



4 & 5

MARCH
2026

ALASKA DAY 2026

AT&T Forum, 601 New Jersey Ave NW, Washington, DC



Welcome from the President



Benjamin Mallott

Welcome to Alaska Day 2026. As President of the Alaska Federation of Natives, I am honored to join you in Washington, D.C. for this important gathering. Together, we continue to strengthen the vital partnerships between Alaska Native communities and our federal and Congressional leaders. This event is a powerful opportunity to advance our shared goals of sovereignty, self-determination, and prosperity for all of Alaska.

This year's theme, "Local Leadership, National Partnership: Advancing Self-Determination and Economic Opportunity," is about results. Alaska Native communities are not asking for handouts. We are building economies, developing energy, strengthening infrastructure, and creating opportunities for our people.

Alaska Native corporations and Tribes are major economic drivers, supporting jobs across America, investing in innovation, and stewarding millions of acres of land critical to our nation's future. We believe in partnerships that respect sovereignty, honor the federal trust responsibility, and deliver real outcomes.

The United States is an Arctic nation because of Alaska, and we are not on the sidelines. Our communities are at the forefront of our national strategy, and Alaska Native leadership is essential to that strategy and future.

Thank you for joining us.

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Overview

Alaska Day 2026 will highlight how contracting and compacting mechanisms under federal programs can streamline service delivery, strengthen sovereignty and self-determination, and empower Alaska Native communities to lead governance and economic development. The agenda will examine how these partnerships improve public services and expand local and regional economic potential, particularly in natural resource development and management.

Alaska Day 2026, taking place on March 4–5, 2026, is an annual event hosted by the Alaska Federation of Natives in Washington, D.C. The event is co-hosted with Alaska’s Congressional Delegation and convenes key stakeholders to explore the partnerships between Alaska Native tribes, organizations, corporations, and federal and Congressional decision-makers. As the Trump Administration continues its new term, and as Vice President Vance has underscored the White House’s priority to uphold and build sovereignty and self-determination, this event offers a critical opportunity to engage the Administration, Congress, and other partners in a dialogue centered on advancing government efficiency, local governance, and economic growth in Alaska.



Alaska Day 2026 Materials



Agenda at a Glance

Congressional Delegation Welcome and Discussion



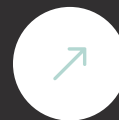
Agenda at a Glance

Navigating Washington, D.C. – Advancing Alaska’s Priorities in Congress



Agenda at a Glance

Unleashing Alaska’s Economic Potential – Native Led Growth



Agenda at a Glance

Strengthening the Durability of the SBA 8(a) Program: Legal Foundations, Policy Landscape, and Strategic Coordination

Agenda - DAY 1

WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2026

9:00 AM

AFN Welcome
AFN Co-Chair Joe Nelson
AFN Co-Chair Gayla Hoseth

9:10 AM

Overview of Alaska Day
AFN President Benjamin Mallott

9:30 AM

Chase Wilson
Associate Director, White House Office
of Intergovernmental Affairs
Executive Office of the President

9:45 AM

Congressional Delegation Welcome and Discussion
U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski
U.S. Senator Dan Sullivan
U.S. Congressman Nick Begich

11:15 AM

Coffee Break

11:25 AM

U.S. Senator Brian Schatz, Hawaii (video)

11:30 AM

Relationship Between Infrastructure and Building
Strong Economies
Julie Kitka, Denali Commission, Federal Co-Chair

NOON

Lunch on Your Own
(recommendations on page 9)

WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2026

1:30 PM

U.S. Department of Transportation Update
James A. Crawford, Assistant Secretary for Tribal Affairs

2:00 PM

Brandon Beach, Treasurer of the United States

2:20 PM

Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs, William Kirkland

2:40 PM

Assistant Secretary Kirsten Baesler, Department of
Education

3:00 PM

Unleashing Alaska's Economic Potential – Native Led
Growth

Moderated by Sarah Lukin

4:00 PM

Status of Philanthropy in Indian Country
Erik Stegman, CEO, Native Americans in Philanthropy

4:15 PM

Leveraging Partnerships to Foster Development
Bernice Kissinger, Dual-Use Advisor for Allied Nations

4:30 PM

From Recovery to Resilience: The Evolving Role of AFN
Navigators

5:00 PM

Recess for the Day

Agenda - DAY 2

THURSDAY
5 MARCH
2026

9:00 AM

Reconvene
Co-Chair Joe Nelson
Co-Chair Gayla Hoseth

9:10 AM

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban
Development Update
Michael Kelsch, Policy Advisor, Office of Public and
Indian Housing
Tonya Plummer, Director of Loan Guarantee

9:30 AM

Why the Farm Bill Matters for Alaska and
Opportunities
Kayla Gebeck, Principal, Giizhik Law LLP

9:50 AM

Strengthening the Durability of the SBA
8(a) Program: Legal Foundations, Policy
Landscape, and Strategic Coordination

Moderated by Sarah Lukin

11:00 AM

Ben Smith, Deputy Director, Indian Health Service

11:15 AM

Meredith Cameron, Chief of Staff at
NOAA's Office of Legislative and
Intergovernmental Affairs

11:30 AM

Post Typhoon Halong: Lessons Learned
for Emergency Preparedness
Vivian Korthuis, President, AVCP

11:45 AM

Lunch on Your Own
(recommendations on page 9)

THURSDAY
5 MARCH
2026

1:00 PM

Celebrating Courage, Heritage, and the Military's
Enduring Bond with Alaska Native Communities
Brigadier General Matthew Komatsu, Special Assistant
to the Commander, Alaskan Command

1:20 PM

Larry Wright, Jr., Executive Director, National
Congress of American Indians

1:40 PM

Strengthen Alaska Native and American Indian
community health, safety, and family stability
through prevention-focused support for families and
communities
Kim Kovol, Principal Deputy Director, Administration
for Native Americans

2:00 PM

Coffee Break

2:15 PM

U.S. Senator Thom Tillis, North Carolina

2:45 PM

Current Status of U.S. Census in Indian Country
Dr. James Tucker

3:00 PM

Navigating Washington, D.C. – Advancing Alaska's
Priorities in Congress

Moderated by Ben Mallott

4:00 PM

Where Investment Meets Impact: The Future of
Connectivity in Rural Alaska, Greg Chapados, GCI

4:15 PM CLOSING COMMENTS &
ADJOURN

Alaska Day Goals

01

Ensure the right stakeholders have a seat at the table

02

Underscore the importance of comprehensive policymaking that reflects the economic needs and priorities of Alaska Native communities

03

Focus on pathways to harness Alaska's vast resources responsibly

04

Leveraging partnerships to foster development while preserving the traditions and ways of life of Alaska's Native communities



Lunch - Where To Go

There are plenty of lunch options near the AT&T Forum.

The Dubliner - 4 F St NW

SUNdeVICH - 601 New Jersey Ave

Subway - 800 North Capitol St NW

District Rico - 91 H St NW

L'Ardente - 200 Massachusetts Ave NW

Wiseguy Pizza - 300 Massachusetts Ave NW

Jack's Famous Deli - 501 3rd St NW # 2

Union Station - 701 First St NE



2026 Special Guests



U.S. Senator
Lisa Murkowski



U.S. Senator
Dan Sullivan



U.S. Congressman
Nick Begich



U.S. Senator
Thom Tillis



Brigadier General
Matthew Komatsu



U.S. Treasurer
Brandon Beach



Julie Kitka
Denali Commission



Larry Wright, Jr.
NCAI



James Crawford
U.S. Dept. of Transportation



Erik Stegman
Native Americans in
Philanthropy



Ben Smith
Indian Health Service



Kirsten Baesler
U.S. Dept. of Education



William Kirkland
Indian Affairs



Bernice Kissinger
Allied Nations



Greg Chapados
GCI



Kayla Gebeck
Giizhik Law LLP



Meredith Cameron
NOAA



Kim Kovol
Administration for Native
Americans



Morgan Rodman
Cherokee Nation



Dr. James Tucker
Native American Voting Rights
Coalition



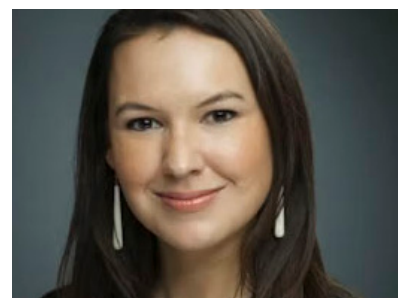
Quinton Carroll
NACA



Michael Kelsch
U.S. Dept. of HUD



Amber Ebarb
Senate Committee on Indian
Affairs



Raina Thiele
Thiele Strategies

Sponsors & Partners

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Ahtna



Notes

Alaska Day 2026 Materials



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