

Chichagof Conservation Council

Box 621 Tenakee Springs Alaska 99841

January 25, 1999

1998 was a busy year, with one issue after another clamoring for attention. This newsletter will look back at 1998 as well as looking ahead.

New Native Claim legislation A bill introduced last year in both House and Senate would have recognized five new Native corporations including one supposedly composed of Tenakee residents. Unlike the previous bill this version did not define what would be given to these corporations but would have set in motion a process where they would later receive "lands and other appropriate compensation". The bill passed out of both authorizing committees but did not make it to the floor of either the House or Senate.

In the last week of Congress there was a sudden attempt to move a scaled down "substitute" bill. The original proposal consolidated the claimants into one urban corporation. It specified land selections of 27,000 acres for logging on Heceta Island, and picked out 7000 acres of other parcels throughout Southeast Alaska for commercial development and "traditional use". In Tenakee Inlet approximately 1 mile of beach front east of Coffee Cove (and connected to the Hoonah road system) would have been transferred to the new corporation. Cedar Cove in Freshwater Bay and Chicken Creek were also identified.

SEACC's executive director met with corporation advocates and convened an emergency teleconference of the SEACC board of directors to decide on SEACC's position. SEACC staff tracked down John Wisenbaugh at a construction site and sent a plane to retrieve Molly Kemp from a remote field camp so they could participate. Concern was expressed about the lack of public participation (especially in light of the City of Tenakee's official position on the issue) and about potential impacts of a major development just outside the city limits and connected to the road system. The SEACC board decided that fundamental concerns about the issue had not been resolved. Various other proposals were examined before discussions broke off.

Senator Murkowski has indicated that he intends to introduce another bill in the next Congress, without revealing anything about what form it will take. **It's time to get this issue out in the open, and to start writing letters to the Alaska Delegation, the Governor's office, and the media.**

We'll try to keep you posted. CCC donated a copy of the "ISER" report on the subject to the Tenakee library, and has other material on file.

Indian River Participation in all those interminable meetings, negotiations, and review of documents was rewarded, at least for the time being. Citing unfavorable market conditions, the Forest Service announced that the proposed Indian River Timber Sale was on hold for the foreseeable future. Special thanks are due to Leba Shaw and Zeb Strong for their efforts reviewing and commenting on the DEIS.

Finger Mountain The scoping process for this proposed sale is underway. The Forest Service has proposed alternatives ranging from 13-54 mmbf. It is likely that the preferred alternative will be "D", with 33 miles of new road and 12 miles reconstruction of existing road. Most of the new road would be at the head of Crab Bay/Inbetween and at Broad Creek in Peril Straits. Potential impacts on herring spawning areas and crabbing are a cause for concern. John Wisenbaugh has been doing some preliminary work on a "Citizen's Alternative" to present to the Forest Service and would appreciate your help. Give him a call!

Although there is no formal deadline for the scoping process it is very important to get comments on the record as soon as possible. Issues must be raised in the scoping process or the Forest Service is not obligated to address them later. Send your comments **(especially any issues not addressed at the public meetings)** to:

Finger Mountain Planning Team
201 Katlian St. Suite 109
Sitka AK 99835

The Draft EIS is currently scheduled for release in September.

Conferences, etc. Back in April John and Vicki Wisenbaugh and Zeb Strong attended the Southeast Alaska Futures Conference sponsored by the Tongass Community Alliance. Local products showing the potential for value-added wood product manufacturing were displayed, including work by Toby Rubke, Terry Kennedy, Diane McCarty, Loren Carter, Paul Scriber, Dave Choate, Nick Olmsted and John Wisenbaugh.

In May the Forest Service held a conference on "Collaborative Stewardship" in Ketchikan which Louis Heins, Paul Scriber and John Wisenbaugh attended.

Cruise Ships Tenakee was in the news this summer after making it clear that while the community welcomes independent travelers there are neither facilities nor welcome available for large scale cruise ships. A difficult situation, which could have been avoided had the tour operator been responsive to the City's clearly worded resolution on the subject. Those of us who had a chance to talk individually with the very pleasant (mostly German) passengers found a surprising degree of sympathy and understanding.

The cruise ship incident points out the pressing need to think through the many similar pressures which are going to arise in years ahead. Tenakee has made a clear statement about cruise ships, but where is the line between enough and too much tourism?

CCC has not dealt with these issues at all, but we will have to take some positions soon. For example, how should CCC respond to trail construction proposals? What kind of trails (if any) would you support, and where? What about a hut-to-hut system? What if it involved logging roads (and consequently would inevitably turn into a vehicle-based operation)?

The Forest Service just released a carrying capacity analysis for future regulation of commercial operations, which identifies 15 groups/ day as the target for Tenakee Inlet. What do you think about that number? Are there areas you'd like to see off-limits to commercial guiding operations? **A Forest Service representative will be in Tenakee February 2, 1999 to discuss the carrying capacity analysis and take comments.**

There are many decisions of this kind coming up- **YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!** Here's another one:

Landmark Trees This is a program created by noted naturalist Richard Carstenson, intended to highlight areas of the Tongass with especially high volume timber. The project is developing a map identifying special areas, with the idea that once people actually see and appreciate groves of ancient giants they will get involved in management issues.

A complicated situation developed this summer with the Landmark Tree folks and a news crew from National Public Radio. The short version is that (after consulting with as many local people as possible at short notice) Molly asked the NPR producer, Jessica Goldstein, to omit specific references to Tenakee locations in their feature story on the Landmark Tree project. Local interviews were dropped and the only location mentioned was "Tenakee Inlet". If you are concerned about publicity NPR deserves your thanks! They estimate that 8 million people heard the story.

We still need to figure out how to interact with the Landmark Tree project. At this point the Tenakee site that was measured and documented this summer (Goose Flats) has not been added to their literature, purely out of courtesy to CCC and the local people who are concerned about drawing attention to the area. On the other edge of that sword is the reality that Goose Flats is NOT protected and the new TLMP plan allows clearcutting there. Some people feel that emphasizing individual stands of big trees will only sharpen the industry's interest. **What do you think?** We do need to keep in mind that the Landmark Tree Project could be a valuable ally if we get into a full scale fight to protect to Goose Flats.

Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan In 1998 the state Department of Transportation released a Southeast Transportation Plan, which proposes huge changes for the ferry system. Features of the plan include several new terminals and roads using small high speed foot passenger ferries to connect small towns, and use of larger vessels only to connect mainland communities. A trip from Haines to Ketchikan might require 8 ferry changes and bus trips and up to 3 nights ashore. The proposes roads cross some sensitive areas such as the Cleveland Peninsula. CCC needs to review the plan and comment.... volunteers needed!

Other news from 1998 CCC's finances were improved significantly by an unexpected grant from the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council. Those funds paid for fixing CCC's copy machine (HURRAY) and helped with travel and other expenses. Thank you SEACC.

PLEASE HELP BY EXPRESSING YOUR OPINION! What are your thoughts about cruise ships? trails? guided recreation?

What should CCC tell the Landmark Tree Project about Goose Flats? What about other sites in Tenakee? Kadashan?

It's time! New members or renewals- your support is important.

1999 MEMBERSHIP FORM

The Chichagof Conservation Council is incorporated as a non-profit organization, and your contributions are tax-deductible.

CCC dues are \$5/calendar year for individuals, \$10 for families. Additional contributions gratefully accepted.

Name (s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

PLEASE HELP BY EXPRESSING YOUR OPINION! What are your thoughts about cruise ships? trails? guided recreation?

Tourism has less impact than most natural resource extraction industries. Planning must proceed before the flood gates are open. Rules should be in place about public use, misuse, care, and maintenance to preserve the very scenic beauty that attracts this industry. I would like to responsibly share the beauty of this country with visitors. Some places will need to remain difficult or impossible to visit to preserve their unique habitat.

What should CCC tell the Landmark Tree Project about Goose Flats? What about other sites in Tenakee? Kadashan?

This is a knotty problem. I feel we should have the knowledge shared about Landmark trees and their location. We need assurance this information will be used to preserve & protect and not have the "big" trees targeted for harvest.

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Name (s) _____

Address _____



Brenda E Wright
17430 Andeanoff Dr
Juneau, AK 99801-8317

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone 789-4656

p.s. Hello Molly & Nick - what a snow winter - sure is lovely here in town. See you one of these days.
Brenda

Chichagof Conservation Council

Box 621 Tenakee Springs Alaska 99841

April 14, 1999

Dear CCC members,

Many thanks to everyone who renewed their CCC memberships recently. I'm sending this brief letter before we all get caught up in the frenzy of summer activities, in the hope that other members will send in the attached membership/renewal form. Your membership in CCC is important.

GREAT NEWS ABOUT THE TLMP APPEAL! We don't know all the details yet but word is out that the Forest Service has modified the Tongass Land Management Plan with protection for Seal Bay, Long Bay, Goose Flats, and the head of Tenakee Inlet as well as the unroaded areas of Crab Bay and the Broad Finger/Broad Creek area. **HURRAY!** Many thanks are due to everyone whose efforts resulted in this vastly improved TLMP decision, particularly SEACC staff Bart Koehler, Buck Lindekugel, Marc Wheeler, Tim Bristol, Michelle Kaelke, and Serena Down.

Tongass hero U.S. Representative George Miller is scheduled to visit Tenakee briefly in late May.

CCC President John Wisenbaugh has obtained a grant from SEACC in order to sponsor a news program on Raven Radio under CCC's name. We will have an opportunity to broadcast brief messages before the program. If you have any ideas about content let John know.

Your secretary/treasurer (that's me) intended to add a list of CCC officers and board members to the last newsletter I wrote, but I forgot. So here it is:

President - John Wisenbaugh
Vice-president - Nick Olmsted
Secretary/treasurer - Molly Kemp
Board of Directors - Pat Taylor
Joan McBeen

CCC will have its Annual Meeting with election of officers sometime in June.

Have a great spring and summer, and **please send in your membership forms!**