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Notes: Wind and Animals in the background of the first 57 seconds of the interview. This is a news report recording in historical sites in the Minto flats. Two interviews for this recording

Summary:

00:13

Man: Chinook it's a warm wind it's a changing wind.

00:21

Man: Chinook a program for and about Alaska Natives

00: 29

Man: Chinook Echo's is looking back into Native heritage.

Women: How thing are and how they got that way.

00:39

Man: Chinook patters is information.

Women: Issues that affect the patterns of Alaskan life.

00:47

Man: Chinook profiles origins of people, places, and events.

Women: But mostly people who are Alaskans.

00:57

Another Women: Welcome to Chinook Patterns, I am Paula Schuler.

00:59

When we think about of the National Register of Historic Places important things like Radio City Music Hall and Central Station and Mount Vernon come to mind. But there is room in registry for places that aren't famous house or fancy buildings. Three sites in the Minto Flats have been nominated. They have already been approved by the Alaska State Historic Site Advisory Committee. Research Anthropologist Elizabeth Andrews with the help of Robert Charlie and residents of Minto prepared the papers. She said that the three sites are on state selective land and that much won't change.

01:31

Elizabeth Andrews: That's one reason they were interested putting it on national registers historic places so that they would have some sort of protection. Since the land was going into out of traditional ownership which before any of this stuff. So that it would have some protection since it is still a value to them although they don't own them anymore.

01:56

Paula: What kind of protection does the historic nation give those sites?

02:00

Elizabeth: Well, with the National Register when things are placed on it there's no police force or anything to enforce protection of our national heritage. Although it can be used to try to get people to comply, with not to destroy important places such as theses. The state can apply for funds to restore or if something starts to washing out they want to apply for funds to have at banks so that the places doesn't get destroyed by flooding or vandalized or whatever. Whatever measures they would want to take to protect the place if they could.

02:40

Paula: So you protect buildings from roads?

Elizabeth: Yeah, it's the main thing it's a protection against the federal government's actions. Ownership doesn't change anything. Private land owner might have a site on their own land and if a place is significant enough could consider placing on the national register and then it has protection form any federal actions. Such as roads or airstrips, or trails or recreational spots.

Paula: So will help if?

Elizabeth: Oh yeah, it will you know. There has been a lot of talk about in the past about land claims going on in the state. When the Sportsmen's Association wanted to build a road out towards the Minto Flats. Peoples traditional subsistence area and there's a lot of use of it. By Sportsmen but now since the state has it and if the state wants to improve it or make it their land

into a more of a recreational area or whatever they would have to then consider these historic places and not to disturb them.

03:57

Paula: I would like to ask you to talk about why these three sites are important and the importance of each one. The oldest site is near as I can see is called "Cache" and would you describe that for us. What it was used for and what it looks like now.

Elizabeth: Right, Cashe is located on a creek that comes out of Minto Lake and presently it has about a-frame sort of frame cashes on it which dates back to the beginning of this century. The site was used earlier times like 19th century as far as we know. For fishing and camping. People used it like a base camp and like in the fall they would leave to go moose and duck hunting. It was primarily a summer camp for like, pike, and sheefish. People would put traps in the creek there. You could store fish there and it was a good place to fish.

05:32

Paula: It's also a meeting place for two important events.

Elizabeth: Yeah, that was reported to me by some of the people in Minto. Many of these places were used where different groups could meet in the interior of Alaska. They were the main ones that other neighboring groups would know about these places as well. They would know how to get there by the trails and whatnot. What was reported to me was that at Cache where some of the native people got together and determined that there would be no more wars or raids between neighboring groups. This is a site where they ended these traditional battles. A Christian minister meet with a medicine man and introduced Christianity at that place.

07:16

Paula: which would also mark another turning point in the culture.

Elizabeth: Yes for sure.

Paula: And after that their uh, we can go to the old Minto site which is described as more of a 20th century site and it shows a further adaptation to none native culture in the area. Tell us about old Minto in relation to Cache.

Elizabeth: Old Minto's located About 10 miles South West of Cache near the Tanana River proper. Which is we know as a glacial stream. The first cabin was built there near about 1915 by Chief Charlie and the Minto Lakes people. This is the time when steamboats were going up and down the Tanana quite a bit to Fairbanks and back to Tanana and Nenana. The native people got a lot of imported goods from outside it was easier to be located on the river itself. This was not a foreign situation for them they already had fish camps along the river.

09:00

Paula: So it wasn't a foreign time to live on the river.

Elizabeth: It was a reorientation for them and to take on new situations and employment was one way. Trade at this time the early 20th century it was no longer in beads like it was in the century before. Oftentimes people needed cash for certain things and one way to get it was through limited wage labor like cutting wood or selling fish or skins or whatever to people on the steamboats or steamboat companies like themselves.

9:30

Paula: The Third site the cemetery site and that is close to the Cash sit about three miles away.

Elizabeth: Right, it's located on Gold Stream Creek. It's one of the many cemeteries in the Minto Flats but it's probably most number of people are buried at this particular site. People single it out because Chief Charlie was buried there and he is an important figure there. He was the last of the traditional chiefs of the Minto Lake's people. It's important because it's his burial place and for a number of people. It was also on the trio from Cache to Old Minto down on the Tanana. It's probably more prominent in a lot of ways with grave fences. It's on a little knoll. It's visually prominent but also because of the people buried there.

10:49

Paula: when you talk about historic sites preservation. Does that mean just the sites where the fences are say in the cemetery site or the knawel or does that include in some of the surrounding area?

Elizabeth: National Register A nomination Forms and the National Registry of Historic Places usually requires you to put limits on the site and to figure out the acreage which has always been a problem for Archeologists and Anthropologists and I'm sure for the local people for themselves because they don't view things in discreet units like that. The people themselves as well as those of us who want to study the life ways of these people view it as a larger picture like the whole Minto Flats but what we are forced to do is to determine what boundaries would be with some sort of a buffer zone as well. On each one of these I had to place some boundaries not just ended to say Cache. Which include some of the natural surrounding area so that's what's called virulent integrates still protected when it was the site itself. The other things that is difficult is the way trying to translate in a scene native concepts about things into a language people or the federal government will understand. That's probably one of the hardest things. I understand what the National Registers are about and I know what perspective that people in federal government view the National Register but to get things from like I say you know where we who studying native cultures and the local people themselves done view themselves as things

of discrete entities as part of a larger picture. I have to somehow mediate between how federal government thinks and the way the situation really is

13:11

Paula: I'm wondering if you ran into the same problem that you have translating between what you feel for the sites and what you know the people that live there feel for it. Translating that to the government and having to put it into a kind of bureaucratic language. I wonder if there is a step for the people in Minto thinking that "Oh, here's they are trying is that really making it?"

Elizabeth: Yeah, No that is a problem that has been pointed out to me before. The only way that I can only really respond to that is to incorporate the different reasons for places being significant. Why I as an anthropologist would think of it being significant as well as the local people thinking as to why it is significant. The average person on the street may think it is significant and I try to put them all in there. And the language may not be in the way the local people may wish to have it described themselves. When you just have to compromise so to speak if you want certain things done and you're talking to people who are the ones going to give it to you. You have to you know compromise somewhat and this becomes the end product to be the best means that I see in order to have them to even consider the places. They may not even consider the places otherwise.

14:44

Paula: Elizabeth Andrews research Anthropologist at the University State of Alaska. She says the National Register follows the state's recommendations on historic sites but the prospects for approval are good. Fortunate patterns I'm Paula Schuler and Chinook is a production of KUAC-FM at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks.

15:03

(Break in Audio)

15:11

Same as beginning of last interview introduction starting with the sound of a Chinook wind.

16:02

Paula Schuler: The New River Times is a monthly newspaper put out by the Fairbanks Native Association with Johnson O'Malley funds. Its primary purpose is to report on Johnson O'Malley educational programs and projects but it does more than that. Twelve hundred Fairbanks residence are at least one-quarter native receiving the River Times free in the mail. These people are interested in the other people who read the paper. According to new river times editor Sharon Tolle [sp?] that's what it's all about.

16:32

Paula: Our readers have told us that they are interested in reading about the people that they know in the River Times and New River Times. It's been a people paper, even though it is educational paper we try to focus on local Natives in features so people can identify them. We like to feature Native culture which very important. It's important that students be aware of their heritage. Its more fun for the people to pick up a paper that has pictures of people who they know and stories they may be familiar with. It makes giving the news and giving the pros and cons of things in a way your-more likely to read when you pick up a Daily News Miner, Anchorage Times or Tundra Times its pretty heavy going.

17:43

Sharon: We try to our print in our paper is larger and sprinkle our paper with pictures and poetry and a lot of names. People like seeing their names in the paper especially our students it helps their self-esteem and help them express themselves.

18:04

Paula: Do you have as editor a joy of policy a direction like to see the people going in the kinds of articles being printed?

18:14

Sharon: Besides carrier education there seems to be a need. I would like to see the paper discuss problems that affect the educational performance of our students. Problems like alcohol, drugs, and dropping out of school, issues that I would like to discuss to the readers.

18:39

Paula: Tell me if I am wrong there seems to be a slight change in the papers since I first started getting it. It seems the recent issues cover one topic fairly thoroughly and with one, or two, or three articles saying that either alcoholism or the native woman's convention in Anchorage in the last two. I am wondering if you're looking to base each issue on a major story.

Sharon: It's due to a staff increase. In the past I edited and wrote but now I have a reporter who writes full time with the native point of view and that is what we needed. As far as focusing on one subject it's helped having three of us. Writing about the same subject in different points of view. It presents a more rounded picture on the issue.

19:53

Paula: When you say writing from a reporter. Writing from a native point of view is that what was lacking before?

Sharon: Yes, it was because I am not a native. I can't give our native readers a native perspective. I couldn't write a story about growing up with alcoholism or seeing all my high school friends drop out of high school. These are problems that are here and now and Kim has grown up with them and seen them. She's edited a very young fresh approach to our paper, which is what I wanted I think our readers are going to enjoy it too.

20:34

Talking about Kim Moe who is a reporter for the New River Times newspaper talks about how growing up with alcoholic parents and seeing her friends drop out of high school and struggling as a child to get through her life living under these conditions. Her personal story has shed some light on the problems facing alcoholic parents and how to prevent such tragedy to happen to other natives in future. She was writing for the parents as well as the kids to change their views on how they drink and who it affects in the house hold and families that are very close.

28:00

End of recording