



WILD ALASKA SALMON: SUSTENANCE AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

ADVANCING INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

Alaska Natives maintain their rich culture and traditions in close connection with the land. Because of this, they are among the first to feel the negative impacts of changes in the environment; it also provides them a vast knowledge of the environment in which they live. This Indigenous Knowledge is critical to identifying changes in the environment and developing solutions to address issues. Yet there isn't much funding to support these efforts.

In 2011, the Alaska Conservation Foundation (ACF), in partnership with an Alaska Native steering committee, launched an exciting new grantmaking program – the Alaska Native Fund (the Fund). The purpose of the Fund is to support Alaska Native efforts to find solutions to the environmental challenges they face, including climate change, impacts of extractive industries, energy, environmental health and food security.

Now entering its third year of grantmaking, there has been an overwhelming positive response to the Fund. Since it began, over \$240,000 in grants has been awarded. Yet grant requests have totaled more than \$1 million, demonstrating the need for this critical funding stream. A central theme that's emerged in these requests is protecting wild salmon from the impacts of industrial scale fishing, mining, logging and global warming. For Alaska Native communities, salmon are essential to food security and cultural survival.



DRYING SALMON IN HOOPER BAY, ALASKA
Photo credit: Roy Corral

The Alaska Native Fund is supporting efforts to include Indigenous Knowledge in determining bycatch limits in the Bering Sea pollock fisheries, documenting local knowledge and perspectives regarding the decline of salmon in western Alaska and addressing the threat of mining to salmon in Bristol Bay. The lessons learned will be crucial to advancing solutions to the most critical environmental challenges facing Alaska today.

To learn more about the Alaska Native Fund, go to www.alaskaconservation.org.

TRIBUTES

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

TED SMITH: A LIFE WELL-LED



TED SMITH

Theodore "Ted" Smith - beloved former ACF board member - died in a hiking accident near his home in Montana on September 1, 2012. A tireless advocate for Alaska's natural environment, Ted was instrumental in building ACF and the Alaska conservation movement. Thoughtful and analytical, he led by example and with generosity, kindness, humor, and class. He embodied the belief that one person can make a difference and

empowered others to reach their full potential.

To celebrate his legacy, ACF created the Ted Smith Young Leaders Fund to support the Conservation Internship Program, which has been fittingly renamed in his

Continued on p 2.

GINNY WOOD: A POWERFUL VOICE FOR ALASKA

Ginny Wood, a matriarch of the Alaska conservation movement, passed away at her home in Fairbanks on March 8, 2013. She was 95. An ACF Lifetime Achievement Award winner, Ginny was instrumental in ACF's founding and will long be remembered as a heroine in the fight for passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA).



GINNY WOOD

ACF Board member Jim DeWitt remembers Ginny: "A powerful, long time voice for Alaska conservation has been lost. With Denny Wilcher and Celia Hunter, she pretty much created the Alaska conservation movement. She led an extraordinary life."

To learn more about Ginny and the impact she had on Alaska, read her recent oral history Boots, Bikes, and Bombers edited by Karen Brewster.

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LETTER *from the* EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,



ANN ROTHE FISHING
IN RESURRECTION BAY

Photo credit: Tom Rothe

Salmon! Central to so much of the life of Alaska and the lives of Alaskans. Each year, hundreds of millions of these gleaming fish find their way unerringly to their natal streams, a great pulse of life into Alaska's fresh waters that feeds every part of the ecosystem. Salmon are essential to the lives and cultures of Alaska's Indigenous peoples. They sustain the ways of life in Alaska's coastal communities, and pump millions of dollars each year into Alaska's economy.

Nearly every Alaskan cares about salmon and believes they are essential to Alaskans' way of life—96% according to a poll done by The Nature Conservancy in 2011. Nearly 9 out of 10 (87%) believe it's important to invest in salmon conservation. Protection of salmon and salmon habitat is a key element of the work the Alaska Conservation Foundation supports. In this newsletter, you'll read about this work, from restoring salmon watersheds in the Tongass National Forest to preventing the destruction of salmon streams in Cook Inlet to protecting Bristol Bay, home of the largest wild salmon

populations left on earth. Grants from our Alaska Native Fund reflect the critical need to protect salmon. A fundamental goal of the Collective Conservation Strategy created by conservation groups we support is protection of salmon and salmon habitat. And the work of a number of our summer interns this year will focus on the health of wild salmon populations.

In this issue, we also say goodbye to Ted Smith and Ginny Wood, two heroes of the Alaska conservation movement and dear friends to ACF. Their legacy lives on in the work we support.

Sincerely,

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.

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.

Ted Smith tribute continued from page 1

honor. (For more information, please see page 4.) ACF committed the first \$50,000 to the Fund with a goal of raising an additional \$200,000 in its first year. Thanks to the generosity of Ted's family and many friends from around the country, ACF is half way there.

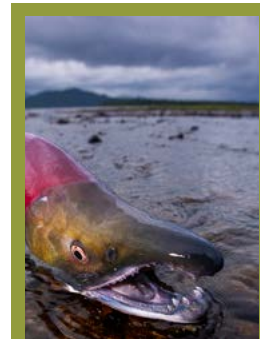
To join in supporting the Fund please visit www.alaskaconservation.org/giving/donate or contact us at development@alaskaconservation.org or 907-276-1917. Please note your donation is for the Ted Smith Young Leaders Fund.

PROTECTING BRISTOL BAY'S WORLD CLASS FISHERY

This past April, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released the second draft of its Watershed Assessment of potential impacts of the proposed Pebble Mine (slated to be North America's largest open pit gold and copper mine) on the Bristol Bay watershed in southwest Alaska. The Agency confirmed that with an average of 37 million fish returning to its waters annually, Bristol Bay is the world's largest and most diverse fishery, supporting over 14,000 jobs. University of Alaska Anchorage's Institute of Social and Economic Research recently valued it at close to \$1.5 billion a year.

EPA concluded that Pebble Mine alone would eliminate up to 90 miles of streams and remove 4,800 acres of wetlands and produce toxic wastewater that could degrade water quality downstream. It underscores that even with no major failures Pebble Mine would cause unacceptable adverse impacts to Bristol Bay's world class fishery.

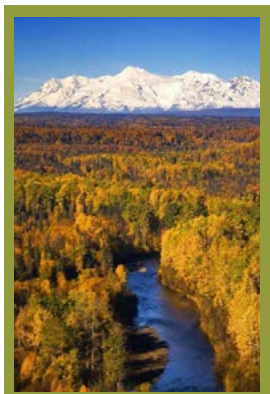
Jobs, livelihoods and cultural traditions are at stake which is why we cannot risk Bristol Bay's commercial fishery and why ACF continues to support a diverse coalition working to safeguard this unparalleled watershed. EPA accepted public comment on the Assessment through June 30th. Expect a final Watershed Assessment in the Fall of 2013.



SALMON SPAWNING,
BRISTOL BAY

Photo credit: Michael Melford

KEEPING ALASKA'S COAL IN THE GROUND



CHUITNA RIVER

Photo credit: Damion Brook Kintz

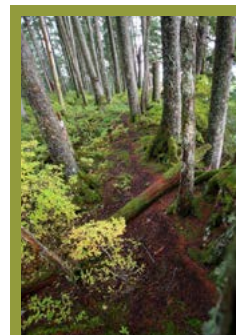
Carbon emissions from coal have been identified as the largest contributor to climate change. Alaska has nearly 1/8th of the world's coal - an estimated 5.5 trillion tons - and the coal industry is determined to mine and export it to booming Asian economies. Eight coal mining projects and four coal-related infrastructure projects are currently being proposed throughout Alaska. The consequences of mining and exporting this coal is dire - from destruction of Alaska's wild salmon and habitat to increased disruption to the Earth's climate, leading to more catastrophic storms, droughts and wildfires.

With six coal mining projects proposed within 75 miles of Anchorage, Southcentral Alaska's wild salmon populations are under direct threat. The Chuitna coal strip mine is of particular concern because it would destroy 11 miles of salmon streams, an act that has never before been permitted in Alaska. ACF continues to support the efforts of the Alaskans for Energy Freedom Campaign, a diverse coalition working to prevent the impacts that developing this coal will have on the Earth's climate, as well as on Alaska's lands, waters, and people. Throughout the remainder of 2013, ACF grantees will be mobilizing tens of thousands of Alaskans to take action to protect salmon and our climate. To make your voice heard, please go to Chuitna.org/actnow.

THE TONGASS: FISH, PEOPLE AND PLACE IN AMERICA'S RAINFOREST

"The Tongass" as Alaskans know it, is a rich and complex ecosystem, home to centuries-old trees, abundant wild salmon and healthy populations of bears and wolves. The Tongass National Forest is both the nation's largest national forest and the world's largest intact temperate rainforest. The number of salmon spawning in its fresh waters is astonishing - millions of fish that account for nearly a quarter of Alaska's annual salmon harvest. The Tongass encompasses nearly all of Southeast Alaska (also known as the Inside Passage), and embraces coastal communities and Native cultures that are closely tied to salmon.

Through the Tongass People and Place Program, ACF is supporting the efforts of local communities and Native tribes to sustain cultures and economies that depend on a healthy forest ecosystem. This year, these efforts included stream and salmon habitat restoration projects on public and private lands in Hoonah, collaboration between the U.S. Forest Service and the community of Sitka in planning for holistic management of nearby forests that includes opportunities for ecotourism and local wood products businesses, and the potential development of a biofuel manufacturing facility in Wrangell that would use local mill wastes. With support from ACF, these communities are building cultural, ecological and economic prosperity, along with sustainability and resilience. And they are maintaining the essential connection between fish, people and place in the Tongass.



THE TONGASS

Photo credit: Erin McKittrick

BUILDING CAPACITY AND A STRONGER VOICE FOR SALMON

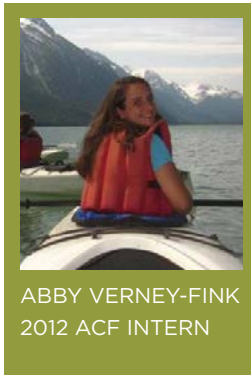
A few years back, in response to significant shifts in the economy and leadership transitions at key organizations, ACF took a comprehensive look at the state of the Alaska conservation movement. The Community Capacity initiative was established to strengthen the movement's organizations and leaders with the goal of achieving greater conservation impact. In the past year, two exciting and strategic outcomes have resulted from our work in this arena, including the first environmental nonprofit merger in Alaska (between Alaska Center for the Environment, Alaska Conservation Alliance and Alaska Youth for Environmental Action) and the creation of a statewide Collective Conservation Strategy. ACF helped facilitate and financially support both efforts, working closely with our many trusted partners.

The Collective Conservation Strategy focuses the efforts of our partners working throughout Alaska into a cohesive set of conservation goals to build support for three issues that resonate with Alaskans: support for renewable energy and energy efficiency; defense of citizen participation in the public process; and protection of wild Alaska salmon and salmon habitat, which the majority of Alaskans see as critical to our cultural identities and local economies. The Collective Conservation Strategy aims to bring organizations together to find solutions to these issues and develop a stronger statewide voice in support of what we value – like our wild salmon.



Photo credit: Dave Therriault

INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION



ABBY VERNEY-FINK
2012 ACF INTERN

ACF is honored to announce the renaming of our popular Conservation Internship Program (CIP) in recognition of esteemed former board member Ted Smith. Ted was instrumental in founding the program over 10 years ago with the intention that the young leaders who emerged would make a long-term commitment to protecting Alaska. Hundreds from Alaska and around the country have participated in this life-changing opportunity and are now making their own mark on the conservation movement, just as Ted envisioned.

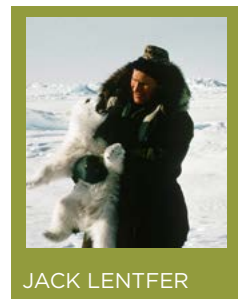
The 2013 class of 12 talented Ted Smith CIP interns gathered recently for an orientation in Anchorage to learn about the statewide context in which they would be working this summer, build their skills and network. They've since been deployed to 11 host organizations to work across the state from St. Lawrence Island (off the coast of northwest Alaska) to Sitka (in Southeast) on meaningful projects like studying the health impacts of toxins in the environment and advocating for the health of wild Alaska salmon.

ACF is also pleased to report this is the second year we're partnering with Alaska Center for the Environment to help coordinate the program as part of their new leadership development pipeline. Look for this story in future ACF communications!

CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENTS IN CONSERVATION

Last September - at a festive ceremony held at the Alaska Native Heritage Center and before a crowded room - ACF bestowed its 2012 Conservation Achievement Awards to 10 individuals and one organization in recognition of their efforts to go above and beyond to protect Alaska. Recipients included: Wally and Jerri Cole, Tim Bristol, World Wildlife Fund-US Arctic Field Program, Joseph Ransdell-Green, Aurora Hoefflerle, Nicole George, Ken Tape, Tom Burek and Orville Huntington.

A highlight of the evening was presentation of a Lifetime Achievement Award to Jack Lentfer for his more than 50 years working for the conservation of Alaska's wildlife and wild lands, with a focus on polar bears. Time and again, Jack has demonstrated his commitment to translating his unique expertise directly into action, advocating balanced management decisions based on conservation science.



JACK LENTFER

Thank you to the following business sponsors that helped make the 2012 Awards event possible:



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Save the Date! ACF's 2013 Awards Ceremony will be held September 19, 2013 at the Alaska Native Heritage Center.

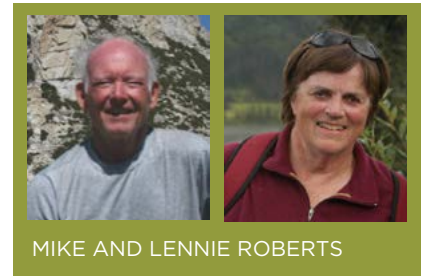
MEET OUR GREATEST SUPPORTERS

Learn more about what inspires some of our most dedicated supporters.

MIKE AND LENNIE ROBERTS

A 50th birthday celebration brought Mike and Lennie Roberts north to Denali Park – it's here where they fell in love with Alaska. In 1988, Mike completed a 23-day traverse of Denali, hiking out to Wonder Lake and arriving at Camp Denali (wilderness lodge) in time for dinner with famed Alaska mountaineer Brad Washburn, who was celebrating the 75th anniversary of the first ascent of the mountain. Mike remembers this experience as a high point of the many outdoor adventures he has enjoyed in his lifetime.

It was long-time supporters Wally and Jerri Cole, owners of Camp Denali, who first introduced the Roberts to ACF. To this day, Mike and Lennie especially appreciate ACF's strategic grants that strengthen conservation organizations throughout Alaska. But what inspires them? Lennie recalls, "It's memories of basking in the slanting autumn sun at Wonder Lake, listening to the haunting calls of sandhill cranes on their fall migration, and gazing at the glaciers dropping from the north side of Denali, that forever remind us of the importance of preserving Alaska's wilderness and its conservation values."



MIKE AND LENNIE ROBERTS

ACF BOARD CHAIR RUTH WOOD



RUTH WOOD ON WIND RIVER, ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Photo Credit: John Strassenburgh

Ruth Wood grew up in Memphis, Tennessee and it is there where her love of nature began. She went on to earn her MBA at the University of Chicago and to a career in finance and marketing before first visiting Alaska in 1989 for an Outward Bound class in the Brooks Range. Loving every rainy minute, she returned the next summer to work for the Alaska Center for the Environment after which, she stayed. She credits ACF-funded programs with introducing her to the conservation community and a life of civic engagement.

Ruth and her husband, John Strassenburgh, now live in Talkeetna with their mostly retired sled dogs. When not actively engaged in community and civic activities, like serving for many years on the Talkeetna Community Council, Ruth enjoys visits to their remote cabins and river trips in the Arctic.

Ruth joined the ACF board in 2007 and now serves as its chair. She writes of her service: "I'm on the ACF board because it is an organization focused on making the environmental community-groups and people strong and successful. The wild lands, waters, and wildlife of Alaska feed my soul, and I will work until I die to make sure they continue to thrive."

To learn more about our Trustees visit www.alaskaconservation.org/foundation/board-directors.

BOARD & STAFF TRANSITIONS ————— WAYS OF GIVING

ACF is pleased to welcome two new and one returning member to our Board of Trustees: Drew Cason (Anchorage), Bonita Howard (Anchorage) and Stacy Studebaker (Kodiak). We give heartfelt thanks to outgoing board members Helen Nienhueser, Faon O'Connor and Jim Liszka. We are grateful for their many years of service to ACF and unwavering dedication to Alaska.

We are delighted to report the following additions to the staff: Mike Coumbe as Deputy Director, Kit Twenter as Development Officer and Loren Peterson as the Alaska Native Fund Program Coordinator. We recognize Program Officer Polly Carr who left ACF in June to become Executive Director of the newly transformed Alaska Center for the Environment (ACE) and Alaska Conservation Voters (ACV). While sad to see Polly leave, we are excited to see her step into this crucial role as we continue to work closely with ACE and ACV to create enduring solutions for Alaska.

ACF's work is made possible by caring, dedicated people—like you. Each gift is critical to carrying out our mission and very much appreciated.

ACF has a range of giving opportunities through which you can invest in protecting Alaska, from cash donations to workplace giving through EarthShare to legacy gifts. Find out more by visiting our website at www.alaskaconservation.org/giving, emailing us at development@alaskaconservation.org, or calling 907-276-1917 (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Alaska Time).

ACF has earned a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator and has met all 20 standards for charity accountability set forth by the Better Business Bureau.

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.