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An aerial photograph of a vast, dense forest with a thick canopy of green trees, covering a hillside. The text is overlaid on the center of the image.

Economic Impact of the USDA Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy Investment Spending 2025

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Economic Impact of the USDA Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy Investment Spending 2025

This economic impact analysis of the USDA's Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy investment funding in calendar year 2025 was performed by Southeast Conference in partial fulfillment of Challenge Cost Share Agreement 22-CS-11100100-004, Sustainability Strategy Investment Economic Monitoring.

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Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy Investments

Since the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy (SASS) was launched in 2022, 29 partner organizations have invested \$20 million in USDA funding across 55 projects throughout Southeast Alaska. Approximately 89 percent of project expenditures occurred within Southeast Alaska, helping retain investment dollars and maximize local economic benefits. These investments supported 436 job-years of employment, generated \$12.6 million in labor income for Southeast Alaska residents, and produced an estimated \$29.6 million in total economic activity across the regional economy.

2022-2025 Economic SASS Impact Summary



2025 Economic Impact Summary

In 2021, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) launched the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy (SASS) for Southeast Alaska and the Tongass National Forest, committing \$25 million in initial investments. Funding was awarded to several dozen projects led by partners across Southeast Alaska to support multi-year natural resource, infrastructure, community capacity, and Tribal-focused initiatives.

The USDA Forest Service partnered with Southeast Conference to measure the economic impact of SASS investments on an annual basis. Working with Rain Coast Data, the team collects quantitative and qualitative information from SASS funding recipients regarding the benefits generated by SASS investments. An economic impact model based on Regional Input-Output Modeling System (RIMS II) multipliers was developed to estimate annual direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts. The reporting process also captures qualitative information about project accomplishments and community benefits.

In 2025, the fourth year of the initiative, 23 SASS funding recipients reported spending \$6.7 million in USDA funding across 44 projects. Through 2025, 29 partners worked collectively on 55 projects. This brought cumulative expenditures since 2022 to \$20 million. These investments generated an estimated \$29.6 million in economic activity throughout Southeast Alaska, supported 436 job-years of employment, and produced \$12.6 million in local wages for Southeast Alaska residents.

Table 1. SASS Impacts in Southeast Alaska 2022-2025

Category	2022 Impact	2023 Impact	2024 Impact	2025 Impact	Impact-to-date
Direct spending reported by SASS partners	\$1,311,374	\$4,651,757	\$7,388,801	\$6,679,893	\$20 million
Indirect and induced economic activity	\$597,710	\$2,222,612	\$3,649,400	\$3,157,588	\$9.6 million
Total Impact of SASS Investment Spending	\$1.9 million	\$6.9 million	\$11 million	\$10 million	\$29.6 million
Year-round equivalent direct jobs	14.3	82.5	123.6	100.3	321 job-years*
Year-round equivalent indirect and induced jobs	7.5	31.5	40.9	35.0	115 job-years*
Total Direct, Indirect & Induced Jobs	22 annual avg.	114 annual avg.	164.5 annual avg.	135.2 annual avg.	436 job-years*
Direct annual wages	\$529,110	\$2,094,428	\$3,257,127	\$3,226,664	\$9.1 million
Indirect and induced wages	\$216,617	\$779,978	\$1,019,539	\$1,466,753	\$3.5 million
Total Wages, Including Multiplier	\$745,727	\$2.9 million	\$4.3 million	\$4.7 million	\$12.6 million

*A job-year represents one full-time equivalent job supported for one year. Job-years are cumulative across years and should not be interpreted as the number of unique jobs created.

Program Background

In July 2021, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) launched the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy (SASS) to support economic diversification, strengthen community resilience, and conserve natural resources across Southeast Alaska. A key element of the strategy included identifying short- and long-term opportunities for investments that reflect the diverse opportunities and needs in Southeast Alaska. USDA made a commitment of \$25 million for such investments. A OneUSDA team consisting of the Forest Service, Rural Development, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service worked with Southeast Alaska partners, communities, Tribes, and Alaska Native corporations to align investment funding with regional priorities and values.¹ More than 270 investment proposals, amounting to more than \$276 million, were submitted. After a rigorous proposal evaluation process, 59 projects were initially selected and assigned to the USDA agency with authority to award funding and support project partners.

Strengthening agreements were formed with three regional organizations:

- Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska;
- Southeast Conference; and
- Spruce Root.

Together, these agreements provide pass-through funding for 25 projects through sub-award systems managed by the respective organizations. The remaining 34 projects are administered directly by the partner organizations responsible for implementation.

Approximately half of the initial SASS funding was awarded to Tribal and Indigenous organizations, with the remainder supporting natural resource management, infrastructure, community capacity, and economic development initiatives:

- Tribal and Indigenous interests - \$12.5 million (50%)
- Natural resources - \$6.25 million (25%)
- Infrastructure - \$3.125 million (12.5%)
- Community capacity - \$3.125 million (12.5%)

To evaluate the economic benefits generated by the SASS investments, USDA partnered with Southeast Conference to develop a regional economic impact model to quantify the impact of SASS investments over time. Project-level spending data are collected annually from funding recipients and applied to the regional economic impact model to estimate employment, wage, and economic output impacts. Southeast Conference is the state- and federally designated regional economic development organization for Southeast Alaska. The mission of Southeast Conference is to undertake and support activities that promote strong economies, healthy communities, and a quality environment in Southeast Alaska. Rain Coast Data collaborates with Southeast Conference to conduct economic impact modeling and regional economic

¹ For more information about the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy see the project website: www.fs.usda.gov/r10/natural-resources/forest-management/southeast-alaska-sustainability-strategy

analysis. Rain Coast Data is a Juneau-based research and consulting firm specializing in Southeast Alaska economic analysis, socioeconomic impact studies, survey research, and public outreach.

Rain Coast Data and Forest Service Alaska Region staff developed an intake tool to monitor projects. The tool consists of an annual questionnaire used to track the economic and community impacts of funded projects throughout their five-year grant periods. The questionnaire includes a quantitative section focused on spending, employment, and economic outcomes, as well as a qualitative section that allows partners to describe project accomplishments and impacts in their own words. All SASS funding recipients are required to respond to the intake tool as part of their annual reporting. Project-level annual monitoring can inform discussions about both market and non-market benefits arising from federal investments across the region. Appendices A and B contain the intake questionnaire and partner responses to the open-ended questions.

Methods

Estimation Approach

Economic impacts were estimated using the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) Regional Input-Output Modeling System (RIMS II), a widely used methodology for measuring the regional effects of public and private investments. RIMS II accounts for the relationships among industries within Southeast Alaska and estimates how project spending circulates through the regional economy. In addition to the direct effects of project expenditures, the model estimates indirect impacts generated through business-to-business purchases and induced impacts resulting from household spending.

To estimate these impacts, SASS funding recipients report annual project expenditures through a standardized intake process. Reported spending is categorized by type and analyzed using Southeast Alaska-specific RIMS II multipliers to estimate employment, wages, and total economic output associated with SASS investments. The results presented in this report reflect the combined direct, indirect, and induced impacts generated by SASS-funded projects.

Data Collection and Model Development

2025 SASS Projects: The annual SASS intake questionnaire was distributed to all project partners in March 2026 to align with annual performance reporting deadlines. The online reporting tool was developed to collect the information necessary to conduct the economic impact analysis (Appendix A). Responses were requested from all 32 organizations responsible for managing the 59 SASS-funded projects, including projects administered through the three regional strengthening agreements. Of the 59 projects, 12 reported no SASS expenditures during calendar year 2025.

U.S. Benchmark Input-Output (I-O) Data Codes: To estimate regional economic impacts, project expenditures must be assigned to industry categories that correspond with the Bureau of Economic Analysis Regional Input-Output Modeling System (RIMS II). SASS funding recipients were asked to describe the activities completed during calendar year 2025, and each project was assigned to an industry category based on the nature of the work performed. Following a review of project activities and consultation with funding recipients, 14 industry categories were selected for the analysis (Table 2).

Table 2. SASS investment industry categories, 2025

U.S. Benchmark I-O Data Codes	Description
8	Wood product manufacturing
52	Administrative and support services
54	Educational services
111400	Farming, greenhouses
113000	Forestry and logging
114000	Fishing, hunting and trapping
115000	Support activities for agriculture and forestry
541700	Scientific research and development
561300	Employment services
713900	Other amusement and recreation industries
5416A0	Technical consulting services
5419A0	Other professional, scientific, and technical services
813A00	Grant-making, giving, and social advocacy
813B00	Civic, social, professional, and similar activities

Results

All SASS funding recipients completed the annual intake questionnaire, resulting in a 100 percent response rate. The reported data were compiled and analyzed using the regional economic impact model. Results are presented below.

Projects Included

Table 3 presents the SASS-funded projects that reported expenditures during calendar year 2025. In 2025, 44 of the projects had active spending. Projects are organized by project name. Projects administered through the three regional strengthening agreements, including associated sub-awards, are listed first, followed by projects managed directly by partner organizations. USDA funding was administered through the Forest Service (including State, Private, and Tribal Forestry), Rural Development, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Table 3. SASS investment projects reporting SASS spending in 2025

Project name	Partner	Project location	Investment category	USDA agency
Regional Strengthening Agreement Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (administration)	Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (CCTHITA)	Southeast	Tribal and Indigenous interests	RD
Subaward Brown Bear Co-existence	Defenders of Wildlife	SEAK	Infrastructure	RD
Subaward Chief Shakes Tribal House Improvements	Wrangell Cooperative Association	Wrangell	Tribal and indigenous interests	RD
Subaward Environmental Laboratory for the SEAK Tribal Ocean Research Network	Sitka Tribe of Alaska	SEAK	Tribal and indigenous interests	RD
Subaward Food Security/ Sovereignty/ Community SmokeHouses and Fish Camps and Kayaani Network	Sitka Conservation Society	SEAK	Tribal and indigenous interests	RD
Subaward Food Security/ Sovereignty/ Kayaani Commission	Sustainable Southeast Partnership	Sitka	Tribal and indigenous interests	RD
Subaward Regional Composting Network	Sustainable Southeast Partnership	SEAK	Infrastructure	RD
Subaward Restoring Tlingit potato gardens in traditional sites	Sustainable Southeast Partnership	SEAK	Tribal and indigenous interests	RD
Subaward Tribal Garden to Increase Food Security	Sitka Tribe of Alaska	Sitka	Tribal and indigenous interests	RD
Subaward Yakutat Tlingit Tribal Greenhouse and Compost Facilities	Yakutat Tlingit Tribe	Yakutat	Tribal and indigenous interests	RD

Project name	Partner	Project location	Investment category	USDA agency
Regional Strengthening Agreement Southeast Conference (admin + microgrants)	Southeast Conference	Juneau	Community capacity	RD
Subaward Aquatic Farmers' Offloading Pier and Packing Facility PLANNING	Alaska Oyster Cooperative	POW	Infrastructure	RD
Subaward Commercial Fishing Crew Apprentice Program	Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust	SEAK	Community capacity	RD
Subaward Local Fish Fund	Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust		Community capacity	RD
Subaward Regional Seafood Access Assessment	Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust	SEAK	Community capacity	RD
Subaward Shellfish Hatchery internship and training program	OceansAlaska Shellfish Hatchery and Marine Science Center	Saxman	Natural resources	RD
Regional Strengthening Agreement Spruce Root (admin + additional sub-awards)	Spruce Root	Southeast	Tribal and Indigenous interests	USFS
Subaward Fisheries Science Education	Hoonah Indian Association	Hoonah	Tribal and indigenous interests	USFS
Subaward Hoonah Legacy Roads to Trails	Hoonah Indian Association	Hoonah	Natural resources	USFS
Tongass Young-Growth Transition	Alaska Division of Forestry	SEAK	Natural resources	USFS
Forest Products Industry Input and Expertise for Young Growth Transition	Alaska Forest Association	SEAK	Natural resources	USFS
Alaska Youth Stewards	Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska	SEAK	Tribal and indigenous interests	USFS
Cultural Interpretive Training – Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska	Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska	SEAK	Tribal and indigenous interests	USFS
Wildland Fire Program	Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska	SEAK	Tribal and indigenous interests	USFS
Snow Pack Monitoring and Deer Strategy	Hoonah Indian Association	Hoonah	Tribal and indigenous interests	USFS
Tourism and Visitor Products	Juneau Economic Development Council	Juneau	Community capacity	USFS
Cultivating Ecotourism Opportunities	Kootznoowoo, Inc.	Angoon	Infrastructure	USFS

Project name	Partner	Project location	Investment category	USDA agency
Cooperative Development, Planning, and Implementation of Watershed Restoration Projects in Southeast Alaska	National Forest Foundation	SEAK	Natural resources	USFS
Kake Alaska Youth Stewards Enhancement Project	Organized Village of Kake	Kake	Tribal and indigenous interests	USFS
Keex' Kwaan Community Forest Project Enrichment	Organized Village of Kake	Kake	Tribal and indigenous interests	USFS
The Teqe'heit Stewardship Program	Organized Village of Kasaan	Kasaan	Tribal and indigenous interests	USFS
Alaska Native Heritage Signage Juneau	Sealaska Heritage and Trail Mix, Inc.	Juneau	Tribal and indigenous interests	USFS
Storytelling and Public Engagement	Sitka Conservation Society	Sitka	Community capacity	USFS
Investment Focus on Capacity Building Sitka	Sitka Trail Works	Sitka	Community capacity	USFS
Sitka Area Trail Development	Sitka Trail Works	Sitka	Infrastructure	USFS
Invasive Species Management on the Sitka Road System	Sitka Tribe of Alaska	Sitka	Natural resources	USFS
Sitka National Forest Partnership Collaborative Program	Sitka Tribe of Alaska	Sitka	Tribal and indigenous interests	USFS
Special Forest Product Plan Development, Implementation and Monitoring	Sitka Tribe of Alaska	Sitka	Tribal and indigenous interests	USFS
Investment Focused on Watershed Restoration	Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition	SEAK	Natural resources	USFS
Watershed Restoration Workshop and Capacity Exchange	Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition	Juneau	Community capacity	NRCS
Investment Economic Monitoring	Southeast Conference	Juneau	Community capacity	USFS
Regional Biomass Strategy and Pellet Mill	Southeast Conference	Ketchikan	Infrastructure	USFS
Community Forest Projects (Spruce Root **87 total \$2475000)	Spruce Root	SEAK	Tribal and indigenous interests	USFS
Southeast Alaska Farmers Summit	Spruce Root	Haines	Natural resources	NRCS

Note: Shading denotes regional strengthening agreements and sub-awards managed within them
USFS = Forest Service Alaska Region, SP&TF = Forest Service State Private and Tribal Forestry, RD = Rural Development, and NRCS = Natural Resources Conservation Service

Total Project Spending Impact

Overall Spending and Output

SASS funding recipients were asked to report the amount of SASS funding expended during calendar year 2025 and the share of expenditures that occurred within Southeast Alaska.

Across all projects, recipients reported spending \$6.7 million in SASS funding during 2025, with approximately 90 percent of expenditures occurring within the region.

As shown in Table 4, the \$6.7 million in direct project spending generated an additional \$3.1 million in indirect and induced economic activity throughout Southeast Alaska. As a result, SASS investments produced a total economic impact of \$9.8 million in regional economic output during 2025.

Table 4. Total output impact of SASS investments, 2025

U.S. Benchmark I-O Data Codes	I-O Data Code Descriptions	Reported Spending by Partners	Final-demand Output Multiplier	Total output
8	Wood product manufacturing	\$681,067	1.6747	\$1,140,583
52	Administrative and support services	\$1,192,849	1.4342	\$1,710,785
54	Educational services	\$414,607	1.472	\$610,301
111400	Farming, greenhouses	\$770,347	1.4295	\$1,101,211
113000	Forestry and logging	\$54,816	1.7822	\$97,693
114000	Fishing, hunting and trapping	\$38,794	1.2072	\$46,832
115000	Support activities for agriculture and forestry	\$1,099,005	1.462	\$1,606,745
541700	Scientific research and development	\$216,140	1.4352	\$310,203
561300	Employment services	\$110,000	1.4207	\$156,277
713900	Other amusement and recreation industries	\$190,059	1.4917	\$283,511
5416A0	Technical consulting services	\$100,595	1.5059	\$151,486
5419A0	Other professional, scientific, and technical services	\$345,508	1.5052	\$520,058
813A00	Grant-making, giving, and social advocacy	\$1,314,275	1.4307	\$1,880,333
813B00	Civic, social, professional, and similar activities	\$151,832	1.4586	\$221,462
	Totals	\$6,679,893		\$9,837,480

To illustrate how multipliers work, the scientific research and development sector can be used as an example. The sector's output multiplier is 1.435, meaning that every \$1.00 spent directly on research and development activities generates an additional \$0.435 in economic activity as businesses purchase goods and services and employees spend their earnings within the regional economy. In total, each \$1.00 of direct spending generates \$1.435 in economic output.

Total Employment Impact

Employment data gathered from SASS projects included job titles and months worked by employees supported through SASS funding. These data were incorporated into the economic impact model to estimate total employment impacts.

Employment Supported by SASS Investments

SASS funding recipients reported supporting 194 positions through project expenditures in 2025. Because many positions were seasonal, temporary, part-time, or began late in the year, employment impacts were converted to year-round equivalent jobs. On this basis, SASS investments directly supported 100 year-round equivalent jobs in 2025, increasing to 135 jobs when indirect and induced impacts are included. The full list of positions supported through the SASS initiative appears in Table 5.

Table 5. Jobs created from SASS investments, 2025

Recreation/Trail Workers	55	Indigenous Stewardship Programs Director	1
Alaska Youth Stewards Youth Crew Members	25	Kayaani Commission Coordinator	1
Administrative/Program Management	12	Lab Analyst	1
Crew	9	Lab Manager	1
Apprentice carvers	5	Master Carver	1
Alaska Youth Stewards Crew Leads	3	Natural Resources Executive VP	1
Alaska Youth Stewards Program Coordinators	3	Natural Resources Planner	1
Deputy Director	3	Natural Resources Tech	1
Executive Director	3	Operations Director	1
Kootznoowoo Stewardship Crewmember	3	Operations Manager	1
Restoration Biologist	3	Outreach and Program Coordinator	1
Environmental Director	2	Program Manager	1
Fish Biologist	2	Program officer	1
Forest Technician	2	Project Coordinator	1
Foresters	2	Project Manager	1
Habitat Workers	2	Regional Coordinator	1
Hatchery Technicians	2	Regional Resource Coordinator	1
Media	2	Science Director	1
Program Coordinator	2	Senior Policy Coordinator	1
Program Director	2	Sitka Sustainable Community Catalyst	1
Administrative	1	Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy Storytelling	1
Alaska Representative	1	Special Projects Manager	1
Anthropologist	1	Stewardship Crewleader	1
Consulting Forester	1	Stewardship Crewmember	1
Curriculum Developer	1	Subcontractor	1
Department Director	1	Sustainability Fellow	1
Director of Culture and History	1	Sustainable Southeast Partnership Director	1
Economist	1	Technical Support	1
Engagement Coordinator	1	TEK Specialist	1
Engineer	1	Trail Crew Leader	1
Environmental Education Coordinator	1	Watershed Hydrologist	1
Executive Assistant	1	Watershed Scientist	1
Future Leaders Catalyst	1	Watershed Technician	1
greenhouse technician	1	Watershed Technician	1
Habitat Supervisor	1	Wildland Fire Manager	1
Indigenous Stewardship Director	1	Youth Coordinator	1
Executive Assistant	1	Total	194

Employment by Month

Recipients were asked how many workers were employed through SASS funding agreements during each month of calendar year 2025. Jobs were measured by month to account for seasonal and part-time employment. Peak employment occurred in July, when 169 unique workers were employed using SASS funds (Figure 1). This pattern reflects the seasonal nature of many SASS-supported positions, particularly those involving summer field work.

Figure 1: Number of workers funded by SASS investments in 2025, measured monthly

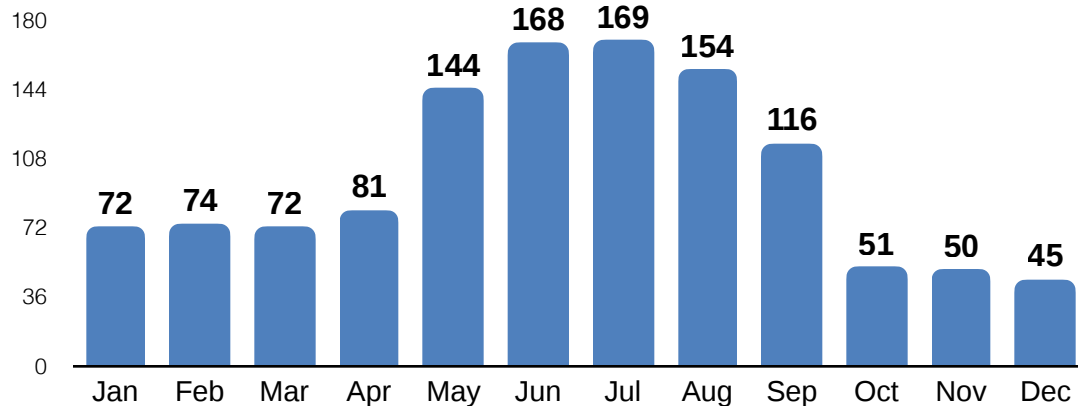
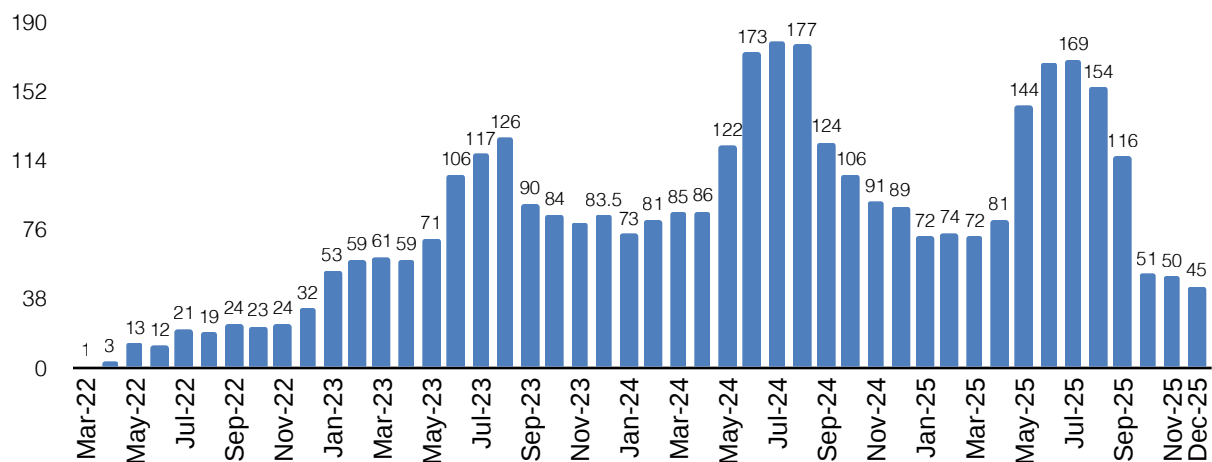


Figure 2 presents monthly direct SASS employment from 2022 through 2025. The data show the seasonal nature of SASS-funded work, with employment peaking during the summer field season each year. Employment levels were highest in 2024 and remained elevated in summer 2025 compared to the early years of the initiative. In July of 2024 a peak of 179 workers were employed on SASS projects.

Figure 2: Number of workers funded by SASS investments by month, 2022-2025



Employment Impacts

To estimate annual employment impacts, monthly employment totals were annualized by summing employment across all months and dividing by twelve. Based on this approach, SASS investments directly supported an average of 100 year-round equivalent jobs in 2025 (Table 6). When indirect and induced effects are included, total employment impacts increased to 135 year-round equivalent jobs across the regional economy.

Table 6. Employment impact of SASS investments, 2025

U.S. Benchmark I-O Data Codes	I-O Data Code Descriptions	Direct Annualized Jobs Reported	Direct-effect Jobs Multiplier	Total jobs
8	Wood product manufacturing	3.2	2.6233	8.3
52	Administrative and support services	40.3	1.3186	53.2
54	Educational services	5.4	1.1962	6.5
111400	Farming, greenhouses	2.3	1.2766	3.0
113000	Forestry and logging	0.5	1.7207	0.9
114000	Fishing, hunting and trapping	1.2	1.1818	1.4
115000	Support activities for agriculture and forestry	18.3	1.1195	20.5
541700	Scientific research and development	6.3	1.6948	10.6
561300	Employment services	7.3	1.2827	9.3
713900	Other amusement and recreation industries	5.5	1.2383	6.8
5416A0	Technical consulting services	2.0	1.3969	2.8
5419A0	Other professional, scientific, and technical services	6.3	1.5353	9.7
813A00	Grant-making, giving, and social advocacy	1.3	1.3993	1.9
813B00	Civic, social, professional, and similar activities	0.4	1.2918	0.5
	Totals	100.3		135.2

To illustrate the employment multiplier analysis, the scientific research and development sector can be used as an example. The employment multiplier for this sector in Southeast Alaska is 1.6948, meaning that each direct job supported by scientific research and development activities generates an additional 0.6948 jobs elsewhere in the regional economy through indirect and induced effects. Because SASS funding recipients reported direct employment associated with their projects, employment impacts were estimated by applying the employment multiplier to the reported number of direct jobs.

Total Wages Impact

SASS funding recipients reported that 48 percent of all project expenditures were used for employee compensation. Funding recipients also reported wages paid to employees supported through SASS-funded projects. In 2025, direct wages totaled \$3.2 million (Table 7). When indirect and induced effects are included, the total labor income impact of SASS investments increased to \$4.7 million across the Southeast Alaska economy.

Table 7. Wages impact of SASS 2025 Investments

U.S. Benchmark I-O Data Codes	I-O Data Code Descriptions	Direct Wages Reported	Direct-effect Earnings Multiplier	Total earnings
8	Wood product manufacturing	\$392,255	2.4237	\$950,708
52	Administrative and support services	\$903,997	1.372	\$1,240,283
54	Educational services	\$132,895	1.2935	\$171,899
111400	Farming, greenhouses	\$322,240	1.3944	\$449,331
113000	Forestry and logging	\$21,263	1.6288	\$34,634
114000	Fishing, hunting and trapping	\$10,388	1.2641	\$13,131
115000	Support activities for agriculture and forestry	\$830,981	1.2258	\$1,018,617
541700	Scientific research and development	\$123,881	1.4138	\$175,143
561300	Employment services	\$85,000	1.2866	\$109,361
713900	Other amusement and recreation industries	\$93,720	1.37	\$128,396
5416A0	Technical consulting services	\$90,979	1.3207	\$120,156
5419A0	Other professional, scientific, and technical services	\$195,673	1.2838	\$251,205
813A00	Grant-making, giving, and social advocacy	\$20,142	1.3079	\$26,344
813B00	Civic, social, professional, and similar activities	\$3,250	1.2944	\$4,207
	Totals	\$3,226,664		\$4,693,417

To illustrate the earnings multiplier analysis, the scientific research and development sector is again used as an example. The direct-effect earnings multiplier for this sector in Southeast Alaska is 1.41 (rounded). This indicates that every \$1.00 paid in direct wages generates an additional \$0.41 in labor income elsewhere in the regional economy through indirect and induced effects.

Total Economic Impact Model Results

Table 8 summarizes the total economic impact of Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy investments during calendar year 2025. Economic impacts were estimated using Southeast Alaska-specific RIMS II multipliers developed by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (U.S. Department of Commerce). In 2025, SASS investments supported 135 year-round equivalent jobs, generated \$4.7 million in labor income, and produced nearly \$10 million in total economic output throughout the regional economy.

The largest economic impacts occurred in grant-making; administrative and support services; support activities for agriculture and forestry; and wood product manufacturing, which accounted for the majority of direct spending, employment, labor income, and economic output associated with SASS investments.

Table 8. 2025 SASS investment total economic impact by industry

U.S. benchmark I-O data codes	I-O data code descriptions	Direct spending by partners	Direct annualized jobs reported	Direct wages reported	Final-demand output multiplier	Direct-effect earnings multiplier	Direct-effect jobs multiplier	Total output	Total earnings	Total jobs
8	Wood product manufacturing	\$681,067	3.2	\$392,255	1.6747	2.4237	2.6233	\$1,140,583	\$950,708	8.3
52	Administrative and support services	\$1,192,849	40.3	\$903,997	1.4342	1.372	1.3186	\$1,710,785	\$1,240,283	53.2
54	Educational services	\$414,607	5.4	\$132,895	1.472	1.2935	1.1962	\$610,301	\$171,899	6.5
111400	Farming, greenhouses	\$770,347	2.3	\$322,240	1.4295	1.3944	1.2766	\$1,101,211	\$449,331	3.0
113000	Forestry and logging	\$54,816	0.5	\$21,263	1.7822	1.6288	1.7207	\$97,693	\$34,634	0.9
114000	Fishing, hunting and trapping	\$38,794	1.2	\$10,388	1.2072	1.2641	1.1818	\$46,832	\$13,131	1.4
115000	Support activities for agriculture and forestry	\$1,099,005	18.3	\$830,981	1.462	1.2258	1.1195	\$1,606,745	\$1,018,617	20.5
541700	Scientific research and development	\$216,140	6.3	\$123,881	1.4352	1.4138	1.6948	\$310,203	\$175,143	10.6
561300	Employment services	\$110,000	7.3	\$85,000	1.4207	1.2866	1.2827	\$156,277	\$109,361	9.3
713900	Other amusement and recreation industries	\$190,059	5.5	\$93,720	1.4917	1.37	1.2383	\$283,511	\$128,396	6.8
5416A0	Technical consulting services	\$100,595	2.0	\$90,979	1.5059	1.3207	1.3969	\$151,486	\$120,156	2.8
5419A0	Other professional, scientific, and technical services	\$345,508	6.3	\$195,673	1.5052	1.2838	1.5353	\$520,058	\$251,205	9.7
813A00	Grant-making, giving, and social advocacy	\$1,314,275	1.3	\$20,142	1.4307	1.3079	1.3993	\$1,880,333	\$26,344	1.9
813B00	Civic, social, professional, and similar activities	\$151,832	0.4	\$3,250	1.4586	1.2944	1.2918	\$221,462	\$4,207	0.5
	Totals	\$6.7 million	100 jobs	\$3.2 million				\$9.8 million	\$4.7 million	135.2 jobs

Conclusion

Summary of Results

Between 2022 and 2025, partner organizations reported spending SASS funds for 55 projects across Southeast Alaska, expending \$20 million of the program's \$25 million investment. The total economic impact of that spending was \$29.6 million. SASS investments supported 436 direct, indirect, and induced job-years of employment and generated substantial benefits throughout the regional economy. Overall, 89 percent of expenditures occurred within Southeast Alaska, and by the end of 2025, 80 percent of the planned investment had been spent.

Table 9. Economic impact summary of SASS investments project spending, 2022-2025

Category	2022 Impact	2023 Impact	2024 Impact	2025 Impact	Impact-to- date
Direct spending reported by SASS partners	\$1,311,374	\$4,651,757	\$7,388,801	\$6,679,893	\$20 million
Spent directly in Southeast Alaska	85%	90%	90%	89%	89%
Indirect and induced economic activity	\$597,710	\$2,222,612	\$3,649,400	\$3,157,588	\$9.6 million
Total Impact of SASS Investment Spending	\$1.9 million	\$6.9 million	\$11 million	\$10 million	\$29.6 million
Year-round equivalent direct jobs	14.3	82.5	123.6	100.3	321 job-years
Year-round equivalent indirect and induced jobs	7.5	31.5	40.9	35.0	115 job-years
Total Direct, Indirect & Induced Jobs	22	114	164.5	135.2	436 job-years
Direct annual wages	\$529,110	\$2,094,428	\$3,257,127	\$3,226,664	\$9.1 million
Indirect and induced wages	\$216,617	\$779,978	\$1,019,539	\$1,466,753	\$3.5 million
Total Wages, Including Multiplier	\$745,727	\$2.9 million	\$4.3 million	\$4.7 million	\$12.6 million

2025 Reporting Challenges

As the reporting process enters its fourth year, staff turnover among partner organizations has resulted in changes to project leadership for several grants. Additional time was required to identify new project contacts, orient them to reporting requirements, and ensure consistent and complete data collection for this report.

Appendix A: 2025 Project Intake Tool

Rain Coast Data reached out to all SASS funding recipients with an intake tool asking the following questions:

1. What is the name of your project?
2. How much of your organization's USDA Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy Investment funding did you spend on your project in 2025?
3. What percent of this above amount was spent directly in Southeast Alaska?
4. Which of the following categories best describes the work primarily completed for the project in 2025?
5. How many workers were employed through this project's agreement funding during each month of the 2025 calendar year?
6. Please list the job titles of the jobs described above.
7. How much did you pay in wages for the above workers in calendar year 2025 (excluding benefits)?

Appendix B: Open-ended Responses

Question 1: In your own words, please describe the economic impact of the project in 2025.

Summary of responses: Across projects, respondents described 2025 economic impacts as centered on workforce development, local job creation, tribal and community capacity building, sustainable natural resource management, and long-term economic diversification across Southeast Alaska. Many projects generated immediate local economic activity through wages, contracts, construction, restoration work, and locally sourced materials, with several emphasizing that nearly all expenditures remained within Southeast communities. Funding supported tribal stewardship crews, youth employment, fisheries access and management, agriculture, mariculture, tourism development, cultural interpretation, forestry coordination, and food sovereignty initiatives. Numerous responses highlighted leveraged funding and partnerships that multiplied economic value beyond the original awards, including new grants, subawards, and community investment. While some projects reported direct economic returns—such as supporting commercial fisheries, tourism businesses, timber and shellfish industries, and local agricultural production—many emphasized that their greatest value lies in long-term outcomes: building skilled local workforces, strengthening Indigenous stewardship and cultural knowledge, improving food security and ecosystem health, expanding community infrastructure and planning capacity, and creating durable systems that position Southeast Alaska for greater resilience and sustainable economic opportunity in future years.

Open-ended responses from partners are provided here unedited except for defining acronyms used in the narratives and removal of personally identifiable information of any individuals mentioned by name.

- The Cultural Interpretive Training Program contributes to economic impact through the use of internal program manager and curriculum developer roles that support the design, coordination, and delivery of cultural interpretation training. These positions strengthen tribal capacity to build and sustain training systems, while providing ongoing support for staff through structured curriculum, professional development, and program oversight. This approach reduces reliance on external resources, supports workforce stability, and builds long-term expertise and continuous improvement in culturally grounded training and interpretation.
- 2025 marked another successful year for the SASS Coordination, Navigation, and Visioning project. Collaborative relationships among Spruce Root, One USDA, the Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, and the Southeast Conference have continued to strengthen, advancing a shared vision of economic diversity, community resilience, and responsible natural resource stewardship in Southeast Alaska. This year marked the first time Seacoast Trust's earnings provided annual drawn-down funds to directly support the Sustainable Southeast Partnership's budget. The SSP Steering Committee (nominated by the network) prioritized local needs and designated \$450,000 of unrestricted funds to support SSP salary match for some Community Catalysts. The support also reached the Seacoast Indigenous Guardians Network (SIGN) to supplement staff capacity and guardian salaries, strengthening long-term stewardship, monitoring, and protection of cultural and ecological resources. The SASS Coordination, Navigation, and Visioning support has enabled the network to continue growing as we stand up this fund to ensure our vision remains grounded in the strength of our connections and our Indigenous values. In April, over 130 people gathered in Sitka for the annual Sustainable Southeast Partnership retreat to accelerate the work that benefits our region. Over three days, 80+ partner organizations built relationships, shared knowledge, launched projects, developed skills, and created ways to address present and future challenges. This gathering was a true community effort — a reflection of the strength we hold when we come together. Following the gathering, the ideas sparked turned into tangible projects that are already making an impact in Southeast Alaska today. Our network is growing. New partners are coming into the fold who may not have seen themselves reflected in this work before. Others have shifted roles yet remain integral threads in this ecosystem. We have welcomed a new Community Catalyst in Kasaan to bring youth and Elders together through harvesting traditional foods. We are welcoming a Regional Regenerative Tourism Catalyst to explore a visitor industry shaped by community priorities. In the summer of 2025, the SASS Regional Strengthening Partners—Southeast Conference, Spruce Root, and Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska—commissioned an independent evaluation to document and assess the impacts of the Southeast Alaska

Sustainability Strategy. This report demonstrates how SASS has transformed Federal-Community Partnership in Southeast Alaska and shows how far this support can go when leveraged by local partners and communities. As the SSP's Regional Community Forestry Catalyst said, "SASS shows how much more power we've held together than we were ever able to hold individually."

- In 2025, this SASS agreement supported 3 full time positions at Tlingit and Haida that worked to operate the Seacoast Indigenous Guardians Network. This funding also was subawarded to Klawock Cooperative Association in the amount of \$46,000 to support their guardian program.
- The Legacy Roads SASSi Funding has enabled us to begin construction of the first section of the Legacy Roads to trails project. From May – July 2025. We have partnered with the City of Hoonah who is purchasing all aggregate and boardwalk material for 4,300 feet of the Spasski Historic trail on the edge of town. That section of trail connects to the road on the edge of Spasski Bay which was selected by the community as the priority project. We have coordinated with Spruce Root and the USFS throughout the project to share progress and check in with questions on funding and spending. We have completed the Pilot Project of the Legacy Roads work and completed the closure on USFS lands. The Legacy Roads funding supported construction of the first section of the Legacy Roads to Trails project, which took place from May to October 2025. HIA partnered with the City of Hoonah, which purchased all aggregate and boardwalk material for 4,300 feet of the Spasski Historic trail, a section connecting to the priority road on the edge of Spasski Bay. In the 2025 field season, 2,000 feet of trail was completed with rock and aggregate, along with all 400 feet of boardwalk crossing structures built by HIA's construction crew in August and September using lumber procured from Icy Straits Lumber. This marked the completion of the Pilot Project and the closure on USFS lands. The team began scouting the 'Gobbler's Knob' section, meeting with HTC Leadership in August 2025 to review the trail, discuss design considerations, and collect data with the HNFP crew for a trail building plan to be completed over the winter and agreed upon by HTC and HIA. The project has generated significant excitement within the community, evidenced by over 100 responses to the community trail vote and the mayor's social media post. While 2,400 feet (2,000 feet of gravel and 400 feet of boardwalk) of the trail was constructed, progress slowed as we moved further from the gravel sources, resulting in less than the expected 4,300 feet of completion. The project empowers Southeast Alaskan communities through several avenues. The boardwalks are constructed from locally produced lumber from Icy Straits Lumber. The Hoonah Native Forest Partnership crew, with support from the AYS crew, served as the primary workers, with HNFP members gaining new skills in large-machine operation. The trail was used by the Huna Heritage Foundation for the Hoonah "Berry Camp," providing access to blueberries for Hoonah youth and community members. Once completed, the trail may also offer a local tourism opportunity for a new trail guide business. Additionally, the project cross-trained crew from the KKCFP. Signage developed by Sealaska Heritage intern Olivia Mills integrates history, culture, and the

site's stewardship. The team partnered with the City of Hoonah for \$40,000 in funding for the boardwalk and aggregate material for work on their lands.

- This planning effort has contributed partially to the employment of several Sitka Trail Works employees and contractors, but its greatest impact will be in the future, if the planned projects come to fruition. Establishing a marine trail in Sitka Sound has the potential to bring more independent travelers and provide more jobs opportunities in kayak guiding.
- The project in 2025 is expected to have a meaningful, community-focused economic impact by leveraging local natural assets, workforce development, and tourism opportunities. First, identifying a “favorite bay” as a prime bear and wildlife viewing site opens new opportunities for eco-tourism growth. Wildlife viewing—especially bears in Southeast Alaska—is a highly valued activity that can attract visitors willing to pay for guided, culturally informed experiences. This can generate income for local guides, small businesses, and support services such as transportation, lodging, and food. Since the site was identified through ongoing field work, it also indicates sustainability and careful resource management, which helps protect the area's long-term economic potential. Second, the project boosts the local workforce through the Angoon Guide Academy. By training students in trail work, wilderness skills, and guiding, it opens pathways to jobs in tourism, land management, and outdoor recreation. These skills directly match the region's needs, making it more likely for participants to find work locally rather than leaving the community for employment. Third, revitalizing the Cross Admiralty canoe trip creates another tourism opportunity while strengthening cultural and historical ties to the land. Including pack rafting and practical internships—especially in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service at Pack Creek—gives participants valuable real-world experience. This not only enhances job readiness but also fosters partnerships that can attract additional funding, training resources, and long-term support for the community. Overall, the economic impact in 2025 can be described as:
 - Diversifying tourism offerings (wildlife viewing + cultural/adventure trips)
 - Creating local jobs and skill development opportunities
 - Encouraging sustainable use of natural resources
 - Strengthening partnerships with federal agenciesIn simple terms, the project helps convert local knowledge and natural resources into sustainable income opportunities, while also investing in people so the economic benefits remain within the community.
- The Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust (ASFT) successfully leveraged SASS funding in 2025, which led to a significant \$700,000 grant and a \$234,000 Program-Related Investment (PRI) from the Rasmuson Foundation for the Community Quota Entity (CQE) project. Additionally, Spruce Root provided \$30,000 for capacity building related to the CQE work. The CQE project is currently focused on finalizing the regulatory and governance structure, conducting outreach to invite membership, and ongoing fundraising efforts. The project generates substantial economic and social health benefits by: Recapturing fishery assets that had been sold out of the region and often out

of state. Providing resident and Alaskan fishermen with critical access to fisheries. Ensuring that the harvest is delivered and processed within the region, thereby increasing local economic activity.

- ASFT successfully met the project goal of publishing a regional seafood equity assessment. The assessment and report provides educational insights into the equity needs, gaps, and priorities of the region's seafood and mariculture industry. Furthermore, the fishery access survey and subsequent report yielded essential data for evaluating the interest of rural Southeast residents in fishing. This included identifying the fisheries they wished to access and the barriers to participation. Consistently, rural residents cited the halibut fishery as a priority access point and the cost of quota as the main obstacle. ASFT continues to leverage the data from this and other reports in the development of the Community Quota Entity (CQE).
- ASFT secured a City and Borough of Sitka Fishery Enhancement Fund grant to continue our crew apprentice training curriculum and additional skill and safety training as well as funding by the Edgerton Foundation. In addition, ASFT continued to expand crew apprentice training by helping to conduct a multi-day workshop in Kodiak with other statewide partners. By training crew and offering young people safe pathways into commercial fisheries, we are also increasing local jobs, building the resident workforce, and providing for the future health and prosperity of the region. Since all of our host skippers and apprentices are operating in Marine Stewardship Council certified sustainable small scale fisheries, ASFT is also contributing to the ecological health of the region.
- 1 employee's salary was covered for a total of 241.5 hours. Workforce development and educational activities were carried out for high school students that has an economic impact that is not able to be quantified.
- The yields for investing in youth education are returned far in the future, so the economic impact of this program will primarily not be realized in 2025. The present day impacts, beyond the direct employment of youth educators and contractors, are the intangible benefits of kids spending healthy, safe time outdoors.
- 99.87% of the project funds spent in 2025 were spent locally, with only \$341.95 going to out-of-town supply purchases. So nearly 100% of project funds directly supported the local economy and therefore likely recirculated in the community, creating secondary economic benefits. Salaries & Contracts In 2025, \$90,000 was spent on contracts with Sitka Tribe of Alaska in 2025 to complete the smokehouse project action plan, materials and other deliverables. These contracts provided the expertise and capacity necessary to complete the project activities in alignment with the project purpose and vision, and to deliver meaningful educational materials and programming in support of community development. \$75,000 of the money invested with STA went directly to support the operations of the STA Redoubt Sockeye Management program, including maintaining in-season management, increasing the sustainability of the program, and supporting the

development of a management plan in collaboration with Sealaska Heritage Institute. This funding supported traditional and customary food access, stewardship, and local jobs. In 2025, \$70,000 was spent on a construction contract with K&E Alaska Inc. to complete the grading, excavation, utility trenching, foundation laying, and construction of the learning/food processing shelter at Pacific High School. This funding supported local jobs and helped create a long-term community asset in support of place-based education and local and traditional food access. In 2025, \$3,600 was spent on volunteer stipends for local elders who generously shared their time, energy, and invaluable knowledge for the smokehouse film series. In 2025, \$38,535.80 was spent on SCS personnel costs (wages, payroll tax expenses, and employee benefits) for the smokehouse project. This included wages, payroll tax expenses and employee benefits for an average of two days a week of work on the smokehouse project for each of the following team members:

- Sitka Sustainable Community Catalyst: Responsible for administering and coordinating the smokehouse project, working as an active facilitator and member of the smokehouse project team, and contributing to and completing smokehouse project deliverables.
- Future Leaders Catalyst: Responsible for partnerships, youth program strategy, planning, coordination and implementation of collaborative youth programs related to local and traditional foods, safe access to lands and waters, stewardship, cultural experiences, skill building and youth empowerment.
- Youth Program Coordinator: Responsible for planning, coordination and implementation of collaborative youth programs related to local and traditional foods, safe access to lands and waters, stewardship, cultural experiences, skill building and youth empowerment.

The above total SCS personnel costs also included \$416.80 for the Executive Director's wages and payroll tax expenses for hours spent supporting the Sitka Sustainable Community Catalyst on the smokehouse project. Materials & Supplies In 2025, \$46,993.47 was spent on materials and supplies. The largest expenditure in this category was \$44,253.29 spent on young growth timber sourced from a small-scale mill in Southeast Alaska for the construction of the PHS learning/food processing shelter. This spending benefitted a small-scale regional mill, the young growth timber industry, the Alaska Marine Highway System (which was used to transport the wood to Sitka), and created opportunities for local contractors to gain experience working with local and more sustainable lumber products. \$1,706.60 was spent on the learning/food processing shelter utility hook-up costs. A total of \$1,033.58 was spent on materials and supplies for STA's Traditional Smokehouse including a wood stove, two chimney caps, a stove pipe flue increaser, cedar for repairs, a torch & torch kit, knives, food storage boxes, and canning jars.

- Conflict with bears is costly for individuals and communities. Repairing fences, chicken coops, sheds, or other structures that bears damage in pursuit of unprotected food sources can place high financial burdens on homeowners. Local livestock and agricultural producers lose profits when bears consume their products and damage infrastructure. Frequently replacing damaged garbage cans or repairing community gardens, compost sites, or landfill infrastructure can strain community budgets.

Defenders' bear coexistence work in Southeast Alaska reduced these costs and losses by offering funding for tools that protect bear attractants and prevent conflicts. In 2025, Defenders provided \$49,329.64 for bear-resistant garbage cans in Haines and \$3,307.56 in electric fence reimbursements for Southeast Alaskan residents. This contribution reflects both federal grant and match funds.

- As an employment program for rural and Indigenous youth, AYS offers place-based on-the-job experiential education and training to care for traditional lands, waters and communities. The youth stewards have the opportunity to work alongside professionals and experts in the region. They are exposed to a breadth of experiences driven by communities and partners. The program allows for shared generations to converge in meaningful activities that restore traditional lands, perpetuate culture, provide opportunities to grow skills, generate income and work towards a collectively built, sustainable future. AYS creates a pathway to post-high school career and educational opportunities by investing in the skills and knowledge of young community members, enhancing their capacity to address environmental changes. Providing training in areas such as environmental monitoring, data collection, and sustainable practices, AYS empowers youth to actively contribute to community resilience now and in the future.
- The project stimulated growth and sustainability on twelve agricultural projects from Yakutat to southern southeast.
- This subaward partially funded one full time employee in Southeast Alaska from 1/12/2025 through the project closeout on 7/15/2025. This grant solely funded planning activities, so no funds were spent on supplies or contracting. Minimal economic impact. Laid ground work for increased food security and lead to additional funding for garden development.
- In February 2025, Spruce Root and Farragut Farm hosted the tenth bi-annual Southeast Alaska Farmers Summit at Chapel by the Lake in Juneau. This three-day educational conference brought together 82 farmers and industry professionals to share knowledge and promote best management practices in Alaska agriculture. We developed a dedicated summit website (www.seakfarmerssummit.org) as a central hub for registration, program information, speaker bios, and resources to support the event and extend its reach. The website remains active as a repository of presentation materials, recorded sessions, and agricultural resources for participants and the wider farming community. It was hosted as a hybrid event to accommodate multiple participation pathways, with select sessions live-streamed for free online. Following the summit was a day of optional farm tours with 30 attendees.
- The economic impact of the funds expended in 2025 minimal as the project was winding down - the bulk of the project was executed in community in 2023 and 2024 including the contract funds that support the Tlingit Potato gardens in communities. No contractors were paid from this projects SASS funding 2025.

- In 2025, this project supported the construction and establishment of the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe (YTT) Community Market Garden, creating new local economic activity and strengthening food access for community members. The garden provided the infrastructure needed to grow produce locally, reducing reliance on expensive, imported foods and keeping food dollars circulating within the community. As a result of the project, YTT was able to sell fresh produce directly to community members. These sales generated revenue to support ongoing garden operations while also helping households access affordable, locally grown food. The project contributed to small-scale income generation, local skill development in gardening and food production, and laid the foundation for long-term economic sustainability through community-based agriculture.
- There was significant economic impact of this award. Funds were used to assist with weir operations at Redoubt Lake. The sockeye management plan for this system requires in season escapement data to trigger liberalized household subsistence harvests, the Tribe's community harvest permit, and the commercial fishery. Without escapement data none of these happen. Although the 2025 commercial harvest revenue is confidential it likely exceeded \$1million. The Sitka Tribe assisted FS staff in implementing the Redoubt salmon weir. The mgmt. plan for that system uses in-season sockeye salmon escapement data to liberalize the subsistence harvest and trigger the Tribe's Community Harvest Permit and the commercial fishery. While exact commercial harvest numbers are confidential rough estimates suggest well over a half a million pounds of sockeye were harvest as a result of this funding.
- Support for supply needs of the timber industry in AK
- The work on this project helped to coordinate and work with a range of partners across Southeast Alaska working on active forest management projects with the Tongass Collaborative. The work that was done including collaborative partnership projects, project planning and coordination, and interface between stakeholders and agency staff to create good Tongass management outcomes. The work done in the performance period brought together tribal representatives, timber operators, Forest Service staff, State of Alaska staff, conservation organizations, municipal partners, and business owners. The work that was conducted helped to lead to various outcomes including the Thomas Bay Stewardship sale, young growth wood products being sent to high school career and technical education programs, and timber sale and stewardship project planning.
- Southeast Conference staff conducted grant management, reporting, and outreach tasks in 2025 in support of the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy and the four SASS sub-awards managed by SEC. Funding was paused for various reviews in January 2025 and SEC floated payments where possible to keep key projects progressing, including Oceans Alaska's February 2025 oyster hatchery workshops. Funding did not flow again until June 2025 and SEC efforts were instrumental in making sure projects were successful despite the long funding pause. Economic impacts of SEC administration included wages and benefits for three Juneau-based staff as well as spending on

contractors conducting accounting, website development, and grant evaluation. SEC's spending covered under this reporting also includes reimbursements of expenses for 13 SASS micro-grant projects based in eight Southeast Alaska communities. Micro-grant projects built capacity and momentum for natural resource-related projects with potential to generate income/funding for long term sustainability. Despite the funding pause 11 micro-grants were completed successfully and another two were partially completed.

- This project resulted in watershed restoration that will benefit salmon and deer populations for people in Angoon and Hoonah. We employed 4 people from the community of Angoon and two+ from Juneau to restore 26.53 acres of peatland forest wetlands, 8.46 acres of floodplain wetland, and restore approximately 2,400 feet of streams in the Ward Creek watershed. The project included workforce development training that will greatly benefit the crew-members of the Kootznoowoo Stewardship Crew, including chainsaw certifications, blasting certifications, wilderness first aid, and more. Further, the US Forest Service used the project as a blasting training opportunity, benefiting seven people.
- This project supported biologists and tribally runs stewardship crews to conduct hands on watershed restoration throughout southeast Alaska. In addition to direct jobs, this project enhanced fish and wildlife populations and provided workforce development trainings for 40 people.
- Training and capacity exchanges related to watershed restoration on the Tongass National Forest
- This position provided significant labor for HIA to contribute to data linked to USFS needs and wildlife management. We supported an adult crew of 6 during most of June and a research position for local knowledge related to deer in the winter of 2025.
- This project is developing Alaska Native Heritage signs to be installed on Juneau Trails. Trails are the heart of Juneau. With over 170 miles collaboratively managed, they improve residents' quality of life and support the tourism economy by attracting visitors. The Juneau trail system is an ideal opportunity to increase knowledge about Indigenous people. Trail signs acknowledge Tlingit history, culture, and values. Incorporating Tlingit place names, language, art, and historical events into interpretive signage will engage non-Native residents and visitors alike in relearning history and developing an understanding of Tlingit experiences and life-ways. This will complement current efforts like the Forest Service's Mendenhall Master Interpretive Plan and the City and Borough of Juneau's Downtown Wayfinding plan. Part of the larger process of truth-telling and community healing, this public recognition of Indigenous history and culture will foster intercultural education and appreciation for generations to come.
- There was minimal economic impact, the labs PSP testing did support public health and safe access to shellfish resources. Although the lab has no regulatory authority it has done pre-regulatory testing for commercial harvesters and growers. Our testing cost are

lower than the State's and if the results came back over the regulatory limit they would delay their harvest until toxin levels dropped.

- Our economic impact was minimal, since we employed our habitat crew for three of twelve months of the calendar year. The data we collected that pertains to culverts can have a positive economic, social, and cultural impact. We can train workers to collect data, and we can secure funds to replace failing culverts.
- This project provided the primary income for three households during 2025.
- These funds were spent in preparation work for the construction of an oyster processing /shipping facility.
- In 2025 OceansAlaska held a "Train-the-trainer" Shellfish Hatchery workshop that prepared 8 participants to train beginner Shellfish Hatchery workshops. Subsequently, a beginner level workshop was held with 10 participants. This knowledge base was additive to Alaska Sea Grant shellfish programs and to UAS Fisheries Technology courses, as instructors from both programs participated in "Train-the-trainer." These opportunities are fundamental to the long-term building of a robust shellfish mariculture industry in Alaska.
- Our crew of five, 14-18 year old local students, spent their summer participating in nine paid weeks of work, followed by school year opportunities to engage in summits and national conferences. Our work is rooted in Indigenous stewardship, and has additional themes of leadership development, Tlingit culture, social emotional well-being and community engagement. The summer is a continuous learning experience as the crew gains hands-on experience working in data collection and scientific methodology, habitat monitoring and restoration, traditional food processing and invasive plant management, to name a few.
- The project enabled 4 KKCFP crew to obtain job skills, and OVK contracted locally to a project that employed an additional 5 people.
- No immediate economic impact but completion and implementation of the plan will expedite commercial access to special forest products.
- There was no direct economic impact in 2025.
- No immediate economic impact. Long-term expedited commercial access to special forest products while prioritizing subsistence access
- In 2025, Spruce Root made significant progress under the Community Forest Partnership SASS agreement, which supports watershed restoration, workforce development and Community Forest Collaboratives and youth stewardship efforts on Prince of Wales Island, in Hoonah, and across Southeast Alaska. A major focus this year was deepening relationships with tribal partners. Spruce Root strengthened its working relationship with Hydaburg Cooperative Association by engaging with interim

Tribal Administrators, liaising with Tribal Council, and establishing rapport with HCA environmental staff to outline a shared path forward. After years of building trust and laying the groundwork for meaningful work on the forest, final agreements were executed between Spruce Root and HCA in early 2026. Two sub-awards are now in progress with HCA: \$225,000 for the Sustaining Healthy Deer Population project and \$250,000 for Habitat Restoration. Spruce Root is working closely with the tribal administrator to ensure funds are utilized. Spruce Root has requested that project proposals with budget forecasts against these funds be finalized by June of 2026 for work planned through April 2027.

- While the project created opportunities for networking, collaboration, and idea sharing during the project window of 2023 & 2024, which allowed for participants to enhance their capacity and efficiencies - The project essentially ended in December 2024 and 2025 was spend winding down the project, working on storytelling activities, and data collection and grant reporting.
- Throughout 2025, JEDC's Tourism and Visitor Products work under the USFS SASS agreement generated meaningful economic impact for Southeast Alaska by strengthening the region's core visitor industry through coordinated cluster development, advocacy, and market intelligence. JEDC convened more than 15 meetings across four sub-cluster groups — small cruise ship operators, flightseeing operators, fishing guides, and Mendenhall Glacier operators — facilitating the kind of industry coordination that supports permit access, infrastructure investment, and business continuity for operators whose combined activity drives a significant share of Juneau's seasonal economy. The 14th annual Innovation Summit drew over 200 entrepreneurs, policymakers, and industry leaders, serving as a direct platform for cross-sector collaboration and Tongass Forest Plan input that will shape the regulatory environment for commercial recreation for years to come. JEDC also launched a Tourism Accelerator targeting early-stage operators in Juneau and Ketchikan, identifying barriers such as USFS permitting, workforce shortages, and housing constraints that, if addressed, stand to improve the viability and growth trajectory of small tourism businesses across the region. Complementing these efforts, the Mobility Data Project built a foundational dataset and visualization tool to better understand visitor movement patterns — a resource that will help both operators and land managers make smarter, evidence-based decisions about where tourism investment and infrastructure are most needed.
- The economic impact of this project in 2025 is the creation of critical analytical capacity for the USDA Forest Service to measure, communicate, and maximize the return on Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy (SASS) investments. Rain Coast Data developed a standardized intake tool to collect quantitative information from SASS funding recipients and built a regional economic impact model using Regional Input-Output Modeling System (RIMS II) to estimate direct, indirect, and induced economic effects. As a result, the USDA Forest Service is now able to clearly quantify the outcomes of its investments—including spending, job creation, and wages—in a

credible and replicable way. This significantly strengthens USDA's ability to demonstrate program effectiveness, justify continued and expanded funding, and guide future investment decisions. Beyond a single report, the project establishes a durable framework for ongoing impact tracking and reporting, improving consistency, transparency, and accountability over time. In a region with limited economic data, this work functions as essential infrastructure for USDA—enhancing its capacity to invest strategically, communicate results to stakeholders, and amplify the long-term economic impact of SASS funding.

- Briefly describe how the funds were used to support food sovereignty or your stated project goals: The SASS funds were used to build Wrangell Cooperative Association and the Native Community of Wrangell capacity to locate skilled artists to carve totem poles, restore Shakes Island to its original historic state and have the carving process be an educational journey for the community as outlined in Exhibit A. The primary focus is economic diversification activities to include development of metrics to assess progress and represent workforce development, mariculture support, community infrastructure and water and sewer projects that advance regional economic diversification and opportunity in Southeast Alaska. All of the funds were used to carve two of four Totems that were raised in Wrangell Alaska July 17-20, 2025. The poles carved were the Under Water Sea Bear by Tommy Joseph and the Double Killer Whale by Joe Young. A videographer was hired by Tlingit & Haida to film the event and WCA contracted a local high school student to video the event as well (attached are photos of apprentice and master carvers working on the totems. There were five apprentice carvers at the start of the project, however only three saw the project to completion. List any key activities or milestones achieved (see above reference to Totem Raising in July.
- The primary objective of this project is to develop and deploy a small-scale, containerized wood pellet mill that supports local biomass utilization, reduces reliance on imported fuels, and serves as a demonstration project for Southeast Alaska. Over the current reporting period, significant progress has been made toward advancing this objective through project siting, facility design, and equipment readiness.

Question 2: In addition to what you have written above, please share your 2025 accomplishments and success stories.

Summary of responses: Respondents described 2025 accomplishments as a combination of tangible project delivery, expanded partnerships, workforce development, and long-term capacity building across Southeast Alaska. Major successes included training and employing youth, stewardship crews, and fisheries workers; advancing tourism, mariculture, agriculture, and forestry initiatives; and strengthening tribal and community-led management of natural and cultural resources. Projects reported notable milestones such as new trail and recreation planning, construction of food and educational infrastructure, expanded greenhouse and community garden development, installation of Alaska's first AI-assisted salmon counting system, strengthened fisheries access through quota acquisition and workforce training, and the completion of cultural preservation tools including smokehouse story maps, films, and interpretive materials. Many organizations leveraged SASS support to secure substantial additional funding, deepen partnerships with tribes, universities, and agencies, and create new regional networks and programs. Respondents consistently emphasized that their greatest successes extended beyond immediate outputs to include stronger local leadership, improved food security, increased youth engagement and career pathways, expanded stewardship and restoration capacity, and the creation of lasting systems and relationships that will continue benefiting Southeast Alaska communities for years to come.

Here are the description of 2025 successes in the words of those who did the work:

- A key accomplishment of the Cultural Interpretive Training Program this year was the successful piloting and refinement of new curriculum components that strengthened support for tribal staff in highly visible, public-facing roles. Training expanded to include a stronger focus on customer service, cultural allyship, and the unique combination of content knowledge, communication, and professionalism required of Cultural Ambassadors, alongside intentional supports for mental health, team dynamics, and systems of care. The introduction of self-assessment and evaluation tools also advanced the program's ability to track growth and impact, contributing to improved data collection and reporting, introducing a head count systems that documented approximately 486,000 visitors entering the MGRA during program hours and roughly 59,000 documented interactions for which ambassadors were prepared for. Throughout a period of operational uncertainty for the U.S. Forest Service, Cultural Ambassadors were trained with confidence, and provided consistency in their roles, helping to maintain access to cultural education and visitor engagement while uplifting Indigenous knowledge and presence at the site.
- In 2025, we hosted a guardians gathering in Craig, Alaska with our guardians that received sub-awards from this funding. On top of this, the Guardians that received funding worked to monitor environmental projects, youth outreach, and subsistence/ cultural activities.

- We cross-trained crew from Kake, Alaska on trail building. This funding was used to support a crew of 7 for about 8 weeks of work, May - September 2025. This is providing significant funding for HIA's summer season.
- This agreement aims to enhance recreational access to the Tongass National Forest by advancing planning on infrastructure investments. Sitka Trail Works (STW) is employing a phased, multi-year approach to ensure the planning is inclusive of local perspectives, is well vetted by land management agencies, and results in thoughtful and feasible investment opportunities. In 2022 and 2023, Sitka Trail Works conducted public engagement and completed the Sitka Trail Plan. In 2024, we focused on planning and design for two recreation projects, a Marine Trail and a backpacking trail south of Sitka. In January 2025, Sitka Trail Works and contractor Fjord Landscape published an updated conceptual design for the restoration of the historic CCC trail from Goddard to Redoubt. Meanwhile, a committee of local advisors has supported Sitka Trail Works in advancing planning for a Marine Trail Network in Sitka Sound. In the spring, we received 50 comments on a public survey about the marine trail route proposals. We are in the process of updating proposed routes based on feedback and drafting a design narrative.
- 2025 Accomplishments and Successes – Angoon Guide Academy In 2025, the Angoon Guide Academy made notable progress in enhancing workforce development for wilderness guiding and sustainable tourism. Through collaborations with experienced professionals in wilderness guiding and fly fishing, students gained practical, career-oriented training aligned with regional economic opportunities. A major achievement was student participation in a week-long intensive fly fishing course through the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS). This training enhanced technical skills in fly fishing, safety, and guiding practices, preparing participants for jobs in Alaska's sport fishing and tourism industries. Students also gained hands-on field experience by shadowing professional guides on trips across Admiralty Island. These experiences offered direct exposure to guiding operations, including client services, trip logistics, and environmental interpretation. Additionally, students completed internships with the U.S. Forest Service at Pack Creek, where they gained skills in wildlife management, visitor services, and resource stewardship at a top bear viewing site. These combined efforts resulted in: Enhanced technical and professional guiding skills; Increased employment readiness and career pathways; Strengthened partnerships with UAS and the U.S. Forest Service; Expanded capacity for locally led, sustainable tourism; Overall, the program effectively equipped Angoon Guide Academy students with the knowledge, experience, and connections necessary to promote long-term economic growth in the community.
- With SASS support in 2025, ASFT significantly advanced its goal of securing halibut or sablefish A share ownership to anchor fishery access in Southeast. This was achieved by paying down quota loans, specifically an existing loan for West Yakutat Sablefish A

Shares in the amount of 34,802 pounds. In total, ASFT's Quota Bank now holds over 91,000 pounds of sablefish A shares and over 1,700 pounds of Halibut A shares.

- ASFT is actively involved in promoting fisheries access, including a recent case study completed in partnership with the University of Maine. The final report, titled Barriers and Pathways to Seafood Access: A Multi-Case Analysis of Power, Place, and Participation in U.S. Seafood Systems, will contribute to a larger, peer-reviewed journal article. The key fisheries access survey and report provided critical data on the interest of Southeast rural residents in fishing, including the specific fisheries they wanted to access and the obstacles they faced. This data was instrumental in the development of the Community Quota Entity (CQE), which now operates as the Southeast Village Fishing Collective (SVFC). This collaboration includes Spruce Root, Sealaska, Central Council of the Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, and ASFT. We have now secured the necessary funding for the SVFC to purchase quota as soon as it receives federal recognition. This was made possible by a 2025 award from the Rasmuson Foundation, which provided a \$700,000 grant and a \$234,000 Program-Related Investment (PRI) for the CQE project.
- ASFT's program continues to see strong interest, averaging over 100 applicants annually. 2025 Highlights: Participation & Selection: The program received 128 applications, with 74 individuals successfully accepted. Crew Placement: Of the participants, 58 were referred to skippers, resulting in 22 new crew placements and 5 returning crew members securing work. Skipper Engagement: Twenty skippers participated, including 13 new participants. Notably, 8 new crew members were hired directly through the program. Safety Training: An additional 8 participants completed the AK On-Board safety training course in Kodiak. Cumulative Impact: Training and Hosting: A total of 80 skippers have received comprehensive training on hosting deckhands, and 48 of those skippers have hosted new crew or interns. Fisheries Workforce: 145 "green" or experienced crew members have been successfully placed on commercial fishing vessels. Fisheries Management Contribution: 30 emerging crew members have contributed to the fisheries management process through written or oral testimony.
- 7 Students enrolled and received both high school science elective credit and 3 college credits at UAS for OCN101 Activities carried also included: Harvesting potatoes with middle schoolers (10 students); Planting seeds and installing grow towers in Greenhouse (multiple sessions, 15 students total); Outdoor/Forest classroom with 10th graders (14 students); Hunter's Education course organized for 15 students; Whalefest trip for 4 students, each one earning 1 college credit; Maritime Credentials and SHI College/Career Summit (8 students)
- Through this agreement, Sitka Trail Works invested in capacity building to train young Alaskans in the concepts and techniques of natural resource management. As a program serving all ages, the curriculum was tailored based on each age group, with the goal of creating the most engaging content regardless of ability level. Our theory of change in

developing the workforce pipeline is that students who develop an early affinity for the outdoors are then more likely to pursue natural resource careers. So the preliminary goal is to cultivate that affinity through time spent outdoors that is safe and enjoyable, building students' confidence to pursue independent activities later. As such our programming focuses on preparing students with the skills and knowledge of outdoor safety and survival to start. Young people who know what to wear, what to pack, and how to respond in emergencies are more likely to spend more time outdoors. Our programming in 2025 continued the prior year's partnership to expand the reach and serve more students. In 2025, we worked with Sitka Conservation Society, Southeast Alaska Independent Living, Youth Advocates of Sitka, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Sitka Native Education Program, and Pacific High School. In total, we served almost 100 students during themed, week-long summer camps, each serving different age groups. We continued youth programming throughout the school year, serving mostly middle and high school students during once weekly sessions during class time. The remaining funding in this agreement was expended by early in 2025, so most of the year's programming was covered by other grants and funding sources.

- This project accomplished its goals, implementing a significant body of work that furthered the project purpose of supporting healing, traditional and customary food access, and economic diversification. Many of the accomplishments had both immediate benefits and long-term benefits for the community that we anticipate will be of value for decades to come. A partial list of project accomplishments is below, loosely categorized by objective.
- Development of Smokehouse Educational Materials** The project significantly expanded the STA digital archive, completed meta data tagging to make information related to smokehouses and fish camps more accessible, and curated a collection of archival materials related to smokehouses and fish camps. This work was an essential step to facilitate the development of the smokehouse map and story map discussed below, but it was also a meaningful accomplishment in and of itself. Preserving knowledge for future generations and honoring the voices of ancestors and elders is essential to healing, to accountability, and to carrying forward Haa Kusteeyi. Some archive materials are available publicly, benefitting anyone with an interest, while others, sensitive in nature, are protected by the tribe and may be made available to Tribal citizens on a case-by-case basis, upon requests and if permitted by STA policies. The project developed a database of historic and present-day smokehouse locations utilized by the Sheet'ká Kwáan, compiling information on location, number of smokehouses, clans, quotes, and information on the destruction of smokehouses by USFS and other actors. Initially, the project team pursued accessing archaeology records from the USFS, but when that was determined to be not feasible, we looked elsewhere. The database was sourced principally from the STA archive, drawing upon oral histories and testimonies from public hearings and records. This database was then used to create a generalized map of smokehouses in the traditional territory of STA. The map is an incredible resource illustrative of elements of diverse clan and family histories and is a powerful visual of the expansiveness of Sheet'ká Kwáan relationships with specific

places, the historic abundance of traditional and customary foods, and the massive transformation that has occurred under colonization. The map is valuable for Tribal citizens and for non-native community members alike and can help build a shared understanding of the history and present in this place through the lens of smokehouses. The project created a Smokehouse Story Map to be embedded on the STA website. The centerpiece of this site is the above map along with a narrative from STA's perspective delving into smokehouses and fish camps. Here is an excerpt from the site explaining what is included: The Smokehouses of Sheet'ká K̓wáan project is a collaborative attempt to document the cultural significance of atx'aan hídi (smokehouses) and at x'aan aaní (fish camps) to the Sheet'ká K̓wáan (Tlingit people of Sitka), map their historic locations, and share the history of the US government's role in destroying our traditional smokehouses. We also aim to provide insight on the current state of smokehouses in Sheet'ká, and our path forward as Indigenous resource managers of Southeast Alaska's largest subsistence sockeye fishery. Through research of oral histories, elder testimonies, ethnographies, reports, and many more sources, we have compiled this Story Map to uplift the lives and fights of our precious ancestors and elders to protect Sheet'ká K̓wáan Territory and our way of life as Tlingit people. As the federally recognized Tribe for Sitka, Alaska, we wish to only speak on behalf of our Traditional and Customary Use Area as outlined in our Constitution. However, we acknowledge that the destruction of Indigenous smokehouses by colonial powers has been experienced across North America and Sitka is just one small piece of these far-reaching, violent actions. Many clans have occupied and cared for the lands and waters surrounding Sitka since time immemorial, and together we make up the Sheet'ká K̓wáan: the People of Sitka. In the compilation of our findings, we have strived to provide varied and balanced perspectives representative of the many clans, houses, and families in Sheet'ká. It is not our intention to misrepresent or exclude anyone in this project. Please forgive us for any and all mistakes made in the presentation of the following information. All mistakes are our own, and we do not mean to offend anyone. It is with the utmost respect and gratitude that we thank the many elders and knowledge holders who contributed to this project by sharing their lived experiences with STA and the world. Gunalchéesh. The Story Map also includes a series of smokehouse films (discussed more below) and archival materials, such as photos and audio recordings regarding smokehouses and fish camps, a compilation of STA programs supporting traditional and customary food access (including a use policy for the STA Traditional Smokehouse), a bibliography, and an about the project section which shares the broader efforts of the smokehouse project. The story map is a significant accomplishment. It is unique and meaningful resource that honors this history and the long fight for justice by Indigenous peoples. It makes important stories and voices more accessible for current and future generations, supporting healing and accountability. It puts all STA traditional and customary food programs in one place, making it easier for tribal citizens to access this information. It is a resource that can be drawn upon for many other deliverables, trainings, events, or programs for years to come for STA, other governments, other entities, and community members. The project also developed and produced a smokehouse film series to help

perpetuate Haa Kusteeyí and traditional food security. Extensive footage at the STA Traditional Smokehouse was captured with elders Al Duncan, Pauline Duncan, and John Young. All footage was made available to the STA archive. A 16-minute film wove together elder voices on the importance of smokehouses, haa kusteeyi and respect, while showing demonstrations and intergenerational knowledge sharing on putting up fish. In addition to the long form film, the project created short chapters sharing knowledge from the elders on assorted topics from fish cutting, to traditional foods across the seasons, to Lingít words related to smokehouses. These films are intended to honor elders, support youth programming through the Sitka Native Education Program (SNEP), and are an additional resource shared on the Smokehouse Story Map site.

Traditional Foods Infrastructure and Investments The project invested in infrastructure and programs to benefit traditional food access for Indigenous peoples in Sheet'ká Kwáan. We purchased, installed, and tested new equipment and supplies to improve the usability of the STA Traditional Smokehouse. The Traditional Smokehouse was designed by Tribal Elders and built through a collaborative project initiated by USFS in the 2010s to begin to make amends for its destruction of Native smokehouses on federal lands. STA gave guidance to the smokehouse project team that they did not want a new smokehouse but rather wanted to support the maintenance and use of the existing traditional smokehouse. These investments were successful and immediately led to increased use of the smokehouse by STA's Traditional Foods Program as well as by individual tribal citizens, supporting the project goal of increased access to traditional foods and traditional foods practices. The project also made a significant investment into STA's Redoubt Sockeye program to improve the resilience of this program and its infrastructure to benefit traditional and customary food security for Tribal citizens. The Lingít people have harvested salmon at Redoubt Lake for millennia. It was a busy center of salmon harvesting and was traditionally home to smokehouses. Today, Redoubt is one of the largest subsistence Gaat ("sockeye salmon") fisheries in Southeast Alaska and is an essential source of traditional foods in the Sheet'ká Kwáan territory. Real time counting of fish and adjustment of the harvest limits at Redoubt is a huge community priority because in times of high abundance it allows for harvest limits to be raised once escapement metrics are met. This increases opportunity and access for all subsistence users within the community, as well as the STA community harvest permit, which feeds Tribal elders and Tribal citizens who may not be able to access these resources independently. Continuing in-season management has the potential to double annual access to subsistence sockeye salmon in Sheet'ká and beyond (versus the minimum harvest limit allowed in low-abundance/no in-season management years), while also supporting increased commercial fishing opportunities. The Redoubt Sockeye Program furthers multi-government/institution cooperation, with STA, Sealaska, United States Forest Service and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game as key partners. Investing in maintaining in-season management and supporting the development of a long-term STA management plan is an investment in traditional and customary food access for years to come. The project also supported the construction of a learning/food processing shelter at Pacific High School, a majority Alaska Native school with a focus

on place-based, experiential education. The shelter will directly support local and traditional food access by providing a safe and comfortable location for educational activities, processing foods, and sharing foods together. The shelter is located on the Pacific High School farm, which cultivates Lingít potatoes and facilitates educational experiences for the Pacific High student body, students from Xóots Elementary School, and many other community members over the course of the year. The shelter also has potential to support SNEP, 4-H and other youth educational programs outside of school hours. The shelter was designed with young growth timber sourced from a small-scale mill in Southeast Alaska. This spending benefitted a small-scale regional mill, the young growth timber industry, the Alaska Marine Highway System (which was used to transport the wood to Sitka), and created opportunities for local contractors to gain experience working with local and more sustainable lumber products. This effort supported economic diversification and benefited youth by exposing them to local businesses and career pathways. Implementation of Educational Programming The project supported the development and implementation of over 490 hours of youth programming related to traditional and customary foods, safe access to the lands and waters of Lingít Aani, cultural experiences, skill building, and youth empowerment. These programs benefited youth and strengthened relationships between collaborating entities. Some camps were offered in both 2024 and 2025 with intentions to continue them in the future as capacity allows. The project also provided adult education experiences for STA staffers, by inviting them to participate in cutting and smoking salmon strips and dry fish in the traditional smokehouse, under the instruction of elders. This multi-day experience was facilitated as part of producing the smokehouse film series, which will hopefully be a valuable resource for many years to come.

- In 2025 Defenders of Wildlife Purchased and shipped 139 bear-resistant garbage cans to Haines with support from the Haines Borough and Alaska Chilkoot Bear Foundation. We also provided 50% reimbursements for 10 electric fence projects in southeast Alaska, ultimately providing \$3,307.56 in funding to property owners. As part of our efforts to increase general bear-awareness in the region and knowledge of the electric fence incentive program, we participated in three outreach events in Southeast Alaska, located in Haines, Sitka, and Juneau. We also advertised about our bear coexistence program in the region. In the fall of 2025, we presented our program work at the Southeast Tribal Environmental Forum. Overall, we had a very successful year and achieved project outcomes identified for the year.
- Milestones: - Supervised 7 AYS leaders and 20 crew members. AYS crew leaders return and retire - Bob Girt (retires after 8 seasons), Eric Benedict (5 seasons), Julian Narvaez (4 seasons), Eloise Peabbles (4 seasons), Thomas Mills (3 seasons), Cheyenne Thomson (2 seasons), Jon Lord (2 seasons). - Offered professional development opportunities and training to AYS leaders, including 5 leaders attending the Sustainable Southeast Partnership Spring Retreat, 1 leader taking 2 classes at UAS, 1 leader taking an online GIS course, and 5 program leaders becoming certified by the American Red Cross as Wilderness First Aid Instructors. - Hosted the second in-person all crew AYS training in

Glacier Bay. - Indigenous Stewardship Programs Grant: NOAA for Coastal Habitat Restoration and Resilience Grants for Tribes and Underserved Communities funded the POW AYS crew's stream restoration project along Jon's Creek. - 1 AYS leader and 3 crew members presented at T&H's Southeast Tribal Environmental Forum. - 9 AYS crew and 7 leaders attended the annual American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) National Conference in Minneapolis, MN. - 3 AYS leaders, 5 youth and 5 elders attended the First Alaskans Institute's Elders & Youth Conference in Anchorage, AK.

- The Yakutat Tlingit Tribe developed an excellent greenhouse and compost facility.
- The award provided staff time to identify a garden location on Baranof Island Housing Authority (under the Sitka Tribe) property and lead to a long-term lease agreement between both entities for a tribal garden. It also led to the Tribe securing an additional \$385,000 from the Native American Agricultural Foundation for garden development and education. Baranof Island Housing Authority provided a Letter of Support for the Tribal Community Garden project stating the selected site is "currently owned free and clear by BIHA and has been reserved for the future development of STA's Tribal Community Garden project." The proposed garden site is shown on a map and defined as a "1.0 acre portion of Lot 5C, U.S. Survey 407B, Sitka Recording District, First Judicial District, State of Alaska" and "Located in the vicinity of 121 Andrew Hope Street in Sitka, Alaska." - The Tribal Community Garden Plan was recommended for approval by the Kayaaní Commission in a unanimous vote on July 10th, 2025, and later approved by Tribal Council on August 6th, 2025. - In April 2025, using the then Draft Tribal Community Garden Plan for guidance, applied to the highly competitive Native American Agriculture Fund (NAAF) Grant. The application proposed funding the initial construction of the garden site, to be further developed in future phases. The application was for just over \$385,000 for staff time, permitting, contracting of site construction, and development of a Tribal Community Garden operating procedure among other things. STA has since (August 15th, 2025) been notified of our NAAF project proposal's acceptance. The project has been fully funded over two years.
- There were 82 in-person participants at the Farmers Summit this year, 11 of whom identified as Alaska Native. Of these participants, 52 currently farm, 12 plan to start farms, and 18 do not farm. There were approximately 20 participants who watched the summit live-stream via Zoom and 30 participants who participated in the optional farm tours. Although overall attendance was consistent with past years, it felt lower than expected to some participants, partly due to the larger venue and lower engagement from the local Juneau community. While a free community day in Petersburg previously boosted local engagement, a similar approach wasn't used in Juneau due to concerns about overwhelming attendance. Some felt Juneau's larger size and existing resources reduced the need to attend. Suggestions for improving attendance include capping registration at 100 to maintain a cozier feel, strategically selecting the 2027 location, and investing in broader outreach such as PSAs and paid radio ads. The 2025 Southeast

Alaska Farmers Summit featured a robust and diverse agenda to foster learning, collaboration, and innovation among the region’s agricultural community. The Summit included over 20 scheduled presentations, workshops, and small group discussions from 23 speakers. Speakers included local farmers, agricultural experts, and featured farmers from outside Southeast Alaska. Notable presenters included Kelpie Wilson of Wilson Biochar LLC, who led multiple sessions on the use of biochar to enhance farm soil; Tom Zimmer and Susie Willsrud of Calypso Farm, who shared insights on soil science and biological soil health; and Carlee Johnson-McIntosh from the Petersburg School District, who discussed strategies for building farm-to-school connections. The event also featured a NOAA meteorologist providing a session on interpreting weather patterns and their impact on farm production in Southeast Alaska. Additional evening activities included a welcome fire, a marketing discussion, a storytelling night, and a closing fire. The Summit placed a strong emphasis on featuring local farmers and their operations. The “SEAK Farmer Snapshot” sessions showcased four farms—Oceanview Gardens (Laura Ballou), Root Seller Farm (David & Nikki Love), Rising Tide Farm (Sarah Dolan), and Four Winds Farm (Sally Boisvert)—who provided virtual “farm tours” through photos and videos. These sessions allowed attendees to learn about diverse production methods, crop choices, and marketing strategies directly from their peers. Additionally, the summit offered optional farm tours on Sunday to five local sites: Ed's Edible Landscaping, Orsi Organic Produce, Juneau Greens, Juneau Composts!, and Tlingit & Haida’s Taay Hit Greenhouse. Feedback for this workshop was overwhelmingly positive. We received 51 responses to the final survey. 100% of participants said that the Farmers Summit met their expectations, and 98% said they were satisfied with the educational opportunities at the Summit. Participants noted that the most valuable parts of the summit were networking, small-group discussions, and presentations. 100% of participants reported that they expanded their skillset, 100% reported that they expanded their networks, and 73% reported that a personal or professional barrier had been removed due to the summit. At future summits, participants would like to see presentations on soil health, crop-specific techniques, pest management, sustainable practices (e.g., no-till, cover cropping, permaculture), and hands-on skills like propagation and tool use. There is strong interest in farm business topics like QuickBooks, grant writing, record keeping, and online sales platforms. Attendees also want more beginner-friendly workshops, Alaska Native and Indigenous-led sessions, and talks on social justice in agriculture, food preservation, and livestock care. USDA NRCS Recognition: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service was recognized as the primary funder throughout the event. The NRCS logo was prominently displayed on all promotional materials, the event website, program booklets, and signage. Verbal acknowledgment of NRCS support was provided during opening and closing sessions. 2026 Southeast Alaska Farmers Retreat & 2027 Summit Planning The 2026 Southeast Alaska Farmers Summit Retreat will be hosted in late February 2026. Planning for this event will begin in Fall 2025. Planning for the 2027 Farmers Summit will also start in Fall 2025. The 2025 Southeast Alaska Farmers Summit fulfilled and exceeded the objectives outlined in the grant agreement. By bringing

together 82 in-person and 20 virtual participants, the summit created valuable opportunities for knowledge sharing, networking, and skills development that will directly enhance regional agricultural practices. Moving forward, we will: 1. Continue to maintain the summit website as an ongoing resource 2. Track the implementation of best practices learned at the summit 3. Apply participant feedback to enhance the 2026 Retreat and 2027 Summit 4. Expand outreach efforts to increase participation from underrepresented communities. Spruce Root appreciates USDA NRCS's support, which has been essential to building agricultural capacity in Southeast Alaska. This partnership continues to yield significant benefits for our region's farmers and food security.

- In 2025, the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe successfully completed the construction and initial establishment of the Community Market Garden. This marked an important milestone in building local food infrastructure and increasing community access to fresh, locally grown produce. Throughout the year, the project transitioned from planning and development to active use. Garden beds were prepared and planted, systems were put in place to support ongoing cultivation, and the space became operational as a community-focused food resource. As a result, YTT was able to begin harvesting produce and selling it directly to community members. One of the project's key successes was demonstrating that locally grown food can be produced and distributed within the community. The garden supported food affordability, reduced dependence on outside food sources, and helped keep resources circulating locally. Community members benefited from increased access to fresh produce, while YTT gained valuable experience in managing a market-based food program. Overall, the project laid a strong foundation for future growing seasons and long-term sustainability. The successful establishment of the Community Market Garden in 2025 represents an important step toward strengthening local food systems, supporting economic resilience, and advancing community-driven food initiatives.
- The Sitka Tribe leveraged funding to team up with Salmon Vision to install the first AI video system in Alaska to count salmon through the weir. The goal of this new technology is to reduce weir operation costs. This was the first year of the project and was primarily used to set the system up, work the bugs and train the AI program to differentiate between the different species of salmon. This year the Sitka Tribe installed AI video shoots to count salmon making their way through the weir and into the lake. The Tribe teamed up with Salmon Vision to implement this system at Redoubt to reduce the cost of weir operations. This is the first time an AI system like this has been used in Alaska and we're hopeful that this summer the system will have learned to differentiate between the various species migrating through the weir.
- Continue to work with USFS to conduct workshops, develop sale volume and provide information re: the industry
- Coordination of activities and investments that have led to the construction of a high school learning shelter built with young growth lumber products sourced from the Tongass National Forest and shipped on the Alaska Marine Highway System The

Thomas Bay Stewardship sale and community partnerships to figure out long term forest and resource management Youth programs that teach forestry skills and build career pathways for forestry and natural resource management careers Programs and activities that develop youth leadership and involvement in the federal subsistence management program—including job and life-skills Coordination and partnership work for landslide warning and prediction Forest product inventory and assessments

- SEC's staff provided extensive assistance to Oceans Alaska in 2025 as they transitioned from SASS as a primary funding source to the SEC-managed Alaska Mariculture Cluster grant. Increasing university partnerships funded by SASS have now led to the pending sale of the Oceans Alaska floating oyster and kelp hatchery facility to University of Alaska Southeast's mariculture program. This investment is a flagship investment for the Sitka campus and also represents a positive step for the sustainability and impact of the Oceans Alaska facility. One successful micro-grant project completed at the end of Q2 2025 funded the launch of the Southeast Alaska Regional Seafood Marketing Association (SEARSMA) to support the Southeast Alaska troll fishery. The organization was formally registered, in interim Board of Directors was seated, and outreach materials were created to engage the fleet and broader industry. SEARSMA will continue outreach in preparation for a vote by the fishing fleet that could lead to self-assessment revenue of roughly \$260,000 annually to support ongoing marketing operations to help increase demand and prices. Another success story in 2025 is Southeast Conference's work in partnership with Spruce Root to complete a comprehensive evaluation of the SASS program, led by contractor Prism Kind. The report was published in July 2025 and blends qualitative and quantitative data and information to document the goals, methods, and impacts of the SASS program across all sub-awards. This evaluation helps inform future economic and community development efforts and other collaborations across a variety of partners, topics, and communities.
- This quote from Angoon crew leader Jamie Daniels encapsulates the meaning of this project: “All of this, it’s not just land to us. It’s our ancestors’ land. We’re here doing more than just fixing roads or removing culverts – we’re reconnecting with our history, our identity and our future.”
- Restoration projects in the Tongass National Forest benefiting 8 Southeast Alaska Communities
- A week of culvert assessment training with the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe, bringing the Kootznoowoo Stewardship crew to the Juneau Ranger District Safety Week, and SAWC staff working directly with the Ketchikan Indian Community and Keex Kwáan Community Forest Partnership on invasive species assessment.
- We completed surveys with over 30 deer hunters to help provide feedback on the Federal restriction to non-rural hunters Nov 1 - 10. We completed our first full year of data collection at the weather stations and we completed the 3rd full year of image

collection with our trail cameras as well as expanding and improving the network of cameras.

- In 2025, we completed the initial text for all signs. We now have 21 signs and photos to be reviewed and designed using the previously agreed-upon sign template. There are 16 interpretive signs and 5 point-of-interest signs. Five signs were fully reviewed and consulted.
- The lab continued to process shellfish sample from Southeast and around the State. Its also involved in several other biotoxin projects including an NIH COHH award to develop predictive PSP modeling, test toxicity of a mix of PSP congeners, and public response to the PSP program.
- We strengthened our relationships with local and federal agencies and increased the capacity of our habitat crew. Allowing them to do culvert assessments- as well as setting minnow traps on a different project gave us the opportunity to expand our efforts by outreaching & educating students. We had a field exercise with elementary students, and they were given educational booklets by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. We had no greater joy than planting seeds with our students, and to cultivate natural resource programs within our schools.
- Completed mapping, database, and analysis of young-growth timber stands across all non-federal ownerships in SE Alaska; findings are documented in the Addendum to the Tongass YG Inventory and Analysis Report covering federal lands in SE Alaska.
- Leverage these funds to access other additional funding to further the Alaska Oyster Cooperative Offloading/processing facility.
- The University of Alaska Southeast is in the process of acquiring OceansAlaska's Floating Mariculture Research and Training Facility, which houses the shellfish hatchery. UAS in (unofficial) partnership with Alaska Sea Grant plan to continue this shellfish hatchery training and to expand related programs significantly. This is testimony to the importance and success of the shellfish hatchery program that USDA SASS funding has allowed OceansAlaska to sustain.
- The Alaska Youth Stewards (AYS) program in Kéex' Kwáan nurtures the next generation of cultural and environmental leaders through a network of opportunity, community and care. We encourage youth to actively contribute to community well-being, restoration of ancestral lands and resilience in the face of a shifting climate. As a workforce development opportunity for rural and Indigenous youth of Southeast Alaska, Kake AYS offers place-based, on-the-job experiential education and training to care for haa aaní (our land), waters and community. Crew members work alongside professionals from around the region and are exposed to a breadth of experiences that are determined by the needs of their community and the resources of community partners. This allows for our youth to engage in meaningful activities that work to restore Native lands,

protect culture, provide opportunities to grow skills, generate income and work together towards collectively built, sustainable futures.

- The KKCFP crew travel to neighboring villages and assisted them with their work. They also learned about thinning logged forests. The funding enable a local contractor to hire 5 people and the tree thinning that was delivered is enabling better trees and corridors for animals.
- The Coordinator, Commission and Forest Service staff nearly completed the plan in 2025 and are waiting on finalized maps to roll out and implement the final plan.
- The Coordinator word with high school students and FS staff on Japanese Knotweed eradication in 2 locations on the Sitka road system. The Coordinator in conjunction with the Commission and FS staff completed a Tribe Invasive Plant Management Plan.
- Commission, Coordinator, and Forest Service staff nearly completed the Special Forest Product Management Plan for the Sitka Ranger District and the Tribe's traditional territory. The plan 2026 is to finalize (complete maps) and implement the plan.
- In Hoonah, the Hoonah Indian Association's Legacy Roads to Trails project spent its 2025 period largely in a planning phase, laying the groundwork for 2026 and 2027 field seasons. HIA's Environmental Director expressed confidence that the remaining \$700,000 of the \$1,000,00 project budget will be fully spent. The SSP Steering Committee also prioritized regional stewardship needs this year, designating \$200,000 in Community Forest Partnerships funds to support the Seacoast Indigenous Guardians Network (SIGN). This investment was matched with a \$100,000 contribution from the Seacoast Trust, and together these funds supplemented staff capacity and guardian salaries to strengthen long-term stewardship, monitoring, watershed restoration, and protection of cultural and ecological resources. Spruce Root is currently awaiting invoicing from the 2025 SIGN activity. Of the original \$465,000 allocated for Community Forest Funds and Services, \$200,000 has been directed to the SIGN funding described above, with the remaining balance of \$161,558 expected to be spent by the end of the calendar year. Overall, the award is on track to be fully spent within the expected timeline.
- Since 2011, the Juneau Economic Development Council (JEDC) has led an industry cluster-based approach to economic development in Southeast Alaska. Since its inception, the Southeast Alaska Cluster Initiative has served as a successful catalyst for private-public partnerships. This approach brings private sector industry cluster firms together with federal, state, tribal, and local agencies, university faculty, trade association representatives, economic development organizations, community leaders and other stakeholders into facilitated Cluster Working Groups. The Cluster Working Groups address industry needs, concerns, and opportunities on a cooperative basis. The Visitor Products Cluster Working Group (VPCWG), an industry-led effort that aims to support the tourism industry in Southeast Alaska, has been strengthened by developing successful cooperation based on local relationships. Facilitating this group,

JEDC supported VPCWG meetings and special engagements in 2025. JEDC staff works with the VPCWG co-chairs to host the meetings, set the agenda, identify initiatives, invite guest speakers, issue meeting invitations and reminders, coordinate travel and logistics, take minutes, and develop follow-up reporting for participants. Meetings The JEDC continued collaborating with tour operators to address Access, Trail, and Infrastructure needs within Tongass. The sub-cluster group that demonstrated the most interest in the first quarter was Small Cruise Ship Operators. The JEDC met with its representatives five times during 2025, worked diligently on the infrastructure list, and established a committee to expedite decision-making. New ranking methods were developed. In addition to meeting with small cruise ship operators, on January 6, 2025, the JEDC also convened with the National Forest Foundation (NFF) to explore creative and unconventional strategies to secure funding for trails and infrastructure. Various financing models were discussed, and JEDC presented one possible option during the meeting. Further discussions will take place in the coming months. JEDC conducted two comprehensive Visitor Cluster meetings, during which tour operators were also invited to participate in the Innovation Summit and the USFS deep dive. Additionally, JEDC met with the representatives of the following sub-cluster groups. Flightseeing Operators, Fishing Guides, Mendenhall Glacier Operators Tourism Accelerator. To empower Alaska's emerging and early-stage tourism operators (1–5 years in business) to scale profitably, sustainably, and independently, through access to tools, coaching, and market connections, JEDC scheduled 1x1 interviews with companies from Juneau and Ketchikan. The following challenges were identified. 1. USFS permitting process 2. Marketing and AI 3. Networking 4. Pricing and product development. 5. Workforce (hiring, finding the right talent, and housing). In response to growing challenges, JEDC has been developing a tourism accelerator designed to help small and emerging businesses grow, strengthen operations, and thrive in Southeast Alaska. Advocacy With JEDC's assistance, the Visitor Products Cluster Working Group (VPCWG) initiated two advocacy letters in 2025: March 2025 – USFS Staffing Concerns VPCWG expressed deep concern regarding proposed federal employee layoffs, including positions within the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). Tourism operators providing services on the Tongass National Forest were alarmed by the potential impacts these staffing reductions could have on operations, business continuity, and the overall visitor experience. December 2025 – Mendenhall Glacier Commercial Permit Holder Advocacy Based on 2025 operating conditions, JEDC initiated an advocacy letter on behalf of Mendenhall Glacier commercial permit holders, respectfully requesting action to: • Align visitor center hours with cruise ship schedules • Restore adequate seasonal staffing • Establish enforceable mechanisms to address unpermitted operators • Provide transparent guidance and a predictable timeline for the permit process Innovation Summit From February 26–28, JEDC hosted its 14th annual Innovation Summit at Centennial Hall in Juneau. Recognizing the critical role of AI in the economy, the Innovation Summit brought together more than 200 entrepreneurs, business and industry experts, policymakers, researchers, and influential change agents from across Alaska and beyond. Relevant to the recreation industry and the USFS, Day 2 featured a

presentation by Monique LaPerriere Nelson, Director of Ecosystem Planning and Information Management, who provided an overview of progress on the Tongass Forest Plan Revision. Later that day, attendees participated in two-hour Deep Dive workshops designed to gather forward-looking ideas and practical input for the Tongass Forest Plan Revision. The session aimed at collecting input to support:

1. What needs to change or be added to the current Forest Plan?
2. What would potential management areas look like for Recreation/Tourism?
3. What are the “Must,” “Should,” and “Will” statements for management on the Forest?

Session Components

1. USFS Presentation Jennifer Johnston provided an overview of what a Forest Plan covers, its limitations, the concept of management areas, and the current recreation framework.
2. Activity 1 – World Café Discussions Participants rotated through three discussion tables:
 - 1: Changes to the Current Plan Key themes included clearer structure, stronger community involvement, deeper tribal partnerships, adaptive management, prioritized resource allocation, and conflict management among users.
 - 2: Resource Management Considerations Emphasis was placed on protecting ecological integrity (soils, water, canopy, salmon), improving infrastructure and transportation, respecting cultural and subsistence values, tribal co-management, balancing recreation impacts, equitable permitting, community engagement, and learning from successful models elsewhere.
 - 3: What would management areas look like for Tourism and Recreation? Participants recommended adaptive, dynamic management systems; zoning recreation areas by use type and intensity; preserving solitude; formalizing cultural stewardship; considering ecological and seasonal factors; and implementing conflict resolution strategies.
3. Activity 2 – Feedback Frames Participants voted and commented on 13 key recreation and tourism topics. From May 2025, due to the busy visitor season, engagement and activity levels within the sub-cluster groups slowed. In preparation for the fall meetings, JEDC worked on several surveys:
 - Seasonal Worker Survey (results shared with the VPCWG on January 13, 2026)
 - Access & Trails – Small Cruise Ship operators
 - Seasonal Housing Survey
 JEDC has been actively involved in supporting the Tongass Forest Plan Revision engagement process. Based on regular (bi-weekly) meetings, the JEDC submitted Tongass National Forest Plan Revision Public Engagement Plan – Commercial Tour Operators. JEDC collaborated with the Tongass National Forest Plan Revision Team through regular coordination meetings to develop and submit a targeted Public Engagement Plan for commercial tour operators. The plan establishes a structured engagement approach organized by commercial sub-clusters (small cruise, flightseeing, fishing, and wildlife viewing) and is designed to improve the quality, clarity, and usability of operator feedback during the Plan Revision process. The engagement strategy aligns with the IAP2 Spectrum and applies a phased approach that spans Inform → Consult during the pre-draft period and Consult → Involve during the post-draft period, with a documented “Promise to the Public” committing to analysis and use of input where allowable. As submitted, the engagement plan introduces two phases: (1) a Pre-Release “Operator Readiness” phase (December 2025–March 2026) focused on building baseline understanding of Forest Plan concepts, Management Areas, and feedback expectations; and (2) a Post-Release Draft Engagement phase (April–May

2026) designed to collect location-specific, evidence-based input on Draft Plan content and Management Areas. The plan outlines the use of ArcGIS Survey123 and virtual and in person facilitation to support traceable, mappable, and defensible operator feedback, supported by educational tools including an FAQ/glossary, quick polls, virtual briefings by sub-cluster group, and guided mapping exercises to document current use areas, constraints, conflicts, and future infrastructure needs. Networking During the ATIA event (October 21-24, 2025), the JEDC representative met with cruise representatives and several tour operators from Southeast Alaska. Mobility Data In 2025, JEDC advanced the Mobility Data Project to create an accessible, usable, and decision-supporting mobility dataset and visualization tool to better understand visitation patterns, activity hotspots, and movement trends across Juneau and the Tongass region. The work focused on building a strong technical foundation, developing early-stage dashboard functionality, and evaluating the reliability and analytical limits of the mobility dataset.

- I mention that one of the apprentice is on the verge of becoming a master carver. He is the great grandson of a legendary carver who worked on many of the Conservation Corp totems in 1940. There are also 2 apprentice who are available to work on future Totem projects. It is the Council's vision to eventually raise 37 Totems in Wrangell, which is around the number of Totems that stood in Wrangell in the early 1900's. We also plan on carving 3 canoes to be used in our tourism program. All of these projects will tie into the communities port expansion to accommodate addition ships into Wrangell based on consideration of what the community deems to be a number of passengers that is acceptable to the people of Wrangell.
- The project has successfully transitioned from the originally planned Gravina Island site to the Generations Southeast Vocational Education campus in Klawock. This relocation represents a strategic improvement, aligning the project with workforce development goals while enhancing long-term operational feasibility. An agreement has been executed with the Central Council of the Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska to support site use and program integration, and the City of Klawock approved the project unanimously in November 2025.