



From **Contamination** to **Health**—**Without Breaking the Bank**

Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council,
Alaska and Yukon

The Yukon River serves as the “lifeblood” for the native people of Alaska and the Yukon by providing both fresh water and regular food supply.

Over time, the river has become contaminated from environmentally irresponsible development companies dumping waste and chemicals into the water. By the 1990s, the water in the river was undrinkable.

Dozens of tribes in the Yukon Watershed joined forces and built a coalition to support cleanup efforts.

Gaining support across such a large area takes more than just mailings and phone calls—it takes face-to-face interaction. Although the site has not fully recovered, the grassroots dedication and committed cooperation indicate healthier days ahead.



Health impacts of the Yukon Watershed Redevelopment:

- ✓ **Established** intertribal cooperation leading to a 50-year vision to restore the Yukon River as a drinkable water source
- ✓ **Conducted** community education to prevent further watershed contamination
- ✓ **Developed** an extensive list of potential brownfields in the Yukon Watershed for future redevelopment



Funding:

- Environmental Protection Agency, Brownfield Tribal Response Program



Photo: Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council

For the full story, visit:

http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/sites/brownfields/docs/ATSDR_LandReuse.pdf



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry



KEYWORDS: brownfield, rural community, tribal land, river