

# Peril Strait Landscape Opportunities Project

## Meeting Summary

December 16, 2010

### INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT AREA

This meeting is hosted by the Sitka Collaborative Stewardship Group. The purpose is to determine how agencies, contractors, organizations and the community can work toward forest management that benefits all parties in the Peril planning area. This project is unique because it allows the community to provide creative and informal input prior to the Forest Service NEPA process. The Forest Service is asking how we use this area, what we value, and how projects can be designed to address community needs. Additionally, the Forest Service is changing from its old model of contracting (which looked at projects separately and asked for little community input), to an integrated approach that addresses multiple opportunities in an area.

The Peril project area is 69,756 acres (109 sq. miles). It encompasses about 104 miles of road and 522 miles of streams. Land uses include Old Growth habitat, scenic viewsheds, and areas for timber production.

### TIMELINE

- January: USFS develops proposed projects and puts this document out for public scoping.
- February: Scoping comments are due and the proposed action is adjusted if needed.
- May: Appeals period ends.
- June: Project implementation begins.

### MONITORING GROUP FEEDBACK

- Without proposed treatments we can't recommend specific monitoring actions, but we know that treatment goals in the area are to improve wildlife habitat, structural diversity, and site health.
- General monitoring, forage species, Herbs, maybe lichens.
- Possible funding and partnership opportunities include:
  - Graduate students
  - Student Conservation Association
  - Interns
  - Anyone with money
- Would like to see an experimental approach focusing on gaps from other projects.
- Develop controls and plots to actually look at data and get statistical data.
- Develop monitoring actions that will have the most results.
- Monitor martins in thinning areas, and monitor the impact of pulling trees on soil quality.

### RECREATION GROUP FEEDBACK

- Do not close any roads that are currently open.
- Consider opening the road that parallels Sitkoh Creek (number?), and road #7453.
- Put a mooring buoy at Todd, and maybe some across Peril on Baranof at Hanus Bay to anchor in bad weather since there aren't many good anchorages on the north side of Peril Strait.
- Construct emergency shelters on roads on the east side of Sitkoh Bay for OHV breakdowns.

- Consider campsites instead of cabins.
- Look for ways to reroute the trail from Sitkoh Lake to Sitkoh Bay around private property on the Bay side (current trail runs up a creek bed through the privately owned section).
- Improve trail to the east cabin from the north trail & keep it non-motorized; keep the west cabin trail motorized.
- Maintain or replace the USFS compound at False Island, and consider renting the cabins when not in use.
- Maintain the dock.

#### **SUBSISTENCE GROUP FEEDBACK**

- Increase access for hunting and disabled hunters.
- Consider the effects of logging on the inflow temperatures to the lake—maintain buffers on all tributaries to cool the inflow for sockeye runs.
- There are concerns about the herring spawns in Sitkoh Bay.
- Maintain wildlife corridors, especially deer access to beach (deer have been moving up the bay to get to the beach).
- Ensure that log dumps don't sit on top of Dungeness grounds.
- Put more cabins towards the mouth of the creek; agree that adding mooring buoys is a great idea.
- Vital to get input from Angoon, because this area overlaps with traditional Angoon use.
- Find ways to make “traditional fish” from the spawning grounds available for use (that is, fish that have spawned out and are used in traditional dishes).
- Acknowledge the smokehouses in Sitkoh Bay that the Forest Service burned when they were considered “abandoned.”

#### **CONTRACTING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP FEEDBACK**

- The challenge is to make something usable out of our young growth.
- Combining timber sales with stewardship contracts can be problematic; don't get too tied to “stewardship contracting” as a defined term, rather focus on the big picture goals.
- Bring in someone who has more contracting expertise to talk to contractors and Forest Service.
- Maintain existing roads for second growth removal, dead and down wood removal, and/or further deer habitat projects.
- Tenakee Logging Company would welcome the chance to bid on sales in the range of 100,000-200,000bf in the Peril Strait/False Island area, and is finding some demand for yellow cedar even in these difficult times.
- Specific project ideas:
  - Develop small cedar sales, and more small timber sales in general.
  - There are a lot of dead and down trees in the area and along the coast that could be used for a lot of things, and there is a lot of interest in small 10,000bf sales. There may be an opportunity for someone to open a small sawmill in the area to supply construction wood or even wood chips (chips would require a lot of money to start up, but could be done if there was a good wood supply).
  - Promote opportunities for small-scale value-added production.
  - Develop small alder sales (alder is a hardwood if stored dry and used w/in the first year).
  - Promote dead and downed cedar extraction and use.
- Areas for Economic Development:
  - Consider a microsaw program in Peril—the FS could clear a NEPA for down and dead

- wood.
- Look into personal use sales and ANILCA use—folks contract this out, which creates economic opportunity.
- Develop contracts for culvert and road maintenance, and fixing/removing “red pipes.”
- Support a kiln for small-scale producers (now a major barrier to local small mill operation).
- Focus on creating a demand for local wood—demand is the main concern.
- Consider facilities for processing in the Sawmill Creek area.
- Consider whether the trees are valuable now, or whether it might be best to wait to thin (also, can we find a market for small, young-growth trees or do we thin for wildlife habitat?).
- Ensure continuity of supply, which is currently a big problem for selling and distributing our cheaper and higher-quality local wood products.
- Consider the potential impacts of treatments on trapping.
- Consider the economics of recreational cabins—could someone use the harvested wood to rebuild cabins, build bridges, or provide more vocational training?
- Consider the economics of additional outfitter and guide opportunities, especially local operations.

#### **NEXT STEPS**

USFS team leader Marty Becker will pull all of this information together with SCS to help develop a proposed action and alternatives, which the public is welcome to be involved in.

Any new ideas can be directed to:

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#### **PARTICIPANTS**

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| 1. Andrew Thoms     | Sitka Conservation Society |
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| 4. Brad Dennison    |                            |
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| 6. Charlie Clark    |                            |
| 7. Chris Leeseberg  | USFS-SRD                   |
| 8. Craig Buehler    | USFS-SRD                   |
| 9. Dale Adams       |                            |
| 10. George Ridley   |                            |
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| 12. Greg Jones      |                            |
| 13. Harvey Kitka    | SEARHC                     |
| 14. J. Eric         |                            |
| 15. Jack Lorrigan   | USFS                       |
| 16. Jeff Feldpausch | Sitka Tribe of Alaska      |
| 17. Ken Kubik       |                            |
| 18. Kent Bovee      | Sitka High School          |
| 19. Kent Barkhau    |                            |

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| 20. Kitty LaBounty    | University of Alaska Southeast, Sitka Conservation Society Board |
| 21. Larry Edwards     | Greenpeace   |
| 22. Marcel LaPerriere | Southeast Cedar Homes, Sitka Conservation Society Board          |
| 23. Mariah Raade      |  |
| 24. Marian Allen      | Sitka Conservation Society                                       |
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| 27. Michael Sutton    |  |
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| 37. Steve Ash         | Sitka Conservation Society Board                                 |
| 38. TM Construction   |  |
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**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS RECEIVED BY:**

- |                  |                                |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Gordon Chew   | Tenakee Logging Company        |
| 2. Phil Mooney   | AK Department of Fish and Game |
| 3. Kelly Pellett | Pellett Enterprises            |
| 4. John McGraw   | McGraw Custom Construction     |