

**22-CS-11100500-064**  
**Exhibit A: Operating Plan**  
**Sustainability Strategy Tongass Young-Growth II Transition CCSA**

The Steering Team for this Agreement will designate representatives from the parties to form a Technical Working Group (TWG). The TWG will:

- Prepare an Annual Work Plan for each out-year of the Agreement by selecting, prioritizing and coordinating numbered Tasks and sub-Tasks, identified and described below, to designate an annual program of work reliant on available funding. Out-year Annual Work Plans for each year following 2022, will be shown in Attachment C: Annual Work Plans, as they are developed and approved.
- Develop written project methodologies to detail and document project technical specifications, ensure the most efficient use of resources and funding, and ensure deliverables support the overall goals and objectives of the Agreement. As necessary, and as determined by the TWG, project cooperators and contractors, including the ADOF's forestry services consultant, will participate in the Technical Working Group.

Out-year Annual Work Plans, including modifications, will require approval by the Steering Team. Numbered sub-Tasks below, prefaced with “**2022**”, constitute the Annual Work Plan for 2022.

**TASK 1. Facilitate and Support the All-Landowners Group (LOG)**

The All-Landowners Group (LOG) will be facilitated by the DNR Office of Project Management and Permitting (OPMP), and DOF staff will act as project manager responsible to oversee and coordinate completion of LOG tasks and deliverables. The LOG will seek to include, at a minimum, representatives from the FS, DOF, UA, AMHT, AFA and private forest landowners in the region. DOF will work to expand the LOG membership by soliciting additional participation from private forest landowners in the region. It is expected completion of deliverable items 5 and 6 will significantly rely on the services and professional forestry expertise of a DOF contractor. All deliverables will be deliberately designed to be compatible with the methods and results of similar analyses completed or on-going on the Tongass to produce reliable information for the entire region.

Broad goals and objectives of the LOG include:

- Supporting the Tongass (and regional) transition to young growth management, the existing timber industry, and development of a sustainable young-growth forest industry in the region by continuing and expanding its collaborative ‘All Lands – All Hands’ approach to ensure maximum opportunity for viable and profitable young-growth projects and timber sales on all young-growth forest ownerships.
- Develop formal written infrastructure use agreements across land ownerships to minimize forest management costs and to maximize profit potential.

- Solicit and coordinate the sharing of young-growth mapping, data and information from the State, Trust entities, and Private landowners in support of the YGWFA initiative, and support young-growth resource inventory related Workforce Development opportunities across participating ownerships. Support identifying opportunities for climate mitigation, young growth markets and product testing, feasibility studies and pilot projects.
- Meet in-person on at least a bi-annual basis, and virtually, via teleconference or videoconference, as decided by the membership.

The project manager for the LOG (DOF staff) in coordination with OPMP staff will oversee and coordinate completion of the following numbered LOG tasks and deliverables outlined below.

**2022 1. *Expand LOG Membership***

ADOE project manager will lead and coordinate outreach efforts to Private forest landowners and other key stakeholders in the region to solicit their membership and their intent to participate in the various goals and ongoing project efforts of the LOG and the YGWFA project.

**2022 2. *Road Use Agreements for SE Alaska***

Finalize formal written agreements between landowners to authorize the sharing of forest roads, across ownerships, to ensure long-term, coordinated access to young-growth forest resources and to facilitate young-growth management, resource restoration, and timber harvesting and manufacturing in the region. The agreements will specify road cost-sharing provisions, permitting and maintenance responsibilities. This task will include an analysis to identify critically important mainline roads, and explore ways of connecting isolated remote road systems to them.

**2022 3. *Young-Growth Infrastructure Agreements for SE Alaska***

Finalize formal written agreements authorizing the shared use of young-growth related management and harvest infrastructure, across ownerships, to ensure long-term maintenance of, and access to; marine access facilities, log sort-yards, rafting grounds, ship loading areas, etc. The agreements will specify permitting, maintenance, and cost-sharing responsibilities, and where feasible, transfer via ILMAs, management responsibility for permitted LTFs and other critical infrastructure to DOF.

**2022 4. *Directly Support the YGWFA Initiative***

Compile, develop and share mapping, data and information to support various YGWFA project deliverables, including:

- Development of a regional road and infrastructure map (GIS) and related database linked to the map designed to contain relevant site-specific information about mapped infrastructure features.
- **2022** Development of information necessary to prepare concise written narratives summarizing the forest management intent and young-growth timber production and harvest goals and objectives of participating landowners. DOF staff will lead this effort.

- Development of information necessary to prepare a young-growth timber pilot project involving multiple landowners.

#### *5. Support an Analysis Comparing various Rotation Periods and Economic Harvest Thresholds*

The LOG will oversee and support an outside analysis by DOF's forestry services contractor to compare the relative economic benefits of various young-growth harvest rotations and minimum economic harvest thresholds as defined by product recovery requirements (average number and length of logs per tree). Analysis may include consideration of different forest products (log specifications) to support either round log export or any of a variety of domestic manufacturing processes/facilities. The AMHT has previously requested an analysis comparing CMAI to the 2-Log Rule. Conduct research into state-of-the-art young-growth silvicultural and timber harvest practices taking place in similar forested regions, like those prescribed in Scandinavian countries, as an example, to recommend new or refined silvicultural and timber harvest practices which could achieve multiple resource management objectives. Results of analysis and research will be provided to all landowners, along with information necessary to making prudent and defensible young-growth management and harvesting decisions.

#### *6. Share Information needed to Develop Young-Growth Harvest Prospectus/RFPs*

The LOG will compile and provide relevant information resulting from the YGWFA to DOF's forestry services contractor to prepare a Prospectus/RFP soliciting industry investment in young-growth harvesting and manufacturing in SE Alaska. The final product(s) would be delivered to DOF and the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development (DCCED) for issuance.

### **TASK 2. Conduct a Young Growth Working Forest Analysis**

The Division of Forestry (DOF) along with its partners, cooperators, contractor(s) and membership of the All-Landowners Group (LOG), will produce the following project deliverables (numbered and described below) necessary to complete a young-growth working forest analysis and to estimate, both spatially and temporally, the regional availability of commercial young-growth timber volumes over the next 100 years, across all participating ownerships in the region. The Analysis will identify logical timber sale areas, refine LSTAs, estimate falldown acreages and operable net timber volumes, and also identify site-specific opportunities for future PCT, commercial tree thinning, and resource restoration projects. Final phases of the project will include a prospectus process to solicit industry investment in harvesting and manufacturing of young growth timber in the region, and completion of a pilot project covering multiple ownerships to assess the final project outputs. The DOF and its partners (Technical Working Group) will jointly develop written project methodologies, technical specifications, and protocols to guide the process and to document the steps taken to produce the following project outputs and deliverables. It is expected completion of deliverable items 1-4 and 6-8, and 11 will significantly rely on the services and professional forestry expertise of a DOF contractor.

**2022 1. *Produce a Regional Young-Growth Timber Type Map.***

Combine existing young-growth timber type mapping (GIS) covering the Tongass, the SE State Forest and some General Use State lands, with new mapping to be developed for other areas in the region including, additional General Use State lands, Trust lands (UA and AMHT), and lands managed by participating Private landowners (Alaska Native Corporations), to produce a regional young-growth timber type map covering all participating land ownerships in SE Alaska. Timber stand delineation and classification (timber type coding) conventions will be applied consistently across all ownerships. The final product will be a GIS layer, relying on the best available information, that specifies species composition, tree size, and stocking density in one spatially integrated attribute for each mapped young-growth timber stand in the region. The TWG will consider potential refinements to the existing mapping and analysis covering Tongass young-growth timber stands to best ensure a robust analysis at the regional level.

**2022 2. *Produce a Regional Young-Growth Timber Stand Database.***

Combine existing young-growth stand-level data (FPS format) for the Tongass NF (existing) with new stand-level data to be developed for stands managed by State, Trust and participating Private landowners to produce a comprehensive young-growth timber stand database covering all participating ownerships in SE Alaska. The project will require the compilation of existing data, the possible collection of new inventory data from younger aged stands, and expansion of stand-level data to all young-growth timber stands which have been identified, mapped and classified (timber typed under Item 1 above), but not field sampled. NOTE: Collection of new field data from younger stands may depend on additional funding and may not occur in 2022.

**2022 3. *Produce a Growth and Yield Analysis of Young-Growth Stands in the Region***

Use results from Items 1 and 2 above, to complete a growth and yield analysis of all young-growth timber stands located on participating ownerships in the region to estimate the future availability and flow of economical commercial timber volumes over the next 100 years - some ownerships may need to be modelled separately to accommodate differences in individual landowner timber production and harvest goals and objectives, including rotation period. Results from this step will also attempt to identify any future shortfalls in the regional availability of economically harvestable young-growth timber relevant to projected market demand.

**4. *Produce a Regional Young-Growth Infrastructure Map and Database***

Combine existing mapping and information with new mapping and information to be compiled and developed by the LOG to produce a regional young-growth infrastructure map (GIS) showing forest roads, marine access facilities, log sort-yards, rafting grounds, ship loading sites, etc. for all participating ownerships. Develop a database, linked to the map, to contain relevant site-specific information relating to each mapped infrastructure feature. This will require combining FS mapping for the Tongass with mapping completed by DOF which covers non-federal ownerships in the region.

### **2022** 5. *Summarize Young-Growth Forest Management Plans for Each Landowner*

Use information to be compiled by the LOG to produce concise written summaries of young-growth forest management goals and objectives as stated by each participating landowner in current forest management plans, land management plans, and Forest Stewardship Plans. Where planning documents contain such information, written summaries will include a description of landowner intent regarding the future production and harvest of young-growth timber. DOF staff will lead this effort.

### 6. *Produce Time-Lapse Mapping of Young-Growth Timber Stands*

Use mapping, data and information developed from Items 1 – 5 above, to produce a time-lapse analysis and animated mapping (GIS) showing where and when individual timber stands are expected to provide economic harvest opportunities within the next 100 years, across all participating ownerships. Results from this step will show the potential flow of economic timber over time, and by geographic area.

### 7. *Produce a Young-Growth Timber Harvest Timeline*

Use outcomes from Item 6 above to identify geographical aggregations of young-growth timber stands which may provide logical, economically feasible young-growth timber sale areas, by 5-year periods, over the next 100 years across all ownerships. This analysis will focus most intently on an examination of potential timber sale areas which could be planned during the next 15 years to meet projected near-term market demand for young-growth timber volume. The analysis will include potential timber sale opportunities involving two or more landowners.

### 8. *Conduct Falldown Analysis and Identify Resource Restoration Projects*

Use outcomes from Item 7 to refine sale specific LSTAs and to assess non-timber resources associated with potential young-growth timber sale areas identified in the next 10 years. Analysis will yield estimates of; falldown acreages, operable net commercial timber volumes by harvest method, and identify potential resource restoration projects. Non-timber resources will be assessed through a combination of modelling and field survey methods. Where feasible, GIS modelling, mapping and analysis, and on-the-ground field survey tasks will involve Workforce Development efforts, in cooperation with regional workforce development entities (Spruce Root/Haa Aani as one example). Results of on-going efforts by FS staff to complete this task for areas of the Tongass will be combined with results of similar analyses to be completed for areas of young-growth forest on non-federal ownerships.

### 9. *Produce a Timeline for future PCT, Commercial Tree Thinning, Resource Restoration Projects*

Use outcomes from Items 6 and 8 above to identify, as possible, future site-specific opportunities for PCT, commercial tree thinning and resource restoration projects on non-federal forest lands, by 5-year periods, over the next 10 years. The expectation is identified projects could be implemented if funding becomes available. Results will be integrated with outcomes from a similar ongoing analysis by Tongass staff to recognize opportunities across all participating forest ownerships in the region.

#### *10. Provide Results of YGWFA to Public, Stakeholders and Industry*

Through a prospectus process, provide relevant data summaries, mapping and other information developed through the Analysis by means of an on-line information portal and/or other effective mechanism(s). Information shared publicly will be used to inform the public, regional stakeholders and industry about young-growth resources, and to solicit industry investment related to resource restoration, and young-growth forest management, harvesting and manufacturing in the region. Culturally sensitive and/or proprietary information related to Private ownerships will not be publicly disclosed.

#### *11. Complete a Young Growth Timber Pilot Project*

Using project outputs (including from the LOG project), design a young growth pilot project covering multiple ownerships, and requiring the shared use of roads and other harvest related infrastructure. The pilot project may include climate mitigation, silvicultural projects and forest restoration, but must include young growth timber harvest components which will be evaluated through a timber sale appraisal process to determine if commercial timber sale components are profitable (positive value). Positive value commercial timber sale components may be sold and operated at the discretion of the landowner/manager or in a mutually agreed manner if involving multiple ownerships. A young-growth GNA project involving a timber sale should be considered.

### **TASK 3. Reconvene and Support the Tongass Transition Collaborative (TTC)**

The TTC will be facilitated by DOF's non-profit cooperator. The TTC, as requested by the Steering Team, will provide continuing Tongass Transition recommendations, including recommendations for implementation, monitoring, and investment, and assist the U.S. Forest Service with its scheduled 5-year review of the Tongass Land Management Plan. The TTC will assist Tongass staff in evaluating the achievement of young-growth goals established in the Forest Plan and the likely impacts to fish and wildlife habitat related to young-growth projects. The DOF's project facilitator will oversee and coordinate completion of the following numbered TTC tasks and deliverables outlined below.

#### **2022** *1. TTC Steering Committee Calls and Meetings*

The TTC Steering Committee represents a core group of individuals committed to the purposes of the TTC. The role of the TTC Steering Committee is to provide continuity and direction regarding the TAC's Tongass Transition implementation recommendations, and to serve as the deliberative body, providing overall direction to the TTC.

The Steering Committee will meet via conference call or video twice per year, to discuss overall priorities and activities of the group. DOF's non-profit cooperator will support the Steering Committee in the following ways:

- Scheduling, planning, facilitating, and documenting conference calls (scheduled twice per year, approx. 90-minute calls).

- Meeting preparation and follow-up will also include tracking of on-going activities and assessing progress toward achieving TAC recommendations, one-on-one communication with members as needed, and updating the public-facing website with relevant information and materials.

## **2022 2. TTC Full Membership Calls and Meetings**

The TTC full membership, along with additional outside entities as requested, will meet virtually twice per year. The DOF's non-profit cooperator will support the full membership meetings in the following ways:

- Scheduling, planning, facilitating, and documenting the two virtual meetings of the TTC full membership (approx. 90 minute - 2-hour call).
- Contractor support for the meetings will include two of their staff members (one facilitator, one note-taker).
- Preparation and follow-up for both virtual meetings will also include tracking activities and progress toward achieving TAC recommendations, one-on-one communication with members as needed, communication with other regional collaborative groups for updates, developing press releases/talking points/briefing sheets, and updating the public-facing website with relevant materials.