

CHILKAT INDIAN VILLAGE



"Yee gu.aa yax x'wan."

**An Indian Reorganization Act Village
Under Act of Congress June 15th, 1935**
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Chilkat Indian Village (Klukwan) Statement on Haines Borough Lutak Dock Project

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

KLUKWAN, AK— The Chilkat Indian Village (Klukwan) is responding to recent misinformation about the role of Tribal Governments in the Haines Borough Lutak Dock project, and reaffirms the need for respectful dialogue as the process moves forward.

"Our Tribal Government was invited to participate in the Lutak Dock Replacement Project as part of a formal government-to-government process required for the project's \$20M in federal funding," said President Kimberley Strong. *"We participate to fulfill our responsibilities in providing the required cultural and environmental information for federal permitting within the project area and the region related to the proposed activity."* The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and other federal laws establish the reviews and processes required before federal agencies can disburse grant funding or issue permits. Under these laws, federal agencies must consult with Tribal governments as part of long-term [federal trust responsibilities](#) dating back to the formation of the United States government under the U.S. Constitution. Contrary to public misunderstanding, Section 106 consultation of the NHPA is not outside the permitting process—it is a key part of the process that ensures projects comply with federal law by identifying and addressing potential impacts to cultural and historic resources before construction moves forward. *"It is our responsibility, as Tribal governments, to exert our sovereignty over traditional lands and waters through continuous and meaningful consultation with all federal agencies engaging in activities impacting our lands, waters and Tribal citizens,"* said Strong.

Public misinformation and lack of understanding have resulted in CIV being inaccurately characterized as "stalling" the Lutak Dock project. *"Our Tribal government often participates in government-to-government conversations, and we have never been pinpointed as delayers of projects,"* said Strong. *"We participate more often than people realize, across many regional and federal processes. The only project we've ever been accused of holding up is this one—and that accusation simply isn't true."* In reality, CIV's participation as sovereign government occurs alongside—and in coordination with—the many federal steps required for large and complex projects. These steps include stakeholder and agency engagement, submission of project-specific information, formal consultation, outcomes and agreements.

A major reason for the project delay has been the ongoing dispute between the Haines Borough and its contractor Turnagain Marine, as well as the premature steel purchase and other missteps that led to this dispute. As of November 2025, the Haines Borough has decided to move forward with a new design process that will include new federal permitting. CIV will continue its ongoing dialogue with federal agencies involved in the process, focusing our participation on potential impacts to cultural and traditional properties within the project area. The former design, for example, required eight months of pile-driving activity during spring hooligan runs in Lutak Inlet, commercial and subsistence gillnet salmon fishing season, and the seasonal harvest of red ribbon seaweed.

“One of our main food staples is the hooligan—we had it on the Chilkat side and the Chilkoot side at one time,” said Vice President Jones P. Hotch Jr. *“Ever since the construction of the Haines Airport expansion, the hooligan run on the Chilkat side has sharply declined—reflecting our traditional ecological knowledge that tells us how sensitive hooligan are to noise disturbances. Should something like that happen in Lutak Inlet, we are looking at the great possibility of not having hooligans in this area. I don’t know how our minds and bodies could adapt to that—this is something our people have eaten since time immemorial, for thousands of years. Hooligan was the most treasured item on the Grease trail, and it still is.”*

The Chilkat Indian Village (Klukwan) remains committed to engaging in the Lutak Dock process in a lawful and constructive manner. Our Tribal Government will continue to uphold its sovereign responsibilities to protect the lands, waters, and traditional foods of Jilꞑáat Kꞑwáan while maintaining open communication with agency officials to ensure that federal consultation requirements are fully and respectfully met.