



The Nature Conservancy in Alaska
Alaska Field Office, Juneau
416 Harris St.
Suite 301
Juneau, AK 99801

tel [907] 586-8621
fax [907] 586-8622
nature.org

September 13, 2016

City of Thorne Bay
Thorne Bay, AK 99919

Re: Prince of Wales Landscape Assessment Team Facilitation

Dear Sir/Madam:

The Alaska Chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) would like to provide to the Prince of Wales Island Landscape Assessment Team (POWLAT or Team) an approach to assist the Team in achieving its goals of developing recommendations for the US Forest Service to consider as it works toward adoption of a landscape-level assessment document for Prince of Wales and nearby islands. We are not submitting a proposal in response to the City's RFP, but rather are offering to meet with the leadership of POWLAT to discuss in detail the issues that we see are involved in this project and an approach to meet POWLAT's needs, if desired.

TNC has had an active program on Prince of Wales Island (POW) over the last decade. We have worked with the US Forest Service, many different communities, Alaska Native tribes, village corporations, and residents in a wide range of projects. In 2010, we led a community-based visioning process for the Greater Staney Creek area, employing a process similar to what we would like to suggest for an area-wide process. Additionally, we have worked with the Hydaburg, Kasaan, and Klawock tribes and the City of Coffman Cove on fisheries and fish habitat assessments, with the US Forest Service on stream restoration projects in the Harris, Twelvemile, and Staney Creek drainages, and have completed terrestrial and stream restoration projects with Shaan Seet, Inc. One of our most visible projects was in partnership with Klawock Heenya Corporation and other partners for the installation of the concrete culvert along the Klawock-Hollis Highway.

As our record on the island indicates, we are committed to working with local communities, tribes, and corporations on locally-based priorities. It is for this reason that we are interested in assisting with the development of local input into the Forest Service's Landscape-level Assessment. Based on our experience in the Staney project, we appreciate the perceived conflicts that exist among the choices that POWLAT will be asked to make and believe that the process in reconciling those conflicts is a challenge, but if successful, will result in recommendations that express the will of the island's residents and communities. We believe that recommendations developed through a fair and open process will have a significant effect in

the choices that will be made by the Forest Service in its future management of the Tongass National Forest on Prince of Wales.

As I mentioned above, our approach would be based upon the successful approach that we used in the Staney project. There, data and information from resource experts were presented to describe Present Conditions. The information was provided for five different sectors at a sequence of meetings. For this process, we see the sectors as being the following: Timber; Recreation and Tourism; Subsistence; Fish and Wildlife; and Transportation. After discussion with POWLAT, these could change, but this will give you an idea of those areas that would be covered in the Landscape-level Assessment. Then, after there is a good understanding of the Present Conditions, POWLAT would prepare a Desired Future Conditions statement for each of these sectors, individually. The last step, is reconciling and agreeing upon Desired Future Conditions and developing final recommendations. In the Staney case, no one interest or group got all that they wanted, but coming to final agreement was relatively easy once the Present Conditions were well understood by those participating in that collaborative process. After the recommendations were completed, projects were developed to implement them to move the landscape towards the Desired Future Conditions. An island-wide process likely will take six or seven 1.5 day meetings to present the Present Conditions information and allow enough time and space for discussions to take place, not only at the meetings, but for the POWLAT members to take the concepts and ideas back to their communities to bring more people into the process.

This idea on how to proceed is just that; we believe that an in-person meeting will help determine whether this approach or a variant can meet POWLAT's needs. We understand that there may be other issues to address as well, including: the roles for the facilitator vis-à-vis the roles for POWLAT members and leadership; administrative support; public outreach; lands to be included (Forest Service-only or "all-lands"); the commitment of the Forest Service to provide information, analyses, and support; funding; and other matters from the collaborative that could be considered in setting up the process.

Again, we suggest that talking through these matters will provide the opportunity needed to help decide whether this approach will work for the POWLAT, and if so, how to proceed. We believe that managing this process will require a team, including members who live on the island. If POWLAT is interested in developing these ideas further, we would be pleased to meet on POW sometime during the last two weeks of September to sit down and talk it through. Whether or not our approach or another is chosen, TNC is committed to this project and will do whatever we can to help make it a success.

If you would like to discuss these issues further, you can contact me directly at 907-789-1791 or email me at ncohen@tnc.org.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Norman A. Cohen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Norman A. Cohen
Acting Conservation Director

cc: Misty Fitzpatrick
Jon Bolling
Michael Kampnich

