

Tongass Futures Roundtable

Purpose

The Roundtable brings together a diverse group of stakeholders long involved in the Tongass to discuss how to incorporate our economic, cultural, and ecological values in public policy issues throughout the region. The Roundtable seeks to explore how a broad range of stakeholders can address these public policy issues and work together to achieve a long-term balance of healthy and diverse communities, vibrant economies, responsible use of resources -including timber, while maintaining the natural values and ecological integrity of the forest.

Convening Values

The Roundtable will include all of those who care for the Tongass by using open, inclusive, and transparent processes to reach out to all Tongass voices. The Roundtable will work to create a positive dialogue and find shared solutions to meet the Roundtable's Purposes.

Recognizing that the governance of the Roundtable will evolve over time, this protocol is intended to guide it through its early existence. The Roundtable will review the protocol at its first meeting annually.

Goals

1. Support an agreement for bridge timber supply that allows a consensus stakeholder process to proceed. Bridge timber supply is required from now until the timber supply would come available under the plan revision (an estimated 24-36 months). In the interim, the Forest Service will continue the scheduled amendment process.
2. Reach consensus on specific recommendations to the TLMP Amendment. The issues that these recommendations will address may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Recommend a stabilized land base
 - Reach consensus on how to address ANCSA entitlements and other potential draws on Tongass National Forest lands
 - Reach consensus on which watersheds of the Tongass should be conserved
 - Reach consensus on which areas of the Tongass will allow timber harvest
 - Recommend a long-term stable supply of timber
 - Assess feasibility of second growth timber
 - Recommend ways for Congress and the administration to incentivise a restoration economy
 - Explore feasibility and methods to transition to second growth management over the next 10-40 years

- Forest Service commits to recognize the comments and recommendations of the Tongass Future Roundtable and meaningfully incorporate the recommendations in the decision-making process
3. Recommend how to protect our SE Alaskan quality of life through the responsible stewardship of cultural, economic and biological values
 - Identify ways to celebrate and enrich cultures, protect values and strengthen opportunities for healthy communities and vibrant economies
 - Achieve this goal by engagement that gives voice to and empowers all cultures and values.
 - Achieve this goal by engagement that gives voice to and empowers local communities.
 4. Advocate for Southeast Alaska to have a robust, community-based diversified and sustainable economy
 - Look at systemic problems regionally and locally (energy, solid waste, regulatory problems)
 - Find a project or issue to work together on and see it through, such as
 - Create a restoration project
 - Create a climate for entrepreneurs
 - Improve existing industry without impacting other users
 - Maximize value-added resource
 - Decrease reliance on government, increase private sector jobs
 - Work toward a timber industry that has more continuity, sustainability and reliability

Tongass Futures Roundtable - Statement on Biomass Energy

The Roundtable believes meeting Southeast energy needs is urgent and critical. Biomass energy provides both a near-term and long-term solution to many problems in Southeast, including moderating the cost of home and commercial heating, the efficient utilization of waste products, and an additional revenue source for our local mills.

The Roundtable would like to see any biomass project meet the following goals:

1. Improve regional energy self-reliance
2. Improve community viability and prosperity
3. Increase resiliency and competitiveness of regional sawmills
4. Reduce energy costs and carbon footprint
5. Create jobs and stimulate secondary manufacturing of wood products
6. Make forest restoration more economically viable
7. Reduce volume of municipal and forest waste/turn into a resource
8. Scale industry to regional energy needs
9. Scale industry to regional municipal, commercial, and forest byproduct waste streams

Adopted by consensus of the Roundtable, May 8, 2008

Tongass Futures Roundtable Members

1. Buce Botelho, Mayor, City and Borough of Juneau
2. Tim Bristol, Director, Trout Unlimited, Alaska Office
3. Denny Bschor, Regional Forester, USDA Forest Service Region 10
4. Forrest Cole, Supervisor, Tongass National Forest
5. Laurie Cooper, Rainforest Program Director, Alaska Wilderness League
6. Kirk Dahlstrom, Owner, Viking Lumber
7. Randy Hagenstein, State Director, The Nature Conservancy in Alaska
8. Karen Hardigg, Alaska forest program manager, The Wilderness Society
9. Rick Harris, Vice President, Sealaska Corporation
10. Russell Heath, Director, Southeast Alaska Conservation Council
11. Steve Kallick, Assistant Director, Environment Program, Pew Charitable Trust
12. Niel Lawrence, Director, Forestry Project, Natural Resources Defense Council
13. Aileen Lee, Salmon Program Director, The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation
14. Denby Lloyd, Commissioner of Alaska Department of Fish & Game
15. Chris Maisch, State Forester, State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources
16. Byron Mallott, Senior Fellow, Alaska Native Policy Center, First Alaskans Institute
17. Michael McIntosh, Sr., The Boat Company
18. Elaine Price, Coffman Cove
19. Olleke Rappe-Daniels, Retired Deputy Supervisor, Tongass National Forest
20. Carol Rushmore, Economic Development Director, City of Wrangell
21. Richard Peterson, Vice President, Tlingit Haida Central Council
22. John Schoen, Senior Scientist, Audubon Alaska
23. Leo Luczak, City of Petersburg
24. Owen Graham, Alaska Forest Association
25. David Secord, Program Officer, Wilburforce Foundation
26. Marlyn Twitchell, Executive Director, Champion Foundation
27. Bruce Wallace, Environmental Chair, United Fishermen of Alaska
28. Shelly Wright, Executive Director, Southeast Conference
29. Randy Wanamaker, Board of Directors, Goldbelt, Inc.
30. Michael Kampnich, City of Craig
31. Woody Widmark, Chief, Sitka Tribe of Alaska
32. Bill Possiel, The National Forests Foundation
33. George Woodbury, Wrangell

Updated: 5/08/08



CENTRAL COUNCIL
Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
Office of the President
320 West Willoughby Avenue • Suite 300
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1726

May 15, 2008

Ms. Abigail Kimbell, Chief
USDA Forest Service
Mail Stop 1104
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-1104

Attention: EMC Appeals

Dear Ms. Kimbell:

The Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (CCTHITA) is a federally-recognized Indian Tribe that services 20 villages and communities and represents over 26,000 members. Our stewardship concerns are for our entire Tribal membership but more specifically for those 13,500 living in the Tongass National Forest. As such, we are compelled to address the issues regarding the forest related to our responsibilities as *stewards of the air, land, and sea* and ensuring a balance is maintained in the use of natural resources.

CCTHITA submitted formal comments on the Tongass Land Management Plan (TLMP) Amendment Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) 2007 in April 2008 (enclosed). This letter is to officially file an appeal to the TLMP Record of Decision's determination to proceed with Alternative 6.

In our comments, we expressed our support for Alternative 5 which maintains the balance between sustainable use and conservation of available resources. Through our work with forest related issues in the Tongass, we have come to the conclusion that prudent use as well as prudent conservation of forest resources are necessary, even in economically challenging times.

It is for this reason that we oppose Alternative 6 which does not address our concerns with the management of forest resources on the Tongass. Specifically, this alternative does not include thorough consideration of the following issues: 1) Protection of Native Sacred Sites within the forest, 2) Protection of intact watersheds of importance to habitat, fisheries, and subsistence, 3) Promotion and funding of a forest and riparian restoration program, 4) Provision of sufficient forest resources to support a sustainable level of economic activity in forest related industries, 5) Slow and controlled transition from old growth to second growth in limited areas.

- Protection of Native Sacred Sites must be paramount in any decision. The preservation of sacred sites is essential and no disruption or destruction should occur without approval of proper Tribal authorities.
- The importance of the whole ecosystem is vital to the very existence of many tribal members who depend upon the quality, quantity, and distribution of wildlife and fishery resources. Subsistence resources are of extreme importance to our culture and well-being.
- The need for a substantive riparian and forest restoration program to mitigate past impacts from resource development.
- Responsible use of Tongass Forest resources, which should be integrated on a local level in Southeast Alaska as to provide the largest positive economic impact for the use of the resources. This includes equitable access to energy resources on the Tongass, i.e. energy corridors as referenced in the appeal document submitted by Kootznoowoo, Incorporated and Kake Tribal Corporation.
- Transition from old growth to new growth should take place in an orderly, undisruptive process with sustainable forestry practices to include consideration of economic feasibility evaluations.

In addition, there was not enough consideration in Alternative 6 about global warming/climate change and the potential impacts which are still to be determined. This issue has huge implications with resources which are vital to the well-being of our Tribal citizens. We feel that there is a potential to harm subsistence species unless more information is researched and presented about this important issue.

Thank you for considering our formal comments and including this appeal in the National Environmental Protection Act record. It is valuable to collaborate with the Southeast Alaska Tribes in government-to-government relationships in decisions on the Tongass National Forest that affect all of us.

If you have any questions, please contact CCTHITA at (907) 463-7197. Thank you.

Sincerely,



William E. Martin
President

Enclosure: April 2008 Comments

cc: Danny Bschor, Alaska Regional Forester,
Governor Sarah Palin
U.S. Senator Ted Stevens
U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski
U.S. Congressman Don Young