Ahtna Travel Narratives

By any measure, the Athabascans of Alaska are among the world’s foremost pedestrian foragers. These travel narratives by five Ahtna experts are walking tours of nearly 1,200 miles of traditional routes and trails in the Ahtna language area. The narratives demonstrate the precise imagery and landscape classification of Ahtna place names and riverine directionals—the profound geographic knowledge system that has facilitated travel and spatial cognition in Ahtna and other Alaska Athabascan languages. James Kari, who has worked with Ahtna speakers for more than 35 years, adds context to the narratives with maps, photos, the original audio files, and a wealth of ethnographic, linguistic, historical, and methodological information. This is the most complete presentation of travel narratives for an Athabascan language.