



USDA Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy Investment Projects

September 2022

TRIBAL AND INDIGENOUS INTERESTS

Keex' Kwaan Community Forest Partnership - Organized Village of Kake, \$300,000

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Train local residents so community members and Tribes will have the ability to monitor resources. Funding supports the Kake Indigenous Guardians Program.

Keex' Kwaan Youth Stewardship Program - Organized Village of Kake, \$120,000

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Assist Keex' Kwaan (Kake) in creating a youth-shared stewardship program to help high school graduates transition into fulltime employment through firsthand experience, technical training, and leadership development.

Wrangell Wild Blueberry Management – City and Borough of Wrangell, \$100,000

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Expand on the Wrangell Ranger District's previous blueberry management efforts (vegetation management) conducted at the request of Tribal members.

Sitka Native Forest Partnership Collaborative Program - Sitka Tribe of Alaska, \$225,000

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- The Sitka Tribe of Alaska will create a long-term collaborative program to partner with federal and state agencies to facilitate monitoring and stewardship of land and resources.

Special Forest Product Plan Development, Implementation and Monitoring - Sitka Tribe of Alaska, \$100,000

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Support the development of a Special Forest Product Plan.

Climate Change Programs - Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, \$625,000

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Funding for Tlingit and Haida Climate Change programs to ensure positive climate action in Southeast Alaska.

Seacoast Guardians Network: Support for Traditional Ecological Knowledge - Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, \$550,000

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Support an initiative to help fund guardians in each Tribal community and focus on Traditional Ecological Knowledge through Indigenous-led, high-level education.

Indigenous Heritage and Place Names in the Juneau Trail System – Sealaska Heritage and Trail Mix, Inc., \$440,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Sealaska and Trail Mix Inc. will work together to plan, research, design, and install Indigenous heritage place names and interpretive signs along trails in Juneau.

Alaska Youth Stewards – Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, \$750,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Build programs that encourage youth to participate in decision-making tools that have potential or direct effects on traditional ways of life.

Wildland Fire Program – Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, \$525,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Plan and develop a wildfire program in partnership with the USDA Forest Service. Funding will support a Type 2 Wildland Fire Handcrew. This will be the first Native Wildland Fire Program in Southeast Alaska.

Cultural Use of Forest Resources Tribal Validation Crew – Organized Village of Kasaan, \$50,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Fund a tribal field crew to document culturally significant cedar trees and compile data that can be used to ensure ecologically sustainable cultural/artisanal use.

Cultural Interpretive Training – Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, \$500,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Tlingit & Haida Tribal leadership will work in partnership with the USDA Forest Service to develop and implement a comprehensive cultural interpretive training program grounded in local Indigenous knowledge, approaches, and teachings.

Hoonah Snowpack Monitoring and Deer Strategy - Hoonah Indian Association, \$375,000

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Support a two-phase initiative to create strategies for habitat restoration, recreation, and reducing user conflict.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Wrangell Area Trail Improvements - City and Borough of Wrangell-Student Conservation Association, \$100,000

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Support trail improvements in Wrangell by repairing and fixing drainage issues, slippery surfaces, and hazards.

Angoon Danger Point Trail – Kootznoowoo, Inc., \$340,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Extend the current Danger Point Trail in Angoon by enhancing an existing undeveloped trail path from the Angoon cemetery to Danger Point Peninsula, and the Danger Point Lighthouse Reserve.

Bear Viewings and Canoe Route on Admiralty Island - Kootznoowoo, Inc., \$125,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Support planning for new eco-tourism opportunities on Admiralty Island and contribute to the sustainable economic development in the Native village of Angoon.

Southeast Alaska Water Trail – Sitka Trail Works, \$42,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Planning, design, and initiation of National Environmental Policy Act review for a Southeast Alaska Water Trail.

Regional Biomass Strategy and Pellet Mill – Southeast Conference, \$1,000,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Facilitate the purchase and installation of a small pellet plant in partnership with the City and Borough of Ketchikan, as a demonstration project for other communities in Southeast Alaska.

Sitka Sound Coastal Trail – Sitka Trail Works, \$80,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Sitka Trail Works and Sitka Conservation Society will work together to plan and design the 20-mile Sitka Sound Coastal Trail, an ocean-front cabin and trail network located 16 miles south of Sitka.



NATURAL RESOURCES

Forest Products Industry Transition - Alaska Forest Association, \$275,000

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Advance information and technology for a young-growth forest products industry and help ensure a successful transition to young-growth forest management that sustains the industry and strengthens local economies in Southeast Alaska.

Invasive Species Management on the Sitka Road System - Sitka Tribe of Alaska, \$50,000

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- The Sitka Tribe of Alaska will work with public land managers to develop a plan that addresses invasive plant species on the road system in Sitka.

Southeast Alaska Farmers Summit - Spruce Root, \$100,000

Funded by USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

- Support the Southeast Alaska Farmers Summit to inspire agricultural production in Southeast Alaska and strengthen food security across the region.

Local Climate Monitoring with Regional Implications – Hoonah Indian Association, \$75,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Establish a real-time network for snow monitoring in seven watersheds and manual monitoring of snowpack in Hoonah's municipal watershed. The project will inform understanding of changing climate trends and how to mitigate impacts from low snowpack on municipal water supply and fish.

Engaging Tribal and Community Partners in Salmon Habitat Restoration in the Margaret Creek Watershed, Tongass National Forest – Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition, \$80,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- This proposal will build on the broader Margaret Creek Restoration Project enabling the Ketchikan Indian Community to hire and train a tribal work crew for stream restoration and riparian forest enhancement activities.

Skanaxheen Restoration Project and Kake Area Restoration Opportunities – Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition, \$505,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- The USDA Forest Service and Southeast Watershed Coalition are partnering to restore stream function, fish habitat, and floodplain wetlands in Skanaxheen and Shorty Creek on Kuiu Island. This investment will support the Skanaxheen Creek restoration and provide resources for additional stewardship activities being planned on Kuiu and Kupreanof Island near the community of Kake.

Trout Creek Restoration Project and Training for Tribal Work Crew – Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition, \$40,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- A partnership of the Klawock Cooperative Association, Prince of Wales Tribal Conservation District, Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition, and the USDA Forest Service will restore instream habitat by adding woody debris using hand tool methods.

Klawock Indigenous Steward Partnership – Shaan-Seet, Inc., \$400,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Strengthen the existing partnership between the Klawock Cooperative Association, Prince of Wales Tribal Conservation District, Klawock Heenya Corporation, Shaan Seet Corporation, and Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition to implement the Klawock Sockeye Salmon Action Plan.

All Landowners Group & Young-growth Working Forest Analysis – Alaska Division of Forestry, \$300,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- The overarching goal of this collaborative effort is to help achieve a diverse and stable young-growth forest industry in Southeast Alaska.

Tongass Transition Collaborative Facilitation Support – Alaska Division of Forestry, \$300,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- By fostering collaboration between Tribes, the timber industry, Tongass National Forest user groups, conservation organizations, and USDA Forest Service staff, this investment will facilitate an all-lands approach towards shared stewardship across the region. This investment will assist in reconvening and supporting the Tongass Transition Collaborative.

The Teqe'heit Stewardship Program – Prince of Wales Tribal Conservation District, \$500,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Fund a forest stewardship work crew with a youth program component. Projects will include riparian habitat improvement, compost/mulch projects, providing cultural wood to the Indigenous community, renewable energy research, and a recreation and trails program.

Cooperative Development, Planning, and Implementation of Watershed Restoration Projects in Southeast Alaska – National Forest Foundation, \$1,000,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Support on-the-ground implementation of watershed restoration projects including young-growth forest management, habitat improvements, cultural resource protection, and related projects.



COMMUNITY CAPACITY

POW Vocational Technical Education Center Academies - Prince of Wales Vocational & Technical Education Center, \$75,000

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Assist the Academy to include courses designed around themes that target job-ready forest, recreation and land management skills to ensure job readiness in preparation for Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) hiring timelines.

Quantitative Tracking of SASSi Initiatives - Southeast Conference, \$150,000

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Support the ongoing success of the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy-Investments (SASSi) by collaborating to collect project information, quantify the economic benefits arising from investments, and communicate economic success stories.

SEAK 4H Youth Development Program - Sitka Conservation Society, \$250,000

Funded by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

- Expand the current 4H Youth Development Program in rural communities of Southeast Alaska.

Southeast Watershed Restoration Symposium - Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition, \$85,000

Funded by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

- Support the coordination of an annual regional Watershed Restoration Symposium.

Indigenous Youth Stewardship & Workforce Development Program – Sitka Trail Works, \$100,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- In partnership with the Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Sitka Trail Works will run a pilot summer youth program aimed at fostering an Indigenous land stewardship ethic in Sitka youth and growing the workforce pipeline to USDA agencies.

Sharing Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy Successes – Sitka Conservation Society, \$150,000*

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

- Creation of stories and content for social media and external communications to highlight the shared work of the Sustainability Strategy. Sitka Conservation Society will engage the public, highlight programs, accomplishments, and opportunities, and celebrate successes.

Juneau Economic Development Council - Visitor Products Cluster Working Group Collaborative Process - \$750,000

Funded by the USDA Forest

- Bring tourism businesses and cooperators together to develop solutions that unite and benefit the whole sector, reduce barriers in working with the Forest Service, innovate solutions, and develop a strategic plan for recreation and tourism on the Tongass.



REGIONAL STRENGTHENING AGREEMENTS:

Three regional strengthening agreements account for about half of the initial Sustainability Strategy investment. Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska and Southeast Conference will receive funds from Rural Development; and Spruce Root will receive funds from the USDA Forest Service. These agreements will support the work of the three partners to advance Southeast Alaska's overall prosperity and self-reliance and strengthen existing and emerging economic sectors. As a part of the agreements, the organizations will develop metrics to assess progress, document and share lessons learned from these efforts, grow the capacity of local partners, and support key economic diversification projects.

Spruce Root Regional Strengthening Agreements –\$6,400,000

Funded by the USDA Forest Service

This investment funds coordination, visioning and navigation services which support economic diversification activities throughout Southeast Alaska and leverages the private investment in the Seacoast Trust. This includes the funding of the continuation of the Sustainable Southeast Partnership network to promote community capacity and local community and tribal development efforts as well as Community Forest projects across the region.

Funds awarded to Spruce Root via these agreements will also support the following projects:

Community Forests – Spruce Root

- Restore impaired watersheds, and recruit, train, employ and develop skilled crews and other workforce elements. Also provides ongoing support to Community Forest Collaboratives and youth stewardship efforts on Prince of Wales Island, in Hoonah, and similar efforts across Southeast Alaska.

Hoonah Legacy Roads to Trails Projects - Hoonah Indian Association

- Restore, repair, and improve Forest Service Roads on Chichagof Island and replace up to 10 inadequate or aging fish passage structures.

Habitat Restoration, Renewable Energy, Sustainable Timber Management, and Carbon Sequestration - Hydaburg Cooperative Association

- Implement a forestry program within the tribe to develop opportunities for workforce development in forestry-related fields. This will include training Hydaburg residents in forestry practices such as tree thinning for habitat restoration, creating jobs in biomass and wood fired technology, and cutting firewood for subsistence purposes.

Sustaining Healthy Deer Populations - Hydaburg Cooperative Association

- The Hydaburg Cooperative Association will continue work with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the USDA. Forest Service on projects that collect data for wildlife subsistence programs. This investment will maintain a continued local workforce, and to involve the Tribe in management decisions for deer species.

Sustaining Local Accredited Fisheries Science Education - Hoonah Indian Association

- Provide a pathway for Hoonah youth to pursue fisheries science accreditation from the University of Alaska – Southeast (UAS). This program will support Hoonah High School students to earn college credits that apply to fisheries and other natural resources management and environmental careers.

Sharing our Knowledge Conference - Wrangell Cooperative Association

- Support the Wrangell Cooperative Association's Sharing our Knowledge Conference Symposium that brings together Alaska Native and First Nations traditional knowledge bearers, elders, and fluent speakers of Indigenous languages with artists, academics, researchers, students, and other learners.

Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska Regional Strengthening Agreement, \$2,840,000

Funded by USDA Rural Development

This initiative will support economic diversification activities in Southeast Alaska through the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy (SASS). Activities will include development of metrics to assess progress, documenting and sharing lessons learned, growing the capacity of local partners, and supporting key economic diversification projects. This effort should inform place-based models of collaborative regional economic diversification efforts and how USDA can best support these strategies.

Funds awarded to Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska through these agreements will also support the following projects:

Food Security, Subsistence, and Sovereignty - Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska

- Support local food security programs that include the development of extreme weatherproof greenhouses and create programs to support subsistence/first foods security programs throughout Southeast Alaska.

Takshanuk Watershed Compost Project - Takshanuk Watershed Council

- Develop a large-scale community composting program that will convert organic waste from the local fish processor, sawmills, brewery, distillery, stores, restaurants, and homes into a high-quality organic compost suitable for food producing applications in both private and commercial agriculture.

Brown Bear Co-existence - Defenders of Wildlife

- Support the electric fence subsidy program and aid in supplying bear-proof safe storage containers for food and waste on a meaningful scale in Southeast Alaska to protect wildlife and wild areas.

Regional Composting Network - Sustainable Southeast Partnership

- The Sustainable Southeast Partnership will develop a regional composting and food recovery network to facilitate regional learning opportunities between community leaders, composting practitioners, and educators from communities throughout the region.

Environmental Laboratory for the SEAK Tribal Ocean Research Network - Sitka Tribe of Alaska

- Increase the analytical testing capacity of the Sitka Tribe of Alaska Environmental Research Laboratory by purchasing a high-performance liquid chromatography mass spectrometer.

Chief Shakes Tribal House Improvements - Wrangell Cooperative Association

- The Wrangell Cooperative Association will support restoration and improvements to cultural infrastructure on Chief Shakes Island, which was home to Tlingit Royalty for generations.

Tribal Smokehouses and Education- Wrangell Cooperative Association

- Implement Wrangell Cooperative Association's educational classes, design and construct traditional smokehouses, and install a community composting system.

Food Security/Sovereignty and Kayaaní Commission - Sustainable Southeast Partnership

- The Sustainable Southeast Partnership, along with the Sitka Tribe of Alaska, will invest in the Kayaaní Commission which protects traditional ways of ancestral knowledge.

Food Security/Sovereignty, Community Smoke Houses and Fish Camps - Sustainable Southeast Partnership

- The Sustainable Southeast Partnership in collaboration with the Kayaaní Network will build community smokehouses and fish camps to strengthen connections with the lands and waters, provide access to

cultural experiences, develop skills for sustainable food harvesting and processing, and support the annual Southeast Alaska Traditional Edible Plants Gathering and Food Sovereignty Summit.

Tribal Greenhouse and Compost Facilities - Yakutat Tlingit Tribe

- Continued use and expansion of the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe Greenhouse and composting facilities that benefit local agriculture and conservation.

Restoring Tlingit Potato Gardens - Sustainable Southeast Partnership

- The Sustainable Southeast Partnership will support food security and food sovereignty by working with communities to restore Tlingit potato gardens in traditional garden and village sites that are located within the boundaries of the Tongass National Forest and on remote islands.

Tribal Garden to Increase Food Security - Sitka Tribe of Alaska

- Assist the Sitka Tribe of Alaska's development of a tribal garden to increase food security for its Tribal citizens.

Lynn Canal Food Network - Chilkat Valley Food Hub

- The Northern Lynn Canal Agriculture Producers Association and Chilkat Valley Food Hub will support local agricultural efforts in Haines and the northern Lynn Canal region. This investment includes work with Klukwan and food security efforts with Haines and Skagway.

Southeast Conference Regional Strengthening Agreement, \$3,160,000

Funded by USDA Rural Development

In partnership with Spruce Root and Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, Southeast Conference will convene SASS partners to develop metrics that assess regional progress toward economic diversification, capture key lessons learned, develop annual reports, support a capacity building grants pools and make subawards into proposed SASS projects. This investment will strengthen the way the network of SASS partners works together on economic diversification, make it easier to assess progress, build the capacity of local organizations, and support economic diversification projects.

Funds awarded to Southeast Conference will also support the following projects:

Shellfish Hatchery Internship and Training Program - OceansAlaska Shellfish Hatchery

- Support an internship and training program that supports the shellfish hatchery program.

Local Fish Fund - Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust

- Support to the Local Fish Fund and Alaska's fishing communities by reducing barriers to enter into commercial fisheries and engaging next-generation fishermen in marine stewardship and policy leadership.

Craig High School Biomass Project - Craig City School District

- Fund the construction of a wood-fired boiler at the Craig High School campus.

"Recycle Tenakee" Solid Waste - Chichagof Conservation Council

- Support the removal of accumulated solid waste in Tenakee Springs.

Statewide Seafood Distribution and Workforce Development - Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust

- Support workforce development in the seafood industry, and food security throughout Alaska.

Aquatic Farmers' Offloading Pier and Packing Facility - Alaska Oyster Cooperative

- Support a planning effort to build an offloading pier and floating dock for vessels in Little Naukati Bay on Prince of Wales Island.

Workforce Development Supporting Alaska's Fisheries and Young Fishermen - Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust

- Support the Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust's Seafood Donation Program.

Regional Seafood System Assessment – Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust

- Support the inclusion of seafood as a part of a larger regional food system assessment and action plan which will help inform future investments in Southeast Alaska's seafood industry.

** These investments were announced in March 2022 and are a part of the full \$25 million in investments*