

**File Code:** 1350**Date:** September 21, 2017**Route To:****Subject:** Approval of Wrangell-Petersburg RAC Recommended Projects**To:** Petersburg District Ranger, Wrangell District Ranger

I approve funding for the following seven projects as recommended by the Wrangell-Petersburg-Kake Secure Rural Schools Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) in 2016. These projects meet the intent of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act legislation as well as our own sustainability requirements for all new project submissions.

Title II of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act (the Act) requires that Title II projects should enjoy broad-based support; and have objectives that may include:

- road, trail, and infrastructure maintenance or obliteration;
- soil productivity improvement;
- improvements in forest ecosystem health;
- watershed restoration and maintenance;
- the restoration, maintenance, and improvement of wildlife and fish habitat;
- the control of noxious and exotic weeds; and
- re-establishment of native species.

Section 202 of the Act specifies that project funds may be used for protection, restoration, and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat, and other resource objectives consistent with the purposes of the Act on Federal land and on non-Federal land where projects would benefit the resources on Federal land. Section 204 of the Act sets forth conditions for approval of proposed projects. A project submitted by a resource advisory committee may be approved only if the proposed project satisfies each of the following conditions:

- The project complies with all applicable Federal laws (including regulations).
- The project is consistent with the applicable resource management plan and with any watershed or subsequent plan developed pursuant to the resource management plan and approved by the Secretary concerned.
- The project has been approved by the resource advisory committee.
- A project description has been submitted by the resource advisory committee.
- The project will improve the maintenance of existing infrastructure, implement stewardship objectives that enhance forest ecosystems, and restore and improve land health and water quality.

The Washington Office RAC program lead has confirmed that projects with a conservation education component are appropriate under Section 204 because they satisfy the conditions by implementing stewardship objectives that enhance the forest ecosystem. Nationally, many projects with a conservation education component have been approved and successfully implemented.



The following projects are approved at the funding level displayed below:

16-1 Kake Adult Culture Camp - \$10,970

16-3 Stikine Area Amphibian Monitoring - \$5,962

16-6 Blaquiére Point Boat Ramp Sign Installation - \$6,095

16-12 PRD Kiosk Maps - \$5,200

16-22 Kids in the Woods in the Petersburg Creek-Duncan Salt Chuck Wilderness - \$4,347

16-18 Wrangell Birdfest - \$24,000

16-19 Wrangell Bearfest - \$24,600

These Title II funds may now be allocated to these projects. It is important that you do not begin work or incur any costs on your projects until the requisite financial paperwork is in place. All RAC projects require a job code developed by the Forest Budget Officer and a work plan and advanced acquisition plan (if applicable) developed by the project managers in conjunction with appropriate program leaders. Please work with Michelle Brainard and appropriate Staff Officers to clarify program assistance for each project.

The Committee also recommended approval of the Kake Dog Salmon Festival Project #16-5 for \$20,000. This project would continue support for a previous Title II grant to the Kake Tribal Heritage Foundation for costs associated with the Kake Dog Salmon Festival for an additional three years.

Previous festivals did not demonstrate a direct benefit to National Forest resources, so the benefits of this project to National Forest resources is not clear. For this reason, I am not approving the Kake Dog Salmon Festival Project at this time based on the Title II criteria mentioned above.



 M. EARL STEWART

Forest Supervisor, Tongass NF

Enclosure: (1)

cc: Linda Slaght