USDA FOREST SERVICE
ALASKA REGION
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Juneau, AK 99802

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Please send your comments to Teresa Haugh, Editor, Public Affairs Office (see page 2).

John Sherrod Retires

After 40 years of working with the U.S. Forest Service, John Sherrod retired as the planning staff officer on the Tongass National Forest.

John is originally from Tennessee. He received a bachelor's degree in forestry from the University of Georgia and an master's degree in forestry resources from the University of Idaho.

Over his long career, he worked on seven national forests and in three regional offices. He worked in timber management, silviculture, fire management, recreation, and served as a district ranger.

John's education and experience makes him a pioneer in developing processes and implementing regulations for many forestland and resource management plans. He served as team leader, author, and editor for numerous resource studies, environmental impact statements, forest plans, wilderness studies, wild and scenic river studies, and national land management plan initiatives.

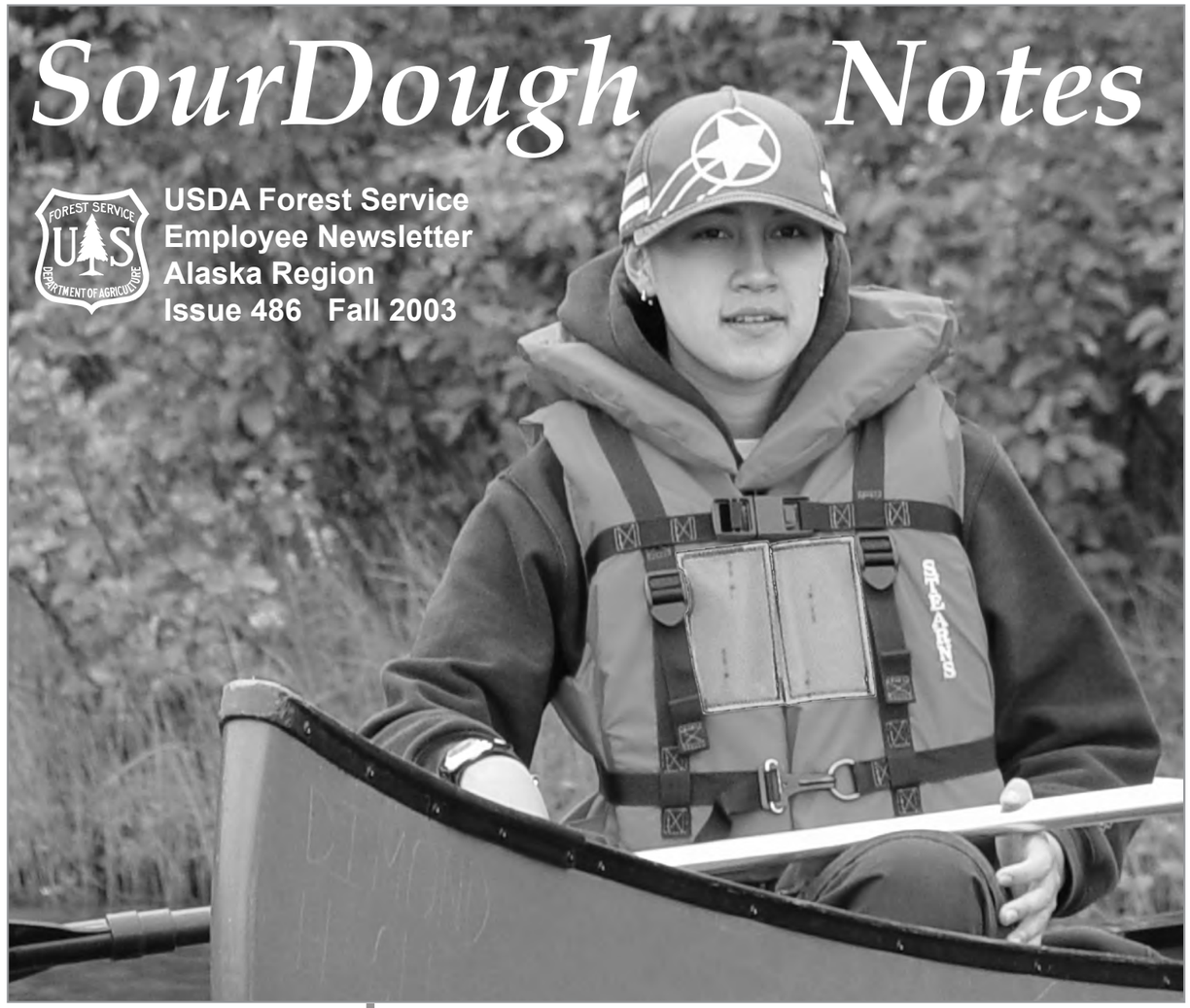
He has been a member of the Society of American Foresters for 43 years, and served as the state chairman.

John lives in Sitka, Alaska where he moved in 1988. Like many Forest Service employees, he finds time to be active in the community. He is a member of the American Legion, the Rotary Club, the Kiwanis Club, the Presbyterian Church, and works with the Boy Scouts.



SourDough Notes

USDA Forest Service
Employee Newsletter
Alaska Region
Issue 486 Fall 2003



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Youth Practicum 2003

by Lillian Petershoare, Civil Rights & Tribal Government Relations

The Office of Civil Rights and Tribal Government Relations hosted a two-week youth exchange practicum for middle school students ages twelve to fifteen on the Kenai Peninsula in July. Eight students from five Alaska Native rural villages on the Kuskokwim River, and 18 students from Hawaii, participated in the practicum. Aurora Coronell from the regional office, Ian Petershoare from the Juneau Ranger District, and volunteer Nick Danielson served as youth camp leaders.

Armed with the theme *From the Mountains to the Ocean,* students studied the many aspects of managing watersheds. They learned about glaciers, forest succession, river systems, wildlife, disturbances, and intertidal zones. They went on an ice worm safari at Byron Glacier, learned about glaciation at the Begich, Boggs Visitor Center, watched ice calving at Portage Glacier, and learned about the environmental forces impacting forest succession at Exit Glacier National Park.

Continued on page 3

ON THE COVER:
Aurora Coronell, Alaska Region employee and Youth Camp Leader, canoeing on a lake in the Kenai Wildlife Refuge at Youth Practicum 2003. Photo by Mark Hall.

SourDough Notes

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Articles should be no more than 800 words and may be edited. Submitted articles many not all be printed. Photos should be submitted as gray-scale TIF graphics, 5"x7" and 300 dpi.



On September 27, 2003, after years of waiting, the residents of Thorne Bay on Prince of Wales Island dedicated their new highway. The $12 million, 321-mile blacktop highway project was a multi-agency effort funded by the Federal Highway Administration with help from the U.S. Forest Service. The newly repaved two-lane highway runs from the Coffman Cove turnoff to Thorne Bay.

The community celebration included a parade and a potluck dinner. Area residents and employees from the Federal Highway Administration and the Forest Service were joined by Governor Frank Murksowski for a special ribbon cutting ceremony.

Many residents say they can now enjoy the view instead of dodging the potholes. In fact, they reminisced about the vexation of driving long hours on the original 1960s logging road, and the wear and tear of the old road on their vehicles and equipment. Now, the shorter, faster, and safer road conditions make driving a pleasure.

Area businesses are optimistic that the road improvements will make the community feel less isolated. Parking is better, and the dust is not as thick. They expect to enjoy benefits of their new road for a long time to come.



Above: Banners reflect the celebratory mood at the dedication ceremony of the Thorne River Highway. Right: Katherine Prussian holds the ribbon for Gov. Murkowski (third from the right) to cut. Photos by Betty Wilt.

Recruitments

Chugach

James J. Kruse, Jocelyn L. Brown, Michael Davidson, Jamie Hackett, Maggie Moesch, Erin Heim, Gail Phillips, Matthew Kampshoff

Tongass

Alyson McHugh, April Carpenter, Brandy Prefontaine, Brian Barr, Cameron D. Savage, Carin Christensen, Charles Thynes, Charley Streuli, Christal Czaenecki, Christina Hoefsmit, Cynthis Sever, Dani Gross, David P. Seals, Dustin Walters, Eric Bloechle, Falicia F. Farmer, George Bisset, Gina Esposito, Jackie Garnick, Jason Freed, Jeff M. Garnette, Jorjena A. Daly, Judy Ward, Karen Brand, Kelly O'Soup, Kenneth Bray, Krista Peterson, Kristen M.Lease, Kyle Skinner, Larry Lunde, Lyndene S. Downie, Matthew Jones, Michael P Whelan, Michael Reed, Noel Phillips, Olleke Rappe-Daniels, Paul Valcarce, Raymond Devaughn, Renaker D. Parks, Jr., Robert Demmert, Robert Lippert, Rodrigo R. Ramirez, Samuel Jackson, Santino Pascua, Scott Snelson, Sheila Jacobson, Todd Zynda, Vincent C. Warner, William J Meadows, Zachary Bowman

Regional Office

Barbara Schrader, Cassandra Butz, Cheri Lang, Garry O. Begg, Lake Allen Koelling, Michael Crotteau, Michael E. Williams, Rodney Dell'Andrea, Rosanne Rowe

Retirements

Chugach

Mark Black, Ann Scott

Tongass

John C Sherrod, Marti Barker, Mitchell Prescott, Nels H Lawson, Robert Huecker, Robert Kinville, Stanley Johnson

Regional Office

David Ellen, Gregory Kahler, James Smith, Ken Thompson, Leo Barrans, Mary Lou Peterson, Paul Forward, Priscilla Steele, William Wilson

Transfers Out

Chugach

Brenda Short, Mary L. Zimmerman, Shannon Huber

Tongass

Alicia Duzinski

Regional Office

Karol Turner

Transfers In

Chugach

Gwendolyn Marcus, Pamela Young, Shannon Huber

Resignations

Tongass

David Kreiss-Tomkins, Dawn Laybolt, Josephf Jurczak, Peter Eichler, Stefan Hovik, Travis Bradshaw

Regional Office

Brenda Carlson, Felicia Moreno, Katie Baird, Leon N. Bus, Liesl Schuepbach, Melissa A. Rogers, Mitchell R. Brooks, Wilma Bennett

Time Off

Chugach

Elizabeth Kellar	Kim Kiml			

Tongass

David Zuniga, Jr.	Jason McCormick	Katherine Prussian	Linda Pulliam	Patrick Heuer
George J. Stittgen	Karl Welch	Kenneth O. Pearson	Melanie Slayton	Valerie Blajeski

Regional Office

Connie A. Johnson	Della Koelling

Quality Step Increase

Tongass

Larry Lunde	Rob Morgenthaler	Vernon Keller

Personnel Actions

Promotions

Chugach

Susan McCall	Randall Green	Gwendolyn Marcus	Dawn Schoppert	Willie R. Thompson

Tongass

Art Etter	David Rak	James H. Thompson	Karl M. Welch	Stephen Tchalemian
Austin O'Brien	Delilah Brigham	Jamie Reimer	Katherine Prussian	Steve Hohensee
Bob Ernst	Donald Frank	Jeff Jackson	Larry Orines	Susan Oehlers
Charles Parsley	Eric Abele	Jeffrey McArthur	Linda Rollins	Terry Fiske
Cole M. Mayn	Eric Raitanen	Jeffrey Wickett	Mary Y Knudson	Tonya R Rymer
Dani Gross	Erik Bruner	Justing K. Anderson	Michael Reichenberg	
David M. Cox	James A. Wilds	Karen L. Dillman	Peter Roginski	

Regional Office

Connie A. Johnson	Forrest Cole	Lynn Humphrey	Stacy York	Trish Clabaugh
Don Martin	Jody Freund	Melinda Hernandez	Stella Mauer	Virginia VanEaton
Eugene DeGayner	John Burick	Ryan Nicholson	Teresa Richards	

Time-Limited Promotions

Chugach

Andrew Schmidt	David L.Frew	Jerry Boughton	Leo Keeler	Nancy S. O'Brien
Brian Sines	Debra D. Srb	Kathy Bagley	Mary Ann Benoit	Teresa Paquet
Courtney L James	Dennis T. Smith	Kelly R. Frick	Mike Stubbs	Timothy Charnon

Tongass

Cynthia Sever	Kelli Reynoldson	Randy Hojem	Steve Hohensee	Terry Fiske
Dennis Benson	Kim A Redmond	Ronald H Medel	Susan Oehlers	Tonya R Rymer
Karen Brand	Laurie Thorpe	Susan Marthaller		

Regional Office

Brian Goettler	Ellery Lumbab	John Morrell	Martha DeFreest	Sharon Cordell
Della Koelling	Emily Howard	Keith Johnson	Richard Zaborske	Susan Oliva

Youth Practicum

(continued from front cover)



Carolann Fredericks of Sleetmute, Alaska and Lindsey Fryar of Honaunau, Hawaii prepare agutuk for the closing ceremonies. Photo by Lillian Petershoare.

At the Russian River, the students learned it takes a takes a healthy watershed to raise a salmon, and saw brown bears and sports fishermen in close proximity. Students met Stream Watch volunteers and talked with them about riverbank erosion and the impact wading fishermen have on salmon spawning grounds. The students classified soil horizons at three diverse sites at Hope. At the Kenai Wildlife Refuge, they learned about the dynamics of forest fires, visited a research center that is studying the diet of moose and caribou, and canoed in local lakes.

They dug for clams and made chowder at Clam Gulch. At Ninilckik and Kalifonsky Beach, they helped local tribal members haul in fish for the elders, and shared traditional songs and dances. They studied the differences in temperate rain forests and boreal forests, explored the intertidal zones, and picked berries at Seldovia.

Students developed a renewed sense of responsibility and respect for the land. A Hawaiian student wrote, "When we Hawaiians would see a salmon or a big aspen tree we would be amazed, but the Alaskans thought it was an everyday thing. It is the same for us. Tourists come [to Hawaii] and are enthralled by turtles and beaches, but to us these things are boring. I think I need to start holding greater respect for all things, big or small."

During closing ceremonies, the youth leaders demonstrated traditional sports events from the Alaska Native Youth Olympics, such as the high kick, the one-foot kick, the arm pull, the knuckle pull, the ear carry, and the ear pull. Everyone enjoyed testing his or her prowess.



Randol Lang of Aniak feeds a moose calf at the Fish and Game Moose Research Center in the Kenai Wildlife Refuge. Photo by Lillian Petershoare.

In 2004, the Youth Exchange Practicum will sponsor two camps. The first will be in Hawaii in March, and will be hosted by our partner, TREE (Tropical Reforestation Ecosystems Education Center). The second camp will be in Sitka and Juneau in June, and will hosted by the Alaska Region.



Jacob Amolette of Kailua-Kona and a Kenaitze tribal member retrieve salmon from a net at Kalifonsky Beach. Photo by Lillian Petershoare.

Special thanks to participants:

- Jim Sumner, onsite camp coordinator
- Linda White, Director of Civil Rights and Tribal Government Relations
- Pam Lee Davis, Director of TREE
- Matt Weaver, State of Alaska Dept. of Natural Resources (and his dog, Binks)
- The Kenaitze Indian Tribe
- The Ninilchik Village
- The Seldovia Village Tribe
- The Chugach National Forest
- The Glacier Ranger District
- The Seward Ranger District

Thoughts from the RF

by Denny Bschor, Regional Forester



RF Denny Bschor enjoys the 40th birthday party of the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center. Photo by Michelle Warrenchuk.

In this issue of *SourDough Notes*, you will read about rewarding work being done in the Alaska Region, from the young people who attended the youth practicum we sponsored, to the seniors who helped in community clean up efforts. Our paid, volunteer, and retired workforce is diverse. Our scientists are studying various plants and animals found in our national forests, and our forest management experts are working with timber businesses to provide economic, sustainable quality wood products. Our visitor centers have reached out to thousands of visitors and Alaskans alike. I attended the 40th birthday party of the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center this year, and also went to Begich, Boggs Visitor Center on the Chugach. The customer service provided at these two centers is the best I have seen in the nation.

I consider the Forest Service employees in the Alaska Region our most valuable resource. As this issue is being printed, there are massive wildfires in California. Our Type I incident team is ready to go, when called. I talked with Gene Zimmerman, forest supervisor of the San Bernardino National Forest, who asked me to, "Pray for rain!" I looked out of my office window at the lush, green trees around me, and the almost perpetual Juneau mist, and answered, "I wish I could send you some!"

The 2003 fire season represented a record year for Alaska Region employee participation. As we continue to support fire suppression efforts in the future, we need to follow the 10 Standard Fire Orders and be alert to the 18 Watch Out Situations, in order to minimize the risk of firefighting to our employees. The regional leadership team and I are fully committed to the safety, health, and well being of all Forest Service employees, as well as visitors and cooperators to national forest system lands.

Soon, a new wildland fire shelter will be phased into use by our employees. The new generation fire shelter provides improved protection from both radiant heat and direct flame. Although the new shelter offers significantly more protection, fire fighters must remember that the shelter cannot protect them in all circumstances. A firefighter's highest priority should always be to avoid situations that can lead to entrapment. The new fire shelter is not an excuse to take risks on the fire line.

The Alaska Region had a good safety record for 2003, with no deaths or major injuries. However, there were close calls. A close call is an accident that "almost happened"—an injury or loss that would have occurred if the timing, location, or other things would have been different. It is very important that we report close calls and hazards, because that's what may prevent the next person from getting seriously hurt. At the same time, it's important to remember that just reporting the close call isn't enough—you can make the situation better by taking action to fix or control the problem. Keep looking for solutions until you get the problem resolved! I am committed to the health and safety of our workforce and I ask no less of a commitment from each and every employee in the Region.

Wildland firefighting efforts to deal with fuels restoration and economic recorvery are underway. Congress is working on bills such as one that will allow expanded thinning of timber. Most supporters of this policy believe it will reduce the amount of fuel available for large fires, by removing small trees and underbrush, and reducing the disease and insect infestation that kills trees. We support national efforts to ensure that national forests remain healthy. We will give more information as we know it.

In this light, we give attention to our forest management policies. Dick Zaborske, a former Alaska Region employee who is currently based in Washington, D.C., will be leading our forest management team for a few months. He and the forest management staff want to aid local timber businesses that are looking for reasonable, economic means of doing their work. For example, over the past few years, timber companies in the Alaska Region have expressed that they are unhappy with national direction regarding the way they are required to measure timber (using cubic foot measure as opposed to the more traditional board foot method).

Awards

Spot

Chugach

Adam M. Johnson	Dan Gillikin	Janet M. Heinen	Nancy O'Brien	Sue Farzan
Alice B Hall	David R. Guilfoyle	Jason Wood	Randy Schrank	Susan Hmurciakova
Alyson M. Miner	David Sanders	Joseph G. Preuitt	Robert M. Dean	Tara A. Turner
Amanda Christensen	David W. Osborn	Justin Gerding	Ryan Burich	William MacFarlane
Ann Marie Kmetz	Dixon Sherman	Leah Largaespada	Samantha Greenwood	Willow Hetrick
Aron C. King	Dona M Walker	Mark C Black	Sarah Yamamoto	
Bonnie Theil	Erin Cooper	Mark J. Michlik	Shannon Huber	
Brianna L. Heisey	Gabriel M. Travis	Michael Leahy	Shawn C. Holcomb	
Christopher Bailey	Guy Hollstein	Mike Davidson	Stacy Prosser	
Courtney L James	Jake Johnson	Molly Hickox	Steve Reese	

Tongass

Allison Canik	Chris Budke	James R. Crumley	Larry O'Rear	Sandy M Powers
Andrew Baltensperger	Chris Yamasaki	Jamie Roberts	Libby A Dougan	Santino Pascua
Anne E. Pollnow	Christina Hoefsmit	Jan Waati	Linda Slaght	Saundra R Ward
Arthur V Williams	Cynthia Sever	Jeff Hosman	Marika Geertz	Scott McDonald
Austin Williams	Darlene Rilatos	Jeffrey McArthur	Mario Barajas	Sharon Webb
Barbara Van Skike	Dave Borgesen	Jennifer Kevil	Mark Medeiros	Sheila R Spores
Ben Case	Dennis J Thrall	Jeremy S Greenwood	Martin Stanford	Shirley Paulsen
Benjamin A. Jongenelen	Dennis Rogers	Jill Reeck	Matt Steffen	Stephanie Clemens
Benjamin Nowakowski	Douglas W. Bosarge	Joel D Little	Megan Ferguson	Stephen Brad Martin
Benjamin R Pfohl	Doyle Hickman	Joel W Charles	Melissa Dinsmore	Steve Patton
Bob Moniz	Edward M Kasko	John C. Sargent	Michael P Whelan	Sumi Angerman
Bobbi Sams	Eric Abele	John Ford	Michael Savage	Susan M. Wise Eagle
Brad L Bolton	Eric Dow	John T Autrey	Michelle Canik	Thomas J. Friend
Brad L. Hunter	Gary Lawton	Jozef A. Slowik	Mike Dilger	Thomas M Salzer
Brad Lee Bolton	Geno Cisneros	Julie Rowe	Myra Gilliam	Tim Piazza
Bradley Flynn	Gina Esposito	Kaelene M. Wilson	Patricia L Borgesen	Tina Dinzl-Pederson
Brandy Prefontaine	Gina Siroy	Karen Maher	Paul Gloe	Trevor Roark
Brian D. Lamon	Ginger Ressler	Karin Mayn	Paul M Crowl	Wayne Marquis
Brian Doyle	Ginny Lutz	Kathryn S O'Connor	Peter M Griffin	Wayne St. John
Bruce Dean	Greg Whaley	Keith Moniz	Ricardo G Sainz	Will T Young
Bryan Holbert	Gwen S Baluss	Kelly N O'Soup	Richard D Jennings	Winona Dick
Carin Christensen	Harry J Gibson	Kevin E Hood	Robbie Piehl	William C. Green
Casey Lavoie	Jacqueline de Montigny	Kristen Lease	Robert G. Scribner	
Cathy Tighe	James A Llanos	Kristin D. Gross	Robert Larson	
Chad A Leshuk	James A Wilds	Kyle Brownlee	Robert Lippert	
Chad C Hood	James Colier	Kyle Kinports	Ron Tschakert	

Regional Office

Andy D. Graves	Dawn Heutte	Maria Lisowski	Peggy L Turner	Sharon Cordell
Aurora Coronell	Della Koelling	Mary A Belcourt	PJ Karpstein	Sharon Deja
Betsy Rickards	Janis S Burns	Marylee Schmidt	Raymond S Howard	Teresa Haugh
Connie Adams	Jon Cummins	Neil Hagadorn	Rebecca V Wright	Tim A Obst
Courtney L James	Lauro Garcia	Pat Ray	Roger Birk	Virginia Bowman
David Ellen				

Length of Service

20 Years	Eugene Degayner, RO	Leo Barrans, RO	Mary Dowling, RO	Kenneth Post, RO
40 Years	Theodore Allio, Tongass			

Awards

Extra Effort

Chugach

Don Hathaway	Joe Meade	Mary Ann Benoit	Mona Spargo	Stephen Hmurciak
James R. Sumner	Kevin Schaberg			

Tongass

Anita Nettleton	Jeffrey Robinson	Linda C. Pulliam	Patricia O'Connor	Sue Jennings
Brad L. Hunter	Jim Rhodes	Liz Cabrera	Peter M Griffin	Terry Suminski
Chip Weber	Joanne Thynes	Michael E Shaffer	Randy R Hojem	Tim Hazlewood
Dale Kanen	John Krosse	Michael S Wolfe	Rex Friend	Trina Ives
Dennis Benson	Joshua Latham	Michele M Parker	Robert J Miller	Vaughn Hazel
Dennis J Thrall	Keith Moniz	Michelle Warrenchuk	Roger Sadler	Virginia Nichols
Devon H Green	Kelly J. Hall	Mike Cruise	Ron Marvin	
Gareth Hummel	Kenneth L. Meserve	Molly Murphy	Russel Wicka	
Gary Lawton	Kermit Budinger	Naomi Seidel	Sandra Skrien	
Glenn Israelson	Kerry J Foster	Nathan D. Austin	Seth Ross	
Jack Oien	Laurie Thorpe	Nicole Clowery	Shirley A Cole	

Regional

Allison Jackson	David Galloway	Gerald Xavier	Orval Wieber	Shirley Matson
Beth G. Pendleton	Dennis L Campbell	Jannelle P. Starks	Peggy L. Turner	Stanley A. McCoy
Bill Tremblay	Dennis N. Chester	Katherine A. Brown	Priscilla Steele	Steven Kessler
Brian Goettler	Dom Monaco	Keith A. Simila	Ray Massey	Susan Sepulveda
Charles A. Klee	Don Rivers	Kenneth Seymore	Robert L Simmons	Winifred Kessler
Cherie L. Shelley	Eric Ouderkirk	Macky A. McClung	Sharon L Cordell	
Connie DeSouza	Forrest Cole	Michael R Cruise	Sharon Randall	

Extra Effort/Travel Gainsharing

Chugach

Elizabeth Bella	Jennifer Trudeaur			

Tongass

David M Cox	Flora Fox	Jerry Ingersoll	Teresa D Dickey	Todd M Tisler
Duane H. Fisher; Jr.	James Russell	Patricia Nannauck		

Regional Office

Elizabeth Walatka	Pamela Finney	Steve Bush		

Performance Bonus

Chugach

Deb Aiken	Julliet Claunan	Kevin Shaberg

Tongass

Lance Lerum

Keepsake

Tongass

Colleen Webb	Karissa Demmerti

Regional Office

David Ellen	Eugene DeGayner	Guy Robertson	Roberts Sheets	Ronald Ketter

We recently requested a change in this policy from the Washington Office. The WO agreed to give me authority as regional forester to return to a measuring system called the Scribner system. The Scribner system measures both the gross and net volume of trees in board foot volume. It is the measuring system used by the majority of industry in Southeast Alaska, and is a system with which they are very familiar.

In response to requests from the governor, the Alaska delegation, and timber companies, the Tongass National Forest staff, working with the regional Forest Management staff, offered a ten-year timber sale contract package in FY 2003 and plan to offer another ten-year timber sale contract package in FY 2004. These ten-year timber sale contract packages combine projects within logical operating areas from various environmental impact statements and environmental analyses. The intent of these ten-year contract packages will help provide stability to timber companies and communities in Southeast Alaska.

We have made important decisions in business operations, also. For example, Betsy Walatka was selected to take the lead in our competitive sourcing studies. Some feel competitive sourcing is a "burden" that hangs over us. I feel it is a valuable tool in our toolbox that will allow us to become the most effective and efficient organization possible. Also, Dave Bruce and many others are working on our pilot program of developing "Credibility Through Accountability" for Performance Accountability System. Jacque Myers is participating in a national business process re-engineering effort for Human Resources to improve the way the Forest Service works nationally.

As you see, a lot is going on! All this progress is made possible because you are doing your job where you are, and also contributing to national efforts where possible. I applaud your hard work, and will continue to update you on the issues that affect your ability to do a good job.



New Deputy Forest Supervisor, Tongass

by Kent Cummins, Public Affairs, Tongass National Forest

The Tongass National Forest recently welcomed Olleke Rappe-Daniels as their new Deputy Forest Supervisor. Olleke came to Southeast Alaska in the summer for a four-month assignment. In September 2003, she accepted the position on a permanent basis. Regional Forester Denny Bschor said, "Olleka did such a great job in her acting role, we sort of missed her transition to the 'real thing.'"

Olleke immigrated to the United States from Sweden with her family in the late 50s and grew up in the west coast. After two years at the University of California, she moved to Missoula, Montana where she started her career with the U.S. Forest Service.

Olleke held several positions with the Forest Service during the first 15 years of her career. She worked as a cartographer, a computer systems operations analyst, an administrative officer, a district ranger, and a NEPA and litigation coordinator.



Olleka Rappe-Daniels, new Deputy Forest Supervisor, Tongass National Forest, walks beside the first place winning float at the Alaska Day Parade in Sitka. Photo by Janet Seals.

In the 1990s, she attended the University of Montana, where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Forestry with an emphasis on communications. Following graduation, Olleke became the Deputy Director of Public and Governmental Relations and Congressional Relations Coordinator for the Northern Region of the Forest Service.

Now that Olleke's latest assignment has brought her to Ketchikan, Alaska, she looks forward to the professional challenges of being part of the leadership on the most extraordinary national forest in the nation.

Olleke is married to a career Forest Service employee (retired) and has two stepsons, three grandchildren, four nieces, and two bird dogs. She enjoys art, music, travel, and a love for the outdoors.

Winners Announced!

by Kristi Kantola, Recreation, Lands and Minerals



Nita Nettleton, Director of Tongass Marine Highway Interpretive Program and recipient of prestigious Interpreter of the Year Award for the Alaska Region. Photo by Ron Marvin.

Nita Nettleton, director of the Tongass Marine Highway interpretive program and Patrick Mangan, Information Assistant on the Cordova Ranger District, recently received Alaska Region awards in interpretation and conservation education.

Described by her supervisor as being "…like Mary Poppins, practically perfect in every way," Nita Nettleton, received the *D. Robert Hakala Excellence in Interpretation and Conservation Education* award.

Nita oversees a program that employs eleven interpreters in the summer and two interpreters in the winter who present programs aboard the Southeast Alaska mainline ferries of the Alaska Marine Highway. She also supervises the Juneau Ranger District conservation education specialist. Her accomplishments include:

- effectively fostering and cultivating numerous partnerships;
- overseeing the production of popular publications, including the *Tongass Guide, Welcome to Pack Creek: An Interpretive Guide and Journal, and Learning About Nature Along the Inside Passage;*
- compiling an inventory of all interpretive and education programs on the Tongass National Forest during FY 2002;
- successfully managing a complex and highly visible interpretive program.

Nita received $500 and is the Region's nominee for the national *Gifford Pinchot Excellence in Interpretation and Conservation Education* award, which is to be presented at the 2003 National Association for Interpretation Workshop, in Sparks, Nev. in November.

Patrick Mangan recently received the *Seasonal Interpreter/Conservation Educator of the Year* award. Patrick was recognized for his creativity in developing and presenting new and effective interpretive and education programs; for taking the lead in operating the District science camp, *From the Forest to the Sea* with partners from the Prince William Sound Science Center; for implementing three, new, one-day science camp/workshops for local children; and for integrating high customer service and safety standards in all the programs he offers. His supervisor described his programs as "crafted to the highest professional standards; a wonderful mix of information, entertainment, and provocation." She suggested Pat's highest praise has probably come from children who said, "We had so much fun we forgot we were here to learn something."

Patrick will receive a $150 donation from the Alaska Natural History Association and a certificate signed by Regional Forester, Denny Bschor, and Charles Money, Executive Director of the Alaska Natural History Association.

Also nominated for the "Seasonal Interpreter/Conservation Educator of the Year" award were Laurie Lamm of the Tongass Marine Highway Interpretive Program, Jim Sumner of Begich, Boggs Visitor Center, and Michelle Warrenchuk of Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center.

Each year in Alaska, Forest Service interpreters and conservation educators contact over one million visitors. These awards recognize the fine work of these dedicated professionals. Congratulations to all of this year's award winners and nominees.



In Search of a Cure

By Robert L. DeVelice, Forest Ecologist, Chugach National Forest

In the summer of 2003, botanists Rich Spjut and Rick Marin collected 166 samples from 69 plant species on the Chugach National Forest for cancer research. Spjut and Marin, of World Botanical Associates in Temecula, Calif., conducted their work for the U.S. government's National Cancer Institute. Their Chugach collections took place in the Kenai Mountains and primarily included species having no or limited sampling elsewhere in the United States for cancer research. To facilitate efficient sampling of a wide diversity of vegetation types, the Ecology Program on the Chugach provided suggestions on sites to visit.

The pair based their work out of Broadview Station, a Forest Service facility managed by State and Private Forestry on the shores of Kenai Lake. They used attic, plant driers, and bunkhouse facilities to dry the plant materials collected prior to shipment to the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, Md. Once at the Institute, extracts from the sampled material will be applied to 60 different cell lines of cancer. Based on previous research, Spjut anticipates that 1-2% of the samples collected will show enough response in the anti-cancer experiments to justify further research.

In addition to potentially resulting in cures for cancer, the information collected benefits the Ecology Program on the Chugach National Forest by expanding the program's database on the distribution an.d abundance of plant species across the Kenai Mountains

Editor's Note: Dr. Rob DeVelice served as the primary contact at the Chugach National Forest for this valuable project. He reports that there have been documented successes in finding anti-cancer properties in Pacific yew trees and false hellebore. Both species occur in the Alaska Region. The website for World Botanical Associates: http://www. worldbotanical.com/.



Rich Spjut prepares to collect specimens of northern bastard toadflax from the Palmer Creek area of the Chugach National Forest. The sample will be tested against 60 different cell lines of cancer. Photo courtesy of World Botanical Associates.

Rick Marin at work drying plant specimens in an attic at S&PF's Broadview Station. After drying, the specimens are shipped to the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, Maryland. Photo courtesy of World Botanical Associates.



A partial list of collections includes:

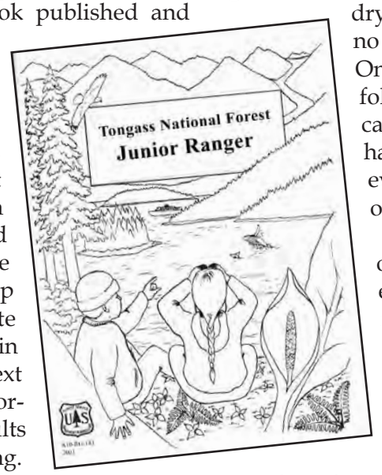
Sitka alder	*(Alnus crispa ssp. sinuata)*
Mertens' sedge	*(Carex mertensii)*
Stellers' cassiope	*(Cassiope stellariana)*
White mountain avens	*(Dryas octopetala)*
Crowberry	*(Empetrum nigrum)*
Woodland horsetail	*(Equisetum silvaticum)*
Northern bastard toadflax	*(Geocaulon lividum)*
Partridge foot	*(Luetkea pectinata)*
Rusty menziesia	*(Menziesia ferruginea)*
Arctic sweet coltsfoot	*(Petasites hyperboreus)*
Aleutian mountain heath	*(Phyllodoce aleutica)*
Trailing black current	*(Ribes laxiflorum)*
Cloudberry	*(Rubus chamaemorus)*
Least willow	*(Salix rotundifolia)*
Sitka mountain ash	*(Sorbus sitchensis)*
False hellebore	*(Veratrum viride)*

Tongass Junior Rangers Ride the Waves

by Nita Nettleton, Tongass National Forest

A seven-year-old boy from Nebraska got a very special certificate on board the M/V Columbia in late August. With some help from his mom, he worked his way through all the activities in the new Tongass Junior Ranger book and was the first recipient of the Tongass Junior Ranger certificate and patch. Shipboard interpreter Constancio Bolima reported the boy worked very hard on completing all the pages in the book on his ferry trip and finished up somewhere near Petersburg. Constancio presented the patch and certificate in front of an enthusiastic audience in the forward observation lounge on the ship.

Karen Maher, the new Juneau Ranger District conservation education director, is the creator of the Tongass Junior Ranger Program. She is very happy to have the Junior Ranger book published and into the hands of children. She printed a fairly small batch in the beginning, waiting to get feedback from the children and the Forest Service staff who help them complete the activities in the book. The next printing will incorporate the results of the field testing.



After giving her regular presentation about salmon on the M/V Malaspina, shipboard interpreter Laurie Lamm gathered the children into a circle on the floor, handed out colored beads and yarn, and helped the kids make bracelets based on the life cycle of salmon. On the M/V Columbia, Constancio Bolima talked to a group of children and adults about living off the land and sea while showing them how to make a canoe and a halibut out of folded paper. Dottie Poling on the M/V Matanuska read the children a story about sea otters. Afterwards, she helped children do the coloring, cutting and gluing it takes to make a sea otter puppet.

All these activities are the result of this year's effort in the Tongass Marine Highway program to build up the program offerings for children on the ships. The interpretive team worked to simplify the existing programs and tried to put new activities into a kit that anyone can use. The result was more programs for more children.

Constancio was drawn to origami for his program because, "It's dry, easy, and requires no cutting or tearing. Once you have the folded object, you can unfold it and you have the pattern forever. You can do it on your own."

Karen Maher developed a salt clay tinted the color of stone for a petroglyph activity. She makes up the dough and keeps it in the refrigerator. She portions out what she or the other interpreters need to take on the ship with the tools to make individual petroglyphs. "It's a hit with Elderhostel students, too," she says, "not just kids."

If you would like more information about the Tongass Junior Ranger program, or would like for copies of the book and prizes, please contact Karen Maher at kmaher@fs.fed.us.





Interpreters Don Poling and Rachel Myron work with children who ride on the ferries through the Tongass National Forest. Photos by Karen Maher.





Left: Ed King and Patrick Mangan at the Shorebird Festival parade in Cordova. Right: Patrick visits the local school in honor of Arbor Day. Photos by Kim Kiml.

Agenda 2020

by Charley Peterson and Sherri Richardson-Dodge, Pacific Northwest Research Station

A partnership among industry, government, and the forest products industry is working to help the U.S. reduce its dependency on fossil fuels, increase carbon sequestration, and promote sustainable development of global economic competitiveness in rural communities.

In 1994, forest products industry leaders created a vision of the industry in 2020 and called it Agenda 2020. A collaborative research partnership also was formed by the Department of Energy and the American Forest and Paper Association to make the vision a reality. The Forest Service joined the partnership in 1999. In 2002, the Rocky Mountain, Pacific Southwest, and the Pacific Northwest Research Stations met to select the group's first research projects. The first annual review of the Agenda 2020 western forestry program was held in Kelso, Wash., the following year.

"Agenda 2020 has a strong portfolio of national projects funded primarily by the Department of Energy and the Forest Service in high impact areas such as biomass gasification, new forest-based materials, and molecular biology," explains spokesman Charley Peterson. "We have added to that foundation with additional collaboration among the western research stations, industry, and universities. This sponsorship has resulted in excellent science, enhanced collaboration with forest industry, and improved relations among the three partners."

Some of the funded areas of investigation include:

- How thinning and regeneration harvests influence riparian vegetation, aquatic community structure, and water quality in small headwater streams;
- The management of coarse woody debris for long-term soil productivity in the northern Rocky Mountains and in the Douglas fir region coupled with climate effects;
- Tools to predict and manage various tree root diseases;
- Discovery of genes controlling adaptive traits in Douglas fir;
- Various silvicultural treatments to enhance forest productivity.



Charley Peterson

Agenda 2020 also includes participation by the Forest Service's North Central, Northeastern, and Southern Research Stations whose work will focus on forest health and productivity. For more information on the Agenda 2020 western forestry program, contact Charley Peterson at the Pacific Northwest Research Station at cepeterson@fs.fed.us.

Glow in the Dark

by Thomas Heuette, Biological Science Technician, State & Private Forestry

Do you think it's always dark in the woods at night? What if you walked deep in the forest on a warm summer evening, kicked aside a few leaves, uncovered a chunk of rotting wood, and found that it was glowing at you? Or, suppose you cleared some trees with a bulldozer, and returned after dark. Would you be surprised if you found thousands of firefly-colored chips of wood illuminating the landscape?

Throughout much of the temperate regions of the world, a glow-in-the-dark fungus of the genus *Armillaria* is responsible for this strange phenomenon. The glow comes from mycelium, which constitutes the "body" of the fungus. Fungal mycelium is the mass of threadlike strands of cells, which dissolves and digests the wood around it as it rots its way through a log. *Armillaria* is one of several luminescent fungi. Some fungi have luminescent mycelia, while other fungi have luminescent mushrooms, including members of the genus *Panus*, and *Omphilotus*, the Jack-o-lantern mushroom.

Armillaria is an important decomposer of dead wood in the forest. *Armillarias* produce the honey mushroom, familiar to hunters of edible wild mushrooms. In some cases, *Armillaria* can go from a saphrophytic (living on dead material) to a parasitic (disease organism) lifestyle when it will attack a living tree, usually after the tree has been subject to other stresses such as drought, breakage or attack by insects. Some species are outright tree killers, but they are not found in Alaska. It's easy to identify *Armillaria* in a rotting log. Just peel back the bark and look for black fibrous branching structures resembling tree roots or black shoe strings. These are called rhizomorphs ("root forms"). They serve as a means of exploration and resource capture for the fungus, helping it spread through the log and transporting water and nutrients through the fungal body. This allows the fungi to spread throughout the log and into the soil to other logs. In fact, one *Armillaria* found in Oregon stretches across an area three and a half miles wide to a depth of three feet. It is the largest living thing ever found.



The honey mushroom is the reproductive organ of the Armillaria fungus. It is capable of producing millions of spores. Photo by Lori Trummer.

Greek philosopher Aristotle and Roman botanist Pliny the Elder both recorded observations about glowing rotten wood and fungi that glowed in the dark. From time to time people have employed foxfire and glowing mushrooms for practical purposes. Soldiers in both world wars are said to have used sticks of foxfire or glowing mushrooms attached to the backs of their helmets to follow each other through the dark. It is reported that people have used glowing sticks to light a path through the woods at night, or to avoid burning down hay barns by lighting them with foxfire instead of candles.

Many living organisms are capable of producing light. The phenomenon is known as bioluminescence. The best known to most Americans are fireflies, which are not found in Alaska, but are common in the lower 48 states. Others include dinoflagellates, tiny organisms found in water that produce "phosphorescent" seas, often seen in the tropics. The anglerfish, residents of the total darkness of the deepest seas, often have organs that glow in the dark. Light in these organs is actually produced by colonies of luminescent bacteria.

In the 1930s, scientists working to discover the mechanism of bioluminescence were able to isolate the light-producing chemical reactions by making extracts from cells and separating out the components responsible for light production. They discovered that three components were required. The first was a sort of a fuel for the reaction, which they named the "luciferin." The second component is a catalyst, an enzyme called the "luciferase." The third component required was an oxidizer, usually oxygen gas, which helps the reaction along. As the biochemists examined bioluminescent mollusks, worms, insect larvae, bacteria and fungi, they found that the basic chemical mechanism was the same in all cases, although

2003 Alaska Region Wilderness Rendezvous

By Marti Marshall, Program Leader for Wilderness, Trails and Recreation Special Uses

A diverse group that gathered in May at the Silver King Lodge near Ketchikan was met by sunny skies and warm weather. Alaska wilderness rangers, managers, members of the National Wilderness Information Management Steering Group, and Tom Carlson from Arthur Carhart Wilderness Training Center, came together for the 2003 Alaska Region Wilderness Rendezvous. This joint meeting provided an opportunity for wilderness managers from across the nationa to network. Additionally, the WIMSG began to appreciate the challenges and differences of managing wilderness (and wilderness study areas) in this Great Land of Alaska. Fortunately for them, they did not experience some of the transportation challenges that can often occur because of with our poor weather. It was smooth sailing the entire week!

The agenda included some fun and informative hands-on stations including "Tools, Cross Cut and Otherwise" by Eric Abele and Kevin Hood; "Kayak Safety and Equipment" with Dave Sanders and Jen Kevil; "GPS and the Use of Other Technology" by Dennis Benson; and "Building Your Wilderness Education Plan" with Tim Lydon.

One full day focused on "How We Manage Our Alaskan Wilderness Challenges." After overviews by forest and regional wilderness specialists, specific sessions were presented that were excellent and thought provoking.

These sessions included:

- *Baseline Inventory of Plants-What Grows in Your Wilderness?* by Brad Hunter
- *Carrying Capacity Issues and Determinations in Prince William Sound* by Dave Sanders
- *Forest Services, Fees or Free - Kayak Rangers and Shipboard Partners in Misty Fiords,* Jen Kevil
- *Why Monitor Boats and Seals? Nexus and the Effects of Activities Off the Forest within Tracy Arm*, by Tim Lydon
- *Should Wildlife be Habituated in Wilderness? Pack Creek Bears and Other Ideas*, by Jennifer Humphrey
- *Managing a Remote Wilderness* by Chad VanOrmer and Mary Emerick.

Although all the specific sessions during this information-packed week are too numerous to mention, some key presenters included Kevin Hood, John Neary (who turns out is a BFES cheerleader in disguise!), Mary Emerick and Tom Carlson (Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center), and Steve Boutcher, National Wilderness Information Manager.

The Alaska Region field, forest and regional wilderness staff are an impressive group of enthusiastic, professional, intelligent, and knowledgable people. Together we crafted some key messages and action items we committed to sharing within the region. Briefly, the primary messages are:

- The Time Is Now!
- 2004 is the 40th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act.
- 2005 is the 25th Anniversary of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, creating Alaska wildernesses.
- Be proactive – not reactive!
- If we lose the wilderness character of our wildernesses, we can never retrieve it.

We currently have no wildernesses managed to standard. We need and want to meet these BFES standards (the BFES 10) The Alaska wilderness has a unique role/position in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

- We have national and international attention and caring.
- Our wildernesses are pristine, and use is low. It is an opportunity to maintain these settings in the NWPS.

Managing Alaska wilderness is complex.

- There are jurisdictional challenges of saltwater/upland interface and immediate nexus issues.
- There are exceptions in ANILCA for motorized use, facilities, allowed mechanized uses and other allowances while maintaining the wilderness character of the areas.

Action items were developed to work toward sharing these messages and engaging all resources in wilderness management. See your local wilderness ranger or manager for specifics on how to pass the word and make a difference!

The Rendezvous was an excellent jump-start to the field season and an important time for caretakers of our Alaska Wildernesses to come together to *Keep Wilderness Wild!*

Seniors Make a Difference

by Jean Mitchell and Mayme Ohnemus, Chugach National Forest



The Chugach National Forest is fortunate to have the volunteer services of the "Sexy Senior Dumpster Cleaners," a group of dedicated, fun-loving seniors ranging in ages from 58 to 98. These senior volunteers meet every Monday throughout the year. They travel up to 100 miles each week to clean around the solid waste transfer sites in the communities of Cooper Landing, Hope and Moose Pass.

Their work goes on in rain, sleet or snow, and even in minus 20-degree temperatures! In six years of service, they only cancelled once. An avalanche that blocked the Sterling Highway prevented them from getting to the cleanup sites.

For two years, the group has been responsible for cleaning the Cooper Landing site to cut down on the amount of bear activity. This started after a brown bear sow with two cubs became habitual visitors to the area. The sow eventually was killed, and the cubs were transported to a remote area. Cleaning the site has been effective in denying bears easy access to the garbage. The Sexy Seniors have badges that read, *Watch For Bears.* They have placed signs at the transfer sites that read, *Watch For Bears—Honk Your Horn.*

October 25 is set aside as a nation *Make a Difference* day for communities. The Sexy Senior Dumpster Cleaners joined with ALPAR (Alaska Litter Prevention and Recycling) Senior/Youth Litter Patrol for a *Make a Difference* project at Cooper Landing. The seniors put together "litter reduction" packages to be distributed as free gifts to area visitors. These useful packages will be given as a free gift to visitors to the Cooper Landing museum next summer. Senior volunteer Mayme Ohnemus remarked, "Support for this project has been overwhelming. We are excited with the prospect of numerous volunteers helping with litter reduction next summer. We are happy to be working with other companies and agencies interested in the environment."

The seniors are confident that visitors will appreciate their efforts to keep their part of the Kenai Peninsula clean. They are certain their gift packages with Smokey Bear litterbags will remind travelers to place their trash in the proper place. The maps they include will familiarize visitors with the area, and the coupons provided will encourage visitors to check out the services available in Cooper Landing. The response cards will provide the senior volunteers with interesting feedback for future projects.

Senior volunteer Jan Mitchell said, "We are proud to have received national recognition for our participation last year, and we are looking forward to another successful project this year. We hope to encourage public awareness of fire and bear safety for visitors enjoying the great Chugach National Forest and give them an appreciation for our *clean* environment.

Litter reduction packages include:

- A request for the visitors to pick up litter
- Smokey Bear litterbags donated by the Forest Service
- Rubber gloves
- Yellow ALPAR litterbags with twist ties
- Travel-sized containers of hand sanitizer
- Litter information with a local fact sheet that includes fire and bear safety instructions
- A coupon book from Cooper Landing businesses

the exact chemical formulas of the three components could vary.

A trickier question about luminescent fungi is *why* would a wood rot fungus glow in the dark. In the case of the firefly or the anglerfish, the reason is easy to figure out. Flashes of light help the nocturnal flying beetles find one another for reproduction. For anglerfish, the light organ is a sophisticated fishing lure to bring prey near its mouth. In the case of foxfire, biologists have so far been unable to come up with a compelling reason for light production. One argument was based on the observation that the light attracts some insects, which could spread the fungi to new wood. In the case of Armillaria, however, this does not seem to be the case. The mushrooms, which do not glow, are the reproductive organs, producing large amounts of spores that are efficiently dispersed by wind. Other hypotheses are that the fungi glow to attract predatory insects that would eat insects that could harm the fungus, or that the glow acts as a warning that the fungus is unpalatable to insects. Another possibility is that the light-producing enzyme reaction is a way of burning off metabolic waste products. Still another is that the enzyme reaction is left over from a useful function that is no longer necessary, and that since it does no harm, the reaction has not been weeded out by the process of natural selection. In a time when we can calculate the age of the universe, mysteries still lurk in our own backyards, beyond the reach of science to solve.



Rhizomorphs are the conductive tissues of the Armillaria fungus found just beneath the bark of a rotting Alder trunk. Photo by Tom Heuette.

Seward District Ranger Arrives

by Doug Stockdale, Public Affairs, Chugach National Forest



Debora Cooper has been selected as the Chugach National Forest's new Seward District Ranger. She replaces Mike Kania who took a new assignment in June.

Forest Supervisor Joe Meade is happy that Debora has accepted what he calls a "challenging" assignment. "She came to us from the largest National Recreation Area in the National Forest System," he said. "There she was a highly regarded and capable manager."

Debora was the Area Ranger for the Sawtooth National Recreation Area in central Idaho, a position she held for four years. Prior to moving to Idaho, she worked for 5 years on the Bridger-Teton National Forest in Jackson Hole, Wyo.

Debora started her 16-year career with the Forest Service on the Nez Perce National Forest following the completion of a Master of Science degree from the University of Idaho in Range and Wildlife Management. She also holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Wildland Science from the University of Calif. at Davis.

Meade said, "I think Ms. Cooper's combination of education, communication skills and experience as a biologist, range conservationist, ecologist and timber specialist—in addition to her leadership role as a ranger on a area with a significant recreation focus—have prepared her well to help us work more closely and cooperatively with individuals, communities and organizations as we implement our forest plan."

Debora began work in October.

Thorne Bay School Aquarium Incubator Project

by Carolyn Lucz, Volunteer Writer



Thorne Bay students with their teacher Jennifer Waisanen, and "the best fish guy ever," Jim Beard. Photo by Nelli Atkinson.

Fish biologist Jim Beard of the Thorne Bay Ranger District introduced 16 youngsters to the life cycle of salmon during the spring school semester of the Thorne Bay School.

Beard used a 50-gallon aquarium for the project, filling it with dechlorinated water and stocking it with approximately 200 coho salmon eyed eggs and alevins from the Prince of Wales Hatchery at Klawock. The children were responsible for monitoring the water temperature and chemical balance in the aquarium, and feeding the fish daily once they reached the fry stage.

"Watching the salmon develop from the eyed eggs to alevins to fry stage is a great way to learn firsthand about the life cycle of salmon," said Beard.

Initially, the aquarium glass had to be totally covered to prevent light from killing the eggs. This simulated the eggs and alevin being buried naturally in stream gravel. The children had to use a flashlight modified with a red lens in order to observe the eggs and alevins during this time. The covering was removed after the alevins absorbed their yolk sacs and began to swim around the aquarium. Beard visited the class several times to talk about the stages of development and to answer questions.

About thirty percent of the eyes/alevin died during the three-month period. This afforded an opportunity to simulate losses in nature due to predation from other animals and poor water quality.

The culmination of the project involved a field trip to release the fish back into the Klawock River. Later, the class spent an afternoon on the Thorne River, capturing juvenile coho and pink salmon and steelhead trout. The students learned how to identify the different species of fish and about competition for food and space in the river.

"At that point, they wanted to know what the fish they had grown would eat now that they were on their own," Beard said. This was an opportunity for Beard to explain how aquatic insects, such as stone flies, mayflies, and caddis flies are food sources for the fish, and to talk about the insects as indicators of stream health. "The kids had a blast sorting through stream samples to find aquatic insects and identify them," Beard added.

Beard preserved specimens of the different stages of development for the classroom, and plans to repeat the project next year. Not only the students in the primary grades, but the rest of the school had an opportunity to watch the fish grow and develop an appreciation and awareness about salmon.

The project was a joint endeavor between the Forest Service, Thorne Bay School, and the Prince of Wales Hatchery. Beard worked with Jennifer Waisanen, who teaches first through third grades at the school.

As for the students, they created a colorful, illustrated story chronicling the development of "Freddie the Fry," entitled "Freddie's Great Adventure." They presented a bound copy of the book to Beard, dedicating it to him as "the best fish guy ever."

Editor's Note: Carolyn Lucz is a journalist working as a volunteer in the Thorne Bay Ranger District. She resides in Tucson, Arizona.

of an old logging road. From there, a helicopter was used to sling in gear to the work site. With the help of a generator, a small concrete mixer and rock drills, all fish pass construction work was completed by hand. This included building cofferdams, drilling holes in bedrock, placing rebar, building forms and pouring the concrete for the walls and entrance. The crew poured, by hand over 50 tons of concrete to complete this vertical slot fish way and Alaska Aluminum Steep Pass.

Living conditions were rustic. The crew lived out of a remote field camp, with three sleeping wall tents and a cook tent.

They worked for eight consecutive 10+ hour days, with six days off between trips. Each trip, the volunteers took turns cooking for a day for the rest of the crew. They maintained an extremely clean camp due to the ever-present brown bears in the area.



Upper Alaskan aluminum steep pass. Photo by Robert Miller.

Fire Managers Anticipate Smoke Problems

by Sue Ferguson and Sherri Richardson-Dodge, Pacific Northwest Research Station

Smoke from planned fires and wildfires affects air quality and visibility. Firefighters, forest managers, farmers, motorists, and people with respiratory problems all need accurate and timely information regarding smoke and visibility when fires burn. BlueSkyRAINS is a technology that allows fire professionals and ordinary citizens to coordinate outdoor activities around fire operations. It was in daily use by incident command teams for about 100 wildfires in the western states this year.

"When smoke is generated from a wildland fire, BlueSkyRAINS helps people to determine where the smoke will go and how much of a problem it may be for breathing and visibility," said Sue Ferguson, an atmospheric scientist based at the Pacific Northwest (PNW) Research Station and developer of the modeling system. "BlueSkyRAINS is a technology that allows someone to go to one centralized Web site to see the potential accumulation of smoke from planned fires and wildfires. It shows the patterns of predicted smoke concentrations in relation to cities, hospitals, schools, parks, or other elements of interest."

Ferguson, based in Seattle at PNW Research Station's Pacific Wildland Fire Sciences Laboratory, says her team of scientists began work on this technology in 2000. The first prototype was up and running by 2002. The first tests began with the Quartz Mountain wildfire complex in the Pasayton Wilderness of the Okanogan National Forest in Washington's northern Cascades.

"We worked with smoke managers, burn bosses, and air regulators for many years prior to developing BlueSkyRAINS," Ferguson said. "As wildfires became larger and more frequent, and the use of prescribed fire increased, smoke became an increasingly difficult problem. Smoke doesn't know about fences making it difficult to coordinate across land ownerships. So we came up with the idea of a centralized, automated system."

Ferguson and her team created BlueSkyRAINS by partnering with the Environmental Protection Agency and other federal, state, tribal, and local agencies that share concerns about clean air and healthy forests.

"This summer, we worked directly with incident command teams on several wildfires in Washington, Idaho, Montana, and New Mexico. Now we're gearing up to help with the prescribed fire season. This is the first technology that allows everyone to see where planned fires and wildfires are and to see the potential impacts of smoke from those fires," said Ferguson.

See: http://www.blueskyrains.org.

Fish Passage Overcomes Barriers

by Robert Miller, Fisheries Biologist, Tongass National Forest

Appleton Cove Creek is located on north Baranof Island and drains into Appleton Cove on the south side of Peril Strait, near Rodman Bay. It is a relatively large stream with a series of three barrier falls within one mile of tidewater. The fish pass work allows access to 5 miles of low gradient stream and three acres of ponds upstream of the falls.

The purpose of the fish enhancement project at Appleton Cove Creek was to provide passage over the barrier falls for the stronger swimming, native fish species, including coho (silver) salmon and steelhead. This required work on three large falls. Interestingly, smaller Dolly Varden char are strong jumpers and swimmers and also will utilize the new fish passes. The fish passes will provide access to excellent rearing habitat for juvenile salmonids. We expect it to produce returns of 1,000 adult coho salmon annually, when the new habitat is completely seeded.

Sitka Ranger District began work last year to provide fish passage over the larger, 15-foot barrier falls and a smaller, 10-foot barrier falls located 500 feet further upstream. During the summer of 2002, a five-person crew blasted a trench adjacent to the 15 foot falls to ready that site for additional work in 2003. They also blasted a small trench alongside the eight-foot falls for future placement of an aluminum steep pass. The crew consisted of crew leader and lead blaster Robert Miller and three Student Conservation Association volunteers. The SCA volunteers came from all around the country to spend a summer completing natural resource work.

This year, a nine-person crew completed the fish pass project. They began work in early May and worked until August to complete the "vertical slot" fish pass, consisting of seven reinforced, concrete cells, each eighteen inches higher than the previous. This was being built next to the downstream 15-foot barrier falls. An "Alaskan Aluminum Steep Pass" was placed a the upper site, allowing fish access around the 10-foot barrier falls. The expected life span of the fish pass is 40 years.



Student Conservation Association volunteers Arilis Jones, Alex Schoenfeld, Gary Brons, John Syslo, and Kirt Senita take a break for a group photo. Photo by Robert Miller.



Two workers survey completed lower vertical slot fishway. Photo by Robert Miller.

The 2003 crew consisted of project co-leaders Robert Miller (Fisheries Biologist), John Pickens (Engineering Technician), and Brad Martin and Lance Watkins. There were also five SCA volunteers: Arlis Jones, Gary Brons, Kirt Senita, John Syslo, and Alex Schoenfeld. Others who have worked on the project include Sitka District Fisheries Biologist Greg Killinger and Hydrologist Marty Becker along with Petersburg District engineers Joe Teter and Tom Laurent. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association also helped with the project.

The fish pass site is in a remote gorge area, with no access for heavy equipment. A barge transported concrete, rebar, lumber and equipment to the shoreline near the end





Left and right: students release the coho salmon back into the Klawock River System. Photos by Nelli Atkinson.

Top: Coho swim in their aquarium at Thorne Bay School, to the delight of the students. Photo by Jim Beard.



Business "As Usual" in Petersburg

by Nicole Clowery, Facilitation and Mediation, Tongass National Forest

Employees from the Tongass National Forest Supervisor's Office in Petersburg, Alaska, have continued to work diligently—albeit from a variety of places—since an oil spill in the Omni Building last May forced them to evacuate the building.

In many cases, SO employees are sharing spaces with Petersburg Ranger District employees. Overall, both groups have managed to work well together, maintain good attitudes, and even find humor in their situation.

A total of 65 employees were displaced to nine different locations. They have taken up shop in the ranger house, their own residences, and bunkhouses.

There has been some frustration. Tempers flare occasionally, mainly because dedicated employees have not always had access to their usual tools and equipment.

Information Resources Management personnel were tasked with the monumental job of rewiring available spaces to handle many more computers than usual.

There does seem to be light at the end of the tunnel, however. Forest Service personnel are negotiating in Washington, D.C., to purchase the Harris Building for use as the supervisor's office space. After that, the restored Omni Building will be converted into storage space. In the meantime, employees will continue to work and play well together and look forward to the day they can move into their new home.



Petersburg employees Patty Borgesen, Cheri Friend, and Jerry Olson maintain their smiles while working in close quarters. Photo by Patty Grantham.

National Museum of Forest Service History

by Frank McKinney, Executive Director, National Museum of Forest Service History

The National Museum of Forest Service History and the USDA Forest Service signed a national memorandum of understanding to increase cooperation between the two organizations to preserve and interpret the rich history of the Forest Service. Chief Dale Bosworth and former NMFSH President Gary Brown signed the MOU on June 16, 2003 in Missoula, Montana.

The Museum's Executive Director Frank McKinney said, "With the signing of this document, we now have a formal relationship with the Forest Service. The MOU formalizes a relationship between the Museum and the federal agency for the purposes of artifact collection and interpretation, program implementation and technical assistance on a national level."

The National Museum of Forest Service History is a non-profit organization located in Missoula, Mont. The museum's purpose is to preserve and interpret the history of the USDA Forest Service, to educate the public about the history of the agency and its role in the history of conservation in the United States, and to present this information with integrity. The museum collaborates with other Forest Service history centers throughout the country to accomplish this goal.

Contact information:
Frank McKinney
Exec. Director, NMFSH
P.O. Box 2772
Missoula, MT 59806
E-mail: nationalforest@montana.com
Phone: (406) 541-6374
Web site: http://www.nmfs-history.net/





Top: Dave Stack NMFSH Vice President, Brad Powell, Regional 1 Regional Forester, Jack Fisher, NMFSH Board Member look on as Chief Dale Bosworth and Gary Brown, former NMFSH President congratulate each other after signing the MOU June 16 in Missoula. Photo by Angie Monaco.

Left: "Guardian of the Headwaters" by Monte Dolack was originally commissioned by the National Museum of Forest Service History. Notecards and posters are available (see contact information listed above).

The Board distributes those monies for enhancements at existing fee sites or to support start-up costs associated with new fee demonstration projects. You may contact Lynn Humphrey, Regional Fee Demo Coordinator, at 907-586-8711 for more information on how to request funds for site enhancements at existing fee sites and to submit proposals for new fee demonstration projects.

We are tracking public response to the fee demonstration program. While there has been some controversy about the recreation fee demonstration program, analysis of survey results show that the fees are acceptable, especially when the public can see direct benefits and improvements at the sites where the fees are paid.

In the Alaska Region, fee receipts are being used to:

- improve public safety by providing, for example, law enforcement and bear-proof trash cans at recreation fee sites;
- develop a new heritage expedition to study Native rock art on the Tongass;
- provide new tours and interpretive programs to nearly 800,000 visitors and residents at Forest Service visitor centers;
- tackle maintenance backlogs at cabins and other recreation facilities; and,
- expand conservation education programs for visitors, residents and community school students.

As I think back on my recent recreation experience at Pack Creek, the fee demonstration program takes on a whole new meaning. My $50 permit, collected under the fee demonstration program, directly supported the informative, interpretive guidance provided by on-site wilderness rangers like George Schaaf, Paul Converse, and Don MacDougall, as I viewed the bears fishing for salmon in Pack Creek. From a safety standpoint, I appreciate the rangers' presence as they helped to ensure that our visit was experienced in a safe and informative manner. I am gratified to know that the fees are going toward adding value to my silderness experience.



Sow with cubs looks for dinner at Pack Creek.

Regional Fee Demo Board
Beth Pendleton & Lynn Humphrey, Regional Co-chairs
Carol Goularte, Sitka District Ranger, TNF
Jim Fincher, Glacier District Ranger, CNF
Marty Myers, R0-LEI
Sharon Heidersdorf, RO-OFM
Ellen Campbell, RO-WFEW
Ron Marvin, Juneau Ranger District, TNF

HR MATTERS

by Teresa Haugh, Editor

The Human Resources Service Center, along with their friends in Information Resources Management, spent many hours in October getting the new Paycheck 7 software up and running in the region. Since we all like to get our paychecks, we are all appreciative of their efforts.

In future (and less hectic) days, Human Resources will continue to highlight some of the their various programs in this column of *SourDough Notes.*

Director Marcia Staten promises to address such provocative subjects as, *Everything You Want to Know About "Details" But Are Afraid to Ask.* Seward Ranger District employee Corriene Brown is currently detailed for eight weeks to fill retiree Priscilla Steele's position. Corriene's tasks include parts of employee/labor relations, tracking performance appraisals, and tracking financial disclosure reports.

"I am enjoying my detail in the regional office, and appreciate the opportunity to broaden my experience!" Corriene said.

Do you think this might be the right kind of learning opportunity for you? Stay tuned for more details.



Corriene Brown on detail in the regional office. Photo by Teresa Haugh.

Recreation Fees Bring More Visitor Service

By Beth Pendleton, Director, Recreation, Lands and Minerals

On a recent August morning, with permits in hand and friends in tow, I departed on a float plane and headed up the rocky beach at the Pack Creek Brown Bear Viewing Area on Admiralty Island National Monument and Wilderness. One of eight Alaska Region fee demonstration projects, the Tongass National Forest's Pack Creek Brown Bear Viewing Area is cooperatively managed by the U.S. Forest Service and the Alaska Department of Fish & Game. The energy, excitement, and anticipation of seeing brown bears in the wild propelled our group of five up the spit, where we met Paul Converse, Pack Creek ranger.

As part of his routine greeting to all visitors, Paul gathered our permits and then launched into his 10-minute orientation to Pack Creek. He covered tips from proper food storage to safety in bear country. After storing all our food in the bear-proof containers submerged in the sand at the upland's edge, we were on our own to head down the beach toward the viewing spit. We spent an incredible day seeing an abundance of wildlife and gaining a better appreciation of Southeast Alaska's coastal brown bears.

Pack Creek Brown Bear Viewing Area permit fees ($50/adult; $25/child) are being used to expand both the viewing season and the daily viewing hours, and to support the rangers who manage the site. The fess support other services at many sites. At the popular Begich, Boggs Visitor Center on the Chugach National Forest, the $1 admission fee to its award winning "Voices from the Ice" audiovisual program supports new interpretive programs and helpful staff that provide services to the center's 400,000 visitors annually.



Viewing area at Pack Creek.

On the Tongass National Forest, the Juneau Ranger District Recreation Complex has been a fee demonstration project since 1999. The Complex includes Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center, two campgrounds, a shelter at nearby Auke Village Recreation Area, and commercial helicopter tours to the Juneau icefield, operated under a special use permit. The Southeast Alaska Discovery Center, in Ketchikan, is using entrance fees to pay for additional staff and information services to maintain exhibits in the center. And beginning this year, all campgrounds on the Tongass became fee demonstration sites, with the revenues being used for site maintenance and campground programs.

Other projects under fee demonstration authority include the rental fees for the 197 public recreation cabins in the Alaska Region. Fees are being used to maintain and improve the cabins and related facilities, such as docks and boardwalks, as well as, to improve accessibility at some sites. The Tongass will add another project in 2004: the Region's first Heritage Expedition, focusing on early Alaska Native rock art on Kosciusko Island.

Congress passed temporary authority for the Forest Service to establish and collect fees at national forest recreation sites in 1996. The Agency was given broad discretion with its authority to charge fees through 2001. Congress extended the program through 2006.

The total fee receipts for the Alaska Region in 2002 were $1.14 million. More than 80% of the revenue from recreation fees is being returned to the sites for site enhancements, maintenance and additional visitor services. Of the remaining 20% or less, up to 15% pays for collecting the fees. Five percent of the annual total fee receipts are deposited into a regional account for the Region's Fee Demonstration Board.

Happy Birthday to You! ♪♫♫ ♪♪

By Michelle Warrenchuk, Information Assistant,, and Mary Tonkovich, Branch Manager, Alaska Natural History Association, Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center, Tongass National Forest

Fog rests on the top of Mendenhall Lake, and the yellow leaves on the trees remind us of the first frost. Fall has come again. Imagine 40 colorful falls, 40 cold, white winters, 40 warm green springs and 40 busy summers. Many changes have occurred at Mendenhall Glacier in the past 40 years. With busy summer days again behind us, it's time to reflect on this summer's events at Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center.

On July 25, 2003, the center hosted a birthday party to celebrate the anniversary of the dedication of the original center, the first visitor center ever built by the U.S. Forest Service. Several hundred Juneau guests—some who attended the original ceremony, many of them Forest Service employees and retirees—came to share stories, enjoy the music of the Glacial Erratics, and eat a wedge of pie in memory of the famous Glacier Pie Shop run in the 60s and 70s by Joe and Kitty Stehlik. Guests sat in front of the copper-faced fireplace, gazing out the bowed windows, appreciating the balmy July evening, and remembering past days. Many spent time viewing the photo display of past center events. Greetings and congratulations were offered by Juneau District Ranger Pete Griffin and Alaska Regional Forester Denny Bschor. Juneau Mayor Sally Smith had sent a congratulatory message that was read, also.

The visitor center was originally designed for a capacity of 28,000 visitors. Today, the center hosts close to 300,000 between May and September. Thanks to the Recreation Fee Demonstration Project and a $4 million renovation completed in 1999, the facilities were enlarged and upgraded. However, on many summer days, the 40-year-old building is strained to the limit by the thousands of visitors who flock to the visitor center to admire the scenery and learn about the nature and changes brought about by the glacier. Only the onset of winter brings some relief and quiet days.

Some of the original traditions of the visitor center continue. As in many past winters, visitors come on Friday nights for fireside chats, and children gather on Saturday mornings for Kids' Day programs hosted by the center's interpreters. Other traditions, however, have fallen by the wayside. The original pie shop was converted into a theater, and later became the home of the Alaska Natural History Association (ANHA) bookshop.

The Forest Service and ANHA continue both traditional and new events and programs (including birthday parties!) which mean so much to Juneau residents and visitors alike. The goal of their partnership is to further the understanding and enjoyment of the Mendenhall Glacier and the surrounding recreational area in the Tongass National Forest.

All birthday parties should have favors. Guests received a souvenir note card from the bookstore with a painting of the "new" center to remember the occasion.



The glacier and visitors center 40 years ago...



Bethany Albercht hosts talks to visitors at the one of the popular "Kids Day at the Glacier" series.

Photos by Michelle Warrenchuk.

Spirits of the Past, Forests of the Future

The Tongass Leadership Team Grows at Grey Towers

By Dennis Neill and Pete Griffin, Tongass National Forest

When the Tongass National Forest began kicking around the idea of a leadership team meeting at Grey Towers, ancestral home of the first Chief Forester, many questions came up. "How much would it cost?" was the first one. Not necessarily any more than traveling within Alaska, we quickly discovered. Cost comparisons quickly showed that the travel costs would be directly comparable to having a leadership team meeting in Juneau—a bit more for some travelers, a bit less for others. With the cost issue settled, we began to ask, "What could we learn?" That answer quickly became apparent.

Grey Towers, under the direction of Ed Brannan, has become the Forest Service's premier leadership training venue. We were able to look at a mixture of contemporary issues and opportunities, and assemble an agenda featuring urban forestry, emotional intelligence, credibility through accountability, and understanding what effective leaders really do. We also made plans to have some very special guests.



The Tongass Leadership Team posed in front of Grey Towers, ancestral home of the first chief of the Forest Service, Gifford Pinchot. Photo by Eddie Brannan.

The team spent Sunday in New York City, and it was a day of firsts for many. At Penn Station, we met Matt Arnn, State & Private Forestry, who is Project Director for the New York City Initiative. He was accompanied by Tim Wenskus, Senior Forester, Natural Resources Group, City of New York Parks and Recreation. We purchased "Fun Passes," tickets that would allow us to ride all day on the New York subway system. The introverts on the team noted that "fun" and "subway" were not terms they would normally use together in one sentence. Shortly after reemerging from the underground into the sunshine of the city, we walked around Ground Zero, viewed the ongoing reconstruction, and read the plaques and the notes of remembrance from families of those who had lost their lives. A short walk through Battery Park was followed by a ride on the Staten Island Ferry where we saw the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, and a forever-changed Manhattan skyline. Back on the subway, we were serenaded by a group of troubadours singing "Under the Boardwalk" and collecting donations as they moved from one car to the next. Central Park was our next stop. We learned that the park was the result of planning long ago and that today, the park hosts a million visitors a day. While "natural" is not a term Alaskans would use to describe the park, this area of trees, lawns, playgrounds, and ponds provides a vital link to good health for the 23 million residents of the metro area. It raised a question for some of us: When metro residents hear about Tongass National Forest issues, do they relate that issue to what they desire for Central Park?

Halfway through our week of meetings, we discovered the hair was rising on the backs of our necks, and though the room was overly warm, goose bumps ran up and down our arms. Meeting with Theodore Roosevelt IV, great-grandson of the conservationist-president, at the home of Gifford Pinchot—where lively discussions about conservation issues and the Forest Service surely took place a century ago—brought us chills.

"Ted," as he prefers to be called, and his chief of staff, were equally pleased to talk to us about management of the Tongass National Forest. It was as if we could almost sense the spirits of Gifford and Teddy beaming at us, knowing that we were continuing the work (and the spirited debates) they had pioneered a century before.

Dr. Haydn Hasty led us through a discussion of emotional intelligence. He provided questionnaires to the team prior to the meeting and evaluated the results. He said we were one of the "highest rated" teams he'd ever tested. We scored high in stress-creating "life pressures" category, but on the other hand, also scored extremely high for "life satisfactions." He suggested we have T-shirts made. The fronts should say, "Look at all the 'stuff' they pile on me!" But, the backs should add, "But I'm having a great time!" Even though the Tongass leadership team is a high performing team, Haydn provided some suggestions on how to improve the team's ability to meet and overcome the tough challenges facing us.





Left: The Tongass team visits Central Park. Photo by Pete Griffin. Right: The Tongass team vists the Pinchot family mausoleum. Pinchot is buried, at his request, in an unmarked grave to the left of the mausoleum. Photo by Dorothy Firecloud.

Grey Towers Director Eddie Brannan is a ball of energy, constantly moving and interjecting his enthusiasm into any atmosphere. For the past ten years, Eddie has been leading forest supervisor teams through continual growth processes. He was able to share many of the lessons he gleaned from a decade of teaching field-level leaders.

The Forest Service has had few challenges that can rival past financial audits and other financial accountability assessments. Kevin Baum, a contractor with Weidner Associates, presented an engaging look at developing credibility through accountability. His position as assistant fire chief for the City of Austin, Texas, provided the context for his presentation, and added an aura of credibility to his message.

On Friday morning, Undersecretary Mark Rey joined us at Grey Towers. He declined to talk about the many definitions of leadership, but opted instead to share his guiding principles: 1) seek bipartisan solutions first; 2) respect the role of Congress; 3) work with and through career civil servants (the Forest Service deserves support); and 4) keep an open mind and an open door. He was willing to answer our questions, and his time with us was greatly appreciated.

Milford, Penn. is steeped in history. The seeds of the National Forest System were first sown here, as evidenced by the establishment of Grey Towers as a national historic landmark. Plaques summarizing Gifford Pinchot's accomplishments always begin with the words, "first Chief of the Forest Service," and then, almost as an afterthought, mention his two terms as governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Grey Towers is the crucible in which the Forest Reserves and the Forest Service were forged. Pinchot attracted luminaries in the early conservation movement, including Teddy Roosevelt, John Muir, and Aldo Leopold. Some team members ate dinner one evening at Muir House, a restaurant in a house once owned by John Muir that remains in the Muir family. Some team members hiked to an overlook of Milford and the Delaware River Valley, where Aldo Leopold wrote up his class notes in the moonlight. The National Forest System that we enjoy today stems from the work of those pioneers.

One of our final stops was the Pinchot family cemetery plot, just outside Milford. Pinchot's parents and wife are interred in a marble mausoleum, and other family members are buried in well-tended graves to the north. Pinchot himself stipulated that he would be buried in an unmarked location to the south of the mausoleum, and that the forested plot around his grave would be left in its natural state. Some would say his presence is still felt around that little bit of wild woodland.