik 'stream mouth of fish hook place.'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tsuk Van Tsal 874.1
Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: DS
Translation: 'small marten lake'
Location: Marten Lake
Latitude: 66.65287  Longitude: -143.73106

Tsuk Tąjj, Tsuk Tąj̨̓ 874.2
Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: DS
Translation: 'marten hill'
Location: Marten Hill
Latitude: 66.64732  Longitude: -143.7303

Tsuk Van 874.3
Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: DS
Translation: 'marten lake'
Location: Marten Lake
Latitude: 66.64904  Longitude: -143.75036

Thaataa Neegwaanąj̨̓ 874.5
Source: Salmon (2014)  Speaker: WS
Translation: 'water breaks through portage'
Location: Chalkyitsik Slough
Latitude: 66.6441  Longitude: -143.71073

Eenjuh T'ii 875
Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: DS
Translation: 'behind the island, behind the big timber island'
Location: Marten Lake
Latitude: 66.68363  Longitude: -143.70923

Jâk’iiitsik K’q̓o̦ 875.1
Source: KU960S2004  Photo credit: Brian Lepping
Translation: 'mouth of fish hook place creek'
Location: Chalkyitsik Creek
Latitude: 66.664151  Longitude: -143.7128167

K’áhdąj̨̓ 876
Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: DS
Translation: 'fish-fence opening'
Location: Marten Lake
Latitude: 66.67778  Longitude: -143.67774

K’áhdąj̨̓ is a very long, narrow lake which is actually a widening of Chalkyitsik Creek (Fishhook Creek). In mid-summer fish nets are set in this lake that yield large quantities of whitefish and pike.
**Dàk Kałičk K’qòñ**

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983), KU960S2004

Speaker: DS

Translation: ‘further back creek’

Location: Fishhook Creek

Latitude: 66.70501  Longitude: -143.7204

Stream

“The hand drawn map shown on the left was made by Chief David Salmon, showing the interconnected streams and lakes going up Jàtk’îtsik K’qòñ all the way to the base of Dîtsik Ehdlii Mountain.”

**T’il’o Diłhàñ**

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)

Translation: ‘hairlike grass’

Latitude: 66.72125  Longitude: -143.73995

Area or Region

“T’il’o Daghàì” refers to an area of open grassy meadows interspersed with ponds.

**Gòódłàjì**

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)

Translation: ‘stream flows through lake; water flows area’

Latitude: 66.70491  Longitude: -143.69348

Lake

**Dàk Kałičk Gòódłàjì**

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)

Translation: ‘further-back water flows through lake area’

Location: Fishhook Creek

Latitude: 66.71469  Longitude: -143.67215

Lake

Gòódłàjì implies that a stream flows through a lake.
K’aii Zhuh Zhit Van 881
Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983) Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘in-willow-shoots lake’
Latitude: 66.70995 Longitude: -143.62848
Ch’ihili 882
Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983) Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘something starts swimming; fish swim in a school’
Location: Chahailie Lake
Latitude: 66.72881 Longitude: -143.56729
Ch’ihili is a major spawning lake for several species of whitefish, which provide the basis for the Chalkyitsik subsistence fishery.
Dâk Khajj Van 882.1
Source: KU960S2004 Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘further back lake’
Location: lake past Ch’ihili
Latitude: 66.75081 Longitude: -143.49995
Lake
Teeniihii 883
Source: Caulfield (1983)
Translation: meaning is unclear
Location: lake north of Ch’ihili
Latitude: 66.78962 Longitude: -143.60918
Lake
Teeniihii is an area of lake and extensive fen, floating vegetation.
Daatee 888
Source: ANLC6601, ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983) Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘among driftwood’
Latitude: 66.70067 Longitude: -143.56602
Area or Region
Daatee is now Native Allotment F 025758, comprising 160 acres.
DS: "There used to be a big driftwood pile there, between lake and river. So they (call it) Daatee."
Daatee Van 889
Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983) Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘among driftwood pile lake’
Latitude: 66.71166 Longitude: -143.56272
Lake
Gwiteet’ii 900
Source: ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983) Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘place in between’
Latitude: 66.61707 Longitude: -143.59471
Area or Region
Gwiteet’ii refers to the area encompassing four lakes and associated ponds.
Vashrązh Rintθhài
Source: ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983) Speaker: DS Translation: 'long high cutbank'
Latitude: 66.67395 Longitude: -143.56502

Teetsaiht'it
Translation: 'water up against ochre'
Location: Red Bluff
Latitude: 66.68172 Longitude: -143.49905

Kii Ts’èhch’ij
A sacred rock, vicinity of Red Bluff; "a woman turned into rock." Also referred to as "Medicine Rock." Andrews (1977), page 284: "The site is of stone configurations representing two women of the past (an old woman and her orphaned granddaughter) who had difficulty keeping up with a group that was traveling. The girl was experiencing her first menstruation, one of the most important events in the life of a Northern Athapascan woman. The name of the site comes from the word for the hood every girl must wear for her first menstruation. The two women starved to death at this site and turned to stone. Each year, people give offerings at the site."

Tsuk Tthaatåh’j
Location: Slough upstream from Red Bluff
Latitude: 66.70884 Longitude: -143.47715

Tr’ichigwiłnįįj
Location: Lake upstream from Red Bluff
Latitude: 66.66396 Longitude: -143.41443
Tr’ichigwiłnįįj is located almost entirely within Native Allotment FF013683.
Łajj Zhee

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)  
Speaker: DS  
Translation: 'dog house'  
Location: Dog House Cabin  
Latitude: 66.6803 Longitude: -143.36214

Łajj Zhee was the home camp for the Williams family and is centered in the middle of their subsistence resource area. Three Native Allotments now line the north bank of the river at this location.

Taih Tsanàa'jj, Taih Tsàq'jj

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)  
Speaker: DS  
Translation: meaning unknown  
Location: hill behind (to the north of) Łajj Zhee  
Latitude: 66.70057 Longitude: -143.37025

DS gives two pronunciations. Taih Tsanàa'jj is an older form (same as in modern Canadian dialects). Taih Tsàq'jj is the form in modern Alaskan dialect. The thematic prefix n- is dropped, resulting in the two syllables contracting into a nasalized long vowel, and the tones of the underlying syllables are retained.

Tr'ik Chiindlit

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983), Salmon (2014)  
Speaker: DS  
Translation: 'female sank in the water'  
Location: lake behind Łajj Zhee  
Latitude: 66.68736 Longitude: -143.34244

William Salmon said that the name of the lake may be Tr'ik Chiindlit, or it may be Tr'ih Chiindlit 'canoe sank in the water.' He wasn't sure. There is a lake near Birch Creek named Tr'ih Chiindlit.

Danzhit Gwatsal

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)  
Speaker: DS  
Translation: 'little canyon'  
Location: small canyon upriver from Chalkyitsik  
Latitude: 66.6333 Longitude: -143.18481

Danzhit Gwatsal was a small canyon upriver from Chalkyitsik.
Ch’ikii Raadlii

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DS, SF

Translation: “they move all the rocks”

“they move all the rocks”

Site
Lat: 66.63038 Long: -143.17774

DS: “In early days, there’s a little creek that comes out here. In the rock, you know. They call it Ch’ikii Raadlii. They pick up rocks and haul it up there (Di’inkwal) to kill the monster (giant pike that swallowed a moose and the young hunter chasing it in a canoe). In early days. And they put on wood, and then they warm up the water (rocks were piled on huge rafts which were set ablaze, so that the heated rocks caused the lake water to boil). And the fish died, the monster fish.” Ch’ikii Raadlii is the site where a large group of people camped throughout the winter while they did this work.

T’aat’eh, T’aat’ee

Speaker: SF, DS

Translation: “beneath the cottonwood tree”

Site
Lat: 66.63129 Long: 143.0526

Photo credit: Brian Lepping

A long inhabited site, now Native Allotment FF014771A. Rev. David Salmon said, “This is old place, not village, but there’s always cabin and camp there. Old Indian camp there, you know. They stop there and fishing, you know.” The first log cabin was built there in 1916 (Andrews 1985).

T’aat’ee Van

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DS

Translation: “beneath the cottonwood tree lake”

Location: lake southeast of T’aat’ee
Lat: 66.60658 Long: -143.01934

Lake

Dee’inkwal, Di’inkwal

Source: ANLC6601, ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DS, SF

Translation: “he swallows it whole”

Location: lake east of Chalkyltsik
Lat: 66.65582 Long: -143.15328

A boy in a birch bark canoe was chasing a bull moose across the lake, when a giant pike came up and swallowed the moose, then swallowed the young hunter and his canoe. An old man who had witnessed the event informed people “from all over.” In order to get rid of the monster, people gathered and camped nearly at Ch’ikii Raadlii over the winter. They built huge log rafts piled with dry wood on the lake ice and heaped stones on top them. In the springtime, they set the log rafts ablaze. The rocks, heated red hot, fell into the lake and caused the water to boil. The monster was killed, and in its death throes it lashed its tail and pushed a lot of the rocks into a reef that extends out into the lake as well as onto the shore. When they cut open the giant pike, the people found in its guts the moose’s antlers, part of the canoe and a feather the boy had been wearing in his hair. Prior to 2010, the reef of volcanic rocks extended just below the surface of the lake from the eastern shore. As the water level has been dropping since then, the reef is now exposed. The trail of rocks also extends on dry land from the eastern shore of the lake to where the people had their winter camp.
T‘eegwat Dōo’ajj, T‘eegwat Dōo’ajj Van

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘stone ax is hanging up’
Location: portage lake upriver from T’aat’ee
Latitude: 66.63845  Longitude: -142.99715

The winter trail runs through T‘eegwat Dōo’ajj, cutting off several long bends of the river. T‘eegwat is an axe with a head knapped from stone, used before Europeans arrived.

Ts‘ālvit Naatihat Thaataa

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘loon fallen down portage’
Location: portage trail downriver from Rotten Fish Slough
Latitude: 66.63935  Longitude: -142.91955

Richard K. Nelson, Hunters of the Northern Forest (1973) page 90: “The experienced hunters know this region intimately. They know where every likely habitat is to be found… Some of these spots are always good for moose. For example, a place called Rotten Fish Creek is often chosen for the first night's camp because it is a favorite moose haunt.” Native Allotments FF014774A and FF014368 are located on either side of the slough mouth. The slough itself has recently converted to a grassy meadow.

Łuk Jāť Tsjik

Translation: ‘mouth of rotten fish slough’
Location: Rotten Fish Slough
Latitude: 66.63088  Longitude: -142.90582

Richard K. Nelson, Hunters of the Northern Forest (1973) page 90: “The experienced hunters know this region intimately. They know where every likely habitat is to be found… Some of these spots are always good for moose. For example, a place called Rotten Fish Creek is often chosen for the first night's camp because it is a favorite moose haunt.” Native Allotments FF014774A and FF014368 are located on either side of the slough mouth. The slough itself has recently converted to a grassy meadow.

K’ii Thaatah

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘birch portage’
Location: portage trail upriver from Rotten Fish Slough
Latitude: 66.63683  Longitude: -142.88345

DS: “That's where they get the birch bark, they say, in early days. All the Black River people say, K’ii Thaatah. Right here, jii dzq̱ this point is nothing but birch.”

Vak’aa Ch’irītth’ak

Source: ANLC6601, Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: SF, MF
Translation: ‘we hear sounds from the other side’
Location: Frozen Calf Mountain
Latitude: 66.69573  Longitude: -142.82458

Ditsik Ehdlii Njik

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  Speaker: SF, DS
Translation: ‘moose calf froze to death stream’
Location: Frozen Calf Mountain
Latitude: 66.79154  Longitude: -143.01781

Ditsik Ehdlii

Source: ANLC6602, ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: SF, DS
Translation: ‘calf (moose) froze to death’
Location: Frozen Calf Mountain
Latitude: 66.79154  Longitude: -143.01781

T’ oo Hanshyah Ddhah

Source: ANLC6601, ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘tussock mountain’
Location: Frozen Calf Mountain
Latitude: 66.77634  Longitude: -142.5428
Kiichan

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘rock base’
Location: Nelson Bluff
Latitude: 66.61414  Longitude: -142.84485

Translation: ‘rock base’

Location: Nelson Bluff
Latitude: 66.61414  Longitude: -142.84485

Kiichan Van

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘rock base lake’
Location: lake east of Nelson Bluff (Kiichan)
Latitude: 66.62534  Longitude: -142.80301

Translation: ‘rock base lake’

Location: lake east of Nelson Bluff (Kiichan)
Latitude: 66.62534  Longitude: -142.80301

T’oo Hanshyāh T’i’in

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: Walter Peter, Sr.
Translation: ‘tussock bend’
Location: An area along a bend in the river upstream from Nelson Bluff (Kiichan).
Latitude: 66.59327  Longitude: -142.81392

Translation: ‘tussock bend’

Location: An area along a bend in the river upstream from Nelson Bluff (Kiichan).
Latitude: 66.59327  Longitude: -142.81392

Area or Region

DS: “This is the main place to pick berries. Blueberries.” The river makes a long, sharp bend to the right, going downriver. Up on the cutbank to the south and west lies an extensive, open flat that is an excellent place to pick blueberries.

Njuu Ghoo Toodlajii

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘water flows around a round island’
Latitude: 66.58863  Longitude: -142.69653

Translation: ‘water flows around a round island’

Latitude: 66.58863  Longitude: -142.69653

Hydrological Feature

This is a two to three mile section of Draanjik River that is swift and braided, and the river frequently cuts new channels. The morphology of the river here has changed several times since the publication of the USGS map in 1956.
Tążh Nahshrii

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)
Photo credit: Mark Knapp
Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘bare hill’

This hill has been used since ancient times by hunters as a look out for game animals. Nahshrii means “it’s open, free of trees and brush.” Gwahshrii means a “meadow, open place.”

Tążh Nahshrii Van

Source: Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: MF
Translation: ‘bare hill lake’

Native Allotment FF014711B is located on the lake’s southeast shore.

Masdik Vatthàl

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘Masdik’s fence’

This moose fence extended across the flats for about one mile between Tążh Nahshrii Van and the base of Vak’at Khàràandií. It did not have corrals as a caribou fence would. Instead, interspersed along its length were openings in which snares were set for moose.

K’yuu, K’yuh

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘a kind of black stone’

DS: “Here’s the hill, too. High hill, and a black stone, just like ky’uu. Tf’yàh k’yuu, you see? Same color. And they call it K’yuu. It’s probably, maybe old Indian name it means ‘black stone,’ you know?”
Andrews (1985): "Salmon Village was an important permanent settlement of the Tranjik Kutchin throughout the first half of the twentieth century although it was significant as a seasonal settlement during earlier times. The first permanent log structure at Salmon Village was built around 1901 by William Salmon. This man was a Canadian Indian who was drawn to the area around Salmon Village during a trip he made from Old Rampart to Dawson during the Klondike gold rush. He married a woman from the Black River and settled at Salmon Village. The permanent settlement grew and nearly 20 houses were constructed. Two trails linked Salmon Village with Old Rampart. These were important not only for trade purposes but also interband contact. After 1941 the settlement at Chalkyitsik became more permanent as a school was constructed and people gradually moved there from Salmon Village. Salmon Village is nevertheless still important to many of the Chalkyitsik Kutchin because of their personal association with the village in historic times. Reports of a battle on the nearby mountain reflect the probable antiquity of the site as well. Informants noted that the earlier settlement was situated on a high ridge to best prevent [protect] them from attacks. The location of the site near the forks of two rivers was cited as being strategic. It allowed the Tranjik Kutchin population to maximize their resources by splitting into two groups and exploit both river systems."

Vak'at Khâràândii

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983), KU972Mi1990
Speaker: DS, MG
Translation: 'we stay up on it'
Location: Vacahanyande Mountain
Latitude: 66.57864 Longitude: -142.55583

This mountain has great cultural and historical significance for the Draanjik Gwich'in. During a war with the Teet'it Gwich'in, the Draanjik Gwich'in sought refuge on top of the hill in a strong defensive position. Moses Gabriel (KU972Mi1990): "There is a great big mountain in back of the village [Salmon Village, or Teetsik]. And Vak'at Khâràândii mean "going to the top," moving everything they had, just like they would move in ordinary way from one place to another. But in this case moving up on top, taking everything with them, men, women and children, personal effects, and animals that they had. That's what Vak'at Khâràândii means. (This is a footnote. I lived there when I was boy. I didn't go to school until I was 12 years old. My parents were trappers and that was our home base, from there the old man used to trap. And the story been told to me over and over by my Grandmother, and all these Indian stories, every day, every night. I was the only boy there, my brother was sick, and so I was very lonesome at times, and they told me stories day and night. I kind a know the story very well.) Long time ago, residents of that area were attacked by hostile enemy, it was said other Indians. These people were not ready, they were too busy surviving, and they're not ready, they don't have the equipment but they have ample supply of arrows. So the only way they could escape is to move on top of that mountain. So everybody gathered their personal effects. The only things they took was what they really needed, and an ample supply of food in case they stay up there a long time. Any every weapons they could carry. And they move on top of that mountain, so they could have a clear visibility in all areas, and if these guys try to climb up there they would just clean them out. That's why they call it Vak'at Khâràândii, meaning that they people move on top, to avoid being slaughtered."
Andrews (1985): "This settlement was significant in the late summer-early fall culture of the Tranjak Kutchin. People gathered at this place and employed an ingenious method for the acquisition of fish - dog salmon, grayling, whitefish, sheefish, and pike. A willow fence device interspersed with two section basket traps was used where the Black River and Salmon River come together. Traps were set from the latter part of August until freeze-up. Some people today can still recall living at this camp during early fall. Because of the use of the traditional means of acquiring fish during the early part of the twentieth century, it is likely that the site was a seasonal settlement in the past."

Also known as "Gravel Bar Camp" and "Fish Trap Village."

Here the river curls tightly against a long, high bluff.

Andrews (1985): "This site is where a battle between Tranjak Kutchin and Indians from Canada occurred. According to one report the Canadian Indians told the Black River people. One summer the people of the Black River received word that the Canadian Indians were preparing their revenge. During their advance they met an orphan boy and informed him he would not be killed if he revealed the location of the rest of the group. He did. After killing the group the Canadian Indians again encountered the boy and told him of their victory. The boy then joined with another group and reported the slaying as he was directed to by the enemy. One man suspected that the orphan boy was a spy and the boy fled and hid until the next spring. He went to Fort Yukon where people said it was fortunate that he was safe and he should be allowed to travel fearlessly."

A little over 1,350 feet in elevation, this small mountain southeast of Di'inkwal is the highest point in the area and is a visible landmark for a large distance.
**Aat’oo Zhit Van**
Source: ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983)  
Speaker: DS  
Translation: ‘lake inside birch trees’  
Latitude: 66.34638  
Longitude: -142.62801

**Thaataa Nahgwàn Van**
Source: Thomas (2014)  
Speaker: FT, MF  
Translation: ‘short portage lake’  
Latitude: 66.3484  
Longitude: -142.58588

The portage between the lake and the river is very short. The lake is good for muskrats and ducks.

**Ti’oo Zhit Van**
Source: Thomas (2014)  
Speaker: FT, MF  
Translation: ‘in grass lake’  
Latitude: 66.32954  
Longitude: -142.60964

**Tąįh Git, Tąįh Git Van**
Source: ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983)  
Speaker: DS  
Translation: ‘hard clay’ or ‘glacier hill (lake)’  
Location: Tommy Lake  
Latitude: 66.29969  
Longitude: -142.55352

In English “Tommy Lake” is named after “Tommy the Mate,” Jacob Thomas, the father of Fred Thomas of Fort Yukon.

**John Thomas Vizhee**
Source: Thomas (2014)  
Speaker: FT  
Translation: ‘John Thomas’ house’  
Latitude: 66.28174  
Longitude: -142.50635

Native Allotment FF013548.

**Chihshòo Van**
Source: ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983)  
Speaker: DS  
Translation: ‘broad whitefish lake’  
Location: Whitefish Lake  
Latitude: 66.25592  
Longitude: -142.48336

Chihshòo is broad whitefish, *Coregonus nasus*, and is a primary subsistence resource for the Draanjik Gwich’in.

**Dehtee Van**
Source: ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983)  
Speaker: DS  
Latitude: 66.23686  
Longitude: -142.43311

**Ti’ęhnjik Gwinjyàa**
Source: Caulfield (1983)  
Translation: ‘long slough’  
Location: Long Lake  
Latitude: 66.16677  
Longitude: -142.37555

**Khaltaj’ Gwànljìj Njik Gwìtsik**
Speaker: FT  
Translation: ‘mouth of round whitefish are plentiful stream’  
Location: mouth of Grayling Fork  
Latitude: 66.15345  
Longitude: -142.33065
Near Khaltaj' Gwânlįj Njik Gwitsik used to be located “Canoe Camp.” The Gwich'in name for this site is no longer known. Andrews (1985): “This site is significant for the annual canoe making event which took place at the location each spring. People gathered before break-up on the hill to build birchbark canoes for themselves and to ‘sell.’ Among the patrons were people from Fort Yukon who did not have access to birchbark and who would travel to the site before break-up, acquire a canoe and return home via the rivers. The site represents not only the importance of this event in the annual cycle of the Tranjik Kutchin culture but also the importance of interband contact and exchange.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place Name</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Listen</th>
<th>Latitude</th>
<th>Longitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shoh Ddhàa Van</strong></td>
<td>Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>‘black bear mountain lake’</td>
<td>Bear Mountain Lake</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td></td>
<td>66.12935</td>
<td>-142.36398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dats’an Van Choo</strong></td>
<td>Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>‘big duck lake’</td>
<td>Big Duck Lake</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td></td>
<td>66.11495</td>
<td>-142.34942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Łūh Ahtsii Van</strong></td>
<td>Thomas (2014)</td>
<td>‘making dirt lake’</td>
<td>Small lake under the eastern slope of Shoh Ddhah (Bear Mountain)</td>
<td>FT, MF</td>
<td></td>
<td>66.09224</td>
<td>-142.46997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faannii Vaddhàa</strong></td>
<td>Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>‘Fanny’s mountain’</td>
<td>Fanny Mountain</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>66.06007</td>
<td>-142.29557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shoh Ddhàa Inlajj Njik</strong></td>
<td>Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>‘black bear mountain flowing creek’</td>
<td>Bear Mountain Creek</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td></td>
<td>65.97858</td>
<td>-142.45583</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dachan Drii Ddhàa

According to Irene Roberts of Circle, Dachan Drii Ddhah is an important landmark in the area trapped by her father Sandy Roberts and her grandfather William Moses. Caulfield (1983) reports Dachan Tr'ii Ddhah or Dachan Tr'ih Ddhah, ‘brittle wood mountain’ or ‘wooden canoe mountain,’ but Irene Roberts states that the name is actually Dachan Drii Ddhah, a name very familiar to her from hearing her father and grandfather use it often. Dachan Tr'ih occurs in place names in Vantat Gwich'in and Dagqø Gwich'in territories (JT Ritter, personal communication).

Njuu Gòo’ajj

According to Elders in Chalkyitsik, this is the site of the last great battle to occur between the Draanjik Gwich'in and the Teetl'it Gwich'in from the Fort McPherson area in Canada. Many people died. It happened during a winter before white people came into the country. The Teetl'it Gwich'in approached from the headwaters of Draanjik. Following a snowshoe trail which they had found, they eventually saw camp fire smoke. They waited throughout the night and at dawn attacked the camp of Draanjik Gwich'in while everyone was still asleep. Later, a group of Gwichyaag Gwich'in, not having heard any news from that area for a long time, came up to investigate. They found the camp destroyed. Rev. David Salmon said that the reason for the attack was that the Fort McPherson Indians were envious of the fine workmanship and efficiency of the tools manufactured by the Draanjik Gwich'in. In addition, they tried to capture local women.
Ohdik
Translation: "up on (hill)"
Location: Ohdik Lake
Latitude: 66.57953 Longitude: -143.72778

Andrews (1977), page 283: "This site is a well known lake used extensively for a unique waterfowl hunting technique utilized by the Chalkyitsik Gwich’in (Caulfield 1983: 129). The Gwich’in would make camps on the west side, and then in canoes, they would force ducks to the narrow south end where they would be shot and killed. This was called driving ducks. Hundreds of ducks would be taken in a day. After the drive, the ducks were cooked and people made speeches. The lake is still an important place for duck hunting and is present in oral traditions of the Chalkyitsik Gwich’in. The site is significant for the unique duck hunting technique employed at it. What is also significant is the role of the activity and ducks as a resource in the Tranjik (Black River) Gwich’in culture."

Ohdik Gehdit Ti’ehnjik
Source: ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983) Speaker: DS
Translation: "slough (in) downstream area (from) Ohtik"
Location: slough, ponds and creek to the south of Ohtik Lake
Latitude: 66.53033 Longitude: -143.88074

Van Lajj
Source: ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983) Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘approaching lakes’
Location: Vunle Lakes
Latitude: 66.47466 Longitude: -143.73018

A series of five lakes. The winter trail from Chalkyitsik to the Little Black River runs through them.

Daat’it
Source: ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983) Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘driftwood pile’
Latitude: 66.47547 Longitude: -143.88023

A logjam completely blocks the river (Grass River, or T’oochayaa Kak Gwinjik).

Tajh Choo Van
Source: ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983) Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘big hill lake’
Location: Tiechovun Lake
Latitude: 66.40064 Longitude: -143.69799

Gwit’ee Van K’at
Source: ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983) Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘lake under (the hill)’
Latitude: 66.39207 Longitude: -143.63039

Native Allotment AKFF 014134B is located on the south shore of the lake.
Shoh Nachàl 960
Source: ANLC6601, Caulfield (1983), ANLC6169 Speaker: DS
Translation: 'black bear's snout'
Location: north of Mardow Lake
Latitude: 66.38676 Longitude: -143.92836
Language

Bearnose Mtn. on USGS map is misplaced.

Shoh Nachàl T’ee 960.1
Source: Peter (2001) Speaker: KP
Translation: 'beneath bear snout'
Location: Mardow Lake
Latitude: 66.318002 Longitude: -143.936765
Lake

Chief Esias Loola had a camp on this lake for trapping muskrats. Peter (2001:44): "We went to a place past Ch'eeuluk called Shoh Nachàl T’ee (mountain about 60 miles from Fort Yukon) where there was a big lake to set up a muskrat camp. The lake was very big so each (the Chief and his wife) would go a separate way and set the traps on the lake. They would check them each morning and each evening."

Danzhit Gwatsal 961
Source: ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983) Speaker: DS
Translation: 'little canyon'
Latitude: 66.39765 Longitude: -143.53186
Landform

This is the location of Native Allotment AKFF 017135.

Łük Aadaa 962
Source: ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983) Speaker: DS
Translation: 'red fish'
Location: Tchulkade Lake
Latitude: 66.35354 Longitude: -143.33235
Lake

Native allotments FF017643 and FF017114 are located here.

Danzhit Gwachoo 963
Source: ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983) Speaker: DS
Translation: 'big canyon'
Latitude: 66.28627 Longitude: -143.21864
Landform

Tee’añijnik 964
Source: ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983) Speaker: DS
Translation: 'paddle river'
Location: Paddle Creek
Latitude: 66.00904 Longitude: -143.10082
Stream

K‘iikii Dik’ih 965
Source: ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983) Speaker: DS
Translation: 'little birches high hill'
Location: across the river from the mouth of Tee’añijnik (Paddle Creek)
Latitude: 66.00641 Longitude: -143.01911
Landform

Dik’ih means a high, sharp little hill. K‘iikii means young birch trees.

Ch’iýática’ok Luk 966
Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983) Speaker: DS
Translation: 'sucked-on-it fish'
Latitude: 66.69765 Longitude: -142.45071
Lake

This lake sits in a little valley about 10 miles north east of Teetsik (Salmon Village).
Vataatthål Nin’ee

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983), Kari, Raboff (2011)  
Speaker: DS  
Translation: ‘there is a fence over it’  
Latitude: 66.59932  
Longitude: -142.41729  

A 1,630’ high hill about 5 miles east-northeast of Vak’at Khàràandii, the location of a dinjik thål (moose fence) which belonged to William Saasa’ (Shuman Gaasheek’yuu, son of Emma and Andrew Gaasheek’yuu), the father of Henry Williams of Chalkyltsik.

Vataatthål Nin’ee Van

Source: ANLC6601, ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)  
Speaker: DS  
Translation: ‘there is a fence over it lake’  
Location: Cow and Calf Moose Lake  
Latitude: 66.61051  
Longitude: -142.34138  

Teedràanjik

Source: ANLC6601, Caulfield (1983)  
Speaker: SF  
Translation: ‘upper cache river’  
Location: Salmon Fork of Draanjik River  
Latitude: 66.5139  
Longitude: -141.91295  

Kiinjåa

Source: Caulfield (1983)  
Translation: ‘ancient rock’  
Location: bluff on north bank of Teedràanjik  
Latitude: 66.51753  
Longitude: -142.51187  

This bluff along the north bank of Teedràanjik (Salmon Fork of Draanjik River) is a source of black chert, which before the arrival of Europeans was used to make arrow heads, lance tips, scrapers, and other stone tools. Chert from here is found in archaeological sites throughout the Draanjik watershed.
Kyaachii

Source: Caulfield (1983), Andrews (1977)

Photo: Mark Knapp

Translation: ‘a voice comes out’

Location: bluff on north bank of lower Teedrâanjik

Latitude: 66.49685   Longitude: -142.4179

Andrews (1977), p. 287, translates the name as “Place of departing spirits,” or “Old Rock.” “This is the site where the Gwich’in believe they went after they died. Smoke can be seen coming from the ground at this site in the winter, and several Gwich’in have reported that you can "hear noise, hear people dance, holler, call you" at the site. The site is important to earlier Gwich’in ideology and to today's Gwich’in heritage.”

Diinzhoo Van, Diniizhoo Van


Translation: ‘brushy top lake’

Latitude: 66.46206   Longitude: -142.24386

There is a cabin on the west point of the lake built by Joe Matesi in 1973.

Diniizoo

Source: ANLC6601, ANLC6169, Caulfield (1983)

Speaker: JW, SF

Photo: Mark Knapp

Translation: ‘brushy top’

Latitude: 66.48747   Longitude: -142.09381

Landform

This wooded bluff on the south bank of Teedrâanjik (Salmon River) is a landmark for travelers on the river.

Ts'iit Teinzhii


Speaker: JW, SF

Photo: Willie Salmon

Translation: ‘porcupine stepped in the water’

Latitude: 66.51551   Longitude: -142.13549

Landform

This wooded bluff on the south bank of Teedrâanjik (Salmon River) is a landmark for travelers on the river.
Kiiveenjik

Source: ANLC6602, ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DS, SF
Photo credit: Brian Lepping
Translation: ‘grey stone river’
Location: Kevinjik Creek
Latitude: 66.64904 Longitude: -142.17557

Nee’inlii, Nee’inlii Van

Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘(fish) swims to a certain point’
Location: Salmon Spawning Place
Latitude: 66.61676 Longitude: -142.09204

Salmon Hole. The annual concentration of large numbers of spawning chum salmon in the nearby stream and predators that feed on them made this an important site for traditional subsistence activity. Belle Herbert, in Shanda (1982) relates visiting Nee’inlii in the late 1800s when there were two sod houses there inhabited by William Loola and Charlie Crow. David Salmon: "Nee'inii means 'spawning place.' All the fish gather there. Millions of fish there. All the dog salmons go in there. There's another Nee'inii up here, you know, that's for the red salmons, too. Nehdlii Nee'inii (see 977) they call it. Nee'inii Van. There's a little lake there, alright, but that's a big area there (in the stream) under the (hill). That's where the warm water comes out, that's where that goes into the (stream) and keeps it open."

Nehdlii Nee’inlii

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘coho salmon swims to a certain point’
Location: Salmon Hole
Latitude: 66.6326 Longitude: -142.11083

Perennial springs, discharging along a section of a small creek, prevent freezing over during the winter and create a highly favorable environment for spawning coho salmon. "Red salmon spawning place." When people lived in Teetsik (Salmon Village) they came by trail across the hills in late fall and early winter and harvested fish for the winter. David Salmon: "Nehdlii Nee'inii and Nee'inii Van. There's two known place, well known place, for Salmon Village people to go there and get tons of fish. Talk about lots fish!"

K’ii Ddhah

Source: Caulfield (1983)
Translation: ‘birch bark mountain’
Latitude: 66.54869 Longitude: -141.79523

Teetthañnjkik

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DS
Translation: ‘warm water river’
Location: Tetthajik Creek
Photo: Jeff Rasic
Latitude: 66.57026 Longitude: -141.72548

Perennial upwellings at various locations along the creek result in open water throughout the winter, and provide excellent habitat for large concentrations of spawning chum and coho salmon.
Tsaih Tl’oo

Source: Caulfield (1983)

Photo: Barry Whitehill

Translation: ‘mixed ochre’

Location: Pink Bluff

Latitude: 66.44199
Longitude: -141.54358

Landform

As the name suggests, this bluff was a source of ochre.

Ahtr’alinjik

Source: Caulfield (1983)

Translation: ‘wind river’

Location: Runt Creek

Latitude: 66.432
Longitude: -141.48873

Stream

Khatstil Daatee Gwinjik

Source: Caulfield (1983)

Photo: Jeff Rasic

Location: Drifting Snow Creek

Latitude: 66.4198
Longitude: -141.2612

Stream

Divii Ddhah

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)

Speaker: DS

Photo: Jeff Rasic

Translation: ‘sheep mountain’

Location: Keele Range

Latitude: 66.63885
Longitude: -141.15433

Landform

According to Henry Williams (Chalkyitsik), in the old days, young men would travel up Teedrànanjik (Salmon River) in mid-summer and cache their birch bark canoes at the mouth of Divii Ddhah. They would then climb the bluff on the north side of Divii Ddhah and follow the ridge line northward to hunt for sheep.

Divii Ddhah

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)

Speaker: DS

Photo: Jeff Rasic

Translation: ‘sheep mountain’

Location: Keele Range

Latitude: 66.63885
Longitude: -141.15433

Landform
Nahdrin Ts’ik

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: DS, MF
Photo: Jeff Rasic
Translation: ‘slender clarity’
Latitude: 66.93394 Longitude: -141.84545

Khaltäj’ Gwänlįj Njik

Source: Caulfield (1983), Thomas (2014)
Speaker: FT, MF
Photo: Jeff Rasic
Translation: ‘round whitefish are plentiful river’
Location: Grayling Fork
Latitude: 66.20106 Longitude: -141.74301

Vli’dzée Needooth’àn Njik

Source: Caulfield (1983), Thomas (2014)
Translation: ‘owl’s eyebrow bone creek’
Latitude: 66.17403 Longitude: -142.20277

Owl Creek on the USGS map is misplaced. Vli’dzée Needooth’àn Njik is an anabranch, or secondary channel, of lower Grayling Fork, south of the main channel. (An anabranch is a section of a river or stream that diverts from the main channel or stem of the watercourse and rejoins the main stem.) In English it is called “Owl Creek” even though it is an anabranch of the river.

Rufus Bluff

Source: Thomas (2014)
Latitude: 66.19047 Longitude: -142.17497

Rufus was the son of Joe Netro of Old Crow, who stayed for some time with William Salmon, father of Rev. David Salmon.

Daa’ol Ddhah

Source: Thomas (2014)
Translation: ‘driftwood mountain’
Latitude: 66.14479 Longitude: -142.04464

Kiit’raadil, Kiitranti’

Source: Caulfield (1983)
Translation: ‘a type of falcon?’
Latitude: 66.21265 Longitude: -142.14445
### Eltin Tee Kheegetwin’ee
- **Source:** Caulfield (1983), Thomas (2014)
- **Speaker:** FT, MF
- **Translation:** *riffle extends among pike*
- **Location:** Jackfish Riffle
- **Latitude:** 66.22284  
  **Longitude:** -142.12295

### Van Vak’at Njuu Alaa, Van Vakat Njuu Alaa
- **Source:** Caulfield (1983)
- **Speaker:** MF
- **Photo:** Jeff Rasic
- **Translation:** *island is floating on the lake*
- **Latitude:** 66.2061  
  **Longitude:** -142.00315

### K’ii Zhit Van
- **Source:** Caulfield (1983)
- **Speaker:** MF
- **Translation:** *lake inside birch bark*
- **Latitude:** 66.20368  
  **Longitude:** -141.96463

### William Salmon Vizhee
- **Source:** Thomas (2014)
- **Speaker:** FT
- **Translation:** *William Salmon’s house*
- **Location:** on the south bank of Grayling Fork upriver from Jackfish Riffle

William Salmon, also known as Old William Salmon, Łuk Choo, is the father of Rev. David Salmon (dec.) of Chalkyitsik.

### Aat’oo Tąįh
- **Source:** Caulfield (1983), Thomas (2014)
- **Speaker:** FT, MF
- **Translation:** *birch hill*
- **Latitude:** 66.28234  
  **Longitude:** -141.87985

### Kiitsiiñjik Łiidląįjį
- **Source:** Caulfield (1983)
- **Speaker:** MF
- **Translation:** *stone cache river confluence*
- **Location:** mouth of Bull Creek
- **Latitude:** 66.23756  
  **Longitude:** -141.82733

Cabins, and Native Allotment FF017133A, are located here.

### Kiitsiiñjik
- **Source:** Caulfield (1983)
- **Photo:** Jeff Rasic
- **Translation:** *stone cache river*
- **Location:** Bull Creek
- **Latitude:** 66.17302  
  **Longitude:** -141.78081

Kiitsii means 'stone cache,' and refers to the underground meat caches lined with stone that were built in the vicinity in the early days. This area is winter range for the Porcupine caribou herd, and also sustains a large population of moose. According to Elders in Chalkyitsik, this area has always had a lot of moose, and migration from here helps maintain moose populations in surrounding areas, such as the Yukon Flats. In the early days, so much meat was harvested annually that winter supplies were regularly stored in underground stone caches.
Vanvee Gòodlajj, Vanteiinlajj

Speaker: FT, MF
Photo: Jeff Rasic
Translation: ‘water flowing (along) lake shore’
Location: Vunvekottlui Lake
Latitude: 66.09778  Longitude: -141.89626

Vanteiinlajj is reported in Caulfield, 1981.

Gwak’an Choo Ddhah

Source: Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: MF
Translation: ‘big burn area mountain’
Latitude: 66.03082  Longitude: -141.71031

Kiitsii

Source: Caulfield (1983)
Translation: ‘stone cache’
Location: Rocky Mountain
Latitude: 66.03415  Longitude: -141.56274

Tȟóht’an Gwaddhàa

Source: Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: MF
Translation: ‘middle of the night mountain area’
Location: Ogilvie Mountains, head of Salmon Fork and Grayling Fork
Latitude: 66.04837  Longitude: -141.10147
**CH’OONJIK - PORCUPINE RIVER, STARTING AT DRAANJIK K’QQ (BLACK RIVER SLOUGH)**

### Draanjik K’qq
Translation: 'cache river stream'  
Location: Black River Slough  
Latitude: 66.65842 Longitude: -144.7711

### Roderick Slough
Source: Slaughter (1984)  
Latitude: 66.732432 Longitude: -144.745471

Slaughter (1984), p.78: “A portage between Boxcar Slough and Roderick Slough, the next slough to the west, was also located [at a camp on Boxcar Slough, approximately 6.5 km up the slough from its mouth, on the west bank.] Roderick Slough ultimately empties into Black River [Slough] a short distance upstream from its confluence with the Porcupine River.” This feature is named for Roderick, son of Ch’eeghwa’lt’ and father of Mae (May) Martin/Herbert.

### Boxcar Slough
Source: Slaughter (1984)  
Latitude: 66.726858 Longitude: -144.725346

### Boxcar
Location: Joe Carroll Cabin  
Latitude: 66.70259 Longitude: -144.69747

Slaughter (1984) p. 76: “The area was occupied by the 1920s or 1930s, if not earlier. The local name is derived from the long narrow shape of one of the cabins which reminded visitors of a Boxcar. The other name, which appears on the U.S.G.S. Fort Yukon (C-2) map, refers to Joe Carroll who later trapped this area for many years. Carroll, the son of James Carroll and Fanny Martin, was born in 1919. Andrews (1977) p. 304, further notes this area was a strategic place for the gathering of certain resources and that it was frequented by old people. Recently collected ethnographic data tend to confirm this observation. These data suggest that fish were the primary resource sought, although muskrats and waterfowl were also locally plentiful.” The site is now within Native Allotment FF014772B.

### K’aiizhruh Gwitsik
Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)  
Translation: 'willow creek mouth'  
Location: Willow Creek  
Latitude: 66.71439 Longitude: -144.6025

K’aiizhruh is felt-leafed willow, *Salix alaxensis*.

### K’aiizhruh Ti’ehnjik
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  
Translation: 'willow slough'  
Location: Willow Slough  
Latitude: 66.71156 Longitude: -144.59566

### K’aiizhruh Van
Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  
Translation: 'willow lake'  
Location: Willow Lake  
Latitude: 66.69865 Longitude: -144.55908
Khiitsik

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)
Speaker: DS
Picture
Translation: ‘chum salmon river mouth’
Location: mouth of Sheenjek River
Latitude: 66.7394 Longitude: -144.56822
Stream Mouth

Khiinjik, Shiinjik

Source: Caulfield (1983)
Speaker: MF
Picture
Translation: ‘chum salmon river’
Location: Sheenjek River
Latitude: 66.77298 Longitude: -144.52963

Khiiitsik Zheh

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993), Slaughter (1984)
Speaker: RM
Translation: ‘mouth of salmon river village’
Latitude: 66.74101 Longitude: -144.51388

Slaughter (1984) pp. 72-73: “A log cabin settlement was found on an old stabilized terrace of the Porcupine River approximately 200 m upstream from the upper mouth of the Sheenjek. ... The structures were numbered one through five beginning with the structure located furthest upstream. The floor dimensions were as follows: house one, 4 x 6 m; house two, 6 x 5 m; house three, 6 x 5 m; house four, 4 x 5 m; house five, 6 x 5 m. Associated with the cabins were cache pits and considerable amounts of cans and bottles. Between the cabins and the edge of the terrace is a faint, overgrown trail which parallels the Porcupine River. ... Abbie Peter, the principal informant on this site, thought it was occupied about 75 years ago. [She also] indicated that at one time there were nine cabins there.”

The old village site is located behind the willows on the upriver side of the old mouth of Sheenjek River. Richard Martin (1993) devotes a chapter to this site in his book: “The reason they had village here. In the fall time when the water’s low they put fish trap in the Sheenjek River clean across there. They catch a lot of fish. And people lived there you know.” How many people do you figure lived there? “I really don’t know but I remember one guy name that got a cabin here. He said he lived here before, his name is Charlie Lula” [Charlie Loola, son of William Loola and brother of Chief Esias Loola]. “Good hunting that’s the reason I guess they had the village here. And good fishing. Good fishing! Whole bunch of people help each other to go in and fish traps you know. When water’s low there not very much water coming out or there. Catch a lot of fish. They why people had a village here.”

Chi’èlchii Sidi’

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)
Speaker: RM
Translation: (may be a ts’ii dejj word, the meaning is unclear)
Latitude: 66.77207 Longitude: -144.40724
Hydrological Feature

This is the name of the long bend in Porcupine River where Jim Firmin has his trap line cabin. The place name refers to a shallow bar in the middle of the river just downstream from the cabin location. RM: “sounds like something’s lying dead in the bottom of the river.”
Njuu Ndak Tinlajj Gwitsik

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)
Speaker: RM
Translation: 'mouth of water-flows-over-island'
Location: mouth of Curtis Slough
Latitude: 66.77581  Longitude: -144.26325

Stream Mouth
Three Native Allotments are located on the west bank of the river. There is an old cabin and a new cabin built by Richard Strom.

Njuu Ndak Tinlajj, Njuu Ndak Tinlajj Gwinjik

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993), Caulfield (1983)
Translation: 'water flows over island'
Location: Curtis Slough
Latitude: 66.80546  Longitude: -144.26529

Caulfield lists Yuundak Teiinlaii but misplaces it on Nine Mile Slough. The upper mouth of Curtis Slough is locally known in English as Goose Slough.

Shree Teet'ın Van

Source: PH, pers. Comm.
Translation: 'half-moon lake'
Location: lake about two miles south of the lower mouth of Nine Mile Slough
Latitude: 66.78468  Longitude: -144.01095

Native Allotment FF019494 is located on the south shore.

Vihk'aa Nīt'ērāh'ee

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)
Speaker: RM
Translation: 'your butt's sitting on the hillside in the dirt'
Location: Nine Mile Slough
Latitude: 66.84257  Longitude: -143.9945

Caulfield (1983) records the name as "Yuundak Teiinlaii" (C/200) which may be a mistranscription for Njuu Ndak Tinlaj (Curtis Slough) and well as incorrectly located.

Zhūh Nirīlzhi Gwats'ą Tr'agòhdii

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)
Speaker: RM
Translation: 'trail comes out to the river from Where We Surrounded Wolves'
Latitude: 66.78892  Longitude: 143.92931

Zhūh Nirīlzhii

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)
Speaker: RM
Translation: 'we surrounded wolves'
Latitude: 66.7755  Longitude: -143.89921

T'aatsih Teeeintri

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)
Speaker: RM
Translation: 'somebody sitting on the drift pile crying'
Location: 12 Mile (below Shuman House)
Latitude: 66.80283  Longitude: -143.91732

At one time this was a settlement.
Zheechoo Ghò’ Tsil

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993), KU973L1999  
Speaker: RM  
Translation: 'giant with missing tooth'  
Latitude: 66.81705  
Longitude: -143.92982

This is the lower mouth of Draanjik Yuundak Gwatsal (Black River Slough). From the Gwich’in Stem List: -TSIL in deetsil 'he has a front tooth missing.' The stem list cites "Zhee Choo Deetsil (pn.) 9-mile slough, so called from a rock formation." According to the information from Richard Martin, the entry in the stem list is incorrectly located. Richard Martin (ANL3670a) says: "And they call it Zheechoo Ghò’ Tsil. Zheechoo mean giant. Deetsil mean one tooth missing. Big man with a tooth missing! (laughs). Zheechoo Ghò’ Tsil that's what that means."

Tr'aatth'at

Source: Caulfield (1983)  
Translation: 'man fell over the bank'  
Latitude: 66.86597  
Longitude: -143.92676

Tl'yah Chuuddlii Tsik, Tl'yah Chuuddlii Gwitsik

Source: Caulfield (1983), ANLC6602  
Speaker: SF  
Translation: 'mouth of rope lying in the water'  
Location: mouth of Six Mile Slough  
Latitude: 66.85558  
Longitude: -143.87655

RM: “Early days people go there to go fishing. There’s so darn many fishnet in the river you see bunch of lines going into the river. That’s what that means, Tl’yah Chuuddlii, that means 'line under the water.' They got a lot of fishnets, nothing but lines going into the water, you know. Tl’yah Chuuddlii they call it, that mean 'line under the water' or 'rope under the water,' whatever you can call it. That’s the name of that place.”

Vanvee Neetinlajj

Source: Caulfield (1983), ANLC6602  
Speaker: SF, KP  
Translation: 'waterfall on lake shore'  
Location: Waterfall Lake  
Latitude: 66.83248  
Longitude: -143.80962

Ts’àlvit Van

Source: Kari, Raboff (2011)  
Speaker: MF  
Translation: 'Pacific loon lake'  
Location: Loon Lake  
Latitude: 66.82815  
Longitude: -143.7628

Ts’àlvit is Pacific loon, which is very common on Porcupine River.

Kii Van

Source: Caulfield (1983)  
Translation: 'rock lake'  
Location: Rock Lake  
Latitude: 66.83369  
Longitude: -143.69141

Tajh Gôô Tsik

Source: ANLC6602  
Speaker: SF, MF  
Translation: 'mouth of twisted hills stream'  
Location: mouth of Chandalar Creek  
Latitude: 66.88402  
Longitude: -143.83911
### Tajh G yö Njik

- **Source:** Caulfield (1983), ANLC6602
- **Speaker:** SF
- **Translation:** *twisted hills stream*
- **Location:** Chandalar Creek
- **Latitude:** 66.92083
- **Longitude:** -143.83655

### Sam Vavan

- **Source:** Caulfield (1983)
- **Translation:** *Sam's lake*
- **Location:** Sam's Big Lake
- **Latitude:** 66.91377
- **Longitude:** -143.87937

Named for Sam Herbert, Sr. son of Joe and Belle Herbert.

### Dinilzhoo

- **Source:** Caulfield (1983)
- **Speaker:** MF
- **Translation:** *brushy point*
- **Location:** Outlook Point
- **Latitude:** 67.27996
- **Longitude:** -144.08833

Listen

### Van Vak’at Ch’igwiidzt

- **Source:** Caulfield (1983)
- **Location:** ‘Big Lake’
- **Latitude:** 67.31271
- **Longitude:** -143.66321

### Ddhah Njàa

- **Source:** Caulfield (1983)
- **Translation:** *elder mountain*
- **Latitude:** 67.4149
- **Longitude:** -143.7404

### Vandik

- **Source:** Caulfield (1983), Andrews (1977)
- **Speaker:** MF
- **Translation:** *lake on the bench*
- **Location:** Vundik Lake
- **Latitude:** 67.3671
- **Longitude:** -143.83834

Listen

Andrews (1977), p.291: "An historic native settlement was reported at this location. It was significant to people from the Arctic Village area as well as the Yukon Flats since it was on the trail to Old Rampart where supplies could be obtained. The site is significant not only for what we can learn about historic Kutchin culture but also because it played a significant role in the trading activities of native people." Native Allotment AKFF 018783 is located on the eastern shore.
Now Native Allotment F025752, this small settlement has long been the traditional home site of the Herbert family. It remains an important milepost today when traveling Porcupine River. See Belle Herbert, *Shandāa* (1982) for lengthy descriptions of life in and around K’airōondak. Rev. Robert McDonald referred many times to this place in his journals, often camping there and encountering other people camped there. He first mentions it in his journal on August 11, 1863 while traveling upriver on his way to Fort McPherson on the Peel River. Later that fall he stopped there again on his return trip to Fort Yukon. His party was traveling down the Porcupine late in the season by boat, and was stopped by ice at the mouth of Old Crow River on September 23. The next day they hauled the boat out and secured it for the winter, stored the cargo on caches, and built a lodge. After more than a month living with the Vuntut Gwich’in, his party started out downriver with three dog teams. On November 5 they arrived at K’airōondak. Many references follow over the years. In his journals McDonald spells it variously as Kironduk, Keironduk, and Kuironduk.

Andrews (1985): “This Kutchin settlement predates the twentieth century although it continued to be occupied almost year-round until the 1950’s. Before the turn of the century one band of Porcupine River Indians were joined under the leadership of the well-known medicine-man, John Shuman, and made their central location at Shuman House. As early as 1898 it was reported that John Shuman’s band consisted of 80 people (Ray and Richardson 1900:551). His medicinal accomplishments are known throughout the Yukon Flats and along the Porcupine River. Some older individuals today can recall his curing their parents. Although he died in 1898 and was buried at Fort Yukon the community continued to be one of the main settlements of the Porcupine River.”

John Shuman’s Gwich’in name was Teetr’ookhwa’i ‘he paddles among us.’ Among his shamanic skills were paranormal surgery and telepathy. He would put a dish pan under a patient with water in it. When treatment was over the water would be black and pitchy.

**K’airōondak Van**

Source: Caulfield (1983), ANLC6602

Speaker: SF

Translation: *in swamp lake*

Location: Belle Lake

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<tr>
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**Gwalat Zhit Van**

Source: Caulfield (1983)

Speaker: MF

Translation: *in swamp lake*

Location: Belle Lake

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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Location</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dandaih T’an Van</td>
<td>‘bearberry leaf lake’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ti’ëhnjik Gwatak</td>
<td>‘short slough’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ti’ëhnjik Gwinjyàa</td>
<td>‘long slough’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ti’oo Kat Gwachoo</td>
<td>‘big grass surface area’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajh Gqq Van</td>
<td>‘twisted hill lake’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kii Van</td>
<td>‘rock lake’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Kat Njuu Alaa</td>
<td>‘island is floating on lake’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dzan Van</td>
<td>‘muskrat lake’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dinjik Ji’ Van</td>
<td>‘moose antler lake’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Łajj Daatsik Van</td>
<td>‘red dog lake’</td>
</tr>
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Cheeghii Gwats’ą’ Tr’aq̱q̱hdii
1160
Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)  
Speaker: RM
Latitude: 66.86455  
Longitude: -143.70567
Trail
Trailhead. A trail comes out to the river across from Joe Ward place from a big lake.

Dandaih T’án Gwitsik
1162
Source: PH, pers. com.  
Speaker: PH
Photo: Ian Johnson
Translation: ‘mouth of bearberry leaf stream’
Location: mouth of Joe Ward Slough
Latitude: 66.87867  
Longitude: -143.65859
Stream Mouth

Dandaih T’án Gwinjik
1163
Source: PH, pers. com.  
Speaker: PH
Translation: ‘bearberry leaf stream’
Location: Joe Ward Slough
Latitude: 66.89985  
Longitude: -143.67474
Stream

Teelqoq
1164
Source: Caulfield (1983)  
Speaker: MF
Translation: ‘shallow water’
Latitude: 66.94877  
Longitude: -143.69192
Lake

Vantseets’it K’qoq Gwitsik
1165
Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)  
Speaker: RM
Photo: Ian Johnson
Location: mouth of Henderson Slough
Latitude: 66.87555  
Longitude: -143.60551
Stream Mouth

Vantseets’it K’qoq
1166
Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)  
Speaker: RM
Location: Henderson Slough
Latitude: 66.89481  
Longitude: -143.53525
Stream
Dachan Døotin Gwisik

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)
Speaker: RM
Translation: 'mouth of elevated-log-stream'
Location: lower mouth of Middle Channel
Latitude: 66.90288 Longitude: -143.60884

Dachan Døotin Gwinjik

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993), Herbert (1982), Hadleigh-West (1963), Caulfield (1983), Jones (1867)
Speaker: RM
Translation: 'log is elevated'
Location: Middle Channel
Latitude: 66.92154 Longitude: -143.56269

Kiichan Gwinjik

Source: Caulfield (1983), ANL3670a, Martin (1993)
Speaker: RM
Translation: 'rock base stream'
Location: Rock Slough
Latitude: 66.97337 Longitude: -143.53409

Kiichan Tajh

Source: ANLC6601
Speaker: SF, MF
Translation: 'rock base hill'
Location: VABM Wart
Latitude: 66.98386 Longitude: -143.53048

Kiichan

Source: ANL3670a
Speaker: RM, SF
Translation: 'rock base'
Location: 998 ft. high hill north of Rock Slough.
Latitude: 66.99042 Longitude: -143.57414

Laganar Way

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)
Speaker: RM
Location: upper mouth of Henderson Slough
Latitude: 66.94342 Longitude: -143.47685

According to Richard Martin, this name dates from the Hudson's Bay era.
Łüh Zhagwinjik
Source: ANLC6601  Speaker: SF
Translation: 'flowing into mud'
Latitude: 66.93767  Longitude: -143.39434
Also known in English as Mud Slough.

Kiichoo

Source: ANLC6602  Speaker: SF
Translation: 'big rock'
Location: Graphite Bluff, Graphite Point  
Photo: Ian Johnson
Latitude: 66.99929  Longitude: -143.34458

For travelers going up Porcupine River, Kiichoo is the first bluff encountered. This signals that they have left the Yukon Flats and are now entering the middle portion of the river, characterized by hills, low mountains, riverside bluffs and ramparts.

Kiichoo Eek'qoo
Source: Caulfield (1983), ANL3670a, Martin (1993), ANLC6602  Speaker: SF, RM
Translation: 'fishing stream near big rock'
Location: Stream that enters Porcupine River just upstream of Graphite
Latitude: 67.00625  Longitude: -143.31312

An important traditional subsistence site. The remains of an ancient stone fish weir for whitefish are visible a short ways up the creek from the mouth.

Vatâjji Van, Vihtâjji Van
Translation: 'trail comes to it lake'
Location: Graphite Lake
Latitude: 67.06343  Longitude: -143.43637

There used to be a settlement on the eastern shore called Graphite Lake Village. It is now Native Allotment AKFF 013736B. Andrews (1985): "The settlement at Graphite Lake was significant because of the abundance of fish there. Not only was it important during the annual round of activities in the lower Porcupine River culture but it was a well-known lake which people relied on when they were starving. During historic times a fire was started by lightning and spread to the area near Graphite Lake. People at the camp saved themselves by staying in the lake until the fire was out."

Kiichoo Eek'qoo Van
Source: ANLC6602  Speaker: SF, MF
Translation: 'fishing stream near big rock lake'
Location: Lake behind Old Village
Latitude: 67.0006  Longitude: -143.17929
**Ti’yah Dik**


Speaker: SF

Translation: “flinty bank”

Location: Old Village; John Herberts Village on the USGS map

Latitude: 66.99052  Longitude: -143.14629

A traditional settlement site, with several buildings and a cemetery. It is the home site of Traditional Chief Simon Francis. There are three cabins, ranging from very old to recent construction. Andrews (1985): “This settlement was one of the main villages of the Porcupine River and was occupied throughout the first half of the twentieth century. At least 6 families are known to have resided at the site although many of the surviving residents and their descendants now reside in Chalkyitsik. One informant reported the remains of sod houses and traditional game traps located near the village extending the possible antiquity of the site to prehistoric times.”

Simon Francis: “You know that flint? Right across there. So that's the one, long time ago they build fire with. Before matches come. That's a long time ago." The flint-like black rock found across the river from Ti’yah Dik is called tf’yah k’yuu. Andrews (1985): "People of the Yukon Flats and Porcupine River came to this site to obtain flint for making fire. It was reported that the natives living near the location traded this important and much desired item to other groups. The "round black rocks" were also said to have had medicinal qualities and aided in relieving rheumatism and arthritis."

**Kii Veeradjjzhaz**

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)

Speaker: RM

Translation: ‘rock they shoved a stick through’

Latitude: 66.99556  Longitude: -143.07847

Older speakers sometimes call it “Medicine Rock.”

**Kii Vakat Deenilârîilzhzan, Kii Vak’ât Deelirîilzhzan**

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993), ANLC6602

Speaker: RM, SF

Translation: ‘rock upon, they made medicine together’

Location: Deacons Rock

Latitude: 66.99758  Longitude: -143.03696

Older speakers sometimes call it “Medicine Rock.”
Bluffs on both sides of Porcupine River give the appearance of a gate. This is the approximate boundary between the Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

This is a stream draining the north slope of Ditsik Ehdlii (Frozen Calf Mtn.) that enters the south bank of the Porcupine River downstream from Rat Creek.

This is a high, steep hill just downstream from Rat Creek on the south bank of Porcupine River.
Vak’at Khàashii
Source: Caulfield (1983), ANLC6602
Translation: 'he is saved up on it'?
Location: Coleen Mountain
Latitude: 67.09702 Longitude: -142.80722
Caulfield, 1983, records the name as "Vak’at ghaakhii."

Diikwài’ Dhich’yaa
Source: Caulfield (1983), ANL3670a, Martin (1993), ANLC6601
Speaker: RM, SF
Translation: 'our foot got burnt'
Location: Burnt Paw
Latitude: 67.02551 Longitude: -142.59372
This site is known to have been inhabited at different times by various people, including John Herbert, Richard Martin, and members of the Francis and Carroll families. The story is told that one winter night, someone slept with his feet too close to the fire, and found in the morning that his footwear was scorched. The roof of the old cabin has fallen in.

Gwitee Tsuk Ddhah
Source: Caulfield (1983), ANLC6602
Translation: 'marten around it mountain'
Location: VABM Cabin
Latitude: 67.02481 Longitude: -142.34309

Gwitee Tsuk Van
Source: ANLC6602
Translation: 'among marten lake'
Latitude: 66.99734 Longitude: -142.41668

Kwànham Jât, Kwân Jât
Source: Andrews (1985)
Translation: 'old houses, fallen in houses'
Location: about one mile upriver from Burnt Paw
Latitude: 67.033748 Longitude: -142.573362
According to Andrews (1985) there are the remains of prehistoric dwellings at this site. Gwajät means it's old, rotten, fallen apart.

Dizhêenjik Njuu
Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)
Translation: 'island at Coleen River'
Location: Coleen Island
Latitude: 67.06232 Longitude: -142.55839

Starvation Rock
Source: Richard Carroll, Sr. pers. comm.
Translation: in the middle of the river ½ mile below the mouth of Coleen River
Latitude: 67.06041 Longitude: -142.5161
The story is told that a man wrecked his boat on this large rock mid-river and was stranded there, unable to make it to shore. He starved to death.
Dizhèetsik

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)
Speaker: RM

Location: mouth of Coleen River
Latitude: 67.0715 Longitude: -142.49864

Stream Mouth

Dizhèenjik, Diizhèenjik

Speaker: RM

Translation: 'wind-like-breathing river'
Location: Coleen River
Latitude: 67.09631 Longitude: -142.51807

KF: the name is derived from the verb stem ZHEE 'to breath' and refers to the sound of the wind as it blows through the canyon in the winter. A suggested translation is 'wind sighing (in the canyon).’ The river flows through a five mile long canyon that starts nine miles above its confluence with the Porcupine River.

Dizhèetsik Zeh

Translation: 'house at mouth of Coleen River'
Latitude: 67.07775 Longitude: -142.48107

Site

Vi’ildëe Needohki’

Translation: 'great horned owl bluff'
Latitude: 67.0949 Longitude: -142.41804

Landform
Viiidzëe Njik

Theetaa Gwachoo Tr'aggldii

Theetaa Gwachoo is a winter portage trail that cuts off "Fish Hook Bend" on Porcupine River, beginning here and returning to the river just below Canyon Village.

Reporter Bluff

K'ali Tsoo Gwânlij

Caulfield, 1983, lists it as Henry Martin viteenjir njuu ‘Henry Martin's island,’ C/192

Łajj Ñrey Zheh

Richard Martin (1993) states that Łajj Tree Zheh was the name of the Hudson's Bay Post located in 1869, on the south bank of the Porcupine River, just downstream from Red Gate. After only one year it was determined that the location was still within the United States territory, and the post was moved upstream to Khêetsik, the mouth of Salmon Trout River (see number 1208). It is also the name of the modern settlement known in English as Canyon Village, which is a town site located on the north bank of the river, founded in 1962. Richard Martin was one of the original group that established Canyon Village. Another was Bella Francis. Her account of that time is told in Elders Speak (1979).

Tajh Daatsik
Source: ANLC6602 Speaker: SF Translation: ‘red hill’ Location: Red Gate Latitude: 67.17911 Longitude: -141.97435

A traveler going upriver on the Porcupine River abruptly leaves the Colleen Lowlands and enters the Upper Ramparts at Tajh Daatsik.
RM: "Early days people go down with a raft. ...you can't put the dogs in the raft, so they leave the dogs to run along the shore. When they get down to Howling Dog gate, the rock is straight up and down and into the river... And when the dogs get there, the raft is getting away from them. Well they run back and forth and pretty soon they sit there and howl. Finally they give up and jump in the river and swim down, you know. That's the reason they call it Howling Dog."

Andrews (1977), p.292: "Located on the south bank of the Porcupine River some 35 miles from the Canadian Border this settlement was one of the main communities of the Porcupine River Kutchin. Thought to have been occupied prior to the coming of white people in the 1840s, it continued to be important for the next 100 years as the traditional native life style blended with the representatives of western civilization - the trader, trapper, and missionary. This contact was especially reflected in the presence of the Hudson Bay Company post opposite the village and the work of Reverend Sims whose grave is still visible there. The record of changing native life styles following this contact is reflected in the memory of the Porcupine River people, some of whom have heard from relatives about the earlier period and remember personal experiences at the site of Old Rampart during the first part of the twentieth century."
Andrews (1977): "During the days when the Hudson Bay Post was opposite the native village and later when trader Charles Strom had as store there, native peoples from as far as Arctic Village and Fort Yukon as well as people from the Porcupine and Black Rivers came to Old Rampart to trade furs and get supplies. Well-known and well-travelled trails along the Porcupine River, to Salmon Village on the Black River, and to the Chandalar country via Bluefish and Vundik Lakes attests to the importance of Old Rampart in Kutchin culture along with the oral accounts of people who actually travelled the trails themselves. In addition, people from the area can recall going to Old Rampart at Christmas time to share in the potlatch activities there where food and good times abounded. However, trading activities and interband congregation and exchange are not all that characterize the native settlement of Old Rampart. Old Rampart was also an independent Kutchin community carrying out traditional activities which characterized their culture as they exploited the fish and abundant caribou resources of the area. The strategic location of the village in terms of resources as well as reports of old style sod houses at the site provide clues that point to the archeological potential of the settlement as well."

Andrews (1977), p.293: "this site has played a significant role in the history of Hudson Bay Company expansion and later retraction during the 19th century, in missionary activity during the years between 1869 and 1889 and in the heyday of fur trapping activities during the first half of the 20th century. The site was first occupied by the Porcupine River Kutchin and continued to be an important fishing and hunting location for them. In addition, the history of Old Rampart reflects the record of changing white institutions and the eventual mixing of the two ethnic groups in the same pursuit of trapping. This record is now reflected in the memory of the Porcupine River people, some of whom have heard from relatives about the earlier period and remember personal experiences at the site of Old Rampart. ...Shortly after Capt. Charles Raymond's trip to Ft. Yukon in 1869 in which he determined the British trading post to be in the newly acquired American territory, the post was removed to Howling Dog Rock. Upon determination within the same year that it was still on American soil, the company was again moved, this time to Old Rampart House. There the post was situated on the north bank of the Porcupine across from a native village of Old Rampart at the confluence of the Salmon Trout and Porcupine Rivers. Old Rampart House, the H.B.C., continued and perhaps increased in importance as a supply post for native populations. Since the Russians had vacated the lower Yukon and American fur companies had just begun to set up posts, Hudson Bay posts such as Old Rampart flourished. Some powerful trading chiefs who had dealt with the H.B.C. at Ft. Yukon and enjoyed privileged positions found it advantageous to send fur and tanned skins to trade at Old Rampart for use in exchange for western goods. During the period from 1869 to 1889, the post also served as a station for Church of England missionaries, the most notable being the Rev. V. C. Sims who was assigned to Old Rampart during the years 1881-1885. During the winter of 1870 Bishop Bompas wintered at Old Rampart House. The Church of England missionaries worked out of the H.B.C. posts and also used the supply boats to send reports back to England. Rev. Sims' grave as well as those of H.B.C. employees are located at the site. In 1889, John Henry Turner of the Coast and Geodetic Survey determined that Old Rampart House was in American territory and the post was again removed, this time to New Rampart House on the Alaska-Canada border. In the first quarter of the 20th century it was reported that there were no signs of the old H.B.C. post at Old Rampart except for the graveyard. However, it was also noted that the site was occupied by natives from the village across the river where there were ten or twelve cabins. ...after the H.B.C. vacated Old Rampart, natives traded on the Arctic Coast, using the mountains as landmarks as they travelled. With the rise in fur

Khètsik Zheh, Khètsik
Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993), Andrews (1977)
Speaker: RM
Translation: 'mouth of dog salmon river village'
Location: Old Rampart
Latitude: 67.16449 Longitude: -141.67088

Andrews (1977), p.293: "this site has played a significant role in the history of Hudson Bay Company expansion and later retraction during the 19th century, in missionary activity during the years between 1869 and 1889 and in the heyday of fur trapping activities during the first half of the 20th century. The site was first occupied by the Porcupine River Kutchin and continued to be an important fishing and hunting location for them. In addition, the history of Old Rampart reflects the record of changing white institutions and the eventual mixing of the two ethnic groups in the same pursuit of trapping. This record is now reflected in the memory of the Porcupine River people, some of whom have heard from relatives about the earlier period and remember personal experiences at the site of Old Rampart. ...Shortly after Capt. Charles Raymond's trip to Ft. Yukon in 1869 in which he determined the British trading post to be in the newly acquired American territory, the post was removed to Howling Dog Rock. Upon determination within the same year that it was still on American soil, the company was again moved, this time to Old Rampart House. There the post was situated on the north bank of the Porcupine across from a native village of Old Rampart at the confluence of the Salmon Trout and Porcupine Rivers. Old Rampart House, the H.B.C., continued and perhaps increased in importance as a supply post for native populations. Since the Russians had vacated the lower Yukon and American fur companies had just begun to set up posts, Hudson Bay posts such as Old Rampart flourished. Some powerful trading chiefs who had dealt with the H.B.C. at Ft. Yukon and enjoyed privileged positions found it advantageous to send fur and tanned skins to trade at Old Rampart for use in exchange for western goods. During the period from 1869 to 1889, the post also served as a station for Church of England missionaries, the most notable being the Rev. V. C. Sims who was assigned to Old Rampart during the years 1881-1885. During the winter of 1870 Bishop Bompas wintered at Old Rampart House. The Church of England missionaries worked out of the H.B.C. posts and also used the supply boats to send reports back to England. Rev. Sims' grave as well as those of H.B.C. employees are located at the site. In 1889, John Henry Turner of the Coast and Geodetic Survey determined that Old Rampart House was in American territory and the post was again removed, this time to New Rampart House on the Alaska-Canada border. In the first quarter of the 20th century it was reported that there were no signs of the old H.B.C. post at Old Rampart except for the graveyard. However, it was also noted that the site was occupied by natives from the village across the river where there were ten or twelve cabins. ...after the H.B.C. vacated Old Rampart, natives traded on the Arctic Coast, using the mountains as landmarks as they travelled. With the rise in fur
prices during the 1920s and 30s, Old Rampart became a trading post for the native and white trappers who were utilizing the rich fur potential of the Sheenjek, Black and Porcupine Rivers. Henry Halle, Charlie Strom and Joe Netro were partners in operating stores at Old Rampart, New Rampart, and Old Crow with Charlie Strom running the one at Old Rampart. Supplies for the stores were obtained by boat from Ft. Yukon. During this period, Old Rampart House was a center where trappers congregated at Christmas and New Year's for potlatches and dancing. ...People from as far away as Arctic Village utilized Old Rampart as a trading post and it is reported that the trail from Arctic Village is still visible. Trails also connected Old Rampart House with Salmon Village and the dog sled trail from Ft. Yukon to Old Crow in Canada went through Old Rampart. The site continued to be occupied for a number of years until people moved closer to schools. Today, Old Rampart is remembered by people on the Porcupine as a trading center during the heyday of the trapping period. Some recall childhood memories of the holiday festivities, which included trappers, both native and white, who "came in" from their trap lines to celebrate, and stories depicting an earlier time when relatives worked for and traded with the Hudson Bay Company.

Khèetsik Taji 1208.1
Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: DS
Translation: 'trail (to) Old Rampart'
Old trail connecting Old Rampart and Salmon Village

Jak Ddhah 1209
Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983)  Speaker: SF, DS, MF
Translation: 'blueberry mountain'
Location: VABM Salmon
Latitude: 67.14454  Longitude: -141.64406

Khèenjik 1210
Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)  Speaker: RM
Photo: Barry Whitehill
Translation: 'dog salmon river'
Location: Salmon Trout River
Latitude: 67.12828  Longitude: -141.47858
This site is a "salmon hole." Due to upwellings of warm water, an area in the creek remains open water late into the fall, sometimes for the entire winter. Large numbers of fall chum salmon concentrate here for spawning. Bears, especially grizzlies, are also numerous, feeding on the fish carcasses.

**Ddhah Daatr'ii**

Source: ANLC6167, Caulfield (1983), ANLC6602
Speaker: SF

Translation: 'mountains are rough'

Latitude: 66.9293
Longitude: -141.37774

**Olti' Vach'adzàà K'it**

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)
Speaker: RM

Translation: 'place where Olti held a dance'

Latitude: 67.17971
Longitude: -141.69667

**Gwatsoo Vavan**

Source: Martin (1993), ANLC6602
Speaker: RM, MF

Translation: 'blondie's lake'

Location: Smith Lake
Latitude: 67.19686
Longitude: -141.56436

Named after a blond haired whiteman.

**Neejuu Niigqq**

Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993), KU973L1999
Speaker: RM

Translation: 'water twisting around island'

Latitude: 67.23659
Longitude: -141.67323

RM: "The whiteman call that place Sweezy Riffle. Sweezy Riffle, that's the name of that place, that's what they call it. But really, the name is Neejuu Niigqq. Neejuu Niigqq means that, you know, water just twisting all over, all the way across. It's a pretty swift riffle there, the water just, you know, whirlpool and stuff like that. They call that Neejuu Niigqq." Dagqq means "it is twisted."

**Kii Ts'èhch'jj**

Source: Martin (1993)
Translation: 'puberty hood rock'

Location: Half-Way Pillar
Latitude: 67.25939
Longitude: -141.63832

In early days, a young woman experiencing her first menses was careful to have no contact with men, lest the power of her inchoate womanhood should weaken a man's hunting medicine. They lived apart from the main group, and wore a special hat that covered the face and helped prevent any untoward glances. The story goes that a young woman in seclusion could not help herself, and gazed with admiration on a young hunter. To atone for this offense, a shaman turned her to stone. The rock pillar still has the appearance of a young woman wearing a puberty hood.
### Kii Nin’ee
- **Source:** Caulfield (1983)  
- **Speaker:** MF  
- **Location:** a riffle on Porcupine River  
- **Translation:** ‘rock extends’  
- **Latitude:** 67.26675  
- **Longitude:** -141.64171

### Dinjji Choo Vatthāl Gwitsik
- **Source:** ANL3670a, Martin (1993)  
- **Speaker:** RM  
- **Location:** mouth of Porcupine River  
- **Translation:** ‘mouth of big man's caribou fence stream’  
- **Latitude:** 67.27693  
- **Longitude:** -141.63598

### Dinjji Choo Vatthāl Njik
- **Source:** ANL3670a, Martin (1993)  
- **Speaker:** RM  
- **Translation:** ‘big man's caribou fence stream’  
- **Location:** Rapid River  
- **Latitude:** 67.29751  
- **Longitude:** -141.66046

A caribou fence owned by "Big Man" was located around the headwaters of this stream.

### K’oq Gwazhrājī
- **Source:** ANLC6602  
- **Speaker:** SF  
- **Translation:** ‘black area stream’  
- **Location:** west fork of Porcupine River  
- **Latitude:** 67.39019  
- **Longitude:** -141.69221

### Kiit’āvan Tsik
- **Source:** ANL3670a, Martin (1993), Andrews (1977), ANLC6602  
- **Speaker:** SF  
- **Translation:** ‘mouth of lake beneath rock stream’  
- **Location:** mouth of White Mountain Creek  
- **Latitude:** 67.3204  
- **Longitude:** -141.53226

Also known as Vasaagihdzak Vakwank’it ‘Vasaagihdzak's Camp.' Vasaagihdzak is a folk hero (or comical figure, according to some) who is the central figure in a cycle of stories that are important in Gwich’in culture. This creek mouth is one of his many campsites. Andrews (1977) p. 295: “This is one of the campsites of the only survivor of a flood event - Vaasaghidzak [sic]. The first man ever to construct a canoe, Vaasaghidzak began to travel from Canada down the Porcupine and Yukon rivers to the Yukon delta. Even today his camps are remembered all along the Porcupine River. ...The importance of Vaasaghidzak in the ideological system of Kutchin culture is confirmed by the annual midwinter recounting of his exploits and was recorded as early as 1933 by R. McKennan.

### Kiit’āvan Njik
- **Source:** ANL3670a, Martin (1993), ANLC6602  
- **Speaker:** RM  
- **Location:** White Mountain Creek  
- **Translation:** ‘lake beneath rock stream’  
- **Latitude:** 67.34793  
- **Longitude:** -141.54116

### Neediikaii, Neediikajjī
- **Source:** Caulfield (1983), ANLC6602  
- **Speaker:** SF  
- **Translation:** ‘sharp?’  
- **Location:** Spike Mountain  
- **Latitude:** 67.59097  
- **Longitude:** -141.65133

### Hydrological Feature
- Source: Caulfield (1983)  
- **Speaker:** MF  
- **Translation:** ‘rock extends’  
- **Location:** a riffle on Porcupine River  
- **Latitude:** 67.26675  
- **Longitude:** -141.64171

### Stream Mouth
- Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)  
- **Speaker:** RM  
- **Translation:** ‘mouth of big man's caribou fence stream’  
- **Location:** mouth of Porcupine River  
- **Latitude:** 67.27693  
- **Longitude:** -141.63598

### Stream
- Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)  
- **Speaker:** RM  
- **Translation:** ‘big man's caribou fence stream’  
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- **Latitude:** 67.34793  
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### Landform
- Source: Caulfield (1983), ANLC6602  
- **Speaker:** SF  
- **Translation:** ‘sharp?’  
- **Location:** Spike Mountain  
- **Latitude:** 67.59097  
- **Longitude:** -141.65133
Neekii Aazhii
Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993)  Speaker: RM
Translation: 'rocks all the way across'
Latitude: 67.31818  Longitude: -141.45241
Hydrological Feature
This is a riffle on Porcupine River. It requires boat drivers to carefully thread a narrow channel of fast water between a rocky bluff on one side and a shallow bar of rocks on the other.

Shyaaghan Kii
Source: Njootli, pers com.  Speaker: SN, MF
Translation: 'old woman rock'
Location: On a rock bluff on the north bank about 5.2 miles above Campbell River
Latitude: 67.334777  Longitude: -141.315125
Landform
This feature is a rock formation that looks like a woman carrying a pack of caribou meat.

Vi’it Gwaatr’al Vakwai
Source: ANL3670a, Martin (1993), ANLC6167  Speaker: RM
Translation: 'his poor pit house in the brush'
Latitude: 67.37325  Longitude: -141.13251
Landform
Richard Martin (1993): "on the right side, you see a hill is pretty high. Maybe two thousand feet up there. That ridge comes down like this, all the way down to river. Vi’it Gwaatr’al Vakwai. Vi’it Gwaatr’al means, that brushman was up there one time, I told you about? His name was Vi’it Gwaatr’al. That means Vi’it Gwaatr’al camp. That means that man's camp."

Shyaaghan Njik
Source: ANLC6602  Speaker: SF
Translation: 'old woman stream'
Location: Sunagun Creek
Latitude: 67.42176  Longitude: -141.04063
Stream

Chųprüf Ts’ajj Nılıj K’at, Chųprüf Ts’ajj Nalk’at
Source: ANLC6602  Speaker: SF
Translation: 'it’s on the water side'
Latitude: 67.42851  Longitude: -141.09482
Landform
Chųprüf Ts’ajj Nalk’at ‘it sticks up toward the water side’ is also the name for Crow Mountain, behind Old Crow, Yukon Territory. Listen to this place name pronounced by the late Charlie Peter Charlie of Old Crow.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Latitude</th>
<th>Longitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shriijaa K’oo</td>
<td>Caulfield (1983), ANLC6602</td>
<td>SF, MF</td>
<td>‘grayling creek’</td>
<td>Grayling Creek</td>
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<td>-142.98288</td>
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<td>Shriijaa Van</td>
<td>ANLC6602</td>
<td>SF, MF</td>
<td>‘grayling lake’</td>
<td></td>
<td>67.29428</td>
<td>-143.12406</td>
</tr>
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<td>Shriijaa Van Zheh</td>
<td>Andrews (1977)</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>‘grayling lake village’</td>
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<td>-143.1785</td>
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<td>Geh Ddhah</td>
<td>Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>‘snowshoe hare mountain’</td>
<td>Rabbit Mountain</td>
<td>67.47442</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kii Ghoo Choo Njik</td>
<td>Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>‘big round rock stream’</td>
<td>Boulder Creek</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nitsij Ddhah</td>
<td>Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>‘rosehip mountain’</td>
<td>VABM Jet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geh Ddhah K’oo</td>
<td>Caulfield (1983)</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>‘snowshoe hare mountain creek’</td>
<td>Lake Creek</td>
<td>67.60843</td>
<td>-142.4455</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Andrews (1977), p.290: "An historic settlement was reported to be located on both sides of the creek near Bluefish Lake. While it was a semi-permanent settlement for one group of people it was significant to people from the Arctic Village area as well since it was on the trail to Old Rampart where supplies could be obtained. The site is significant not only for what we can learn about historic Kutchin culture but also because it played a significant role in the trading activities of native people."
The story goes that among a group of people camped at the mouth of the creek at one time was a woman suffering from severe depression. One day, while alone in camp, she committed suicide by hanging herself.