State's Summary of Reasons for RDI Application:

7. Kichaiakaka Creek (Alatna Portage)

Introduction

The RDI Application is for the length of Kichaiakaka Creek from the east boundary with Section 11, T. 19 N., R. 22 E., KRM., downstream to the Kobuk River. This summary will consider navigability of the same portion of Kichaiakaka Creek. The documented pre- and post-statehood use of the portage offers strong evidence of navigability.

Rationale

1. **Tidal Influence.**

   These segments are not tidally influenced.

2. **BLM Determinations.**

- There are no known BLM determinations for Kichaiakaka Creek.
- These documents are from state files; additional determinations may exist in BLM files.

3. **Pre-Statehood evidence of use.**

- In 1887 Lt. Henry Allen reported that he had met an Indian man with his family who told him he had made many trading trips over the mountains near the headwaters of the Alatna to a small river, the Basnuna (presumably Helpmejack Creek), then down to a large river, the Holoatna [Kobuk], to where the Eskimos lived.[1] This trip would appear to refer to crossing the portage which would include Kichaiakaka Creek on the approach to the Holoatna [Kobuk].

- In 1898 Jasper Wyman, an amateur photographer, took a photograph of men lining a poling boat up what is identified as Helpmejack Creek, which is a tributary of the Alatna, and considered a part of the overall portage that existed between the Alatna and the Kobuk via Helpmejack Creek and Kichaiakaka Creek. (See p12 of full historical memo attached to this RDI application) In maps and some literature, this portage may be referred to as the Alatna Portage.

- Walter Mendenhall and D. L. Reaburn documented the portage in detail during their 1901 exploration of the area and created a map which marked where and when they camped during their traverse between the rivers. (See p13 of full historical memo attached to this RDI application). Mendenhall's group travelled in Peterborough canoes which were "propelled by

[1] Annette McFadyen Clark, *Koyukuk River Culture*. Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1974, 215-216.

oars, sails, or paddles, or by tracking or poling, as conditions varied."[2] Indeed, they opted to use the Peterborough canoes for the trip as they were light enough to be carried over portages.[3] Mendenhall described the portage between the Alatna and the Kobuk, "from the head of Helpmejack Creek to the upper course of the Kichaiakaka, a distance of 5 1/2 miles, over an elevation of 300 feet."[4] Mendenhall identifies the west end of the portage as the head of canoe navigation on Kichaiakaka, noting it was a further seven miles to the mouth of the Kichaiakaka on the Kowak [Kobuk] River.[5] Further, he describes two sets of rapids on Kobuk below the mouth of the Kichaiakaka, but does not mention any rapids on the Kichaiakaka.

4. Post-Statehood evidence of use.

- In May 1972, UAF graduate student Frank Keim undertook fieldwork that brought him across the Alatna portage to the Kobuk River:

  > We [Keim and an unnamed friend] contracted an Alatna man, Jimmy Edwards, to take us up the Alatna River by motorboat about 130 miles to a point near the Continental Divide. From there we hiked 25 miles or so across the Divide until we reached the headwaters of the Kobuk River. At a point along Kichoiyakaka [sic] Creek we set in our rubber raft, hoping by this means to be able to float to Kobuk village about 250 miles downriver. However, the rapids caught us and tore the bottom of our raft out and thereby changed our plans somewhat. So, downriver another ten miles we built a log raft out of some spare twine and shoe laces we had on hand and then proceeded by this rude means.[6]

  As noted in the pre-statehood section, Mendenhall had identified two sets of rapids on the Kobuk below the mouth of the Kichaiakaka in 1901, so these may be the rapids to which Keim refers, meaning that he safely travelled the length of the Kichaiakaka prior to meeting the rapids on the Kobuk.

5. Physical Characteristics supporting use, or being susceptible to use, in pre- and/or post-statehood.

- **Kichaiakaka Creek**
  Location at the confluence with the Kobuk River
  Latitude: 67.0623352
  Longitude: 154.1649932
  Basin area: 85 square miles
  Elevation at source:1500 feet

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[2] Walter C. Mendenhall, *Reconnaissance from Fort Hamlin to Kotzebue Sound, Alaska by way of Dall, Kanuti, Allen, and Kowak Rivers*, US Geological Survey Professional Paper No. 10, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902, 19.
[3] Mendenhall, 18.
[4] Mendenhall, 19.
[5] Mendenhall, 29.
[6] Frank J Keim, *Some Trends in Non-Native Adaptation in Villages Along the Kobuk and Koyukuk Rivers in Northwest Alaska*, unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, University of Alaska Fairbanks, (May 1973), 21.

Main channel length: 17 miles
Average channel slope: 46
Channel type: Meandering
Stream Order: **3** from river mile 10-2 and **4** from river mile 2-0

Conclusion

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