Chilkoot Indian Association

In This Newsletter

Enviromental: Storm Disaster

Transportation: Tlingit Street Signs

Discover Deishu: Bus Fleet Upgrade

Housing: Expanding Local Housing

Culture: Archives & Food Preservation

Chilkoot Indian Association

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Tribal Administrator:

Since the beginning of my work as Tribal Administrator, I have been focused on building a strong Tribal organization focused on rebuilding the Chilkoot Tribes sovereignty through careful program planning, expanding economic opportunities, building Tribal land holdings, expanded cultural activities, protection of Tribal rights, building local and national partnerships, and leveraging what we have to increase the capacity of CIA.

We have restored 9 parcels of land to the Tribe by building strong positive relationships and through leveraging our program funding.

There are three important arms within the larger organization: Government, economic and nonprofit.

Our government is thriving, which allows us the luxury of expanding into for profit and to develop a nonprofit.

Discover Deishu is the for profit arm of our Tribe. With a tourism company, a outdoors store and a restaurant.

We have started work to create a nonprofit. The mission is too preservation and promotion of the Tlingit cultural traditions' of the Chilkoot people.

Every acquisition, every action fits into a larger vision for the Tribes future.

The success of our Tribe is the result of strong Council leadership and a dedicated staff.

Congradulations Harriet!

Harriet Brouillette attended the Alaska Tribal Administrators Association Symposium in Anchorage, where she was honored on April 22, 2026, with the 2025 Tribal Administrator of the Year Award in recognition of her outstanding leadership and dedication to strengthening the tribe.



Culture Department:

Several interviews were conducted with elders from the community and archived. If you know of anyone who you feel should be interviewed or would like to share knowledge with future generation please reach out to CIA.

Work is about to restart after the winter break on the three totem poles being duplicated for the Noow Hit clan house. Construction is also continuing on Noow hit itself.

For the past few months Trygve Bakke has been working on various projects in our 'Media Department'. The overarching goal is digitizing old physical media (documents, letters, videos, voice recording, ect.) onto our Sharepoint drive to keep backed up. This ensures that we have easy access to any and all media that we may need in the future on a database that any of our employees can access. A new project we've recently just started is putting recovered cassette audio files onto a hard drive, with recordings as far back as the 80s. There are well over a hundred cassettes keeping me thoroughly busy. Another project that we are learning is how to digitize VHS tapes. This has proven to be both an interesting and frustrating process. Like most things we deal with, it's a 'work in progress' at the moment as we're still trying to work out all the nuts and bolts to this process. In the world of streaming, where any movie or tv show is seemingly at the palm of your hand, this is a nice change of pace. The ultimate goal of this, similar to the cassette process, is to digitize old recordings and upload them to our archive. We're hoping to make serious headway on this endeavor in the coming weeks as we gather all the parts we need to make it happen. These have been two of the main projects that we've been working on as of lately.



In November 2025, we had the opportunity to take part in a seal harvest in partnership with the University of Alaska Southeast along with the help of Tim Ackerman and Sonny Williams to support one of our young Tribal members in their secondary education. The seal was harvested at the mouth of the Chilkoot River, where the seal was brought in and prepared for butchering. We then moved to a nearby stream to begin processing. There, the seal was cleaned and gutted and carefully skinned. The fat was set aside for later use and processing, honoring the importance of using every part of the animal. The meat was preserved through pressure cooking so it could be stored and shared with others. This harvest was not only about gathering food, but also about learning, teaching, and keeping our traditions strong through hands-on experience. We were grateful to be able to share the finished meat with our community during our annual Holiday open house. It was a meaningful way to bring people together and continue the cycle of sharing that is so important to sustain our way of life.





Culture Department Continued:

We harvested 2 dzísk'w (moose) road kills, as well as collaborating with Sealaska Heritage Institute to harvest a tsaa (seal) During the Holiday party we gave away Smoked Coho and Wild Dog gaat (Sockeye) fresh pack tsaa, l'ook, téel', gaat, and cháatl (halibut) along with blueberry jam and apple butter. Ax toowú sigóo, I am so happy, food champions have been a busy bunch. From the road kills we were able to distribute roasts, backstrap, heart, and liver to our elders as well as some burger. The first batch of burger was made locally but the next batch as well as sausage was made by our group. January thru April we have processed seal, moose, made salmon strips, more apple butter, dandelion oil for salve, spruce tips for jelly, blueberry balsamic dressing, compote, and jam. Rhubarb was made into jelly as well as pie filling, some was combined with strawberries for jam. Our smoked saak (hooligan) was rolled into sushi. We even tried pickling some gaat. We were gifted some jánwu (mountain goat) which we jarred with Jamaican spices for curry. As we look towards spring, saak oil, devils club, dandelions, red ribbon seaweed, and spruce tips. We are asking if you have any extra jars for processing and would like to donate to our traditional food program. Please let us know.

axtoowúsigóo= I amsohappy



Ouryoungestfood championhelpingprocess dzísk'w, Tyr McClellan, 3 years old.



Tribal Citizen Jessie Morgan taught copper carving the 2026 Southeast Art Festival. Where the students creations were displayed for the publics view on April 27th. She recently completed our artist apprenticeship program. Thank you Jessie!





Krill Basket Weaving with Tribal Citizen Rhonda Degtoff



Smoked Black Cod



Jarred Smoked Sockeye



James Hart, Robert Martin, and TJ Young working ontotem polesforNoowHit

Environmental Department:

On April 9, celebratory high fives were exchanged in the office of CIA Housing Director Aliza Tompkins. She had just received a notice of award for an Indian Community Development Block Grant from the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Tompkins applied for the block grant this February in order to replace the greenhouse in the CIA subdivision which was crushed under heavy snow load on January 6. This grant was awarded through HUD's Imminent Threat Program. The $183,774 grant will allow the CIA construction crew to build a more durable, accessible and versatile structure on the 30' x 48' footprint where the previous greenhouse once stood. That greenhouse, which had been utilized over the last few years to cultivate vegetables for the CIA's Tribal Citizens, had an aluminum frame with a clear plastic cover and a gravel floor. The new and improved greenhouse facility was designed by CIA construction foreman Zac Jacobs. It will sit on a concrete slab and will have a wooden frame and hard polycarbonate siding.



The CIA hoop house after this winter's Storm Disaster

The structure will include gutters and a rain catchment system and mobile garden boxes."It was a bummer to see that old greenhouse go down," said Liam Wirak Cassidy, who worked with Taylor Cowan to disassemble the crumpled wreckage. "I'm glad no one got hurt. We knew as soon as it happened that we needed to rebuild so that we could keep growing food over there and I'm extremely grateful that Aliza figured out a way to make that happen." With the rebuild slated for this summer, CIA staff plans to utilize other spaces to cultivate vegetables for Tribal food security this year, including the garden boxes at the CIA office building and the area adjacent to the future greenhouse. News of the funding windfall reached the CIA office the day after the staff had planted the first vegetable seeds of the season, and the faint scent of springtime lingered in the air.





Polley saved the seeds from her jack-o-lantern last fall, now those seeds have sprouted in the CIA office





Transportation Department:



Spring is in the air, and the Transportation Department is gearing up for a busy and exciting summer season. At the dock, our crew has removed the dock from winter storage and is completing preparations to welcome our first cruise ship in early May. We are pleased to once again host Lindblad Expeditions this season, along with continued service from the fast ferry. Progress continues on the BUILD grant awarded last summer. All required preliminary documents have been completed, and we are now in the final stages of the grant agreement. Once the agreement is signed, we will begin working with an engineering firm to draft project plans. A public comment period will be held during the planning phase, and we will keep the community informed about opportunities to participate and provide input. We are also proud to share the completion of our Tlingit Street sign project. As you travel along Main Street, you will notice new street signs displayed in both Tlingit and English. Our community is the first in Alaska to implement widespread Tlingit street signage, and we are honored to celebrate and promote our language in this visible and lasting way.

As always, our trail system remains a high priority. With snow melting and warmer weather making trails more accessible, we welcome community suggestions regarding areas that may need attention. Our crew will continue addressing hazards to ensure safe and enjoyable use throughout the spring and summer months.

Finally, we would like to provide an update on the CFI grant awarded in 2023. This was a two-phase grant, with the first phase designated for property acquisition. The Tribe successfully acquired the former Delta Western gas station on Haines Highway. However, the second phase of funding has been delayed under the current federal administration and is now moving through the court system, along with several other projects under the NEVI program. We will continue to monitor developments and share updates as they become available





Discover Deishu:



Discover Deishu

The Discover Deishu team is busy preparing for the fast-approaching tourism season. Our first day of operation is scheduled for May 3rd. This will be our second season of ownership as we continue to learn and understand the tourism business. We had a steep learning curve in our first year but are looking forward to refining and growing our program.

Alaska Nature Tours

We are in the process of upgrading our bus fleet in order to stay compliant with Alaska State Park's new commercial use permit stipulations. The primary change centers around Park's limitation of large buses in the Chilkoot Corridor. Our bus fleet solely consisted of buses that are no longer legally permitted in Chilkoot. We will have 5 new 14 passenger buses in our fleet once the upgrade is complete. We are also expanding our relationship with Lindblad Expeditions as we offer new shuttle service for their guests and crew while in port.

Taste of Deishu

We are happy to share that the restaurant will be catering all of our tour lunches this year. We did a test run throughout September last season and are excited to expand to the full tour season this year. We are planning to open for service to the public in late May or early June. We also received our Beerand Wine License and will feature a limited range of beverages.

Alaska Backcountry Outfitter

We are working on bringing in new inventory ahead of the summer season as we transition from a wintertime operation. We are working on finding the balance between operating the business as both our head administration office and retail store. Stay tuned for our summer hours coming soon.

Food Distribution:

The Local Food Program continues to support access to healthy, locally sourced foods for tribal households, and we are pleased to share a brief update.

At this time, the program is serving 54 eligible households, representing 83 community members, through the Chilkoot Indian Association (IRA). All eligible households are currently being served as we continue our work to strengthen food security and support wellness.

We are also excited to share that the Local Food Program is working with SeaShare to expand access to locally sourced seafood, including lingcod, sockeye, and coho. Fish received through this partnership will first be offered to individuals and families enrolled in the food program, ensuring priority access for participants. If additional fish is available after program households have been served, it may then be shared with tribe members.

We are grateful for the continued support of the community and our partners as we work to provide nutritious foods, strengthen local resources, and support the health of tribal members.

Housing Department:

We were recently awarded the Indian Community Development Block Grant – Imminent Threat to replace the CIA Greenhouse in the Chilkoot Subdivision, which was destroyed during the December/January storm. Building on this progress, we have also submitted an application through the Indian Community Development Block Grant program to rehabilitate the Cha'ak Building (614 Main Street), recently purchased by CIA, and renovate it into a childcare facility.

In addition, we have applied through the Indian Housing Block Grant – Competitive program to construct two (2) new fourplexes in the Chilkoot Subdivision, helping to expand local housing opportunities. Meanwhile, the annual Indian Housing Block Grant (NAHASDA) continues to provide essential funding to support and subsidize our eight (8) low-income apartments.

Coming Soon...



The Chilkoot Indian Association is pleased to share that we have received a grant from the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) to purchase computers for students and tribal member households. This funding will help improve access to technology throughout the tribe and support education, and community engagement. We are currently developing a plan for distributing the computers and have limited stock available, we will share more details soon, please stay tuned into our socials for updates.

Congratulations to our Three Graduating Tribal Citizens!

May 19th 2026 at 6:00pm



Ava Graham
(Nu Du Aax)



Colton Combs
(Shúkheen)



Ruby Martin
(K'ootsee)

Haa toowú kligéi i kaax̲

(We're proud of you)

Upcoming Events

Tribal Council and SEARHC Representative Elections - May 14th, 2026 8:00am - 8:00pm

Early Elections opened April 20th

Culture Camp - July 13th - 17th, 2026

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