



Forrest Cole
Forest Supervisor

A MESSAGE FROM THE FOREST SUPERVISOR

To the American People ...

Fiscal Year 2004 was an award-winning one for your Tongass National Forest, chock-full of major accomplishments in the areas of ecological sustainability, communities, recreation and tourism, relationships with Alaska Natives and organizational effectiveness. The more than 500 Tongass National Forest public servants shone in managing the country's largest forest in 2004.



Olleke Rappe-Daniels
Deputy Forest Supervisor

Highlights in the area of ecological sustainability included our vigorous efforts to correct fish passage barriers by investing more than \$2 million in stream crossing improvements and design. The lead fish passage engineer was recognized nationally for the program. The Tongass continued attacking invasive species with active programs throughout the forest. An invasive species strategy was developed to address the problem. The Stikine River welcomed a federal subsistence fishery for the first time in 50 years. Widespread watershed restoration work continued on the Tongass with riparian thinning, wildlife emphasis thinning and in-stream large woody debris insertions. The Redoubt Lake Restoration and Management Program garnered national recognition for collaborative fisheries management. The Tongass persisted in its search for innovative ways to adapt to the ever-changing timber climate and make wood available to family-owned businesses. The Tongass completed a memorandum of understanding between the Forest Service and the Wood Technology Center in Ketchikan to research new uses for Tongass timber.

Employees enhanced already-sound relations with Southeast Alaska communities and contributed to the stabilization of Southeast Alaska's economic infrastructure with a wide array of programs ... from participating in local events to assisting communities with infrastructure concerns such as access to electrical power grids. Forest Service employees took part in numerous outreach activities including educating students throughout Southeast Alaska about the agency, fisheries, watershed, subsistence, silviculture, and much more. The Tongass continued to spread an encouraging light on the surrounding area evidenced by the numerous positive stories published in Alaska media outlets or aired on Alaska radio stations.

The Tongass remained steadfast in its commitment to develop and promote sustainable levels of high-quality recreation and tourism opportunities while protecting natural resources. A forest interpretation and education strategy, which is being heralded as a national model, was developed and put into practice. As a tribute to the 40th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act, employees joined with tourism and conservation groups across Southeast Alaska to sponsor hikes, paddles and celebrations. Misty Fiords Wilderness Kayak Ranger Interpretive Program earned national recognition for its unique and innovative wilderness educational program.

The Tongass continued its efforts to incorporate the unique cultural heritage, legal status and traditional knowledge of Alaska Natives into its programs and processes. Programs highlighting these efforts included developing an archeological site stewardship program with the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe, participating in the Native Youth Practicum with students from Alaska and Hawaii, working with the Sitka Tribe to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the battle at Indian River and the survival march across Baranof Island, and sponsoring a Heritage Week in the Angoon schools to educate children about heritage resources.

Tongass programs also focused on enhancing employee's abilities to perform as an efficient, effective, proactive and multicultural organization. The Tongass made strides in organizational effectiveness with its active participation in "Credibility Through Accountability" programs and training. A Tongass forestry technician garnered a regional civil rights award for outstanding dedication, initiative, leadership, and for being an advocate for civil rights issues both in the workplace and the community. Tongass leaders continued to underscore the importance of internal relations programs, understanding that communicating timely, accurate, relevant information enhances employees' morale and effectiveness.

We want to thank the employees, our partners and cooperators for a successful year.

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