

HERITAGE

Monthly news update from the Office of History and Archaeology

State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources

October 2025

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Office of History and Archaeology News

Staff Updates: The State of Alaska currently has a hiring freeze in place and as of August 29, OHA has five vacancies. Until hiring waivers are approved and positions are backfilled, current OHA staff are in acting status: Nick Schmuck, Acting State Archaeologist and Sarah Meitl, Acting Chief. As of September 15, 2025, Amy Hellmich is the new Acting Review and Compliance Coordinator.

Effective June 30, 2025, Governor Dunleavy appointed DNR Commissioner John Boyle to serve as Alaska's Interim SHPO following Judy Bittner's well-earned retirement after over forty years of state service.

Architectural Historian - Historian 2 Job Posting: We're hiring! OHA is looking for a historian to join our team. Learn more about the position at Workplace Alaska ([HERE](#)). The job posting is currently open to Alaska Residents and closes 10/21/2025 @ 5:00 pm.

Contact Information: OHA encourages sending inquiries and requests to the email addresses listed below.

To send by email:

Section 106: oha.revcomp@alaska.gov

State Permits: oha.permits@alaska.gov

AHRS: oha.ibs@alaska.gov

Grants: ohagrants@alaska.gov

Surveys and Research: adam.brinkman@alaska.gov

General Inquiries: dnr.oha@alaska.gov

To send by USPS or other courier:

Alaska State Historic Preservation Office

c/o Office of History and Archaeology

550 W 7th Ave, Suite 1310

Anchorage, AK 99501

Archaeology Day 2025: The Office of History and Archaeology will be participating in the annual Archaeology Day event, now being hosted by the UAA Anthropology Department and held on **October 25, 2025** from **12:00 to 3:00 pm** at **UAA's Beatrice McDonald Hall (2400 West Campus Drive)**.

America250 Program: The America250-Alaska planning team has accomplished the following tasks to encourage broad, statewide participation:

- Launched Website: <https://america250.alaska.gov/>, from which all Alaskans can submit organization activities to the [online calendar](#);
- Spotlight state and national activities via Facebook: [America250Alaska](#); Instagram: [alaskaamerica250](#); and YouTube: (coming soon);
- Set up Email: america250@alaska.gov

America250 Traveling Exhibit: The Alaska Office of History and Archaeology has created a traveling exhibit, *Alaska's Fields of Dreams: America's Pastime in the 49th State*, for the America250 Alaska project. The exhibit consists of nine free-standing, 80" x 33.5" banners. The banners tell the history of Alaska Baseball, from the Indigenous version of the game to the Alaska Baseball League. Reserving the exhibit is free, except for shipping. To learn more, contact OHA's exhibit coordinator, Rachel Carraway, at rachel.carraway@alaska.gov.

The America250-Alaska coalition is growing. If you have questions, would like to learn more, or are interested in getting involved, please contact Katie Ringsmuth at katie.ringsmuth@alaska.gov.

Federal Legislation

On 09/30/25, Congressional lawmakers failed to pass FY26 funding or a continuation of current funding, resulting in a government shutdown. Currently, a continuing resolution has not been passed in the Senate, though one was narrowly passed in the House of Representatives. Many government employees have been furloughed, leading to delays in many government services and staffing shortages in others.

National Park Service

Metlakatla THPO: On September 26, 2025, the US National Park service announced a new Tribal Historic Preservation Officer in Alaska. On September 24, 2025, the Director of the National Park Service signed an agreement with the Metlakatla Indian Community to assume certain Historic Preservation Officer functions on Metlakatla Indian Community tribal lands. Under the agreement, the Metlakatla Indian Community assumes formal responsibility for the review of Federal undertakings pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Additionally, Metlakatla Indian Community assumes all of the other Historic Preservation Officer functions in the National Historic Preservation Act except for assisting in the certification of local governments and in the evaluation of proposals for rehabilitation projects that may qualify for Federal assistance, including income tax credits.

The Metlakatla Indian Community Tribal Historic Preservation Officer is David Boxley. Please address correspondence to:

David Boxley, Cultural Heritage Director and THPO

Metlakatla Indian Community

900 Milton Street, P.O. Box 8

Metlakatla, AK 99926

(907) 886-4441

dboxley@metlakatla.com

You can find a complete list of Indian Tribes that have assumed historic preservation functions at the [Tribal Historic Preservation Program database](#). Questions about the National Park Service Historic Preservation Program can be emailed to thpo_program@nps.gov.

National Register Update: The National Register Program is currently working with the Office of Management and Budget to renew its forms, as part of a regular 3-year-renewal cycle. The revised Registration Form will include additional checkboxes to capture more specific information such as whether a nomination is supported by DOI/NPS grant funding. The revised forms will again be issued in MS Word format.

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

The government has shut down. Most of the ACHP staff are furloughed; however some staff members may continue working on expected Section 106 reviews and consultation. All other ACHP

business is halted and the ACHP offices will be closed for the duration of the shutdown. Check the ACHP website for more information and to find out when ACHP staff members will be back in the office: [Advisory Council on Historic Preservation](#)

eLearning

ACHP announces that three of their eLearning courses are now back online! These include “What is Section 106?”; “What Now? Protecting Historic Properties During Disaster Response”; and “Section 304 and Confidentiality”. Visit the eLearning course webpage ([e-Learning Courses | Advisory Council on Historic Preservation](#)) to check out these updated courses.

Public Project Alerts

Administrative Order 360

In response to Administrative Order 360, the Department of Natural Resources is soliciting written comments from affected industries, community organizations, and the general public regarding regulations and materials incorporated by reference in 11 AAC 16.

Written comments can be submitted electronically to the Department of Natural Resources via email at dnr.dpor.AO360Comments@alaska.gov. Additionally, DPOR will accept comments submitted by mail and addressed to:

Matt Wedeking, DPOR

550 West 7th Ave, Suite 1380

Anchorage, AK 99501

Comments must be received no later than **October 31, 2025**.

See the public notice for more information: <https://aws.state.ak.us/OnlinePublicNotices/Notices/View.aspx?id=221094>

Reference documents:

[Administrative Order \(AO\) 360](#)

[Alaska Historic Preservation Act \(AHPA\), Alaska Statute 41.35](#)

[AHPA Implementing Regulations, 11 AAC 16](#)

Draft Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) Guidebook Available for Public Comment

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities' new guidebook draft for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is available for review and public comment. The guidebook focuses on simplifying the application process for local governments, tribes, transit agencies, non-profits, and schools applying for funding smaller-scale transportation projects. Projects for historical transportation facility preservation and rehabilitation are listed as eligible for this funding source as well. Public review and comment is open until Friday, Oct. 17, 2025.

The draft and more information about providing comments is available here: dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/cip/stip/projects/TAP.shtml

Comments may be emailed to TAP.dot@alaska.gov.

Section 106 large project consultation in progress:

- Graphite One Mine near Nome, USACE
- Safer Seward Highway, MP 98.5-118, DOT&PF
- Seward to Glenn Connection PEL, DOT&PF
- Chilkoot National Historic Trail Comprehensive Trail Plan, NPS
- Iditarod National Historic Trail Comprehensive Trail Plan Revision, BLM
- Cook Inlet LNG, FERC
- AK LNG, FERC
- Ambler Mining District Access Road, AIDEA
- West Susitna Access Road, USACE

Review and compliance agreement development for large projects in progress:

- West Susitna Access Road, DOT&PF
 - Programmatic Agreement
- USFS Heritage Program
 - Programmatic Agreement Amendment
- USFS Sustainable Cabins
 - Programmatic Agreement
- NPS Kennecott Maintenance and Operations
 - Programmatic Agreement Amendment
- NPS Dyea and the Chilkoot Trail
 - Programmatic Agreement

For information on how to participate in the process, or on how to review and comment on the above projects, contact Amy Hellmich, amy.hellmich@alaska.gov.

Heritage subscription information

Heritage is produced by the Office of History and Archaeology, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, Alaska Department of Natural Resources. Please send your comments, suggestions, and information by e-mail to dnr.oha.@alaska.gov, mail to 550 West 7th Ave., Suite 1310, Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3565, or telephone 907.269.8700.

All issues are posted to our web site at dnr.alaska.gov/parks/oha/ and distributed to subscribers by e-mail. A paper copy can be sent to individuals and organizations that specifically request it.

To be added to the subscription list, please send an e-mail to dnr.oha@alaska.gov with “Heritage, subscribe” in the subject line.

If you do not wish to continue to subscribe to *Heritage*, please send an e-mail to dnr.oha@alaska.gov with “Heritage, unsubscribe” in the subject line.

Much like the OHA office, the Heritage Newsletter is entering a stage of transition. We are working on updating our mailing list and delivery system. We will have more information on the future of the newsletter and its delivery soon.

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Preservation calendar

2025

October 25 – Archaeology Day: Hosted by the UAA Anthropology Department at Beatrice McDonald Hall on UAA Campus (2400 West Campus Drive). The event goes from 12:00 to 3:00 pm.

October 28-29 – NPI training “NAGPRA and ARPA: Application Requirements”, Anchorage, AK. Offered in conjunction with “NEPA Compliance and Cultural Resources). For information go to npi.org.

October 30-31 – NPI training. “NEPA Compliance and Cultural Resources”, Anchorage, AK. Offered in conjunction with “NAGPRA and ARPA”. For information go to npi.org.

2026

2027

March 3- 7 – Sharing Our Knowledge conference, Ketchikan. For more information and volunteer opportunities, contact Joaqlin Estus at jmestus50@gmail.com