

Assessments of Shaw Creek Watershed in the Tanana River Basin, Alaska

Alaska Boreal Forest Council

Project Partners:

Shaw Creek Community, GW Scientific, Alaska
Department of Fish and Game, Alaska Department of
Natural Resources--Division of Forestry

Whitestone Farms Community, Alaska Department of
Environmental Conservation, Restoration Science and
Engineering

Shaw Creek Watershed and Station Network

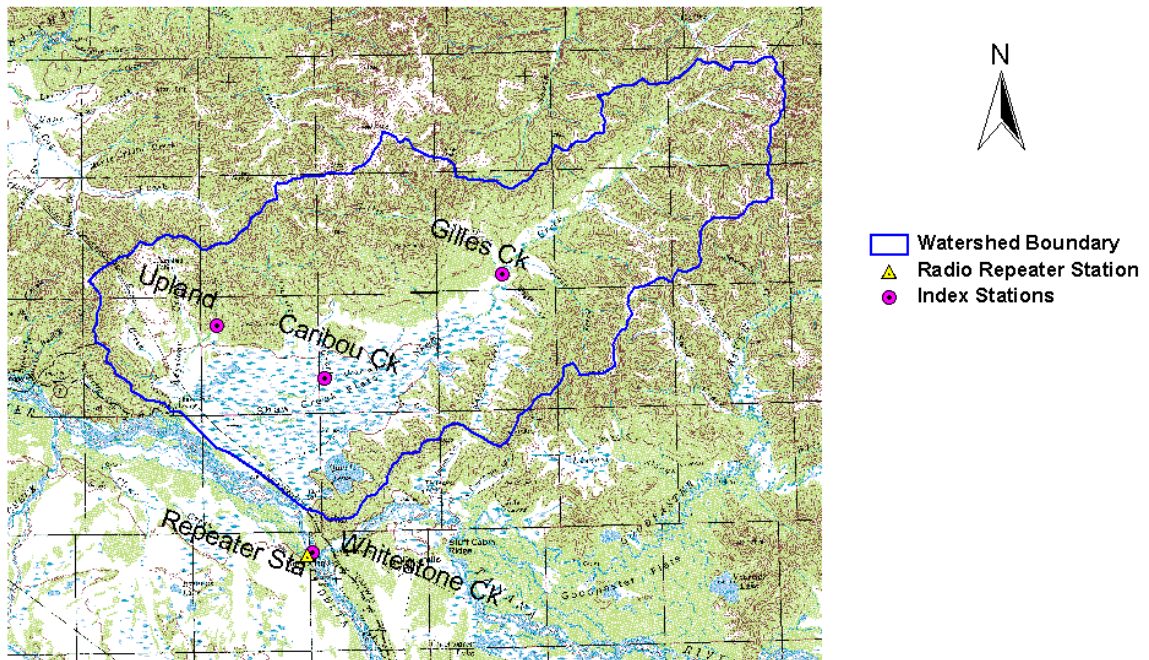


Figure 1: Shaw Creek Watershed and Monitoring Station Network

Background:

Shaw Creek, a northern tributary of the Tanana River (Figure 1), has been identified by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources as rearing and possibly spawning habitat for Coho and Chinook salmon, very important spawning habitat for grayling, and habitat for other resident fish species. In addition, it serves as winter habitat for the Fortymile caribou herd, moose, bears, and other furbearers. The watershed also contains spruce and hardwood timber resources, mining resources, scientific resources (e.g. Shaw Creek Tamarack and Rosa Keystone Dunes research natural areas), and recreational resources (e.g. Quartz Lake, winter trails).

Current and future development has the potential to interact with fishery and water resources in Shaw Creek. Access routes to proposed timber sales and mining areas, timber harvesting activities, prescribed burns, and community development all have the potential to impact the water quality and quantity of the Shaw Creek watershed. To meet, both, sustainable development and environmental protection goals, current and future development requires an understanding of the ground-water and surface-water processes and their interaction with each other and with the local ecosystem.

Project Objectives:

The overall goal of this project is to provide the required baseline data for sustainable development of the Shaw-Creek basin, such that multiple land uses can be supported while protecting the natural qualities of this watershed. The specific objectives:

1. Establish 3 baseline hydrologic monitoring stations in the Shaw Creek watershed. Will collect continuous data on:
 - surface-water levels;
 - air, soil, surface-water, and river-bed temperatures;
 - stream conductivity
 - soil moisture;
 - air relative humidity.
2. Conduct a geohydrology field-survey of Shaw Creek basin
3. Provide data to improve the public understanding of these public fisheries and water resources.
4. Develop a Geographic Information System (GIS) database structure to later be used in order to promote public interest, information exchange, education, and improved decision-making.



Figure 2: Shaw Creek resident. Robert Walker delivering researchers Craig McCauley and Johnny Mendez to Upland monitoring site



Figure 3: Local resident and river guide Dean Seibold, next to Caribou Creek monitoring site

For More Information:

If you would like to get involved or find out more about this project, visit the following website:

<http://www.tanana-watershed.org>

Or contact:

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