



## PROTECTING THE TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST

### BUILDING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES IN SOUTHEAST ALASKA

Stepping into Alaska's coastal rainforest is like walking into a cathedral. Two-hundred-foot tall spruce trees and 1,000 year old cedar trees soar overhead. Sunlight filters through the canopy to the forest floor. Amid the ferns and mossy remnants of fallen trees, you might see a grizzly bear ambling its way to the nearest salmon stream in search of its next meal. This is the Tongass National Forest, home of the largest remaining stands of coastal temperate rainforest in the world.

The Tongass has long provided for its residents. Communities have evolved around the rich marine resources, salmon, minerals and timber that make the area iconic. The region has enjoyed periods of prosperity, but more recently has experienced prolonged economic and social decline as a result of having an economy built primarily on boom and bust cycles of logging and mining.

Alaska Natives and non-natives alike have long relied on the healthy wild salmon populations that return year after year to spawn in the myriad rivers and streams of the Tongass. Connection to the sea and the forest, for both the salmon and the people, is what has made Southeast Alaska rich in history and culture – the people of this region rely as heavily on the surrounding land and water for their livelihoods, recreation, food and culture as anywhere else on Earth.

ACF and our many partner organizations are working



A LOCAL FOREST THINNING CREW IN HOONAH, ALASKA

Photo credit: John Schoen

to ensure this connection between place and community survives for future generations through an initiative called Tongass Fish, People and Place (TFPP) – the goal of which is to empower Southeast Alaska communities to pursue economic development projects that balance cultural and environmental values, offering sustainable alternatives to the large-scale resource extraction projects that would perpetuate the boom and bust pattern of the past.

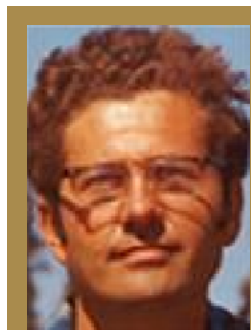
Working closely with several partners including The Nature Conservancy, Sitka Conservation Society, Haa Aani', Southeast Conference and the Hoonah Indian Association (HIA), ACF is providing financial and ...

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## TRIBUTES

*The Alaska conservation community lost two heroes this year. We pay tribute to them and their remarkable lives.*

### LARRY MAYO: AN UNWAVERING COMMITMENT



LARRY MAYO

Long-time Alaska conservation leader and friend to ACF, Larry Mayo, passed away in Fairbanks on September 30, 2013 surrounded by his devoted family; he was 75. Larry's unwavering commitment to protecting Alaska's natural environment was an inspiration to many. In his professional life, he was devoted to studying glaciers including year round data collection on select glaciers and an aerial photography series of many of the

glaciers in the state; he collected and compiled a 30 year data set for Wolverine Glacier. He and his wife Gail also helped organize seven different conservation organizations including Arctic Audubon and Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge, accomplishments for which they ...

*Continued on p 2.*

### RUTH A. M. SCHMIDT: A LEGACY LIVES ON

Long-time ACF supporter Ruth A. M. Schmidt passed away on March 29, 2014 just shy of her 98th birthday. Ruth was a true trail-blazer who had a distinguished career as a geologist when women in the field were rare. She moved to



RUTH A. M. SCHMIDT

Alaska in 1956 while working for the US Geological Survey, and went on to establish the Geology Department at the University of Alaska Anchorage, where she served as its first chair. Ruth was a well-known and respected philanthropist who supported a myriad of important causes from science education and the arts to conservation. She was dedicated to ACF until the end and we are proud and grateful to be among one of the many groups she trusted and supported throughout her generous life.

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We always welcome your feedback on  
our communications. Please send any  
comments to the email address listed  
above.

Click the icon to visit ACF's  
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## LETTER *from the* EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,



ANN ROTHE FISHING IN  
RESURRECTION BAY

Photo credit: Tom Rothe

The Tongass. The name conjures up images of a forest dominated by massive trees and carpeted with a rich mix of ferns and moss that shut out the outside world and create a shaded reverent silence. But it also includes the cultures, communities and ways of life that are intertwined in the forest ecosystem. It has engendered decades of major political battles over allocation of its natural resources. And it has been a defining part of ACF's work.

For nearly three decades, ACF has had a presence in the Tongass. We supported efforts to stop widespread clear-cut logging carried out by multi-national timber companies in boom and bust cycles driven by fluctuations in the world's timber markets. Through the Alaska Rainforest Campaign, we helped end the operations of huge pulp mills that were discharging toxic pollutants into the forest's coastal waters, which sustain marine wildlife essential to maintaining the cultures and communities of people living in the forest. And we

provided support for efforts to block development of industrial-scale mining in forest watersheds.

In this issue of the Dispatch, we've described a new role for ACF in the Tongass. Through the Tongass Fish, People and Place initiative, we are helping to build local economies and communities that thrive in the forest. We've highlighted new leadership for conservation in the Tongass — Malena Marvin, the new Executive Director of the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council and 2005 ACF Ted Smith Conservation Internship Program intern. We've also included a story about long-time supporter Sockeye Cycle, an ecotourism business that serves as a model for sustainable business in the Tongass. Tongass Fish, People and Place represents an exciting transition for ACF's work in the Tongass and a new direction that's helping us fulfill our mission and redefine conservation in Alaska.

For Alaska,

Ann Rothe

## MISSION

The Alaska Conservation Foundation protects Alaska's natural environment and the diverse cultures and ways of life it sustains. We do this by promoting conservation philanthropy and by strategically directing resources to conservation leaders, organizations and initiatives.

### ***Larry Mayo tribute continued from page 1***

were honored with an ACF Celia Hunter Award in 2003. Larry's family requested those wishing to remember him make a contribution to the Celia Hunter Fund at ACF, a fund he helped establish in memory of ACF's Founder. The response from his friends and colleagues has been tremendous — a testament to the impact he had on Alaska and a fitting tribute to a man who dedicated his life to exploring, understanding and protecting Alaska's resources.

## VISION

Alaska Conservation Foundation envisions an inspiring Alaska that is naturally thriving, biologically and culturally diverse, rich in wildlands, bountiful in terrestrial and marine life, sustainable in its economic development and thoughtfully protected — forever.



## ALASKA NATIVE FUND GATHERING HONORS KATIE JOHN'S LEGACY

In January 2014, the Alaska Native Fund (ANF) grantmaking program awarded 16 grants totaling over \$173,000 for indigenous environmental priorities addressing critical issues from assessing food security in the Arctic to restoring Pacific Ocean herring stocks in Southeast Alaska.

On May 21st, ANF grantees gathered in Anchorage along with 10 foundation representatives from Alaska and across the country, including Oak Foundation and PEW Charitable Trusts, for the 2nd biennial ANF Gathering. This year's theme, selected by the ANF Steering Committee, was *Honoring Katie John, Philanthropy and Subsistence*. Over the course of the three-day Gathering participants explored what is needed to further protect and advance subsistence ways of life in Alaska and the role of philanthropy, funders and grantees.

Keynote speaker Kathryn Martin, Katie John's granddaughter, presented the legacy of the Ahtna elder who won a landmark court decision to protect subsistence rights for all Alaskans. Other honored guests included former Governor Tony Knowles and Native American Rights Fund Attorney (and former ACF Trustee), Heather Kendall Miller, who both shared their personal experiences with Katie John and discussed the critical issues surrounding Alaska Native subsistence.



GUEST SPEAKER GOVERNOR TONY KNOWLES

Photo credit: Roy Corral

The main goal of The Gathering is to build the collective capacity of both foundations and grantees — providing time for foundations to learn more about the environmental issues impacting Alaska Native communities and fostering more direct relationships between foundations and ACF grantees. It also provides an opportunity for all to learn more about the projects the ANF is supporting across the state.

According to both funders and grantees the event was a great success. "It was most valuable to see interest among funders to promote sustainability and resilience of Native communities under the umbrella of the ANF program and around the broad topic of subsistence," wrote Dr. Chuck Smythe, Director of the Culture and History Department at the Sealaska Heritage Institute in Southeast Alaska, a 2014 ANF grantee.



ALASKA NATIVE HERITAGE CENTER DANCE GROUP PERFORMANCE

Photo credit: Roy Corral

To learn more about the ANF, visit [www.alaskaconservation.org/movement/diverse-voices/alaska-native-fund](http://www.alaskaconservation.org/movement/diverse-voices/alaska-native-fund)

## RAPID RESPONSE TO ENVIRONMENTAL THREATS

The second session of Alaska's 28th Legislature wound to a close in April 2014 and ACF is thrilled to report that in spite of Governor Sean Parnell's aggressive attempts to seek the passage of House Bill 77 – it failed.

This was a huge win for Alaska conservation because if passed, this bill would have effectively removed Alaskans from the public comment process on many resource extraction permitting decisions. It would have also limited citizens from obtaining water reservations needed to ensure salmon get to their spawning grounds.

The impacts of this bill would have been devastating for Alaska's clean waters and wild salmon. It would have given developers proposing massive mining projects, including the proposed Pebble Mine in Bristol Bay, unlimited access to the water they need for development. Needless to say ACF and our many partners including Alaska Center for the Environment (ACE) and Trout Unlimited (TU) had been following this bill very closely.

During the past two legislative sessions ACF deployed Rapid Response grants to ACE and TU to support their efforts to ensure Alaskans were a part of the discussion and heard loud and clear. And they were! Rapid Response grants are unique in that they can be deployed quickly to address unforeseen threats to Alaska conservation of statewide/national significance.

During Fall 2013, business, tribal and conservation advocates, as well as members of the legislature, held public forums on the bill in communities throughout Southcentral Alaska in response to the Alaska Department of Natural Resources' failure to convene similar meetings. Over 500 people attended with more than ...



NO PEBBLE MINE RALLY

Continued on p 4.

## GIANT STEPS CLOSER TO BRISTOL BAY PROTECTION

In case you haven't yet heard the news, British-Australian mining goliath Rio Tinto Group announced in April it was pulling out of the proposed Pebble open-pit mining project located at the headwaters of Bristol Bay's wild salmon spawning grounds. The stunning move follows on the heels of another key partner – global mining giant Anglo American – withdrawing late last year from the project, as well as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's decision on February 28th to begin the process of determining whether to restrict and possibly prohibit the development of the mine in Bristol Bay's watershed.

Rio Tinto had been reviewing its association with the proposed Pebble Mine for the past year, and concluded that its reputation was at risk as a result of its investment in the project.

Although ACF and our partners celebrate this latest news, we know that the next 12 months will be critical as Northern Dynasty vows to continue pressing forward.

ACF will continue to keep you updated at [www.alaskaconservation.org](http://www.alaskaconservation.org) as the EPA process unfolds.



## TED SMITH CONSERVATION INTERNS: WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



The Ted Smith Conservation Internship Program started over 10 years ago with one intention: that the young leaders who emerged would make a long-term commitment to protecting Alaska. Since it began, hundreds of talented individuals have participated in the program, and just as envisioned a number have assumed leadership positions at conservation organizations throughout Alaska. We are thrilled to share one such story about Malena Marvin.

Malena is from Ashland, Oregon. In 2005, she was placed at Southeast Alaska Watershed Council (SAWC) where she spent three months working in Haines, Yakutat and Skagway, supporting SAWC's efforts to build a regional voice that promotes community watershed stewardship. After her placement she went on to complete a Masters in Environmental Education from Southern Oregon University and earn a Certificate in Sustainable Building and Design from Yestermorrow Design Build School. Most recently, Malena served as Communications Director for Klamath Riverkeeper and ran her own eco-design business, Elemental Design/Build.

ACF is thrilled to report she recently returned to Alaska to become the Executive Director of long-time grantee, Southeast Alaska Conservation Council (SEACC). Malena recalls today how her internship experience those many years ago influenced her career path and where she is today, "I fell in love with Southeast Alaska, I don't know if I would have engaged with this area otherwise. The internship exposed me to a way of life I didn't know existed; I never wanted to move away from Alaska."

### ***Building Sustainable Communities continued from page 1***

strategic leadership to this effort. In fiscal year 2014, ACF awarded more than \$650,000 to groups working on the ground to carry out this vision of proactive, local efforts to ensure stable jobs, renewable energy and secure food supplies while not compromising the health of the ecosystem.

ACF's partnership with HIA is a wonderful example of what can be accomplished with a relatively small investment of funding and technical support. Hoonah is a mostly Tlingit community located 40 air miles west of Juneau. Most of the 760 residents still make traditional hunting, fishing and gathering an important part of their daily lives. With support from ACF through the TFPP, the community has built a workforce development program focused on training local residents to accomplish forest and stream restoration to improve fish and wildlife habitat on logged lands. They are working with other partners to minimize the import and burning of fossil fuels by developing small-scale hydropower generation and by using the waste from forest thinning to provide heat to one of their schools and the community center. HIA is also leading an effort to improve community food security by spearheading a community garden and greenhouse program.

What ACF and our partners learn in Southeast as a result of the TFPP initiative, and the efforts of our grantees like HIA, can be employed in communities throughout Alaska working to develop more sustainable solutions to complex challenges.

### ***Rapid Response continued from page 3***

100 Alaska Native tribal leaders, lodge owners and commercial and sport fishermen testifying to oppose the bill. Only one person, a paid lobbyist, spoke in favor.

While ACF supports proactive, solutions-based approaches to conservation challenges (like you read about in the front page story on the Tongass), we are also committed to ensuring that Alaskans have a voice in the democratic process, especially when it involves Alaska resource management decisions about our wild lands, clean waters and wild salmon.

## MEET OUR GREATEST SUPPORTERS

*Learn what inspires some of our most dedicated supporters.*

### SOCKEYE CYCLE: PARTNERS IN CONSERVATION

A two month sea kayaking trip in Southeast Alaska became a life-changing experience for Sockeye Cycle Owner Thom Ely – not an unusual story in these parts. What is unusual is the conservation-ethic he has infused throughout his business, a value shared by his high-quality staff. Thom opened Sockeye Cycle in Haines in 1988 and then expanded to Skagway. Today, it is the oldest operating full-service bicycle business in Alaska, and, since 1994, ACF has been proud to call them our partners in conservation.

While out on trips in the unparalleled Southeast Alaska environment, Sockeye guides share with their clients some of the threats to maintaining the integrity of these pristine landscapes (of which most visitors to Alaska are unaware) and a bit about the groups working to protect it. At the end of the trip, they offer logo water bottles for a \$2 donation, with 100% of the proceeds going to support ACF's Rapid Response grant program. Sockeye Cycle then matches the donations raised and contributes those funds to local conservation organizations such as Lynn Canal Conservation and Southeast Alaska Conservation Council. Some summers this has meant upwards of \$20,000 for Alaska conservation efforts!

Please support the businesses that support ACF and our partners. For more information, go to: [www.cyclealaska.com](http://www.cyclealaska.com).



### ACF TRUSTEE & ALASKA VICE-CHAIR, JIM DEWITT



JIM AND NANCY TOAST ACF

Jim DeWitt, long-time ACF supporter and board member since 2008, grew up in Fairbanks and has practiced law in Alaska since graduating from Northwestern University School of Law in 1975. Since 1986, he has been with Guess & Rudd P.C., and for 15 years he chaired the faculty of the Biennial Nonprofit Law courses sponsored by the Alaska Bar Association. Jim is also the author of the Volunteer Legal Handbook (nine editions). For more than 20 years, he served on the board of the United Way of the Tanana Valley.

An avid birder and bird photographer, Jim's environmental concerns focus on avian conservation. His other hobbies include fly-fishing, cross-country skiing, hiking, writing and website design. Jim is married to Nancy DeWitt, environmental consultant and former Executive Director of the Alaska Bird Observatory. Jim and Nancy have hosted three educational owls at their home for many years (including a Great Gray Owl named Earl).

This September, Jim will assume the role of board chair. Of his commitment to ACF he writes: "ACF is simply the most effective conservation organization in Alaska. Not just at raising money but also ensuring it is spent wisely. My time, energy and finances are all limited; ACF assures those limited resources are used effectively."

To learn more about our Trustees visit [www.alaskaconservation.org/foundation/board-directors](http://www.alaskaconservation.org/foundation/board-directors).

### BOARD & STAFF TRANSITIONS —

ACF is pleased to welcome our new Trustees: Amy Gulick, Lisa Marie Lang, Dorothy Larson, Don May, Anna Plager and John Schoen. And we give heartfelt thanks to our outgoing board members Marcia Lamb, Leonard Steinberg, Carol Kasza and Bonita Howard. Thank you all for sharing your time and talents with ACF. We are grateful for your dedication to Alaska.

We are also delighted to announce three new members of the staff: Amanda Piatt (Donor Relations Manager), Anne Remick (Grants Manager) and Lucas Veldhuis (Development Associate). It is always hard to see great staff move on. Program Officer Sam Snyder, Donor Communications Manager Roy Corral and Grants Manager Jordan O'Connell have left ACF to pursue new professional adventures. And long-time ACF Program Officer Matt Rafferty is leaving at the end of June to take on new challenges. The good news is they aren't going far and will continue working on Alaska conservation issues.

### WAYS OF GIVING —

Only because of you, is ACF able to support the efforts of our many partners working on the ground throughout Alaska on our greatest conservation issues. Every gift is appreciated and essential to carrying out our mission.

ACF has a range of giving opportunities through which you can invest in protecting Alaska. Please consider joining our Great Land Monthly Giving Club (GLGC), a more convenient and environmentally-friendly way to support ACF's mission — all year long.

Sign up online at [www.alaskaconservation.org/donate-monthly](http://www.alaskaconservation.org/donate-monthly), by emailing us at [development@alaskaconservation.org](mailto:development@alaskaconservation.org) or calling 907-276-1917 (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Alaska Time).

Thank you again for your interest in ACF and our efforts to protect Alaska.

*Alaska Conservation Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization. Your contribution to ACF may qualify for a tax deduction based on your individual circumstance. ACF's tax identification number is 92-0061466.*





**Alaska  
Conservation  
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LARGE-TREE OLD GROWTH IN  
SAOOK BAY, NORTHEAST  
BARANOF ISLAND  
Photo credit: John Schoen

**YOUR SUPPORT HELPS PROTECT  
THE OLD-GROWTH RAINFOREST IN  
THE TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST**

**THANK YOU!**