



Tongass Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary

March 25-27, 2015

Juneau Assembly Chambers, Juneau, AK

The Tongass Advisory Committee (TAC) held its seventh meeting in Juneau at the Juneau Assembly Chambers from March 25-27, 2015. During the three-day meeting, the TAC continued robust discussions regarding possible young growth recommendations for the Tongass Land Management Plan Amendment. In addition to Plan Amendment components, they also discussed implementation, investments, and monitoring.

The meeting agenda is available online, [here](#). The following summary provides a description of each topic discussed and the resolution (where applicable). Recordings of the TAC deliberations are available by contacting Liz Duxbury at lduxbury@merid.org. See Appendix A for a meeting participant list (including TAC members, staff, and members of the public who attended, both in-person and virtually).

Welcoming Remarks and Updates

At the beginning of the meeting, Committee Designated Federal Official (DFO) Jason Anderson provided updates related to the Plan Amendment process, and allowed an opportunity for additional Committee updates, as described below.

Analysis of a TAC Alternative

Jason Anderson reminded the Committee that in order to possibly include a TAC alternative for the Plan Amendment, analysis needed to begin in March 2015. For that reason, he provided the TAC's draft language to the Forest Service (FS) Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) and Tetra Tech, the contractor for the analysis. The IDT is treating the TAC language as a Plan alternative, and is translating the language into Plan components for the Amendment¹. Some of this translation will include adjusting language to focus on *constraints* rather than

¹ Under the 2012 Planning Rule, there is a new chapter of a Forest Plan, entitled, *Chapter 5: Plan Components*. Because the current Tongass Plan is written under the 1982 Planning Rule, these changes result in added complexity. The Tongass is the first Forest to amend their Plan under the 2012 Rule, so the complexity is new for the agency as a whole.

what is *allowed*, in order to be in line with other language in the Plan. Ideally the translation of this language will be available for the TAC to review during their May meeting, but it is unclear whether that timeline will be possible.

Upon initial review of the draft language, the IDT fisheries biologist expressed concern about the proposed 10-acre opening sizes, particularly for meeting co-intent in Riparian Management Areas (RMAs). Specifically the concern was that there are not young growth areas large enough to result in 10-acre openings. Wade Zammit clarified that 10-acre openings were meant to be the *maximum*. Strategies for meeting co-intent objectives, operable opening sizes, and other on-the-ground constraints will be identified at the project-level.

The Committee work on collaboration and socioeconomic impacts was not forwarded because the IDT and Tetra Tech are narrowly focused on Plan components in order to produce the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

If the TAC agrees on final recommendations that are in line with the draft language that was analyzed, they can be included in the published DEIS as a TAC alternative. If the Committee is unable to reach consensus, or if the recommendations differ considerably from the draft language, the FS will need to determine if/how they can use the language and the analysis.

Forest Service Updates

- The new Forest Supervisor, Earl Stewart, will be attending the May TAC meeting.
- The hiring process for the Deputy Forest Supervisor position is in the interview stages. The new individual should be named by the next TAC meeting.
- Litigation on the Big Thorne timber sale was dismissed on all counts. There are several written judgments, but in general, the FS won the case. However, there is still a chance that the case will be appealed.
- The Forest Plan Amendment process is moving forward – Tetra Tech and the FS IDT have translated the FS alternatives into Plan language to align with the 2012 Planning Rule.
- There is a FACA Committee that is discussing implementation of the 2012 Planning Rule. They are meeting August 4-6, 2015 in Juneau. There will likely be an opportunity to engage the TAC at that meeting. The Committee Coordinator, Chris French, and the Committee Facilitator, Kathleen Rutherford, are potential resources for the TAC in reviewing the implications of the 2012 Rule.

Board of Forestry Fisheries Forum

The Board of Forestry held a “forest fisheries forum” on Monday, March 23 to discuss interactions between forestry and fisheries management. During the forum, there were presentations regarding new research. For example, one aspect of research reviewed the role of alder for bug production, which is a food supply for fish. Some Committee members

suggested that it will be important to review these new areas of research when determining the best management techniques in stream buffers (i.e., understory management for bugs). Others clarified that this specific research was narrowly focused and cannot be applied to every watershed.

Recommendations Draft Review and Revision

The Committee reviewed the Working Discussion Draft, which is comprised of drafts that subgroups of the TAC worked on prior to the meeting, compiled and organized by TAC facilitation staff. The draft, as circulated to the TAC prior to the meeting, is available online, [here](#). The purposes of the document were to: facilitate TAC review by populating a comprehensive framework, organized roughly around Plan Amendment components; and help TAC members identify what still needs to be addressed to achieve agreement on Plan Amendment recommendations. A brief overview of the TAC's discussion is outlined below. Please see [Appendix D](#) for the draft document which includes the Committee members' edits from drafting sessions during the March meeting. Note: the draft is continuing to evolve, so the posted draft is already dated.

Overall Feedback

Connie Lewis reviewed changes to the document, which were mainly focused on removing redundancies and providing clarity, without losing the substantive content. Every attempt was made to incorporate TAC member edits, but some were inadvertently missed. Overall, the TAC focused their feedback on the importance of providing crisp, clear recommendations that do not leave any room for interpretation. At the same time, they want to include detailed rationale and highlight all the resource values of the Forest.

The Committee suggested an alternative organization for the document, as follows:

- Introduction
- Purpose and Need
- Charter
- Vision
- Rationale and Objectives
- Approach
- Recommendations for Land Use Designation and Standards and Guidelines
- Implementation (to include Volume and Timing and Domestic Markets)
- Transition Investment
- Monitoring and Research
- Appendices

Introduction

The Committee recognized that this section had already been forwarded as a recommendation, but suggested changes to ensure that their meaning is clear. Specifically, they discussed the need to provide context for the Plan Amendment – specifically changes in timber management over time, including for example the Tongass Timber Reform Act and its positive impacts for fisheries, and the dramatic decline in the timber industry. Also, it would be valuable to explicitly acknowledge damage that resulted from some past timber management practices – to describe how much has been learned and what changes have been made to ensure protection of other resource values, including fisheries; and to make clear that current timber management practices are not detrimental to fisheries or other resources. In addition, the group discussed the context of their recommendations for young growth management on the Forest, specifically that young growth timber management will occur on only 7.5% of the timber base, and 1.5% of the entire Forest. The introduction should set the stage for the TAC’s recommendations, clearly highlight other resource values, and lay the groundwork for the co-intent concept.

Recommendations and Action Plan

The recommendations are listed in order of priority, based on most return and least environmental risk, and are organized first by LUDs, and then standards and guidelines.

To ensure that the FS interprets their recommendations correctly, the TAC emphasized the need for clarity and definitions of key terms (e.g., the transition period, co-intent, old growth, young growth, and stakeholders), recognizing that the TAC’s definitions may differ from the FS or others. For example, when defining the transition period, they suggested a timeframe of when young growth volumes are greater than 50% of the total volume or 10 years after signing of the Record of Decision (ROD). They clarified that this suggested timeframe does not necessarily represent the *end* of the transition, but rather it triggers a review process – to evaluate the effectiveness of management approaches, and whether co-intent is being achieved, both treatment-wise and volume-wise. Depending on the evaluation, the FS could *continue* implementing its management approaches, or make necessary changes.² The review process will include a multi-party monitoring group, as well as consultations with user groups and permit-holders.

Jason Anderson clarified that when developing standards and guidelines for the Amendment, standards describe what “thou shalt *not* do,” whereas guidelines describe what can be done, assuming that all other objectives are met. This will be important for the Committee to keep in mind, since the FS IDT will ultimately be translating their recommendations into this language.

² For more information regarding triggers and FS review, see the monitoring section in [Appendix D](#).

The Committee emphasized that their Plan Amendment recommendations are at the level of the Forest Plan. On-the-ground decisions will still be made at the project-level, with the understanding that FS staff will have flexibility, within the parameters established by the Amendment, to apply their expertise in designing economic young growth sales that meet all resource objectives³. Monitoring will be essential to determine how well different management approaches are working. For example it was suggested that the effectiveness of stream buffers should be monitored with respect to stream function and fish habitat, and that buffer widths be adjusted based on monitoring results. Another option might be to suggest a blanket increase in the width of stream buffers, perhaps with a corresponding increase in the upland timber land base to offset the loss of available timber in the increased stream buffer area. In general, the TAC expressed a desire to achieve the co-intent of fisheries protection *and* timber harvest. An example might be a small-scale habitat improvement project in an RMA that could be economic if located adjacent to a timber sale. Another suggestion for addressing fisheries interests was to place higher standards on evaluation of high-value watersheds when planning sales.

Implementation, Monitoring, and Investment

The Committee recognized that the success of the transition rests on implementation – starting *now*, and that effective implementation will require a significant shift in agency culture (with a focus on what *can* be done rather than what *cannot* be done); a willingness to be creative and take risks; an adaptive approach that relies on monitoring; and financial investments to support businesses and communities as they shift to a young growth based timber program.

The discussion about these sections was largely focused on increasing clarity and removing redundancies. They also noted the importance of offering recommendations that help, rather than hinder, the FS, which is already burdened with complicated and sometimes contradictory bureaucratic processes.

Implementation

Leadership and a culture of collaboration and transparency were identified as the underpinning of effective transition implementation. Leadership needs to come from all levels of the FS – from district rangers and team leaders to the Forest Supervisor and Regional Forester. Those responsible for the transition need to be held accountable for producing the intended outcomes. The TAC emphasized that internal and external collaboration is equally important – for example, having resource scientists, silviculturalists, and operators working together on sales rather than in isolation or at odds with one another. The TAC suggested that coordination with the timber industry will be particularly

³ See implementation, monitoring, and investment in [Appendix D](#) for suggestions that address project-level specifics.

important for determining the economics of young growth sales. Since the transition will be a learning period for all, information exchange to develop collective knowledge will be critical. FS staff should be encouraged to actively engage with industry, the conservation community, other landowners and other players, before projects begin, to foster mutual learning and the exploration of new and better approaches to achieve efficiencies and accomplish co-intent objectives. This is in direct contrast with the “divide and conquer mentality” that some believe is prevalent in the agency today.

Timing and Volume: The TAC continued talking about transition period definition, which encompasses volume and timing, for both young and old growth. For young growth, there will likely be a gradual ramp-up of sales during the first five-year period, with most of the FS sale planning energy realistically dedicated to sales beginning in the 2nd five-year period. During the initial five years there may be opportunities that planning teams can capitalize on – for example, young growth opportunities adjacent to planned old growth sales. For large-scale old growth sales, the group continued to grapple with whether or how to define a precise end-point, but agreed the need to clarify their support for the continuation of small and micro old growth sales up to about 5 MMBF/year.

Stewardship Contracting: The group discussed the role of stewardship contracting, and the ability to simultaneously increase local benefit and improve wildlife habitat through this approach. For example, if the original objective of a project is a timber sale, it would not be possible to change the sale to an Integrated Resource Service Contract (IRSC) simply because the sale did not appraise positive. However, if an IRSC was the original intent, and there is a timber by-product, the sale could be offered without a positive appraisal using the stewardship contracting authority. The TAC suggested a more integrated approach to planning these sales – rather than having separate timber and service contracting officers based on the objective of the sale, these departments should be combined.

Fish Fund: In response to perceptions by some that timber management is in conflict with fisheries, one member of the Committee proposed a “fish fund” for fisheries habitat enhancement projects. The fund would draw upon the “pooled receipts” that are already collected out of “excess” timber sale receipts, and that are currently earmarked for restoration and stewardship activities. The suggestion was to specifically dedicate a portion of these receipts to fisheries enhancement projects, through a competitive funding process, focusing on enhancing the most vital watersheds and/or watersheds in most need of restoration. Similarly, a general restoration fund for integrated resource management could achieve a lot of objectives that are currently being addressed through stewardship contracts. The Tongass Collaborative Stewardship Group, which has been active in implementing projects with the pooled receipts, could be a valuable partner in these initiatives.

Domestic Processing: The TAC discussed the importance of incentivizing domestic processing and consumption, with a focus on maximizing economic benefits for Southeast Alaska. They clarified that this would not necessarily mean the immediate *end* of export - in some cases, particularly early in the transition, some export will be required for sales to appraise

positively and until there is enough supply or proof of continuity of supply to encourage investment in local processing. Potential investors need to know that there is a “shelf-ready supply,” especially given the highly competitive marketplace for young growth timber. Some members suggested re-instituting long-term contracting and advocating for a domestic processing facility, perhaps on Prince of Wales Island, to ensure that there is timber harvest and processing capacity in Southeast Alaska for the long term.⁴ Working closely with other landowners (i.e., Sealaska and the state of Alaska) could further encourage development of predictable, stable timber supply through coordinated sales.

The members recognized that old growth valuation methodology does not work for young growth. For example, the way that residual value is calculated is very specific to old growth manufacturing, and will need to be recalibrated for young growth markets. In general, the TAC wants to encourage the FS to take advantage of, and upgrade, all tools available to offer and complete sales in the most effective manner.

Case Examples: The TAC suggested incorporating case examples into the draft to help clarify the intention behind their recommendations, especially where the language is aspirational rather than specific. Case examples should illustrate lessons that can be derived from both failures and successes. For example, Dargon Point exemplifies problems with the sale process. Staney Creek is an example of a stewardship sale that brought together Prince of Wales communities and operators in a collaborative planning process.⁵ In order for the case examples to not detract from the actual recommendations, it may be best to include them in an appendix rather than in the body of the report.

Monitoring

It will be important to differentiate between monitoring that the TAC is proposing and what the FS is already doing. The TAC’s emphasis is on effectiveness monitoring – especially with regards to socio-economic impacts of the transition, focused on three main recommendations: baseline analysis of the benefits derived from the Forest and local economic return, the creation of a multi-party monitoring group, and overall Plan review. The draft monitoring section is organized by principles (why this is important), recommendations, and dashboard metrics (trend lines). Within the recommendations there are specific monitoring elements, measurable indicators, and “triggers” to initiate new action when something is not working.

⁴ Norway and Sweden were referenced as examples of places with effective timber management using long-term planning and management of small diameter timber.

⁵ One member noted that Staney Creek may not be the best example of a project because it resulted in financial losses for the operator.

The TAC stressed the need for immediate response if transition objectives are not reached (i.e., not after a five-year delay). In other words, there needs to be a system of active adaptive management that allows for a quick reaction if something is not working.

For the transition to succeed, the monitoring program needs to be accompanied by performance measures/metrics that are used to hold individual employees and the Forest as a whole accountable for ensuring the Plan is implemented properly – and real consequences if it is not. One example of a mechanism to help promote accountability would be an annual “dashboard” report to Congress (and local communities) outlining what has/not been achieved. Another is the establishment of a multi-party monitoring and implementation group with real authority.

Investment

The TAC discussed a variety of financial investments to support implementing the transition. They recognized the unique opportunity to attract investment dollars if they achieve consensus on an approach to forest management in the Tongass – which has eluded others for so long. Consensus recommendations coming from a diverse group are much more powerful, and more likely to garner attention and support from Congress, foundations, and private investors, than funding requests from individual sectors. As with other recommendations, the group encouraged innovation and creativity – for example, an investment in stand-level inventory could also support an integrated resource inventory including understory habitat and forest structure. The stand-level inventory data also could be integrated into a region-wide inventory across jurisdictional boundaries that would benefit other landowners.

The group also discussed investments for research, stand management, and local workforce development. Many of the research needs have to do with learning about and applying innovations that are working elsewhere, but that would be new to Southeast Alaska – for example, cable-yarding approaches and utilization of biomass. For stand management, there will be significant costs for pre-commercial thinning (PCT) of young growth stands⁶, as well as re-planting, stand modifications, afforestation treatments, and stem-exclusion research.

Implementation and Monitoring Council

The TAC’s overarching implementation and monitoring recommendation is for a standing council of stakeholders to provide guidance, support and feedback to the Forest for the duration of the transition, ultimately helping the Forest succeed. Collaborative engagement by the Forest’s key constituencies is an essential ingredient for ensuring that community

⁶ See Appendix C for a table of PCT related to timber harvest over the past 20 years. The far column shows the deficit of PCT compared to timber harvest at each time period. The bottom number is the overall deficit of acres not treated.

benefits are realized and that important resources are protected, and perhaps most importantly for engendering trust. The Committee will continue discussions regarding the roles, responsibilities, structure, and funding options for this group during the next TAC meeting.

Analysis of a TAC Alternative

After the last TAC meeting in February, Jason Anderson forwarded the Committee's young growth Plan Amendment draft language and two annual demand scenarios for analysis – 46MMBF and 70MMBF, both of which had a ten-year timeframe. The goal was to try to get analysis information from the contractor prior to the May TAC meeting, in part to gain greater clarity about the amount of old growth that would be needed under different scenarios to fill the demand gap. Jason clarified that this analysis will help determine whether the draft TAC alternative proposals could meet the purpose and need of the Plan Amendment under each demand scenario – in other words, whether such an alternative would achieve the transition goal of primarily young growth harvest in 15 years or less. For each scenario, the point at which the majority of timber harvest is young growth will be plotted based on volume and time. If the analysis were to show that the alternative did not meet the purpose and need, the alternative would not be included in the DEIS. While the analysis may not be complete by the May meeting, the TAC's own analysis shows that the lower demand scenario (46 MMBF) *would* meet the purpose and need (transition within 15 years or less) but the higher demand scenario (70 MMBF) likely *would not*.

The full effects analysis will be available in June 2015. It will provide additional detail that the TAC was not able to model in their own analysis – for example, displaying estimated net-down and volume gained from each LUD and as a result of suggested changes in standards and guidelines. Following the outputs of the analysis, the TAC will have the opportunity to review.⁷ The published DEIS will be available for the public in about August, at which point the TAC will reconvene to comment on the draft. Jason Anderson clarified that the TAC's comments on the DEIS will be considered as part of the public comment process.

Old Growth Bridge Timber

As the Committee began discussing old growth bridge timber for the transition it was apparent there were a range of views. The conservation representatives on the TAC have been asked by some of their constituency to obtain a commitment to a definitive end to

⁷ The TAC will be able to review the effects analysis of their alternative only – not the analysis of the other FS alternatives.

large-scale old growth timber harvest – possibly within five years. The conservation community has already submitted a request to the FS for a “conservation alternative,” and has asked the TAC for support for that proposal. With this in mind, there was a suggestion for the FS to analyze a conservation alternative, with a demand level of 35 MMBF/year for 5 years, then reducing to 5MMBF/year after year 5, with specific constraints such as avoiding high-value watersheds. To balance that suggestion, it was also suggested that the FS analyze a “timber development alternative” with a demand of 109-150 MMBF. The idea behind these suggestions was to “bookend” the process with high- and low-level demand alternatives.

Some members of the Committee objected to the suggestions for the following reasons:

- The higher (timber) demand scenario would not meet the purpose and need of the Amendment (achieving the transition goal of primarily young growth harvest in 15 years or less), and therefore would not go through effects analysis.
- The lower (conservation) number would not meet the need of maintaining a viable timber industry, and therefore would not fulfill the TAC’s charter. As the number decreases, the certainty increases that there will *not* be a future industry.
- The idea of creating two radically different and unrealistic approaches just for the purposes of “bookending” a realistic middle ground only serves to continue past patterns of conflict and drive sides apart, rather than furthering collaborative dialogue.
- None of the estimates include net-down, which will further decrease financially viable options for the timber industry, especially if trying to complete the transition in a five-year timeframe.
- It is difficult to support proposals from a group outside of the TAC process, because motivations are unclear.
- The industry needs a ten-year period to prepare for the “wall of wood.” If the industry does not survive during that time period, it will be nearly impossible to recreate a new industry in the region.
- The suggestions are incomplete since they do not include changes to LUDs and standards and guidelines, but rather propose outcomes without a process.

Some suggested points of support of a conservation alternative included:

- The old growth supply is at risk because there is not that much that is readily available, there are concerns about the complying with the conservation strategy, and there are issues of public acceptance.
- If there is an option to complete the transition in less than 10 years, it should be attempted.
- If analysis shows that a conservation alternative does not meet the purpose and need of the Amendment, it would bolster the TAC alternative.

Chris Maisch noted that the state of Alaska submitted an alternative that is modeled after the current Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ) of 267 MMBF. The state alternative will in essence serve as a “timber development alternative.”

Given the lack of agreement on the TAC for suggesting analysis of a conservation alternative, the TAC discussed other ways to achieve clarity around old growth, such as:

- Providing a more explicit description of the process that the TAC underwent to “grow the pie” for young growth, thereby reducing the need for old growth.
- Develop a map of acceptable locations for old growth harvest, possibly based on the land base maps from the Tongass Futures Roundtable, the Hemlock Society maps that avoided Tongass 77 (T77) watersheds, or the T77 maps.
- Utilize the Phase 1 land base from the current plan, and avoid high-priority watersheds.
- Focus on a ten-year timeframe, because shortly after that the “wall of wood” will increase young growth supply significantly.
- Use the outputs of the modeling to show the old growth volumes based on demand less the projected young growth volumes.
- Propose an acceptable *range* that will maintain a viable industry, as opposed to a hard number for volume/demand.
- Include monitoring metrics that show the amount of old growth and young growth timber offered and sold through the transition.

The old growth conversation concluded with the recognition that it will be up to the FS to decide whether or not to include a conservation alternative. Some of the Committee members are going to draft a description of a possible place-based approach to old growth harvest, utilizing the Phase 1 land base, while avoiding high-priority watersheds and maintaining the conservation strategy. The TAC will continue this discussion at the next meeting.

Communications and Messaging

The group recognized that even though the Committee has a strong understanding of the rationale, thorough analysis, and balancing among interests that have gone into developing their draft recommendations, the general public does not necessarily share this understanding, nor, in many cases, do they understand the TAC’s charter. To help address this disconnect, the Committee believes it will be important to develop a communications plan to accompany the roll-out of their recommendations. Outreach needs to be targeted towards local as well as national audiences, and messages will need to come from a variety of sources besides just the FS. They will be most effective coming from a collaborative voice like the TAC, or from the proposed implementation and monitoring council. It will be

important to clarify what the TAC is recommending to improve fisheries and wildlife habitat as well as to enable the transition away from old growth.

In addition, the members emphasized the need to remind the public of the narrow focus of their charter, recognizing that not all issues can be addressed through this limited charge. The group believes they have been successful to date in trying to fulfil the mandate provided by the charter; however, they understand the importance of the public's perception that they have not reached far enough. For example, some concerns about the timber-centric focus of the charter may be alleviated by telling the story of multiple resource values co-existing on the Tongass and/or by advancing the concept of "salmon-friendly timber." Ultimately, the TAC wants the public to understand that they all came together to develop integrated resource management options that take into consideration all uses, values, and interests. The Committee is in a unique position, as a federally-chartered place-based group, to create solutions that are better for all user groups and the public at large who care so deeply for the Tongass National Forest.

Public Comment

The Committee encourages members of the public to provide input through oral and/or written comment. Every TAC meeting includes a public comment period. Prior to the meeting, many written comments were received. All written comments are available online, [here](#). Committee member Kirk Hardcastle developed a "word cloud" based on public comments to see the words and concepts that appeared most frequently in comments to date. The top words/phrases were: PhD, university, old-growth, forest, and Tongass. See Appendix B for the word cloud.⁸

The following comments were offered in-person during the meeting:

James Mackovjak has lived in Southeast Alaska for more than four decades, primarily working in the fishing industry. He described his home, built primarily out of Tongass wood bought from eight small mills in the region. Daniel Fanning's mill, DNL Woodworks in Hoonah, was one example of a successful local processor. James believes that exporting round logs is a major problem for Southeast Alaska – it is marketed as a "transition" or "bridge" while the value-added industry develops, but from James' perspective, it seems like export is the future plan. Export does not assist local communities and timber-dependent industries; rather, it employs relatively few people and does not develop a skilled workforce, nor does it show concern for fishing or tourism. James brought a bundle of

⁸ The word cloud was produced by copying and pasting the majority of written public comments posted on the TAC website, up to the month prior to the meeting. It was an informal application, and likely inadvertently missed some documents, but was an attempt to synthesize the 700+ pages of comments.

firewood purchased at Fred Meyer as an example of failed opportunities – the firewood was grown on Puget Sound. Another example is the Hoonah Ranger District building, which was built of Douglas fir. In contrast, James would like to see more opportunities for locally sourced wood, such as Sitka spruce or hemlock.

Mike Sallee was born in Ketchikan, has lived most of his life in Southeast Alaska, and has run a sawmill for 35 years. Mike referred to the Saddle Lake DEIS, noting the statement that Alaska yellow cedar would be 100% exported because it is determined to be surplus to domestic processing. As a local processor, Mike explained that his logs, including yellow and red cedar, as well as spruce, are typically salvage timber from blow-down, landslide, cleared properties, or abandoned sort yards. Typically this is of little or no cost to him, other than transport costs. He displayed a variety of photographs illustrating high-value logs that are left in the forest after a timber sale. He explained that this salvage timber has a variety of local uses, such as building (i.e., decking, siding, railings, house beams, etc.), totem and plaque carving, and furniture and cabinet work. Mike would like to see the wood kept in Southeast, to be processed and used locally.

Lynn Campbell, Timber Coordinator for Southeast Conference, presented the TAC with a letter from Ketchikan Gateway Borough Manager, which reviewed the economic impact of the demise of the timber industry for the residents and community of Ketchikan.⁹ The letter describes issues with declining federal assistance, and the effects on Secure Rural Schools funding. A 24% property tax increase would be needed to replace the lost National Forest payments, an increase that would place financial burdens on the local communities, which are already suffering economically. 40% of students receive free or reduced price school lunches – Lynn expressed that this statistic directly reflects the impacts of the demise of the timber industry to the local children. On behalf of Southeast Conference, she urged the TAC to craft an alternative that increases timber and provides options to restore community pride.

Next Steps

Upcoming Meeting Schedule

The next TAC meeting is scheduled for May 6-8 in Ketchikan, Alaska. The meeting will likely focus on the final package of recommendations; implementation; old growth bridge timber; a communications plan for the release of recommendations; and the future role of the TAC. There may also be opportunities for presentations from students from Ketchikan High School and the University of Michigan School of Natural Resources and Environment.

⁹ A copy of this letter is available on the TAC website, on the [Public Comment page](#) with the March Public Comment letters.

Prior to the full TAC meeting, a working group of the TAC will meet with FS staff, specifically district rangers and key regional directors, to discuss implementation strategies. That meeting is tentatively scheduled for May 1, 2015 in Ketchikan.

Homework Assignments

In the coming weeks, TAC members will continue drafting and revising sections of the draft recommendations package. Assignments are as follows, to be completed by April 15:

- Introduction: Kate Troll and Carol Rushmore
- Young growth recommendations: Wade Zammit as lead, and others as needed
- Implementation: Lynn Jungwirth (lead), Carol Rushmore, Jaeleen Araujo, and Karen Hardigg. Erin Steinkruger will work with Meridian to develop options for an "Implementation and Monitoring Council."
- Investment: Les Cronk (lead), Chris Maisch, and input from Jason Anderson
- Monitoring: Erin Steinkruger as lead, and others as needed
- Executive summary: Karen Hardigg as lead, with input from Kate Troll and others as needed
- Renewable energy¹⁰: Les Cronk to reach out to Jason Custer and Chris Rose; Jason Anderson will contact Melissa Dinsmore (Lands Special Uses Program Manager, USFS) to determine how this component can be included to complement the forestry components of the Amendment
- Old growth bridge¹¹: Keith Rush will draft his proposal and include a map, and Brian McNitt will draft context based on language from the Secretary's memo

Once all of the sections have been revised, Connie Lewis and Diana Portner will compile, edit, and format the drafts into a single document, to be completed by April 20. The lead authors will then be asked to review the draft for internal consistency, and returned to Connie and Diana for final editing and formatting. The draft will be sent to the full TAC for review by April 29.

In addition to work on the draft recommendations document, the group will also prepare options for a communications plan for roll-out of their recommendations. Connie Lewis and Diana Portner will develop draft options for the Committee to consider.

¹⁰ This section will serve as a placeholder for the time being, and will likely be incorporated as a comment following release of the DEIS.

¹¹ This language will serve as the basis for discussion at the next meeting, at which point the TAC may decide to keep, revise, or discard this section.

Reflections on the Meeting

The TAC identified the following key messages that will serve as talking points for the members, as well as the basis of a press release to be finalized by the co-chairs in cooperation with staff. The press release with the finalized key messages is available online, [here](#).

- The Tongass Advisory Committee held its seventh meeting in Juneau from March 25-27.
- The Committee thanks the members of the public who attended the meeting and provided feedback, as well as the City and Borough of Juneau for sharing their assembly chambers.
- Much of the group's discussion centered on finalizing and consolidating their recommendations, which focus both on ideas for amending the Tongass Land Management Plan, as well as implementation, monitoring, and financial investments needed to make a successful transition to young growth.
- Success will be incumbent upon collaboration internally as well as with other landowners, partners, etc.
- A central piece of the potential recommendations is the idea of co-intent.
- Discussion occurred around mutually beneficial land management activities that benefit fish and wildlife, as well as importance of salmon.
- There was emphasis on local processing and domestic use of young growth products, as well as small sales for local operators (i.e., small sale team should be worked in).
- The next, and probably final, TAC meeting for this phase will be May 6-8 in Ketchikan.

Appendix A – Participant List

Committee Members in Attendance

Jaeleen Araujo (*late arrival*)
Les Cronk
Kirk Hardcastle (*early departure*)
Lynn Jungwirth
Chris Maisch (*late arrival*)
Brian McNitt (*partial attendance*)
Eric Nichols
Keith Rush
Carol Rushmore
Erin Steinkruger
Andrew Thoms
Kate Troll
Wade Zammit

Committee Members in Virtual Attendance (Phone)

Brian McNitt (*Partial attendance*)
Richard Peterson (*Partial attendance*)

Absent Committee Member

Woody Widmark

Alternates in Virtual Attendance (Phone)

Jason Custer (*Partial attendance*)

Absent Alternates

Robert Mills
Chris Rose

Committee Staff (USFS/Facilitators)

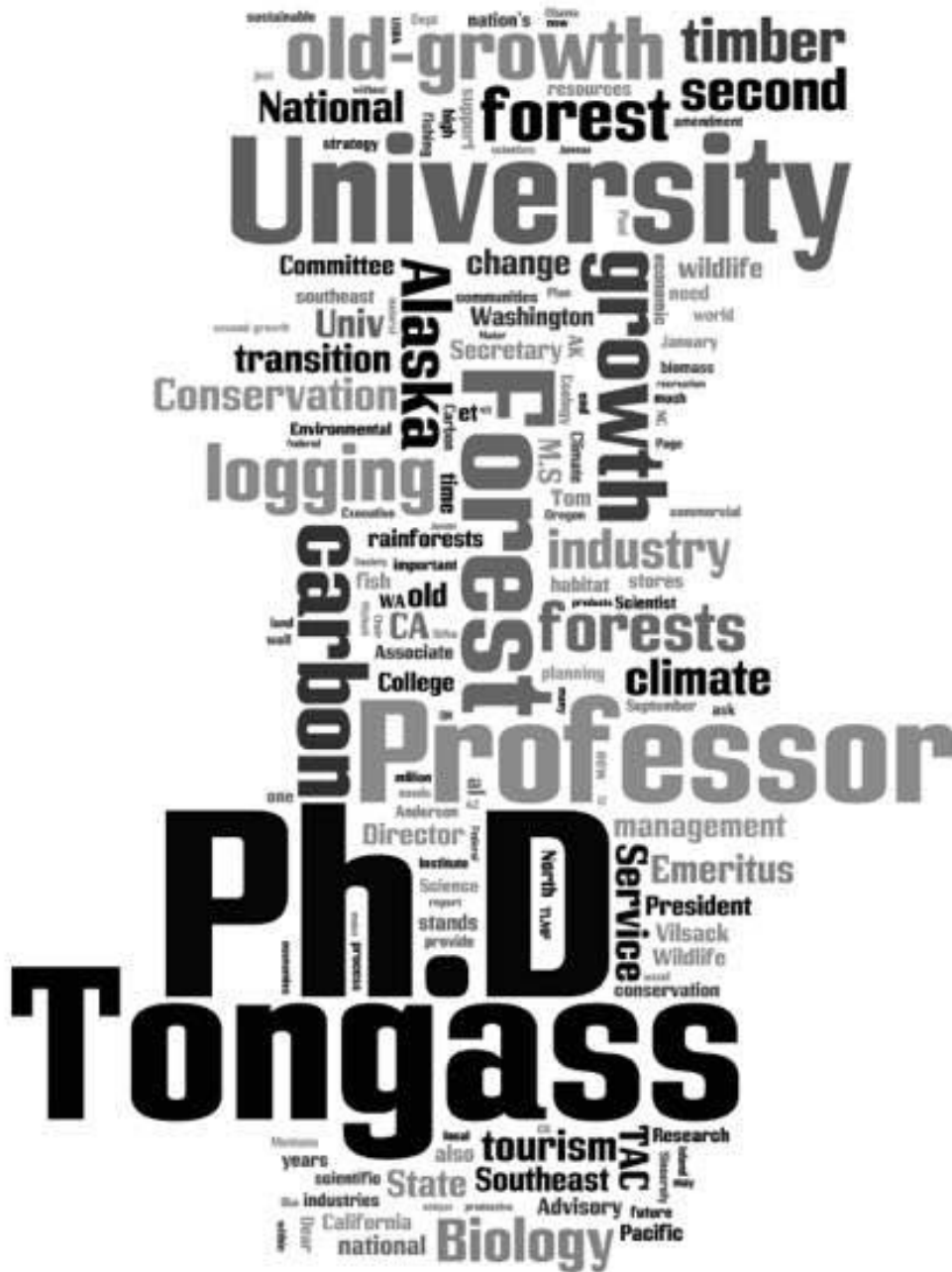
Jason Anderson
Karen Hardigg (*partial attendance*)
Connie Lewis
Diana Portner

Members of the Public in Attendance¹²

Lynn Campbell
Peter Chaille
Norman Cohen
Sylvia Kreel
Niel Lawrence
James Mackovjak
Molly Mayo
Catherine Pohl
Mike Sallee
Mayor Merrill Sanford
Larry West

¹² This list is based on members of the public that signed in at the beginning of each meeting day. This list is not complete/comprehensive.

Appendix B – Public Comment Word Cloud



Appendix C – Pre-commercial Thinning on the Tongass

PCT		Harvest in development LUDs 20 years before		
Year	Acres	Year	Acres	Difference
1994	3,754	1974	9,332	-5,578
1995	2,330	1975	8,618	-6,288
1996	2,725	1976	7,168	-4,443
1997	2,361	1977	5,427	-3,066
1998	2,463	1978	4,788	-2,325
1999	5,005	1979	7,049	-2,044
2000	3,494	1980	7,199	-3,705
2001	4,715	1981	6,317	-1,602
2002	2,979	1982	3,657	-678
2003	3,561	1983	3,778	-217
2004	3,525	1984	2,983	542
2005	5,540	1985	6,271	-731
2006	4,814	1986	4,006	808
2007	4,862	1987	5,701	-839
2008	4,967	1988	6,323	-1,356
2009	6,337	1989	8,980	-2,643
2010	6,072	1990	8,205	-2,133
2011	6,555	1991	4,803	1,752
2012	5,971	1992	6,505	-534
2013	6,245	1993	7,545	-1,300
2014	8,899	1994	5,136	3,763
Totals	97,174		129,791	-32,617