

SourDough Notes



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ON THE COVER:

An Alaska yellow-cedar seedling is marked and measured for future monitoring as part of a "facilitated migration." Photo by Sheila Spores. Story begins on page 3.

SourDough Notes

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Summer/Fall 2009

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Submissions: SourDough Notes is written for people interested in the Alaska Region. Your suggestions, articles, and photographs are welcome. Please contact:

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Articles should be no more than 800 words and may be edited. Submitted articles may not all be printed. Submitted digital photos should be sent as high resolution TIF or JPG. Please contact the Public Affairs Office if you have questions.

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Michael Goldstein's daughter Ella, age 5, enjoys the summer program offered by Tongass National Forest Interpreter Amy Nye on the Alaska Marine Highway Ferry M/V Columbia. Goldstein is the Regional Wildlife & Terrestrial Ecology Program Leader.

Alaska Yellow-Cedar Moves North

By Sheila Spores, Silviculturist, Tongass National Forest

Climate change has become an increasingly prevalent topic in the news and in how the Forest Service will manage national forest lands for long term diversity and sustainability. The Forest Service has developed a strategic framework to guide management actions that address the challenges of climate change. One of the goals of this framework is “adaptation.” This means enhancing the capacity of forests to adapt to climate change in order to maintain ecosystem services. One of the methods that has been increasingly discussed is the idea of “facilitated migration,” or the moving of a species into an area where it doesn’t currently grow, but is anticipated to expand its range to that area in a warming climate. This kind of planting may be necessary because trees cannot migrate quickly enough keep up with the pace of anticipated climate change.

This past June, a group of silviculturists from across the Tongass



The Tongass planting crew—Chuck Ressler, R.D. Parks, Mike Sheets, Sheila Spores, Craig Buehler, and Chris Scott—traveled to Yakutat to implement a facilitated migration project involving Alaska yellow-cedar. Photo by Sheila Spores.

National Forest traveled to Yakutat to implement a facilitated migration project involving Alaska yellow-cedar. While yellow-cedar is found throughout most of the Tongass and west to Prince William Sound on the Chugach, its range appears to skip the Yakutat area. This tree species has been experiencing a widespread decline for the past century that is causing considerable mortality in Southeast Alaska. Research has indicated that a warming climate with reduced snow may be contributing to this decline. In the long term, this may mean a shift in the range of the species to higher elevations and extensions around the Gulf of Alaska. The Yakutat cedar project involved planting 3,300 Alaska

yellow-cedar seedlings in three recently harvested areas. These areas, part of the Situk Blowdown Reoffer Timber Sale, contained primarily Sitka spruce prior to harvest. It is expected that the stands will regenerate predominantly to Sitka spruce, but with an experimental population of Alaska yellow-cedar along with the spruce. The trees were grown from seeds collected on the Hoonah Ranger District. They were planted at an approximate spacing of every 20 feet and will be monitored in the following years to assess how these trees will respond to an area where they do not currently grow. If the plantations are successful, this may lead to further experimental plantations of Alaska yellow-cedar in the future, which may help this long-lived, culturally important species adapt to a changing climate.



Dying yellow-cedar

Letter to Alaska Region Employees

From Regional Forester Denny Bschor and Deputy Regional Forester Paul Brewster

We would like to take this opportunity to recognize that many of our Forest Service employees have been affected in recent months by low employee morale. The morale problem was highlighted in a testimony to the House Committee on National Resources last March by the Partnership for Public Service. In their 2008 poll, *Best Places to Work in the Federal Government*, the Forest Service ranked 206 out of the 216 federal agencies surveyed. The report showed that 56% of employees surveyed say they would recommend the Forest Service as a good place to work (down from 61% in 2006), and 62% say they are satisfied with their job (down from 70% in 2006). (<http://data.bestplacestowork.org/bptw/index>)

We have heard your stories of what's not working well. We recognize there areas that need attention: having effective leadership in place; having sufficient resources to accomplish the job; recruiting people with the right skills; providing adequate training; and creating workable business processes and systems. Do any of these complaints sound familiar?

We have also heard that you love what you do and wish more people understood the importance of our mission. We agree. We are encouraged that the report says our employees are highly committed to their mission and believe their jobs are a good match for their skills. More than 80% of employees in the Forest Service, National Park Service, and Bureau of Land Management say that they like the kind of work they do. We also scored a high 82% of respondents who



Regional foresters gather at the national Forest Service reunion in Missoula, Mont. in September. Left to right: Harv Forsgren (R4), Liz Agpoao (R8), Jane Cottrell (acting R1), Mary Wagner (R6), Kent Connaughton (R9), Rick Cables (R2), Denny Bschor (R10), Randy Moore (R5), and Corbin Newman (R3).

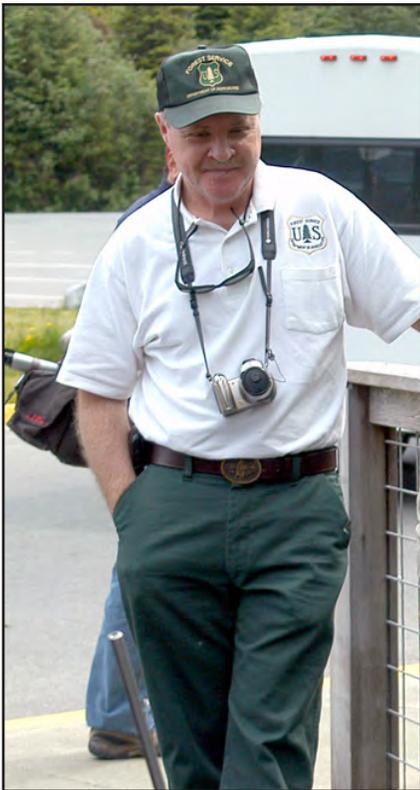
believe their supervisor supports a healthy work/life balance.

Your well-being is our highest priority, even above our stewardship of the land. We cannot fulfill the mission of taking care of our natural resources without taking care of our employees first. We are committed to making the Forest Service the best agency to work in, especially in Alaska.

We are living in a time of tremendous change. Some people can easily adapt to change, and others find it difficult. We recognize that in the past two years, we have been impacted not only by change in the agency, but also by the sometimes poor implementation of those changes. We experienced significant restructuring of our workforce on all three units, while simultaneously

dealing with LincPass, AgLearn and GovTrip (the nemesis of the RF's office, too). We certainly agree with you that there has been too much too fast, without adequate training and resources.

If it is any consolation, leadership on a regional and national level has come to recognize that we must become very deliberate about implementing new processes, programs, and systems, or even moving offices. We need to have much stronger confidence that the plans for change include items that have been missing, such as: the visible, widely-communicated reasons for the change; the how and when the change will take place; the how and when training will be done; and the adaptive management or exit strategy if the change doesn't work.



Deputy Regional Forester Paul Brewster at Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center. Photo by Teresa Haugh.

With that said, here is good news.

We know the processes at ASC-HRM do not work well. Denny has been leading an HRM redesign review team since June to recommend changes to the National Leadership Council. In October, the name changed from HCM (human capital management) back to Human Resources. The hiring process will be simplified for both managers and job seekers. AVUE software problems will be addressed. While we initially struggled to develop and use standard position descriptions, we now see the hiring process move faster because the standard descriptions are used.

The issue resolution process will be simplified. New HR Director Robin Bailey is working diligently to increase the employee morale in Human Resources and help HR employees make clear connections with the customers they serve—you! Managers have begun to write the

outreach or vacancy announcements in plain English. An internal pay strike team will be established to address critical pay issues. HR will be implementing a more user-friendly application process by early 2010.

We have completed a review of the radio system across the region and have received the action plan to improve the repeaters, coverage and system for field use. Safer access for maintenance and improvements are being made on sites on both forests. (See Dan Logan's story on page 10.)

We are cultivating new leaders. We have employees participating in the national new, middle and senior leadership programs, and welcome nominations for these programs. We have increased our student internships, made use of the President Management Fellows program, and partnered with the University and other organizations for entry-level positions that bring enthusiasm and new ideas to accomplishing our work.

We are doing a "pulse-check" at the regional office with the help of the enterprise team Organizational Development Experts. They held employee listening sessions in August to identify specific areas for improvement, and we are reviewing their summary. That team will continue pulse-checks through FY10, and we will adapt and focus our priorities based on your feedback.

Chugach Forest Supervisor Joe Meade worked closely with the USDA to highlight several of our standard computer systems that are neither user-friendly nor Section 508 compliant. This has led to improved accessibility of our websites, Paycheck8, AgLearn training, and other systems. Joe is to be commended for seeing a need and recommending positive changes that benefit many employees.

You, too, have a role in creating positive change. When a process,

system, or supervisor is hindering your work, you can share in a productive way that can bring about change. For example, we all gripe about using GovTrip. However, when someone solves a glitch in the system, and shares with others, the process gets a little easier. Have you figured out how to get the flight you want, or to enter an odd expense on a travel voucher? In the long run, those success stories are more useful than tales of, "it's-not-working-and-I'm-so angry." We have asked directors Bob Simmons and Pamela Finney to develop an easy way by the end of October for you to share examples of how you overcame a problem for the benefit of others. Stay tuned.

What we focus on most steers our attitude. At the national retirees' reunion in Missoula, Mont, in September, Denny heard many retirees say, "We worked for the best outfit around." Many of those retirees pioneered our work in the Alaska Region, and fought for the groundbreaking changes in the safety and work environment that we enjoy today. They encouraged us to keep up the good work they started. If you are looking for a place to share some good news of what's working well, or just want to say why you love your job, send a paragraph or two to *SourDough Notes* editor Teresa Haugh at thaugh@fs.fed.us. We will include your input in future issues.

Also, as we go into fall and winter, we encourage you to look out for one another. If you see a colleague or family member who is frustrated or struggling with change, give them some of your time. Offer to listen, take a break, and go for a walk in the special place where we live. Remember: Enjoying what we do and making a difference to people and the resources they depend on is what brought us to the Forest Service in the first place, and keeps us going on tough days.

Two Perspectives on the 3C's Group Use Site

Transformation

By Karen Brand, Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District Recreation, Wilderness and Lands Staff

Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District opened a new group use site to the public August 14, 2009. Located in the Ward Lake Recreation Area, Three C's Group Use Site has been important to many people over the years. Three C's was first used by Civilian Conservation Corps enrollees during the 1930s when they built their camp in the location. The men of the CCC worked on many projects that improved the recreation opportunities in the Ward Lake area as well as other projects in and around Ketchikan. They occupied the site until 1941.

After the United States entered World War II, the government decided to evacuate and relocate Native people from the Aleutian Islands. In 1942, 160 people were moved to Ketchikan and housed at Three C's in the buildings that were designed for 65 CCC enrollees. There were many hardships for the Aleuts, and the large trees and topography of the area was foreign to them. After the war, many returned to their homes in the Aleutians Islands, while others remained in Ketchikan. The camp was closed.

Over the years, Three C's was used infrequently. It was converted to a small campground and used primarily as an overflow campground during times of heavy use, such as holiday weekends. It ranked very low in the 2006 facility master planning effort due to its occupancy rate and amount of revenue generation. It was slated to be decommissioned and removed.

KMRD staff began discussing what opportunities there might be for the site, including decommissioning. However, since demand for our day use shelters was strong, we decided to advertise Three C's as a group use site. We've had about 10 groups use it each year and district staff felt that it might be even more popular if the proper group facilities were constructed. In 2006 and 2007, we applied and received grants from the Resource Advisory Committee to install a group use shelter, fire ring, tent pads and picnic tables. The work was completed in July 2009.

Part of the reason to keep the site available to the public was to protect and tell the public about the history of the site. A new kiosk with interpretive signs was installed just outside the site along the Ward Lake road to enhance the visibility of the site and serve as a roadside interpretive station. The signs tell the story of



Side and front views of the new 3C's shelter.

CCC and the Aleut evacuation. The signs were completed with the assistance of Historic Ketchikan, Inc., and Aleut elders and individuals that still reside in the Ketchikan area.

Three C's is a true success story. We would like to thank the many groups and individuals who helped us accomplish the work, including: the Ketchikan Resource Advisory Committee; Historic Ketchikan, Inc.; Aleut descendants Faye Schlais, Axel Senson, Dave Dyakanoff, and Jon Dyakanoff; the Youth Conservation Corps; the Hyder cabin and trail crew; Joe Bagayas; campground hosts Lisa and Jon Caffee; and employees Jacob Hofman, Leah Taylor, and Faith Duncan.

The site may be reserved for \$40/night by contacting the ranger district at (907) 225-2148.

Hard Work and Frivolity

By Jacob Hofman, Wilderness and Inventory Monitoring, Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District



Left: Jillian Piazza, Greg Johnson, Blake Bachant and Jessica Craig stand in front of a partially completed kiosk. Crew members not pictured are Debbie Hudson and Nick Hydock. Right: Jillian Piazza works on the foundation holes for the kiosk. Photos by Jacob Hofman.

In the morning stillness, a light mist slowly lifts to reveal mammoth Sitka spruce trees ringing Ward Lake near Ketchikan. A few early risers hike around the lake as campers start to stir at Signal Creek Campground. As sunlight begins to warm the landscape, there are sounds of shovels scraping against rock, the steady rhythm of hammer against nail, and of course, laughter. The 2009 Youth Conservation Corps crew is building and learning at Three C's group use site.

Three C's group use site, located at on the Ketchikan Misty Fiords Ranger District occupies the site of the historic Ward Lake Civilian Conservation Corps camp. During World War II, the camp was used as an Aleut evacuation camp. Today moss-covered concrete foundations are the only physical evidence of the former camp. KMRD received Resource Advisory Council funding to make improvements to the Three C's group use site, including a large shelter and interpretive kiosk. This season's Youth Conservation Corps crew was tasked with building a new trail and kiosk at the site.

KMRD has hosted the federal YCC work program for over a decade, with three primary goals: to accomplish needed conservation related work on public lands; to provide employment for youth between 15 and 18 years of age; and to provide environmental education to participants. This season's crew was lead by Debbie Hudson, a returning AmeriCorps volunteer who came to KMRD through the Southeast Alaska Guidance Association Connections program in Juneau.

Work on the trail and kiosk started in late June. Local yellow cedar logs for the turnpike trail were taken from a Forest Service firewood cutting area. The dimensional lumber for the kiosk came from a local mill in Ketchikan. The crew got an educational tour of the mill and was shown how saw logs are transformed into finished product. On-site work began in earnest in early July.

A two-panel kiosk (known as a diptych in the interpretive world) was constructed using yellow cedar timbers with a cedar shake roof. The kiosk houses an interpretive sign about the Aleut evacuation camp and information about the group use site.

Construction of the kiosk provided the crew with hands-on experience in pouring cement, carpentry, and roofing. The new trail at the site connects the new shelter with one of the gravel camp pads and the restrooms. Constructed as a turnpike (trail with natural log rails to contain the gravel), this project gave the crew some valuable character building experience—the kind gained from moving a mountain of gravel using a shovel and wheelbarrow.

Construction of both the kiosk and trail was completed in mid-July and the site was opened to the public about a month later. As crew leader, Hudson did an outstanding job motivating the crew and fostering a team environment. The crew really grew together and individually throughout the season. A single word can be used to describe the YCC crew: fun. Frivolity and goofiness prevailed throughout the project and season. Perhaps it was all the sunshine we had this summer.

Thanks to Hudson and crew members Blake Bachant, Jessica Craig, Nick Hydock, Greg Johnson and Jillian Pizze, and to all those who support the YCC program.

Black Bears and Blue Ice

By Laurie Craig, Interpreter, Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center

Mendenhall Glacier is rapidly becoming one of Southeast Alaska's best black bear viewing areas. The glacier is only 13 miles from downtown Juneau and the cruise ship docks. Last year, 435,000 visitors toured the glacier grounds and visitor center. Due to the glacier complex's easy road access and close proximity to Mendenhall Valley neighborhoods, the glacier is a popular bear viewing

site for residents as well as Lower 48 and international visitors.

Several factors contribute to the new wildlife watching opportunity that provides safe bear viewing for thousands of visitors each summer. The key element is Steep Creek's sockeye and coho salmon runs. This prime food source attracts bears when the sockeye enter the creek to spawn in late July. Next, the recently deglaciated landscape has finally grown a forest capable of providing two more components: thick vegetative cover for the bears and tall sturdy cottonwood trees for bears to climb and escape from other bears. Finally, the human contributions offer a new elevated boardwalk, cedar and mesh fencing, and careful bear and people management by Forest Service interpreters.

Approximately a dozen black-coated or cinnamon-colored black bears feed along the banks of one-mile-long, lower Steep Creek. Since the platforms were erected in 2005, the resident bears have adapted to



The elevated boardwalk at Steep Creek allow visitors to safely watch bears in the wild. Photo by Laurie Craig.

catching fish, napping in trees, and playing with cohorts while being observed at close range by hundreds of visitors standing above them. During summer, seasonal interpreters are stationed at two key spots on the platforms to provide interpretive talks about fish, bears, birds and plant life. Solar-powered public address systems allow interpreters to reach as many as 200 visitors simultaneously. The interpreter shares life histories about bears in general and about specific bears if they are known.

One particular female black bear has been the favorite of visitors, locals and staff. She has nurtured four sets of cubs at the glacier over the past six years. Black bears have cubs every other year. Her acceptance of human observers has allowed people to watch and listen as she suckles her cubs, teaches them how to fish and where to escape for safety, and leads them on walks around the grounds. Many of the bears do not confine their wander-

ings to the creekside platforms so Mendenhall staff are trained in bear hazing techniques to encourage bears to avoid areas designated only for people. The management goal is to enhance viewing opportunities while keeping visitors and wildlife safe. Crowd control becomes a more challenging effort than bear control.

Perhaps the most important step for public safety has been the no-food policy institut-

ed in 2008. All visitors are asked to have no food or beverages outdoors anywhere at the glacier. This step reduces the potential for bears to become food-conditioned.

Bears use the grounds at times other than when the salmon are available. In May, bears climb high into the leafless branches of male cottonwood trees to feed on the catkins. In June, the bears climb to the tops of the female cottonwood trees to feed on the seed pods. In July and August, bears carry salmon to the base of the cottonwood trees so they can eat while being close to an easy-to-climb escape route. Decaying salmon carcasses fertilize the trees and forest.

Bears are frequently visitors' most sought after wildlife. A close-up view of a bear is the prize of a trip to Alaska.

Explaining the complex relationship between habitat and bear viewing is one of the best topics for Mendenhall Glacier staff to discuss with visitors. Interpreters



often dispel the notion that the bears are tame, artificially fed or kept in pens for release when visitors arrive. The gratifying aspect of their work is the look of sheer delight on a visitor’s face after he or she has watched a bear move silently through the forest or catch a bright red sockeye salmon from Steep Creek.

As one visitor was heard to say, “Those people with the Forest Service are sure smart. Their glacier retreats and they bring in the bears!” There’s much more to the story than that and glacier staff are on site to offer the details.

Black bear cubs are great tree climbers.

“River Watcher” Héén Latinee Experimental Forest

“I respectfully ask, may we meet on your ancestral lands?” asked Dr. Sandy Boyce, Alaska Issues Coordinator for the Pacific Northwest Research Station. “Yes,” said Alaska Native elders who joined Forest Service employees at Centennial Hall in Juneau, Alaska on August 13. These remarks were an auspicious beginning to the establishment ceremony for the Forest Service’s newest experimental forest, Héén Latinee.

Since the forest, located north of Juneau, is situated on ancestral lands of the Auk, the Forest Service Chief agreed that the forest be given the Tlingit name Héén Latinee, which means “river watcher.” The forest extends from “ridge to reef,” and will offer scientists the opportunity to conduct long-term research and confront emerging issues facing Alaska, such as climate change, carbon sequestration, salmon habitat and production, forest development dynamics, hydrology and increased recreation.

Héén Latinee will become the center for temperate rain forest ecosystem research for the Forest Service in Alaska and partners such as the University of Alaska, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the City and Borough of Juneau, and Alaska Native groups.



Left: Dr. Bov Eav, Pacific Northwest Research Station Director, speaks at the establishment ceremony for the Héén Latinee Experimental Forest. Photo by Teresa Haugh.

Right: PNW’s Dr. Terry Shaw joins Dr. Ralph Crawford from the Washington Office and Native dancer Frances Houston. Photo by Julie Speegle.



Left: Renowned Tlingit Elder Dr. Walter A. Soboleff (age 101) shares the stage with Héén Latinee lead scientist Dr. Rick Edwards. Photo by Julie Speegle.

Where We Work, Radios Are Crucial

By Dan Logan, Regional Office Safety Manager

No matter where you work, communication is key. However, if your work takes you flying, boating or hiking across Alaska's Chugach or Tongass national forests, then communication takes on a whole new significance. If the vehicle or vessel you are operating suddenly decides to fail in remote, rugged terrain or in vast open expanses of water, you could be stranded for days. Should you get hurt out there, medical assistance could be a long time in arriving. For these reasons, the region installed a comprehensive radio system in Alaska many years ago. Over time, however, there have been changes in the way we work, and the radio system has degraded. Employees let management know that some of the system's functions were becoming unreliable. The message was heard loud and clear.

At the request of the Regional Forester's Team, the Forest Service's Chief Information Officer arranged for a complete field review. I joined the review team that traveled to the Tongass and Chugach this summer, gathering a wealth of information. On the Tongass, we met with Supervisor Forrest Cole, Deputy Supervisor Becky Nourse, and Aviation Officer John Krosse. On the Chugach, we met with the leadership team, and engineering and aviation program managers Kent Kohlhase and Jeff Schlee, as well as a number of end users of the radio system.

While on the Chugach, we had planned to take members from the Washington Office Information Solutions Organization to a high mountain site. But, as often is the case in Alaska, the weather interfered. We did, however, meet with representatives of the Alaska Land

Mobile Radio system, which is used by Forest Service Law Enforcement in Alaska. We will explore the potential of using ALMR in more areas, although it is confined to the road system and may not work for all field-going personnel.

The week-long trip gave the leadership of the ISO an opportunity to experience first-hand the field conditions that we work in on a daily basis. They gained a strong appreciation of the critical need for reliable radio communications. They recognized that "Alaska truly is different." The terrain is different, access is different, and the primary use of the radio system is different. The need and use for a radio system in the Lower 48 is largely for support of the fire program; in Alaska, it is critical to ongoing mission and project work.

Field personnel from the Chugach discussed the unreliability of our radio system and the deficiencies in coverage. One message we heard repeatedly is that trust in the system is lost, and employees have turned to other technology such as satellite phones to serve as primary communication tools. In addition, employees complained that the radios are simply too big and clunky.

The ISO responded. First, they arranged for the exclusive use of a helicopter for 90 days. Helicopter availability has long been an obstacle to accomplishing mountaintop repeater maintenance and repairs. This enabled ISO technicians to conduct maintenance and improvements on most of the Chugach repeater sites. These improvements have included replacing a failed foundation at one



Beezer communication site

key site, and installing new solar panel systems with better batteries at all the sites on the Seward and Glacier ranger districts. Plans have also been made to switch the Cordova net to a separate set of frequencies to avoid interference issues that have plagued that district. Two new radio shelters have been installed at key locations and the system has been redesigned to better cover the Cordova and Prince William Sound area. Technicians and equipment are now poised to finish the system change when the weather allows.

Everyone left these meetings encouraged and energized about where we are going. Deputy Regional Forester Paul Brewster, who was part of the review team, thanked the forests for providing candid feedback and the ISO review team for dedicating a week to hearing our issues and concerns. It is clear to us that ISO is dedicated to developing solutions, and providing the best communication system possible.

Working Together to Trap Exotic Species

By Sue Jennings, Writer/Editor, Tongass National Forest

Charles Knight and Curtis Knight of the State of Alaska Division of Agriculture are searching for invasive (exotic) insect species throughout Alaska. In a state the size of Alaska, the possibility of covering all the ports and forests may seem daunting. Fortunately, they are not working alone but in partnership with the Forest Service and other agencies throughout Alaska.

In June each year, Forest Service employees hang traps from Ketchikan to Seward and many places in between. The traps are different sizes and shapes to target different insect species. Each trap is baited with a species specific pheromone and hung in the preferred habitat for that insect. The traps target areas where people and cargo from out of state come ashore. Adult gypsy moths and moth egg clusters have been found on RVs near ferry terminals and in campgrounds, on potted garden plants, and by U.S. Customs on crates being offloaded in Alaskan harbors. The species targeted by the traps set on the Chugach and Tongass national forests are European and Asian gypsy moths, rosy gypsy moths, Siberian silk moths, small brown apple moths, and eastern ash borers.

It is important to find these species when the population numbers are low because it is possible to eradicate the insects when they have a low population. Eradication can be done by blanketing the infected area with traps, so the species does not reproduce for several years; insecticide; or removing the infected trees. Once the invasive insect population is large, it is almost impossible to eradicate. For example, when gypsy moth populations are large, they can totally defoliate the forest canopy over hundreds of miles. This defoliation usually kills all of the trees in the infected area. Unlike the eastern ash borer or the small brown apple moth that specialize in one tree species, the gypsy moth can infect hundreds of different species and wipe out all of the trees in a forest.

While working with local resource specialists, the Knights are also looking for European black slugs. This slug is larger than the resident slugs. Some were found in Cordova feasting on dandelions and dog droppings. Although this sounds like a good thing for most yards in Alaska, exotic species



Britta Schroeder, Jason Johnson, and Curtis Knight construct gypsy moth traps at the Wrangell Ranger District. Curtis is wearing gloves so that he does not mix the pheromone baits used in the traps. Pheromones from some moth species repel moths from other species. Photo by Sue Jennings.



Curtis Knight puts together a wing trap for the rosy gypsy moth while Charles Knight looks on. Photo by Sue Jennings.

can often out-compete native species and throw off the natural balance. The State and Forest Service are trying to eradicate this slug species before it gets out of control.

If you see any of these invasive species or suspect that you've seen them, please contact your local Forest Service office.

Brazilians Visit the Tongass National Forest

By Jeffrey Miller, Program Manager, Partnerships, Volunteers and Business, Alaska Region

Every summer in Southeast Alaska, as we receive an influx of new visitors, we are reminded of the importance in maintaining sustainable tourism practices. Our motto, *caring for the land and serving people*, is practiced on a daily basis as we monitor recreation use; outfitter and guide operations on public lands; conditions of federal and private infrastructure; protection, research, and access to protected areas; and human resource management in remote areas. This August, we hosted visitors from Brazil who came to study the United States system/model for forest and park management.

The tour was organized through the Forest Service's International Programs. Julio Gonchorosky and Sergio Brant Rocha, senior administrators for the Chico Mendes Institute for Conservation of Biodiversity (ICMbio), were our guests. The Institute is now in charge of all protected areas under Brazil's federal government.¹ This is significant because Brazil has become a world leader in this conservation challenge. In 1992, 150 nations at the Convention on Biological Diversity in Rio de Janeiro signed an agreement to establish a system of protected areas to conserve biodiversity on a global scale. Since then, Brazil has overwhelmingly taken the lead by setting aside 523,592 square kilometers of protected areas between 2003 and 2009.² This represents 74% of all lands placed internationally since 2003. In addition,



Sergio Brant, Jeff Miller, and Julio Gonchorosky watch the bears at Windfall Harbor. Photo by Marti Marshall.

56% of their lands meet a formal International Union for Conservation of Nature category.³

Gonchorosky and Rocha are now taking the next steps to maximize the potential of these valuable public lands. According to the Ministries of Environment and Tourism, around 25 Brazilian national parks have potential for visitors, while only two concession operations are currently hosted in the country.⁴ President Lula set a goal to have 10 Brazilian national parks in place by the end of 2009. In an effort to empower Brazil's National Concession Plan, a collaborative partnership was developed with Forest Service International Programs, the U.S. State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development to provide for an exchange of professional experience and planning expertise. The study tour to Alaska was a part of that effort.

As part of the August tour, we took a field trip to Admiralty Island National Monument, which served as an ideal outdoor classroom. The Monument is an excellent example of a conservation unit in a remote setting that is surrounded by a marine environment. We visited the Icy Strait Point Cannery and the Huna Totem Corporation in Hoonah. We gained insights on how the small Native community adjacent to public lands managed not only to improve the health of their economy by becoming a tourism destination, but was able to capture and retain their culture and history while doing so. It is possible their lessons will



John Neary, Sergio Brant, Julio Gonchorosky, Barbara Lydon, and Marcos Pereira participate in a safety briefing before their trip to Tracy Arm-Ford's Terror Wilderness. Photo by Jeff Miller.

be applicable to small communities in and around Brazilian protected areas.

After spending three days in the wilderness with our visitors, we felt that leaving them at the airport was like saying goodbye to family. Julio Gonchorosky summed it up by saying, "Alaska is beautiful. You've given me a lot to think about, and I look forward to partnering with your agency and its professional resources."

For Marti Marshall, this tour was a great start to her new job as Admiralty Island National Monument Ranger. She said, "I'm excited to be a part of building a strong relationship with the Chico Mendes Institute, USAID, and International Programs. I realize that sharing knowledge, ideas, and information goes both ways. Our discussions in the field were invaluable, and sharing our exemplary programs in wilderness, visitor management, and community efforts were greatly appreciated. *Obrigado!* (thank you in Portuguese) to International Programs."

Marshall will continue the work as she joins a team traveling to Brazil in September for an assess-

ment of their concession program and to see where the agency can provide future technical and professional expertise to IC-MBio. Her follow-up story will be included in the winter issue of *SourDough Notes*.

For more information, please contact jeffmiller@fs.fed.us.



Participants in the Tongass Tour

Brazil Ministry of Environment

(Chico Mendes Institute for Conservation of Biodiversity)

- Julio Gonchorosky, Director of Concessions and Visitation (Brazil Park Service) and his wife Rosa
- Sergio Brant Rocha - Senior Environmental Analyst

U.S. Forest Service Alaska Region

- Denny Bschor, Regional Forester
- Ruth Monahan, Director, Recreation, Lands, and Minerals
- Jeff Miller, Partnerships, Volunteers, & Business Program Mgr.
- Marti Marshall, Admiralty National Monument Ranger
- Rich Jennings, Hoonah District Ranger
- John Neary, Wilderness Field Manager
- Tim Lydon, Wilderness Manager
- Barbara Lydon, Wilderness Manager

U.S. State Department

Marcos Pereira, Interpreter



¹ *Marine Protected Areas and Artisanal Fisheries in Brazil*, Diegues, 2009.

² *Biological Conservation*, Jenkins and Joppa, 2009

³ <http://www.iucn.org>

⁴ <http://brazil.usaid.gov/en/node/469>, 2009

Controlling the Amber-Marked Birch Leafminer

By Steve Patterson, Assistant Director, State & Private Forestry

A tiny, stingless wasp is used to help preserve the ecosystem in Southcentral Alaska. In 2003, a collaborative biological control program was initiated against the amber-marked birch leafminer by the Forest Service Alaska Region, the Canadian Forest Service, and the University of Alberta. In 2006 the University of Massachusetts-Amherst joined the project.

The goal of the biological control program is to use a highly specialized natural enemy (a tiny stingless wasp) called *Lathrolestes eugeniae*, which was discovered controlling the pest in Edmonton, Alberta, a city plagued by a similar invasion of leafminer in the mid 1990s. The tiny wasp caused the pest densities to decline by more than 90%, and remain low since early 2000.

Over 3,600 individuals of this parasitoid were released in Anchorage, Alaska between 2004-

2008. In 2007 and 2008, several parasitoids of this species were found at release sites in and around Anchorage. This showed that the parasitoid is now established and increasing in numbers. Research has also found that the local leafminer population is being attacked to some degree by a local native parasitoid *Lathrolestes soperi*, which should also help with control of the pest. Complete control of the pest is very likely, and will develop slowly over several years (3-10) as populations of the parasitoids build. Since the parasitoid is established, very little input is needed and the natural enemy will continue to spread with little to no human intervention

By establishing a natural biological control agent, the use of pesticides to control the pest will be reduced. With the reduction of pesticides, biodiversity will increase. This is due to the fact that often pesticides that are applied affect not only the intended pest species but also other species in the ecosystem.

For information, contact: Anna Soper, 608.698.0901 or asoper@psis.umas.edu

Prince of Wales Deer

A Subsistence Management Success Story

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

Five years ago, the Sitka black-tailed deer on Prince of Wales Island were the thorniest of all subsistence management problems, not only for the Forest Service, but for the Federal Subsistence Management Program overall. The resolution of this issue through community engagement, interagency cooperation, and science is a success story well worth telling.

The Sitka black-tailed deer is an important source of nutritious and affordable food for many families and communities in Southeast Alaska. Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) provides a priority to rural Alaskans to harvest wild fish and game on federal lands for subsistence purposes. If resources shortages occur, it may be necessary to restrict other users to ensure that subsistence needs are met. However, such restrictions are highly controversial because of their impacts on other users.

Six or seven years ago, subsistence hunters on Prince of Wales Island were seeking to restrict other users because they were having difficulty securing enough deer to meet their needs. The controversy rose to a fever pitch. Was a restriction really necessary? Possibly, if indeed, a shortage of deer was the cause of the problem.

There were two other possible explanations, however. Maybe subsistence hunters were having difficulty because of increased competition and interference from other hunters who were traveling to POW Island on the new Inter-Island Ferry service. Or perhaps subsistence hunters were less effective at finding deer



Todd Brinkman begins an early field season to sample deer pellets on Prince of Wales Island.

because vegetation had grown up in clearcuts and along logging roads, thereby reducing visibility.

A two-pronged approach was needed to address the issue: a social process to work through access and sharing issues; and, scientific investigations to improve methods and estimates relating to the abundance of deer on the island.

In 2003, the Forest Service engaged Jan Caulfield of Sheinberg Associates to assess the feasibility of using a cooperative management process to address the issue. The results were favorable enough that the Unit 2 Deer Management Planning Process was launched as a subcommittee of the Southeast Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. The inclusive, grass-roots effort of this group led to regulatory changes that strengthened the subsistence priority while maintaining opportunity for others. There was broad support

for the sharing arrangement, and the issue changed from a full boil to a quiet simmer.

Meanwhile, the Forest Service Subsistence Management Program issued a call-for-proposals for research to bolster the science side of the equation. The successful proponents set to work on three objectives: 1) to develop a reliable and statistically robust method for estimating deer population levels on Prince of Wales Island using DNA extracted from fecal pellets; 2) compare the existing methods for monitoring deer (pellet transects) with the new DNA-based method and identify practical modifications to improve reliability; and 3) develop estimates of deer population abundance and compare them across different habitats. The final report, "Developing a Method for Estimating Deer Abundance on Prince of Wales Island, Alaska" is

in hand. It is clear that the team—consisting of Dave Person of the Alaska Department of Fish & Game; Todd Brinkman, F. Stuart Chapin III, and Kris Hundertmark of the University of Alaska, Fairbanks; and Winston Smith of the Pacific Northwest Research Station—achieved a milestone for deer research and monitoring in Southeast Alaska. Aspects of their findings are also published as articles in *Conservation Genetics*, a scientific journal.

There is more to this success story thanks to the exceptional effort by team member Todd Brinkman, who completed much of the work as part of his PhD program at UAF. No ordinary graduate student,



POW Island deer

Brinkman is a Research Fellow in a special program of the National Science Foundation called the Interdisciplinary Graduate Education and Research Training (IGERT) program. IGERT's purpose is to develop doctoral graduates who are

adept at addressing complex problems by working across disciplinary lines. Brinkman fulfilled his PhD requirements not only by conducting high-tech biological work; in addition, he completed social investigations that yield new understanding about subsistence hunting in rural Southeast Alaska. These findings are published in *Ecology and Society* and the *Journal of Ecological Anthropology*.

When it comes to the management of subsistence resources, there's no shortage of complex and often contentious issues. The experience with Prince of Wales deer demonstrates what can be achieved through effective investment, cooperation, and creative effort.



Northern Saw-whet Owl

It's a record! The Seward Ranger District, Chugach National Forest, discovered that eight of 53 owl boxes in this year's Adopt-An-Owl Box Program were occupied by owls, a 4% increase over last year.

For a decade, the Seward Ranger District has submitted data from our owl box program to the Cornell University's Birdhouse Network program, a national database of information for monitoring bird species around the country. The Seward Wildlife Program participates by placing about 150 owl and chickadee boxes along a trail network and recruiting community member to put boxes up in their yards. The owl

and maintaining the boxes.

The Northern Saw-whet Owl is a common owl around the country with its northern range extending to the Kenai Peninsula. The Boreal Owl has a smaller range that extends farther north. The Northern Saw-whet owl is about 8 inches tall while the Boreal Owl is slightly bigger. In both species, the male will find a suitable nest site in the late winter or early spring, and sing to attract a female. Once a female lays her eggs, they are incubated for three to four weeks and owlets usually fledge in four to five weeks. Northern Saw-whet Owls usually lay four to seven eggs while the Boreal Owl lays three

A Record Year for Owls

By Julie Buehler, Seward Ranger District

boxes are designed to attract the Northern Saw-whet and Boreal Owls. The boxes resemble an old woodpecker's tree cavity and have a circular hole from which the birds can fly in and out. Boy Scouts, volunteers, and Forest Service employees have contributed time to building

to four eggs. Typically the owls will use the same cavity for only a few years to avoid predators.

This past year, Wildlife Technician Rebecca Zulueta and a team of colleagues checked 53 boxes and found eight boxes occupied by owls. They found that 17% of community boxes and 11% of trail boxes housed owls. Out of the eight boxes, seven housed Northern Saw-Whet owls, and one housed a Boreal Owl. Reports from the public suggested there was an increase in the local vole numbers, which may have contributed to the increase in owl numbers. Voles provide food for owls and owlets.

Currently, the Seward Adopt-An-Owl box program is only offered on the Kenai Peninsula. If you would like more information about the program please contact Wildlife Biologist, Mary Ann Benoit at 907-224-4122. To learn how to build your own box, visit the Cornell Website at <http://watch.birds.cornell.edu/nest/home/index>.

Wet Hikers Find a Welcome Sight

By Reid Parker, Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District

With the enthusiastic support of local volunteers, the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District recently completed the reconstruction of the Deer Mountain Shelter. The shelter is located 2,900 feet above downtown Ketchikan, and three miles up the Deer Mountain Trail. It is used year-round by locals and visitors alike. Replacement of the shelter was due in large part to the commitment and support of over 50 local volunteers who provided nearly 1,000 hours of labor during the summers of 2008 and 2009.



Allan Braun and Eric Abele work on the new roof for the Deer Mountain Shelter.

Deer Mountain Trail, one of Ketchikan's most popular trails, offers excellent summer hiking opportunities. Backcountry skiing and snowboarding, snowshoeing, and hunting are popular fall and winter activities. With the rapid changes in weather characteristic of Southeast Alaska, the shelter has provided a safe haven to Ketchikan recreationists for over 75 years.

The original Deer Mountain shelter was constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s and was replaced with a plywood A-frame in 1962. The A-frame has been in poor condition for the last

decade and was beyond repair. In 2001, KMRD's District Ranger removed the A-frame from the National Reservation System and reclassified it as a shelter due to health and safety concerns. An inspection of the shelter conducted in the 2004 revealed that the shelter was unsafe and needed to be removed.

Local groups, including the Ketchikan Volunteer Rescue Squad, advocated that a shelter was necessary on Deer Mountain for the safety of trail users. Strong community support combined with Cabin

Crew Leader Eric Abele's determination to see the shelter rebuilt. A Resource Advisory Committee grant was received in 2008 for engineering work and for helicopter costs associated with transporting materials to the site.

The shelter was completed largely with local materials using the skills

of local volunteers. Administrative use logs were harvested by KMRD staff and transported to the Tongass Forest Enterprises mill in Ward Cove, Ketchikan. During spring 2008, mill owner Larry Jackson and his employee Ross Devila assisted volunteers in milling the wood. Additional wood was provided by Mike Sallee of Moser Bay. KVRS volunteers then helped move and package the milled lumber for helicopter transport to the shelter site.

Heavy snowpack delayed demolition of the old A-frame until July 2008. Foundation work was com-



Front of Deer Mountain Shelter

pleted by mid-August. Local contractor Duane Dorr then led a large volunteer effort to raise three, 6 x 10 yellow cedar A-Frame rafters, fasten the yellow cedar tongue and groove roof decking, and install the metal roof. In September 2008, the door and windows were installed and local cedar siding was used to complete the shelter walls.

Interior work began in July 2009. Led again by Dorr, 10 volunteers worked 175 hours over the course of six days to build a loft, ladder, bunks, table, bench, and beautiful yellow and red cedar counter. With the application of stain to the exterior and polyurethane to the interior floors and furniture, the Deer Mountain shelter is now complete. The shelter will be a welcome sight for cold, wet and weary trail users, and it stands as a testament to the dedication of many Ketchikan volunteers. The Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District would like to thank all of those involved with this project!

For more information, contact Karen Brand at 907-228-4108 or KMRD at 907-225-2148.

LEOs Participate in Night Out Against Crime

Story and photos by Julie Speegle, Acting Public Affairs Officer, Tongass National Forest

It happens every year. Thousands of communities across the country hold block parties to promote police-community partnerships, crime prevention and neighborhood camaraderie. The aim of this event, called “America’s night out against crime,” is to celebrate safety and crime prevention successes, and to expand and strengthen programs for the coming year.

This year, Juneau residents organized nine separate block parties throughout the city for the event, held August 4. Law enforcement and public safety officials from the Juneau Police Department, Juneau Fire Department, Coast Guard and U.S. Forest Service made appearances at the neighborhood gatherings.

Forest Service law enforcement officers David Zuniga and Doug Ault began their evening at Skater’s Cabin, where they met with about 30 residents whose neighborhood borders the Tongass National Forest.

“This is the second year we have participated in National Night Out,” said Zuniga, LEO for Juneau and Yakutat ranger districts. “It’s good to meet people at the block parties and listen to their concerns about their neighborhoods.”



U.S. Forest Service Law Enforcement Officer David Zuniga talks with (left to right) Isiah (5), Christian (2), and Caden (4) at the Skater’s Cabin National Night Out block party Aug. 4 in Juneau. Caden asked Zuniga if his gun was real.



U.S. Forest Service Law Enforcement Officers Doug Ault and David Zuniga confer about neighborhood issues at the Skater’s Cabin National Night Out block party, held Aug. 4 in Juneau. Zuniga is the Forest Service law enforcement officer for the Juneau and Yakutat Ranger Districts. Ault will be the new law enforcement officer for the Wrangell Ranger District.

“It helps them realize that we’re here to help them,” added Ault, the new LEO for the Wrangell Ranger District. “Our main concern in any situation is public safety.”

One concern for Arctic Circle residents this particular evening is recent vandalism in their neighborhood.

When Zuniga first arrived in Juneau in 1997, most complaints centered on late-night partying in the vicinity of Skater’s Cabin, and folks camping in the campground when it was closed. He said those problems are almost non-existent now, thanks to education and enforcement efforts.

Now, neighbors in the Arctic Circle area are also actively involved with the wolf issue in the West Glacier area. When they see people and their dogs interacting inappropriately with the black wolf that visits the area each winter, those residents alert the LEOs.

“It’s really a two-way relationship,” said Zuniga. “They help us out by letting us know what’s going on in their neighborhoods, and we help them out by being there for them when something’s amiss.”

Juneau’s National Night Out also included activities for kids, including visits to each block party by McGruff the Crime Dog, and Sammy the Sea Otter—the mascot for the Coast Guard’s “Kids Don’t Float” program.

Vantastic Stories

Vantastic I

By Carolyn Seramur, Visitor Service, Chugach National Forest

The Vantastic program has expanded its efforts on the Seward Ranger District to share information, education, and wildlife viewing opportunities with visitors and residents alike. The Vantastic program offers two programs in different locations when the schedules allow. I host the Vantastic I program, while Julie Buehler hosts Vantastic II. Volunteer Hali Thompson helps us both on Fridays and Saturdays.

The Vantastic program provides valuable wildlife viewing, campground programs, and interpretive displays at events on the Chugach National Forest. Wildlife viewing with the Vantastic I program primarily is located at Tern Lake (along the Y intersection of the Seward/Sterling Highways) with telescopes and binoculars. We set up several tables with skulls, hides, antlers, and visitor/wildlife information. At Tern Lake, we may have contact with 100 people in a day.



Julie Buehler and Hali Thompson welcome a visitor to Vantastic at Mount Eyak.

Campground programs vary from *Leave No Trace* principles to “Silent Hooting Flyers,” “Crossing Paths with a Porcupine,” “White Mountain Climbers,” and “Amazing Birds.” Programs are offered throughout the summer at 7:30 pm on Saturdays, alternating between Quartz Creek Campground and Trail River Campground.

Julie, Hali, and I worked with wildlife crew Mary Ann Benoit, Marion Glaser, and Rebecca Zulueta at the Alaska Fish and Game Spring Fling at Potter Marsh to celebrate International Migratory Bird Day May 15-16. Local students braved the wind and wet weather to bird watch. Saturday was well attended by the public.

We were glad for sunny skies when we taught binocular basics and shared bird identifying tips.

Both the Seward and Glacier Ranger Districts sponsored Kid’s Fishing Days in June. Hali and I attended the event at Moose Flats Day Use Area. We were ready with our trout fishing poles, wildlife display, and planned activities around fly tying and fish printing. I also attended the Seward event at Lower Summit Lake to help with the craft activity. Kids fished for trout all around the lake, and some got to ride across the lake in a boat. Employee Katy Toth-Stauble helped kids make their own fish with colored pasta noodles.

July 10-11, the Vantastic trio attended Cordova’s Salmon Jammin’ as part of the Copper River Wild Festival which took place at Mount Eyak Ski Hill. This event was made possible by the Prince William Sound Science Center, the Alaska Department of Fish & Game, the Seward and Cordova Ranger Districts, and the entire community .

On both days, the Dept. of Fish & Game set up their aquatic classroom, and we set up the Vantastic I and II displays. On Saturday, the Cordova Ranger District and the science center provided activities ranging from casting, fish printing, coloring, aquatic plant awareness, chalk drawing with Ray Troll, and Salmon Jeopardy.

At the end of the month, our Vantastic crew sailed across Prince William Sound on the ferry to Valdez for the Gold Rush Days held July 31- August 2. We set up at the Crooked Creek Information Site and at the park strip after the parade. We reached a few hundred very appreciative visitors at our sessions.

Overall, the Vantastic program endeavors to contact both visitors and residents alike and provide them with sound education, opportunities to view wildlife, and encouragement to get out and visit their national forest. This program fulfills the Forest Service mission of *caring for the land and serving people*.

Vantastic II

By Julie Buehler, Chugach NF

New to the Chugach National Forest this year is the Vantastic II program on the Seward Ranger District. As part of Seward's Wildlife program, Vantastic II focuses on environmental education and wildlife viewing. Vantastic II uses the traveling van similar to Vantastic I and focuses on educating visitors on wildlife viewing, identifications skills, identification tools, and viewing signs.

When visiting the Vantastic II display, visitors can take advantage of many resources for learning how to identify wildlife. Various field guides are available along with spotting scopes and binoculars. Bird calls for various sites can be played to help with bird identification. Also there are many things to touch and to examine including pelts, scat, skulls, bird eggs, and antlers. Mixed into the display are informative signs about wildlife including: where to go, how to find wildlife, when to go, and what to bring. Finally, there is an interpreter available to answer questions and offer information.

Depending on the wildlife viewing season, Vantastic II sets up dis-



Hali Thompson, Carolyn Seramur, and Julie Buehler traveled across the Chugach National Forest with Vantastics I and II.

plays at different locations along the Seward and Sterling Highway, particularly at sights on the Kenai Peninsula Wildlife Viewing Trail. During the spring and summer, Exit Glacier and the Kenai Lake Outlet offer Dall sheep and mountain goat viewing while Tern Lake provides migratory bird viewing. As the summer continues, schools of salmon take over the streams and provide excellent salmon viewing at Bear Creek, Ptarmigan Creek, and the Russian River. Sometimes wildlife that feeds on salmon can be seen

such as bears, eagles, and other small mammals or birds.

In addition to the Kenai Wildlife Viewing Trail, Vantastic II made appearances throughout the Chugach National Forest this summer. Events included the Mt. Marathon Race/ 4th of July Parade in Seward, Wagon Wheel Days in Hope, and the Moose Pass Summer Solstice Festival. Vantastic II also joined Vantastic I for an appearance at the Copper River Wild Jamming Salmon festival in Cordova, and the Valdez Gold Rush days.

Chief Tom Tidwell Visits the Alaska Region



Photos by Ray Massey.

Chief Tidwell visited the Tongass National Forest September 25 to meet employees and to see the Tongass first hand.

Left: Tidwell with RF Denny Bschor and TNF Deputy Forest Supervisor Becky Nourse at Mendenhall Glacier.

Right: Tidwell hears about the effect of climate change in Alaska from PNW's Dr. Sandy Boyce.



Alaska Region Employees Train for Forest Protection Officer Duties

Story and photos by Julie Speegle, Acting Public Affairs Officer, Tongass National Forest

Is a BB gun considered a firearm? Is drinking alcohol legal in national forests?

These are just some of the questions 14 Alaska Region employees learned about June 8-12 in Juneau, as they participated in the first Forest Protection Officer training held in-region in nearly ten years.

The training, sponsored by Law Enforcement and Investigations, authorized the employees to conduct limited law enforcement activities in the field, including issuing warnings and violation notices, while exercising personal safety techniques during contacts.

It culminated with a field exercise June 11, in which FPO trainees had the opportunity to apply their new knowledge and skills at seven “role playing” stations set up in a fictitious “Moose Lake Campground and Recreation Area,” aka the Dredge Lakes area behind the Juneau Ranger District office.

Each station featured a different scenario that might be encountered in the field, such as a law-breaking foreign visitor who doesn’t speak English; belligerent intoxicated campers shooting guns, or a severely injured hiker.

“The purpose of the training is to expose employees to comprehensive range of field experiences involving contacts with members of the public, but in a controlled environment,” said Law Enforcement Officer David Zuniga. “The trainees are then evaluated on how they handled particular stressful situations so that when they encounter similar situations for real, they will be better able to handle them in a positive and appropriate manner.”



Seward RD employee Lorraine Cuevas writes a warning to James Bradley for riding his ATV on a trail closed to motorized vehicles during the Forest Protection Officer training field exercise held June 11 in Juneau.

Forest Service employees and volunteers from the community assisted in the training exercise by role-playing for each particular station, and then giving feedback to trainees on how they performed.

James Tipps, president of local all-terrain vehicle club Juneau Rough Riders, Alaska, Inc., and club secretary James Bradley provided support for the training by portraying two ATV riders operating illegally on federal lands.

“Basically, we volunteered for the opportunity to ride our ATVs in the Dredge Lakes Area, which is, under normal circumstances, closed to motorized vehicles,” said Tipps. “Our friends are envious that we get to ride around back here—especially legally.”

“We are normally pretty nice guys,” added Bradley, “but for this exercise we are being a bit obnoxious, sneaky and difficult. These Forest Service folks aren’t going to encounter just nice people on the job, so it is better for them to prac-

tice how they would handle tougher customers now, so they’ll have experience before they have a real face-to-face situation.”

Although Forest Protection Officers do not carry guns, they serve as the front line of law enforcement in national forests, patrolling campgrounds, trails and parking areas. FPOs are authorized to write tickets for a wide range of violations, and trained how to determine if a situation calls for alerting law enforcement officers.

To maintain their FPO certification, trainees must attend an eight hour refresher course annually, said Zuniga.

Answers to questions at beginning of article:

1. BB guns are considered to be firearms;
2. It is legal to consume alcohol in national forests unless specifically prohibited; however, the use of glass bottles or containers is a violation.

Interpreting the Chugach National Forest from a Blue Canoe

By Lezlie Murray, Visitor Services Specialist, Chugach National Forest



Left: Purser Lynn Olsen, Interpreter Jim Sumner, Captain Garr Henning, and Chief Bill Whitmore in the pilot house of Alaska Marine Highway's M/V Aurora. Right: The M/V Chenega departs Whittier en route to Valdez. Photo by Lezlie Murray.

After days of heavy wind and rain, the clouds lifted to reveal the verdant green slopes of Prince William Sound's islands and mainland as well as the brilliant blue-white of numerous glaciers. Passengers traveling from Valdez to Whittier aboard the M/V *Aurora* were delighted with the new weather and took every opportunity to get out on deck to drink in the glorious view. Forest Interpreter Jim Sumner had been providing programs and colorful commentary for the passengers all day, so it was a pleasure to be invited onto the bridge for a visit with Captain Gar and his crew.

This year marks the 39th year of the storied partnership between the Alaska Marine Highway and the Forest Service in Southcentral Alaska. This remarkably long-lived relationship exists for many reasons, but without the support of both organizations it could not continue. As a result of the quality interpretive services provided by the Forest interpreters, the passengers have the opportunity to learn about everything from glaciers and marine mammals and sea birds, to the communities of Prince William Sound. In addition, programs and narrations share information about cultural heritage, history, wildlife, fisheries, geology, geography and forest management.

The Chugach Marine Highway Interpretive Program currently provides service four days per week in Prince William Sound, from early June through the third week of August. The M/V *Aurora* and the M/V *Chenega*, are the Alaska Marine Highway vessels that most commonly serve the Sound. Interpreters from the Begich, Boggs Visitor Center, like Sumner, provide narration and programs for the *Aurora*'s passengers, while interpreters from the Cordova Ranger District serve those who travel aboard the M/V *Chenega*.

On this particular voyage, Purser Olsen shared how much she values the work the Forest Service interpreters do aboard the vessels and said that she wished we could be aboard all summer long. Each year the agency re-evaluates its funding priorities. So far the Chugach Marine Highway Program has managed to stay afloat. As the *Aurora* pulled into Whittier, Sumner thanked the passengers for their attentiveness and received a warm round of applause for his efforts. Their response suggests that if the public could choose, the Forest interpreters would be onboard the Alaska Marine Highway for many years to come.

Thank you for visiting or contacting the Alaska Region of the Forest Service. We hope your experience has been enjoyable. Please help us provide the best services and facilities by filling out this comment card.

Date of Visit: Aug 8, 2009
Aug 11, 2009

Name of office/facility visited or contacted: Chenega

What was your reason for contacting or visiting us? Naturalist

Comments? Suggestions for improvement?
Our trip from Valdez to Cordova was greatly enhanced by the Naturalist on Board. Please do all you can to retain this service. The trip from Cordova to Whittier was not as enjoyable without this service.

By traveler from Eagle River, Alaska

Thank you for visiting or contacting the Alaska Region of the Forest Service. We hope your experience has been enjoyable. Please help us provide the best services and facilities by filling out this comment card.

Date of Visit: 06-26-09

Name of office/facility visited or contacted: Ferry from Valdez AK to Whittier

What was your reason for contacting or visiting us? To travel from Valdez to Whittier AK

Comments? Suggestions for improvement?
We definitely enjoyed the cruise and the Forestry Service Guide was exceptional! She made our travel time enjoyable and informative. Thank You so much.

By traveler from Watkinsville, Ga.

Reducing Overhead Using Existing Solutions

By Robert (Max) Dean, Chugach National Forest

Forest Service heritage programs regularly engage in a series of required processes. These include reviewing existing archaeological sites and surveys

fixed costs, the only solution is to reduce the cost-per-process. To reduce the cost of each process, the easiest solution is decreasing the amount of time it takes to complete the process.



Max Dean records the location of site features using Trimble GeoXM (device on knee) and descriptive data of site features using Heritage I-Mobile application (device in hand) during 2009 Priority Heritage Asset monitoring.

within a project area, inventorying and monitoring sites, and entering data into Infra, a Forest Service database system, for data management and reporting results upward. These processes represent fixed costs that occur with each project.

The Chugach National Forest (CNF) Heritage Program reduces some costs by eliminating certain processes. This is done by using a programmatic agreement with the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) that allows some processes to be streamlined or avoided altogether under specific circumstances. To further reduce

In the past it has proved difficult for the Heritage Program to provide significant cost reductions through faster process completion. The root of the problem lay in the paper-based network of forms, maps, and case-files. It proved difficult to maintain data in a way that it could be readily re-used to fulfill new Section 106 and NEPA cultural resource compliance obligations. In the past, Heritage Program units were forced to rely, to a large degree, on corporate knowledge of existing data. Ultimately, it is an issue of how data is managed: either it is managed inside peoples' heads, or it is managed in an environment where it is readily available to those who need it.

During 2007 and 2008, the Seward Ranger District (of the CNF) Heritage Program explored and tested several IT solutions. It became evident that the best solution was implementing the integrated solution developed by the Forest Service: Infra, I-Mobile, and ArcGIS. Infra is already used, though not to its full potential. I-Mobile, companion software to Infra, but for mobile devices, allows field-data entry of Infra data, instead of recording data in the field and then re-recording the data in Infra. ArcGIS manages spatial data – including GPS points as well as more complicated types of data – in much

the same way Microsoft Excel manages spreadsheets.

In addition, new tools became available in 2009 that have accelerated the ease of using these new tools. Instead of keeping many installations of ArcGIS up-to-date, the CNF Heritage Program accesses ArcGIS and its spatial data by logging into the Kansas City Datacenter, via Citrix. Citrix is software that allows users to run programs on servers at the Datacenter as if they were running on their own computer. This allows novice users, and those training them, to focus on simple ArcGIS processes, rather than on maintaining software installations. In addition, Tim Lindemann, a developer from Region 5, has created several tools in the Geospatial Interface – an extension of ArcGIS – that allows heritage specialists to determine what archaeological sites and surveys are in a project area, and export the results to Microsoft Word, in the space of a few minutes.

The hope is that further cost savings can be wrung from these solutions using more straight-to-Infra workflows where the product is an Infra-generated form; I-Mobile can assist with this in some cases. In addition, the author has been developing several manuals and engaging in one-on-one trainings in an effort to get all CNF Heritage Program employees, proficient – or at least capable – in the use of these IT solutions. A large data entry backlog is one of the biggest impediments to full use of these tools. The ray of hope is that time and money spent on this backlog results in time and money saved on future project reviews, which benefits everyone—most importantly taxpayers.

National Trails Day 2009—Kids' Event

By Nancy Gehm and Irene Lindquist, Seward Ranger District

The first Saturday in June has been designated National Trails Day. This year, children and their caregivers from several communities located adjacent to the Seward Ranger District enjoyed the 6th Annual National Trails Day Kids' Event hosted by the Seward Ranger District on the first Wednesday of June.



A playful group of over 100 kids, parents, caregivers, and Forest Service employees came together to relish the lush Alaskan outdoors, enjoy nature crafts, as well as other fun games and activities.

This creative event for youngsters is the bright idea of two energetic, long-term Forest Service employees, Irene Lindquist and Katy Toth-Stauble; both busy moms themselves, and very familiar with what children like to do.

When describing the planning stage of this event, Irene says "We have a lot of fun. The two of us have planned the event from the inception of this now annually-anticipated event. We get so excited about deciding which science/natural history theme to focus on, and generate so many ideas, that we already have a few ideas for next year!"

Lindquist elaborated upon her inspiration for the event, saying "My goal is to get kids outside and turn them on to nature and the outdoors through fun activities and crafts related to nature. It seems like more people show up each year, and now have a large following of kids from Seward, Cooper Landing and Moose Pass."

Katy Toth-Stauble as the Dandelion Queen, and Martha Story as the Happy Gardener.



Smokey Bear greets fans at the annual Kids and Family Fishing Derby in Hoonah. Photo by Jennifer Ryan.

Fishy Fun in Hoonah

By Jennifer Ryan, Visitor Information Asst., Hoonah RD

As part of our ongoing goal to connect people to the outdoors, the Hoonah Ranger District and the City of Hoonah hosted our 19th Annual Kids and Family Fishing Derby. On June 20, well over 100 children and their parents enjoyed a beautiful day outdoors, with a barbeque generously provided by our local grocery store.

Sunshine, cool temperatures and lots of enthusiasm contributed to everyone having a wonderful time, even though very few fish were caught. Activities included a casting contest, an outdoor gyutaku (fish printing) workshop, and a workshop I held for ages 3-16 to demonstrate a humane method for safely releasing fish. This year we were lucky that the annual Fishing Derby Fun Run fell on June 13, in conjunction with National Get Outdoors Day. This kick-off event for Fishing Derby Week drew participants of all ages.

The events would not have happened without the support of partners, volunteers from the community, and the donation of prizes by local businesses. The Kids and Family Fishing Derby is an essential part of Hoonah Ranger District's education program, and gets bigger and better each year.

Youth Media Explorers Blog Their Course

By Heather Gott, Chugach National Forest

This summer, in honor of the upcoming dedication of the Chugach Children's Forest, the Chugach National Forest and Alaska Geographic launched a youth media expedition in Prince William Sound. Eleven teenagers from rural and urban Alaska spent a week living and working aboard boats and in tents around the Sound. The youth were trained various forms of media, and tasked to document the state of the Sound twenty years after the Exxon Valdez oil spill. Participants also contributed their perspective on connecting youth with public lands.

In between the collecting data on recovering species, meeting with community leaders, and learning new media skills, the teens took time to enjoy Prince William Sound. They learned to kayak, went swimming in frigid waters, scrambled up cliffs, ate freshly caught salmon, and figured out how to coexist peacefully within the tight quarters of the boat.

The teens created an online trip blog containing photos and a diary of their experience. The blog is available on National Geographic's My Wonderful World Website, at <http://blog.mywonderfulworld.org/2009/08/chugash-childrens-forest-expedition.html#more>.

This experience was possible through the support of the Chugach National Forest, the Regional Office, Alaska Geographic, the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council, Chenega Corporation, National Geographic, and REI.

You can follow future explorations in the Chugach Children's Forest by subscribing to the YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/user/ChugachChildForest>.

Excerpts from Student Blogs

I always heard about the oil that still remains, but once you're digging in it, getting that thick, black, smelly substance all over everything it comes in contact with, it really is an eye opener. After today, I want to share what I've experienced, and encourage people to protect their environment, and hopefully teach people how to take responsibility for their actions.

.....
To start off our day, we went on an amazing kayak ride around Chenega Glacier. When we went on our kayaks, seals were all around us poking their heads out of the water for 10 seconds, looking around at us and then going back under. We rode through the ice chunks and we picked up small icebergs. Finally, as a part of our Summer Solstice celebration everybody got the idea to jump into the ocean. It was very exciting to see everybody jump into the water, and some even jumped from the top of the boat.



.....
Teens from Anchorage knew little about the spill.... This conversation highlighted the diversity of backgrounds reflected in the group and demonstrated each student's willingness to open up and share his or her personal experience—which was incredible. It also increased our awareness regarding the spill's lingering impact and the implications of our reliance on oil. We explored further along the shoreline and uncovered lingering oil just beneath the beach rocks. The powerful smell, feel, and sight of the oil created a stark contrast to what had appeared on the surface to be a pristine setting.



Continuing the First Alaskan Tradition

By *Brianne Wassmann, Environmental Interpreter, Begich, Boggs Visitor Center*

This summer, I participated in a First Alaskans Institute Internship which aims to better develop Alaska Native leadership in young adults. Just like the 23 other interns, I requested a specific place to work. My first choice was the Begich, Boggs Visitor Center in Portage, Alaska. My job title was Environmental Interpreter/Naturalist. I performed frontline duties in and around the center. Every other Friday, the other interns and I attended First Alaskan leadership meetings to hear speakers talk about current leadership issues concerning Alaska Natives.

Most of my time was spent at Begich, Boggs, where visitors commented on my supposed “Sarah Palin” accent, and asked if the town of Whittier is in Canada, I gained valuable communication and people skills by interacting with coworkers, supervisors and visitors. I learned not every visitor wants to hear you talk or hear your jokes! The majority, however, were all ears. Once I heard a chatterbox give his scientific view on receding glaciers—I learned to appreciate multiple points of views.

I learned more about working with others, as well. Around Begich, Boggs, it’s very important to have efficient communication and awareness between the employees. We’re all in this together to make the visitor’s experience as educational and enjoyable as possible.

My daily duties included conducting Ptarmigan narrations on Portage Lake. I guided Moraine Trail hikes and also worked the front desk and opened and closed the visitor center. However, the most unique interpretive program I offered was one I developed on Alaska Native subsistence.

I presented this program to as many as ten different audiences per week. I was very proud and happy to educate visitors from around the world about this part of Alaska Native culture. My continuous research of the issues surrounding subsistence helped me better relate the information in a way that listeners could understand. This program was a learning opportunity for everyone. I learned new things about my Inupiaq culture and also those of other Alaska Native groups.



Brianne Wassman, Environmental Interpreter

I spent a couple of days with Paul Clark, the Tribal Relations Liaison for Glacier Ranger District. We talked to employees at the Office of Subsistence Management in Anchorage, which is comprised of five different federal agencies that deal with subsistence of federal lands. It was very eye-opening and almost an overwhelming amount of information. I had no idea how many people and agencies work on subsistence issues every day! I plan to continue educating myself about subsistence, and the huge stack of books and regulation packets I gathered from Clark and the OSM will definitely help.

I enjoyed having a variety of things to do, and each was different. My coworkers were enthusiastic, encouraging, hilarious, friendly, and seasoned veterans of the ever-hectic and enjoyable Begich, Boggs Visitor Center. Portage Valley is a beautiful area with an array of plants, mountains, glaciers, and wildlife. I



Alaska/Wisconsin: What's the Connection?

By: Jesse Davis and Alexis Sohlden

These two places seem to have little in common. However, every summer they are both inhabited by several students that have or are currently attending the University of Wisconsin—Stevens Point. How is that possible you ask?

Every summer, two students are selected from the University to serve in an internship position at the Begich, Boggs Visitor Center in Portage, Alaska. Year after year, students have made the ambitious trek from Wisconsin to Alaska. This summer, Jesse Davis and Alexis Sohlden continued this tradition as they packed their bags and headed for the last frontier.

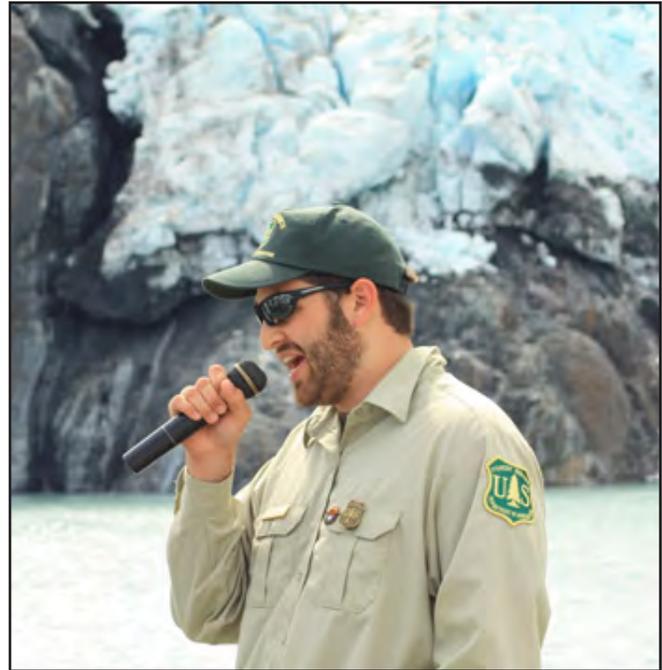
The University of Wisconsin—Stevens Point is often recognized for its College of Natural Resources. Included in the College of Natural Resources is a field in which many look to Stevens Point for answers. Environmental Education and Interpretation is both offered at an undergraduate and graduate level at the University. Professors, advisors, and others involved with this field at Stevens Point are arguably some of the more well known in the country. Students continue to follow their example as they too study in the field of Environmental Education and Interpretation.

Below, Davis and Sohlden offer personal insights into their seasonal positions at the BBVC.

Jesse Davis

I graduated from the UWSP in December 2008 with a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Education and Interpretation and am currently a graduate student at the University of Minnesota – Duluth's Center for Environmental Education earning my Master's degree. My educational career began in 2004 in Ely, Minn., a small town near the Boundary Waters on the Canadian border where I studied wildlife biology at Vermilion College. I transferred to Stevens Point in 2006 where I spent my first semester studying in Sydney, Australia. Then last summer I worked with organic farming in Kitui District, Kenya.

After graduating, I was contacted by my advisor in Stevens Point and Lezlie Murray about this wonderful opportunity in Portage Valley to gain further practice with my interpretation skills. This is my first major chance to hone the interpretation skills I had gained over the last couple of years. I accepted the internship with much excitement. So far, this summer has been an amazing opportunity in one of the most beautiful places on earth.



Jesse Davis narrates about the M/V Ptarmigan.

My daily duties include providing narration aboard the M/V *Ptarmigan* on Portage Lake, formal guided hikes to Spencer Glacier, guided hikes around the BBVC, and informal roving interpretation. I have gained an incredible abundance of information and skills that I think will assist me greatly throughout my career in interpretation. I feel that interpretation is essential on the Chugach and that we the interpreters have the important task to help bridge the gap between the forest resources and the visitor.

I have had the chance to meet some amazing people from all walks of life. This includes the staff at Begich, Boggs Visitor Center. They are truly incredible people. They have been a huge support as well as great friends. I look forward to gaining more interpretation skills as I complete my Master's degree. I hope that in the future I will have the opportunity to work for the Forest Service and Begich, Boggs Visitors Center again.

Alexis Sohlden

I am currently a senior attending the UWSP. I am majoring in Environmental Education and Interpretation. This summer served as my first internship experience in the field. Last summer, I studied abroad in several countries in Europe with the College of Natural Resources European Summer Seminar.



Alexis Sohlden

This summer I was finally able to apply the knowledge and skills that I have gleaned from college. At UWSP, our classes ready us for real tasks and jobs that we will be doing out in the field. The studying and homework may have seemed frustrating at the time. However, it has truly been an experience to see it pay off. I came into the visitor services information assistant position at the BBVC feeling as if I had a step up. I had already taken classes in interpretation, interpretive media, and more. This interpretive background fit into the job perfectly. It has been my job to answer questions and explain the resources in Portage Valley to visitors. Taking a resource and exploring its meaning with visitors is crucial to interpretation.

Some things came a bit easier than others did, however. One of my first hurdles was dealing with the enormous amounts of visitors in Portage Valley. Getting up in front of my first group on one of our partnership boats, the M/V ptarmigan, was extremely hard. However, I got through it. I fell back on techniques that we had learned while in classes for interpretation. As the summer progressed, the nervousness has disappeared.

Jesse Davis and I are truly appreciative to anyone and everyone who had a part in making this opportunity of a lifetime become a reality. We are fortunate to have been chosen from the innumerable qualified students currently at UWSP. Davis and I hope that this tradition and connection between UWSP and the BBVC continues into the future.

Go For the Red

By Victoria Houser, Craig Ranger District

In competitions like the Olympics, participants go for the Gold, but on the north end of Prince of Wales Island all hands were going for the Red. All island recreation staff members participated in the great race to finish the reconstruction of the Red Bay Lake Trail. Reconstruction of this half-mile trail from Forest Road 20 to Red Bay Lake and the beautiful Red Bay Lake Cabin was made possible by an Alaska Trails Initiative grant and some supplemental funds from our sponsors in the Supervisor's Office.

The whole Tongass team came together on this project, from Eleanor Oman's bridge engineering to Eric Abel's grip-hoist and come-along expertise, to the Forest Service fisheries staff, who helped out with getting the necessary permits. All of this ground work allowed the recreation crew members: Ben Walker, Casey LaVoie, Katie Rooks, Dave Wenner, Jeremy Taylor, AnneMarie White, Sarah Harwell, Casey Goldsmith, Shane Thon and the Prince of Wales YCC Crews to build a 75-foot, log-stringer bridge, over 1,000 feet of boardwalk trail and more than 1,000 feet of gravel trail. The trail bridge is a work of art and a vast improvement over the former, precarious log crossing, which left more people than probably admitted it in the creek. The results of the recreation crew's labor are a tremendous improvement to the trail conditions in the area and much easier access to one of Prince of Wales Island's more popular cabins. Go Team Red Bay!



Photos by Ben Walker.

Gold Rush Days 2009

By Kim Kiml, Interpretation and Education, Cordova Ranger District

The City of Valdez, Alaska, has celebrated Gold Rush Days for the past 56 years, and the staff at the Forest Service's Crooked Creek Information Site has taken part in the celebrations since 1994. In 2007, we started presenting our collection of programs called *A Step Through Time*. The programs were not only appropriate for Gold Rush Days but also a good way to commemorate the Valdez-All-American Route Gold Rush and the Chugach National Forest Centennial.

We started this year's events with a campfire sing-along July 31. We used the *Music of the Alaska-Klondike Gold Rush—Songs and History* by Jean A. Murray as our inspiration. We sang *Buffalo Gals*, *After the Ball*, *Michael Row Your Boat*, and other popular songs from that era. Our musicians from the Cordova Ranger District were Sam Fleming on guitar, Richard Stapp on guitar and vocals, and Naomi Morris on the penny whistle and vocals. Crooked Creek Information Site employees Bonnie Thiel, Jeannie Kirkland, and Kelsey Wakefield lent us their vocal strength, also. We provided sheets of the 100-year-old lyrics for the audience.

Another day, we presented *A Day in the Life of a Miner*. This gold mining activity was completed with a trip to take the "gold" to the assayer's office to be weighed. Employees Stapp and Kody Walker were our "assayers," weighing the "gold" brought in by the children.

During *Old Time Hobbies*, we demonstrated how simplicity in games and hobbies were the rule of the day. Naomi Morris helped people make braided rugs, and Kelsey Wakefield helped with soap carv-



Employees from Cordova and Seward Ranger Districts and Crooked Creek Information Site take a photo break at the Gold Rush Days in Valdez. Top row: Bonnie Thiel, Jeannie Kirkland, Carolyn Seramur, Kelsey Wakefield, Julie Buehler, and Hali Thompson. Bottom row: Kody Walker, Richard Stapp, Sam Fleming, Naomi Morris, and Kim Kiml. Photo by Melani Bixby.

ing, the first step pioneers used to teach their children to carve wood. At the town picnic on Sunday, the *Children at Play* activity spotlighted popular games from 100 years ago, including jacks, tops, pickup sticks, marbles, charades and Tiddlywinks. Children were saying, "Mom, hurry and see this new game I found!" while moms said, "I played that game when I was your age!"

During the Alaska-Yukon Gold Rush, newspaper articles and manuals were written to advise gold seekers which supplies and how many were required to last them at least one year. Gold miners in 1898 described the coveted leavening they used for baking as "sourdough—worth its weight in gold." Sourdough was mentioned frequently in journals or diaries, and at one time, could be traded ounce for ounce as gold. At Gold Rush Days, I gave a four-hour demonstration of cook-

ing in Dutch ovens, making stew, sourdough bread, and peach cobbler. The recipes are very basic, and use only items mentioned in miners' list of needed goods. Employee Sam Fleming was my helper. We started by building the fire, preheating the Dutch ovens, preparing, cooking and baking our dishes, and telling stories about the history of the Valdez Gold Rush All-American Route. Over 220 people participated.

For the past several years, we have enjoyed wearing our historic Forest Service uniforms in the parade. Marching down the street with Smokey and his friends has become a tradition with the staff from Crooked Creek Information Site, and a real crowd pleaser. There are no patterns available for historic uniforms. We based ours on pictures of Forest Service employees dating from 1907 to 1929. The early photos of men in the Forest Service

shows them clothed in sack jackets and jodhpurs, circa 1905. The earliest photo of a female working for the Forest Service shows an improvised version of the men's uniform, with a long jacket (more fitted), and a long skirt instead of pants. There was mention of a woman, Dr. Eloise Gerry who dared to go against fashion norms of the day and wear jodhpurs in the woods.

Several years ago, Amy Sayer and I made a version of the historic uniforms for ourselves. Since then, we sewed jodhpurs and shirts for other Crooked Creek Information Site staff members Elena LaPella and Robin Lohse. This year, Bonnie Thiel, Jeannie Kirkland and I completed the historic ensembles by sewing matching jackets to wear during Gold Rush Days.



Rehearsing for the Sing-a-long are Naomi Morris, Richard Stapp, and Sam Fleming. Photo by Kim Kiml

We appreciated the annual Gold Rush Days celebration in Valdez giving us the opportunity to help our modern generation connect to the past.

Kids Go Fishing on the Chugach

By Mona Spargo, Public Affairs, Chugach National Forest

If there is one thing Alaskan's love it is their fishing! We like to start 'em young here, and that's only one reason Kids Fishing Day is so popular. The Chugach Forest held three events in June, one Kids Fishing Day for each district, where more than 300 kids and adults showed up for the fun. The day may have centered around fishing, but there was a lot more than that going on. Once they honed their casting techniques and caught their limit, they were on to other "fishy" things.



A gleeful angler



Ashley Marjmaen helps kids tie fishing lures.

The creative side of Kids Fishing Day reached new heights this year. Fish print t-shirts are always popular and this year was no exception. Some other events and activities included; casting contests, fly-tying, boat rides, recycling plastic bottles into fish (the non-edible kind) and the new art-form macaroni fish art! Kids and Adults alike were fascinated by Ken Hodges fish oil rendering demonstration.

Woody Owl, Smokey, and Sammy Salmon were busy trying to hit each of the events and spread a little of their wisdom. After all that activity-people were hungry, and while fish wasn't on the menu, hotdogs and cookies were, and they may be next on the list of what Alaskan kids love.

New Staff for Forest Health Protection

Shared by Steve Patterson, Assistant Director, State & Private Forestry

State and Private Forestry Forest Health Protection staff are welcoming three newcomers to the Alaska Region. Lori Winton, Steve Swenson, and Nicholas Lisuzzo are now on board and ready to work.

Lori Winton received her B.S. degree in biology from Eastern Washington University and her Ph.D. in plant pathology specializing in forest pathology from Oregon State University.

Her Ph.D. and post-doctoral work at OSU focused upon Oregon's major tree diseases. Work included: detection and evaluation methods for Swiss needle cast, Port Orford root disease, sudden oak death, and laminated root rot; eradication efforts underway for sudden oak death; exclusion, sanitation, and resistance programs to limit the further spread of Port Orford Cedar root disease, and silvicultural strat-

egies to lessen the economic impacts of laminated root rot.

For the last five years she has worked as a research plant pathologist with the USDA Agricultural Research Service in Fairbanks. In her ARS position, developing and maintaining both professional and stakeholder relationships and collaborations were particularly important given the remote location. Since arriving in Alaska she has received letters of appreciation, recognition, or support from 90% of the potato and vegetable producers in Alaska, the Director of Cooperative Extension, the Director of the State of Alaska Division of Agriculture, as well as several University of Alaska Fairbanks faculty. In addition, she was acknowledged by the Dean of the UAF School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences in the journal *Agroborealis* for helping to “avert what could have been a



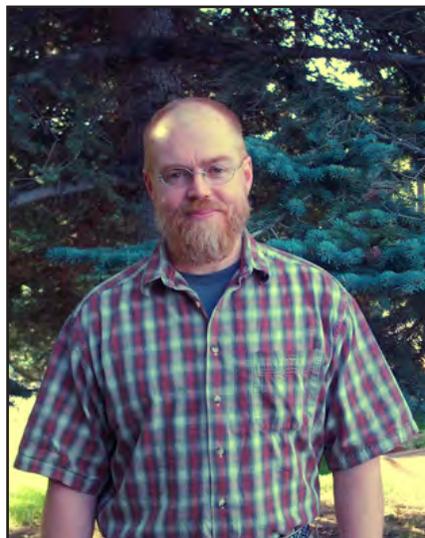
Lori Winton

disastrous infestation of late blight in the 2005 potato crop.”

Winton is eager to use her forestry skills in a more applied setting.

Steve Swenson graduated with a B.S. in Business Administration with a computer science minor from Central Methodist University in Missouri. He worked for 10 years as a manager and software engineer in St. Louis and San Diego. He later decided to study forestry, and received an M.S. in Natural Resources with a forestry emphasis Humboldt State University in 2009. Steve's thesis examined above-ground carbon distribution in second- and third-growth coast redwood stands in a sustainably managed community forest owned by the City of Arcata, Calif.

Swenson held a variety of jobs while pursuing his degree. He worked on the Lassen National



Steve Swenson

Forest doing stand exams for the district silviculturist; spent a season as a biological technician for the Pacific Lumber Company looking

for rare plants; and did chainsaw thinning in tanoak-dominated stands for a restoration project in the coast range in Northern California.

Swenson also worked for the U.S. Geological Survey in the Sequoia, Kings Canyon, and Yosemite National Parks. He worked on a global climate change and demography project collecting insect and disease data for all trees on long-term plots located along an elevation gradient. At the Forest Service's Pacific Northwest Research Station, he conducted vascular plant surveys in prescribed burn areas and collected data for insect and forest pathology studies used to research the interaction of fire, insects, and disease in interior northwest forests.

Nicholas Lisuzzo is the new biological science technician in Fairbanks, Alaska. Nick was born and reared near Detroit, Mich. After completing his undergraduate degree in forestry at East Lansing in 2001, he moved to Fairbanks, where he completed a Master's degree in botany in 2005.

Lisuzzo has spent the last five years working for the National Park Service and the Forest Service conducting natural resource inventories across large portions of Alaska and Northern California. Most recently,

he worked with the Forest Inventory and Analysis Program as a part of the Quality Assurance-Quality Control team. He spent his time training, leading, and evaluating field crews in Southeast and South-central Alaska.

This position has allowed him to visit some of the more remote and rugged areas of the state using helicopters, float-planes, boats, and foot travel to collect forest health and productivity data from the program's 2,000+



Nick Lisuzzo

permanent research plots throughout coastal Alaska.

Family Fishing Day in Yakutat

By Matt Catterson, Fisheries Technician, Yakutat Ranger District

The Yakutat small boat harbor was packed with kids for this year's annual Family Fishing Day. With the generous support of many local sponsors, the Forest Service organized a fun filled day of fishing, fly-tying, T-shirt fish print-

ing, and hot dog chowing. Smokey Bear and Sammy Salmon even joined in the action. Over 40 children and their families participated in the fishing derby and other activities, catching a variety of fish off the harbor docks, including juvenile pa-

cific cod and pollock, sculpin, flounder, and even one snake prickleback. Family Fishing Day promotes recreational fishing and outdoor activity as a healthy and fun way for families to interact with the prolific fisheries of the Yakutat area.



Above left: Yakutat Ranger District employee Aimée Kaye enjoys Family Fishing Day with Smokey Bear and Sammy Salmon. Above right: Yakutat residents practice fly tying. Below: Kids fish from the Yakutat small boat harbor.



Forest Service History Quiz

Congratulations to Terry Butler and Linn Shipley, winners of the last Forest Service history quiz! They correctly answered the following questions:

- What was the only year that National Leadership Team meeting was held in Alaska? **1988**
- In what town was the meeting held? **Juneau, with a field trip to Hoonah**
- Who was the Regional Forester that year? **Mike Barton**
- Who was the Chief that year? **Dale Robertson**

For their correct answers, Butler and Shipley received a set of four Forest Service plates based on the historical pattern used in lookout towers and ranger stations. The plates were provided by Western Heritage Co. in honor of the National Museum of Forest Service History that will soon be under construction in Missoula, Mont.

Butler came to Alaska in 1986 to be the Hoonah Ranger District support services supervisor. Shipley came to Alaska in 1988 to be the Hoonah Ranger District fish, wildlife, & watershed staff assistant. Shipley, along with Mike Cooney, served as gun bearers for that 1988 NLT meeting during a field trip to see logging activities on the Tongass National Forest. One of Shipley's vivid memories was watching the visitors stepping off the floatplanes onto the slippery dock wearing cowboy boots, dress jackets, and slip-on shoes! Shipley and Mike received a lot of strange looks until District Ranger Joe Chiarella explained that the rifles were for protection from bears, to not keep the NLT in line.



Prize winners Terry Butler and Linn Shipley

Shipley transferred to the Thorne Bay Ranger District in 1992 as the deputy district ranger. In 1994, Butler and Shipley were married and Shipley was acting district ranger in Ketchikan. In 1995, both transferred to the supervisor's office in Sitka; Shipley was a planning shop interdisciplinary team leader and Butler was resource assistant in the recreation shop. After the Tongass was unified in 2000, Shipley became the wildlife program manager.

Butler and Shipley retired in January 2007 with a combined 63 years of service; 43 years spent on the Tongass National Forest. Last year, they moved into their new home in Montesano, Washington. They keep busy with landscaping their yard, working in the garden, and going to garage sales. Shipley still finds time to work on fires.

The prize for the next quiz is a 52 x 64" cozy fleece throw with an embroidered Forest Service shield—the perfect winter companion. Please send your answer to the following question to Teresa Haugh by November 30 at thaugh@fs.fed.us, or through regular mail to U.S. Forest Service, Public Affairs Office, P. O. Box 21628, Juneau, AK 99802.

Next Question: What were the names of the last two Forest Service ranger boats built for the Alaska Region, and when were they built?



The next prize is a cozy Forest Service fleece throw.

Send in your answers by November 30.



For more information on the National Museum of Forest Service History visit: <http://www.nmfs-history.net>.