Tyonek TRIBAL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

July, 2026

As summer reaches its peak, TTCD is continuing to advance conservation, food sovereignty, and youth engagement. Our Habitat Monitoring and Restoration team is transitioning from a successful month-long "pike camp" in Beluga — where more than 1,300 invasive northern pike were removed from District waters — to salmon and water temperature monitoring efforts across the region. Pictured here is Naomi Jones, Farm and Field Technician, with a juvenile salmonid. We're also celebrating the return of the Tyonek Farmers Market, hands-on science experiences for Tyonek youth, and strengthening Tribal Conservation District partnerships across Alaska.

Dena'ina word of the month

Our Dena'ina word of the month is Łiq'a ka'a baba. Łiq'a ka'a baba means dry king salmon, one of the foods that ties Tebughna people to their ancestors. The careful slicing, hanging, and smoking are teachings passed hand to hand. July reminds us that preparing fish is more than a task; it's a way of caring for family and carrying traditions forward.

Łiq'a ka'a baba: Dry king salmon

Tyonek Youth Conservation Science

We hosted a Youth Cyanotype Day at the Tyonek Garden, where youth and their families learned about cyanotypes, created their own sun prints, and explored UV-reactive solar energy beads that change color in sunlight. Participants connected art and science through hands-on activities while learning how ultraviolet (UV) light triggers chemical reactions in light-sensitive materials, producing permanent blue images and color changes.

Seal Rescue

A recent harbor seal pup rescue in Beluga highlights the importance of quick action and teamwork. After a local pilot reported a distressed newborn pup, TTCD field biologists helped coordinate its safe transport to the Alaska SeaLife Center, where it is now receiving care. During seal pupping season, remember that pups are often left alone while their mothers forage nearby. Keep your distance, keep people, vehicles, and dogs away, and never approach or handle a seal pup. If you believe a marine mammal is in distress, contact the Marine Mammal Stranding Hotline for guidance: https://www.alaskasealife.org/stranding_guidelines

Tribal Conservation District Network

As part of the statewide TCD Network, TTCD staff is joining members of six other Alaska TCDs at a strategic planning workshop in Juneau. By being together in person, we will be able to share the successes and challenges we are each encountering, improve our skills in planning and facilitation, and build relationships that support future collaborations. The work session will result in draft vision and mission statements for review at the annual TCD Network meeting scheduled for January 2027.

Habitat Monitoring & Restoration

The HMR team completed our month long “pike camp” in Beluga, removing over 1,300 invasive Northern pike from the District’s waters! Our busy field season continues with the team shifting to monitoring efforts. We will be visiting our water temperature monitoring sites throughout the region to download the past year’s data and continue trapping juvenile salmon to monitor their abundance. In the coming weeks, the team will be installing a new video weir on Indian Creek in Tyonek to monitor the return of adult salmon, furthering our understanding of the region’s salmon populations to inform future restoration and conservation efforts.

Tyonek Grown

Our first Farmers Market of the season will be July 9, with a BBQ celebration from 12–2 PM and open market hours from 12–5 PM. We’re excited to offer rhubarb and strawberry starts for home gardens, as well as a variety of Alaska-grown vegetables. Later this month, TTCD Youth Interns will travel to Homer for a farmer training intensive hosted by the Homer Soil & Water Conservation District, supporting ongoing efforts to strengthen agricultural education and hands-on learning opportunities for Tyonek youth.

Tyonek Gather

This month, we’re offering fresh local beef from Mat-Valley Meats, pork roasts from Blood, Sweat & Food Farm, and fresh eggs from Polaris Farm. Online ordering for meat and dairy will continue throughout the summer and Tyonek-grown and Alaska-grown produce will be available at the weekly Tyonek Farmers Markets. Join us again in late July for a free fish market featuring fresh salmon caught by Tyonek fishermen this summer. Fish will be distributed whole and are intended to be self-processed. Check the TTCD Facebook page later this month for details on date and time.

Sign up and order from the Tyonek Gather marketplace: tyonekgather.localfoodmarketplace.com.

OPENING FARMERS MARKET & BBQ

THURSDAY, JULY 9

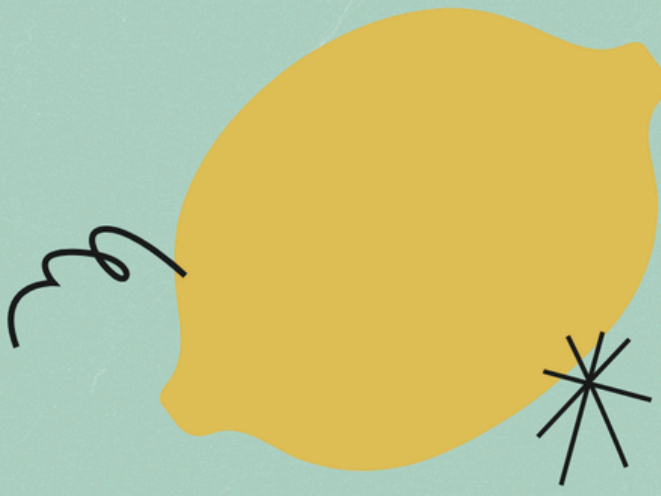
TYONEK GARDEN

FARMERS MARKET

12:00PM - 5:00PM

BBQ & GAMES

12:00PM - 2:00PM



TYONEK GROWN

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What's on the menu?

Recipe: Rhubarb Lemonade

Ingredients

- 3 cups rhubarb, chopped
- 2 large lemons, juiced and zested
- 1.5 cups granulated sugar
- 3 cups water

Directions

- Wash and prepare rhubarb, chopping into 1/2" pieces. Be sure to discard the leaves of the rhubarb and use a clean knife and cutting surface for the chopping.
- Wash and zest lemon using a grater. Then cut lemons in half and juice using a juicer or a fork. Strain juice to remove seeds and pour over rhubarb.
- In a medium saucepan pour water, sugar, and rhubarb-lemon mixture along with the lemon zest.
- Bring to a boil over medium-high heat.
- Allow to cook for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the rhubarb is tender and breaks down.
- Remove from heat and gently mash the mixture.
- Allow to cool for 10 minutes before straining into a large bowl.
- When you are ready to make a pitcher of lemonade, use a 3:1 ratio -- 3 cups of water to 1 cup of concentrate.

How's it growing?

Cucumbers are growing in the high tunnels at the Tyonek Garden, thriving in the warm, protected environment. Once established, cucumbers mature quickly — typically ready for harvest about 50 to 70 days after planting — and continue yielding steadily when picked regularly during peak production.