

## Thank you to our Community Partners

We thank all of these partners and the generous support they offer those we serve.



Find us on Facebook at

<https://www.facebook.com/interiorregionalhousing>

**Proudly Serving The Doyon/Tanana Chiefs Region**



# IRHA

## Community Newsletter

### Spring Brings New Beginnings Across the Interior

As spring arrives in the Interior, communities once again see longer days, returning warmth, and the renewed energy that comes with the season of change. After a long winter, spring is a time to prepare, repair, and look ahead together. At the Interior Regional Housing Authority (IRHA), spring marks the start of construction season and renewed efforts to support safe, healthy homes across our region. From maintenance and rehabilitation projects

to new housing developments, our work continues in partnership with tribes and communities to meet local needs and respect local ways of living. Spring is also an important time for homeowners and renters to check their homes after winter—looking for freeze damage, moisture issues, and maintenance concerns. Reporting issues early helps protect homes, if they are under warranty, and keeps families safe.

IRHA remains committed to building not just houses, but strong communities grounded in respect, responsibility, and care for one another. We are grateful to residents, staff, tribal leaders, and partners who continue this work side by side. As the season changes, we look forward to the progress ahead and to supporting families across the Interior—today and for generations to come.



Housing material in Beaver, Fall 2025

#### OFFICE HOURS:

Monday – Thursday 8:30 am – 4:30 pm  
Closed to the public on Fridays.

Interior Regional Housing Authority  
828 27th Ave.  
Fairbanks, AK 99701  
907-452-8315  
[www.irha.org](http://www.irha.org)

#### Mission

Provide tribal housing opportunities to positively impact housing needs.

#### Vision

Families with quality affordable housing.

#### Our Core Values

- > Innovation
- > Respect
- > Honesty
- > Accountability
- > Service

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### Letter from the Chief Executive Officer

Dear Chiefs, Tribal Councils, and Tribal Members,

As we move further into 2026, I want to take a moment to slow down and share what’s happening at IRHA and across the Interior. Housing continues to be one of the most pressing challenges facing our region, but I remain encouraged by what we’re able to accomplish when we work together. The progress we’re making is the result of strong partnerships, committed leadership, and a shared belief that safe, affordable housing strengthens families and communities for the long term.

Collaboration continues to be at the center of our work. IRHA is proud to work alongside Tanana Chiefs Conference, Doyon, Denakkanaaga, Fairbanks Native Association, and other Interior Native organizations. This year, we’ve come together to begin planning an economic impact study that will help us better understand—and clearly communicate—the value of Tribal housing investments. This effort will help tell our story in a meaningful way, showing how housing supports local jobs, stabilizes families, and contributes to the broader regional economy.

We’re also building on successful community efforts like the Elders Day of Caring. Planning is already underway for the 2026 event, and we’re taking time to reflect on what worked well last year and how we can grow this effort even further. Caring for Elders is a shared priority, and bringing organizations together around that goal is something IRHA is proud to be part of.

Advocacy remains an important piece of my role as CEO. IRHA senior staff and I also met with the new Fairbanks City Mayor, Mindy O’Neill, to continue strengthening local relationships and coordination. Through active participation with the Association of Alaska Housing Authorities, the Alaska Federation of Natives’ Council for Advancement of Alaska Native Communities, and ongoing conversations with state and federal leaders, IRHA continues to speak up for the needs of our Tribes. Much of this work happens behind the scenes, and it has real impacts. We continue to advocate for protecting Tribal purchasing power, addressing unfunded federal mandates that drive up construction costs, and strengthening Tribal self-determination under NAHASDA so communities can make housing decisions that work best for them.



Eugene Paul, IRHA CEO

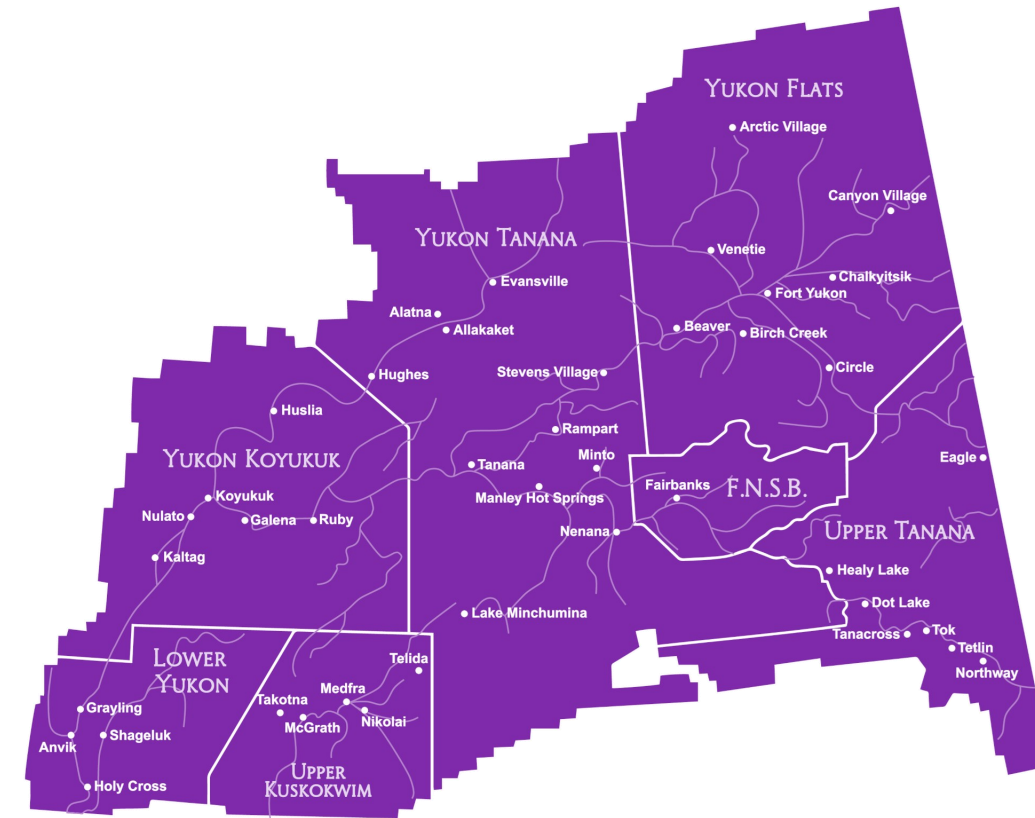


Eugene Paul swearing in new BOC, Patricia MacDonald, March 12, 2026



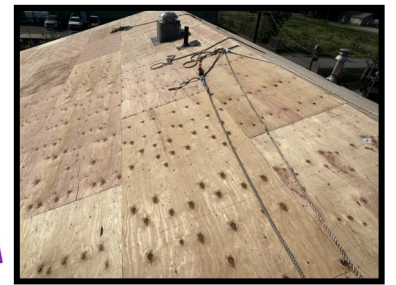
Eugene Paul presents a gift made by Leda Cruger to outgoing Board Chair, Kristen Moreland, for her 3 years of service as a BOC.

Below:  
IRHA Roof Rehabilitation in  
August 2025



### Communities We Serve

- |                    |                   |                        |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Alatna</b>      | <b>Holy Cross</b> | <b>Shageluk</b>        |
| <b>Allakaket</b>   | <b>Huslia</b>     | <b>Stevens Village</b> |
| <b>Anvik</b>       | <b>Hughes</b>     | <b>Takotna</b>         |
| <b>Beaver</b>      | <b>Kaltag</b>     | <b>Tanacross</b>       |
| <b>Birch Creek</b> | <b>Koyukuk</b>    | <b>Telida</b>          |
| <b>Chalkyitsik</b> | <b>Manley</b>     | <b>Tetlin</b>          |
| <b>Circle</b>      | <b>Minto</b>      | <b>Doyon:</b>          |
| <b>Dot Lake</b>    | <b>McGrath</b>    | <b>Tok</b>             |
| <b>Eagle</b>       | <b>Nenana</b>     | <b>Canyon Village</b>  |
| <b>Evansville</b>  | <b>Nikolai</b>    | <b>Medfra</b>          |
| <b>Grayling</b>    | <b>Northway</b>   | <b>Fairbanks</b>       |
| <b>Healy Lake</b>  | <b>Ruby</b>       | <b>Lake Minchumina</b> |



Joke Time:

Why did the house  
bring a sweater to  
spring breakup?

*Because it knew the Interior  
weather still gets chilly!*

## Welcome Home Fairbanks – Jessica Hildebrand



*“I am so thankful for all of you, the construction on and in the house is so good, it is beautiful. The office ladies are so helpful... I am in disbelief, can’t believe I got so lucky, thank you.”*

~Jessica Hildebrand



**2026 Deadline Periods:**  
April 30  
November 30

Apply for a grant

### 2026 RurAL CAP Foundation Grants

The RurAL CAP Foundation is offering small grants from \$500 to \$25,000 to support projects that strengthen and celebrate the culture, knowledge, and self-determination of rural Alaska communities. Open to tribal governments, nonprofits, and other eligible entities, these funds can help bring to life initiatives that honor traditional ways of life, support food sovereignty,

build community leadership, and protect the land and environment for future generations. This is an opportunity to invest in projects rooted in your community’s values, stories, and vision—helping preserve cultural heritage while creating lasting local impact. Deadlines are April 30 and November 30.

<https://www.ruralcapfoundation.org/>

The federal government shutdown late last year created real challenges and delays, but I want to recognize the patience and determination of our staff and partners. Even during that difficult period, our team stayed focused on the work ahead. Today, IRHA continues to move forward with new construction and rehabilitation projects across the region, helping families remain safely housed and supporting opportunities for homeownership. We also continue to prioritize rental and emergency assistance, particularly for Elders who are often most affected by rising housing costs.

I’m especially proud of some of the innovative work happening at IRHA. This includes workforce training to address methamphetamine and fentanyl contamination in homes, an issue that directly impacts health and safety in our communities. We’re also looking ahead to the 2026 construction season, including our partnership with the U.S. Marine Corps through the Innovative Readiness Training program. This collaboration will bring new homes to Allakaket and Beaver while also creating unique opportunities for skill-building and partnership.

At the heart of all this work is our mission: *to provide Tribal housing opportunities that positively impact housing needs.* That mission guides every decision we make, whether it’s building a new home, rehabilitating an existing one, supporting a family in crisis, or advocating for change at the policy level.

I am deeply grateful for the guidance of our Board of Commissioners, the dedication of our staff, and the trust placed in us by Tribal leadership and our partners. Thank you for standing with IRHA and for the continued collaboration that allows us to move this important work forward together.

Dogi’dinh,

Eugene Paul  
Chief Executive Officer  
Interior Regional Housing Authority

Below:  
AAHA meeting in Washington DC





June 2025  
2025 Board of Commissioners & CEO  
L-R: Chaaiy Albert, Leah Woods,  
Eugene Paul, Kristen Moreland,  
Kimberly Carlo, and  
Alfred Demientieff

### Board of Commissioners

#### Patricia MacDonald

Chairperson

Dot Lake

Seat E – Exp. 3/2029

#### William Chaaiy Albert

Vice-Chairperson

Northway

Seat A – Exp. 3/2027

#### Alfred Joseph Demientieff

Secretary/Treasurer

Holy Cross

Seat B – Exp. 3/2027

#### Kimberly Carlo

Commissioner

Ft. Yukon

Seat C – Exp. 3/2028

#### Leah Woods

Commissioner

Manley

Seat D – Exp. 3/2028

## Board of Commissioners

### Patricia MacDonald



Patricia MacDonald  
Chairperson,  
Board of Commissioners

The Interior Regional Housing Authority is pleased to welcome back Patricia MacDonald as the newest returning member of the IRHA Board of Commissioners. Patricia brings a wealth of experience, leadership, and deep commitment to tribal housing that will continue to benefit the communities IRHA serves.

Patricia previously served on the IRHA Board for nearly three years, including time as Board Chair, before joining IRHA staff as Chief Operating Officer (COO). During her two years as COO, she played a key role in strengthening operations and supporting housing programs across the Interior. She later went on to serve as Executive Director of the Bristol Bay Housing Authority, further broadening her leadership experience in tribal housing.

With her unique perspective as both a former board member and senior staff leader, Patricia chose to re-run for a seat on the Board. She was re-elected to a new three-year term in March, reflecting the trust and confidence

placed in her leadership.

Patricia is Nalts'iin Upper Tanana Athabascan from Dot Lake and currently resides in Dillingham, Alaska. Her love for her people and community is evident through the dedication and hard work she has contributed throughout her career in tribal housing, particularly during her years serving Interior communities.

She and her husband Jason have been married for 39 years and are proud parents to seven adult children and six grandchildren. IRHA is honored to welcome Patricia back to the Board and looks forward to the knowledge, insight, and passion she brings to this role.

## IRHA is 95% Alaska Native/American Indian Hire

## Preparing for Disaster Recovery Funding Cont.

computer, or external storage device

- Share documentation with Tribal offices or designated housing or infrastructure staff if requested
- Do not wait—document damage as soon as conditions are safe

These small actions can make a meaningful difference. By working together and being prepared, we can help ensure our communities are ready to access the resources needed to recover, rebuild, and strengthen resilience for the future.

## Home is More Than a House

In the Interior, home has always been more than four walls and a roof. It is where families gather, elders share knowledge, children grow, and community bonds are strengthened. Our homes reflect who we are, how we live, and how we take care of one another.

At the Interior Regional Housing Authority (IRHA), our work is guided by these shared values. Housing is not just about buildings—it is about supporting healthy families, honoring culture, and helping our communities remain strong for future generations.

Across the Interior, IRHA continues working with tribes and community leaders to build, rehabilitate, and maintain homes that are safe, warm, and designed for our climate and way of life. From energy-efficient upgrades to new construction and maintenance support, each project is shaped by local needs and local voices.

We recognize that every household is different. Some families are growing, some elders need accessibility and safety, and some households are working toward homeownership for the first time. Our programs are meant to meet people where they are, while offering support that respects independence, responsibility, and tradition.

Taking care of a home is also part of taking care of the community. Simple actions—reporting maintenance issues early, preparing homes for seasonal changes, and following safety guidance—help protect not only your household, but neighbors as well. When we look out for one another, everyone benefits.

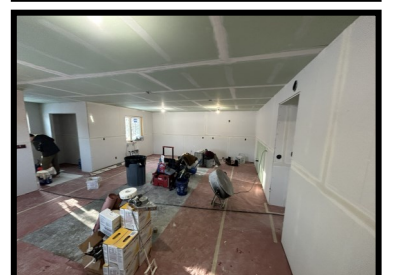
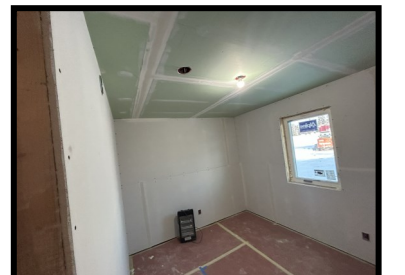
We are grateful to the residents who share their time, stories, and feedback with us. Your experiences help shape how IRHA does its work. We also thank maintenance staff, housing counselors, tribal partners, and community members who contribute their skills and knowledge every day.

As the seasons change, IRHA remains committed to working together—with respect, transparency, and accountability. Whether you are a renter, homeowner, elder, or young family, you are an important part of this effort.

If you have questions, ideas, or concerns, we encourage you to reach out. Strong housing starts with strong relationships, and those relationships are built through communication and trust.

Together, we continue the work of creating safe, healthy homes—so our communities can thrive today and for generations to come.

New Home Construction pictures in the Mendone Subdivision



### Preparing for Disaster Recovery Funding

Below Pics:  
Flooding in Circle in 2023  
Photo credits: Alaska Division of  
Homeland Security and Emergency  
Management



Flooding and other natural disasters can affect our communities with little warning. Rising water, erosion, severe storms, and other events can cause serious damage to homes, roads, and critical infrastructure—creating immediate safety concerns and long-term housing challenges for families.

When disasters occur, Tribal communities may be eligible for emergency assistance and grant funding designed to support recovery efforts and address urgent threats to health and safety. These funds can help with repairs, mitigation, and planning for future resilience. However, access to disaster recovery funding depends heavily on documentation.

One potential funding source is the Indian Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG) Imminent Threat program. This funding is intended to help communities facing immediate and serious risks. Like most disaster-related programs, ICDBG and similar funding sources require clear, verifiable proof that a disaster occurred and that it caused real impacts within the community.

#### WHY DOCUMENTATION MATTERS

Accurate documentation is essential. Grant agencies rely on evidence to understand the scope of damage and determine whether a community is eligible for assistance. One of the strongest and most widely accepted forms of documentation is photographs.

Photos should clearly show visible impacts such as:

- Flooded or damaged homes
- Washed out or eroded roadways

- Downed trees or debris
- Damaged community buildings
- Shoreline or riverbank erosion

Whenever possible, photos should be taken from multiple angles and include recognizable landmarks. Recording the date and location—either through photo timestamps or written notes—adds critical detail that strengthens funding applications.

#### BE PREPARED—EVEN IF FUNDING IS NOT IMMEDIATE

Even if your Tribe is not applying for a grant right away, collecting and safely storing disaster documentation is an important step. Conditions can change quickly, and having clear records on hand helps ensure the Tribe is ready when funding opportunities arise.

Proactive documentation:

- Strengthens future grant applications
- Supports emergency planning and mitigation efforts
- Helps advocate for resources to protect and rebuild the community

#### ACTION STEPS FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Community members play an important role in disaster preparedness and recovery. If it is safe to do so, please consider taking the following steps after a disaster event:

- Take photos documenting damage to homes, land, roads, and community facilities
- Capture both wide views and close-ups, including landmarks or recognizable locations
- Record dates and locations whenever possible
- Save and back up photos to a phone,

### Employee Highlight

#### Welcome Chloe Prentice

Chloe Prentice is Inupiaq from Koyuk, Alaska, and the daughter of John and Beda Prentice of White Mountain and Koyuk. She is a proud Mt. Edgecumbe High School alumna, Class of 2024.

After graduating, Chloe moved to Fort Yukon to support family and friends, where she

spent much of her time helping with childcare. After a little over a year, she relocated to Fairbanks.

Chloe joined the Interior Regional Housing Authority in February 2026 as an Information Specialist. She is passionate about supporting Alaska Native communities

and is committed to contributing to meaningful, community-centered work. She looks forward to continuing to learn, grow, and expand her skills within IRHA while supporting the organization’s mission to strengthen housing and community development across the Interior.



Chloe Prentice  
Information Specialist

### 2026 Construction Season Recruitment

Applications and job descriptions can be downloaded at [www.irha.org](http://www.irha.org) under Careers.

**Available Positions:**  
Carpenters  
Laborers  
Electricians

**Contact information:**  
Phone: 907-452-8315  
828 27th Avenue  
Fairbanks AK 99701  
Vcruger@irha.org.



Above:  
New Construction home in Beaver,  
Fall 2025

Below:  
IRHA Planning Coordinator, Brian  
Leal, and Fairbanks City Mayor,  
Mindy O’Neal at the TCC  
Convention March 2026.



### Strengthening Tribal Housing Through Partnership

For many tribes, developing, expanding, or preserving affordable housing can be complex, which is why strong partnerships matter. The Interior Regional Housing Authority (IRHA) brings extensive experience navigating federal, state, and local housing programs, helping guide projects from early planning through completion. From grant administration and regulatory compliance to financial management and long-term asset planning, IRHA provides steady, reliable support that helps housing projects succeed, particularly in rural communities where administrative capacity can be limited.

In addition to technical assistance, IRHA often serves as a bridge between tribal leadership and outside funding sources. By supporting applications for U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs and other public-private financing opportunities, IRHA helps tribes layer funding in ways that can increase both the scale and quality of housing developments.

Tribal housing is about more than just buildings; it's about creating safe, affordable homes that reflect culture, community, and connection. When housing projects

Strong examples of this collaborative approach can be seen in Circle and Tanacross, where partnership and careful planning have helped move housing and model activity projects forward despite challenges such as remote location, high construction costs, limited local capacity, and insufficient funding. By working closely with community leadership, aligning additional funding sources – including Indian Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG) funds, the Rasmuson Foundation, Mt. McKinley Bank, and First National Bank of Alaska – and supporting compliance and project management, IRHA has helped ensure projects remain culturally appropriate, financially sound, and responsive to local needs.

Most importantly, IRHA engages respectfully with tribal leadership and incorporates community input into planning and design. This collaborative approach helps create sustainable housing solutions that not only address immediate housing needs, but also strengthen long-term community stability, economic development, and tribal self-determination.

### Did You Know?

are thoughtfully planned and supported, they help strengthen families, stabilize communities, and support long term self-determination.



Above: New Home Construction in Manley.

Below: CEO, Eugene Paul, and CFO, Teodor Dornea, receive a check for IRHA from Mt. McKinley Bank's Member Impact Fund on March 3, 2026.



### IRHA Celebrates Emerging Leadership

The Interior Regional Housing Authority is proud to congratulate Constance Reimer-Ely, Tribal Development Manager at IRHA, on her selection to the inaugural Emerging Leaders Program through the Alaska Housing Accelerator Academy.

Constance was chosen as one of just 10 housing professionals statewide to participate in this program, which focuses on Tribal housing systems, leadership development, and innovative approaches shaping the future of housing across Alaska.

Her selection reflects her dedication to strengthening housing and community development in the Interior. IRHA is honored to be represented in this exceptional cohort and looks forward to sharing updates as Constance continues this journey.

#### 2026 Emerging Leaders Cohort

- Anita Andrews – Copper River Basin Regional Housing

- Authority
- Constance Reimer-Ely – Interior Regional Housing Authority
- Erin Wilson Potter – Aleutian Housing Authority
- Esther Ashton – Tlingit Haida Regional Housing Authority
- Jacob Brunner – Cook Inlet Housing Authority
- Keegan Bravo – Kodiak Island Housing Authority
- Elizabeth Greybear – Copper River Basin Regional Housing Authority
- Christopher Pruitt – Kodiak Island Housing Authority
- Shawn Guthrie – Tlingit Haida Regional Housing Authority
- Alice Morgan – Cook Inlet Housing Authority

IRHA congratulates all of the Emerging Leaders as they prepare to deepen their leadership skills and continue this important work for housing authorities and Tribal communities across Alaska. We look forward to following Constance's journey and sharing updates along the way.



Photo Credit: Alaska Association of Housing Authorities

Below Pictures: New Construction in Mendone Subdivision

