



Chichagof Conservation Council

Box 621

Tenakee Springs Alaska 99841

April, 2009

Seeking permanent protection for Upper Tenakee Inlet

Over the past five years scientists funded by Audubon and The Nature Conservancy have worked to develop a framework for Tongass management that would protect irreplaceable fish and wildlife habitat and still allow for a sustainable, local-scale level of timber harvest. They used data from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and many other sources to rank watersheds throughout the Tongass according to habitat value.

Although it won't surprise any one who lives here, the fish-rich watersheds of Upper Tenakee Inlet land at the top of every list. Tenakee residents have fought off efforts to clearcut Seal Bay, Long Bay and Goose Flats for over 3 decades, and we have produced an impressive administrative and legal record. Now there may be a chance of gaining permanent protection for those areas (plus Saltery Bay and the head of the Inlet) through innovative negotiation with allies and past foes.

The Southeast Alaska Conservation Council (SEACC) and other conservation groups have been meeting with the USFS, timber industry representatives and other "stakeholders" for non-binding discussion of a sustainable management strategy. The world has changed since the pulpmill days, and SEACC is very good at simply stopping timber sales. What we hope to see now is a long term legislative solution, one that includes permanent protection for Upper Tenakee. The ongoing negotiations are entering new territory, and the ideas being laid out for examination can be pretty scary at first glance. However with stalwart Tongass champions like Buck Lindekugel, Emily Ferry, John Sisk and John Schoen at the table it's worth giving negotiation a chance. The worst that will happen is continuing the current management status.

Supreme Court rules against University land transfer

Great news from the Alaska Supreme Court, which threw out Frank Murkowski's ill-conceived fund raising scheme on constitutional grounds. Under the now discredited plan 346 acres within Tenakee Springs city limits would have been transferred to the University of Alaska for revenue production. Many thanks are due to SEACC and Earthjustice for intervening.



Nettie and Ayah in the big woods

New Native Corporation legislation introduced

Legislation co-sponsored by Senators Begich and Murkowski would create five new Native corporations identified as Haines, Ketchikan, Petersburg, Tenakee and Wrangell. Each new corporation would receive one township of federal land (23,040 acres) in the vicinity of its base, plus \$650,000 and other "appropriate compensation". (For comparison - visualize the city limits of Tenakee, which encompass about 7800 acres including USFS uplands and stretch from Cannery Point to the west boundary past Swopes.)

Sealaska wants land selections in Tenakee Inlet

Southeast regional Native corporation Sealaska has not yet completed land selections under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). Legislation introduced by Senator Lisa Murkowski would allow Sealaska to make selections outside the original ANCSA boundaries, and identify 47 parcels for undefined "Futures" sites. Several proposed parcels are in Tenakee Inlet. While finally resolving Sealaska's valid claims is important, it is equally important that affected communities have a voice in the process. Senator Begich is considering co-sponsoring the Murkowski Sealaska bill.

What you can do : Let the Alaska delegation (especially Sen. Begich) know you are concerned about these bills.
See contact information inside!

Let our law makers know you care about Tongass issues

The internet "links" provide direct access to legislative public opinion sites

Senator Mark Begich

Web address:

<http://begich.senate.gov/contact.contact.cfm>

mail:

825C Hart Senate Building

Washington DC 20510

Phone 202-224-3004

Fax 202-224-2354

Senator Lisa Murkowski

<http://murkowski.senate.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=ContactMe.EmailLisa>

709 Hart Senate Building

Washington DC 20510

Phone 202-224-6665

Fax 202-224-5301

Representative Don Young

http://donyoung.house.gov/IMA/issue_subscribe.htm

211 Rayburn HOB

Washington DC 20515

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Governor Sarah Palin

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E-waste Recycling Project

Last summer CCC members collected electronic waste, old computers, monitors, TVs, refrigerators and other items and shipped them all to Seattle for responsible recycling. On June 23, 24, and 25th volunteers went through town and picked up recyclable e-waste, which was then hauled to the store and palletized. The electronics were shrink wrapped and the freezers and refrigerators were banded to pallets. We shipped out four pallets of electronics weighing 2400 lbs and seven pallets (3160 lbs) of refrigerators and freezers including two chest freezers stuffed with small electronics and dry cell batteries. We also shipped one 1300 lb pallet of lead-acid batteries.

Shipping costs were somewhat alarming, but between local donations and "Greenstar" grants from the Rasmussen foundation CCC broke even. All in all it was a worthwhile project and it is nice to have that stuff properly recycled. Many thanks to the many people who helped. Special thanks go to Gary Rice who pulled four dead refrigerators and several discarded boat batteries out of the weeds at the harbor and hauled them down town. JCW

2008-2009 Winter Diversions

In December CCC and the Tenakee Historical Society jointly sponsored Elizabeth "Betsy" Kunibe's presentation about Southeast Alaska Native potato culture. The wonderful violinist Steve Tada accompanied Betsy to Tenakee, a splendid bonus!

A film triple-header in February included "Red Gold" (a documentary about the Pebble Mine proposal), an ADF&G video about marine debris and sea lion entanglements, and "2320", a close up look at the proposed Juneau Access road route.

In early April Beth Matthews gave a talk on harbor porpoises, and lined up local observers to conduct systematic surveys. Despite our general impression that harbor porpoises are uncommon in Tenakee, Joanie saw a group within days of starting observations.

Stream Temperature Monitoring Project

CCC's first year of water temperature data was recorded by data loggers, collected from Seal Bay, Long Bay, Lower Goose, and the head of the Inlet, and transferred successfully to digital storage devices last summer. The data logger batteries are good for five years, with annual downloads necessary. We still need to get back to Sitkoh River. If anyone with a large skiff or other appropriate vessel is interested in making a trip to Sitkoh Bay in June, please contact Molly.

Tenakee– Hoonah road connection update

In an informal discussion in late March , DOT planner Jim Petropulis told MK that DOT had made a decision to drop the road connection project and a report to that effect would be available in May. Good news and the result of all the letters and phone calls from CCC supporters, but this issue is far from settled. As long as DOT believes that Don Young's SAFETEA –LU sneak attack supersedes Tenakee's Tongass Timber Reform Act protection, we'll have to remain vigilant. Last summer Andy Hughes gave his personal assurance that if DOT applies for a construction easement we'll be informed "the very same day". Is that totally reassuring? Not really!

Back in January DOT held another meeting in Hoonah but did not inform Tenakee in time for anyone to attend in person . JCW and MK participated by telephone. About 20 Hoonah residents attended, plus 3 DOT officials and the USFS Hoonah District Ranger 12 people testified in favor of the road connection, 2 against. Al Hill (spokesman for proposed new "Landless" Native corporations and chair of proposed Tenakee corporation) spoke first and quite aggressively in favor of the road connection as part of their long term plan. He described the would-be corporation's desire to acquire a large amount of USFS land around Tenakee Springs and throughout Tenakee Inlet.

Although DOT again started the discussion in terms of providing minimal access to Indian River timber, that pretense was quickly dropped and the Hoonah support was all about major construction. Several speakers asked for a parking lot and a boat ramp at the Indian River log dump. Andy Hughes acknowledged that there has been discussion of building additional road from the log dump to "just outside" the boat harbor and constructing a parking facility there. . There was much discussion to the effect that once "those people in Tenakee" have road access we'll be happier, healthier and wealthier - it's all for Tenakee's own good!.

Despite the apparent reprieve, having DOT lay all this ground work without precipitating a formal legal challenge to the SAFETEA-LU easement language is really unfortunate. It means when DOT has an infusion of money the project could be dusted off and construction might happen rapidly. We will have to be prepared to act fast, with legal action that challenges the Forest Service authority to grant a construction easement.

NOTICE —Annual Membership Renewal

3

Please take a few moments to send in your 2009 membership application/ renewal. Your support and contributions are vitally important.

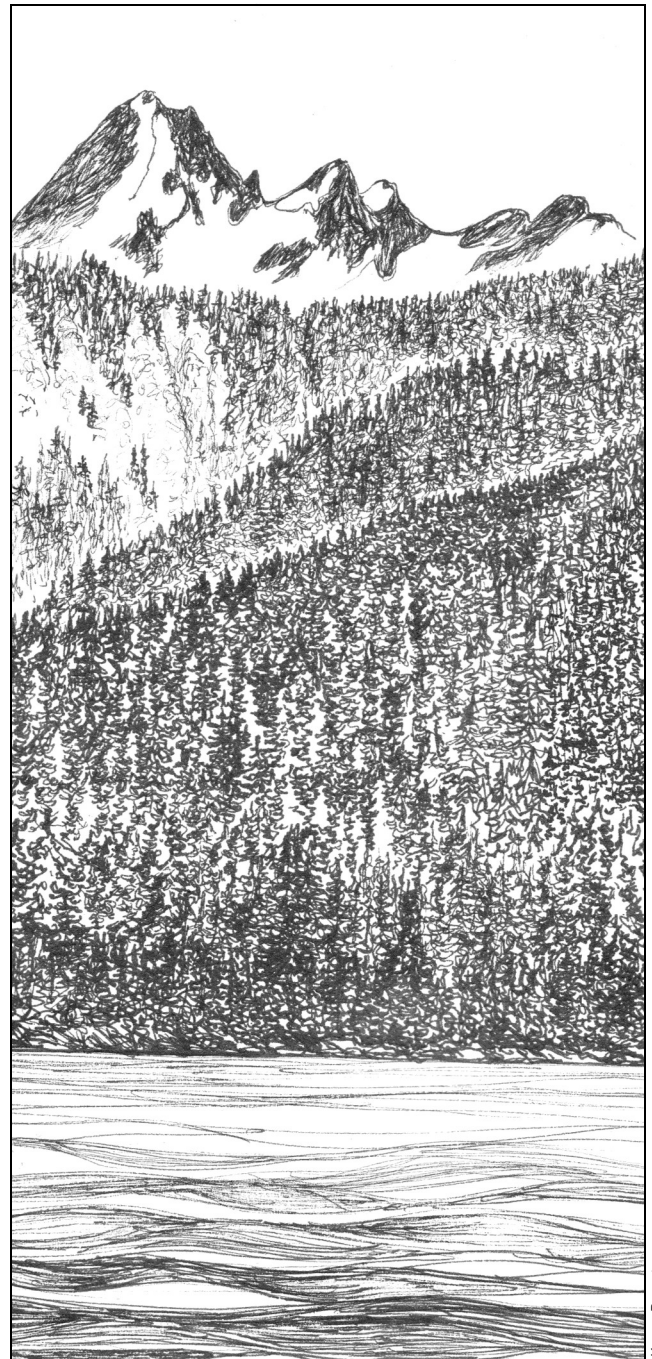
The Chichagof Conservation Council is a registered 501-C non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of natural resources with emphasis on the Tongass National Forest.

President: John Wisenbaugh (JCW)

Vice-president: Joan McBeen

Secretary-treasurer-newsletters: Molly Kemp (MK)

Board members: Steve Lewis, Sam McBeen.



Karen Bryant

**2009 membership issue
Join or renew now!**

Chichagof Conservation Council
Box 621
Tenakee Springs AK 99841

**Chichagof Conservation Council
2009 membership application/renewal**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Membership dues \$5 individual, \$10 household. Additional contributions are welcome!

CCC is a registered 501c non-profit organization and all contributions are fully deductible.

Would you like to receive membership information from SEACC? (Southeast Alaska's regional conservation coalition) yes ___ no ___

Would you like to be on CCC's e-mail list for *infrequent* announcements and alerts?
yes ___ no ___