Developing Your Heritage Tourism Program

2015 Alaska Historic Preservation Conference

Heritage Tourism Program Recipe

Ingredients

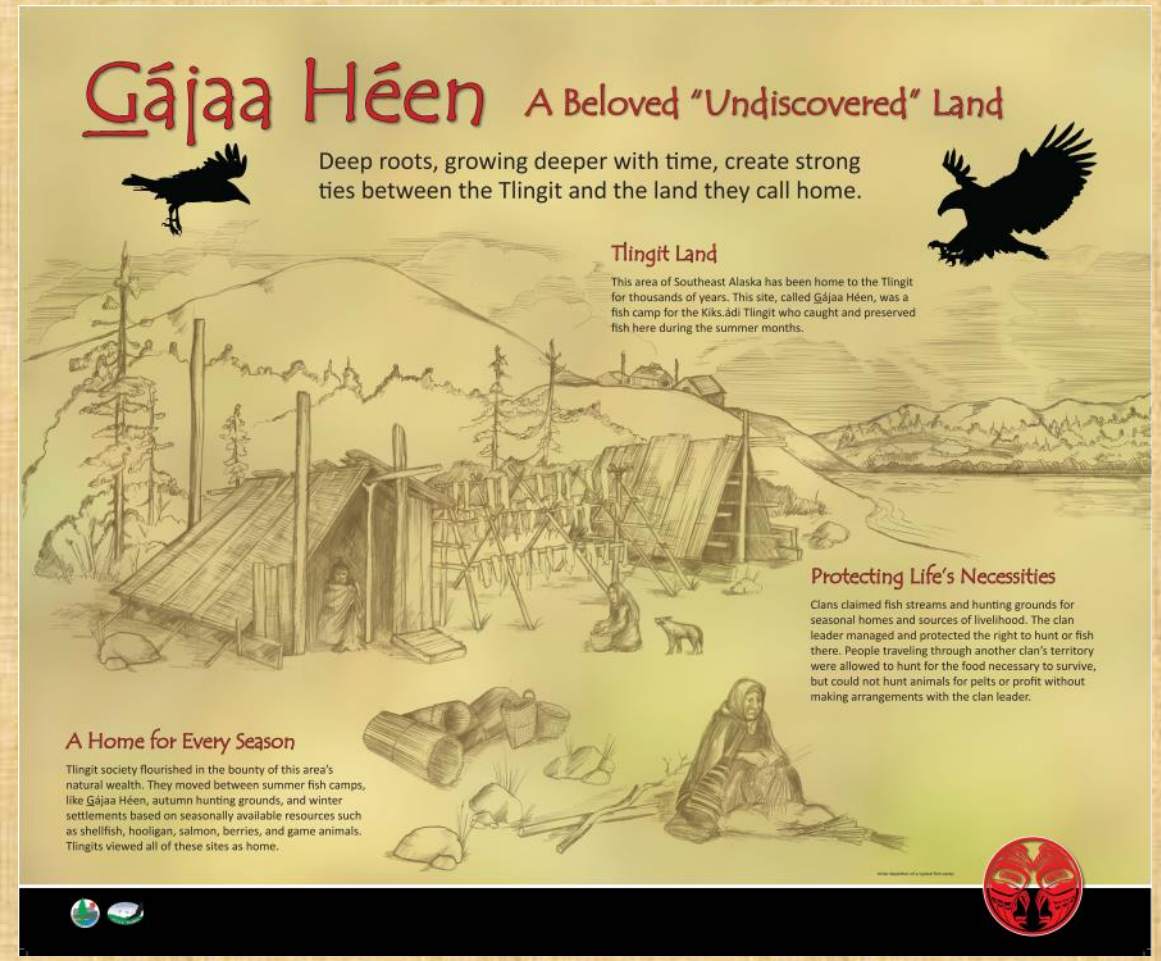
- 1 whole resource
- 1 handful of audience
- 1 tsp clarified message
- 1 pinch of techniques

Directions

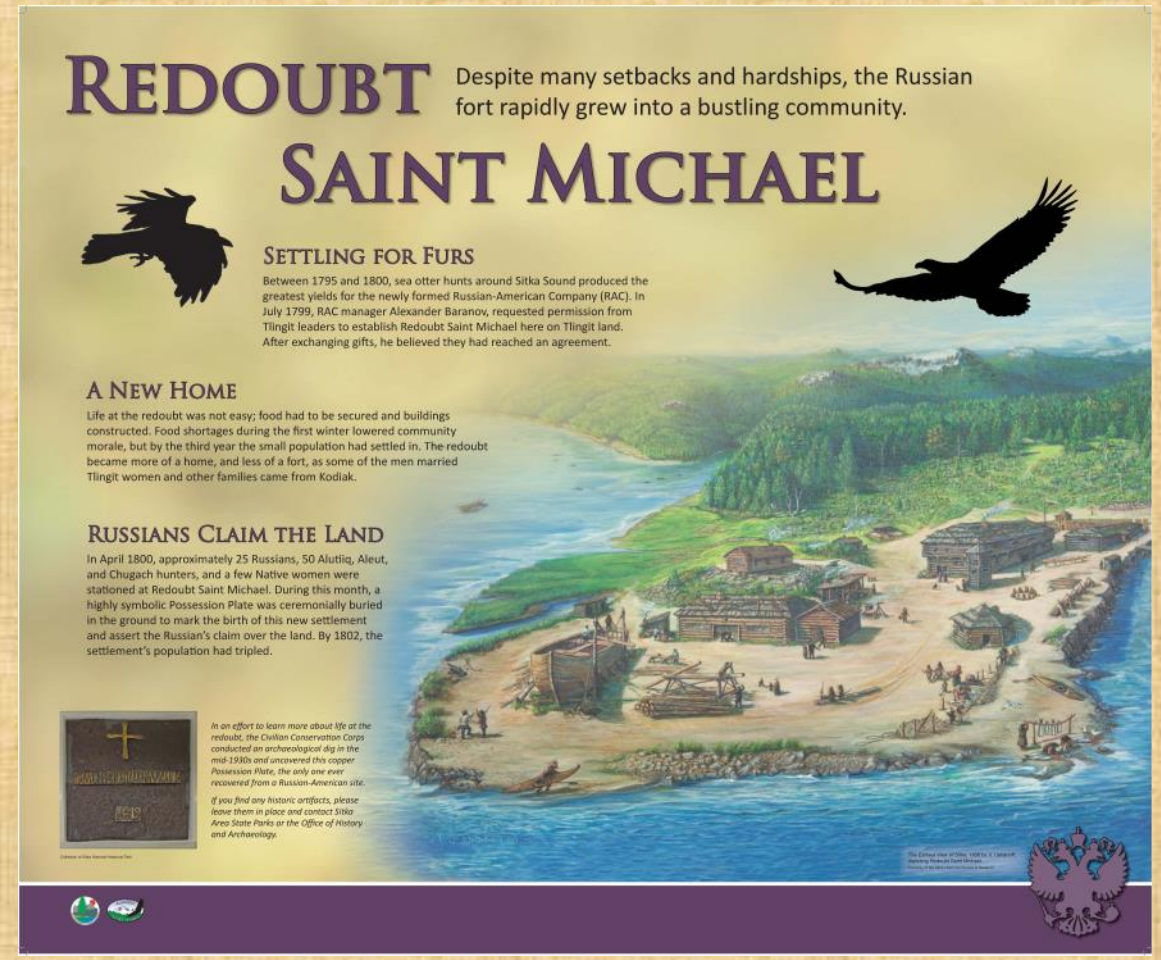
- Consider your resource and your audience.
- Select a clear message about your resource that you want to communicate to the audience.
- Choose techniques or methods that will clearly communicate your message, helping the audience connect with the resource.
- Evaluate the effectiveness and relevance of your message and techniques every 5 to 10 years.

Alaska State Parks

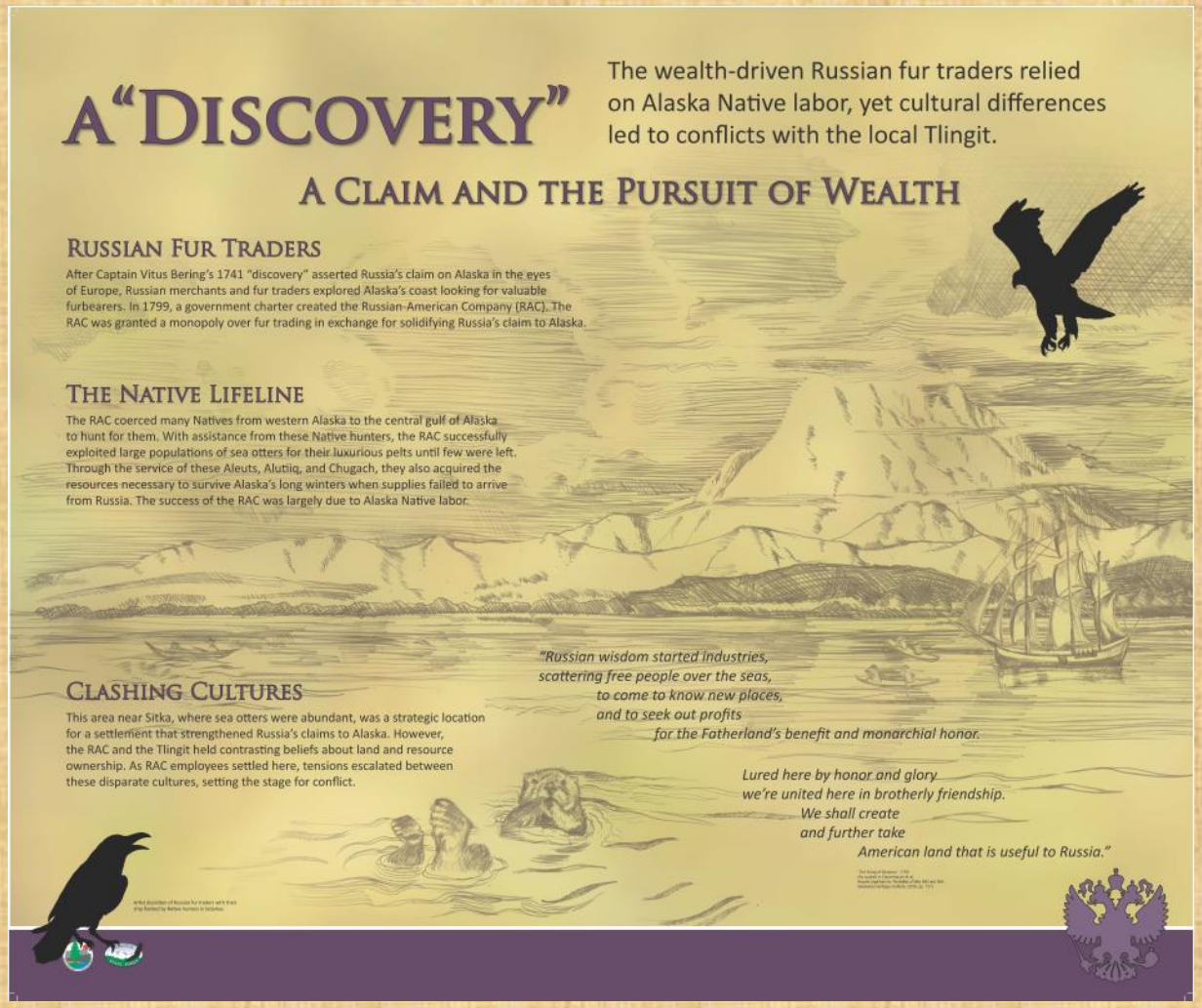
Old Sitka SHP



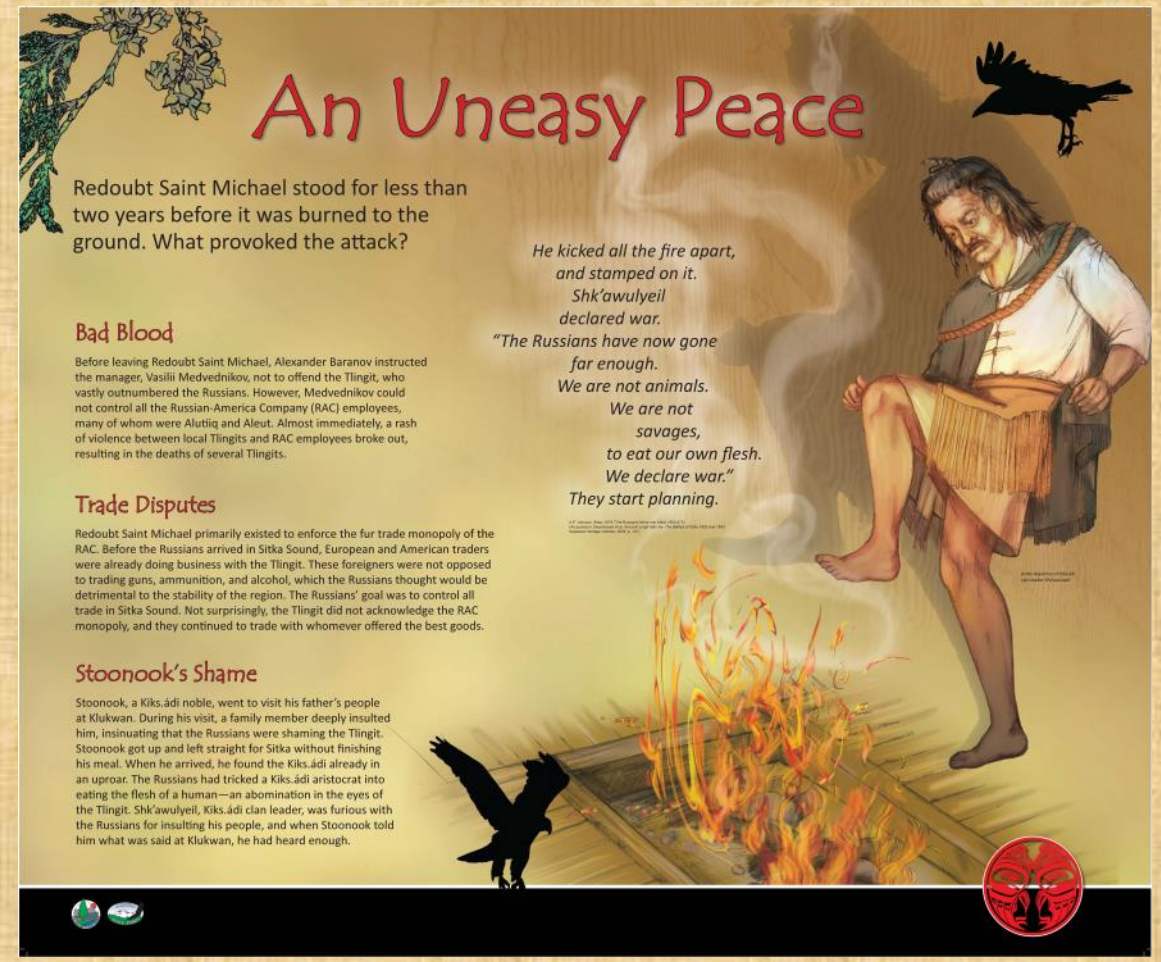
Old Sitka SHP



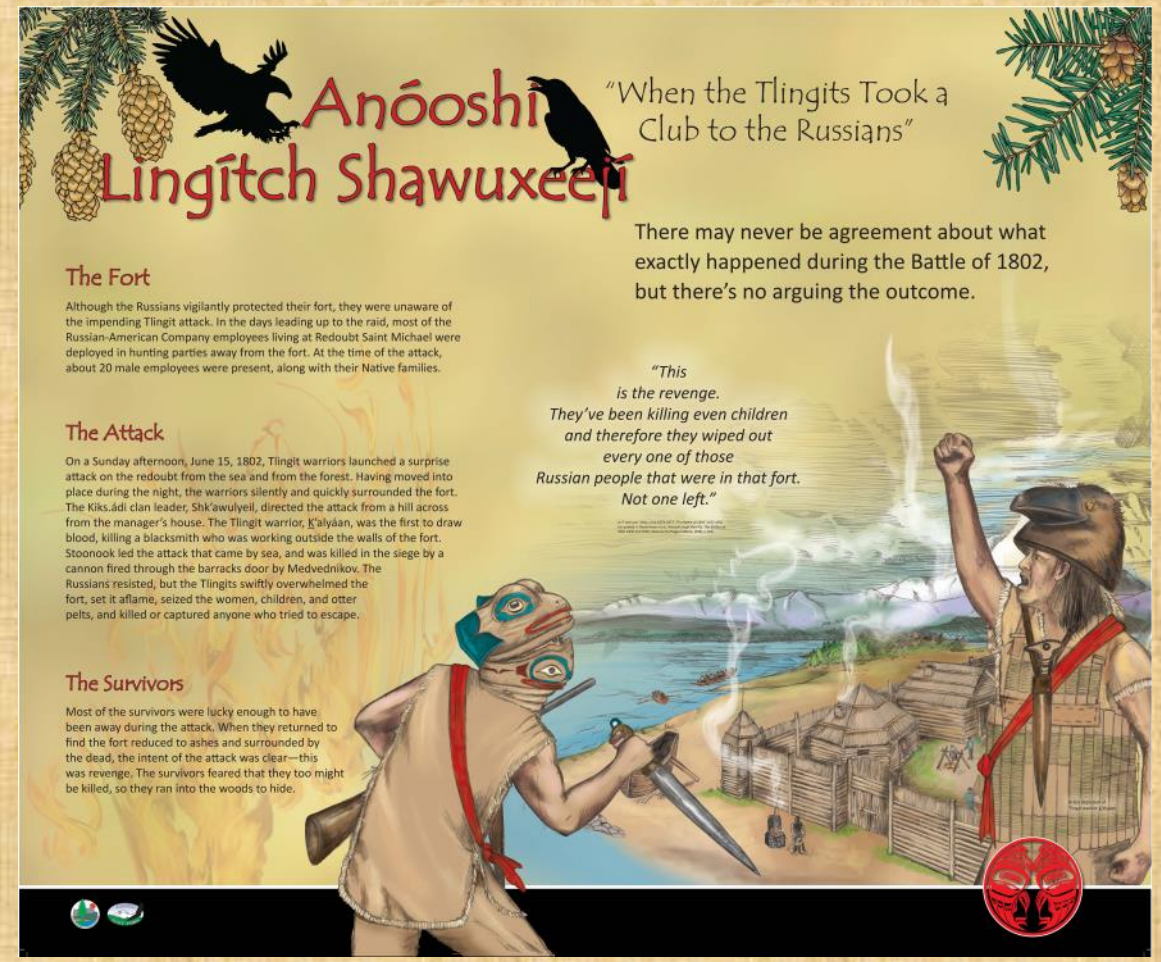
Old Sitka SHP



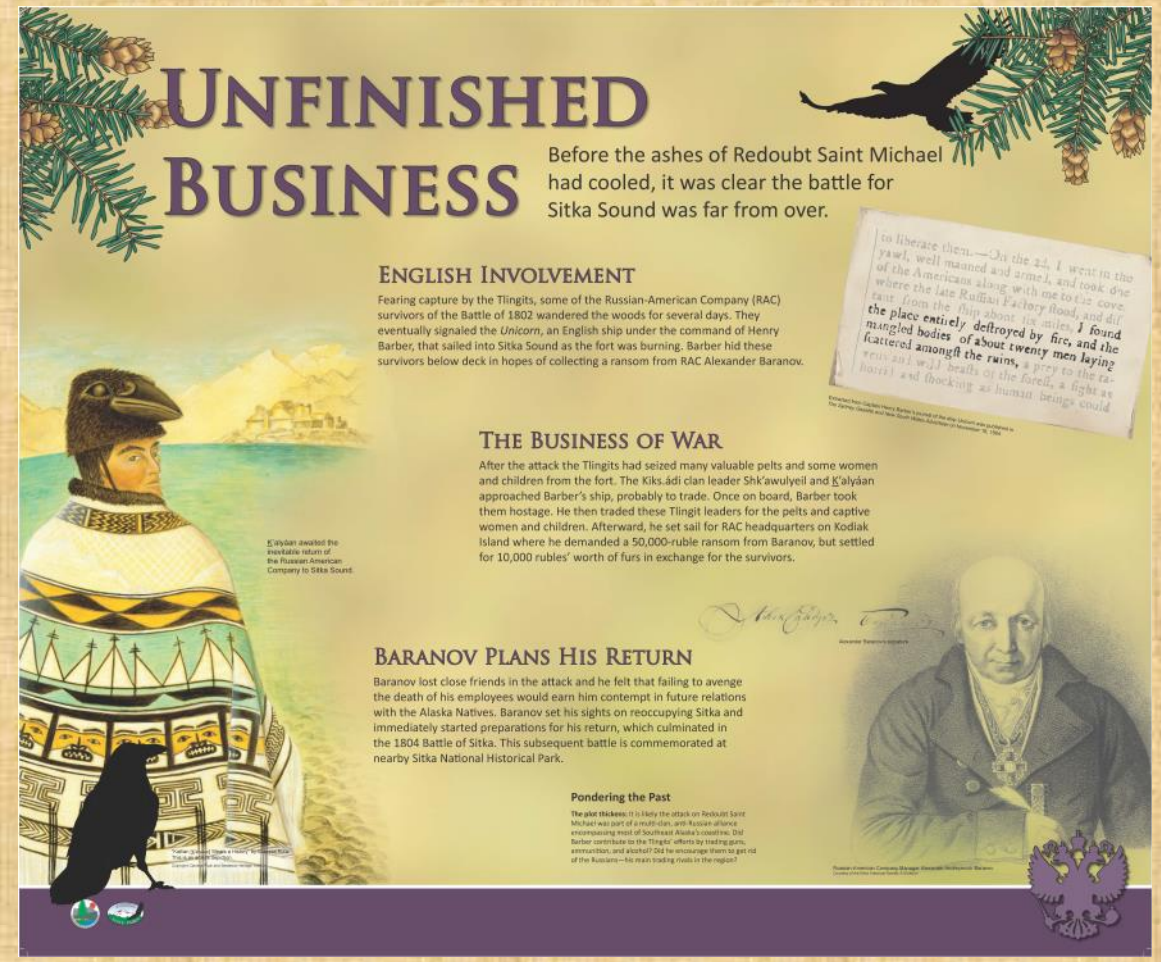
Old Sitka SHP



Old Sitka SHP



Old Sitka SHP



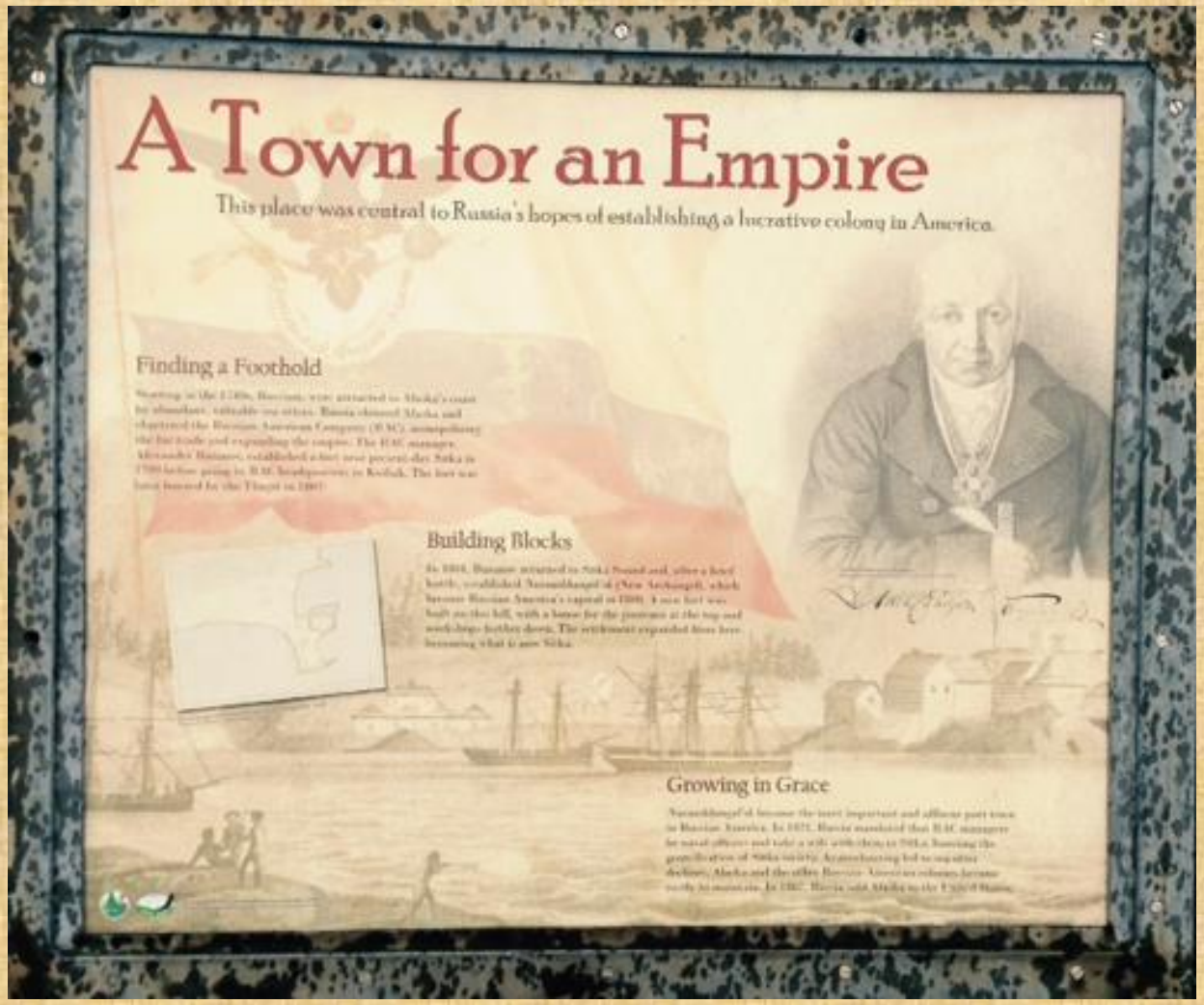
Old Sitka SHP

Baranof Castle SHS

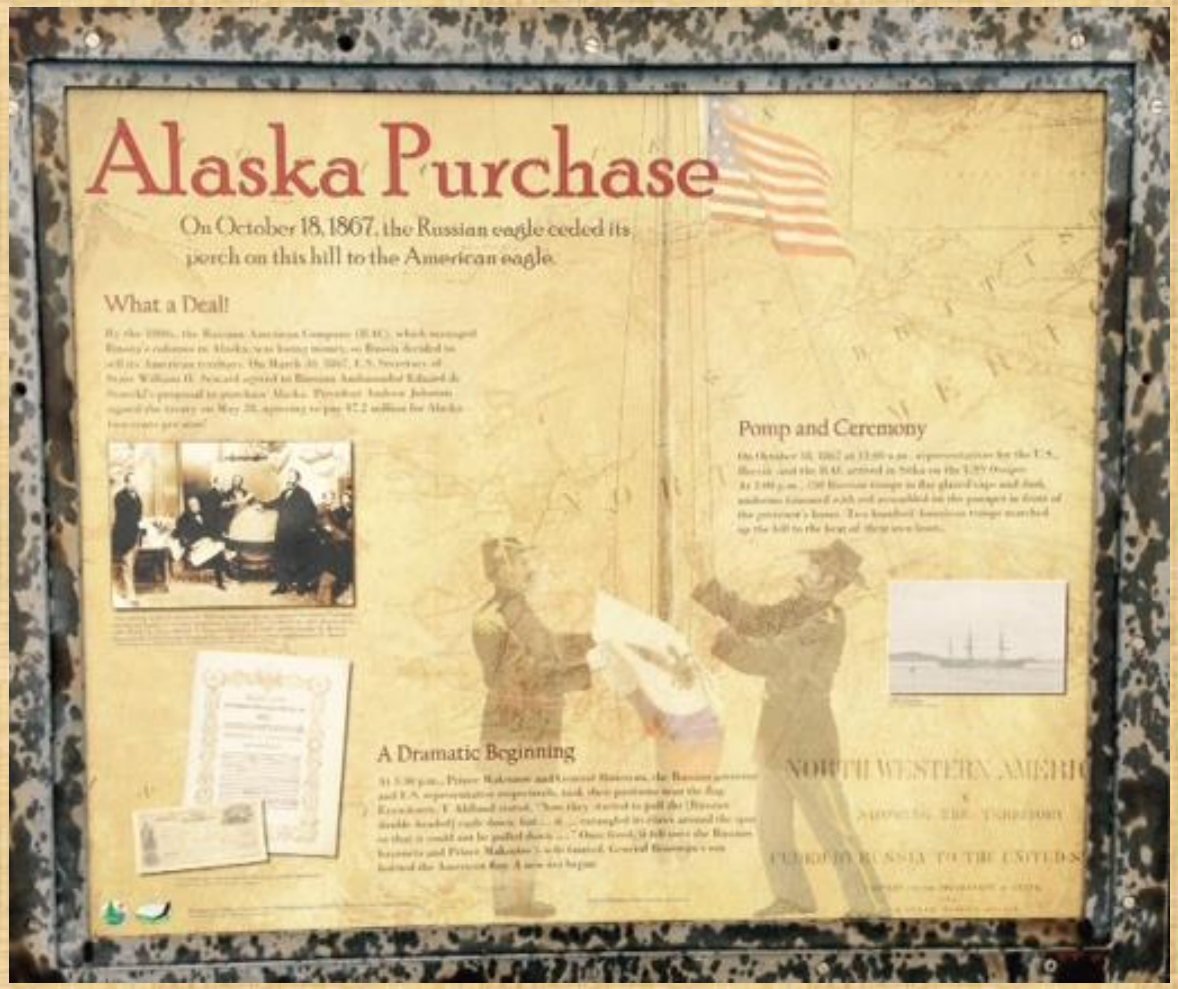
Baranof Castle SHS

Baranof Castle SHS

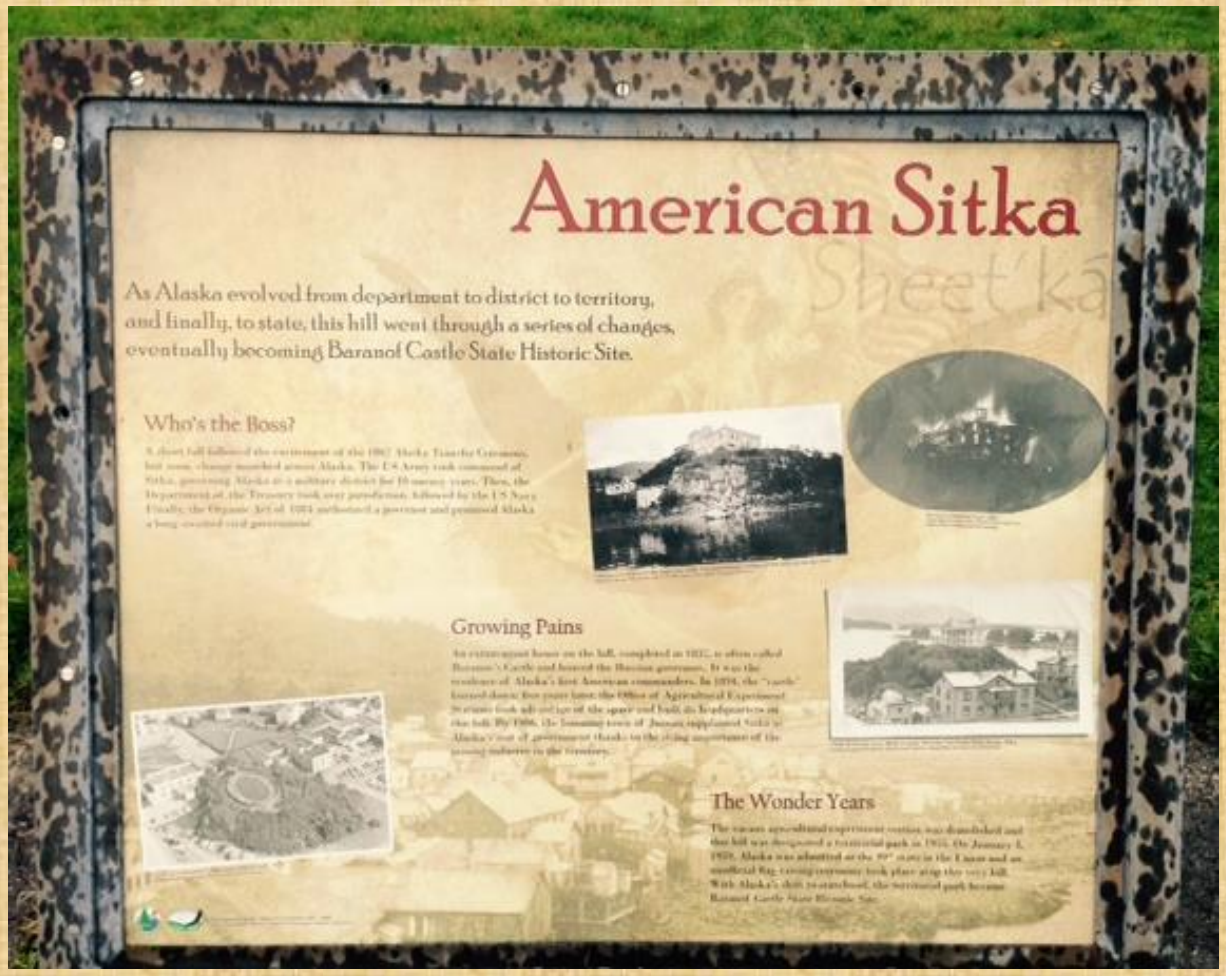
Baranof Castle SHS



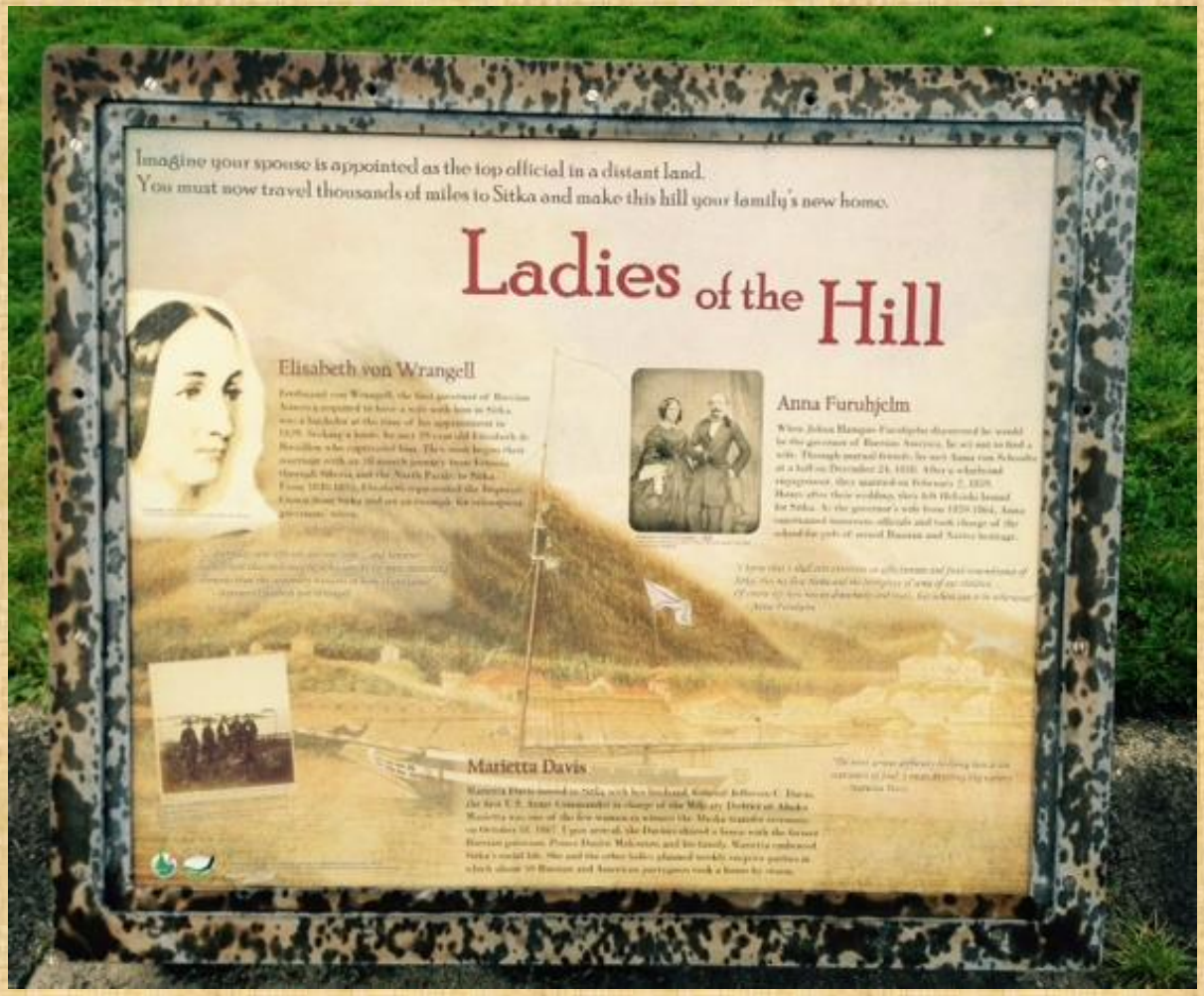
Baranof Castle SHS



Baranof Castle SHS



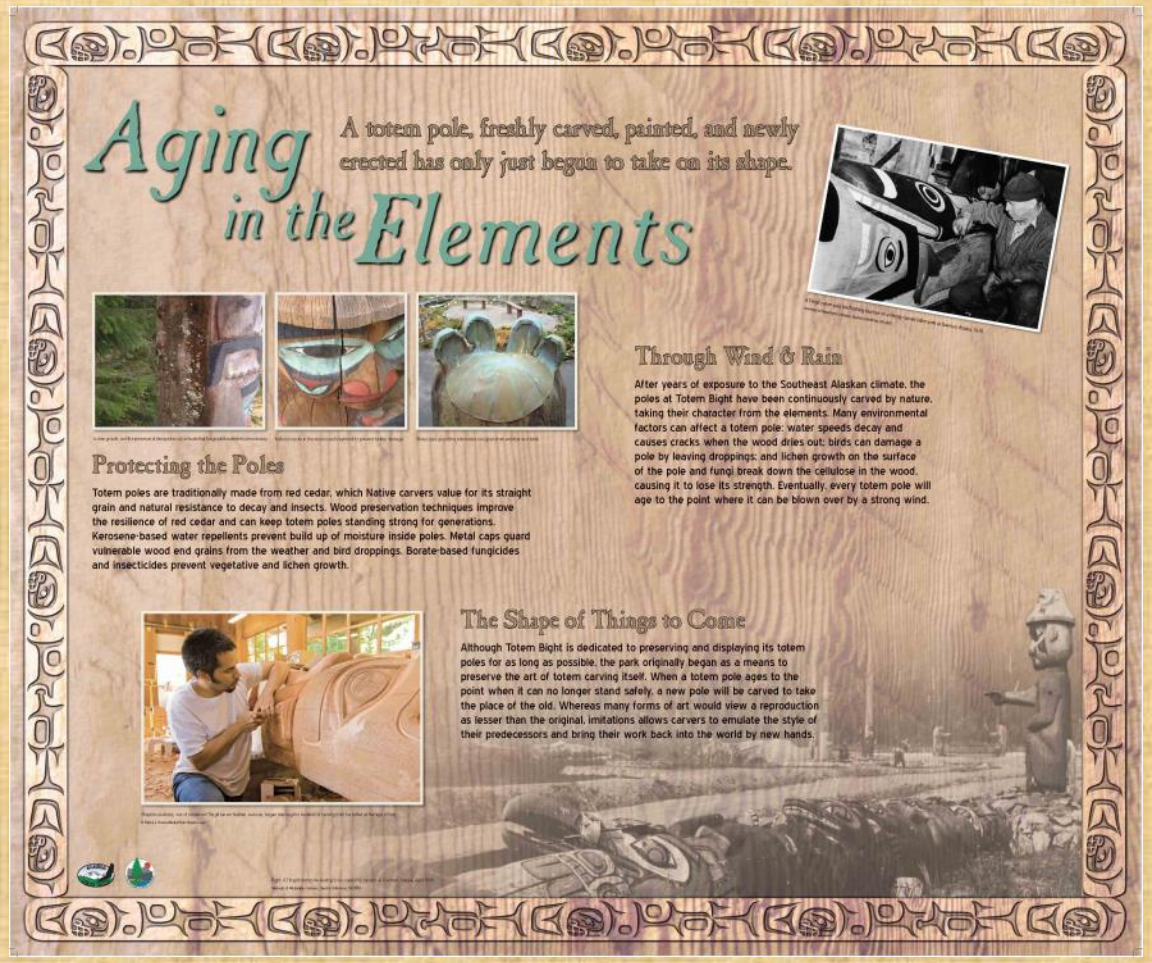
Baranof Castle SHS



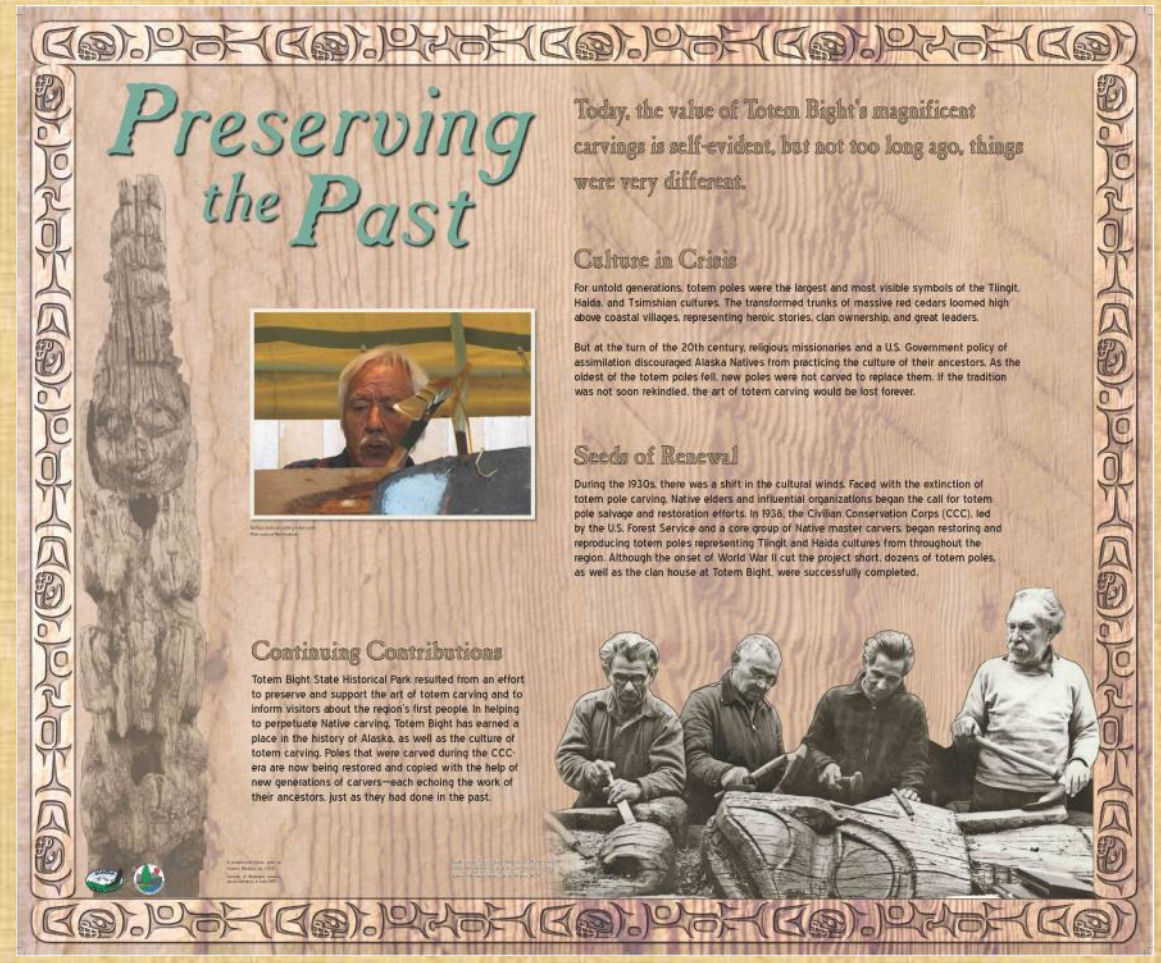
Baranof Castle SHS

Baranof Castle SHS

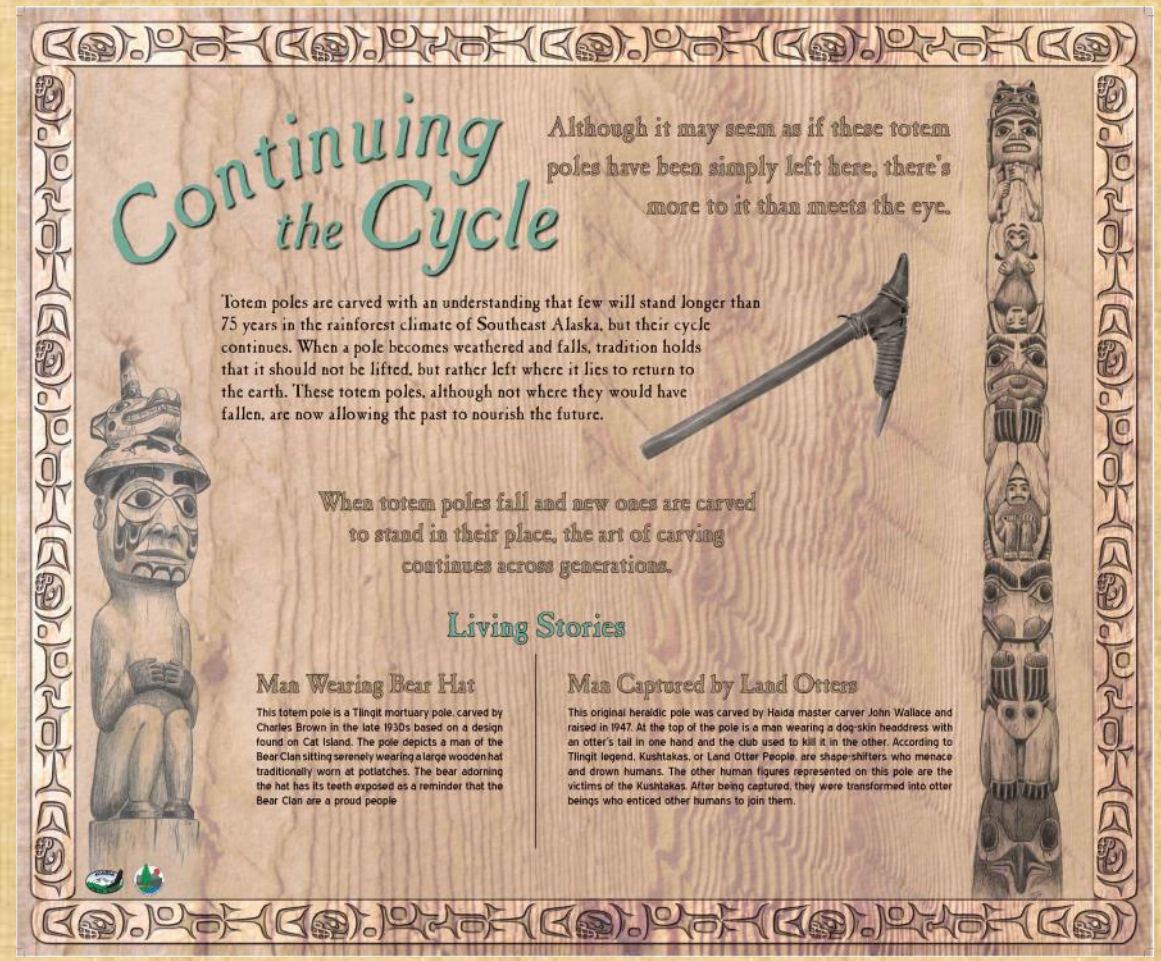
Totem Bight SHP



Totem Bight SHP



Totem Bight SHP



Fort Abercrombie SHP

Fort Abercrombie SHP

Fort Abercrombie SHP

Fort Abercrombie SHP

Fort Abercrombie SHP

Fort Abercrombie SHP

Fort Abercrombie SHP

Fort Abercrombie SHP

Fort Abercrombie SHP

Kodiak After the War

Once the U.S. recaptured Attu and Kiska islands, the U.S. military shifted their focus away from Alaska, leaving behind concrete clues of Kodiak's World War II heritage.

Gone with the War

In what may have seemed a mass exodus, the U.S. Army and Navy moved their troops to other war fronts in the fall of 1943. A small contingency remained to keep the newly built defense installations from falling into complete disrepair.

Peacetime Adaptations

As WWII ended, many of the military installations were no longer essential for national defense. Fort Abercrombie was placed in caretaker status in 1944 along with the rest of Fort Greely. All Fort Greely installations were abandoned in 1947 and Fort Abercrombie's 8-inch guns were blown up as a safety precaution in 1948.

Lasting Impacts

The Kodiak Naval Operating Base (NOB) was officially turned over to the U.S. Coast Guard in 1972 and is now the largest Coast Guard base in the nation. Fort Abercrombie became a state historical park in 1969 and was designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1970, along with Fort Greely and the Kodiak NOB, due to its significant role in the United States' first line of defense.

Fort Abercrombie SHP

Uncle Sam's Footprint

The U.S. military fortified Kodiak Island as soon as Alaska was threatened, creating lasting impressions.

Builders and Soldiers and Sailors!

A swell of soldiers, sailors, and construction workers swept over Kodiak utterly changing its physical character and culture. First came civilian contractors with Siems-Drake Puget Sound, then Navy Seabees, then soldiers and additional sailors poured onto Kodiak. The area's population rapidly grew from only a few hundred to thousands.

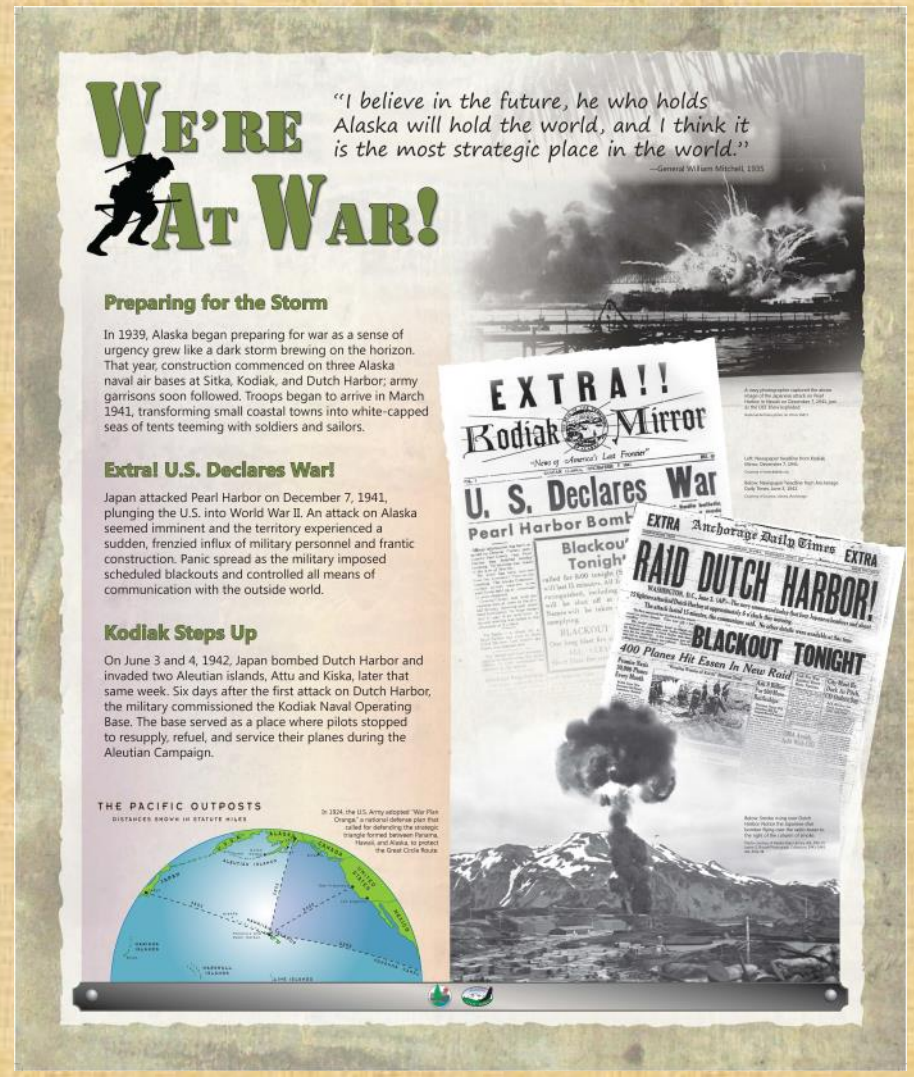
Wartime Construction

Military construction on the island began as a slow trickle in 1939 and quickly became a flood of activity. By 1941, a large naval operating base and an army fort with many satellite posts were rapidly taking shape. Large swaths of old growth forest were cleared for space and timber while the beaches were exploited as sources of gravel and sand. The military left nothing untouched.

Withdrawing Forces

Once the tide of war receded and the U.S. armed forces were reassigned to other fronts, a slower pace of life resumed. However, many soldiers and sailors returned after the war, and others never left the island. Many of Kodiak's defense installations were repurposed and others, though gutted, still stand. World War II left a lasting impression on Kodiak.

Fort Abercrombie SHP

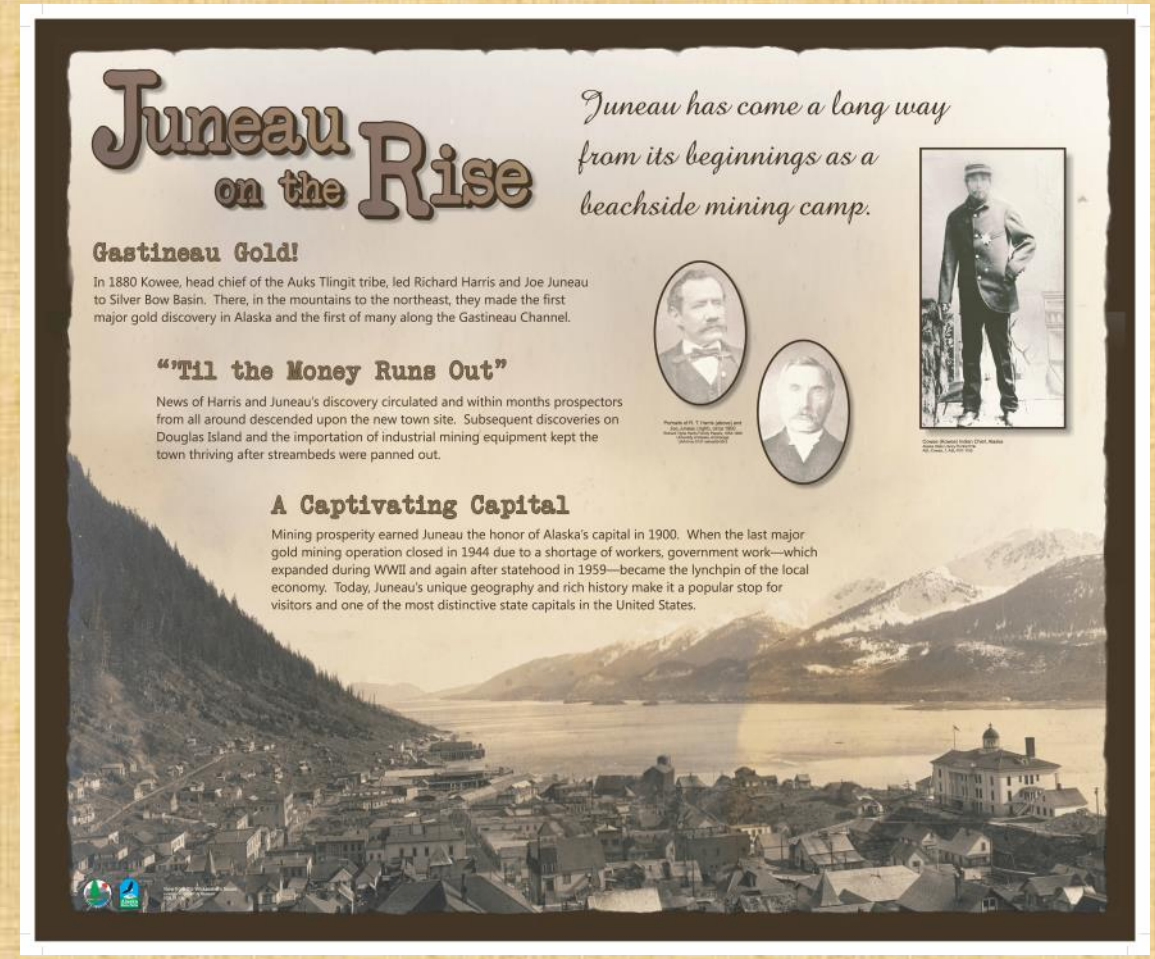


Fort Abercrombie SHP

Independence Mine SHP

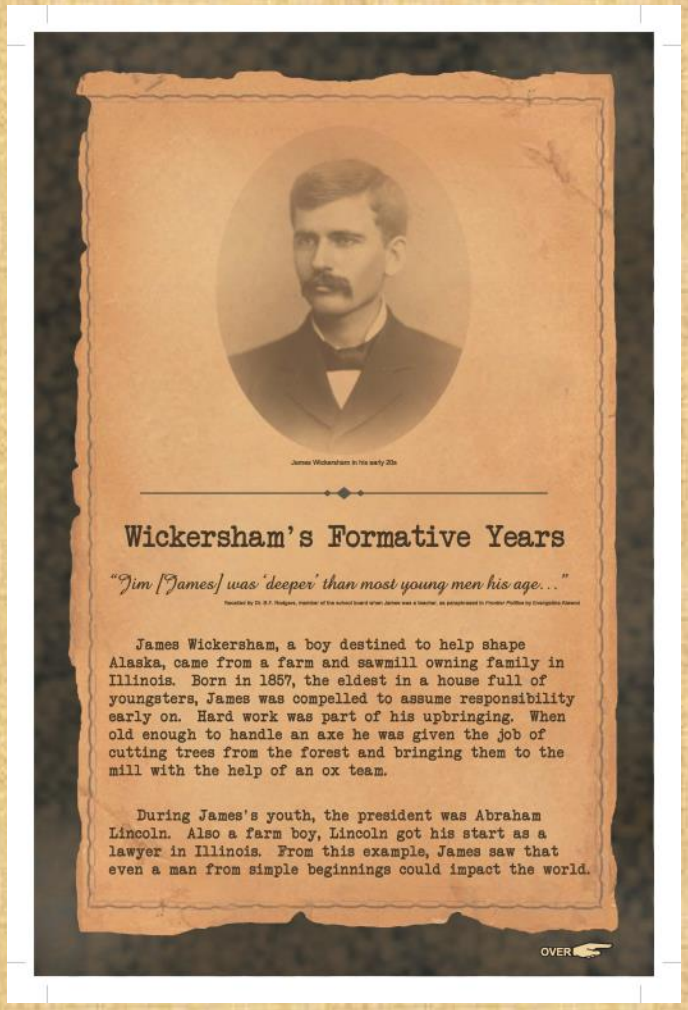
Wickersham SHS

Wickersham SHS



Wickersham SHS

Wickersham SHS



James Wickersham in his early 20s

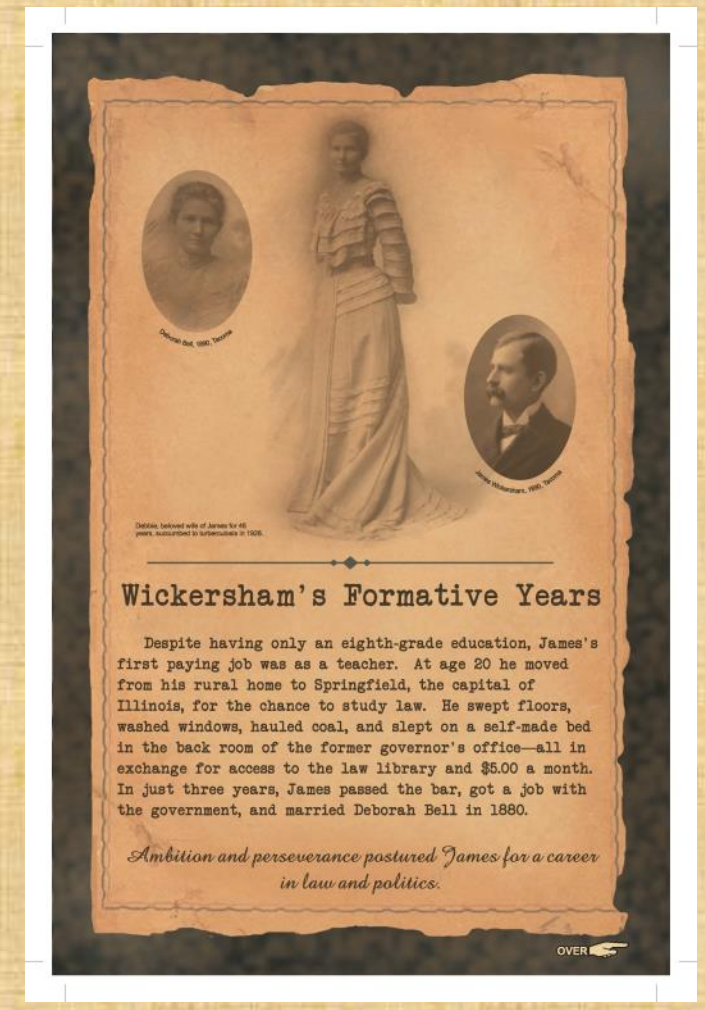
Wickersham's Formative Years

"Jim [James] was 'deeper' than most young men his age..."

James Wickersham, a boy destined to help shape Alaska, came from a farm and sawmill owning family in Illinois. Born in 1857, the eldest in a house full of youngsters, James was compelled to assume responsibility early on. Hard work was part of his upbringing. When old enough to handle an axe he was given the job of cutting trees from the forest and bringing them to the mill with the help of an ox team.

During James's youth, the president was Abraham Lincoln. Also a farm boy, Lincoln got his start as a lawyer in Illinois. From this example, James saw that even a man from simple beginnings could impact the world.

OVER



Deborah Bell, 1880, Tacoma

James Wickersham, 1900, Tacoma

Debbie, beloved wife of James for 46 years, succumbed to tuberculosis in 1926.

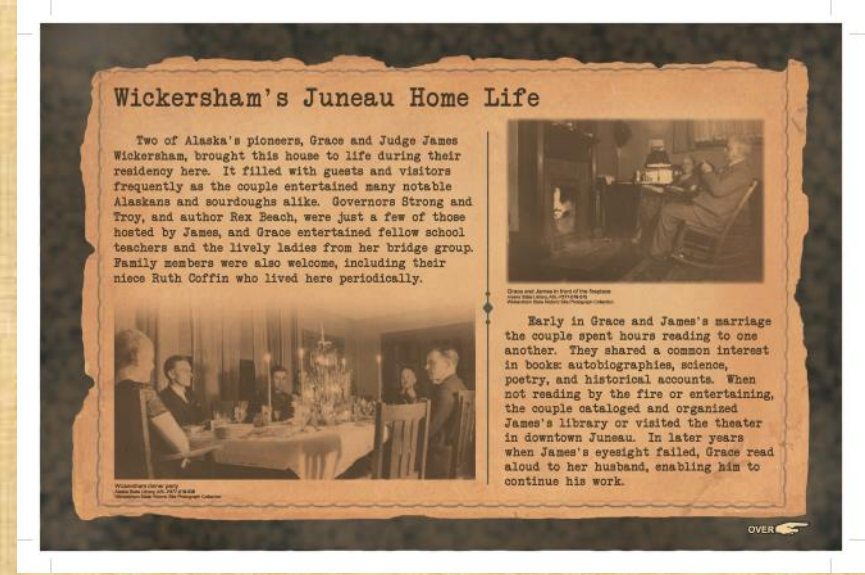
Wickersham's Formative Years

Despite having only an eighth-grade education, James's first paying job was as a teacher. At age 20 he moved from his rural home to Springfield, the capital of Illinois, for the chance to study law. He swept floors, washed windows, hauled coal, and slept on a self-made bed in the back room of the former governor's office—all in exchange for access to the law library and $5.00 a month. In just three years, James passed the bar, got a job with the government, and married Deborah Bell in 1880.

Ambition and perseverance postured James for a career in law and politics.

OVER

Wickersham SHS



Wickersham's Juneau Home Life

Two of Alaska's pioneers, Grace and Judge James Wickersham, brought this house to life during their residency here. It filled with guests and visitors frequently as the couple entertained many notable Alaskans and sourdoughs alike. Governors Strong and Troy, and author Rex Beach, were just a few of those hosted by James, and Grace entertained fellow school teachers and the lively ladies from her bridge group. Family members were also welcome, including their niece Ruth Coffin who lived here periodically.

Grace and James in front of the fireplace

Wickersham's dinner party

Early in Grace and James's marriage the couple spent hours reading to one another. They shared a common interest in books: autobiographies, science, poetry, and historical accounts. When not reading by the fire or entertaining, the couple cataloged and organized James's library or visited the theater in downtown Juneau. In later years when James's eyesight failed, Grace read aloud to her husband, enabling him to continue his work.

OVER

Eskimo Clay Bowl—James's February 1, 1902, diary entry: *"Worked today burning out two earthen pots from an old kitchen—where they are buried in sand."* James collected this bowl on a month-long ethnographic exploration via dog sled near Cape Prince of Whales.

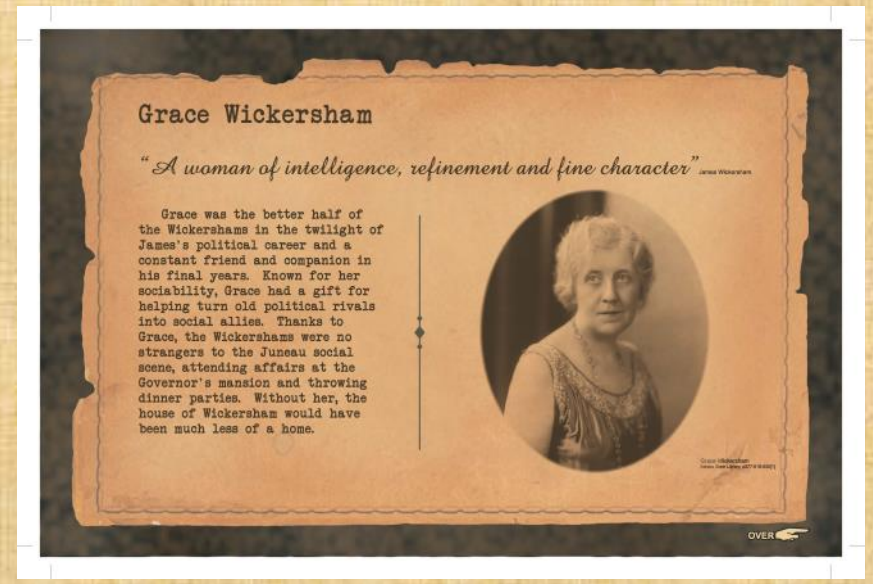
Goggles—This eyewear was made by northern Alaska Eskimos. They would have been useful to James on his 1901, 1,040-mile dog sled trip to hold court in Rampart and Circle during which he became snowblind. He covered his eyes with a bandage and held onto the sled's handlebars for guidance instead.

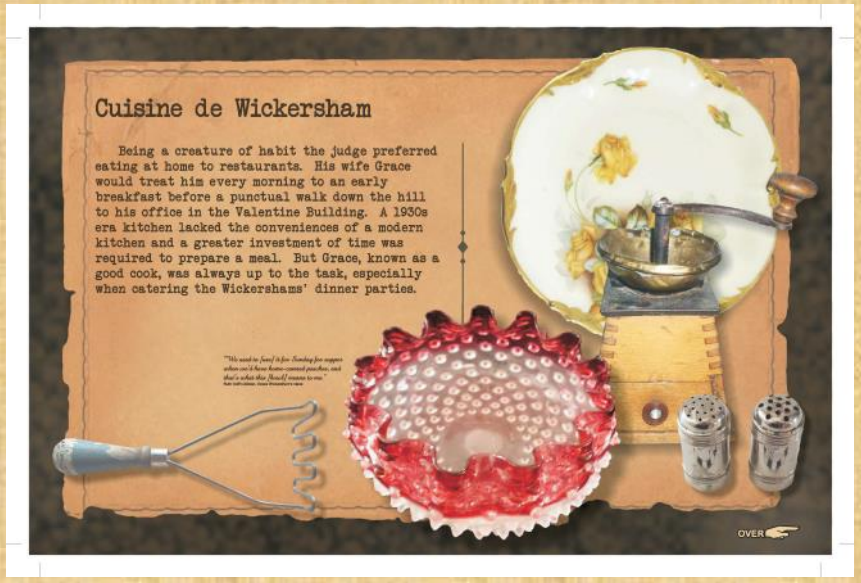
Fairbanks Gold Nugget Spoon—On July 4, 1904, James dedicated the Fairbanks courthouse and was presented this spoon made by the prospectors. On the handle are Felix Pedro's original nuggets. Felix made the first gold strike in the Tanana region.

President McKinley Plate—President McKinley appointed James to the position of district judge in 1900. James received this plate in honor of his appointment.

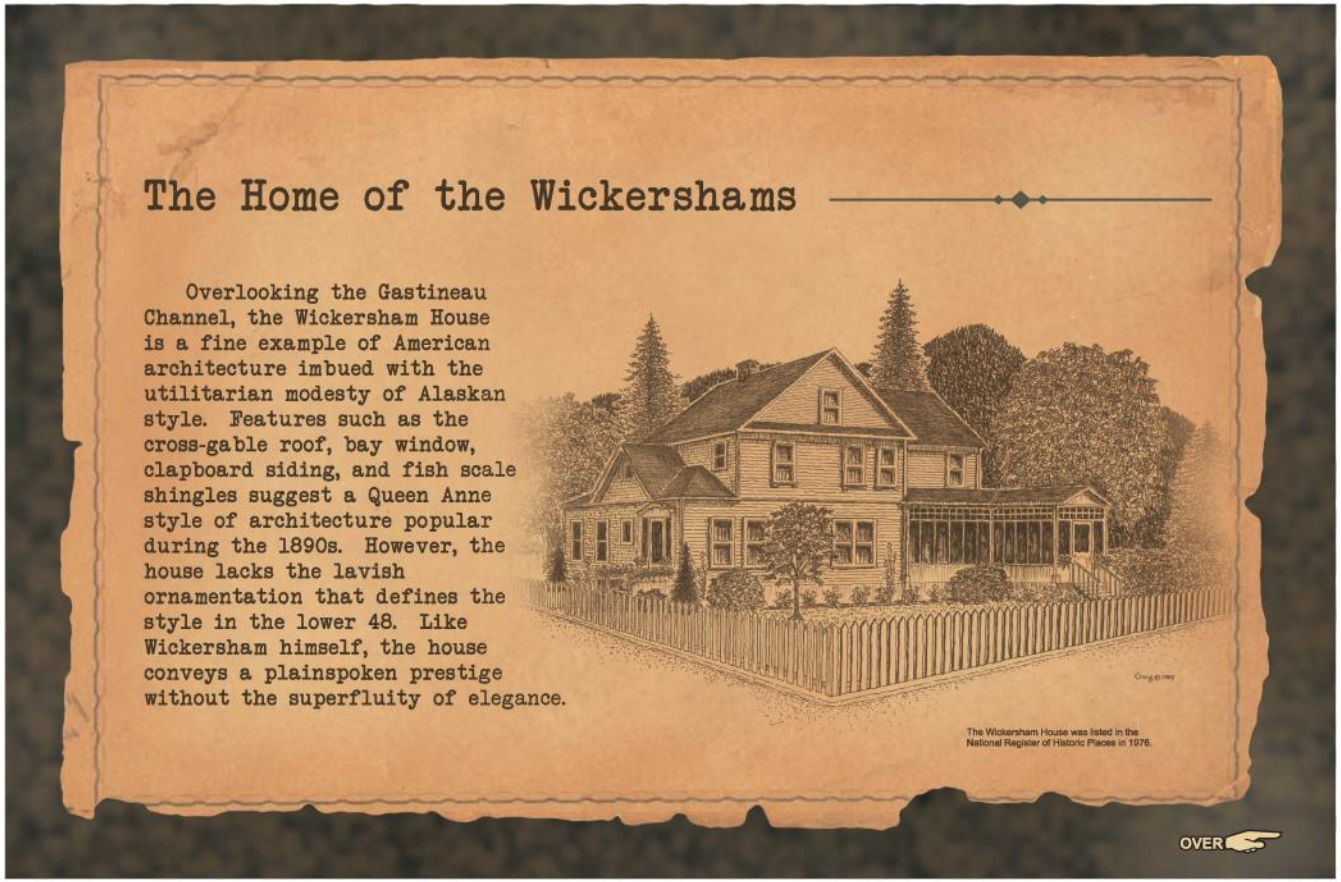
OVER

Wickersham SHS

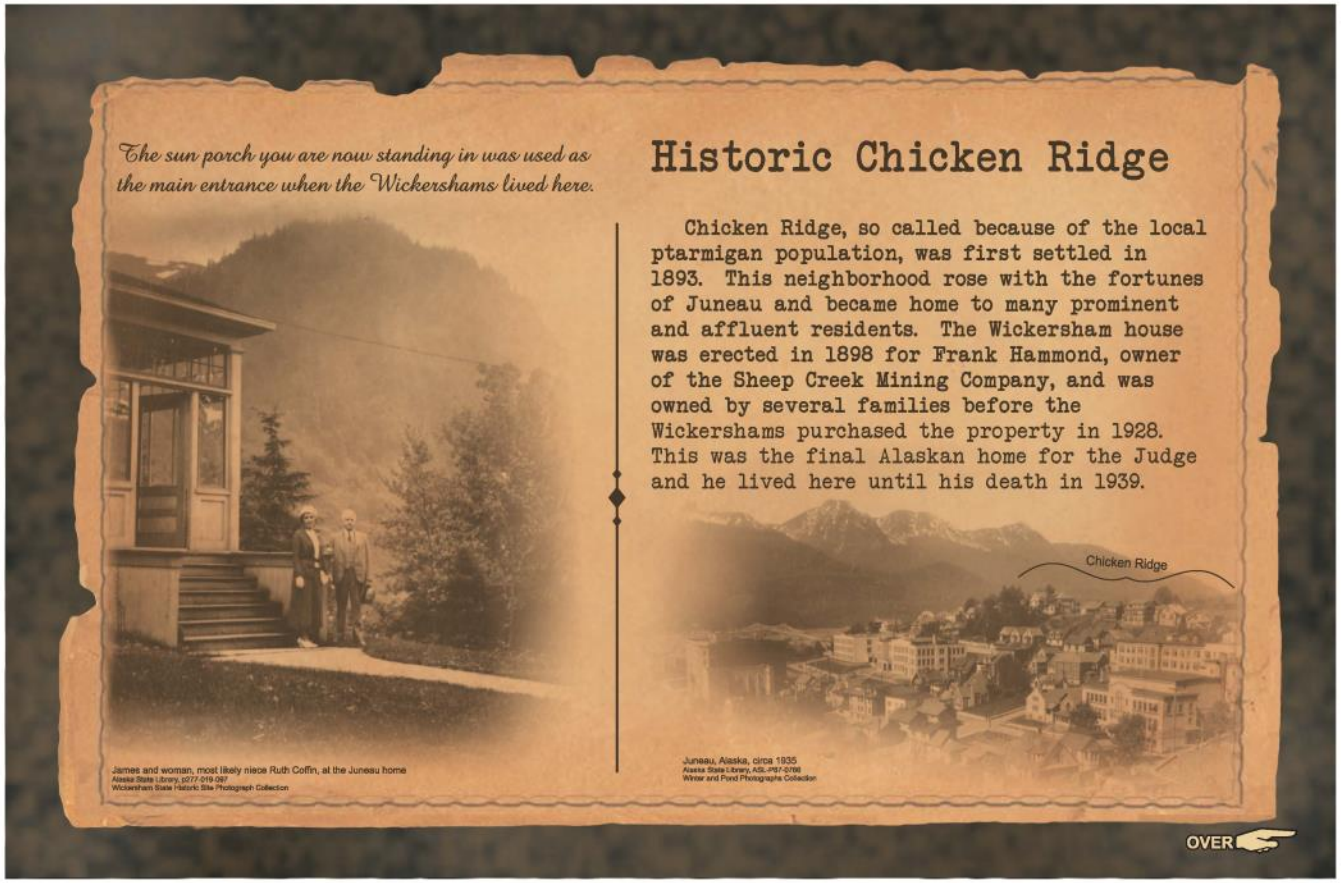




Wickersham SHS

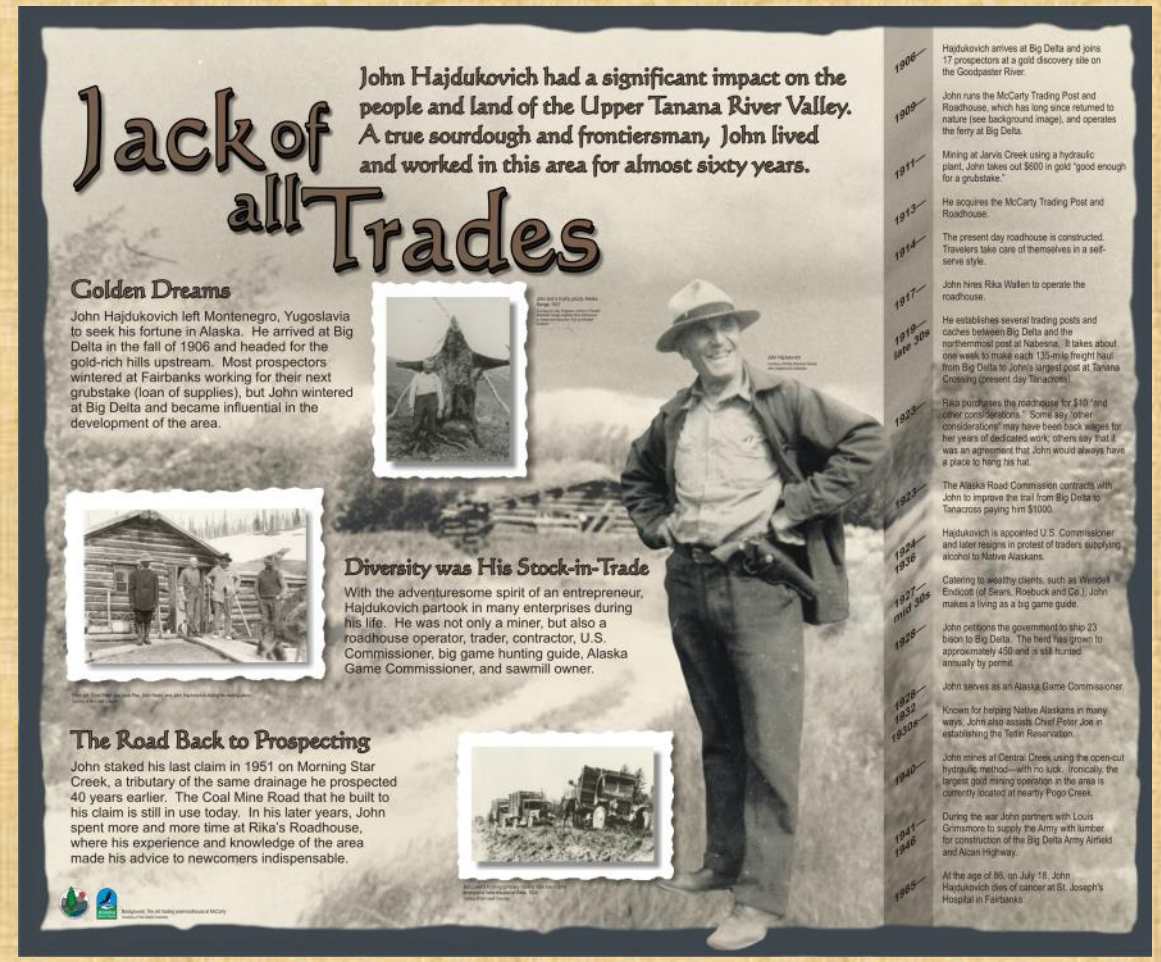


Wickersham SHS



Big Delta SHP

Big Delta SHP

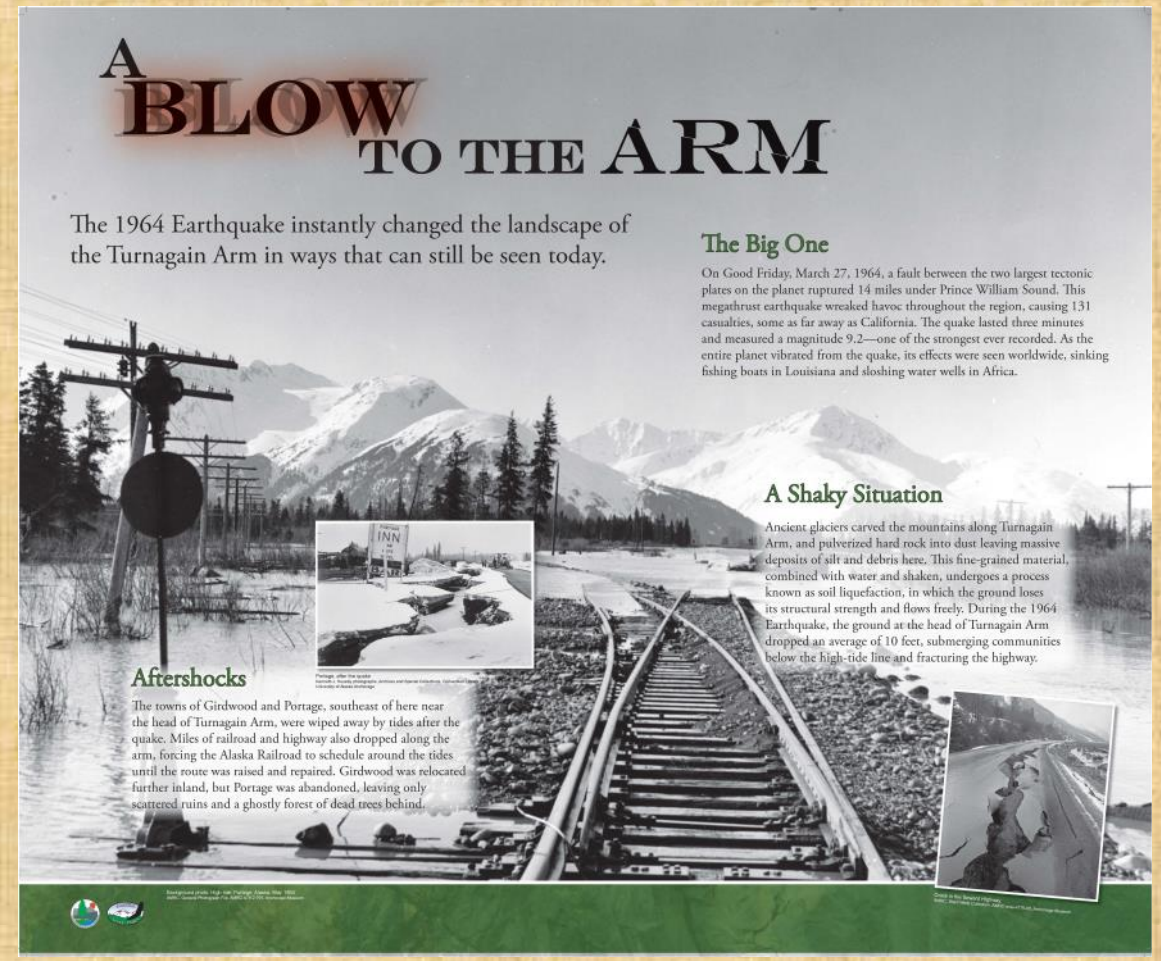


Big Delta SHP

Big Delta SHP

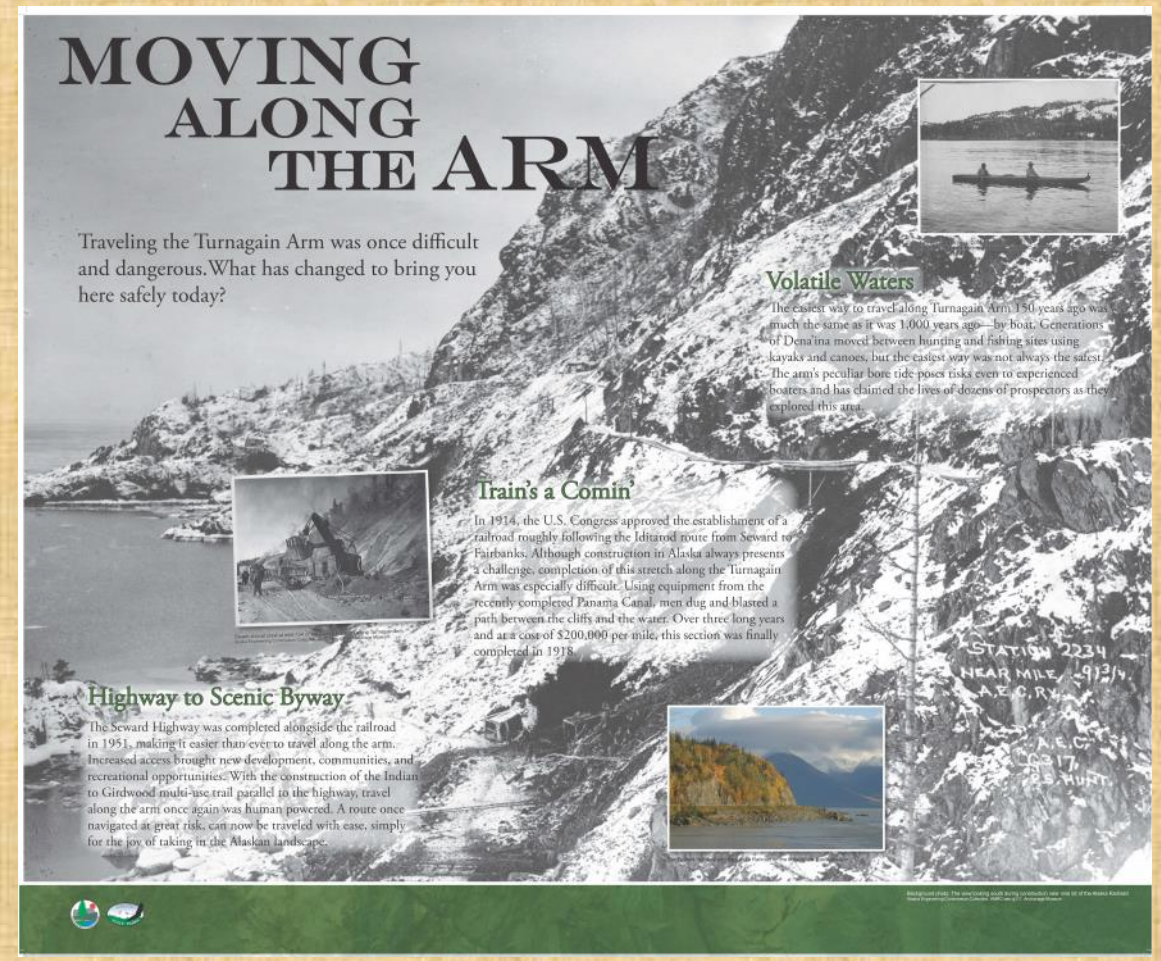
Big Delta SHP

Bird Creek Campground

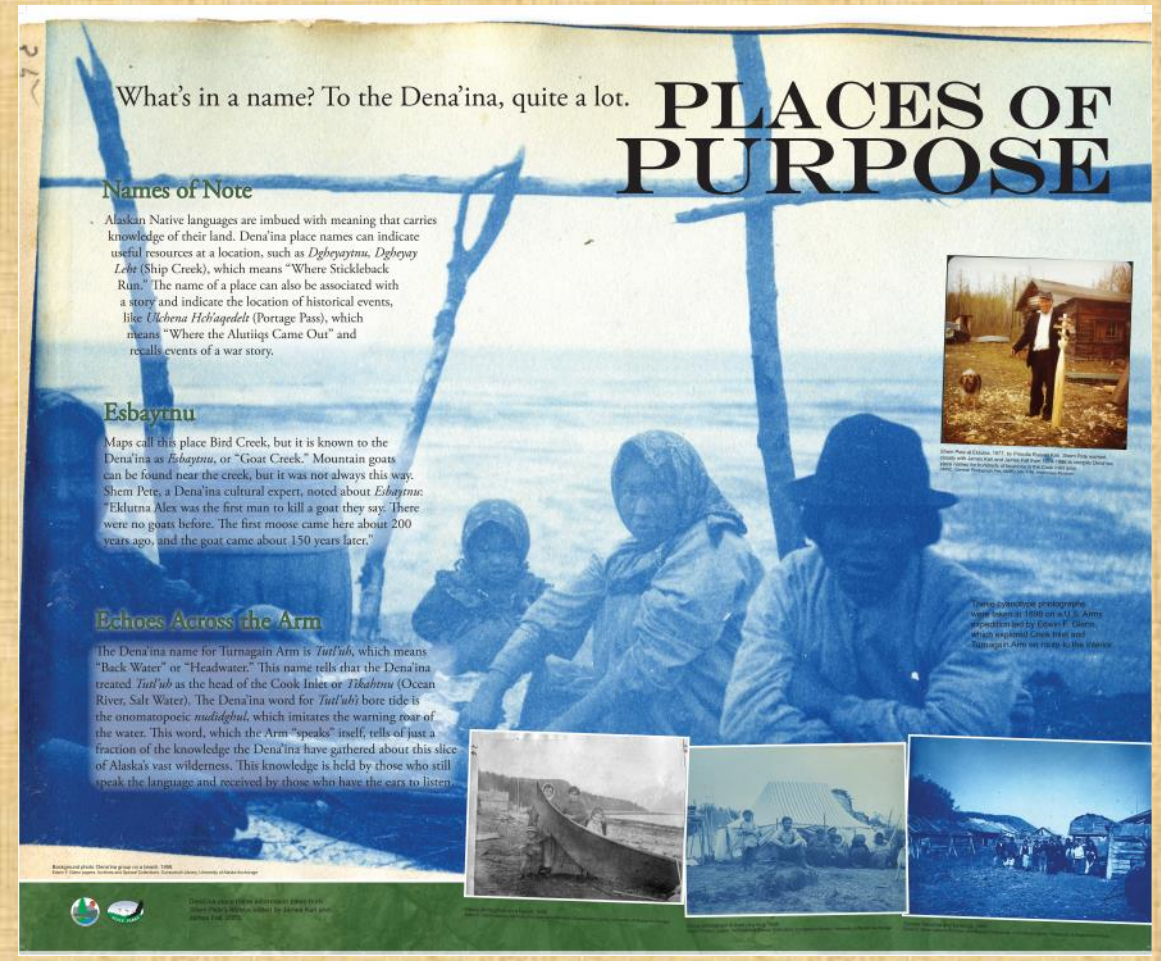


Bird Creek Campground

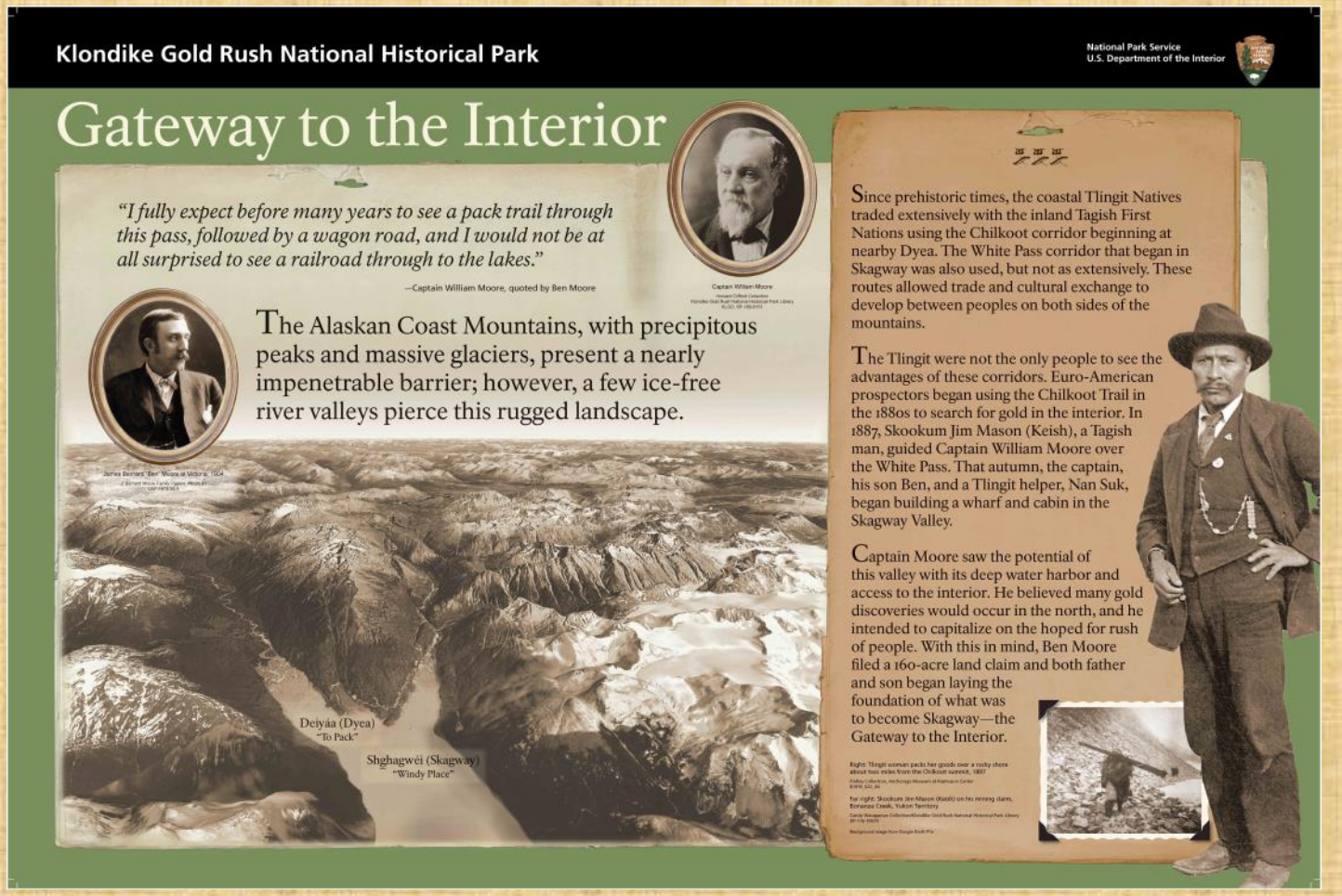
Bird Creek Campground



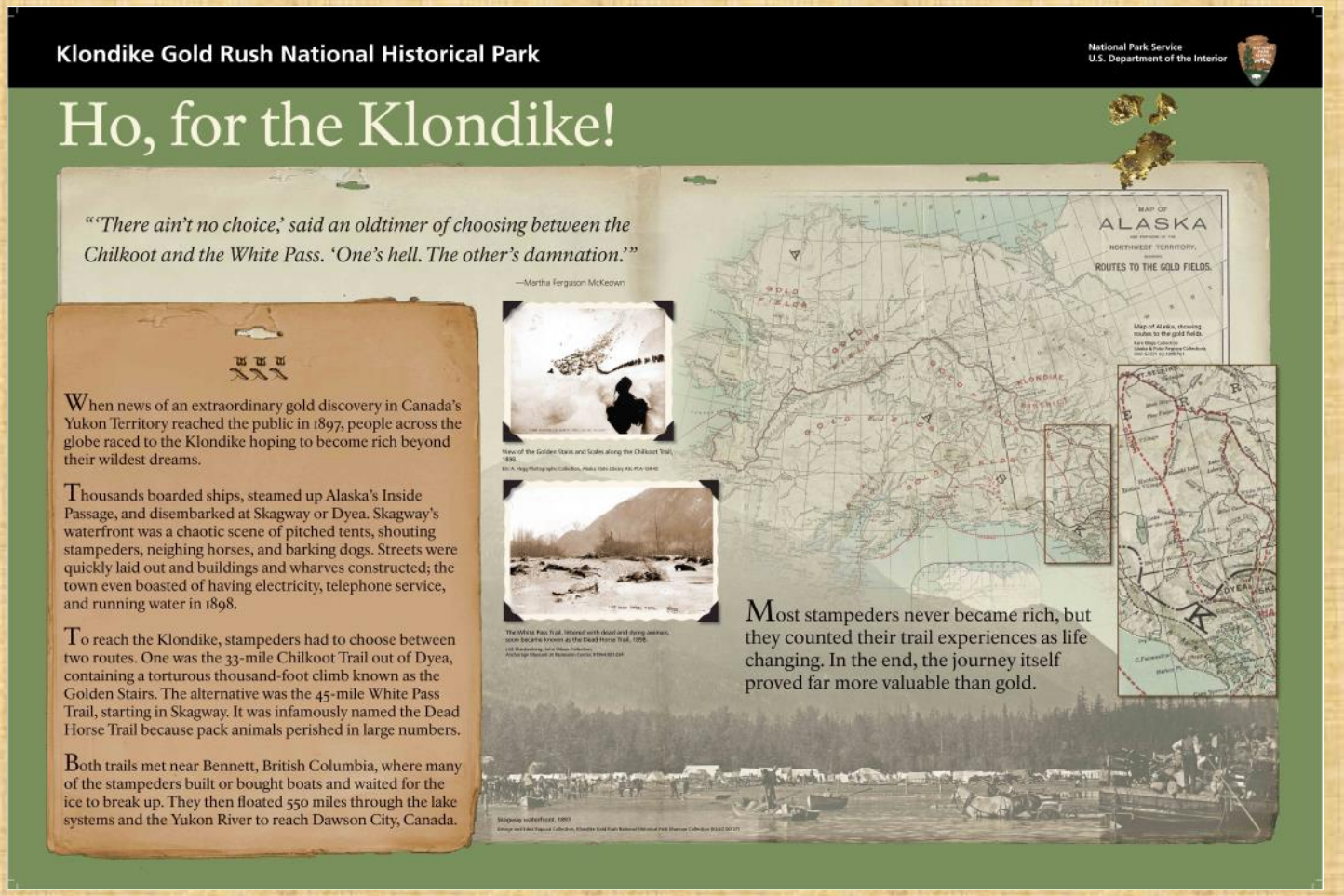
Bird Creek Campground



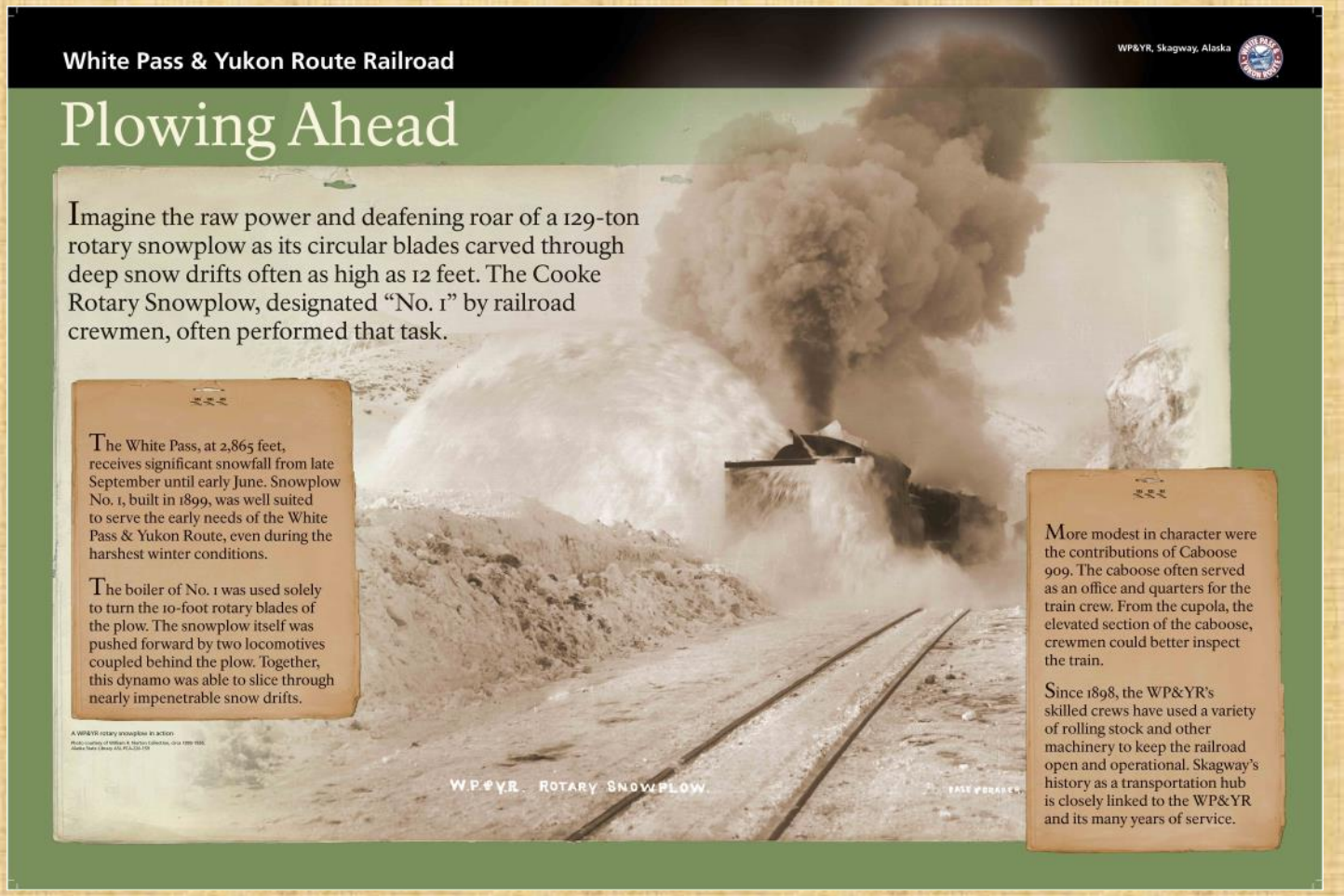
Other State, Federal, and Local Agencies



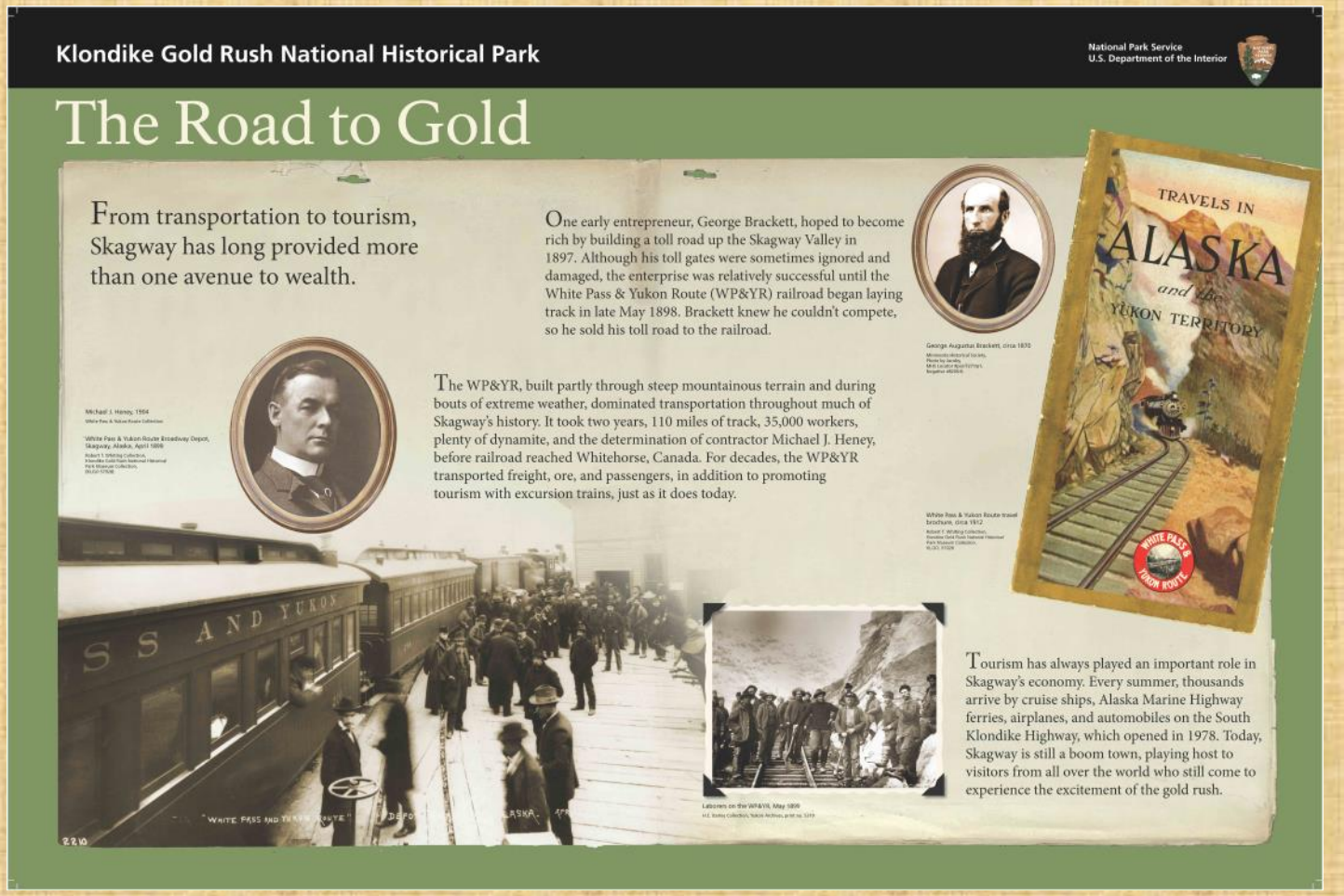
Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park



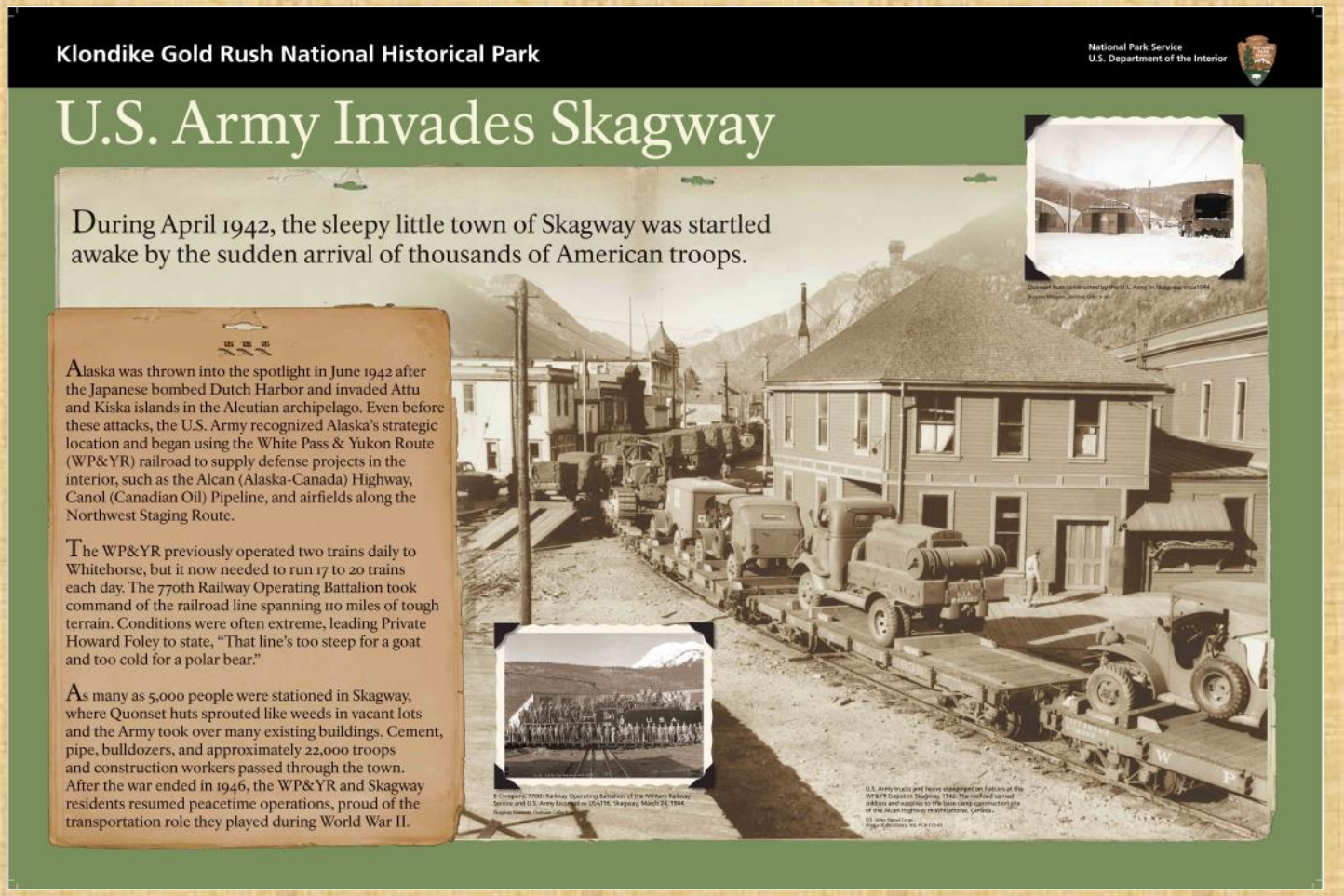
Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park



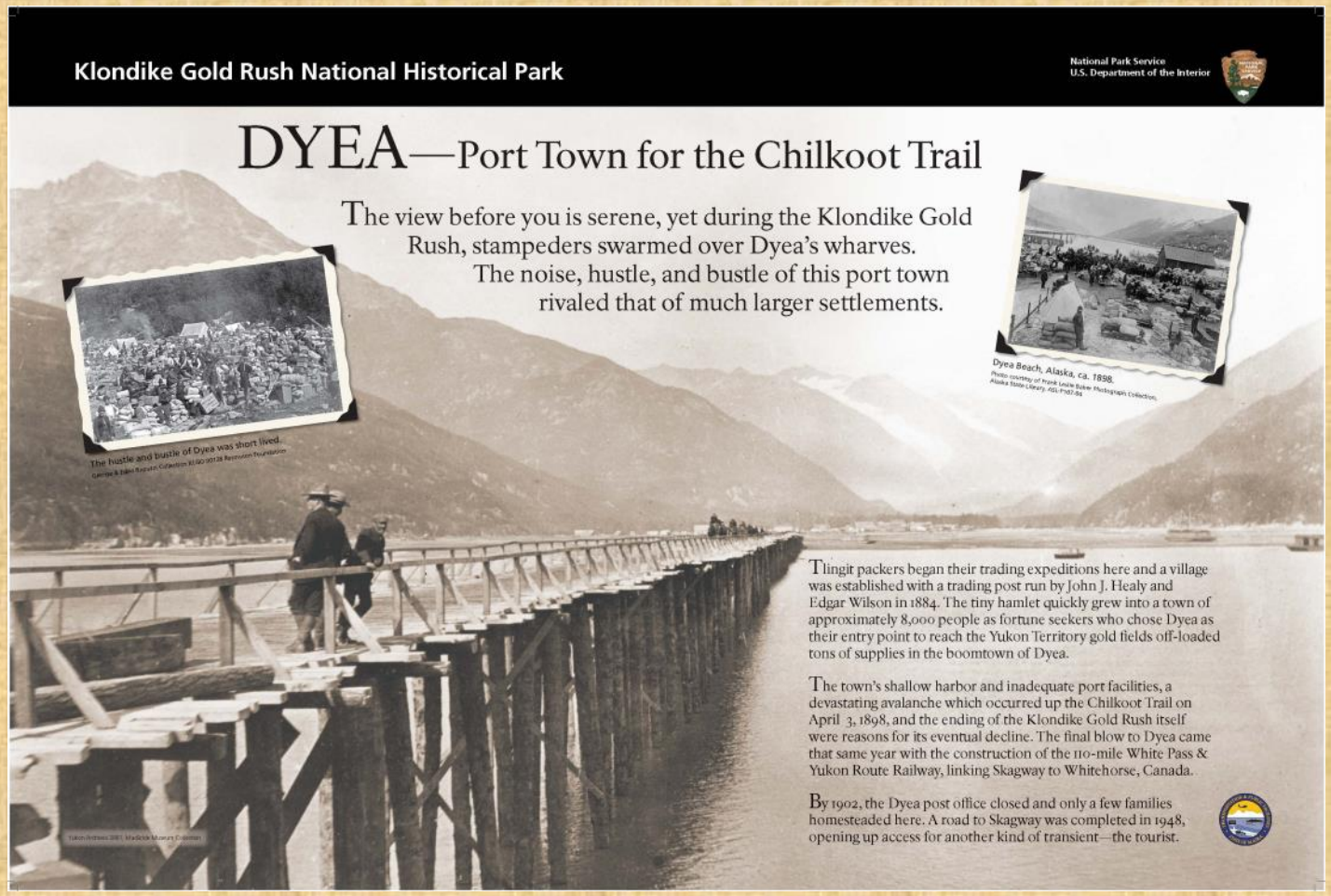
Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park



Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park



Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park



Municipality of Skagway Borough

Fairbanks

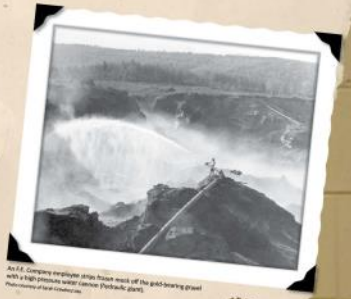
The F. E. Company

Operating along Illinois Street for over 40 years, the Fairbanks Exploration (F.E.) Company was vital to the development of Fairbanks and Interior Alaska.

Boom to Bust

When gold was discovered near Fairbanks in 1902, it triggered a rush that turned a trading post into a boomtown. The population of Fairbanks soared to 5,000 in 1909, but soon the most accessible deposits were panned out. Pick and shovel mining became unprofitable and the economy floundered. By 1920 the population had shrunk to 1,155.

This dredge at Fox was one of eight operated by the F.E. Company in the creeks surrounding Fairbanks.



An F.E. Company employee strips frozen muck off the gold-bearing gravel with a high-pressure water cannon (hydraulic giant).

The (New) Golden Age

In 1925 the F.E. Company arrived in Fairbanks to begin a dredging operation that extracted gold deposits unreachable by pick and shovel mining. To process the gold the company built a state-of-the-art industrial complex off a spur from the recently completed Alaska Railroad. By the 1930s the F.E. Company employed nearly 1,000 people (over a quarter of the local population), including machinists, engineers, and dredge operators. Workers bought goods and services locally that helped keep the Fairbanks economy healthy.

The F.E. Company office building was the center of operations. Notice the sign above the door. The F.E. Company was a subsidiary of the United States Smelting, Refining and Mining Company based in Boston, Massachusetts.

Crisis Precipitates Change

When the U.S. entered World War II, the government declared gold mining non-essential, and in October 1942 the F.E. Company dredges shut down. The F.E. Company assisted the Army during the war by providing facilities, heavy equipment, and electricity. Although gold production resumed after the war, the F.E. Company never regained its stature in the Fairbanks economy and discontinued dredging in 1965.

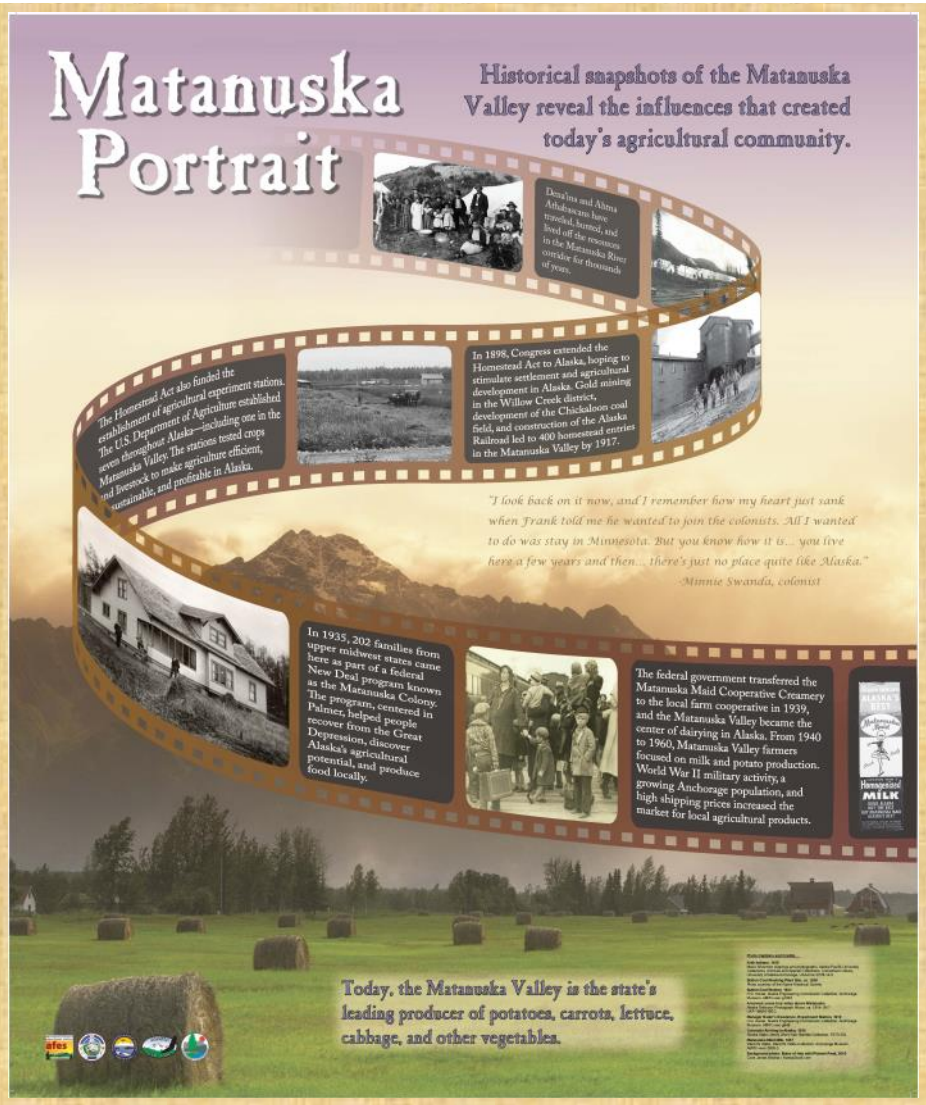
DOT & PF


Agriculture Anyone?
Since 1915 the Matanuska Experiment Farm has helped Alaskans develop suitable agricultural practices.
Matanuska Experiment Station
The U.S. Department of Agriculture established the Matanuska Experiment Station (now Farm) in 1915 to research plant and livestock breeds and agricultural practices for the region. In 1932 the station was transferred to the University of Alaska Fairbanks, becoming part of the Alaska Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station. The station provided technical assistance to local homesteaders and colonists hoping to develop a stable agricultural industry.
Building on the Past
Today's research topics are more complex than the farm's original objectives. A few of the topics being studied are arctic revegetation methods, crop season extenders, biomass energy, thermoregulation, and soil, plant, and feed nutrient analysis. The farm's buildings meld past and present into a working agricultural research facility. A state-of-the-art research, education, and administration building—Kerttula Hall—sits amidst five original structures. Part of the building sits atop the concrete floor of the original dairy barn.
Crimson Cultivation
The bright red strawberries grown in the valley today are juicy benefits from the farm's research. It took Dr. Curtis Dearborn over twenty years of research to develop three strawberry varieties that could flourish in Alaska's shortened growing season. He named them Susitna, Squentna, and Matared. Dearborn also developed hardy strains of potatoes and other crops.
Kodiak Cottage (1922)
Main Hall and Dormitory (1920)
Implement Shed (1922)
Center Cottage (1917)
Herdman's House (1930)

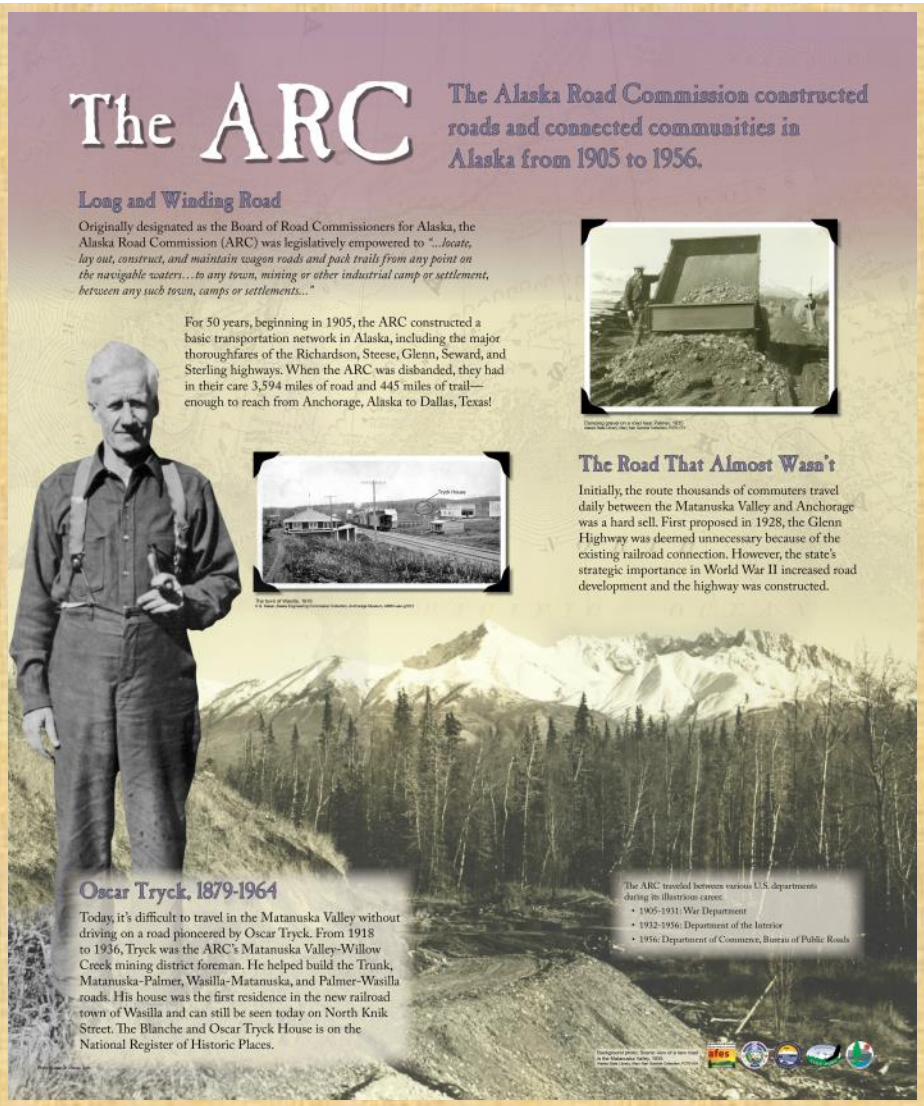
DOT & PF


Cows, Cabbage, & Crops
The Matanuska Valley is recognized for its resilient agricultural industry.
Matanuska Milk
The first Matanuska Valley cows were transplants from Kodiak. The hardy herd of Galloway-Holsteins was transferred from the Kodiak Experiment Station to the Matanuska Station in 1926; used for meat and milk, some were sold to homesteaders, colonists, and entrepreneurs. Grade A dairies developed throughout the area, including a creamery at the Curry Hotel north of Talkeetna. Operated by the Alaska Railroad, the creamery provided locally produced milk and cream at a much reduced price. In 1934, the Matanuska Experiment Station took over the railroad's creamery and renamed it "Matanuska Maid" two years later.
Giants
The Matanuska Valley is known for producing monster vegetables! Over 19 hours of sunlight during summer and rich soil enable crops to thrive and reach peak weight in August. In 1941, the first giant cabbage contest winner at the Matanuska Valley Fair was Palmer resident Max Sherrod, who won with a 23-pound cabbage. Almost 70 years later, the 2009 winning cabbage (and world record holder) weighed 127 pounds.
Potato chips are made with a special low-sugar potato that doesn't turn brown and look burnt when baked.
Tubers Rule
The first valley settlers grew potatoes as their primary cash crop. Today, potatoes are Alaska's number one horticultural product. Baked, fried, scalloped, mashed—there are many ways to prepare potatoes and just as many varieties. Over 15 varieties are grown in the valley to satisfy our insatiable need for this tremendous tuber.

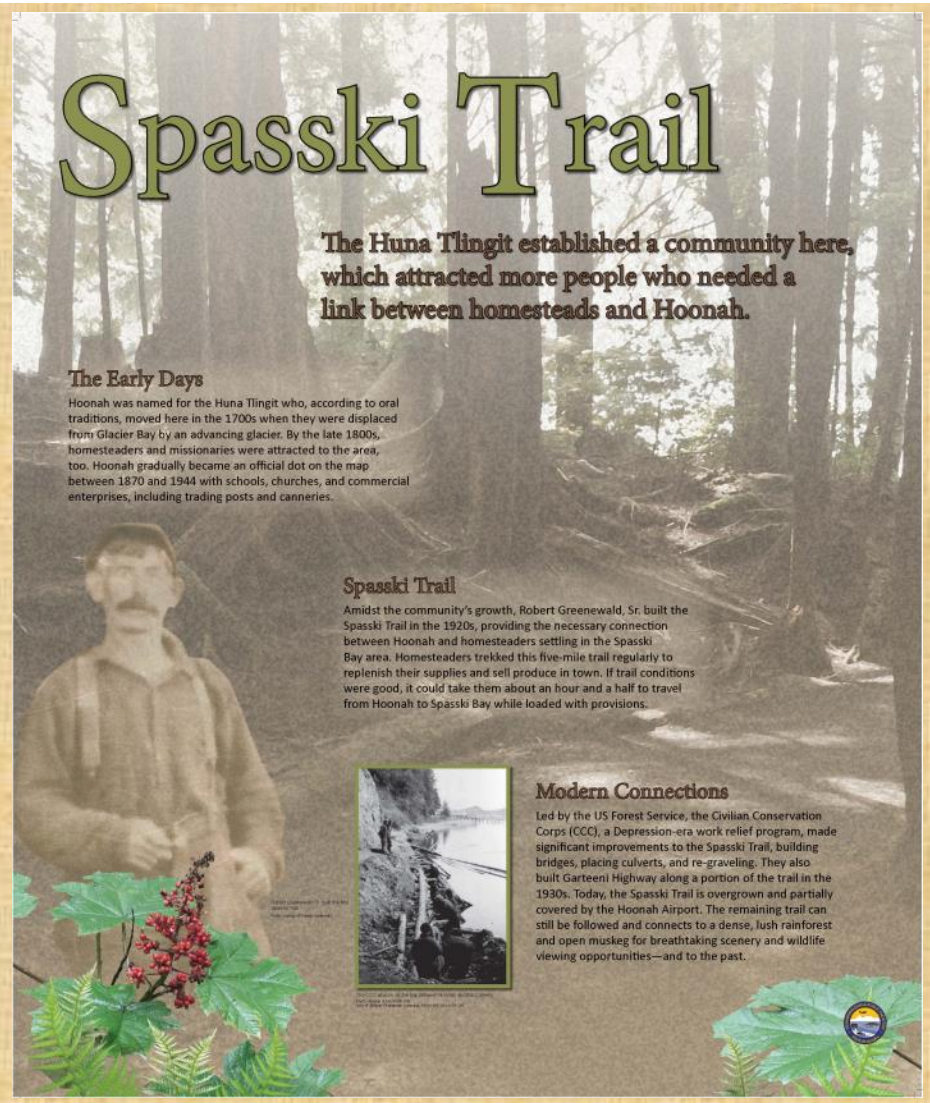
DOT & PF


Matanuska Portrait
Historical snapshots of the Matanuska Valley reveal the influences that created today's agricultural community.
Dena'ina and Ahtna Athabaskans have traveled, hunted, and lived off the resources in the Matanuska River corridor for thousands of years.
The Homestead Act also funded the establishment of agricultural experiment stations. The U.S. Department of Agriculture established seven throughout Alaska—including one in the Matanuska Valley. The stations tested crops and livestock to make agriculture efficient, sustainable, and profitable in Alaska.
In 1898, Congress extended the Homestead Act to Alaska, hoping to stimulate settlement and agricultural development in Alaska. Gold mining in the Willow Creek district, development of the Chickaloon coal field, and construction of the Alaska Railroad led to 400 homestead entries in the Matanuska Valley by 1917.
"I look back on it now, and I remember how my heart just sank when Frank told me he wanted to join the colonists. All I wanted to do was stay in Minnesota. But you know how it is... you live here a few years and then... there's just no place quite like Alaska."
-Minnie Swanda, colonist
In 1935, 202 families from upper midwest states came here as part of a federal New Deal program known as the Matanuska Colony. The program, centered in Palmer, helped people recover from the Great Depression, discover Alaska's agricultural potential, and produce food locally.
The federal government transferred the Matanuska Maid Cooperative Creamery to the local farm cooperative in 1939, and the Matanuska Valley became the center of dairying in Alaska. From 1940 to 1960, Matanuska Valley farmers focused on milk and potato production. World War II military activity, a growing Anchorage population, and high shipping prices increased the market for local agricultural products.
Today, the Matanuska Valley is the state's leading producer of potatoes, carrots, lettuce, cabbage, and other vegetables.

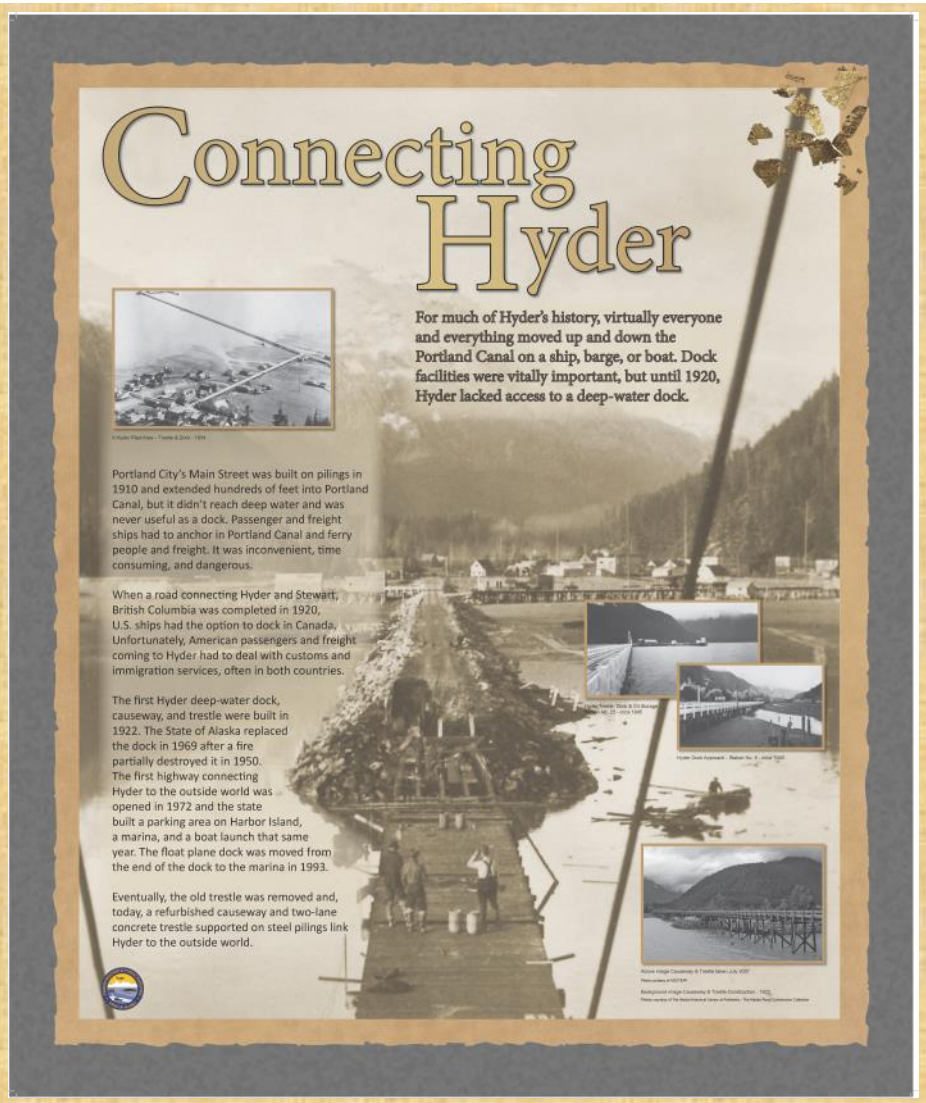
DOT & PF


The ARC
The Alaska Road Commission constructed roads and connected communities in Alaska from 1905 to 1956.
Long and Winding Road
Originally designated as the Board of Road Commissioners for Alaska, the Alaska Road Commission (ARC) was legislatively empowered to "...locate, lay out, construct, and maintain wagon roads and pack trails from any point on the navigable waters...to any town, mining or other industrial camp or settlement, between any such town, camps or settlements..."
For 50 years, beginning in 1905, the ARC constructed a basic transportation network in Alaska, including the major thoroughfares of the Richardson, Steese, Glenn, Seward, and Sterling highways. When the ARC was disbanded, they had in their care 3,594 miles of road and 445 miles of trail—enough to reach from Anchorage, Alaska to Dallas, Texas!
The Road That Almost Wasn't
Initially, the route thousands of commuters travel daily between the Matanuska Valley and Anchorage was a hard sell. First proposed in 1928, the Glenn Highway was deemed unnecessary because of the existing railroad connection. However, the state's strategic importance in World War II increased road development and the highway was constructed.
Oscar Tryck, 1879-1964
Today, it's difficult to travel in the Matanuska Valley without driving on a road pioneered by Oscar Tryck. From 1918 to 1936, Tryck was the ARC's Matanuska Valley-Willow Creek mining district foreman. He helped build the Trunk, Matanuska-Palmer, Wasilla-Matanuska, and Palmer-Wasilla roads. His house was the first residence in the new railroad town of Wasilla and can still be seen today on North Knik Street. The Blanche and Oscar Tryck House is on the National Register of Historic Places.
The ARC traveled between various U.S. departments during its illustrious career.
• 1905-1931: War Department
• 1932-1956: Department of the Interior
• 1956: Department of Commerce, Bureau of Public Roads

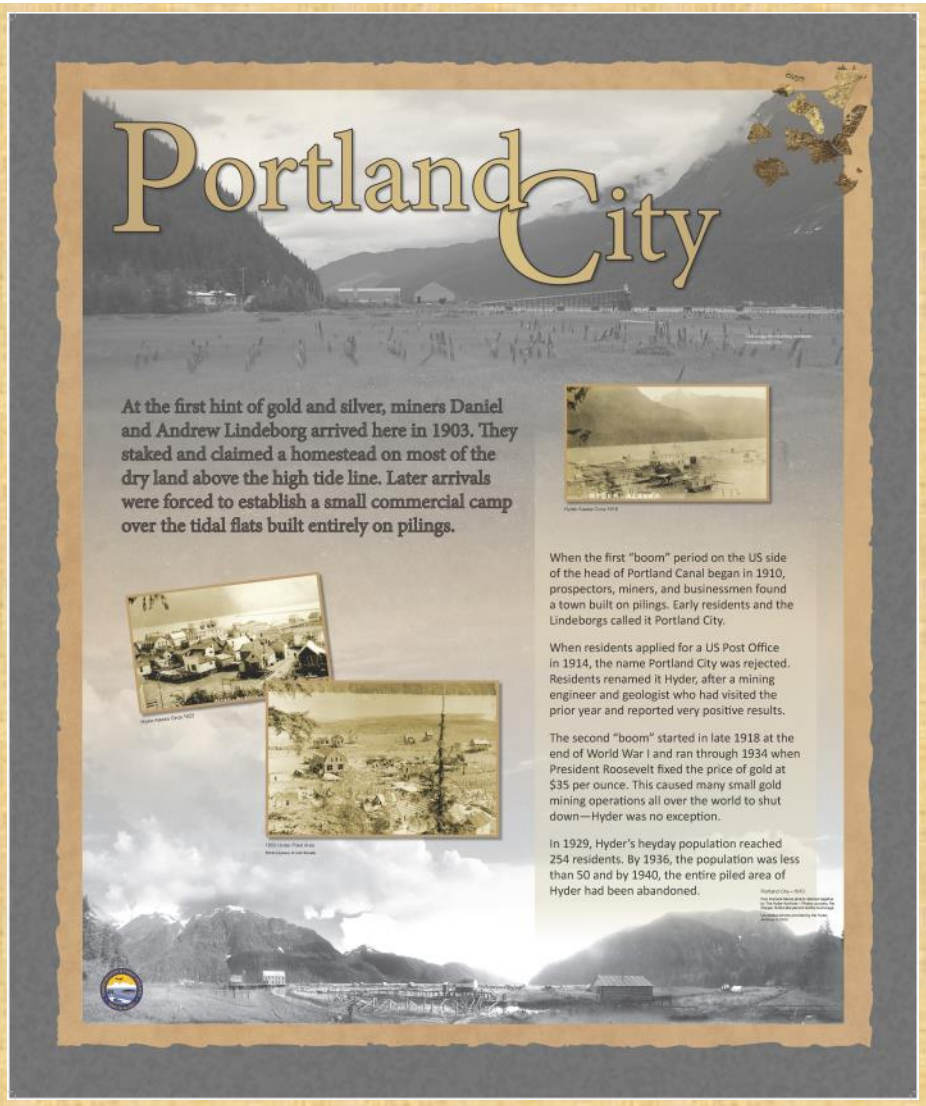
DOT & PF


Spasski Trail
The Huna Tlingit established a community here, which attracted more people who needed a link between homesteads and Hoonah.
The Early Days
Hoonah was named for the Huna Tlingit who, according to oral traditions, moved here in the 1700s when they were displaced from Glacier Bay by an advancing glacier. By the late 1800s, homesteaders and missionaries were attracted to the area, too. Hoonah gradually became an official dot on the map between 1870 and 1944 with schools, churches, and commercial enterprises, including trading posts and canneries.
Spasski Trail
Amidst the community's growth, Robert Greenewald, Sr. built the Spasski Trail in the 1920s, providing the necessary connection between Hoonah and homesteaders settling in the Spasski Bay area. Homesteaders trekked this five-mile trail regularly to replenish their supplies and sell produce in town. If trail conditions were good, it could take them about an hour and a half to travel from Hoonah to Spasski Bay while loaded with provisions.
Modern Connections
Led by the US Forest Service, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), a Depression-era work relief program, made significant improvements to the Spasski Trail, building bridges, placing culverts, and re-graveling. They also built Garteeni Highway along a portion of the trail in the 1930s. Today, the Spasski Trail is overgrown and partially covered by the Hoonah Airport. The remaining trail can still be followed and connects to a dense, lush rainforest and open muskeg for breathtaking scenery and wildlife viewing opportunities—and to the past.

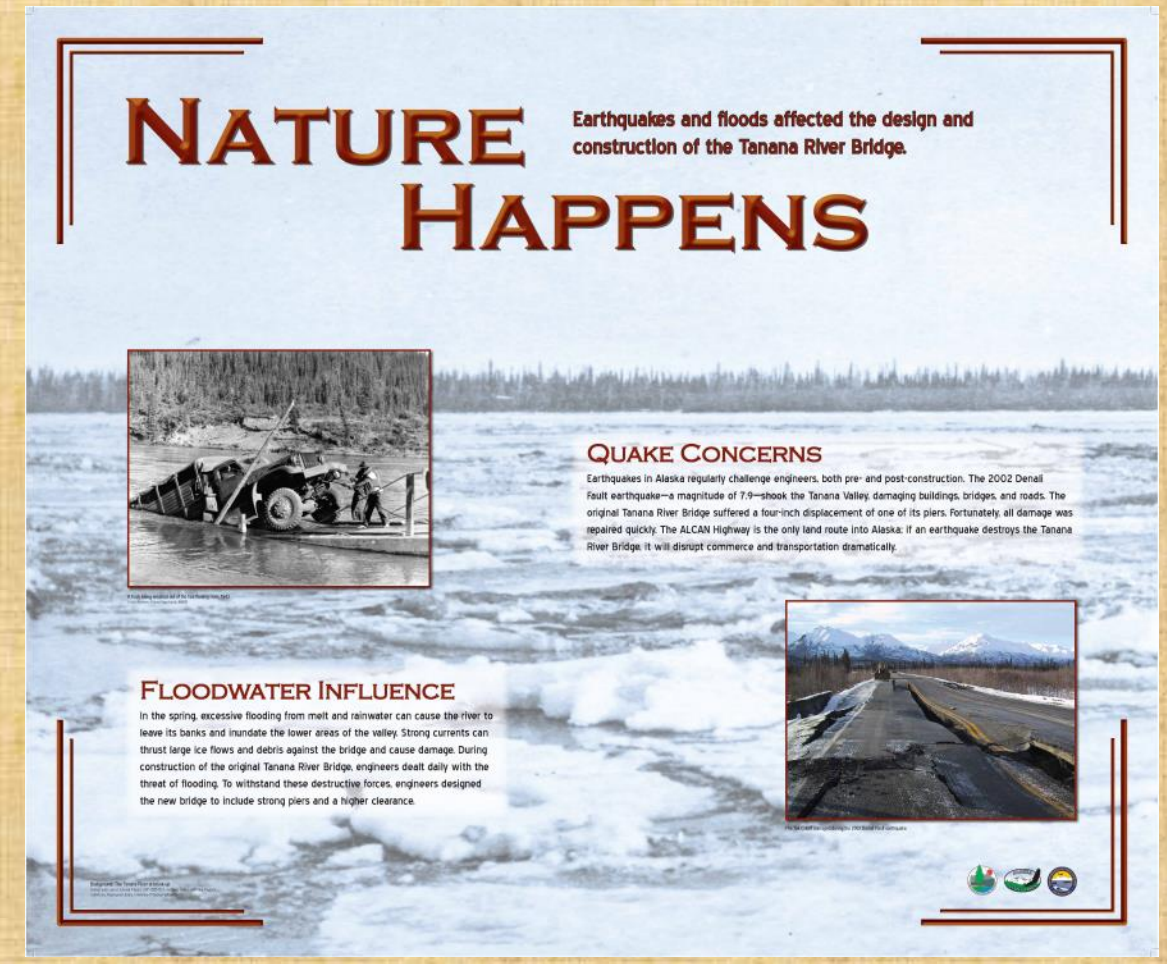
DOT & PF


Connecting Hyder
For much of Hyder's history, virtually everyone and everything moved up and down the Portland Canal on a ship, barge, or boat. Dock facilities were vitally important, but until 1920, Hyder lacked access to a deep-water dock.
Portland City's Main Street was built on pilings in 1910 and extended hundreds of feet into Portland Canal, but it didn't reach deep water and was never useful as a dock. Passenger and freight ships had to anchor in Portland Canal and ferry people and freight. It was inconvenient, time consuming, and dangerous.
When a road connecting Hyder and Stewart, British Columbia was completed in 1920, U.S. ships had the option to dock in Canada. Unfortunately, American passengers and freight coming to Hyder had to deal with customs and immigration services, often in both countries.
The first Hyder deep-water dock, causeway, and trestle were built in 1922. The State of Alaska replaced the dock in 1969 after a fire partially destroyed it in 1950. The first highway connecting Hyder to the outside world was opened in 1972 and the state built a parking area on Harbor Island, a marina, and a boat launch that same year. The float plane dock was moved from the end of the dock to the marina in 1993.
Eventually, the old trestle was removed and, today, a refurbished causeway and two-lane concrete trestle supported on steel pilings link Hyder to the outside world.

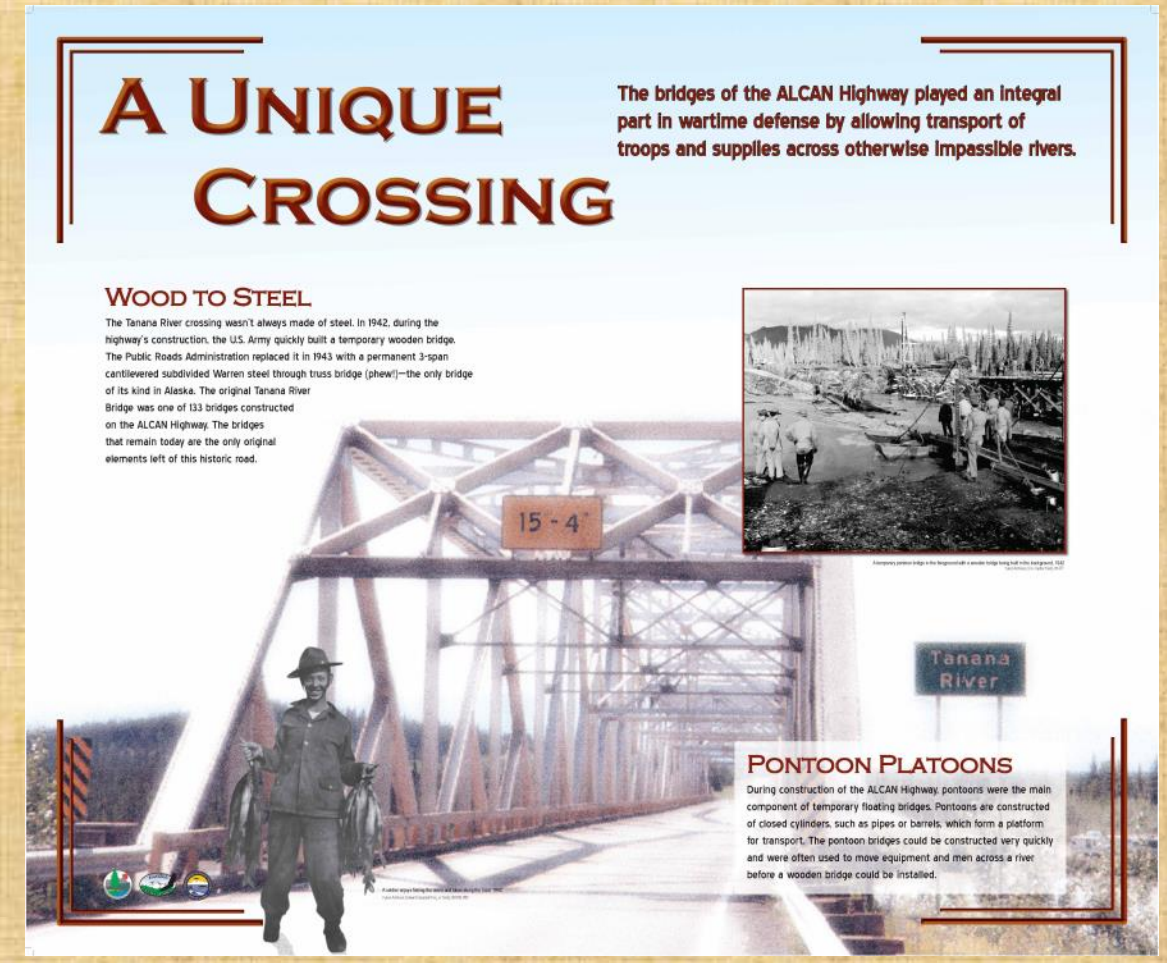
DOT & PF


Portland City
At the first hint of gold and silver, miners Daniel and Andrew Lindeborg arrived here in 1903. They staked and claimed a homestead on most of the dry land above the high tide line. Later arrivals were forced to establish a small commercial camp over the tidal flats built entirely on pilings.
When the first "boom" period on the US side of the head of Portland Canal began in 1910, prospectors, miners, and businessmen found a town built on pilings. Early residents and the Lindeborgs called it Portland City.
When residents applied for a US Post Office in 1914, the name Portland City was rejected. Residents renamed it Hyder, after a mining engineer and geologist who had visited the prior year and reported very positive results.
The second "boom" started in late 1918 at the end of World War I and ran through 1934 when President Roosevelt fixed the price of gold at $35 per ounce. This caused many small gold mining operations all over the world to shut down—Hyder was no exception.
In 1929, Hyder's heyday population reached 254 residents. By 1936, the population was less than 50 and by 1940, the entire piled area of Hyder had been abandoned.

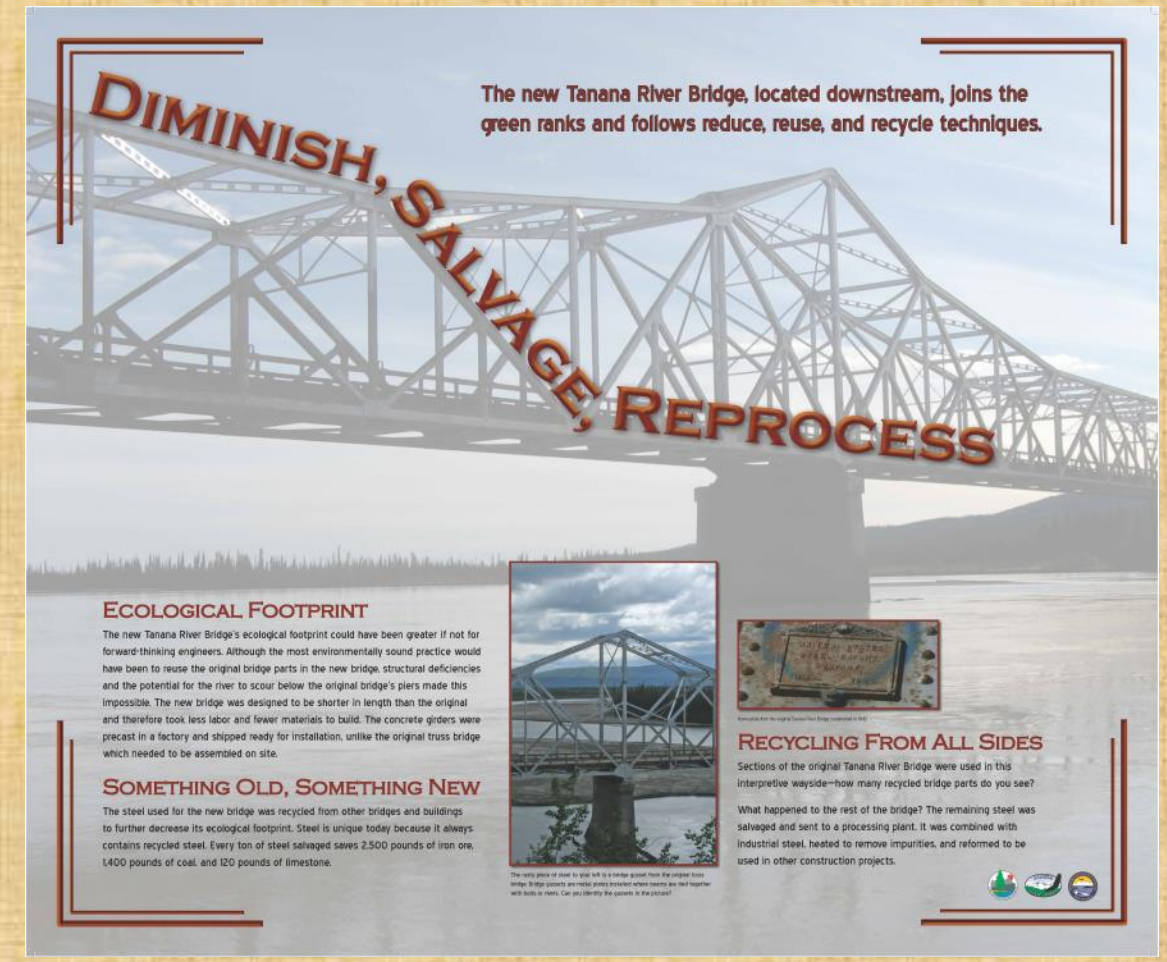
DOT & PF


NATURE HAPPENS
Earthquakes and floods affected the design and construction of the Tanana River Bridge.
QUAKE CONCERNS
Earthquakes in Alaska regularly challenge engineers, both pre- and post-construction. The 2002 Denali Fault earthquake—a magnitude of 7.9—shook the Tanana Valley, damaging buildings, bridges, and roads. The original Tanana River Bridge suffered a four-inch displacement of one of its piers. Fortunately, all damage was repaired quickly. The ALCAN Highway is the only land route into Alaska; if an earthquake destroys the Tanana River Bridge, it will disrupt commerce and transportation dramatically.
FLOODWATER INFLUENCE
In the spring, excessive flooding from melt and rainwater can cause the river to leave its banks and inundate the lower areas of the valley. Strong currents can thrust large ice flows and debris against the bridge and cause damage. During construction of the original Tanana River Bridge, engineers dealt daily with the threat of flooding. To withstand these destructive forces, engineers designed the new bridge to include strong piers and a higher clearance.

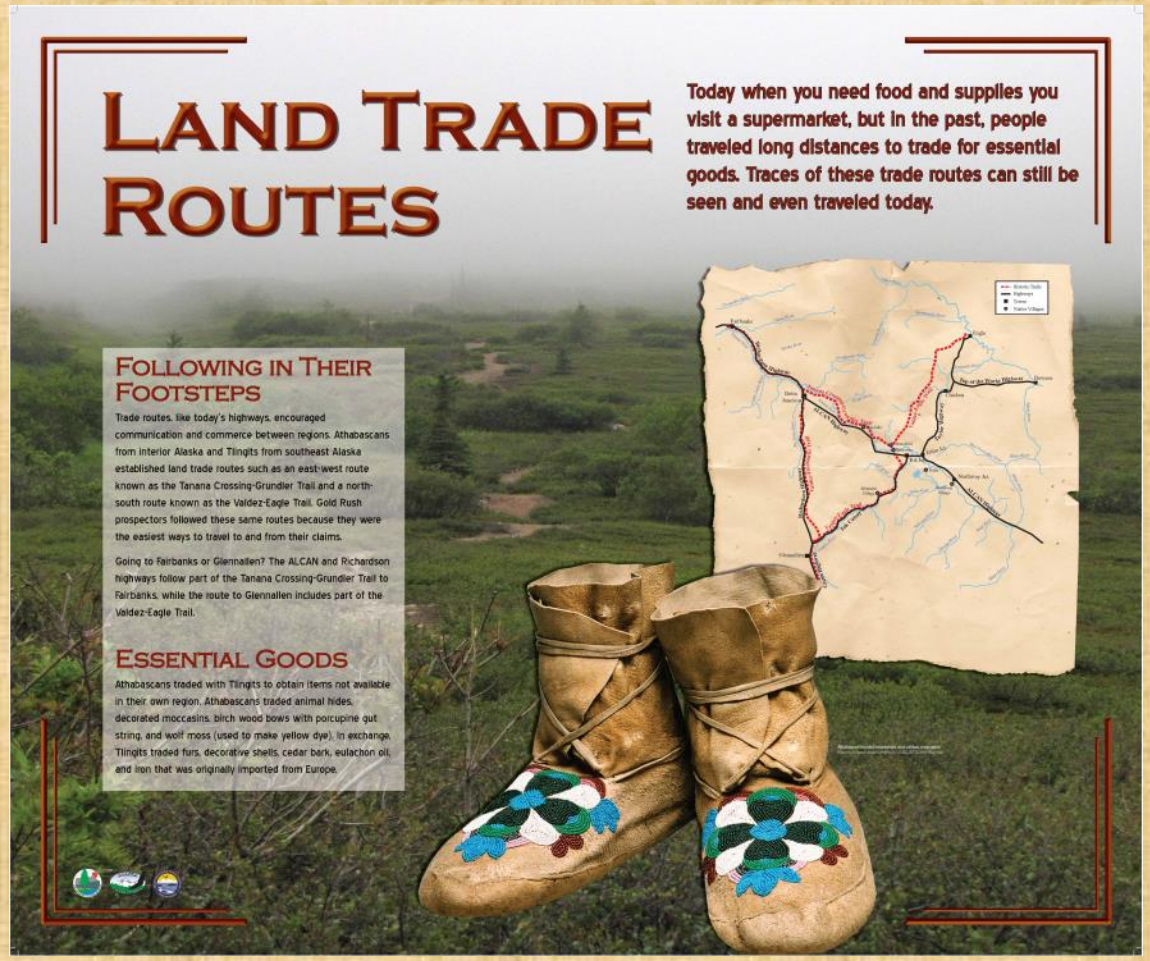
DOT & PF


A Unique Crossing
The bridges of the ALCAN Highway played an integral part in wartime defense by allowing transport of troops and supplies across otherwise impassible rivers.
Wood to Steel
The Tanana River crossing wasn't always made of steel. In 1942, during the highway's construction, the U.S. Army quickly built a temporary wooden bridge. The Public Roads Administration replaced it in 1943 with a permanent 3-span cantilevered subdivided Warren steel through truss bridge (phew!)—the only bridge of its kind in Alaska. The original Tanana River Bridge was one of 133 bridges constructed on the ALCAN Highway. The bridges that remain today are the only original elements left of this historic road.
15 - 4
Tanana River
Pontoon Platoons
During construction of the ALCAN Highway, pontoons were the main component of temporary floating bridges. Pontoons are constructed of closed cylinders, such as pipes or barrels, which form a platform for transport. The pontoon bridges could be constructed very quickly and were often used to move equipment and men across a river before a wooden bridge could be installed.

DOT & PF


DIMINISH, SALVAGE, REPROCESS
The new Tanana River Bridge, located downstream, joins the green ranks and follows reduce, reuse, and recycle techniques.
ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT
The new Tanana River Bridge's ecological footprint could have been greater if not for forward-thinking engineers. Although the most environmentally sound practice would have been to reuse the original bridge parts in the new bridge, structural deficiencies and the potential for the river to scour below the original bridge's piers made this impossible. The new bridge was designed to be shorter in length than the original and therefore took less labor and fewer materials to build. The concrete girders were precast in a factory and shipped ready for installation, unlike the original truss bridge which needed to be assembled on site.
SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW
The steel used for the new bridge was recycled from other bridges and buildings to further decrease its ecological footprint. Steel is unique today because it always contains recycled steel. Every ton of steel salvaged saves 2,500 pounds of iron ore, 1,400 pounds of coal, and 120 pounds of limestone.
RECYCLING FROM ALL SIDES
Sections of the original Tanana River Bridge were used in this interpretive wayside—how many recycled bridge parts do you see?
What happened to the rest of the bridge? The remaining steel was salvaged and sent to a processing plant. It was combined with industrial steel, heated to remove impurities, and reformed to be used in other construction projects.

DOT & PF


Land Trade Routes
Today when you need food and supplies you visit a supermarket, but in the past, people traveled long distances to trade for essential goods. Traces of these trade routes can still be seen and even traveled today.
Following in Their Footsteps
Trade routes, like today's highways, encouraged communication and commerce between regions. Athabascans from interior Alaska and Tlingits from southeast Alaska established land trade routes such as an east-west route known as the Tanana Crossing-Grundler Trail and a north-south route known as the Valdez-Eagle Trail. Gold Rush prospectors followed these same routes because they were the easiest ways to travel to and from their claims.
Going to Fairbanks or Glennallen? The ALCAN and Richardson highways follow part of the Tanana Crossing-Grundler Trail to Fairbanks, while the route to Glennallen includes part of the Valdez-Eagle Trail.
Essential Goods
Athabascans traded with Tlingits to obtain items not available in their own region. Athabascans traded animal hides, decorated moccasins, birch wood bows with porcupine gut string, and wolf moss (used to make yellow dye). In exchange, Tlingits traded furs, decorative shells, cedar bark, eulachon oil, and iron that was originally imported from Europe.

DOT & PF

LINKING ALASKA

Alaska's vulnerability to Japanese attack justified the need to build a military supply route to connect the continental U.S. to Alaska.

STRATEGIC STEPPING STONE

Alaska was susceptible to attack because of its isolation; prior to WWII, the only way to enter Alaska was by boat, plane, or overland by foot. Rough terrain, fast-flowing rivers, distance, and cost made building a road from the continental U.S. to Alaska difficult to justify. However, the Japanese bombing of Dutch Harbor and invasion of the Aleutian Islands of Kiska and Attu in 1942 was all the justification needed. In January 1942, the U.S. War Department approved construction of the Alaska-Canadian Highway (ALCAN).

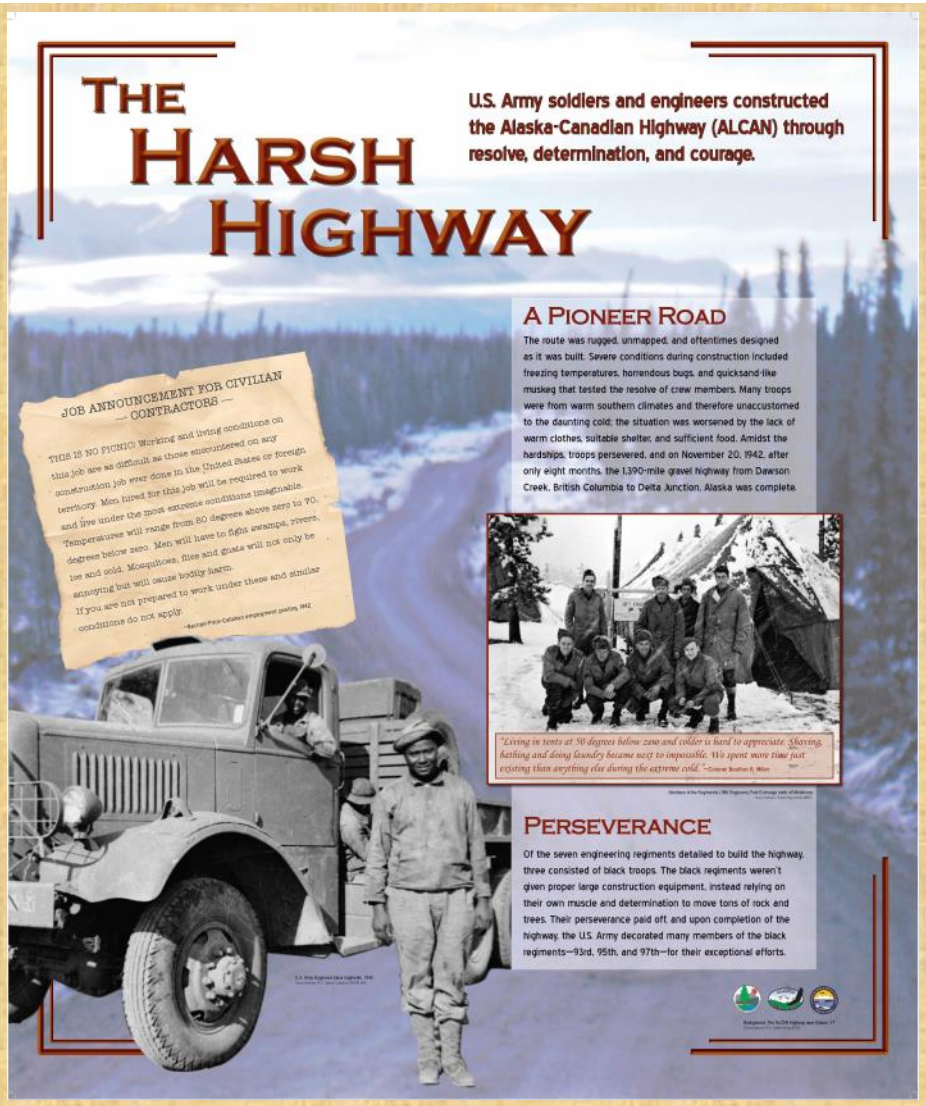
"I believe that in the future, whoever holds Alaska will hold the world. I think it is the most important strategic place in the world."

–General Billy Mitchell to Congress in 1935

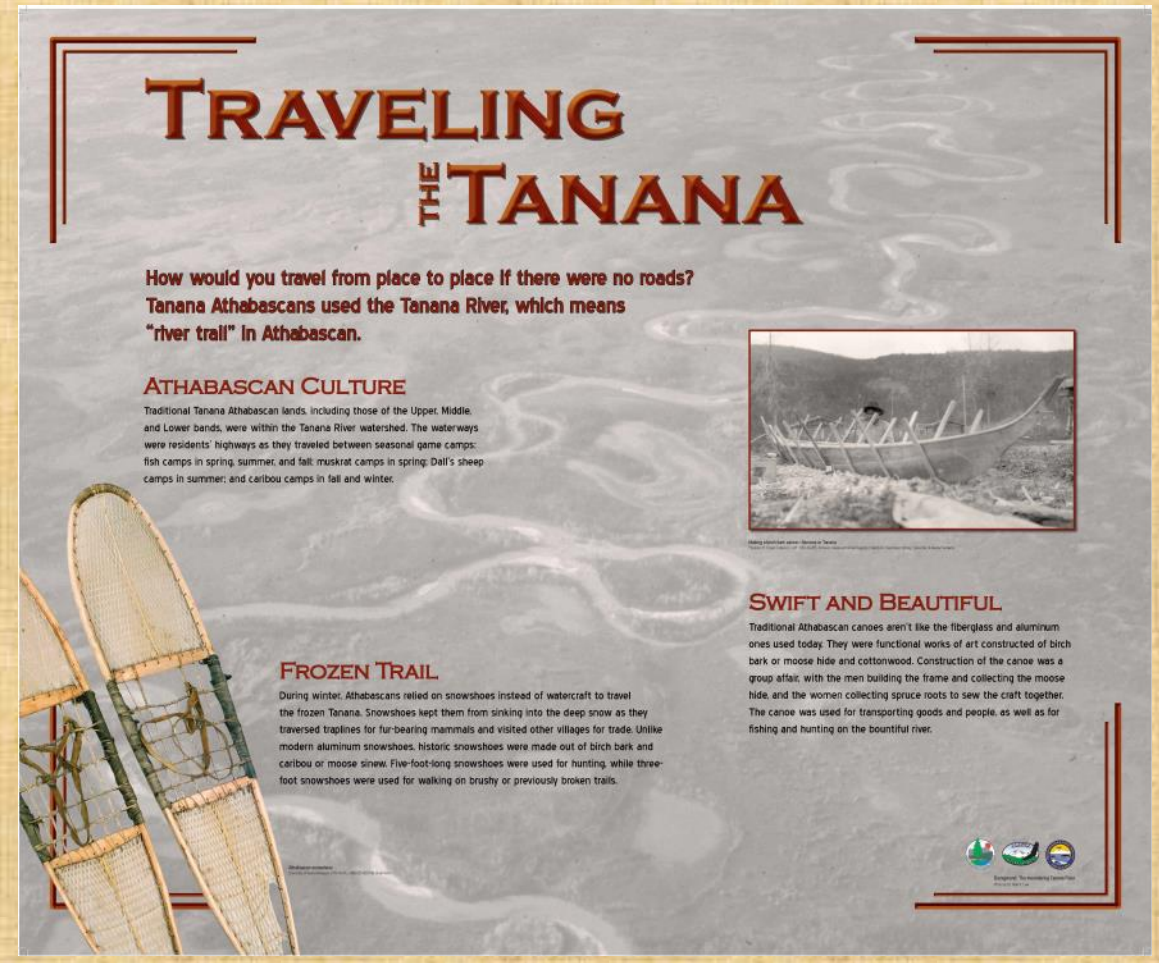
ALCAN

The 1,390-mile ALCAN Highway was built by the blood and sweat of over 10,000 men in eight grueling months. Construction cost $138 million and included 133 bridges. Although built for strategic defense purposes, the ALCAN Highway became a new link for commerce and travel to Alaska.

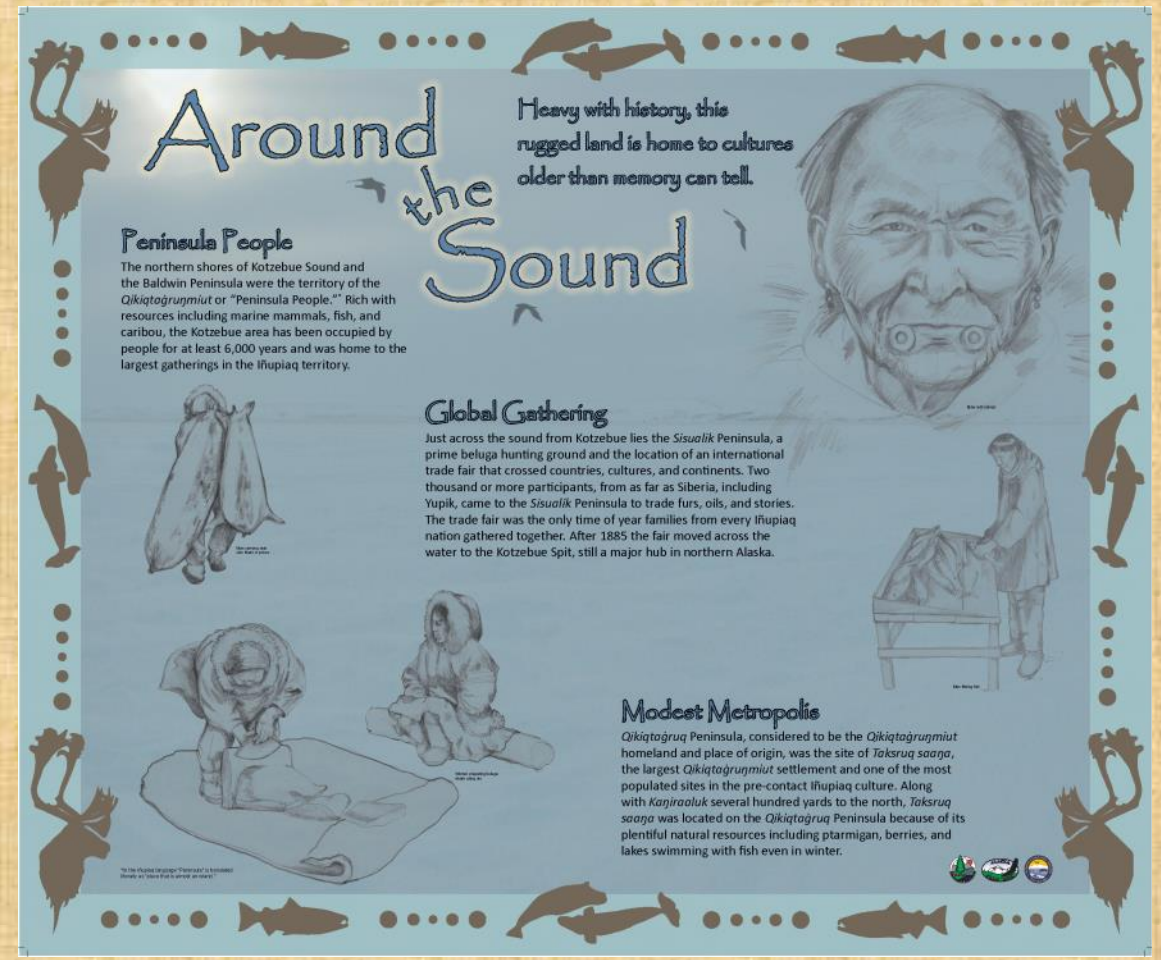
DOT & PF


THE HARSH HIGHWAY
U.S. Army soldiers and engineers constructed the Alaska-Canadian Highway (ALCAN) through resolve, determination, and courage.
A PIONEER ROAD
The route was rugged, unmapped, and oftentimes designed as it was built. Severe conditions during construction included freezing temperatures, horrendous bugs, and quicksand-like muskeg that tested the resolve of crew members. Many troops were from warm southern climates and therefore unaccustomed to the daunting cold; the situation was worsened by the lack of warm clothes, suitable shelter, and sufficient food. Amidst the hardships, troops persevered, and on November 20, 1942, after only eight months, the 1,390-mile gravel highway from Dawson Creek, British Columbia to Delta Junction, Alaska was complete.
JOB ANNOUNCEMENT FOR CIVILIAN — CONTRACTORS —
THIS IS NO PICNIC! Working and living conditions on this job are as difficult as those encountered on any construction job ever done in the United States or foreign territory. Men hired for this job will be required to work and live under the most extreme conditions imaginable. Temperatures will range from 80 degrees above zero to 70 degrees below zero. Men will have to fight swamps, rivers, ice and cold. Mosquitoes, flies and gnats will not only be annoying but will cause bodily harm.
If you are not prepared to work under these and similar conditions do not apply.
"Living in tents at 50 degrees below zero and colder is hard to appreciate. Shaving, bathing and doing laundry became next to impossible. We spent more time just existing than anything else during the extreme cold." –Colonel Scotton R. Miller
PERSEVERANCE
Of the seven engineering regiments detailed to build the highway, three consisted of black troops. The black regiments weren't given proper large construction equipment, instead relying on their own muscle and determination to move tons of rock and trees. Their perseverance paid off, and upon completion of the highway, the U.S. Army decorated many members of the black regiments—93rd, 95th, and 97th—for their exceptional efforts.

DOT & PF


TRAVELING THE TANANA
How would you travel from place to place if there were no roads? Tanana Athabascans used the Tanana River, which means "river trail" in Athabascan.
ATHABASCAN CULTURE
Traditional Tanana Athabascan lands, including those of the Upper, Middle, and Lower bands, were within the Tanana River watershed. The waterways were residents' highways as they traveled between seasonal game camps: fish camps in spring, summer, and fall; muskrat camps in spring; Dall's sheep camps in summer; and caribou camps in fall and winter.
FROZEN TRAIL
During winter, Athabascans relied on snowshoes instead of watercraft to travel the frozen Tanana. Snowshoes kept them from sinking into the deep snow as they traversed traplines for fur-bearing mammals and visited other villages for trade. Unlike modern aluminum snowshoes, historic snowshoes were made out of birch bark and caribou or moose sinew. Five-foot-long snowshoes were used for hunting, while three-foot snowshoes were used for walking on brushy or previously broken trails.
SWIFT AND BEAUTIFUL
Traditional Athabascan canoes aren't like the fiberglass and aluminum ones used today. They were functional works of art constructed of birch bark or moose hide and cottonwood. Construction of the canoe was a group affair, with the men building the frame and collecting the moose hide, and the women collecting spruce roots to sew the craft together. The canoe was used for transporting goods and people, as well as for fishing and hunting on the bountiful river.

DOT & PF


Around the Sound
Heavy with history, this rugged land is home to cultures older than memory can tell.
Peninsula People
The northern shores of Kotzebue Sound and the Baldwin Peninsula were the territory of the *Qikiqtaġruŋmiut* or "Peninsula People."' Rich with resources including marine mammals, fish, and caribou, the Kotzebue area has been occupied by people for at least 6,000 years and was home to the largest gatherings in the Iñupiaq territory.
Global Gathering
Just across the sound from Kotzebue lies the *Sisualik* Peninsula, a prime beluga hunting ground and the location of an international trade fair that crossed countries, cultures, and continents. Two thousand or more participants, from as far as Siberia, including Yupik, came to the *Sisualik* Peninsula to trade furs, oils, and stories. The trade fair was the only time of year families from every Iñupiaq nation gathered together. After 1885 the fair moved across the water to the Kotzebue Spit, still a major hub in northern Alaska.
Modest Metropolis
Qikiqtaġruq Peninsula, considered to be the *Qikiqtaġruŋmiut* homeland and place of origin, was the site of *Taksruq saaŋa*, the largest *Qikiqtaġruŋmiut* settlement and one of the most populated sites in the pre-contact Iñupiaq culture. Along with *Kaŋiraaluk* several hundred yards to the north, *Taksruq saaŋa* was located on the *Qikiqtaġruq* Peninsula because of its plentiful natural resources including ptarmigan, berries, and lakes swimming with fish even in winter.

DOT & PF

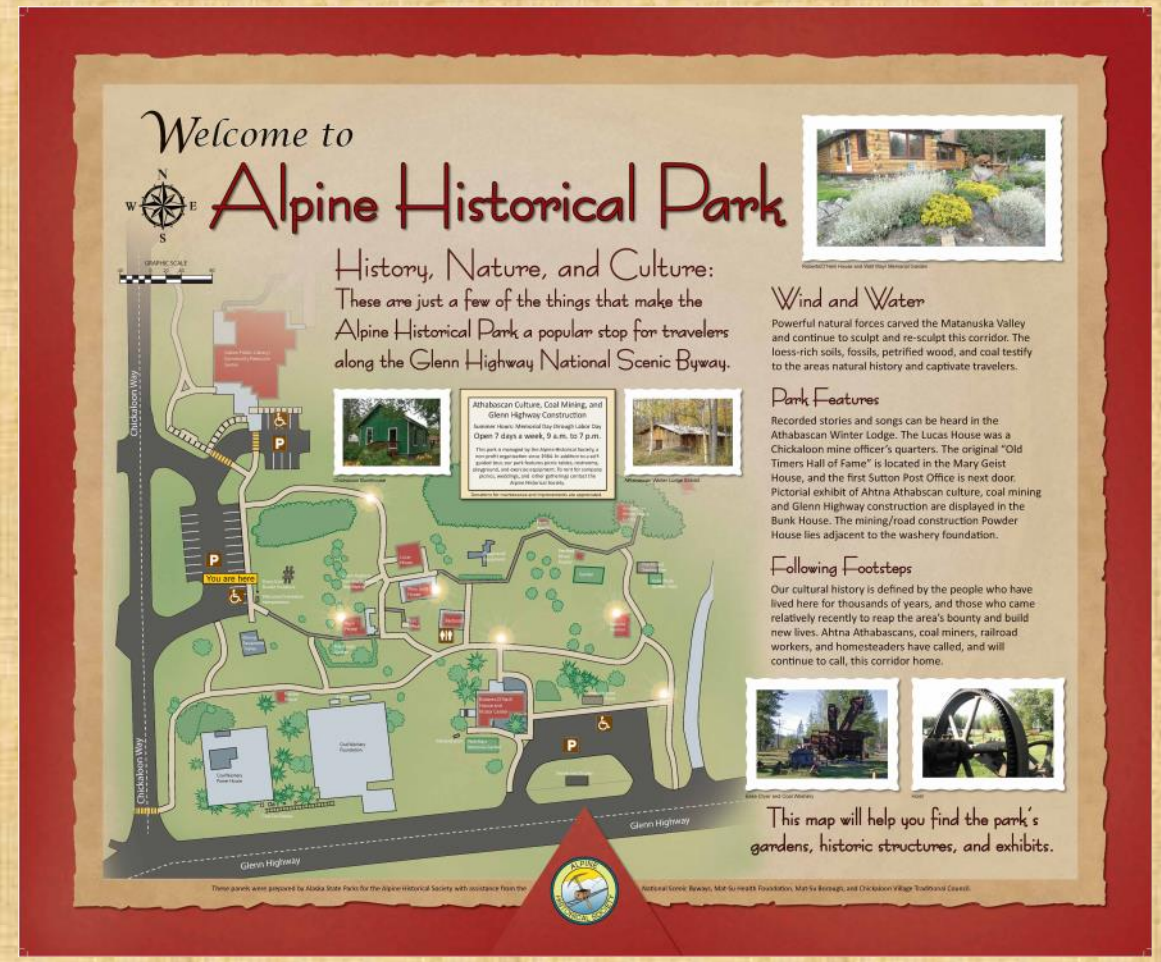

Front Street
Once a simple foot path, Front Street—now Shore Avenue—has evolved with the community it ties together.
Salt Water People
Before this strip of land was called Front Street or Shore Avenue, it was simply the shore—a place that provided residents with a connection to food, clothing, and transportation. The sea was an essential partner in survival to the ancient people who lived in this area for over 6,000 years, and continues to be for the Iñupiat who draw life and livelihood from its waters today.
A City on the Shore
As Kotzebue grew from a village into a city, the beach—and Front Street—continued to be the focus of life for the people here. Families stored their *umiat* (skin boats)on the beach, offering the freedom of the open sea at their doorstep. In the summer it was a place to catch fish and dry them on the racks that lined the avenue. During winter it was the launching point for ice fishing and hunting. Year round it was a place to meet with friends and catch up on the local news.
Changing Tide
Progress is not without its perils. The arrival of cars in Kotzebue added congestion and dust to Front Street, making the fish racks unusable. When the harbor was built, many families upgraded to larger modern boats, leaving the *umiat* sitting upon the sand. Persistent battles with erosion and encroaching sea ice demanded bold changes. But progress, like time, is not a two way street; with the reconstruction of Shore Avenue, a significant part of the tradition and culture of Kotzebue has been irrevocably lost. Although Front Street has changed, the beach and the way of life it represents will live on in the people of Kotzebue.

DOT & PF

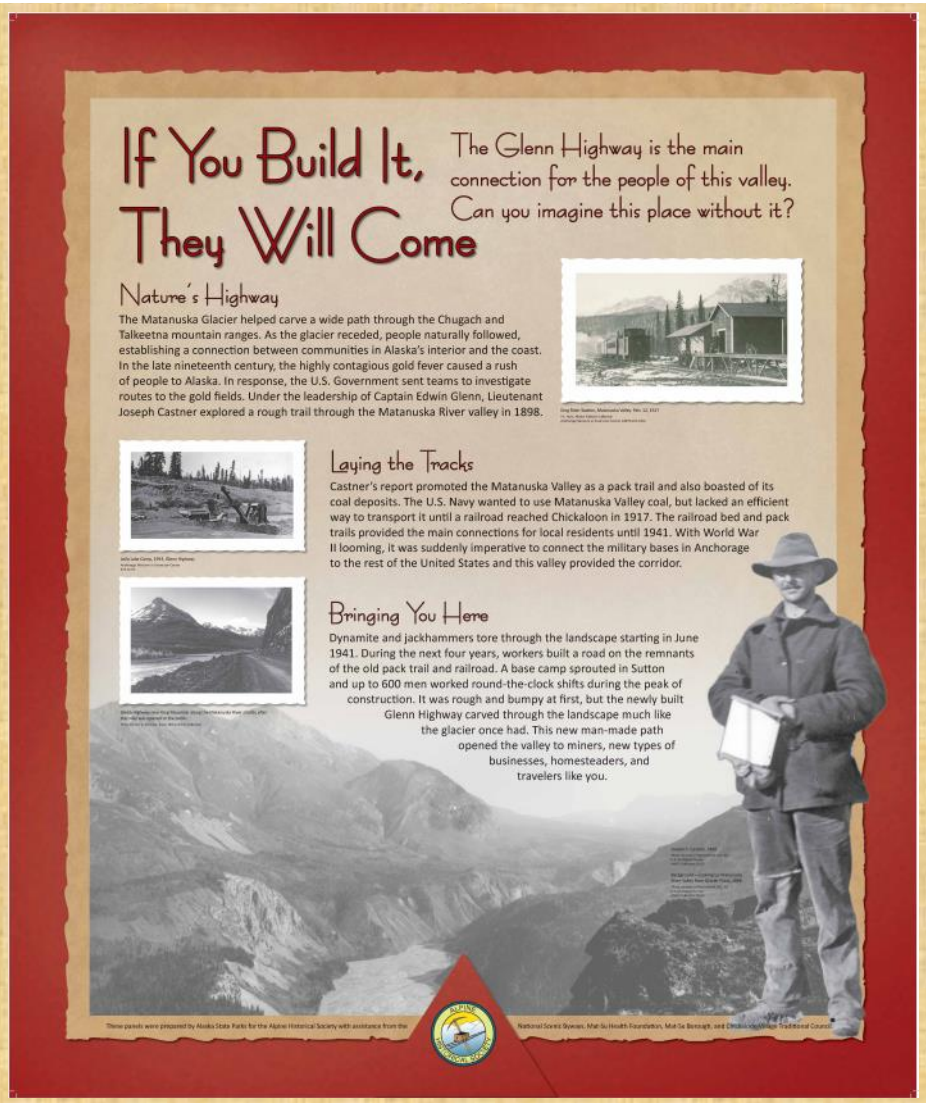

Spring
When the sea ice broke on Kotzebue Sound, Qikiqtaġruŋmiut men hunted for seals from kayaks and large skin boats called umiat. Meanwhile, women processed the harvest by making rope and storing the blubber and meat in seal pokes. As the last of the ice left, so did the seals; the Qikiqtaġruŋmiut loaded their umiat and moved as a fleet down the coast toward Siuualiik.
Summer
After the trade fair at Siuualiik, the Qikiqtaġruŋmiut spread out in small camps along Kotzebue Sound to harvest salmon. In addition to fishing, the women picked masru (Eskimo potatoes) and berries. Many of the men went into the Igichuck Hills and Baird Mountains to hunt caribou and grizzly bears. By late September, hunters returned to their families bringing hides, meat, and fat.
Baird Mountains
Igichuck Hills
Qikiqtaġruŋmiut
Like all Iñupiat, the Qikiqtaġrunmiut—or Malemuit—of northern Kotzebue Sound lived a yearly cycle of subsistence in rhythm with the ebb and flow of their environment.
Fall
The reunited families quickly moved to their fall and winter settlements to prepare for the last seal hunt before winter. In fall, seals were hunted in open water using nets, spears, and many clever techniques. After the water froze, families fished through holes for tomcod and sheefish and piled their catch on the ice in preparation for winter.
Spring/Summer
Fall/Winter
Dance of Survival
Traveling seasonally to traditional settlements, the Qikiqtaġruŋmiut moved with the seal, caribou, and salmon. Theirs was a society founded upon an ancient knowledge: the way to thrive in what explorers saw as an unforgiving landscape. The Qikiqtaġruŋmiut saw themselves not only as inhabitants of their environment but also as a part of it.
Winter
The short days of early winter were the holiday season for the Qikiqtaġruŋmiut, who celebrated their year of hard work with great messenger feasts and dances. Later in the winter, they collected the fish caught in the fall and hunted ptarmigan and caribou. As the days grew longer, they put their umiat on sleds and returned to spring seal hunting settlements to wait for the ice to break and spring to arrive once more...

Municipality of Anchorage

Private and Non-Profit Organizations

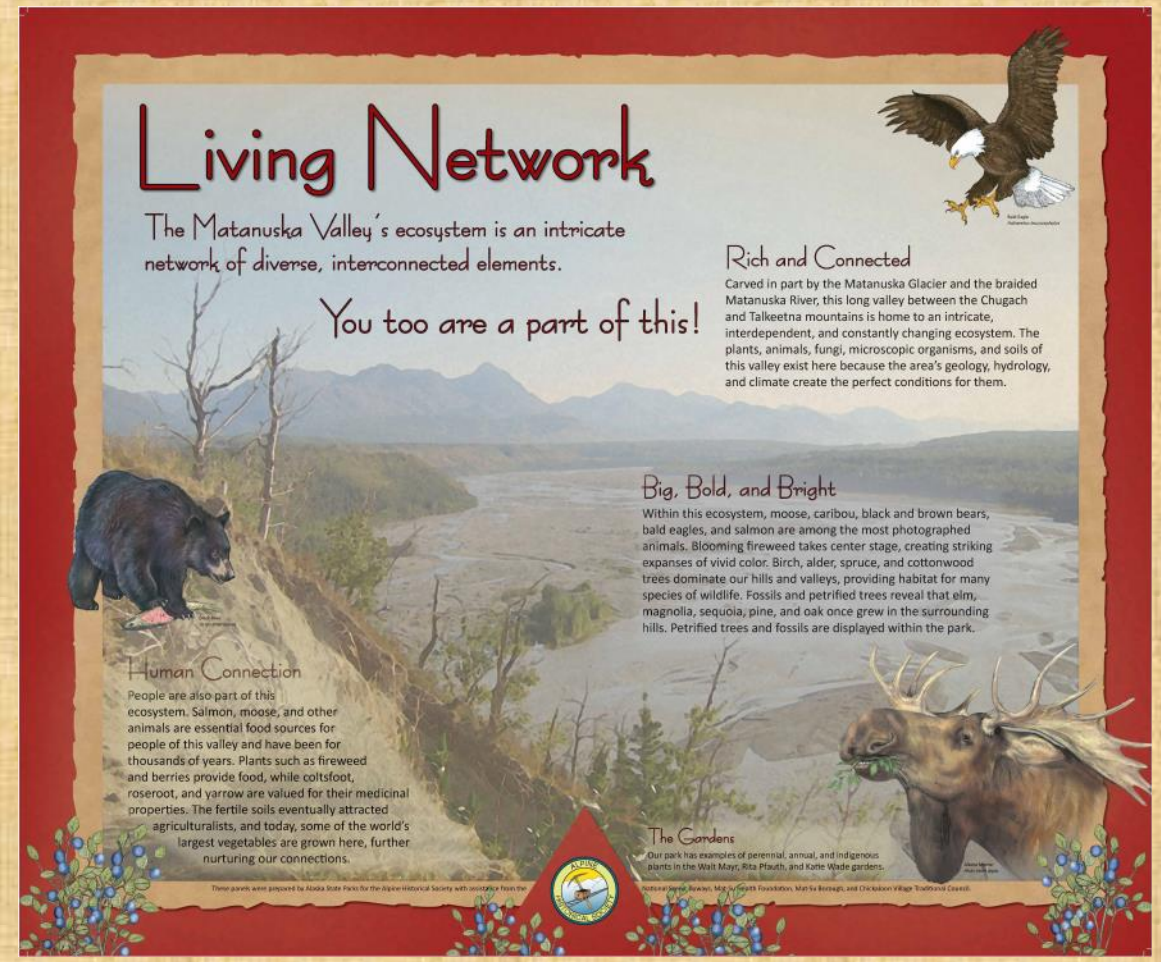


Alpine Historical Park



Alpine Historical Park

Alpine Historical Park



Alpine Historical Park

Alpine Historical Park

We can even create videos

Baking Your Heritage Tourism Program

What to do:

- if your don't have time,
- if you dislike "baking,"
- if you want someone with more experience to "bake" your program,
- or if you just want someone to edit for you or give you advice?

Call or email Alaska State Parks' Interpretation and Education Program!

emily.angel@alaska.gov (907) 269-8742