

Working together with tribes to enhance sovereignty, self-sufficiency, and our Way of Life.

Nunaput umyuallgutkut pinirluteng-llu, Tegganerput qigcikluk pirpakluki-llu, ayagyuaput-llu ciuliqagcimaut yuuyarakun



Alaska Native Leadership Promising to Keep Fighting Following Disappointing Area M Decision **PAGE 4**



Tiger Lee Rural Fire Protection Specialist **PAGE 6**

## Inside



- 2** Natural Resources Update
- 5** Success Stories
- 7** Announcements and Upcoming Events
- 10** Job Openings



## Two Alaska Tribal Organizations Sue the Federal Government to Protect Subsistence Fishing as the Salmon Crisis Intensifies



Tanana  
Chiefs  
Conference



**Anchorage, Alaska – The Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) and Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC), represented by Earthjustice, have filed a lawsuit against the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in U.S. District Court in Alaska, seeking to reexamine groundfish catch limits for the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands.**

AVCP and TCC collectively work on behalf of nearly 100 Tribes and communities in the Yukon-Kuskokwim region.

The lawsuit alleges that when NMFS recently adopted groundfish catch limits for 2023-2024, the agency unlawfully relied on outdated environmental studies and failed to consider monumental ecosystem-wide changes that have occurred in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands ecosystems over the last two decades.

Alaska is facing a historic salmon crisis which is crushing

the people and tribes of Western Alaska. Subsistence fishing in the Yukon and Kuskokwim regions of the state has been severely restricted for over a decade while the pollock trawl fishery continues to catch thousands of Chinook and chum salmon as bycatch each year. Meanwhile, radical ecosystem changes have negatively affected conditions for Chinook and chum salmon rearing in the ocean. The federal government’s current fisheries management decisions prioritize maximizing groundfish catch over protecting the subsistence rights of Alaska Native peoples who are deeply impacted by those decisions.

Despite these sweeping ecosystem changes and their dramatic effects on people in the region who depend on the marine environment, NMFS set groundfish catch limits based on analyses well over a decade old. These rapid and unprecedented ecosystem changes are relevant to fisheries management decisions and defendants cannot make informed decisions based on severely outdated studies.



**AVCP Chief Executive Officer Vivian Korthuis said, “This litigation is intended to hold the government accountable for its lack of action, lack of urgency and lack of understanding that as our environment changes, catastrophic impacts are occurring in our waters. This lawsuit has been brought to protect the subsistence way of life which is critical to the health and well-being of the tribes of the Yukon-Kuskokwim region. The federal government continues its ‘business as usual’ deliberate and ineffective management style as our people suffer and our waters are forever harmed.”**

The Yukon-Kuskokwim region is one of the most cash-poor regions of the state, making the salmon harvest particularly important for food security as well as the continuation of the region’s cultures. Households share salmon with other households and communities to ensure that all community members have enough to eat. Since at least 2007, western Alaska Chinook salmon stocks have been in decline, followed by collapses in chum and coho salmon stocks over the last three years.



**Brian Ridley, Chief/Chairman of Tanana Chiefs Conference said, “NMFS has failed at every turn to truly manage the natural resources they are responsible to protect. NMFS needs to do a supplemental environmental impact study to analyze the fisheries management plan considering today’s changing climate and dramatic salmon declines. The pollock fleet keeps trawling up salmon and no adjustments have been made to the overall management approach – this must be addressed. The government allows the commercial industry to carry on unchanged, while the people who have responsibly cared for our precious natural resources for centuries are harmed.”**

In addition to catastrophic salmon declines, the Bering Sea has experienced warming ocean temperatures, loss of sea ice, shifts in the abundance and distribution of fish species, massive seabird die-offs, decreased nutrient productivity, and a variety of other changes cascading across the ecosystem. Yet fisheries management decisions continue to be based on outdated environmental analyses that do not account for the current environment or the effect fisheries management decisions have on Alaska Native peoples who depend on salmon and other ocean resources to support their ways of life.

**NOW IS THE TIME FOR THE COURT TO HELP PROVIDE RELIEF BOTH TO OUR PEOPLE AND OUR NATURAL RESOURCES.**



## Alaska Native Leadership Promising to Keep Fight Following Disappointing Area M Decision

**Anchorage, Alaska- The Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) leadership, is committed to keeping up the fight and finding real solutions to help end the salmon crisis which is devastating Western Alaska.**

A marathon session of the Alaska State Board of Fisheries ended Sunday following seven days of public testimony and Board deliberation. In the end, The Board's actions do nothing to meaningfully address the salmon crisis. No significant changes to regulations will be made which will allow for more fish to pass through Area M and make their way to rivers and streams.

"This is very disappointing, but we are strong people and we have only just begun to bring this crisis to the attention of people who care about Natives and our subsistence way of life," AVCP Chief Executive Officer Vivian Korthuis says. Korthuis adds,

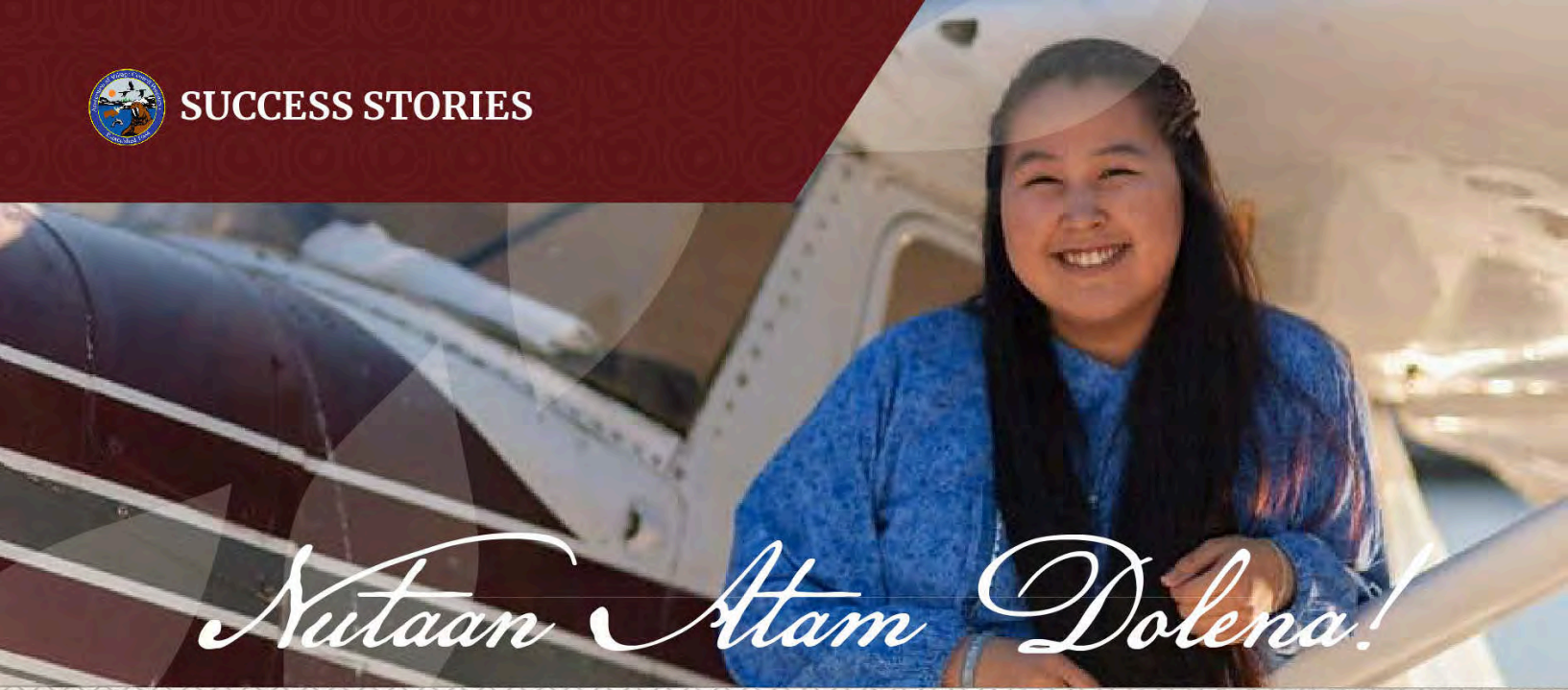
*"Subsistence needs are being ignored, treaties between the United States and Canada are being ignored and the commercial fishing industry is driving the bus."*

AVCP was joined by Natives from across Alaska striving for real change to address the salmon crisis. Proposal 140 which would have reduced excessive harvest of migrating salmon in the Cook Inlet, Bristol Bay and AYK area, failed by a 4 to 3 vote of the Board.

*"They (the Board) did not compromise. Proposal 140 was compromise. We are going to now step back, regroup explore all of our options and go from there," says Korthuis.*

AVCP leaders have already reached out to the office of Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy's to express frustration with the process used by the Board this past week. Korthuis is set to address the salmon crisis later this week with members of the Federal Government.





## Nutaan Atam Dolena!

In the AVCP region, we live off the road system and heavily depend on bush pilots to transport people, everyday goods, and essential freight. The need for pilots will always be present in our region and AVCP is proud to celebrate Dolena Fox's achievement of becoming a licensed Commercial Pilot. Dolena is from Kipnuk and after going to flight school in Palmer, she has since returned back to the region and resides in Bethel where she is a pilot at Grant Aviation.



### This is what Dolena had to share about her experience:

"I was raised in my hometown of Kipnuk. Entering into my high school years, I then left so that I can expand my experiences. I had attended and graduated high school from Mount Edgumbe. After that, I moved to Anchorage in August of 2020, to pursue my Pilot License from Blue River Aviation located in Palmer. I obtained all my licenses in 2021 from PPL-Commercial, multi, and flight instructor, and did a bit of training with Great Circle LLC out in Merrill. After earning all my licenses, I worked as a flight instructor in Palmer for roughly four months. I knew from a young age I wanted to become a pilot and thought that it would be so cool to return to Bethel to serve and to fly locals in surrounding villages. I am hoping that if they see me, they can realize that there are no limitations to our people, despite the limited resources we get in our communities pertaining to opportunities.

I currently work as a Commercial Pilot for Grant Aviation and am based in Bethel, flying the 207. This upcoming May will be my one year anniversary flying for Grant Aviation.



*"Do not give up. Work hard and pursue your goals. it is the most rewarding when you get to return home and share your success and serve your people."*

**ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BECOMING A PILOT AND NEED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE? LEARN MORE ABOUT AVCP'S SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES HERE:**

[WWW.AVCP.ORG/SCHOLARSHIPS/](http://WWW.AVCP.ORG/SCHOLARSHIPS/)



Last month, VPSO Tiger Lee from Kwethluk was **one of thirteen Village Public Safety Officers (VPSOs)** who participated in a 13-day Rural Fire Protection Specialist (RFPS) training held at the Department of Public Safety Training Academy in Sitka.

**HELP US CONGRATULATE TIGER ON SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING THE TRAINING AND THANK HIM FOR HIS COMMITMENT IN KEEPING OUR RURAL COMMUNITIES SAFE.**



*Nutaan Atam  
Tiger Lee!*



## CHECKOUT OUR NEW MMIP-YK WEBSITE!

### Help Stop the Violence Against Indigenous People.

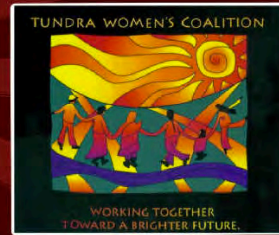


*Visit the MMIP website & Download the MMIP Service Delivery Guide to help recover from and prevent MMIP in your community.*

**WWW.MMIP-YK.ORG**



# 2023 MMIP MARCH FOR JUSTICE



**May 5th 12:15 PM**

**Bethel, AK AVCP Family Services Center**

**Route: Starting at AVCP Family Services Center and ending at Joe Lomack Building. Transportation shuttle provided**

**This event is being hosted by AVCP in partnership with Tundra Women's Coalition.**

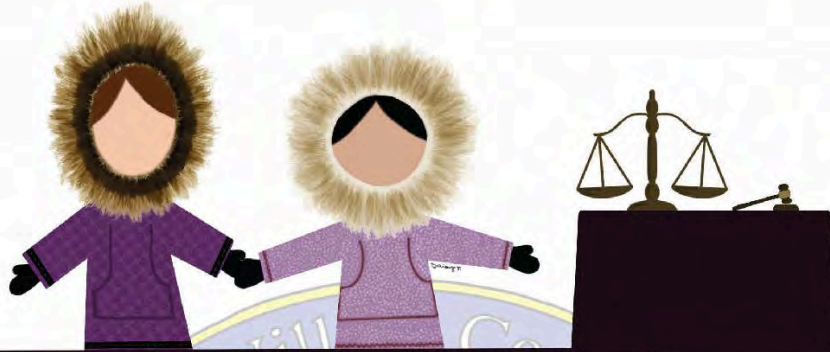
**Please consider donating to TWC - [tundrapeace.networkforgood.com](https://tundrapeace.networkforgood.com)**

**Wear red to show support and raise awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous People.**

**Runners are welcome!  
No registration necessary.**

**For more information, email [mmip@avcp.org](mailto:mmip@avcp.org) or visit [mmip-yk.org](http://mmip-yk.org)**





**Tribal Justice and Tribal Services will be hosting Q&A webinars. Please see dates below:**

**Tribal Justice:**      **Tribal Services:**

- March 15 - *Tribal Councils acting as Tribal Courts*
- April 12 - *Cultural Adoptions & Vital Statistics*
- May 10 - *Code & Ordinances*
- October 18 - *Banishment*
- November 08 - *Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA)*
- May 17 - *AVCP Hiring & Interview Process*
- June 07 - *Understanding Chain of Command*
- July 19 - *Conflict Resolution & AVCP Reprimand Process*

# 2023

Each webinar will be from 2PM-3:30PM. If you have any questions please contact Daisy Thompson at 907-543-7473 or at [dthompson@avcp.org](mailto:dthompson@avcp.org)



# SUMMER YOUTH Internship June 5 - 16, 2023

The Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) is accepting applicants for a 2-week paid summer internship for students aged 14-17, preference given to Alaska Native students.

**You will get to:** Learn how Tribes and Tribal Organizations operate, learn how AVCP works to uplift Tribes, families, subsistence resources, our way of life AND earn money while helping your community members.

If you're interested in applying, please contact Human Resources at [hr@avcp.org](mailto:hr@avcp.org) or call us at (907) 543-7300.





# WE'RE HIRING!

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## Employment

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**Job Announcements Under the provisions of P.L. 93-638 qualified Indians/Alaska Natives are provided preference in filling vacancies.**

To apply submit your completed AVCP application to AVCP, Pouch 219 Bethel, AK, 99559. Applications are only accepted for current vacancies. Please submit an application for each vacancy you wish to be considered for.

\* PER PUBLIC LAW 101-630 (INDIAN CHILD PROTECTION & FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION ACT) ANYONE APPLYING FOR THESE POSITIONS MUST SUBMIT TO A CHARACTER BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION, FINGERPRINT PROCESS & COMPLETE A COMPLIANCE APPLICATION.

PER PUBLIC LAW 93-638 (INDIAN SELF DETERMINATION & EDUCATION ASSISTANCE ACT) QUALIFIED ALASKA NATIVES/AMERICAN INDIANS ARE GIVEN PREFERENCE.

For more information regarding applications call 543-7350 or 1-800-478-3521.

Please Contact the Employment Specialist to check the status of the positions. For all complete job descriptions, contact us at 307-543-7350.

Keywords Location

Remote positions only

Search Jobs

Full Time  Temporary

|  |  |                       |           |
|--|--|-----------------------|-----------|
|  | <b>Summer Youth Intern</b><br>Closing Date: April 30, 2023   | Bethel, Alaska        | Temporary |
|  | <b>**Teacher</b><br>Salary: \$36,548.05 - \$57,206.71   Closing Date: April 30, 2023               | Kotlik, Alaska        | Full Time |
|  | <b>**Headstart Maintenance</b><br>Salary: \$34,869.09 - \$54,481.43   Closing Date: April 30, 2023 | Bethel, Kotlik Alaska | Full Time |
|  | <b>Accounts Payable Specialist</b><br>Salary: \$48,981 - \$73,471   Closing Date: April 30, 2023   | Bethel, Alaska        | Full Time |

To View All Current Job Openings  
Please Visit Our Website at

[WWW.AVCP.ORG/CAREERS/](http://WWW.AVCP.ORG/CAREERS/)