

**Galena Village/Louden Tribal Council And The 11<sup>th</sup> Air Force  
Elmendorf -- Anchorage  
An Alaska Model**

- The entire village of Loudon moved 14 miles downriver to its present location at Galena, in the early 1920s. The Loudon Tribal Council (LTC), a.k.a. Galena Village, is a Federally Recognized Tribe. Galena is located in traditional Koyukon Athabaskan Indian territory, along the banks of the Yukon River, in Alaska's remote interior.
- Beginning in 1996, a new Remedial Projects Manager (RPM), located at Elmendorf, decided to work toward enhancing that relationship. He made contact with the LTC and asked if he could visit Galena and speak with the LTC about their issues, concerns and relationship with the Air Force.

The RPM began to hold regular meetings with the entire community and met specifically with the LTC to consult with them on matters that might be of interest to them. These meetings became the foundation of an on-going relationship.

The LTC asked for information on opportunities to participate in Federal contracts. The RPM provided advice and arranged for small business and contracting experts to meet with the LTC. The end result of all of these activities was the formation of a for-profit entity by the LTC – the Yukaana Development Corporation. Since its formation, the Corporation has participated more than a half dozen contracts, helping the Air Force and providing economic benefits to the whole community.

- The RPM worked with the LTC to institutionalize how the government-to- government relationship would be conducted between the LTC and the Air Force. These efforts resulted in the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement between the Loudon Tribal Council and the 11<sup>th</sup> Air Force.
- The MOA was signed in December of 1999 and defines the parameters of the relationship between the LTC and the Air Force. The intent of the agreement is to build a stable and enduring relationship between the LTC and the Air Force. Some of the major elements are:
  - All parties agree to engage in open and timely communication by working together to enhance and foster communication;
  - LTC and the Air Force agree to designate one representative (Government-to-Government Program Manager) of each organization that will be the conduit for sharing information. The Program Managers are the primary points of contact to coordinate all activities under the MOA, including the resolution of disputes;
  - Air Force agrees to consult with the LTC prior to reaching decisions on matters that may have the potential to affect protected Tribal resources, Tribal rights, or Tribal lands;
  - Parties agree to resolve disputes at the lowest possible level of authority;
  - Air Force recognizes the LTC is a sovereign Tribe, with the right to set its priorities, develop and manage Tribal and Trust resources and be involved in Federal decisions or activities which have the potential to affect these rights;
  - Air Force commits to search for ways to involve the LTC in programs, projects, and other activities that build economic capacity and foster abilities to manage LTC resources while preserving its cultural identity; and
  - Air Force and the LTC agree to work together to evaluate opportunities for the LTC to obtain excess and surplus Air Force property.

This MOA is the result of three years of working together on a government-to-government level to address environmental impacts associated with USAF activities.

According to the RMP, the AF and the LTC are not always able to reach their individual goals. Cooperation does not guarantee a desired result. Each organization has constraints. It has taken years to get to the point where LTC and the AF are now. Critical to this success story has been consistent involvement of AF staff. It has also been crucial that a mutually respectful relationship has been built between individuals.