

SourDough Notes



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ON THE COVER:

Volunteers such as Ken Kirkland (i.e., Smokey Bear) are part of the “relative factor” that help us reach our communities and fulfill our mission.

Photo by Kim Kiml.

Story begins on page 3.

SourDough Notes

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Teresa Haugh, Editor

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Your suggestions, articles, and
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Please contact:

Public Affairs Office

U.S. Forest Service

Department of Agriculture

P. O. Box 21628

Juneau, AK 99802

(907) 586-9337

thaugh@fs.fed.us

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RF Award Winners

Regional Forester Beth Pendleton recently announced recipients of the 2009 Regional Forester Awards. Here are the brief descriptions. You won't want to miss the the summer issue of *SourDough Notes*—we will be featuring some of the stories and photos of these employees and partners so readers can learn more about their contributions to the Forest Service and the Alaska Region. An expanded list that includes the names of the team members can be found at:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/ro/newsroom/releases/2009>

[_Alaska_Regional_Forester_Awards_100511.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/ro/newsroom/releases/2009/_Alaska_Regional_Forester_Awards_100511.shtml).

- **Hector Gandara Memorial Award:** Ruth Monahan, Regional Office
- **Employee of the Year Award:** Debra Srb, Cordova Ranger District
- **Resource Stewardship Award:** Peter Griffin, Juneau District Ranger
- **Meeting America's Needs Award:** Key Coastal Wetlands Strategic Team
- **Promoting Recreation Award:** Victoria Houser
- **Partnership Award:** Alaska Geographic and Chugach National Forest
- **Safety & Occupational Health Award:** Alicia Stearns, Tongass Nat'l Forest
- **Excellence in Business Operations Award:** Dawn Heutte, Reg. Office
- **Excellence in Customer Service:** Erin Andresen, Wrangell RD

The Relative Factor: Volunteers Lend a Hand

By Kim Kiml, Interpreter, Cordova Ranger District

To the credit of many Interpreters, we are nothing if not creative. Sometimes we have a project where we need some help; we just can't do it all alone. And when all of our coworkers are swamped with their own projects and duties, what can we do? We recruit our family and friends to help us out.

Such has been the case with my family and friends, as I am sure there are those

of you who can relate to this situation. They know that look in our eyes—before the words come out of our mouths—what is about to happen. They are about to be enlisted, their services for the “greater good” are being requested again. They are going to sign up to volunteer at another Forest Service event.

The list of activities has varied over the years: planting flowers, donning the costume of a celebrity bear or fish, setting up tables and chairs at a program, assisting



Naomi Morris (left), daughter of Kim Kiml, and Bethany Kirkland, (right), daughter of Jeannie Kirkland, plant flowers at the Crooked Creek Information Site.



Naomi Morris, daughter of Kim Kiml, volunteers at the Cordova Ranger District's Discovery Room January 2010.

at a station for a program, hauling the many totes of equipment used for programs, being a character in a puppet show, and, yes, helping to clean up after programs are done.

The hours that they put forth may not be as noteworthy as some special awards requiring hundreds of volunteer hours, but they are significant in their timing. They are there when we need them. Many programs would not have happened if our families and friends did not step beyond their comfort level and help us with our programs or events.

There is no form of measuring the value of their contributions. And perhaps no certificate of appreciation, just a heartfelt “thank you” to our families and friends who have over the years given up their free time to volunteer and to help us to keep our programs going.

So, the next time you are at a gathering of family and friends, let them know just how much you appreciate their efforts and contributions put forth for your programs. They are the “relative factor.” They are the silent and almost

invisible element usually not acknowledged by anyone but us.

There may be other benefits derived from this experience though. You may be giving your family and friends a glimpse of why you put forth the time, energy, and passion into your programs.

Comments from the participants expressing their gratitude and appreciation; children telling you that

they didn't think “learning could be so much fun,” or a parent sharing with you how delighted they were to have their children share with them something they had learned while attending one of your programs. And sometimes it is the adults who come along to watch their children participate in a program, oftentimes joining in themselves, commenting later, “I wish there had been programs like this when I was their age.”

Hopefully, participating in these events allows your friends and relatives to witness firsthand the why we do what we do.



Kim Kiml's mother, Ellie Brimanis, volunteers at the Shorebird Academy.

Wilderness Stewardship Success Story

Invasive Plant Eradication in the South Etolin Wilderness

By Maria Burke, Wilderness Ranger, Wrangell Ranger District

Within the mist of the Tongass National Forest lies the South Etolin Wilderness (SEW), an isolated, natural area within the Wrangell Ranger District relished for its opportunities of hunting, fishing, camping, and solitude.

The SEW was presumed to have no invasive weeds until an annual wilderness monitoring trip in 2005 discovered a 1/7 acre patch of orange hawkweed (*Hieracium aurantiacum*) at its southeastern corner. Historically, this location contained six structures that were likely used as a fisherman's camp. The orange hawkweed was discovered eight years after the structures had been removed from the area. This is the only invasive plant population found to date in the SEW.

On the day of discovery, the district wilderness team used the only available resources they had at hand to cover up the invasive plant population: blue and gray scavenged tarps that contained several rips and holes. A field inspection the next summer revealed that orange hawkweed had managed to grow and flourish through any possible hole. To combat this battle, an additional layer of tarps were added, and the entire area was covered with six millimeter black plastic. Later that year an inspection indicated no sign of plant life under the black plastic but there were roughly thirty plants growing around the perimeter. Additional black plastic was added to cover where escapees were growing and a camouflage tarp was laid over plastic to provide visual screening.



Clean site in the South Etolin Wilderness after the removal of a tarp that was used to cover invasive orange hawkweed.



Summer scenery, South Etolin Wilderness, Wrangell Ranger District.

In Summer 2007, there were no living plants under treated area but one plant was found growing outside perimeter. The escapee was carefully pulled to remove as much of the rhizome as possible. By the end of Summer 2008, two growing seasons had passed with essentially no growth of the orange hawkweed; the treatment was deemed effective, therefore the tarps and plastic were removed. Inspection of the site in 2009 confirmed our success due to the absence of orange hawkweed and the recolonizing of native mosses and liverworts. Due to the area being in the early succession phase, it

is still very susceptible to other invasive plants which makes it imperative that the site continue to be monitored for another three to five years.

Alternative treatments considered were hand pulling or using herbicides. Hand pulling would have resulted in disturbance of surface soil due to the need to remove rhizomatous roots and the use of herbicides would have required a timely MRDG¹ and environmental analysis. Our tarping method did not disturb the soil surface; however, the ground did have the appearance of a three year old moldy block of cheese when the tarps were removed. This is now gone back to a natural appearance (see photo above).

Factors that contributed to the success of the project include: awareness by the wilderness team; taking swift action when plants were first discovered; routine inspections done in a timely manner; remoteness of site allowed for no visitor

disturbance; cooperative working relationship between the Wilderness team and Invasive Species Coordinator. Thanks to those management actions, South Etolin Wilderness is assumed to be weed-free and able to score 10 points to meet the Wilderness Stewardship Challenge for invasive weeds in 2009.

¹A Minimum Requirement Decision Guide is used to determine if an action should occur in Wilderness, and what activities could be carried out. If the action is determined necessary in Wilderness, the MRDG then establishes what the minimum activity could be in order to carry out that action.

High School Career Expo Is a Big Success

By Teresa Haugh, Editor

Students from Juneau-Douglas High School, Thunder Mountain High School, and Yakoosge Alternative High School flocked to the Forest Service booth at Juneau's High School Career Expo held April 14. Not only were the students interested in collecting some free candy, Smokey Bear water bottles or LEI flashlights, they wanted to ask Forest Service employees, "What do you do all day?"



Above: LEO Michael Mills and Archaeologist Nicole Lantz answer questions from curious students. Top right: The first wave of students make their way through the crowded gym at Juneau-Douglas HS. Bottom right: LEO Chad Curey and Engineer Rod Dell'Andrea discuss career options with the Forest Service. Photos by Keith Riggs.

And employees were there to answer. Many brought examples of the type of work they do for the students to see, including engineering drawings, beautifully drawn maps, samples of completed projects, and photos of float planes to show students how we get into the field. The LEOs were there in uniform, with all their equipment.

Eli Carlson and Chris Hoffman, our current student employees who attend Juneau-Douglas High School, were on hand to meet their classmates and discuss working with the Forest

Service. Past interns Hannah Atadero and Melinda Hernandez talked about their conversions from part-time student jobs in the regional office to permanent positions at the Juneau Ranger District.

The event was organized by regional EEO Specialist Teddy Castillo, who is part of the newly-formed recruitment strategy team. She is looking forward to hosting other successful events like this in the future. Today's students are tomorrow's natural resource and public land managers.

Other participants included:

- Michael Mills, LEO
- Chad Curey, LEO
- David Zuniga, LEO
- Andy Morse, LEO
- Nicole Lantz, Archaeologist
- Adelaide Johnson, Hydrologist
- Marie Messing, Engineer
- Rod Dell'Andrea, Engineer
- Bob Francis, Mapping
- Michael Wilcox, Engineer
- John Kato, Geologist

A special thanks is extended to Jeff Miller who provided the candy.

50th Annual Cordova Ice Worm Festival Parade

Story and photos by Kim Kiml, Information Specialist, Cordova Ranger District

Winter time in Alaska is, for many, a cause or season to celebrate. Anchorage has its Fur Rendezvous, Fairbanks has its Winter Carnival, and Cordova has its Ice Worm Festival.

This past February was a milestone celebration for Cordova as Ice Worm Festival 2010 marked 50 years of merriment and activities. Some of the long standing activities included: The Ice Worm Tail Hunt, the Photo Show, the Historical Ice Worm Display, the Ice Worm Variety Show capped by the Miss Ice Worm Coronation and Citizen of the Year Award, the Arts and Crafts Show, and last but not least, the Ice Worm Parade.

Compared to the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, you would miss the Cordova Ice Worm Parade if you blinked too many times (it usually lasts about 20 minutes, weather permitting). That being said, the spectators are none the less enthusiastic and appreciative of the efforts put forth by participating organizations and individuals.

This year, with less than 12 hours before the parade was to start, the winds were clocked at 100 mph at the harbor, along with pelting rain and hail. Three hours before the parade, the winds died down to a mere 40 mph. An hour and a half the parade started, it began to snow, and by the start there were already two inches of snow on the ground. The parade was not cancelled. It continued perhaps at a quicker pace than it would had it been a sunny day; nonetheless, the crowds cheered and waved at the snow-covered participants.

Although there were fewer parade entries this year, the Forest Service entry helped bolster and lengthen the parade. We entered not only two floats—an airboat pulled by the LEO vehicle, and a Delta truck pulling a flatbed with recreation enthusiasts on board—but also had walking firefighters, Smokey and friends, and our Forest Service banner holders.

The time and effort put forth by many Forest Service employees was rewarded with a “Best Workmanship” prize.



Two local children ride aboard the flatbed with employees Bruce Campbell and Chris Dunlap. TJ Holley walks alongside with Hank, who wants her fish.



Dave Zastrow and Kat Michael suit up for the parade.

Thanks to all the district employees who participated:

- ≈ Teresa Benson
- ≈ Deyna Kuntzsch
- ≈ Chris Dunlap
- ≈ Nancy O'Brien
- ≈ TJ Holley and Labrador Hank
- ≈ Bruce Campbell
- ≈ Dede Srb
- ≈ Dave Zastrow
- ≈ Tanya Zastrow
- ≈ Milo Burcham
- ≈ Kat Michael
- ≈ Gretchen Lampe
- ≈ Bob Behrends
- ≈ Dana Smyke, and friends
Danika Sapp, Melanie O'Brien, Keyona Mattson, Cole and Elias Hanson

Retirees: Where Are They Now?

An Update from Steve Law

I was the Forest Engineer on the South Tongass National Forest when I resigned from the Forest Service in 1978.

Twenty years earlier, I began my career in the agency on the White Mountains National Forest, transferring to the Green Mountains National Forest and then the Six Rivers National Forest in California before being named the forest engineer on the Jefferson National Forest in Virginia in 1963.

My stint on the South Tongass was the best job I ever had, and I loved every minute of it. Unfortunately, as the saying goes, “All good things must come to an end.” In 1978, I was told it was time for me to move to a regional office, either to Juneau or to some other region. Obviously, not every engineer in the Forest Service can spend 15 years as a Forest Engineer because there are just not that many forests. I already had enjoyed the opportunity of a lifetime, in the best job in the Forest Service, so I chose to resign rather than take a desk job in a regional office.

I was too young to retire so I purchased a set of sporting camps on Sebec Lake in my home state of Maine. Our expenses were greater than the income we received from the camps, so I took a second job as Town Manager of Milo, a small town nearby. Neither the excitement nor the satisfaction from the two jobs combined was comparable to that of being a forest engineer, so I looked for something else to occupy my time, something where I could make a difference.

My years in the Forest Service had made me realize that forest management in the 21st century was

going to be a lot different from what had been successful in the 20th century. I decided Maine needed my help to be ready for the future.

In 1984, I was elected to the Maine Legislature, where I authored a bill titled “Forests for the Future.” A freshman legislator, in the minority party, could almost never get a bill passed. But the previous Legislature had established a committee to come up with a recommendation on how the state of Maine should be managing its forest resources. Thirty days before its report was due, the committee had nothing to submit and no prospects. I heard about the committee’s problem and offered my bill as its solution. The committee accepted and the bill was passed into law.

In 1989, I volunteered for and was accepted to teach in the Elderhostel program aboard the Alaska State Ferry. That was a fun job but only lasted two weeks.

In 2003, my wife and I got a great idea of how we could introduce all the area kids to a forest environment in an objective setting. To do this, we initiated the *Kids & Trees Growing Together* program, which would involve kids from kindergarten to their senior year in high school. We went to all the schools in the area, four School Administrative Districts, with our idea and they agreed to participate. We help kindergartners plant fir tree seeds and then, in



Retiree Steve Law teaches first graders about forest resources—one tree at a time—as part of the Kids and Trees Growing Together program he and his wife initiated for the area schools around Dover-Foxcroft, Maine.

subsequent years, the students transplant the baby trees to a transplant bed, then those seedlings are transplanted to a plantation. We set aside about two acres on our family farm for each school district, allowing about 100 trees for each class in each school. When the kids are seniors in high school, the seeds they planted in kindergarten are ready to harvest as Christmas trees. The seniors can have the profits from the Christmas tree sale for any project they want. The first sale will be ready in 2013.

I have had too much fun and enjoyment in the past 50 years to keep it to myself. I wanted to share my forest experience with those who do not have the opportunities I had, so I wrote a book, *A Forest Environment*, which has been published by Tate Publishing. See website at <http://www.tatepublishing.com>.

The Alaska Tribal Leaders Committee

Tribal and Forest Service Leaders Building Relationships

By Lillian Petershoare, Regional Program Leader, Tribal Government Relations

The Alaska Region in December 2008 officially launched the Alaska Tribal Leaders Committee at a regional leadership team meeting in Juneau. Over two days, ATLC delegates and Forest Service leaders became acquainted, discussed tribal priorities, developed a plan for getting organized, and listened to presentations on climate change impacts in Alaska. Since then, the ATLC has met twice. During a video conference March 17, 2009, committee members discussed the draft charter, listened to presentations regarding the employment of Alaska Natives within the region, and identified ways that the Tribes and the Forest Service can work together to improve outreach to potential Alaska Native applicants. At the November 20, 2009 meeting, the ATLC adopted a charter, the forests and regional office reported on outreach activities and successes, and Tribal Delegate Woody Widmark provided an overview on the White House Tribal Summit.

Tribal Delegates have participated in different leadership team meetings on both forests. Thorne Bay District Ranger Jason Anderson said the ATLC "...is a powerful way for the Tribal leaders to communicate issues that are important to them on a local level. It fosters an awareness of the issues the Forest Service has to grapple with while being respectful of traditional tribal uses on the landscape."

The ATLC will meet formally twice a year to address regional-level issues, and is working towards establishing an informal monthly conference call. The mission of the Committee is to advance coopera-

Tribal Delegates bring substantial experience and knowledge to the ATLC:

≈ **Woody Widmark** has been the Tribal Chairman for Sitka Tribe of Alaska for seventeen years, a Baranof Island Housing Authority Chair for twelve years, a Native American Rights Fund Board Member for five years, and prior to 1990, a Sitka Ranger District employee for ten years. Woody currently works for the Sitka School District and in 2001, he was the recipient of the Alaska Education Support Person of the Year Award.

≈ **Richard Peterson** has been the Tribal President for the Organized Village of Kasaan for eleven years, the Mayor of Kasaan for twelve years, and an Executive Council Member of the regional tribe Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska for three years. Richard is also the CEO of the Prince of Wales Tribal Enterprise Consortium, a dynamic 8(a) company that provides information technology and engineering services.

≈ **Sasha Lindgren**, for over 15 years, represented the Kenaitze Indian Tribe in a unique partnership with the Forest Service to preserve, protect, and present the cultural and natural resources of the Sqiłantnu archaeological district in Cooper Landing. As the Tribe's Cultural and Educational Department Director, Sasha directed interpretive programs and sites; maintained the Tribe's register of traditional, historic, and sacred sites; and developed and presented cultural, Dena'ina language, and traditional knowledge seminars and trainings.

≈ **Mark King** has represented the Native Village of Eyak on many boards and councils during the past ten years. His passion for hunting, fishing, trapping, and berry picking crosses over into his work with the Tribe; "many of NVE's programs have been carefully crafted...allowing the elders and youth to interface with each other...to [encourage] the younger generation to embrace a ... subsistence lifestyle."

...tive relationships, collaboration and the furtherance of government-to-government partnerships between the Forest Service and the Federally Recognized Tribes of Southcentral and Southeast Alaska in promoting sustainable forests, resources and communities. While the Committee is advisory in nature, the ATLC fully recognizes that it is not a substitute for government-to-government con-

sultation between the Forest Service and the Federally Recognized Tribes.

The Committee consists of four Tribal Delegates, two Tribal Alternates, the Regional Forester's Team, and a Pacific Northwest Research Station Representative and Alternate. The Tribal Delegates were elected by the Federally Recognized Tribes located in or near the Region's

two national forests. Twelve out of 12 Tribes on the Chugach National Forest and 15 out of 19 Tribes on the Tongass National Forest voted. The elected Tribal Delegates were to serve on a Forest Service proposed National Tribal Leaders Committee.

During a conference call with Chief Kimbell in November 2007, Tribal Delegates Woody Widmark and Sasha Lindgren advocated that the Alaska Region create a regional tribal leaders' committee. Chief Kimbell expressed her support for the concept, and regional Tribal Relations Specialist Lillian Petershoare worked with the Tribal Delegates and John Autrey, Tribal Relations Specialist on the Tongass National

Forest, and Paul Clark, Tribal Relations Coordinator on the Chugach, to develop a proposal and a plan for launching the ATLC.

Many individuals and Tribes assisted the region in establishing the Alaska Tribal Leaders Committee. Thirty-one Federally Recognized Tribes embraced the concept, identified a process for electing tribal delegates, and collaborated with the region in the implementation. The Office of Tribal Relations in Washington endorsed the Alaska Region's commitment to honor the Tribes' request to create a regional tribal leaders committee. The Bureau of Indian Affairs hosted a forum for the Tribes for identifying a process for electing

the Tribal Delegates. The Environmental Protection Agency provided a facilitator for that forum: the late Carol Jorgenson, a former Director of EPA's American Indian Office met with the Regional Leadership Team to build support for the ATLC proposal, and other EPA staff shared technical information about their tribal advisory committee charters. At the first ATLC meeting, members expressed their desire for the committee to get organized quickly. In response, the region hired a contractor, Jan Caulfield, to assist the ATLC is getting established. Everyone on the ATLC is committed to working together to further partnerships between the Tribes and the Forest Service.

Kevin Hood Recognized for Wilderness Efforts

By Keith Riggs, External Affairs, Regional Office

Juneau Ranger District Wilderness Ranger Kevin Hood has received the 2009 Alaska Region Wilderness Champion Award. Hood's efforts as a wilderness ranger have advanced the district's wilderness program through his delivery of professional presentations aboard cruise ships. He also serves as the

Leave No Trace coordinator for the Alaska Region, and leads the special training of outfitters and guides.

He is the region's representative to Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell's Wilderness Advisory Group, where his passion for wild places will influence national perspectives. Hood speaks eloquently for the values demonstrated in the Wilderness Act. In 2009, he attended the World Wilderness Congress at his own expense to deliver a high quality presentation.

"Somewhere in my upbringing a soft spot for the underdog was instilled in me, and in our modern world, wilderness is a tremendous underdog," Hood explained. "The notion that there is a value to preserving some of our wild country is so contained that less than 5% of our nation is designated as wilderness. I prefer to stand for that which is irreplaceable, invaluable and underrepresented in our democracy."

"In my opinion, wilderness will play an increasingly vital role in

our lives. Most folks appreciate that wilderness is essential to preserving biodiversity, supplying fresh water and air and protecting intact ecosystems. I also believe wilderness will increasingly serve as a place of sanctuary and renewal as we strive to escape lives that are technologically isolating and full of e-fatigue. Wilderness will afford us a return to our organic, simpler and more wholesome lives," Hood concluded.

A former resident of Los Osos and a graduate of Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, Hood has been with the Forest Service since 1995 and has been assigned to the Alaska Region for the last 11 years.

"I am honored to receive this award. Whatever degree of wilderness professionalism I have achieved is due to the high quality of my colleagues who have taught me, challenged me, enlightened me and inspired me. So I also view this award as a tribute to the caliber of the wilderness folks in the Forest Service with whom I work," Hood said.



Wilderness Ranger Kevin Hood received the 2009 Alaska Region Wilderness Champion Award

Forest Service Presents Ceremonial Staffs

Story and photos by Keith Riggs, External Affairs, Regional Office



Deputy Regional Forester Paul Brewster (l) listens as carver Donald Frank explains how the staffs were designed and made.

At the annual General Assembly of the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska in 2008, Alaska Regional Forester Dennis Bschor and Tongass National Forest Supervisor Forrest Cole acknowledged the removal of Alaska Native fish camps, smokehouses, and cabins by the Forest Service in the mid-1900s.

"I am here today to stand before you and acknowledge that these things happened, that the Forest Service, in its efforts to manage uses of the Tongass National Forest, did burn and remove many fish camps, cabins, and smokehouses that once belonged to Alaska Native families and clans," Bschor said at the time.

With the removal of fish camps and smokehouses, an essential aspect of the traditional pattern of life was lost. Opportunities for families to work together harvesting fish, to pass cultural knowledge from one generation to the next, and to learn respectful ways of harvesting and processing traditional foods were diminished. Alaska Native identity was seriously damaged with the loss of the seasonal camps.

By acknowledging the past, Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska and the Forest Service paved the way for respectful and honorable relationships, and continued partnerships.

On April 21, 2010, that acknowledgment was commemorated with the presentation of two ceremonial staffs from the Forest Service to the Central Council during the 75th Annual Tribal Assembly of the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska. The Central Council is the governing body for over 27,000 tribal citizens.

Lillian Petershoare, Tribal Government Relations Specialist for the Alaska Region coordinated the creation and presentation of the staffs. "To me, the staffs represented our integrity; a representation of our good will," she said. "The acknowledgement ceremony (in 2008) was a beautiful thing to have happened. At that ceremony we heard, for the first time, tribal elders say, 'this is the first time I'm using the word, 'trust' when working with the Forest Service.'"

"We did a series of interviews after the acknowledgement ceremony (in 2008) and would get comments where people would say, 'I would visit district ranger offices and I never really felt welcome but now I know that the Forest Service wants to work with the tribes.' We had a huge paradigm shift take place," Petershoare revealed. "You would talk to people about it and you could feel the anger, the pain, the hurt. In acknowledging this—that was pretty tremendous."

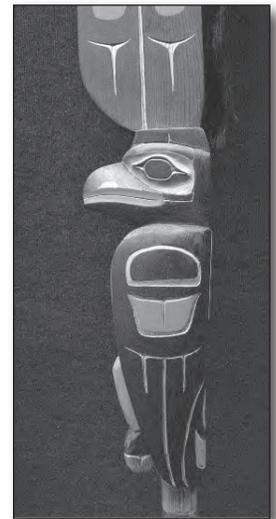
Deputy Regional Forester Paul Brewster said, "I had the privilege of participating in the (2008) acknowledgement ceremony. The ceremony had a deep impact on me ... By acknowledging the past, Central Council and the Forest Service have paved the way for respectful and honorable relationships, and continued partnerships. My hope is that these staffs will serve as a powerful symbol for our future relations."



Tongass National Forest Supervisor Forrest Cole (r) presents Central Council President Emeritus Edward K. Thomas Sr. with the Raven staff.



Forest Service Tribal Relations Liaison Donald Frank, his son Steven Frank and Angoon resident Jamie Daniels carved the staffs. One depicts a raven, the other depicts an eagle; the eagle and the raven are symbols of unity between the Tlingit and Haida people in Southeast Alaska. Each staff has a plaque that reads:



David Rak Honored for Stewardship Efforts

By Keith Riggs, External Affairs, Regional Office

Recreation and Lands Forester David Rak, of the Wrangell Ranger District, was selected to receive the 2009 Alaska Region Wilderness Stewardship award.

Rak has worked in the wilderness program on the Tongass for more than 25 years. He was honored for his efforts in improving the stewardship levels of the Stikine-LeConte and South Etolin Wilderness Areas to meet Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell's Ten Year Wilderness Stewardship Challenge. The Stikine-LeConte and South Etolin Wilderness Areas are north and south respectively from the city of Wrangell in Southeast Alaska.

The 10-Year Wilderness Stewardship Challenge was developed by the Chief's Wilderness Advisory Group as a quantifiable measurement of the Forest Service's success in Wilderness stewardship. The goal is to bring each and every wilderness under Forest Service management to a minimum stewardship level by the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act in 2014. The first year of the Challenge was Fiscal Year 2005.

Through Rak's leadership, South Etolin now meets the required score for achieving the Stewardship Challenge, and the Stikine-LeConte is only one point away from doing so. His work has been instrumental to the progress achieved in meeting the Chief's challenge.

Rak says, "...the opportunity to protect and manage a special place to be experienced by future generations in its natural condition" is what makes wilderness special to him. Quoting former Forest Service Chief Jack Ward Thomas, Rak cautions to "see that Wilderness doesn't get inched away from us, one compromise at a time."

A graduate of State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Rak has been employed by the Forest Service since 1977, spending his entire career in Alaska.



Forester David Rak received the 2009 Alaska Region Wilderness Stewardship Award.



David Rak travels to the field.

Telling the Tongass Story

Introducing Sitka Black-tailed Deer to the Lower 48

By Faith L. Duncan, Tongass Interpretive Program Manager

This past February, several representatives for the Tongass National Forest participated in the Western Hunting & Conservation Exposition in Salt Lake City, Utah. The event is sponsored by the Mule Deer Foundation and by Sportsmen for Fish & Wildlife. Forest employees and volunteers have been working with these groups to achieve common goals for the past three years.

This year, we assembled a new exhibit with our key messages, talking points and a collaborative sheet of projects which was used in both the exhibit hall and in meetings with individual Mule Deer Foundation members. Kristen Romanoff, Boyd Porter and Dave Persons from the Alaska Department of Fish & Game donated *Deer Tracks* magazines and hands-on items so that a youth teaching kit could be assembled for the show. The colorful displays attracted hundreds of families and young people to the exhibit. Volunteers Steve Daniels and Dennis Neill provided logistical support to help us contact over 2,000 people at our venue during the four-day event.

The expo allowed us to interact with the public and bring them to a new level of understanding about our work on:

- The restoration and enhancement of young-growth forests.
- Research into the habitat needs of the Sitka black-tailed deer.
- Forest management practices on the Tongass.
- The recreation and cabin programs in Southeast Alaska.
- The importance of our partnership with The Nature Conservancy in the attainment of management goals.

Danielle Chi, Forest Service National Mule Deer Foundation Liaison, and George Garcia, Program Leader for Wildlife in Region 4, visited our booth several times. They were impressed by our approach and organization. We have made great strides in working with Mule Deer Foundation as a result of these contacts. Many thanks go to employees Jim Brainard and Jim Baichtal and volunteer Dennis Neill for standing on concrete to talk to all our visitors. Through their stories they shared enriching, personal experiences about Sitka black-tailed deer. Thanks are also given to those provided input for the exhibit and to our partners at The Nature Conservancy and ADF&G. We are looking forward to the benefits of



Left to right: Tongass Forest Geologist Jim Baichtal, Forest Biologist Jim Brainard, and retiree Dennis Neill open the Western Hunting and Conservation Exposition and Mule Deer Foundation Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah.



Program Manager Faith Duncan staffs the Tongass National Forest booth at the Western Hunting and Conservation Exposition in Salt Lake City, Utah.

having a chapter of the Mule Deer Foundation in Southeast Alaska in the near future and a state-wide organization that recognizes the Sitka black-tailed deer, its habitat needs and management challenges.

Recovery Act Project Helps Companies, Forest Service Employees, Stay Afloat

By Julie Speegle, Asst. Public Affairs Officer,
Tongass National Forest

Another American Recovery and Reinvestment Act project helped keep Wes Tyler and his employees at Icy Straits Lumber and Milling employed. The company also provided Alaska yellow cedar for a new deck on the Wrangell Ranger District's floating camp.

Each field season, the floating camp houses Forest Service employees charged with the administration of the Anan Creek Wildlife Observatory, a world class wildlife viewing site that attracts tourists from around the world. The Anan facility is of great economic importance to the community of Wrangell because of the visitors it draws to the area.

The marine float keeping the camp above water was in failing condition, and was badly in need of repair. Dan Ash and employees at Sage Systems Technologies, LLC, in Anchorage were awarded the contract to replace the marine float.

A new polyethylene float was constructed in the state of Washington and shipped to Wrangell in three pieces. The contractor bolted the pieces together on the City of Wrangell dock. Using yellow cedar purchased from Icy Straits Lumber and Milling in Hoonah, workers constructed a 28 ft. by 26 ft. deck that would support the housing unit.

After the new float was lowered into the water, crews from Stikine Transportation in Wrangell used a crane to transfer the existing housing building from the old float to the new float. Stikine Transportation also towed the new floating camp to the City of Wrangell harbor where the contractor finished attaching the building to the deck and ensured accessories—such as utility lines, steps, thermal pain windows, hot water heater, marine sanitation device and skirting—were properly relocated and/or replaced.

The project provided work for five Sage System employees, as well as opportunities for the economically depressed communities of Wrangell and Hoonah.

The completed float will house Forest Service administrative personnel at Anan Bay, and will also be available for use as a remote camp for other Tongass projects during the Anan off season.



A polyethylene float was constructed in Washington State, and was then shipped to Wrangell, AK, in three pieces.



At the city dock in Wrangell, Sage Systems Technology crews construct a deck on top of the polyethylene float to support the building that will house Forest Service employees at the Anan Wildlife Observatory.



After the new polyethylene float was lowered into the water, Sage Systems Technology workers transfer the existing building from the old float to the new float using a crane from Stikine Transportation.

Sitka Office Wins Sitka Green Business Award

By Michelle Putz, Writer/Editor, Tongass National Forest

Many small actions led up to one big award for the Sitka Office of the Forest Service in April 2010. The Sitka Office received a 2010 “Sitka Green Business Award” for their green business practices from the Sitka Global Warming Group/Sustainable Sitka. Employees of the Sitka office received the highest recognition in the program, a Platinum Level award. While 32 Sitka businesses were recognized in the program, the Forest Service Sitka Office was one of only three Sitka businesses to receive this highest honor.

The program came about because members of SGWG/SS recognized that many Sitka businesses are engaged in green practices such as recycling, composting, installing bike racks, encouraging use of reusable cups/bags/plates, and energy conservation. Realizing that these green practices benefit the environment, save money, and increase sustainability, SGWG/SS wanted to recognize and thank businesses like the Forest Service, encourage others to start greening their business, and help local businesses take advantage of a green marketing strategy.

“We recognize and appreciate how the Forest Service and other award-winning businesses are contributing to the sustainability of our community, both in an environmental sense and in a financial and social sense,” said Natalie Sattler, a representative of SGWG/SS. “We hope these awards are the start of added business and sustainability in Sitka.”



District Ranger Carol Goularte and Writer/Editor Michelle Putz accept the Sitka Green Business Award. Photo by Barth Hamberg.

I was happy to present the award to employees of the Sitka office at the April 2010 District/Supervisor’s Office meeting. We received a letter of recognition and a “2010 Sitka Green Business Award” certificate. All the green businesses are listed on the SGWG website at www.sitkaglobalwarming.org.

Employees reacted with surprise and excitement at the recognition. Most of the businesses, including the Sitka Office, did not realize they were even in the running for an award because they did not know that their employees or customers had nominated them. These awards have been a great way to show support for the Forest Service and others who use sustainable business practices.

Carol Goularte, Sitka District Ranger, said, “Recycling is a ‘no brainer’ for some people. It is fantastic to see people at the office coming together to recycle, save paper or address ways to save energy.”

Staff Officer Jon Martin said, “I really appreciate the recycling and other things that Sitka employees do

to increase our sustainable operations. Thank them! They are the ones who deserve the recognition.”

Jacquie Foss, a soil scientist and the Sitka Office Green Team representative, was pleased by the award. “The sustainability effort in the Sitka building has been focused on small steps... simple every day things we can do to green up our work place. It’s great to see that those little things add up and

really do make a difference,” Jacquie said after getting the award.

SGWG/SS developed the local certification process to determine those businesses and practices to recognize through this program. The program’s four levels (bronze, silver, gold, and platinum) recognize different levels of commitment towards green practices. The more actions that a business is doing to help the environment, the higher the recognition level they received.

SGWG/SS compiled a list of over 30 green practices that are being used by businesses in Sitka to determine the green business awards. The Forest Service Sitka Office was recognized for 10:

- Recycling all city-sponsored items (mixed paper, newspaper, tin and aluminum cans, glass, and now plastic).
- Recycling specialty items (like batteries and phones).
- Composting coffee grounds.
- Encouraging double-sided printing.
- Re-using serving items (plates, cups, bowls) in their break room.

- Properly disposing of hazardous waste.
- Turning off lights at night.
- Using teleconferences and videoconferences to reduce travel for meetings and training.
- Using recycled paper and other refurbished office supplies.
- Establishing an employee Green Team.

Lisa Hirsch, Support Services Supervisor, said, “You can see a difference in how we are doing things in Sitka. A couple of years ago, you’d see all the lights on in the building

all the time. Now, when people leave they shut their lights off. And when you get to work in the morning, only the lights that people are actually using are turned on. The motion sensor light switches we added to rooms like the break room and copy room have worked great to help us conserve energy. Now we only use lights when we actually use the room.”

This is the first year that SGWG/SS have presented the green business awards. They hope to present awards every year. Natalie Sattler said, “We are excited about the long

list of local businesses taking action to reduce their environmental footprint in Sitka. All of our award winners, but especially our three Platinum award winners, Sitka Conservation Society, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, and the US Forest Service-Sitka Office, are doing many great actions to reduce waste, conserve energy, reduce fuel use in transportation, and support the community and green products industry. We hope that businesses review the list and work towards reaching a higher award level next year.”

Pain with a Gain

By Jacqueline Foss, Soil Scientist, Tongass National Forest

Mandatory data entry into nationwide databases is taking up more of our time, but the Tongass soil scientists have found a silver lining in this seemingly drudging task. Their NRIS database is becoming an excellent archival tool which may also have research applications. Several thousand individual soil data points have been taken across the forest since the early 1960s.



Dave D’Amore takes measurements for a soil data point in a *Sunnyhae* (alpine meadow) soil. Photo by Dennis Landwehr.

Once entered into NRIS, users will be able to pull up spatially-located soil and lab data from across the Tongass with a simple click.

NRIS, or natural resource inventory system, is a nationwide geodatabase used to catalog a range of natural resources. Soils and vegetation are just one application. This database has site information like aspect, soil information like drainage class, and vegetation information like species and quantity, and it’s all represented by a point on a map. Once NRIS adds the tool that allows Adobe pdf (porta-

ble document file), all of the scanned field forms and lab data will be attached to that point on the maps.

The soil mapping effort represents millions and millions of dollars and decades in data collection, processing, and organizing. Digitizing the soil information preserves it for future inventories or research while making it available to many users. Now, the Tongass soil information will be stored in a long-term, electronic database.

Migrating the data from hardcopy into the NRIS database is an ardu-

ous task, much like herding cats. Little bits of info keep slipping away, hiding in binders, file cabinets, boxes and people’s desks. Each legacy point in NRIS represents at least two different data forms, air photos and field data forms, and about 20 minutes of work for one dedicated soil scientist. New points are added to the database as part of the regular soils program of work. Adding new points is easier because our field methods use electronic data capture like GPS field computers

reducing the data entry tedium.

Knowing the distribution of soil data across the Tongass is incredibly valuable. Researchers can mine the information in the database to reduce data collection costs or for use in a model. For example, we can use the depths of soil or the depth of development to age the Tongass or answer microclimate or carbon questions. Soil drainage class explained 40% of the variation in the recent young growth model! Think what you could glean from the more than 4,000 data points in this database.

Eight Fathom Cabin

Economic Recovery

By Judy Suing, Public Affairs Specialist, Tongass National Forest

Hard times are no stranger to Wes Tyler, owner of Icy Straits Lumber and Milling in Hoonah. He has seen the number of local timber jobs in the community drop dramatically since the 1990s. In an effort to save the remaining timber jobs in the area, Tyler and his wife, Susan, purchased the town's ailing lumber mill in 2003. Despite difficulties obtaining a loan, the couple persisted because they felt compelled to provide employment opportunities to the residents.

Times continue to be hard for the family-owned mill. "Every day is very much a struggle, but we are working non-stop to keep our people employed," said Tyler.

Icy Straits Lumber and Milling was able to keep employees on its payroll, thanks to a Forest Service contract to build Eight Fathom Cabin. The contract was funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

"This contract came at a critical time," Tyler said. "[Staffing] got very thin just before. We were having to lay people off, so this was a real big boost." Ultimately, 15 employees from the company worked on constructing the recreation cabin.

In addition to providing jobs for the local economy, the cabin's construction also served as a tourist attraction. The cabin was constructed at the ferry terminal in Hoonah to allow visitors to see their tax dollars, and the employees those dollars funded, at work. This brought additional recognition to the company and sent a strong message about the impact of the economic recovery on

local businesses like Icy Straits.

"This mill is an opportunity to provide jobs to the community and make use of the great timber here," said Tyler.

The timber resources in Hoonah are what really spark Tyler's passion, "It's always rewarding to build something out of material that you cut yourself. When I'm cutting down a tree, I like to picture in my mind all of the products that tree will become."

From the locally-cut yellow cedar and spruce logs, Tyler and his crew expertly crafted the Eight Fathom cabin using four-by-six squared timbers. The 16-by-20 foot shelter is complete with a stove, table, benches, bunks, and a full loft, providing a cozy place to relax after a long day of hunting, fishing, or exploring along the road network that is adjacent to the cabin.

The pride that went into building the cabin is evident. "We like to make high value-added products out of the wood here – that is our vision and goal. Fundamentally, that's the only way our business is going to survive here."

It is this commitment to value-added wood production that will not only help create economically diverse economies in Southeast



Wes Tyler, owner of Icy Straits Lumber and Milling, talks about the spruce and yellow cedar logs that were locally harvested, processed, and used to construct Eight Fathom recreation cabin in Hoonah.

Alaska, but it is also a critical step in transitioning the Tongass away from old growth harvesting to young growth management.

As a good neighbor to Southeast communities, the Tongass has a role to play in providing more projects that encourage local harvesting, processing, and selling of wood. The Eight Fathom Cabin is a great start.

In the meantime, Tyler remains optimistic about new projects for his business. He points out that the road network at Eight Fathom Bight is large enough to accommodate additional cabins which can serve both subsistence and recreation users.



A Success Story

Picture Perfect

By Sue Jennings, Planning Team Leader, Tongass National Forest. Photos by Geno Cisnero

The new Eight Fathom Cabin was constructed in Hoonah in the summer of 2009. This American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) project was built with lumber harvested and milled by Icy Straits Lumber & Milling in Hoonah and constructed through a contract with Channel Construction, Juneau. Once the cabin was completed

it was moved 15 miles southwest of Hoonah to Eight Fathom Bight, where it is now ready for reservations.

On April 22, 2010, Forrest Cole, Tongass Forest Supervisor; Rich Jennings, Hoonah District Ranger; and Geno Cisneros, Hoonah Recreation Specialist, visited the new Eight Fathom cabin. This was the first visit to the cabin for Forrest, since it was moved from Hoonah.

Access to the cabin is by a 45-minute boat ride from Hoonah or a short 10 minute flight from Hoonah or a 30 minute flight from Juneau. When you arrive, the gravel beach leads to a short barrier-free trail.

All of the wood in the cabin is cedar, yellow-cedar for most of the cabin and redcedar for trim. From the outside deck, the craftsmanship details are obvious. Stepping inside the attention to detail continues, with the wood stove, counters, table, and bunks; you'll feel right at home.



No need for pictures on the walls, the view out the windows is enough.

When you are done setting up your living area, go for a walk up the road, fishing, hunting, or just sit on the deck and enjoy the view and maybe you'll spot some wildlife. While Forrest, Rich and Geno were at the cabin, they saw lots of shore birds and some whales. Remember, this is brown bear country so bring some protection along with your other supplies.

If you are looking for a real Alaska vacation this summer, try the Eight Fathom cabin. It is just a short flight to this new experience.



Forest Supervisor Forrest Cole and Hoonah District Ranger Rich Jennings inspect the new cabin.



Left: Bunk, dining table and kitchen area. Right: The cabin sits at the end of the road. Be on the lookout for bears.

Shaping Tomorrow's Leaders: Yakutat Youth Career Development

By Susan Oehlers, Wildlife Biologist, Yakutat Ranger District

Thanks in part to the Alaska Region Diversity Matching Funds Program, Yakutat area students are well on their way to discovering their future career paths. Six high school students recently traveled to Fairbanks to attend the Alaska Association of Student Governments (AASG) Spring Youth Leadership Conference. The purpose of AASG is to provide leadership training, communication, and a student voice of issues at the local, state, and national levels. AASG creates young leaders in communities and schools by teaching them leadership skills and increasing their awareness of political issues and the political process (see www.aasg.org for more information).



Yakutat student Savannah Beckstrom (foreground) learns the value of community service.

During the conferences, students attended general business meetings where issue-related resolutions were introduced, debated, and voted on by the delegation. They also attended leadership workshops and other presentations, and elected new officers. Students volunteered for community service events, including helping out at the local animal shelter, Salvation Army, and cleaning up a local skate park. The students also took the opportunity to tour the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus, including the Far North Museum.

Yakutat student Maka Monture summarized her experience: "I met many other students from all over Alaska who are making a difference for their schools through student council. It was cool that Yakutat's student council was able to contribute to those differences by voting



Ellen Anderson and Chad Hood field questions from inquisitive high school students. Photo by Laurie Lamm.

for the resolutions. The workshops that they offered were great experiences as well. I attended a martial arts class where I was taught how to break a wooden board with my hand. I also went to a Salvation Army where we sorted clothes for the Air Force base. The tour of UAF really gave me an idea of what college will be as well. Spring AASG 2010 was a great experience."

Funding for the student's travel to Fairbanks was provided by the Alaska Region Diversity Matching Funds Program. The Alaska Region has a long established management emphasis on diversity and understands the significance and importance of integrating diversity into every aspect of how we do work and engage with our



Myra Gilliam gets "grilled" by a kindergartner. Photo by Susan Oehlers.

communities. The primary objective of the diversity matching fund program is to achieve the four diversity goals of the Alaska Region Diversity Strategy:

- Promote a better understanding of the value of diversity.
- Increase outreach, partnerships, and program delivery to non-traditional users, underserved communities, and diverse youth programs.
- Enhance personal commitment and accountability for creating an inclusive and diverse work environment.
- Increase the recruitment, employment, and retention of a more diverse workforce.

The diversity matching fund opportunity is intended to expand current programs, build upon existing partnerships, expand employment opportunities, and help develop new relationships with under-represented and nontraditional communities, partners, and youth.

Yakutat students also had the opportunity to explore possible future careers during the Yakutat Elementary and High School Career Fair. Approximately 60 people representing a variety of disciplines participated in the Fair, including the military, public safety offices, health care, law, architecture, and meteorology. Forest Service employees included Russel Wicka (representing trails and wildland firefighting); Teresa Hunt (recreation, minerals, heritage, lands, cabins, and special uses); forester Daryl James; District Ranger Lee Benson; and Susan Oehlers (wildlife biology). Visiting Forest Service representatives were Terry Suminski (fisheries and subsistence); Ellen Anderson (botany);



Yakutat high school students depart the Yakutat airport for the AASG conference in Fairbanks.

Myra Gilliam (archaeology); Jeff Bryden (law enforcement); Chad Hood (minerals); and Laurie Lamm (interpretation and conservation education).

Students from kindergarten through 12th grades circulated throughout the fair, each interviewing several representatives. Posters, videos, brochures, and other displays and props helped children to gain a better understanding of the careers available in the Forest Service (not to mention “freebies” such as Smoky gear that helped attract them to the tables in the first place). The Career Fair was a great success, with wide participation by members of the community, in addition to the students and their parents.

Exposure to educational and career opportunities that they might not otherwise be aware of is a valuable experience to students in this isolated, rural community. The Yakutat

Ranger District has extremely small staff and consistent community outreach can sometimes be challenging; however, we take great pride in our community involvement and will continue to build towards maintaining and increasing these important relationships.

The events high-lighted in this article are only a small sample of the district’s many outreach programs. Through all of our outreach activities, we believe we are making great strides toward addressing the goals of the Alaska Region Diversity Strategy. Many thanks to the “visiting” Forest Service folks who made time in their busy schedules to travel to Yakutat for the Career Fair; your dedication and participation are highly appreciated.! The school is already making plans for next year’s Career Fair, scheduled for Friday, April 8, 2011, so mark your calendars.

Exotic Invasive Insect: A Disturbing Find

Contributors: James J. Kruse, Ken Zogas, John Hard, and Nicholas Lisuzzo, Forest Health Protection

Introductions of exotic invasive insects are a serious threat to biological diversity, both nationally and within Alaska. Increased commercial activity and tourism in Alaska and climate change trends in northern regions increase the probability that non-native organisms that are introduced into Alaska will establish breeding populations and begin to spread. Once established, invasive pest populations can be extremely difficult and expensive to manage.



Adult green alder sawfly

In the early to mid-1990s, the invasive green alder sawfly was first discovered in North America in Newfoundland, Canada. The green alder sawfly is native to Europe, North Africa and the Near East, where its preferred host is European black alder trees. There were no known populations of the green alder sawfly in Alaska at that time.

After discovering the woolly alder sawfly in Southcentral Alaska, in 1997 researchers began assessments of riparian thin-leaf alder defoliation events. In 2007, during one of these surveys, green alder sawfly larvae turned up. This led to a review of collection records, which revealed that the first green alder sawfly specimen was taken in

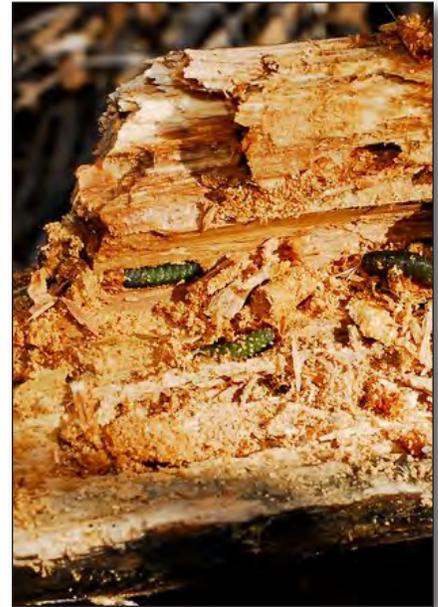
Palmer, Alaska in 2004. By the time of identification, green alder sawfly was actively defoliating thin-leaf alder in Anchorage, Kenai, Seward, and in the Matanuska-Susitna River Valley. In 2009, the invasive green alder sawfly was positively identified from Alaska, a new U.S. record. Green alder sawfly adults have been recently collected in Fairbanks. In 2010, the sawfly has been found on the Columbia River in Washington State.

How to identify green alder sawfly

The newly emerged larvae are very pale green and approximately 2.0-3.0 mm in length. As they develop, the larvae undergo a color change to a vibrant green. Fully mature larvae are 15.0-18.0 mm in length. Adults are 7.0 - 10.0 mm in length. Females of green alder sawfly have a black head and antennae, and a white labrum. The thorax is black, sometimes with some yellow or brownish coloration; their legs reddish brown to black; and the abdomen is black with the margins of the segments white to yellow. Males have not been recorded in North America or the UK.

Biology and potential impacts to Alaska

There is a small body of scientific literature which focuses on green alder sawfly under laboratory conditions and in its native habitat. Observations in Alaska suggest that there may be significant differences between their life history in Alaska and their behavior as described in European literature. In Alaska, green alder sawfly appears to be the first alder-defoliating sawfly to emerge in the spring. Newly emerged adults were actively engaged in egg-laying



Prepuae found in Eagle River

as early as mid-May in temperatures as low as 15.5 °C. In Washington, adults are active by early April. At this time, alder leaves have begun to flush. One to five eggs are laid on either the upper or lower leaf surface. Females appear to be parthenogenetic (a form of reproduction in which an egg develops into a new individual without being fertilized). European populations have been documented laying up to 40 eggs per individual, however, this has not been observed in Alaska.

Within two weeks, the new larvae emerge and immediately begin feeding. Most young larvae soon migrate to the lower leaf surface to feed and continue their development over the next several weeks. Feeding is not formally gregarious as in some other sawfly species. It is common to find larvae feeding in concert with one or both of the other two major alder-defoliating sawflies in Alaska; woolly alder sawfly and the striped alder sawfly. Green alder sawfly are exceptional among other



Green alder sawfly worm

sawflies as they burrow into rotten wood or the piths of branches. They diapause (suspend development) in a pre-pupal state. The following spring, they pupate and emerge as adults.

The increase of alder-defoliating sawfly activity, coupled with the widespread mortality of alder in Southcentral and Interior Alaska, attributed to a variety of canker fungi poses a considerable threat to riparian areas that are dependent on alder for its nitrogen-fixing contribution to soil nutrition. Research suggests that up to 70% of the available

nitrogen in the most productive forests may have its origin in stands of alder and that the rate of nitrogen fixation can decline by as much as 73% following defoliation. Further, studies in Southeast Alaska have shown that the mere presence of alder in riparian habitats could protect or even improve the productivity of aquatic organisms, thus having a positive impact on fisheries and salmon production. Alder stands affected by this widespread mortality show few signs of recruitment or recovery.

The Forest Health Protection staff is conducting an Evaluation and Monitoring project during the 2010 and 2011 field seasons. This project will serve to investigate alder dieback in riparian areas in Southcentral Alaska previously identified via aerial survey; (1) identify the extent to which non-native sawflies contribute directly to alder dieback; (2) identify the extent to which alder canker contributes directly to alder dieback; (3) identify the extent to which

Scientific terms:

- Green alder sawfly (*Monsoma pulveratum*)
- European black alder (*Alnus glutinosa*)
- Thin-leaf alder (*Alnus tenuifolia*)
- Woolly alder sawfly (*Eriocampa ovata*)
- Striped alder sawfly (*Hemichroa crocea*)
- Canker fungi (*Valsa melanodiscus*)

non-native sawflies and canker may synergize to cause alder dieback; (4) attempt to identify whether non-native sawflies may serve as infection court facilitators or otherwise predispose alder to pathogens. Ultimately, this work will help determine whether there is a correlation between alder sawflies and alder pathogens, and help determine the necessity for chemical or biological control of non-native sawflies to protect riparian alder forests and salmon spawning streams.

How you can help

To report infected trees or to receive additional information, please contact your state or federal forest health specialist. On the web, visit: : <http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/spf/fhp>.

A New Flock of Junior Ornithologists

By Katy Toth-Stauble, Conservation Education Specialist, Seward Ranger District

This spring, the Forest Service has helped fledge fifty-two Seward Elementary School third and fourth graders to become Junior Ornithologists during this year's Bird Academy. I have coordinated this two-day intensive workshop for the past five years.

Students rotate through five 30-minute presentations for a total of 10 lessons in two days. Mudflat Café, Pass the Parts, Wing, Flight, and Feathers, Binocular Detective, and Bird Banding are just five of the 10 hands-on, action packed workshops the kids take part in.

On the second day, after their

fifth presentation, the students decompressed by listening to music provided by local musician Mike Glaser. The students were swaying and singing along as Mike played his repertoire of bird songs. The event culminated with the five teams playing "Jepro-Birdy" which included actual "Jepro-Birdy" buzzers and categories pertaining to all the sessions they attended.

The success of this event is because of a phenomenal team of presenters from Forest Service, the Kenai Fjords Park Service, and the Alaska Sea Life Center.

This event is followed up with two to three, post-academy class-

room visits for more bird lessons. One of the three classroom presentations is "Bird ID; the 11-Step Program." This presentation is in preparation for the Bird Watching Field trip to the meadow and wooded area near the Seward Airport; the finale for the multi-week bird unit. On this structured excursion, I challenge these new junior ornithologists to utilize and put into practice all of their newfound knowledge. Watching and listening to the students in the marshy meadow, rich in bird sightings, "wing bars, contour feathers, and palmate feet" are the quiet words that drift away on the gentle spring breeze.

Sitka Kids are “Hands-On” for Earth Day

By Frank Barnes, Information Receptionist, Sitka Ranger District



Geof Smith teaches kids about the interdependency of organisms in the stream.



Kids simulate rain drops running down the hill.

The 2010 Earth Day Awareness Program was a big success for the Sitka Ranger District. Brad Kriekhaus, District Biologist, planned and implemented a fun day of learning for the 3rd grade classes at *Keet Gooshi Heen* Elementary School in Sitka. The students were very receptive to the educational materials and seemed eager to learn about their outdoor environment.

For this multiagency effort, Geof Smith represented the National Park Service, Caroline Jezierski the Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Kelsey Jacobson the Sitka Conservation Society, and Linda Speerstra the Army Corps of Engineers. I joined other Sitka Ranger District employees Marty Becker, Rob Miller, Craig Buehler, Erik Abele and Joe Serio to help with the day's activities.

Several learning stations were set up along Cutthroat Creek, where small groups of *Keet Gooshi Heen* students were given presentations on the different aspects of stream management.

Kelsey Jacobson supervised a very creative game designed by 3rd grade teacher Rebecca Himschoot to help the kids understand watersheds. Jacobson explained the concept of a watershed by asking the kids to track a drop of rain as went from the top of Gavan Hill, down to the ocean, and back to the top again via evaporation. Then, she reinforced the concept by asking the kids to simulate the process. They ran down a small hill while touching markers labeled “stream,” “river,” and then “ocean,” where they picked up more markers labeled “evaporation,” and ran with them back up to the “mountain top.”

At another station, Caroline Jezierski pointed out different characteristics of the stream and how important these features are to fish habitat. She then walked them along the stream and to explore ways to improve the streambed to make a better home for the fish. Marty Becker, Miller Rob and Craig Buehler got down in the stream with their shovels and demonstrated changes such

as riffles and pools can be built in to make the stream more supportive of life. That mucking around in the muddy water really had the kid's attention.

Joe Serio's presentation featured an aquarium with live cutthroat and Dolly Varden trout that were removed from the creek that morning. He pointed out and named the different body parts and markings of the two species of fish as they swam around the tank. Serio then used a series of pictures to explain the life cycle of salmon and their dependence on healthy streams. He also spoke about the strong sense of smell that salmon have to help them find their way back to the stream, where they were born, after years of roaming the Pacific Ocean as adults.

Geof Smith had a streamside table full of examples to explain the fish food chain and emphasized the interdependency of the organisms in the stream he was standing in. His display had not only preserved specimens in vials but he also livened it



up with live specimens collected in Cutthroat Creek that morning. Everyone knows how well bugs and kids get along—he was a hit.

Smith also had hands-on examples of slimy algae, swimming, crawling insect grazers and minnow size cutthroats. He pointed out the habitat limitations of Cutthroat Creek imposed on it by the surrounding development and explained what changes could be made to restore it to a healthy stream. Students were reminded at each station of what Earth Day is all about, and how important it is for them to be mindful of, and take care of, their natural environment.

Joe Serio's presentation featured an aquarium with live cutthroat and Dolly Varden trout that were removed from the creek that morning.

Harbor Mountain Road Earth Day Cleanup

By Perry Edwards, Fisheries Biologist, Sitka Ranger District

Ok, so it was the weekend after Earth Day, but it was a beautiful sunny day. The Sitka Ranger District partnered with the City of Sitka, Sitka Conservation Society and RecycleSitka to clean up the Harbor Mountain Road. This area is 2½ miles of mixed ownership between the Forest Service and the City of Sitka.

Over 30 volunteers showed up, including Forest Service employees, a Boy Scout Troop, the Youth Advocates, and part of the 297th Military Policy Company of the Alaska Army National Guard. Joe Serio, Ryan Cox and I (all Sitka Ranger District employees) made this project a success and kept everyone safe for the event; at times it was like herding cats.

The unique part of this project was that we separated out recyclable materials from trash. So many cleanup efforts end with taking all the material to the landfill. In Sitka, this means it goes on a barge to Seattle and then ends up in a landfill. We felt it was important to recycle whatever possible to make this a better project.



Sitka employees Joe Serio, Ryan Cox and Perry Edwards, along with 30 volunteers, clean 4,170 pounds of trash from Harbor Mountain Road.

Not only did we remove a 1970s vintage Datsun sedan, but we also picked up a bunch of scrap metal (recyclable) which included an engine block, a car axle, a pile of old culvert parts, a commercial dryer, a van load (over 200 pounds) of plastic bottles and aluminum cans, 15 wood pallets, and two televisions.

We also had 30 bags of miscellaneous garbage. Total weight was 4,170 pounds. Many of the volunteers asked, “When and where are we going to do this again?”

We hope that when people see how clean the Harbor Mountain Road is now, they’ll keep it this way!

Injured Birds Stopover in Portage Valley

By Julie Buehler, Interpreter, Glacier Ranger District

This winter, the Begich, Boggs Visitor Center reopened its doors to winter visitation for the first time in two years. In addition to the exhibits and an award winning film, the BBVC teamed up with Bird Learning and Treatment center (Bird TLC) of Anchorage and offered a series of Sunday afternoon presentations. There were 12 different educational presentations featuring rescued birds and their handlers. The series was a hit among the local



to large raptors come through the clinic's door each year. Overall, the clinic has about a 50% success rate. Because birds need to be at 100% to survive in the wild, some birds cannot be released and therefore join the center's educational program, becoming ambassadors for their species to the general public.

Each week, a volunteer handler from Bird TLC brought a different live Alaskan bird to the visitor center and engaged audiences with fun facts and useful information about the birds and Bird TLC. One of the biggest stars was Sparky, the one-winged Bald Eagle. Sparky was brought to Bird TLC in 2005 after he electrocuted his wing in a flying accident. Unable to return to a normal life in the wild, Sparky joined the educational team in 2006.

During one weekend, over 50 children and adults joined Sparky and his handler, Kristin Guinn, to learn more about Bald Eagles and their natural habitat. In addition to Sparky, some of the other birds that participated included; Willow the one-eyed Magpie that said "hello," Denali the Golden Eagle, and various hawks, owls, falcons and other birds.

The staff of the Glacier



Patricia Garcia with Jasper, a rough legged hawk. Photo by Burnie Shultz.



Gena Holloman with Avery, a Stellar jay. Photo by Kevin Smyth.

communities and visitors from outside Alaska alike, many people returning week after week.

Bird TLC is a non-profit organization dedicated to rehabilitating sick, injured or orphaned wild birds and providing avian education programs to the public. Bird TLC was founded in 1988 by Anchorage veterinarian Dr. James R. Scott. Scott's vision was to treat sick or injured birds and release them back into their natural habitat. Today, hundreds of birds ranging from tiny chickadees



Ranger District is thrilled to re-open the doors of the BBVC this winter and is extremely grateful for the efforts made by the Bird Learning and Treatment Center in offering this program to the public. Thank you to all the handlers and birds who visited.



Avery, the Stellar Jay. Photo by Kevin Smyth.

I'm Going to College!

That was the declaration of 420 fifth-graders who attended the two-day “I’m Going to College!” event held at the University of Alaska Southeast in May. EEO Specialist Teddy Castillo recruited regional office employees to talk about their careers and share with students what it takes to become a scientist or engineer in the Forest Service. Castillo complimented the presenters for their ability to engage the students. She said, “It was great to see the students raise their hands, hoping to be called on to give the answer.”



Fisheries Biologist Don Martin described to students how he gets to the field via boat, plane, helicopter, or hiking.



Wildlife Biologist Mike Goldstein showed what happens when a wolverine finds a nest of black oystercatcher eggs.



Engineer Marie Messing takes the students from maps and blueprints to the finished product: a bridge or a road..

“The Green Mile”



Left to right: Roger Birk, Gary Sonnenberg, Bob Simmons, Richard Stahl, Hannah Atadero, Sue Alexander, Adam Kackstetter, Marie Messing, Jeff Miller, Carol Voneida, Michael Wilcox, Teresa Haugh, Anne Bergstrom and Gene Miller. Not pictured: Katie Benning. Photo by Ray Massey.

Employees in Juneau celebrated Earth Day a little early by cleaning up “The Green Mile.” For the last nine years, as part of the State’s Adopt-A-Highway program, employees have cleaned this stretch of scenic highway between Juneau and the Mendenhall Glacier as a public service project and a morale builder.

The first cleanup of the year is always a challenge, according to coordinator Ray Massey. This year’s was the worst he’s seen it since the agency began cleanups.

“We picked up two, eight-foot pickup-sized loads of bags and debris in one mile,” said Massey. “Everything from the front end of car, tag included, to credit cards and health insurance cards from a woman who lost her purse two months ago.” The Forest Service returned the cards, but not the front end of the car.

It took 15 employees from the Regional Office and Juneau Ranger District four hours to complete the task. As the group gathered to turn in their safety vests, Massey gave each of them a \$10 gift card to a local sandwich shop, donated by the Forest Service Woocheen Committee. The Committee supports Regional Office employee internal communications and morale, and encourages employee community service.

The State’s Adopt-A-Highway program calls for an organization to agree to pickup one to three miles of highway, three times a year, for three years. Massey said he will have to think of something very special for the cleanup crews next year. After all, it will be their tenth anniversary.

Sitka Office Receives Tongass Safety Award

By Bill Moulton, Tongass Safety Officer

Forest Service employees co-located at the Sitka Office recently received the annual Tongass National Forest Safety Award. The Sitka Office includes personnel from the Sitka Ranger District, Tongass Supervisor's Office, Forestry Sciences Laboratory, Albuquerque Service Center and Regional Office. The award is presented to the unit that best demonstrates exceptional proactive or innovative approaches to hazard recognition, prevention and employee protection.

District Ranger Carol Goularte and Staff Officers Jon Martin and Scott Snelson made a highly effective effort to improve awareness and understanding of safety goals by designing training programs to improve the understanding of employee protection responsibility and opportunities. Safety training tracking spreadsheets were drafted and distributed to all Forest Service units at the Sitka Office. Last spring, three weeks of safety training were staggered with different starting dates to reach all employees.

Safety training and job hazard analyses were completed for summer volunteers from the Southeast Alaska Guidance Association, the Student Conservation Association, the Sitka Conservation Society and the Alaska Department of Fish & Game.

Sitka held spring safety meetings where all permanent and seasonal employees received incentive items such as water bottles and insulated coffee mugs with safety mottos. A safety award program was created, with the new motto, "SAFE: Situational Awareness for Everyone." An annual calendar of safety trainings and events as well as photo-



Deputy Supervisor Becky Nourse presents Staff Officer Jon Martin, District Ranger Carol Goularte, and Staff Officer Scott Snelson with the Tongass Safety Award.

graph and names of safety committee member were distributed.

To better manage risk, the Sitka Safety Committee insures that work leaders and supervisors use and practice frequent tailgate meetings tied into job hazard analyses. This action resulted in a four-time increase in the number of tailgate sessions reported from the previous fiscal year. Redesigned tailgate safety forms were printed on *Rite-in-the-Rain* sheets; the front has tailgate instructions and the back side has *Go-No-Go* standards and emergency contact information.

Sitka's OSHA 300 logs over the last three years show measurable benefits to the safety and health of Sitka employees. Reportable incidents dropped from two in 2007 to one in 2008, then to none last year.

The committee insured that fire drills were completed with good response. They also created a new standard operating procedure for an automated external defibrillator which was purchased and installed.

A new hazing policy that was

designed and successfully implemented at Redoubt weir addressed problems with human/bear interactions. This has not only improved safety for employees and the general public, but also kept the bears alive. In addition, management has been increased in developed recreation areas, with site-specific temporary closures, signage, patrols, and education for outfitter/guides and campers. This has proven effective in areas such as one that had nine different brown bears appearing all summer and fall, including at least two sows with cubs.

To maintain Office of Safety and Health Administration standards, the Sitka Safety Committee conducted a spring facility inspection. Office risks that were addressed included an air quality survey, ergonomic workspace consultations (offered to all Sitka Office employees), and the repair of structural building issues such as back stairs. Management insured that all safety problems have been mitigated, or that fixes are in the works.

Spotlight on Tricia O'Connor

By Wini Kessler, Director of Wildlife, Fisheries, Ecology, Watershed, and Subsistence Management

Celebrating the successes of our people has been one of the real highlights of my career with the Forest Service. On February 9, I added one more event to my collection of special memories. The setting was the conference room of the Juneau Ranger District. The occasion was a pizza lunch shared by the Tongass Leadership Team, who were meeting that week, and the JRD staff. What a perfect venue to present the 2009 WFEWS Director's Award to Tricia O'Connor, whose look of total surprise made my day, if not my entire week!

The WFEWS Director's Award was initiated in 1984 to recognize employees in wildlife, fisheries, ecology, botany, watershed, or subsistence management who are making outstanding contributions to their professional fields, to communities, and to the Alaska Region's mission. In nominating Tricia, her peers described an outstanding track record of advancing the Alaska Region's mission, both in her previous position as the Yakutat District Ranger and currently as the Tongass Staff Officer for Wildlife, Subsistence Management, and Planning. She is known and appreciated for her dedication to people, both internal and external.

Examples include her outreach to State colleagues in the Alaska Department of Fish & Game and the Department of Natural Resources. That effort has fostered strong and effective working relationships, better coordination, and progress toward productive outcomes. Likewise, the strong relationships Tricia has forged with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Southeast Subsistence



WFEWS Director Wini Kessler presents the 2009 Director's Award to Tongass Staff Officer Tricia O'Connor. Photo by Michael Goldstein.

tence Regional Advisory Council, Tribal leaders, and non-government organizations are achieving real progress toward shared objectives.

Within the Forest Service Tricia has taken a lead role in the training of field biologists, serving as a coach in the Middle Leader Program and a mentor to many others. All of these contributions are acknowledged by her coworkers with deep appreciation for the positive difference she is making.

In describing her accomplishments, Tricia's colleagues referred to certain qualities that appear instrumental in her success. These include a holistic outlook, her forward thinking on difficult and emerging issues, her ability to build trust among stakeholders, and a willingness to take on new tasks and challenges including those with no precedents. These qualities have been at work in many important efforts that

bear Tricia's mark; for example the completion of the 2008 Tongass Forest Plan and Record of Decision, improved implementation of forest plan monitoring, various aspects of the Tongass workforce reorganization, and the recruitment of highly-qualified new talent to the forest and the region.

Tricia's peers describe her as "a voice for the districts, forest, and fe-gion," a "dedicated, thoughtful, and true professional," and "a tireless advocate for the Subsistence Program and rural Alaskans." The enthusiasm in her supporters' voices makes it clear just how much she is respected, valued, and appreciated.

Oh, did I mention how surprised she was to receive this recognition? That's because this modest and humble professional is most comfortable working quietly behind the scenes. Did I feel guilty for dragging her into the limelight? Not a chance!

Prince William Sound Zone: Shoreline Rare Plant Surveys

By: Kate Mohatt, Erin Cooper, and Betty Charnon, Chugach National Forest



Kelly Bandoch stands in one of the few known Yellow Cedar stands in Cedar Bay, Prince William Sound.



Marilyn Barker surveys a delightful Prince William Sound fen for rare plants. Photos by Kate Mohatt.

Prince William Sound (PWS), Alaska is known worldwide for its amazing wildlife and scenery, but the wide varieties of plants that inhabit this area are little understood. Past surveys have documented numerous sensitive and rare plant species on Southcentral Alaskan maritime shorelines. Prior to this survey, little was known of the presence or distribution of several sensitive plant species that are known to occur in similar habitats as found in PWS. The PWS area is managed to maintain its wild character and unique wildlife habitat. Although human access is generally limited to boat or aircraft, recreational and other human uses are continuing to increase.

Through the PWS Framework, the Chugach National Forest is currently working on projects to help understand human uses and their potential impacts to natural resources. This, in combination with a recent revision of the Region 10 sensitive plant list, made an investigation into sensitive plant distributions in PWS timely. The Glacier and Cordova

Ranger Districts on the Chugach National Forest collaborated on this survey, making it the first zone-wide project in PWS. Results from the survey have greatly increased the understanding of the presence and distribution of sensitive plants in PWS and will be useful for a variety of natural resource and human use project assessments.

The primary purpose of this project was to inventory plant species that occur along PWS shorelines while targeting key habitats for Region 10 sensitive plant species. Plots were selected using a stratified random process and a few subjective sites were selected for their unique geologies or habitats. A total of 100 random points were surveyed in July and August of 2009. This project took approximately 4 weeks and documented 364 plant species.

Prior to this project, 181 plants were known in PWS from various surveys and data from vegetation ecology plots. Through this survey we identified an additional 200 distinct plants bringing the total number in PWS to at least 381. Of par-

ticular importance are new sightings of Region 10 sensitive plant species, including four distinct populations of Sessileleaf scurvygrass (*Cochlearia sessifolia*) and a single collection of Unalaska mist-maid (*Romanzoffia unalaschensis*).

Sessileleaf scurvygrass has never been documented before on National Forest System lands and this is only the third documented occurrence of Unalaska mist-maid on the Chugach National Forest, which only has 29 occurrences world-wide. Additionally, we found three species designated as rare by the Alaska Natural Heritage Program, including two orchids (*Malaxis palidosa* and *Platanthera chorisana*), and Pacific buttercup (*Ranunculus pacificus*). Range extensions were also documented for three species including the Pacific buttercup.

Estimates of richness based on our data suggest that our current plant list includes approximately 80% (up from 35%) of plant species that actually occur along PWS shorelines. Because a majority of plots surveyed for this project were

randomly chosen, several locations, specifically those in closed forest habitat types, were species poor.

In 2010, we plan on conducting more targeted surveys in areas with unique geologies or habitats that were under-represented, such as sandy or recently de-glaciated gravelly sites. This will likely add significantly to our known plant list and may potentially add additional Region 10 sensitive species such as Pale poppy (*Papaver alboroseum*) and two Moonwort fern species (*Botrychium tunux*, and *Botrychium yaaxudakeit*). Including additional habitats such as sandy beaches and alpine areas in future surveys will yield an even greater understanding of the plant species and their distribution in PWS.

Participants included Kate Mohatt, Betty Charnon, Erin Cooper, Marilyn Barker, Rob Lipkin, Helen Cortes, Kelly Bandoch, Rob Develice, Mary Stensvold, Sean Meade, Erin Johnson, and Jason Fode.



Helen Cortes identifies plants in a Prince William Sound wetland. Photo by Erin Johnson.

Young Leaders Awarded

By Sara Boario, Public Affairs Officer, Chugach National Forest



Left to right: Alaska Geographic Executive Director Charley Money, award winner Zoe Fuller, and Acting Chugach Forest Supervisor Nancy Peak at the 2010 Spirit of Youth awards event in Anchorage. Photo by Joshua Borough.

In recognition of the Chugach National Forest and Alaska Geographic's commitment to developing young leaders through their Children's Forest initiative, Acting Forest Supervisor Nancy Peak and Charley Money, Executive Director of Alaska Geographic, were invited to present the Spirit of Youth's 2010 award for outstanding youth leadership in science and the environment.

Over 300 community leaders, young Alaskans and their families were in attendance the evening of March 27 to recognize this year's winners. Two awards were presented in the science and environment category.

≈ **Zoe Fuller** of Palmer, Alaska was recognized for her leadership in a statewide effort to "Re-Think Plastics," for initiating a "Sustainable Schools" campaign, and convening a conference on school nutrition.

≈ **Homer Middle School group, EcoLogical**, was praised for its campaign to reduce the community's trash output. They eliminated Styrofoam trays from their school's lunchroom, cutting waste in half and allowing the school to go from two dumpsters to one.

Youth were also recognized for their leadership in the following additional categories: cultural activities; government and business; lifesaver and prevention; service to youth; overcoming challenges; technology and media; faith-based service; fine arts; and, service to community.

The Spirit of Youth is an Anchorage-based nonprofit dedicated to creating, promoting and recognizing youth involvement in their communities. It began in 1997 as a media-based project to address the growing negative image of teenagers. Since then, hundreds of positive stories about Alaska youth have spread through statewide television, radio, and local newspapers. Now in its 12th year, the Spirit of Youth awards ceremony recognizes the hard work and effort of these young leaders. This year over 160 nominations were received from 50 Alaskan communities.

Seward Ranger District Take Youth Ice Fishing

By Katy Toth-Stauble, Conservation Education Specialist, Seward Ranger District



Left: A young ice fisher admires his rainbow trout.

Right: Kids fish through drilled holes in the 18-inch ice.

On February 24, 50 students, their siblings, parents, and teachers (a total of 82) participated in the Seward Ranger District's second annual Ice Fishing Day at Jerome Lake. Whether or not the event could take place was touch and go for a while due to the threat of several days of warm temperatures and rain. We had already cancelled once due to marginal conditions. The day before the rescheduled event, we drilled several test holes to assess the thickness of the ice and found it to be 18 inches thick. The next morning, the weather turned in our favor.

It was 32 degrees with mostly clear skies.

It proved to be a jubilant day for the participants. While only four rainbow trout were caught, there was an abundance of smiles, laughter, hot dogs, chips, hot cocoa, and apple cider. Paula Johansen, our wonderful and dedicated partner from Tel-Alaska, purchased all the food for the event.

Ruth D'Amico, Acting Fisheries Biologist, led this effort to get our local kids outdoors. Ruth had the assistance of three Forest Service employees: Adam Cross, Phil Ingersol

and Katy Toth-Stauble. We were fortunate to have two enthusiastic volunteers: Gail Canaday who warmed hotdog buns, assisted grilled hotdogs, and cleaned up after we were full; and our other courageous volunteer, Andrew Nuclkes, who along with other tasks, dug stairs into the steep and very deep snow bank to provide easier access to the lake.

Participants, young and old, discovered that fish are one example of the many natural resources found in their national forest. Another discovery was how fun ice fishing can be on a pleasant winter day.

1,000!

On May 4, 2010, Fire and Fuels Management Lead Ron Knowles once again taught the Interagency Incident Business Management class to several students at the regional office in Juneau. Little did the students realize



Diane Woodling and Ron Knowles.

they were being counted as they walked through the door. Ron found who he was looking for when Diane Woodling from the Tongass National Forest made her entrance. She was Ron's 1,000th student! In honor of the occasion, she received a stuffed Smokey Bear and a candy bar. Congratulations to Diane for her good timing, and thanks to Ron for his years of service in imparting his wealth of knowledge to others.

One Space After Periods

By Julie Speegle, Tongass NF, Asst. Public Affairs Officer

Congressional staffers, editors, reporters and other media, even professional colleagues and coworkers could be giggling at you behind your back. Is it because you have toilet paper stuck on your shoe? A hole ripped in the seat of your pants? Broccoli stuck in your teeth?

No. Something far worse could be harming your credibility...and consequently the credibility of the U.S. Forest Service.

In many of the agency's correspondence, publications, yes, even news releases, someone is still putting two spaces after periods.

Is it you?

Most of us were taught to put two spaces after a period in high school typing class. Back in the days of typewriters, letters in typefaces were all the same width and two spaces were needed to accentuate the end of a sentence.

Enter the computer age.

Because computer characters

have variable widths, only one space is needed at the end of a sentence.

Since 1894, the U.S. Government Printing Office's (GPO) Style Manual has served as a guide to the style and form of federal government printing. The 2000 and 2008 editions of the GPO Style Manual state: "A single justified word space will be used between sentences. This applies to all types of composition." (Paragraph 2.49)

The use of a single space at the end of a sentence is now the standard practice worldwide when using a language with a Latin-derived alphabet. In fact, no known U.S. or international style guide currently advocates the use of a double space after concluding punctuation for final work. This applies to periods, colons, question marks, exclamation points and closing quotation marks.

For some of us, breaking the "two spaces" habit after decades of ingrained use can be an overwhelmingly difficult feat. The simplest fix is to do a "search and replace" (Ctrl + H) to change our two spaces to one.

You can do it. Start today putting only one space after a period in all your writings and correspondence. You'll be able to hold your head high knowing you're boosting the credibility of the agency and saving the sanity of your public affairs specialist.



Julie Speegle wants you to overcome an ingrained habit. Photo by Ray Massey.

Adams Cause a Stir™ Essay Contest

By William Moulton, Safety Manager, Tongass National Forest

Recently, encouraged by my wife who wants me to win a free trip to Yosemite National Park, I entered the Adams Peanut Butter Cause a Stir™ Essay Contest.

Contestants were asked to write an original essay describing creative ways in which they are helping (or supporting) the environment. I'm sure when you read my essay here, you will agree with many of my sentiments.

Contest winners were named in April at www.adamspeanutbutter.com/causeastire.

How am I helping the environment? I decided at an early age to follow the example of my maternal grandparents. Like them, I dedicated my life to protecting and caring for the forested land of the western United States. For the last 36 years, I worked for an organization that preserves and protects millions of acres of our dwindled natural environment. We lovingly treat dying elderly stands of trees to insure the new growth has a chance. In the process, we insure biodiversity and habitat for diverse species. We educate the public on the need to preserve our natural resources. We provide recreational opportunities so that people will learn to enjoy and to love the great outdoors as much as we do. We foster wilderness areas and set aside unique gems in the landscape for future generations. I personally spent half my career fighting forest fires that annually threaten to devastate our national legacy. Shoot, I was fighting forest fires as a Boy Scout! In the process of saving the forest, we also save recreational sites, summer homes and whole communities on the urban/rural interface. We save lives and coordinate search and rescue. We care for the land and serve the people. I am proud to work for the USDA Forest Service.



Recovery Act Puts Americans Back to Work

By Gary Lehnhausen, Fire Safety & Training Specialist, State & Private Forestry



Washington Creek, AK; December 12, 2009 - **Hand treatment of Black Spruce fuels on Washington Creek with scattered “leave trees”.** Washington Creek is located about 24 miles northwest of Fairbanks, Alaska. Fires in Black Spruce can occur at higher dead fuel moisture contents due to flammability of live spruce foliage. Fires in this fuel type produce extreme fire behavior including torching, crowning and spotting ahead of the main fire which makes direct fire control efforts difficult. The work was completed using Alaska Emergency Firefighters. These are temporary workers usually hired to help with wild-fire emergencies. In this case the crew was composed of about 50% Alaska Natives and all crew members were unemployed at the time of the project. This work provided extra money for their families immediately and valuable work experience to help compete for permanent wildfire suppression positions in the future.



South Fork Chena River, AK; February 15, 2010 - **Completed Shear-blading and windrowing of Black Spruce fuels on hill top near the South Fork of the Chena River.** Fires in Black Spruce can occur at higher dead fuel moisture contents due to flammability of live spruce foliage. Fires in this fuel type produce extreme fire behavior including torching, crowning and spotting ahead of the main fire which makes direct fire control efforts difficult. Shear-blading involves the use of a specially designed dozer blade that shears the trees off at ground level during the winter months when the ground is frozen. The blade is designed to float along the ground surface leaving the vegetative mat largely undisturbed. A second pass is made to move sheared trees into a windrow. Sheared trees may be offered to the public for harvest. Remaining windrows dry for a summer and are burned in late fall by emergency fire crews.



In the Winter 2010 issue of SourDough Notes, these photos of the polebarn and warehouse in Cordova were labeled as new construction. In fact, both of the structures have been around for many years. Each building had leakage issues due to the weather, and received new steel siding using Economic Recovery funds. Thanks to Dana Smyke for setting the record straight.