



SEALASKA
HERITAGE

Northwest Coast Arts Economy

David Shakagook Russell-Jensen

Sealaska Heritage Overview

- Sealaska Heritage Institute is an independent 501(c)(3) chartered by Sealaska Corporation in 1980
- Northwest Coast Arts, Native language, educational equity, collections/archives, and research and scholarship
- Operate the Walter Soboleff Building and Sealaska Heritage Arts Campus in Heritage Square, downtown Juneau
- In 2020, served 51,400 people in 36 communities
- 2020: Revenues of \$17.5m, 61 employees



Northwest Coast Arts

- Northwest Coast art (NWC art) evolved over thousands of years among the rich and complex Indigenous societies of the Pacific Northwest Coast
- NWC art is intricate and based on ancient formline design principles and spatial relationships unique to this region
- NWC art has capacity for further innovation



Arts Economy in Southeast Alaska

- 2013: arts-related spending in Southeast Alaska totaled \$57.8m¹
- 2013: 2,340 artists earned \$29.9m in workforce revenue¹
 - Nearly twice the amount of workforce earning than the timber industry
- 2013: Artists derived an average 23% of income from art¹
- Total income of NWC artists is \$27,900, or about 64% higher than average profits of other Southeast Alaskan artists
- 2022: Southeast Alaska continues to experienced a depressed economy but with growth expected in visitor industry

1 - Southeast Conference. (2013). *The Arts Economy of Southeast Alaska*. <https://www.seconference.org>



SHI and NWC Arts

- Vision: Make Juneau the Northwest Coast Arts capital of the world
- Training new NWC artists
- Teaching NWC arts in schools
- Ensuring excellence of NWC art/formline
- Educating the public about formline
- Integrating NWC art in public places
- Designating NWC art a national treasure
- Protecting the clan ownership of crests
- Repatriation of NWC art



SHI Programming

- Offered in-person and virtually:
- Sustainable arts (seal, sea otter)
- Wood carving
- Formline design/painting
- Basket weaving (spruce root and cedar bark)
- Woolen weaving (Chilkat and Ravenstail)
- Moccasin making
- Metal work (chasing/repousse, carving)
- Programming is open to all with a priority preference for Sealaska shareholders



SHI Arts Campus

- SHI Arts Campus is operational; broke ground on construction in June 2021, occupied December 2021, and hosted first course in early 2022
- Campus features:
 - Wood Carving Studio
 - Metal Arts Studio
 - Fiber & Textile Studio
 - Artist in Residence Studio
 - Research Library
 - Digital Arts Studio
 - Performing Arts Space
 - Studio spaces are equipped with virtual engagement/distance-learning capabilities
- Programming will significantly expand from current offerings, with plans to operate courses daily, host summer visitors, and more



Arts Campus Dedication

12-2pm June 8, 2022

- Dancing
- Sealaska Cultural Values 360° pole dedication

SHI Collaborations

- Three-way partnership between University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) and the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) in Santa Fe, N.M.
- SHI is commencing the Kootéeyaa Deiyí: Totem Pole Trail project in partnership with the City & Borough of Juneau
- Project will see 30 totem poles raised along the downtown Juneau waterfront
 - SHI received \$2.9m in December 2021 from the Mellon Foundation for the first 10 poles
 - Poles will be carved in 6 SE communities and transported to Juneau
 - Each pole has an economic impact of \$200,000+



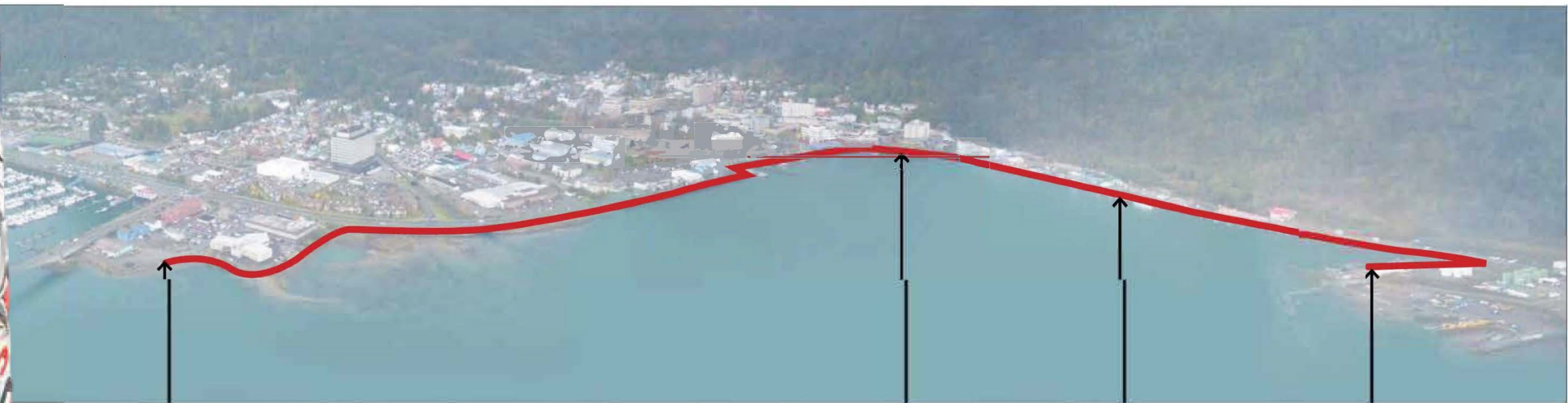
KOOTÉEYA DEIYI

Totem Pole Trail

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COFFMAN
ENGINEERS

September, 2019



Study Area C



Study Area A



Study Area B



Study Area D



Growth of Arts Economy

- We are at the beginning of possibilities
- Training artists to supplement other sources of income can benefit economically-depressed regions of Alaska
- Supporting Alaska Native art respond to the growing visitor industry's desire for authentic local crafts
- Changing attitudes towards art as a powerful economic tool
- The Southwest Association for Indian Arts (SWAIA) Indian Market held annually in Santa Fe, N.M. generated an estimated economic impact of \$165.3m in 2018
- We envision this scale of impact for Southeast Alaska with Juneau as the Northwest Coast Arts capital of the world





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**Let's talk about how we can make Juneau the
Northwest Coast Arts capital of the world!**

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