

Toolik Field Station

Town Hall, March 8, 2024



Toolik Town Hall



- Welcome - Donie Bret-Harte
- Opening Remarks - NSF representatives
- Field Operations in 2024 - TFS staff
- Helicopter Operations - Patrick Proden, PFS
- Construction Operations - Trace Wright, PFS
- Questions



Land Acknowledgement



We acknowledge the Alaska Native nations upon whose traditional lands our field station operates. In Fairbanks, our Logistic Offices are located on the traditional lands of the Troth Yeddha' Dena people of the Lower Tanana River. We acknowledge that Toolik Field Station and the surrounding areas are located on the ancestral hunting grounds of the Nunamiut, and occasional hunting grounds and routes of the Gwich'in, Koyukuk, and Iñupiaq peoples. Toolik Field Station recognizes, and is grateful for, the Indigenous people who inhabit and steward this land.





2024 Operations Overview

What to expect?



- Summer reservations due March 31
- TFS rate increase in 2024 to \$124/night
- Logistics and transportation to operate as in 2023:
 - North and south trucks will run on **Tuesdays** and **Thursdays** weekly.
 - Dalton Highway Express will run **north on Fridays** and **south on Saturdays** during June-July peak.
 - **Arrival days to the station are Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.** Other arrival days should be coordinated with the station manager.
 - Toolik Taxi Service will be limited. Please coordinate with station managers well in advance.



Logistics



- Pre-departure forms for COVID, drivers
 - Sent out 1 week prior to departure to email address on myToolik profile
- Shipping
 - Samples - SRS needs to be submitted 24 hours prior to southbound truck
 - More communication about supplies/sample shipping is always better. Never too early to begin coordinating.
- Reach out to logistics if you plan to bring **more than two 50 lb bags**





Proposed COVID plan

- Similar model as 2023, no quarantine, modest changes
- Attestation of vaccination or exemption is still required.
- **Before traveling:** provide proof of **2 negative rapid antigen tests**, taken 48 h and 24 h before driving up to Toolik
 - Pre-departure test results will be collected via the same Google Form used in 2023, emailed at least 48 h before departure to email on myToolik profile
- **Post-arrival:** take **1 rapid antigen test on their 5th day** at the station
 - Bring 2 more tests in case of an outbreak
 - Residents are encouraged to wear a face mask for their first 7 days at the station but can go about their business normally
- Projects are responsible to provide COVID antigen tests for their personnel
 - This is an allowable grant expense. Need a total of 5 per person per reservation.



Proposed COVID Plan



- We will try to separate housing for new arrivals from established residents, but this may not always be possible.
- If a station resident contracts COVID at Toolik, they will isolate in their room until they can be cleared - no more sick bays.
 - We will attempt to relocate roommates, but this may not be possible if population is high.
 - Residents can depart the station if they can provide their own transportation.
- Those who have been in close contact with a confirmed COVID case may be required to undergo further testing and socially distance from others.
- Personal responsibility makes this protocol work:
 - Travellers should be aware of the risks of COVID-19 during travel and protect themselves. Wear a mask during travel. Avoid large gatherings.
 - Understand that residents could contract COVID-19 any time while at Toolik



Facility Upgrades



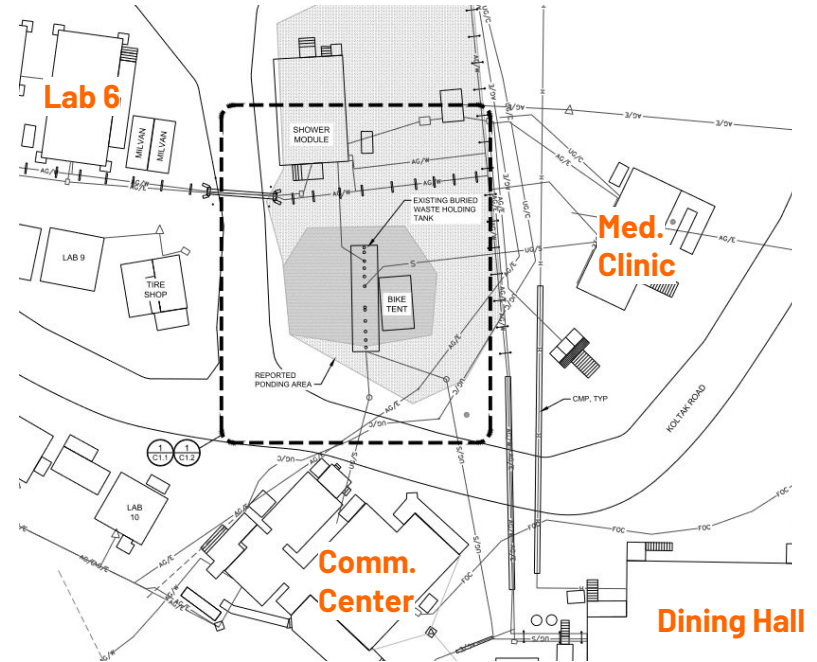
Tower holding tank replacement

- This season, the tower holding tanks closest to the WeatherPorts will be replaced. There will be an upgrade to this tower facility.
- This tower will remain out of order until upgrades are completed.
- **Expected completion:** ~June 6.



Central waste tank replacement

- The central holding tank for the dining facility will also be replaced in 2024.
 - Major construction effort throughout August - September
 - Road closures to foot & vehicle traffic:
 - Directly to the west of the dining facility across from the community center front door
- Expected completion:** mid-September



Field Courses

- Alaska Songbird Institute's North for Science
 - half day visit to Toolik
 - 8-10 middle schoolers
 - Early June
- UAF Summer Sessions Painting in the Arctic
 - 6 day art course, led by Klara Maisch
 - 10 adult students + 2 instructors
 - June 13-20
- UAF Climate Scholars
 - 3 day field trip, learning history of the pipeline & oil extraction
 - 14 undergraduate students + instructors
 - Aug 12-15
- OSU Upward Bound
 - 5 day field trip on Arctic climate change
 - Funded by Battelle & Dept. of Ed.
 - 12 high school students + 6 instructors/chaperones
 - Aug 15-20

For beginners and beyond- an art adventure at Toolik Field Station

Painting in the Arctic

June 13 – 20

with Klara Maisch

This six-day class (with a travel day on each end) takes place at Toolik Field Station (TFS), UAF's remote research station 370 miles north of Fairbanks. The course aims to develop or strengthen an observational-based landscape painting practice using oil or acrylic paint (watercolor is also an option if you have previous experience). There will be structured painting demos, as well as ample time to create at least two landscape paintings on location. All experience levels are welcome. Please check the web listing for more information.



\$2,400

includes: roundtrip ground transportation from Fairbanks to TFS, lodging, meals, and six days of instruction in a remote, breathtaking location. Register now for this once-in-a-lifetime trip!

Read more and Sign up at:

uaf.edu/summer/travel/upcoming.php



Summer Sessions @UAF Summer@alaska.edu || (907) 474-7021

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Website and myToolik



- myToolik
 - Please use the SRS system for all Operational, Maintenance, Logistics, and SEDC requests.
 - Project profile updates
 - Personal profiles
- Continuing
 - [COVID statistics](#)
 - 2024 [Support](#) & [COVID](#) FAQs (to be updated)
 - Updated information for international researchers
 - Creating a Community of Respect [resource & training list](#)



Spatial & Environmental Data Center



- Normal operations
 - Including remote access
 - Last year we supported 45 projects for more than 1500 hours.
 - Baseline measurements
 - Field Support
 - Drone & GPS Surveys
- Staffing
 - Hiring new GIS & RS Analyst
- Moving the Science SCUA to a larger CONEX
 - Ability to organize donations and provide additional support.



Community Gear Closet

- 115+ items in a wide variety of sizes
- Located in east side of the Science Workshop
- Listed on website at bit.ly/toolik-gear-closet
- Please share with your field teams to help
- Have items to donate? Contact Haley Dunleavy or Ruby An.



Photo by Ruby An

Thank you to Steering Committee student representatives, Ruby An and Brandon Yokeley, for leading the initiative and to the many community members and projects who have donated items to the closet. This closet was supported with a microgrant from the National Science Foundation Polar Science Early Career Community Office.



CELEBRATING 50 YEARS IN 2025

On the way to reconnoitre Toolik Lake, July 1975

Jerry Brown, John Hobbie, Philip Miller, Michael Miller, Vera Alexander
Photo from the Pat Webber archives.

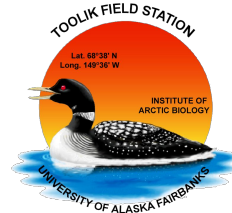


A year-long celebration

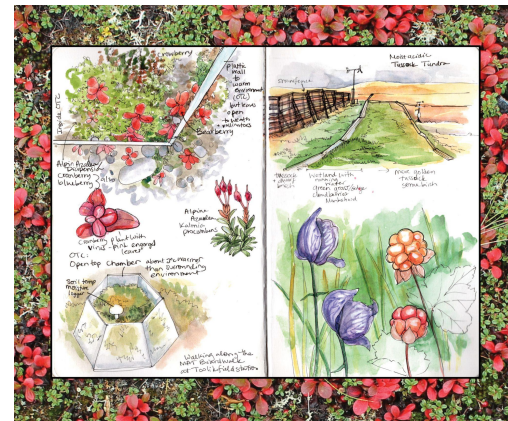
- Highlighting Toolik research from the past & present
- Recognizing our growth from a grouping of tents to today's year-round facilities
- Looking forward to new initiatives & directions

Kicking off with an extended All Scientists Meeting in January 2025 & culminating with summer activities in Alaska

Opportunities for Broader Impacts



- Share your research & give a glimpse of what it's like to live and work at Toolik with a **social media takeover**
 - Sign up at QR code or bit.ly/toolik-social-takeover-2024
- Engage the Fairbanks community at UAF's **Arctic Research Open House**, May 16, 4-7pm
 - hdunleavy@alaska.edu for more info or to sign-up
- **Artist-in-residence application due March 29**
- Collaborate with **teachers** at Toolik
 - In-person ARETS, July 15-23 & virtual data nuggets, Amanda Morrison, arcticlter.education@gmail.com
 - In-person & virtual, Polar STEAM, researcher applications open polarsteam.info
- **Arctic Interagency Visitor Center – 20th anniversary**
 - hdunleavy@alaska.edu for more info or to sign-up



Kristin Link, 2023 Artist-in-Residence

Tundra Award

- Provides students & early career researchers with up to 10 days to conduct an independent research project at TFS
- Continuing in 2024 awardees announced in late March
- Applications for 2025 due next Feb 15



UA Giving Day is March 26-28

