

Cook Inlet Sites

The Cook Inlet Historic Sites project is now more than half way through, with some 49 historic/cemetery sites identified.

Almost half of these sites are new identifications but it is unknown at this time if they are pre-historic or in the post-contact period. (Prior to Indian contact with Russians or Europeans).

The purpose of the project is two-fold; a Bi-Centennial effort to identify the breadth and depth of the original inhabitants' cultural heritage throughout Cook Inlet region, and to fulfill a requirement for the Regional Corporation under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, Section 14(h). (The Region has until December 18, of this year to file for historic/cemetery sites located within the boundaries.)

Twenty student historians, ages 16 through 21, are in the seven teams under the direction of a supervisor. Each student, not only assists in technical aspects of the project, but receives a personal experience of their own cultural heritage.

Many student team members are keeping daily journals of their experiences as they record a part of the region's past history.

Much information is gathered through informants that are life-long residents of the particular areas. The students, most who are Alaskan Native and enrolled to Cook Inlet Region, Inc., are re-acquainting themselves with their cultural heritage by conversing with local

residents in gathering ancient legends or historic events.

Some of the areas visited are on the Kenai Peninsula, Kachemak Bay area, Tyonek and points as far north as Montana Creek, Knik, and Alexander Creek.

The field teams are easily recognizable by their yellow windbreakers embossed with the logo, "Cook Inlet Historic Sites Project — American Revolution Bi-Centennial 1776-1976."

Within the following month, the field teams will continue their expeditions to Halibut Cove, Tustumena Lake, Chickaloon, Eklutna, Nancy Lake, Polly Cove, and Lake Telequana.



THE OLD VILLAGE site of Tyonek, recently visited by a field team of the Cook Inlet Historic Sites Project. On the hill, in the upper left corner, is an area where the team identified an ancient cabin. The cabin remains are yet to be dated and labeled as to the actual use. But will be included in the Region's inventory of historical and cemetery sites within Cook Inlet. The current buildings are a contemporary fish camp.