

Appendix A—Troth Yeddha Placenames



University of Alaska Fairbanks
Department of Alaska Native and Rural Development
College of Rural Alaska

Troth Yeddha' Oral History
 Compiled by Miranda Wright
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The land now occupied by the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus was called Troth Yeddha' ("wild potato hill") by the Tanana Athabascans. Oral traditions that focus on place names have been documented through the Alaska Native Language Center, the Interior Aleutians Campus and the Rural Student Services. While the orthography has changed over time, the place names have remained constant.

April 15, 1968 Moses Charlie of Minto, AK provided the following information to Dr. Michael Kraus of ANLC:

<i>Troththid</i>	Fairbanks area in general
<i>Troth yeddha'</i>	College Hill
<i>Troththiddkhvna</i>	Noyes Slough

Minto Nenana Athabaskan Noun Dictionary, edited by Dr. Michael Kraus, Preliminary version February 1974 provides this information:

<i>Trothyeddha', Troyeddha'</i>	College Hill
<i>Troththeetkhun'a</i>	Noyes Slough
<i>Troththeet</i>	Fairbanks area to Chatanika

Matthew and Dorothy Titus provided Krauss and Kari the following information on June 16, 1981:

<i>Troth Yettha mena'</i>	Smith Lake
<i>Troth Yetth</i>	College Hill, off Noyes Slough
<i>Tro yeddha' no'</i>	Deadman's Slough (Noyes Slough)

Lower Tanana Athabaskan Listening and Writing Exercises by James Kari, ANLC 1991:

<i>Troth Yeddha'</i> (<i>hedyarwan</i>)	Ridge at University of Alaska lit. 'Indian Potato (<i>alptman</i>) ridge'.
<i>TrothGhotthit</i> Indian potato'	Geist Road-Fairbanks Street area, lit. 'below
<i>Troth Yedha' Xwu'a</i> potato ridge stream'	Deadman (or Noyes) Slough, lit. 'Indian
<i>Tr'exwghodegi Troth Yeddha' Bena'</i>	Smith Lake, lit. 'upper Indian potato lake'.
<i>Tr'exwghothidi Troth Yeddha' Bena'</i>	Ballaine Lake, lit. 'lower Indian potato lake'



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Lower Tanana Athabaskan Dictionary compiled by and edited by James Kari, ANLC, August 1994:

*Troth*¹ (hedysarum alpinum)

Troth, -trodha'(n) Indian potato root of hedysarum alpinum.

Troth Yeddha', Troth Yethh (p.n.) *College Hill (ridge), lit. 'Indian*

Potato Ridge'

*Troth*² difficult (X situation) is difficult

The late Eva Moffit of Salcha also provided information to James Kari, ANLC, regarding the importance of Troth Yeddha as a gathering place where Native bands would gather to harvest the wild potato and to hold council regarding the state of affairs among Native nations in the interior of Alaska. (personal communications with J Kari, 2003)

The following narrative published in the UAF catalog was compiled by the Interior Aleutians Campus and Rural Student Services after Chief Peter John of Minto, AK spoke to UAF students during the 1994 Native Student Summit. A video recording of this speech also exists:

"Our people used to come to this hill to pick Troth. They would paddle up the creek, Troth Yeddha' No, and camp by the Lake Troth Yeddha' Mena. Troth Yeddha' was important, a meeting place. The grandfathers used to come to talk and give advice to one another about what they were going to do. When they learned this place would be used for a school, the university, they came here one last time, to decide what they should do. They decided that the school would be good and would carry on a very similar traditional use of this hill (a place where good thinking and working together would happen). They placed an eagle feather on a pole. This was to let all the people know that the Dena would no longer be using the ridge for a meeting place or to pick wild potatoes. They were also giving a blessing so their grandchildren would be part of the new school." I am proud of it. I am an Indian. *What does it mean to put an eagle feather with the United States flag? The eagle feather is connected with the clan. It is a symbol of us. We are part of this new Nation. People from all over the world come to the university to go to school and teach. We have something in common. Something all American people can share in. Be proud of it. Make it all the way, not just part way.*" (Chief Peter John, Minto, Alaska as published in the UAF catalog)

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