



Working with Interior Alaska landowners to safeguard the character and natural resources of our community

2011

What We Do

Land trusts can be found in every state. There are more than 1,700 of them, some over 100 years old. Land trusts have protected over 47 million acres - an area over twice the size of all the national parks in the contiguous United States. This is an increase of about 10 million acres since 2005, and 23 million acres since 2000. Land trusts are mostly local organizations, although there is a national parent organization, the Land Trust Alliance, which provides professional support. In every case, land trusts work only with willing land owners, and support land issues that are important to their own communities. Six local land trusts serve Alaska, including the Interior Alaska Land Trust, based in Fairbanks.

A Changing Community

Continuing development throughout the community brings attention to land use issues. The pace of building, though not as frantic as during pipeline days, is beginning to turn the

last remaining undeveloped areas into small pockets, and cutting up trails and greenways that people thought were protected.

Private land that people acquired 30 or more years ago has increased tremendously in value. Often these are large parcels, and their owners find their heirs could be required to sell some of the land just to pay inheritance taxes. In these cases, the Interior Alaska Land Trust can hold an easement on the land, reducing its estate tax value, protecting open space, or connecting greenways and trails and allowing the property to stay intact.

Our Work in Interior Alaska

The Interior Alaska Land Trust works with private landowners, allowing land to stay in private ownership and management, while protecting conservation values for the public. Our most common approach is to use a conservation easement, a voluntary contract between the landowner and the land trust that runs in perpetuity along with the deed. Each conservation easement is tailored to meet the needs of the landowner and the character of the land. The landowner gives up certain rights to the land, to preserve its conservation values. IALT takes on the responsibility of monitoring the conservation easement, ensuring that the property's

conservation values are preserved. The partnership between the land trust and the property owner benefits the whole community.



IALT members pose near a new sign on the Blueberry Preserves property along Ballaine Road during a fall Outreach Hike. Creating and placing the sign (and two others at the Peat Ponds) was a cooperative project with Arctic Audubon, the Borough Parks and Recreation, and IALT members Frank Keim (stewardship coordinator), Tom Paragi, and Sam Dashevsky.

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MESSAGE FROM THE
PRESIDENT

As winter cycles around again, I often find myself looking for ways to survive the frigid cold and dark days. Though the pace of life in Interior Alaska may not be any slower than in other places, we are afforded unique outdoor experiences and

intimate opportunities to engage in our community. This could not have been expressed in a better way than at the Art Expo held recently in the Museum of the North on the university campus. Greeted by neighbors and friends who are artists in the community, their expressions of the natural beauty of the north reminded me of all that I love and appreciate in this part of the world.

Living in a community with so many people that derive great peace and enjoyment from an intimate connection to the natural world offers the Interior Alaska Land Trust an opportunity to expand its membership. In this newsletter, you'll read about some of the projects IALT is working on or has accomplished and ways you can join in our efforts to continue this work of conservation. Having gratitude towards the place and the people with whom I share Alaska, I challenge each of you to do what you can to get out and experience our protected places and give back in a way that is meaningful to you.

Warmly,

Roselynn Ressa

IALT President

Chena Flats Greenbelt Project Update

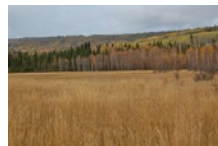
New Phase of Project

The Chena Flats Greenbelt concept is now a reality. The Greenbelt is now 500 acres of public land, mostly owned by the Fairbanks North Star Borough, and IALT has moved beyond its land acquisition phase. We are not currently seeking any new lands, as most of the larger parcels have been acquired and there are connections (though sometimes thin) nearly all the way from the Tanana Wayside on Chena Pump Road to Geist Road. While we would welcome new acquisitions of key lands, our focus is now on clarifying trails and reducing land ownership conflicts. The most recent acquisitions added three large parcels totaling 134 acres in the southern part of the Greenbelt at the very end of Pickering Drive. You may have fun exploring these this winter.



Parking Lot on Pickering Drive, coming soon...

For those of you who do not live near the Chena Flats Greenbelt, parking and access can be a bit confusing. There is currently no



designated parking for the Greenbelt, though that is about to change. IALT, in cooperation with US Fish and

Wildlife Service and the Fairbanks North Star Borough, will be constructing a parking lot on Pickering Drive next summer to improve access to the main part of the Greenbelt. We will keep the lot small; it should fit about 2-3 cars. While

we have mixed feelings about disturbing the land, we feel that having a designated parking place will keep everyone safe and minimize conflicts by avoiding trespass issues. We will also clarify property ownership by increasing IALT signage near property boundaries so everyone can feel comfortable knowing they are recreating on public property and not accidentally tramping through someone else's backyard.

Cripple Creek

A small tributary of the Chena River flows through the Land Trust property on Chena Pump Road between Old Chena Ridge Road (near the transfer station) and new Chena Ridge Road. In the 1930s, a ditch was dug alongside Cripple Creek, creating a straight run from Ester to the Chena River. Cripple Creek was diverted into the ditch so that mining sediments could be flushed out into the Chena without slowing down in the bends of the meandering creek.

The Interior Alaska Land Trust, with funding from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, hired an environmental consulting company to explore the idea of re-routing the creek back into its original channel. Putting the creek back into its natural channel would increase potential salmon rearing habitat and overwintering habitat for grayling. Fieldwork completed this summer showed that it would be relatively easy to put the creek back in its channel on the IALT parcel, though upstream portions of the old creek are too far above the existing ditch channel. A survey of the IALT portion of the natural creek bed is being done to develop a detailed restoration plan. We are still awaiting the final report from the consulting company to decide the best actions to restoring Cripple Creek to a more natural flow and improving fish habitat.

Sally Andersen,

Chena Flats Greenbelt

Project Coordinator

Partnership With the Fairbanks North Star Borough

Photo: Merritt Helfferich

On August 25th, the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) Assembly voted to accept title to twelve of the Chena Flats Greenbelt properties. The Interior Alaska Land Trust will donate the properties to the Borough, and in turn be given a conservation easement on the properties, meaning that it will hold the development rights to the properties. The FNSB will hold the remainder of the property rights.

What this really means is that the private land you may have been walking your dogs on for all these years is now public

property. It means that the \$20 and \$50 dollars you've been donating for the last five or six

We should all congratulate each other and especially the FNSB Parks and Recreation



These are some of the lands which were transferred to the FNSB.

years has gone towards purchasing your favorite place and turning it into a place everyone can walk, freely, legally, and for always.

Department for being forward thinking, cooperative, and supportive of open space in Fairbanks.

In contrast to the first time the Land Trust donated Greenbelt parcels to the Borough (in 2009), this Resolution saw some opposition from the community, in particular, from members of the Interior Conservative Coalition (ICC). The ICC rallied its membership and brought several people to testify against the transfer of the parcels to the Borough.

See Partnership, Page 4.

Partnership, continued from Page 3

The ICC members raised several concerns at the Borough Assembly meeting that are worth addressing: 1) that transferring ownership of the properties to the FNSB would reduce property tax revenue, 2) that the Borough would have future expenses in managing the property, 3) that the Borough shouldn't accept land with restrictions and the wording "conservation values" in the easement restrictions is too vague, 4) the Borough should be selling land to the public for development, not accepting land that will not be developed, and 5) any conservation goals can be met without the Borough accepting the property.

1. The Interior Alaska Land Trust has a practice of paying full property taxes on the properties that it owns, rather than applying for a property tax exemption. So accepting the donation of these properties to the Borough did reduce next year's property tax revenues. However, a) the Greenbelt will likely increase adjacent property values so that the net effect over the long run will be an increase in overall tax valuation, b) the Land Trust acquired these properties with an understanding that the Borough was interested in them as part of a local passive park. If the Borough had not accepted the donation, the Land Trust could not afford to continue to pay full property taxes, and would apply for the tax exemption.

2. Property management does entail expenses, so acceptance of the property would increase future Borough expenses. However, the Land Trust is working with the Parks and Recreation Department and local residents to minimize Borough expenses by creating a local user's group of people who will monitor and provide any management that the Park will need. A model for this type of "passive park" can be found in the Pearl Creek Park, adjacent to Pearl Creek School (between Auburn and Ballaine Road). This land was donated to the Borough, and has been managed by the neighborhood for about 40 years. Pearl Creek Park has trails

that are used year-round by neighbors, other Borough residents, and Pearl Creek School children and their families. Locals maintain the trails year-round and set ski trails in the winter. The Pearl Creek School ski program uses the trails. Trail use conflicts have been dealt with locally, with signs and fences, at no expense to the Borough. The user's group has created trail maps and set up a kiosk with trail information at the Pearl Creek School trail head, again at no expense to the Borough. In the case of the Chena Flats Greenbelt, the Land Trust has printed and posted trail signs, and is working on a trails plan for the property. As mentioned above, the increased tax revenues from higher valuation of the surrounding properties likely more than offset any additional expense to the Borough.

3. The Interior Alaska Land Trust is required by its Articles of Incorporation, and by the sources of funding used to acquire the property, to ensure that the property will remain undeveloped. The reason the Borough Park Department is interested in accepting the donation of the property is for its undeveloped values, as the last potential park area between two rapidly infilling areas of privately held land – the south-facing side of Chena Ridge and both sides of Chena Pump Road. The wording of the proposed easement was drafted by the Borough Legal Department to be as flexible as possible for the Borough in the future, while still protecting the underlying wetland, wildlife habitat, green space, and recreational values for which the property was originally purchased. Rather than enumerating these values specifically, which might restrict future management options, the more general "conservation values" was used to clearly designate intent.

4. The Borough is selling land, but has also taken on the responsibility of providing park areas within reach of most neighborhoods to maintain the quality of life that attracts people to Fairbanks and keeps them here. A mix of residential, industrial, commercial and recreational

lands are required for a healthy community. The Interior Alaska Land Trust, by responding to local citizens' concerns, can help identify areas where prized recreational land that people have been using for years turns out to be privately owned. By working with private landowners, the Land Trust can try to identify and implement a land management option that best meets the community's needs. In this regard, the Land Trust plays a valuable role in reducing conflicts that would otherwise end up before the Borough Assembly, Planning Commission and Platting Board.

5. The conservation goals for the properties could be met if the Borough did not accept the donation. However, the management of the properties, to the benefit of the Borough residents, would be much more difficult if the some of the Chena Flats Greenbelt were owned by the Borough and some owned by the Land Trust. The Borough Parks Department has professional staff experienced in managing land for public parks. The property will be best managed by having the land owned by the Borough, overseen by the professionals of the Parks Department, with day-to day management provided by the local neighborhood users' group. The Interior Alaska Land Trust, through holding a conservation easement on the property, will continue to be active in supporting the Borough and the neighborhood in the management and use of this passive park.

*-- Sally Andersen and
Martha Raynolds*



Photo: Merritt Helffreich



Photo: Town of Chena, circa 1905. Courtesy of UAF Archives

A Town Lost in History

Locating Landmarks of the Historic Chena Town Site Using Ground-Penetrating Radar

The town of Chena, once poised to develop as the metropolitan and transportation hub of the Tanana River Valley, precipitously faded into memory following a brief period of prosperity at the beginning of the twentieth century. Trade ascending the Tanana River aboard sternwheelers, and later traveling inland on the Tanana Valley Railroad - which had its Southern terminus in Chena - brought the town life. The growth of Fairbanks into the regional center eclipsed Chena's purpose, resulting in Chena's disappearance. Today, memory of Chena lives on confined to the dusty spaces of archived newspaper articles and in the imagination of historians. However, recent explorations into the history of the town and attempts to pinpoint the location of significant features from its subterranean ruins have opened an exciting new possibility to the town of Chena: the chance to achieve historical immortality.

In a distant time and familiar space, the name of Chena was widely known in its own right as the name of the town situated on the banks of the Tanana River. A supply center for early prospectors exploring the Interior river gravels for gold deposits, Chena was located on the site of modern-day Tanana Wayside, a Fairbanks North Star Borough parkland that sits near the end of Chena Pump Road, as the road starts to climb the bluffs leading up to Rosie Creek Road.

Years have brought tons of glacial silt down the mighty Tanana River which intermittently eroded and inundated the town of Chena. It is somewhat of a miracle that anything of the townsite has survived to the present day, considering its location on one of the Interior's most dynamic rivers. Similarly, high population turnover, dynamic political and social changes throughout the twentieth century and the passing of several generations of pioneers and settlers have eroded the memory of Chena.

This article tells the story of Chena, the town which prospered in proximity to Fairbanks for a few brief years, as well as the story of a group of modern scientists who have gone in search of the remains of Chena. Using the technology of Ground-Penetrating Radar, a local group of Fairbanks geologists, surveyors, archeologists, historians, and other assorted enthusiasts are attempting to locate old building foundations and to connect these findings to archival evidence of the town, including newspaper articles, maps and other documents. The Ground-Penetrating Radar technology being employed allows the researchers to scan through many layers of earth at once, to a depth of up to fifteen meters below the surface in areas where dry soils allow electromagnetic radiation employed by the device to achieve maximum penetration. The techniques employed by the

GPR are non-invasive and non-destructive; they allow researchers to "see" objects deep beneath the surface without ever picking up a shovel or pick. The electromagnetic frequencies employed are in the microwave band of the radio wave spectrum, and not harmful to human health.

As to why the reader finds this article in an issue of the Interior Alaska Land Trust newsletter, the answer is simple: parts of the original Chena town site are located on properties conserved through the Chena Flats Greenbelt Project. Local landowners and neighbors working with the Interior Alaska Land Trust conceived the idea of a "greenbelt" of undeveloped wetlands stretching below the rapidly developing subdivisions along Chena Ridge. The Chena Flats Greenbelt Project is currently shepherded by the Interior Alaska Land Trust. The Greenbelt properties stretch from the old Cripple Creek bed near Woodriver Elementary School to the former Hopkinsville region near the end of Chena Pump Road.

Chena was of great importance to the growth and development of Fairbanks one hundred years ago; one hundred years is not such a very long time for history to be written and then forgotten.

Writing this piece would have been impossible, if not for the work of the scholars who have gone before. Specific credit is due to Nicholats Deely, railroad historian, for his excellent history Tanana Valley Railroad: The Gold Dust Line (1996), which provide readers with an excellent historical chronology of the development of railroad and community in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Thanks are also due to Martin Gutoski of the FNSB for inviting the author to take part in his GPR project searching for the structures of the original Chena townsite, as well as for sharing his expertise and collection of documents pertaining to the settlement.

The Interior Alaska Land Trust believes that land stewardship should be tailored to the unique characteristics of individual locations and that developing a nuanced concept of the evolution of land use and community is an important part of being responsible land stewards.

The Rise and Fall of Chena

The names of E.T. Barnette, Judge James Wickersham and the steamship *Lavelle Young* are well known in connection with the founding of Fairbanks. Less well known is the role which the town of Chena played in Fairbanks' history, yet this chapter also deserves remembering. Commonly known are Barnette's ill-fated journey upriver, in search of a passage to Tanacross to construct a trading post. Shallow water forcing the hand of the sternwheeler captain, Barnette was deposited on the banks of the Chena River with a small mountain of supplies. The next year, in 1902, Felix Pedro discovered gold in the nearby hills, and, as word spread, hopeful prospectors began to flock to the area. In the aftermath following the discovery, Barnette made a savvy pact with Judge Wickersham; in exchange for Barnette naming his bustling trading post in honor of Indiana Senator Charles Fairbanks, Wickersham agreed to smooth the way to Fairbanks' ascension as the metropolitan center of Interior Alaska, transferring the courts and other federal services to Fairbanks.

Chena was founded in 1902 by George Belt and Nathan Hendricks, in the name of the North American Transportation and Trading Company. Belt and Hendricks had tried in 1901 to set up a trading post on the opposite bank of the Tanana River, however the discovery of gold had triggered a rush of prospectors heading up the Chena River and into the hills to the North. Belt and Hendricks, observing this, decided to move their supply point across the river to a point on the Tanana River downstream from the outlet of the Chena River. The location of this trading post, in terms of the modern geography of Fairbanks, is roughly centered at today's Tanana Wayside boat launch near the end of Chena Pump Road in Fairbanks. Belt and Hendricks had a strong belief that their trading post would ultimately prove to be a better location than Barnette's cache, due to the fluctuating water levels on the Chena River that made steamboat access to the upriver trading post uncertain. Additionally, construction of the Washington-Alaska Military Cable and Telegraph System (WAMCATS) was underway, including a secondary telegraph line traveling along the Tanana River

through the proposed site of their new trading post.

Chena quickly became a transportation hub for prospectors heading to the hills near Fairbanks. Reliable river access in Chena brought an influx of people and the town quickly began to grow. In 1903, Chena counted only twenty-three residents. The early settlement was plagued by property disputes, due to the haphazard manner in which claims were staked and cabins were built. New claims often violated previous owners' rights, and food was in short supply in the growing town. During the first few winters, the residents survived almost entirely off wild game. However, the town's growth after 1903 was rapid, as settlers quickly got a foothold.

By the summer of 1904, the Interior Alaska gold rush was booming. Steamships brought boatloads of miners experienced in techniques of dredging out gold from beneath layers of frozen earth. Many of these miners came from the gold rushes in the Klondike and Nome. Mining in the Tanana Valley was machinery-intensive, relying on processes of thawing and digging which required a surplus of energy to power machinery such as hoists and steam boilers. Immense quantities of wood and water were required to fuel this machinery. A system of crude roads developed, radiating out from Chena and Fairbanks to allow the conveyance of supplies and machinery out to the claims and mines. It soon became obvious that moving heavy equipment over boggy ground using teams of horses was difficult, to the point of limiting growth in the region. Even the advent of the automobile did not solve the miners' problems, as the solid rubber tires would freeze through in winter, limiting traction. In summer, the roads would dissolve into a mess of mud and bog that should be familiar to any resident of

Fairbanks, past or present.

Two new arrivals to Fairbanks, Falcon Joslin and his friend Martin Harrais, decided to solve this transportation problem by building a railroad to carry cargo out to the mining claims on the creeks North of Fox. Joslin drew on his prior experience building a narrow-gauge railway in the Yukon to plan and construct the Tanana Valley Railway, which would eventually stretch from Chena out to Chatanika.

Joslin and Harrais were confident that a railway would provide the best answer to the transportation challenges of the area and arrived with an already-formed intent to build a railway. Joslin even brought with him Porter 0-4-0 Saddle tank from his previous railway in the Yukon. Joslin's locomotive was shipped to Chena on a sternwheeler. Today, the locomotive designated Engine No. 1 on the Tanana Valley Railway does light duty in the center of Fairbanks, providing entertainment and a connection to Fairbanks' past as part of a working passenger train for guests at the well-known Fairbanks attraction of Pioneer Park.

During the fall and winter of 1903, Martin Harrais, Falcon Joslin and Joslin's brother, John, worked overtime to plan a route for the new railway, surveying a tract would run from Chena to the Northeast of Fairbanks and through the Goldstream Valley towards Fox, and then continuing out to the creek mining claims. Falcon Joslin took the results of the survey to London, England, where he secured financial backing for the project from Close Brother and Company, to the tune of \$400,000. During the time it took for Falcon to make the journey to London and back, Harrais turned his attention to the development of the town of Chena. Investing



The town of Chena, circa 1905. Image taken from the heights of the bluff leading to today's Rosie Creek Road. Image courtesy of the UAF Archives.

Investing a great deal of his personal resources in the town and anticipating the needs of future miners and settlers to the area, Harrais built a sawmill using parts he scrounged from abandoned sternwheelers. He built the Chena Light and Power Company, and soon streets were laid out in a grid-pattern. The streets of Chena bore the names of battleships from the Spanish-American War. Soon Chena could boast of a public school system, as well as a telephone system, hospital, jail, five hundred seat public lecture hall, several newspapers, as well as a police and fire department. By the years 1904-1905, the population had increased to number in excess of four hundred and fifty people.

With the return of Falcon Joslin from London, work on the railway commenced. The master-plan Joslin envisioned placed Chena at the center of a hub of rail lines, stretching out to far-flung communities, including Nome, Rampart and Haines.

Two hundred workers labored on the construction of the railway. They encountered great difficulties in laying track over the permafrost-thick ground near Fairbanks, and experimented with different techniques for shoring up the tracks. They were never completely successful, as high costs for maintenance and repair were a consistent issue that effected the long-term profitability of the railway.

By 1905, the towns of Chena and Fairbanks were connected by rail, and four trains each day were transporting goods and passengers. The line to Fairbanks was intended as a spur line on the main railway; however, eventually traffic on the line to Fairbanks would exceed traffic on the line to Chena and was effectively considered the main line. Construction on the railway to the Northeast of Fairbanks through the town of Happy and up the Goldstream Valley to Fox continued throughout the summer of 1905, finally in August connecting the towns of Fox and Gilmore to Chena and Fairbanks by rail. In 1907, the connection further North to Chatanika was completed.

In this time period, the population of Fairbanks began to swell. By 1907 there were approximately five thousand people living in Fairbanks, and an additional five thousand in the creeks and valleys surrounding the city. In contrast, Chena had remained a company town. Despite the infrastructure that Martin Harrais had sponsored, and the fact that in 1905 Chena and Fairbanks populations had been neck to neck in terms of size, after 1906, Chena did not keep up with the growth of Fairbanks. The town retained some

importance due to the railroad offices and its busy dock, however eventually most of the traffic shifted to the Fairbanks station, and the Chena line began to fall into decline. The Tanana Valley Railway did not much outlive the first boom years of the gold rush, and had its peak years of productivity during 1905 – 1910. During the years of 1911 – 1917, the railway entered a long period of decline. It was this stagnation of the railway that sealed Chena's fate. By 1916, the structures in Chena were being dismantled. Many of the buildings from Chena were shipped downriver to Nenana, which was booming with the construction of the Alaska Railroad and Chena ceased to exist.

In Search of the Past

During the next hundred years' time, Fairbanks grew and developed into the town as we know it today. World War II brought lend-lease pilots and the Alaska Highway, and the post-war years led to a cold war military buildup and Pipeline boom. The population of Fairbanks expanded and, today, it is difficult to imagine a time when there were no roads leading out into the Goldstream Valley or when a whole town independent of Fairbanks existed at the Tanana Wayside. Progress and the passing years layered buildings, infrastructure, and history over the landscape of the Tanana Valley.

The remains of old Chena are not invisible to the naked eye, however, nor has the town site lost its importance to modern residents of the Fairbanks area as a population recreation site and access point to the Tanana River. The inlet on the Tanana River where sternwheelers were unloaded is today used for launching boats for recreation and transportation. A need for affordable housing during the Pipeline years spurred the construction of a bevy of rental cabins during the 1970s, roughly centered on the West end section of the old Chena townsite. This area known as Hopkinsville, was for several decades home to students and newcomers to Fairbanks. In 1975, an attempt was made to reconstitute the town of Chena around the population center provided by the Hopkinsville cabins, however the proposition was defeated by nearby property owners, who were hesitant to pay taxes to a reconstituted Chena city government.

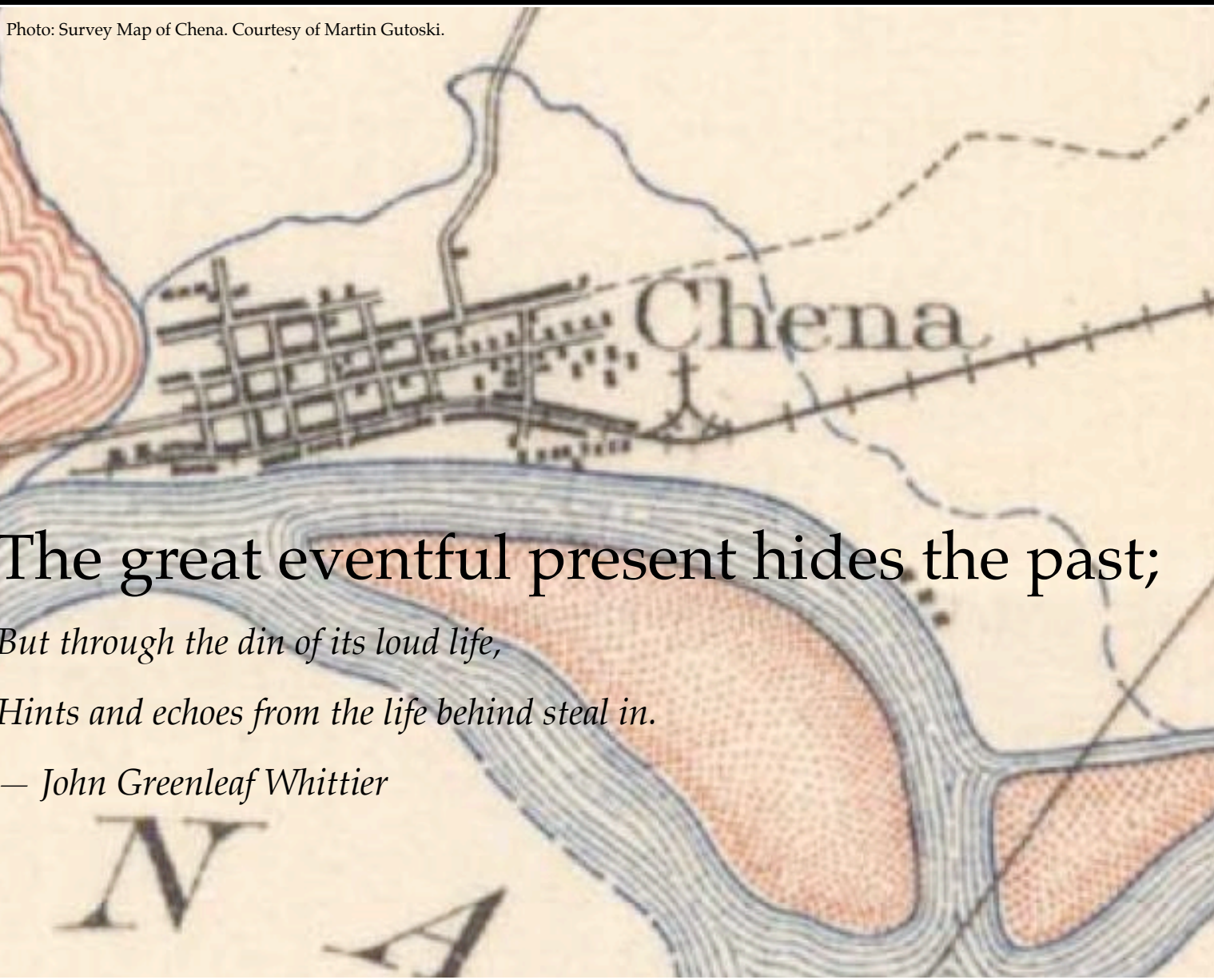
In recent years, efforts have sought to explore and preserve the remains of Chena. In 2006, an assessment performed by the State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) found collapsed foundations throughout Tanana Wayside and the surrounding properties. The area is prime for serious archaeological work,

digging that could result in discovery of artifacts and remains that would provide insight into the time period.

Recent months have brought another exciting chapter in the efforts to uncover the past at Chena and breathe new life into the handiwork of Harrais, Joslin and scores of others. A team of researchers, led by Martin Gutoski of the Fairbanks North Star Borough and Pete Bowers of Northern Land Use Research (NLUR) has begun using Ground-Penetrating Radar technology, combined with a thorough survey of archival documents from the early town to attempt to pinpoint the locations of collapsed foundations and landmarks throughout the community. The modern Fairbanksans involved in this project are doing so in a volunteer capacity, and the success of their work so far has been largely due to the enthusiasm Gutoski and Bowers have for finding the lost buildings of Chena. NLUR has provided the Ground-Penetrating Radar equipment and expertise of their technicians, while gaining valuable experience on the project. NLUR makes use of this technology in their contract work to perform archaeological impact assessments for permitting and research. Trained to pick up significant objects beneath the earth, the GRP techs slowly slide the equipment across the ground in a special wheeled basket designed for the purpose. Gutoski does the initial surveying to set up the grid, and other specialists take way-points using GPS to mark the measurements.

The main archival tools the researchers are relying on are early maps of Chena. Most notable of these maps is one from 1905, known as the Sanbourne map, which shows the layout of streets and locations of buildings in Chena. Originally, this map was made for the purpose of assessing property values and determine fire insurance rates in the town. The map has some inherent inaccuracies in terms of the inconsistent scale of the map and difficulty we have determining today how much of the riverbank has eroded in the past hundred years. The current primary goal Gutoski and Bowers have in their project is to find a significant identifiable feature from Chena using the GPR that is also shown on this historic map. A discovery like this would allow researchers to extrapolate the location of other key structures from the town site, helping archaeologists to determine the best locations for excavation and other research. Additional sources of information guiding the project include old black-and-white photographs of Chena from the beginning of the twentieth century, which have been preserved in the UAF archives.

Photo: Survey Map of Chena. Courtesy of Martin Gutoski.



The great eventful present hides the past;
But through the din of its loud life,
Hints and echoes from the life behind steal in.

— John Greenleaf Whittier

The point from the original townsite that can be firmly located on modern maps is a meander corner from the original survey for the plot of land assigned to Chena. The office for the WAMCATS Telegraph Office was tied down to this corner, as was the survey for the Tanana Valley Railway. Unfortunately, the official 1907 survey map done for the boundaries of Chena is essentially useless, due to the conflicting and haphazard nature of claims in the town. A later Federal Survey was no more successful and ended up being voided, because a good plat on the streets could not be located.

Additionally, modern day researchers face circumstantial difficulties due to development in

the area in the intervening years. During construction of Chena Pump Road itself, a large swathe of the original town site was bulldozed. The Tanana River has made an impact as well; a section of Chena which included the saw mill built by Harrais has almost certainly been completely washed away by erosion. In Gutoski's opinion, this was potentially one of the most interesting and complex structures of the town site, and a real loss to historical investigators.

So far, this project is still in the beginning stages, but Gutoski and Bowers have high hopes for what may be discovered in the coming months and years. Already, their work has turned up several foundations, as well as brought

together a community of specialists, including Jim Whitney, Archaeology Collection Manager at the UAF Museum of the North, and Dan Gullickson, of the organization *Friends of the Tanana Valley Railroad*, and one of the people instrumental in the restoration of the original Engine No. 1. GIS techs have also been instrumental in the work completed so far. The eager collaborations and enthusiasm for the project that have already appeared throughout Fairbanks for the project, is itself evidence for the importance the town of Chena continues to hold for residents to the Fairbanks area.

— Riley Witte, Outreach Coordinator

Please consider becoming a member or donating to the Interior Alaska Land Trust. You tax-deductible contributions help us qualify for grants, leveraging your dollars. You can choose to donate to a specific project, such as the Chena Flats Greenbelt.

A thin layer of ice coats the Peat Ponds along Goldstream Road late in the Fall season



Photo: Martha Raynolds

Financial Report

In 2010, the Interior Alaska Land Trust received most of its income from government grants, and used most of this income to acquire properties that have become part of the Chena Flats Greenbelt. Income came from cooperative agreements with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to help accomplish their mission of protecting natural habitat, from the Salcha Soil and Water Conservation District for acquisition of land to mitigate wetland impacts, from a National Wetlands Conservation Act grant, and from an Alaska State Trails

Grant to acquire properties that extended and protected the trails of the Chena Flats Greenbelt. 2010 expenses were spent almost entirely on program services (99 %), with only 1 % spent on management and fundraising.

Martha Raynolds,
Treasurer

Income	
Interest	457
Public Support	11,208
Government Grants	392,142
Non-government Grants	3,000
Membership	1,305
Total Income	408,113
Expense	
Conferences	3,137
Contracts	11,593
Equipment	2,337
Land/Easement Acquisition	328,896
Stewardship	8,731
Operations	5,504
Total Expense	360,198
Net Income	47,915

Welcoming Our New Board Members



Collin Todd grew up in Fairbanks and graduated from West Valley High School in 2005. He earned his Bachelor's degree in Economics at Lewis & Clark in Portland, Oregon. Collin is a candidate for CFP® Certification and currently works for New Outlook Financial providing financial planning and socially responsible investing advice. Collin is an avid fan of the outdoors, and enjoys skiing, biking, canoeing, rock climbing and hunting.



Alex Prichard graduated from the University of Alaska Fairbanks with master's degrees in Wildlife Biology and Statistics. He currently works as a biologist at ABR Inc.—Environmental Research and Services and specializes in large mammal research. Prior to working at ABR Inc., he worked for the University of Alaska Reindeer Research Program for three years. He has lived in Fairbanks for 19 years and enjoys a variety of outdoor sports.

Board of Directors

Roselynn Ressa — President
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