



Qizhjah Vena Alaska

We Are Celebrating!!!

Re: The Purchase of Dena'ina Ancestral Homelands

October 2, 2024

It is with deep gratitude and excitement that we, the team of Qizhjah Vena Alaska, announce our purchase of 'Koksetna Lodge'. This lodge is on five acres of land located at the mouth of Chulitna River which drains into Qizhjah Vena, known today as Lake Clark.

A year ago, we didn't know how this purchase would be possible; the asking price was far beyond funds we had and it was a short timeline. However, we are a team of local hard-working women. We continued fundraising and brainstorming throughout the year. There were many ups and downs, but we stayed true to our vision of creating a Dena'ina center for sustainable living. Our goal was far bigger than us or a simple lodge and land purchase. We knew the Dena'ina Ancestors were there cheering us on and supporting us. Everything came together in the last four months leading up to signing the paperwork and receiving the title to "Koksetna Lodge".

Over the past year we were continually inspired by the local, regional, and national support we received; both individually and organizationally. We appreciate all of the verbal, energetic, monetary, informational, and logistical support. It took many networks and community members to make this happen. We give our greatest Chin'an Gheli to NDN Collective who came to our aide in the final hours and provided the loan for the property purchase. NDN Collective provided hours of support through business education, financial expertise, regenerative literacy, legal advice and will continue to support us as loan relatives until we successfully pay off the loan. Letters to individual donors and funders will be forthcoming.

In humble partnership with the natural world and motivated by Dena'ina values, we move forward as the first, primarily Dena'ina women owned lodge on Qizhjah Vena. There is more to be said about our journey and what our programs, goals, and plans will be. For now, we want to share the wonderful news and say chin'an gheli to those near and far who have supported us in words, money, or energy. You all inspired us and assisted with creating a new narrative for our region.

Respectfully,

Karen Evanoff, Danielle Stickman, Fawn Silas, Kiana Till
Support Team: The late Butch Hobson, Pauline Hobson,
AlexAnna Salmon, Margaret Baldwin, Max Chickalusion,
George Guyver, Chase Rodriguez, Monty Rogers



All of this wouldn't be possible without the following key partners, Chin'an Gheli:

Igiugig Village Council, Aurora Warrior at NDN Collective, Native Movement, the Alaska Venture Fund, Tamalpais Trust, Indigenous Knowledge Holders Fund of RSF Social Finance, Cold Mountain Fund, Charlotte Martin Foundation, Erin Johnson Memorial Fund, Worldwide Indigenous Science Network, Aurora Agee at Alaska SBDC, Ruth Miller, and others.