

2025

SE ALASKA ECONOMIC SUMMIT
& 66TH ANNUAL MEETING

ROOTED IN RESILIENCE

Sept. 16-18, 2025 ★ Sitka, Alaska



Mission Vision Values

of Southeast Conference

MISSION

What we do

SEC's mission is to undertake and support activities that promote strong economies, sustainable communities, and a healthy environment in Southeast Alaska.

VISION

Why we do it

To facilitate enduring connections that enable dynamic, diverse, and thriving economies across Southeast Alaska.

VALUES

How we do it

We position Southeast Alaska as an economic leader in the global economy.

We engage community leaders to develop solutions which will enhance the economic sustainability of our region.

We catalyze change and prosperity for our diverse region.

We facilitate visionary and adaptive solutions to sustain our region in perpetuity.

We build trust among our partners.

We respect and celebrate the diversity of our region.

We develop capacity internally and externally to accomplish our mission.



What does SE Conference do?

- Develop regional strategic planning documents (CEDS) that help communities establish a shared regional vision for long-term economic growth; identify key regional projects and priorities that can help spur economic development
- Committees that coordinate partnerships that identify key projects and solicit input and ensure that regional projects that are undertaken provide greatest impact for communities.
- Provide staff capacity to assist with project development and implementation
- Conduct economic data analysis to help inform decision-making and outcomes
- Provide business development support to entrepreneurs and industry partners
- Available to conduct disaster mitigation and recovery and disaster planning work
- Catalyze Project Development from Concept to Construction
- Supply chain analysis for economic development opportunities
- Regional Planning Organization (RPO, RTPO, EDD, ARDOR)
- Community and Public Engagement



SOUTHEAST 2030 STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY

In February 2025, Southeast Conference released the draft Southeast Alaska 2030 Economic Plan, a five-year strategic plan for the region. The membership worked together to develop an overall vision statement, 46 objectives, and 7 priority objectives, along with regional and industry specific SWOT analyses. More than 400 people representing small businesses, tribes, Native organizations, municipalities, and nonprofits were involved in various elements of the planning process. The Plan's prioritized objectives are listed below.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- ★ 1. **Housing objective: Support the sustainable development of housing**
- ★ 2. **Childcare objective: Increase childcare capacity in Southeast Alaska**
- 3. Infrastructure maintenance
- 4. **Education objective:** Partner with University of Alaska Southeast and K-12 school districts to build career pathways
- 5. **Workforce attraction and retention objective**
- 6. **Coast Guard Objective:** Support Coast Guard vessel homeporting opportunities
- 7. **Natural disaster planning objective:** Support disaster preparation and relief efforts
- 8. **Solid waste objective:** Support regional solid waste management solutions
- 9. **Healthcare workforce objective**
- 10. **Telecommunications objective:** Improve communications access in Southeast Alaska
- 11. **Manufacturing objective:** Promote regionally-manufactured local products
- 12. **Food security objective:** Increase supply and distribution of local foods



★ = Priority Objectives

SEAFOOD

- ★ 1. **Further develop markets for Alaska seafood**
- ★ 2. **Seafood modernization initiative**
- 3. Work to further promote a year-round seafood economy in the region
- 4. Full resource utilization and ocean product development
- 5. Mariculture development
- 6. Bring back seafood jobs to Southeast's smallest communities
- 7. Support access to capital for harvesters and processors
- 8. Maintain a stable regulatory regime



NATURAL RESOURCES

- 1. Prepare for potential Chinook salmon listings
- 2. Work with USFS to direct federal contracts toward locally-owned businesses
- 3. Support an innovative, integrated timber industry
- 4. Attract capital investments, maintain global competitiveness
- 5. Provide an economically viable supply of timber from the Tongass to regional operators
- 6. Increase access to minerals and energy sources for mining on state and federal lands
- 7. Advocate for the regulators
- 8. Revise the Tongass National Forest Land Management Plan



VISITOR INDUSTRY

- ★ 1. **Support local tourism ownership and entrepreneurship**
- 2. Workforce housing for visitor's sector
- 3. Cultural tourism development
- 4. Collective regional strategy for accommodating tourism industry growth in Southeast



ENERGY SECTOR

- ★ 1. **Reduce energy costs and increase deployment of renewables**
- 2. Promote beneficial electrification
- 3. Support consumer education on heat pumps
- 4. Policy and regulatory development to meet community energy needs and priorities
- 5. Continue to support PCE for rural communities
- 6. Biomass in energy



TRANSPORTATION

- ★ 1. **Support the stability, sustainability and longevity of the Marine Highway System of Alaska**
- 2. Develop a long-term, strategic, multi-modal, regional transportation plan
- 3. Improve and expand opportunities to move freight to and from markets
- 4. Ports and harbors infrastructure improvements
- 5. Transportation Workforce Development
- 6. Ensure the stability and safety of passenger transportation services
- 7. Improve marine and road connection to Lower 48
- 8. Disaster Resilient Transportation Infrastructure



★ = Priority Objectives

SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE'S 2030 PRIORITY OBJECTIVES



1 HOUSING:
Support the Sustainable Development of Housing

2 CHILD CARE:
Increase Childcare Capacity in Southeast Alaska

3 TRANSPORTATION:
Support the Stability, Sustainable & Longevity of the Marine Highway Systems of Alaska

4 ENERGY:
Reduce Costs & Increase Deployment of Renewables

5 SEAFOOD:
Further Develop Markets for Alaska Seafood

6 SEAFOOD: Seafood Modernization Initiative

7 VISITOR'S INDUSTRY:
Support Local Ownership & Entrepreneurship

The impact of the 2021-2025 CEDS

Southeast Alaska 2025 Economic Plan

Southeast Conference's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
2021-2025



Updated April 2024

Prepared by
Rain Coast Data

Priority #1



Sustain and support the Alaska Marine Highway System

Priority #2

Mariculture development



Priority #3

Promote beneficial electrification



The top priorities of the 2025 Plan

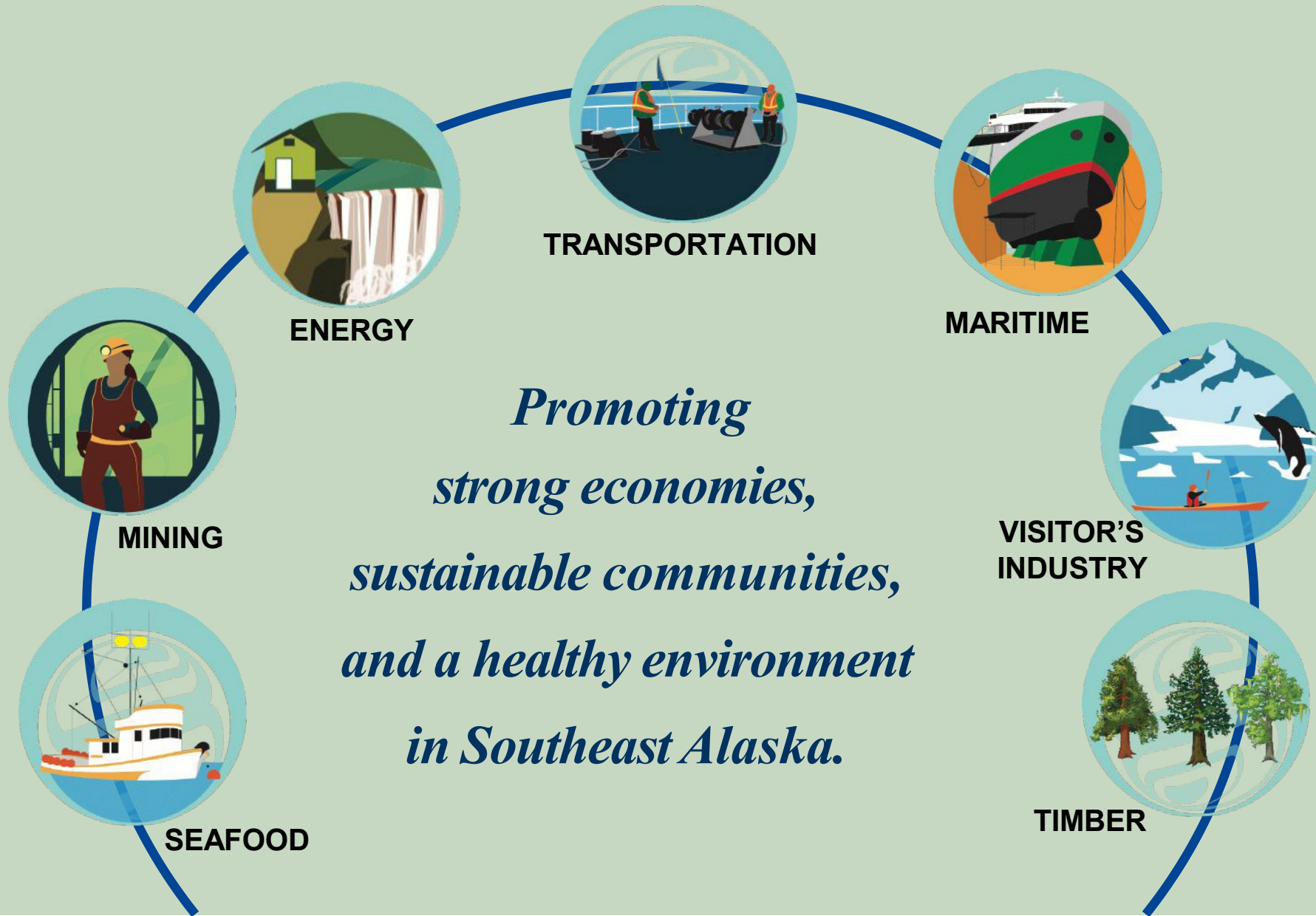
= \$700 million

= \$49 million

= \$39 million

National Association of Development Organizations 2021 Impact Award for the Southeast Alaska 2025 CEDS

THE WORK OF **SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE**





MODERNIZING

OUR

MARITIME

FLEET



AMHS VESSELS



Aurora

- No Major Projects Planned

48 yrs - Built 1977



Columbia

- WiFi Upgrades in 2024

52 yrs - Built 1973



Hubbard

- No Major Projects Planned

6 yrs - Built 2019



Kennicott

- Emissions and Exhaust
- \$24.4M in 2025

27 yrs - Built 1998



LeConte

- Extended Overhaul Winter of 2024-2025

52 yrs - Built 1974



Lituya

- No Major Projects Planned

21 yrs - Built 2004



Matanuska

- Assessment in Progress
- \$37.5M in FY25 Rural Ferry Program

62 yrs - Built 1963



Tazlina

- Crew Quarters Addition
- \$19.3M in FY25

6 yrs - Built 2019



Tustumena

- Continued State of Good Repair Focus

61 yrs - Built 1964

Planned/Future Vessels



Tustumena Replacement Vessel

- New Construction
- \$310M in FY25



New Mainliner

- New Construction
- \$10M in FY25



No/Low Emissions Ferry

- New Construction
- \$53.2M in FY26



RECONNECTING to PRINCE RUPERT



MOORING & TERMINAL FACILITY

Upgrades /Replacement Needs

Working with Canadians on options



BUY AMERICA WAIVER

May not be necessary



VESSEL REQUIREMENTS

SOLAS & Accessible Canada Act Compliance

Working with Delegation and Canadians to resolve

RESOLVED

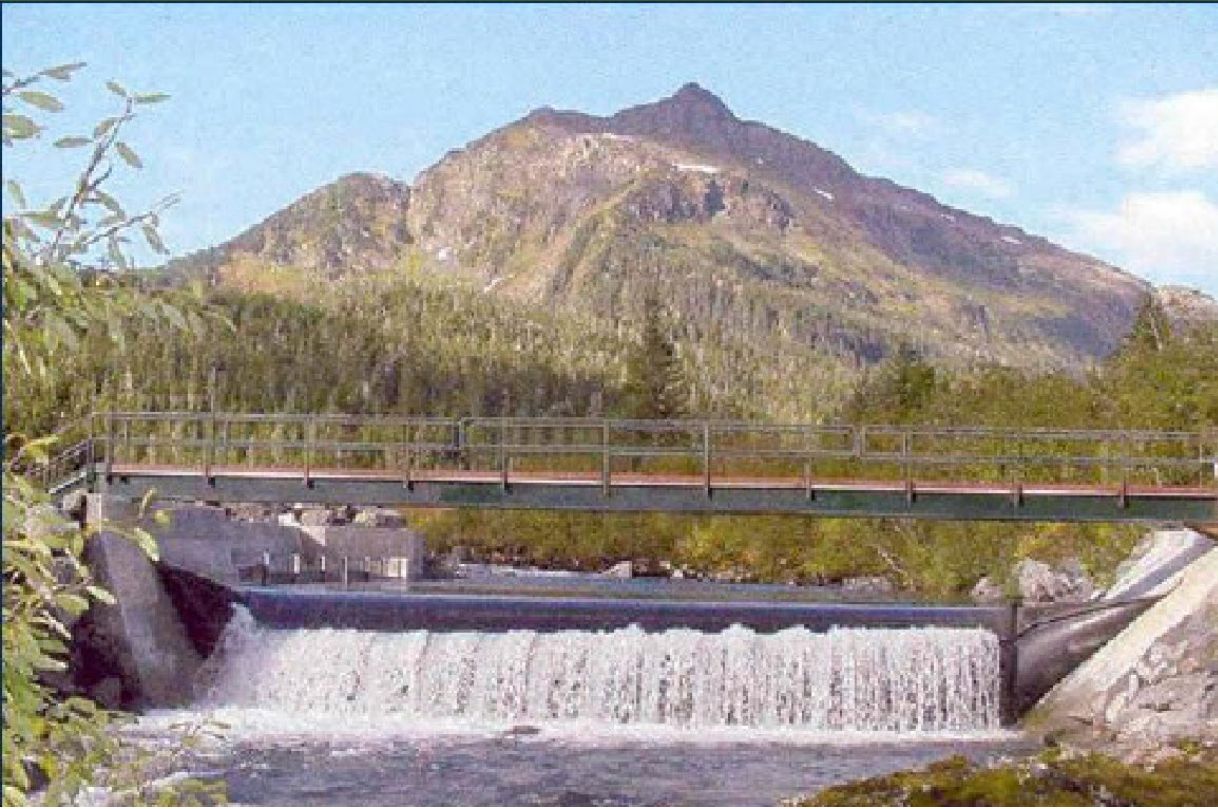
US BORDER PROTECTION
& PASSANGER CLEARANCE



PROMOTING
REGIONAL
ENERGY
PROJECTS
WITH LOCAL
RESOURCES



RENEWABLES ARE HERE. LET'S USE THEM



THE FUTURE HAS BEGUN.

From ground source heat pumps in Metlakatla to excess wind and solar thermal heat in the Arctic, innovation and beneficial electrification is taking shape across Alaska.



BENEFICIAL ELECTRIFICATION IS KEY



APPLICATIONS

- TRANSPORTATION
Automobiles, buses, marine vessels
- FOOD SECURITY
greenhouses
- MANUFACTURING & MATERIAL HANDLING
- INFRASTRUCTURE
cruise ship docks, ports and airports
- BUILDING THERMAL LOADS

STRATEGIES

- Infrastructure planning and development
- Rate Design
- Incentives & Financing
- Education & Outreach
- Partnership Planning
- Managed Charging Systems

THERMAL LOADS





CREATING
QUALITY
EXPERIENCES
SOUTHEAST
FOR ALASKANS
AND VISITORS



FREEDOM FISH

- Federal Executive Order 14068: Bans Russian Seafood from U.S.
- In 2022, 70,000 metric tons of Russian seafood valued at \$452 million entered U.S. market
- Opportunity for all Alaska seafood species
- Norway, Chile, Iceland, and farmed whitefish also taking advantage of ban

Anecdotal evidence indicates that the Russia ban is helping stabilize U.S. market for Alaska seafood products.

International Trade & Tariffs

Alaska Seafood products compete with countless products and numerous countries in every single market.

U.S. seafood products generally face higher tariff rates than seafood from competing seafood producing countries.

Alaska Seafood is often collateral damage in trade negotiations.

While Russian seafood is banned from the U.S., it is not restricted elsewhere.

China is still an important trade partner. It will take time to fully divest from China for reprocessing.



Mariculture PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

+100 STUDENTS
trained through UA's various
BBB Mariculture Programs

+\$13M IN FUNDS SPENT
THROUGH
FISCAL YEAR 2025

<\$17M New Projects
AWARDED



ALASKA WOOD ENERGY DEVELOPMENT TASK GROUP



17

ACTIVE PARTNERS

Meet annually to review applications and award funds for pre-feasibility studies for woody biomass heat systems





CHIP BIOMASS INSTALLATIONS THIS YEAR

NENANA



*Biomass
Energy
Techniques
(BET) boiler
for District
Heat*



MENTASTA

Heizomat Boiler in a Box





Biomass

Cordwood Operator Training

- Sessions throughout AK
- 27 Certifications in 2024
- 9 Graduates in 2025

Technical Support

- Assistance provided to dozens of partners

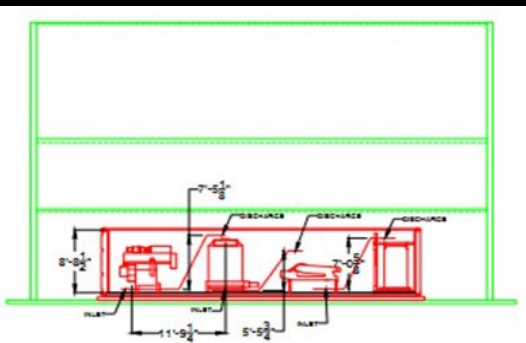
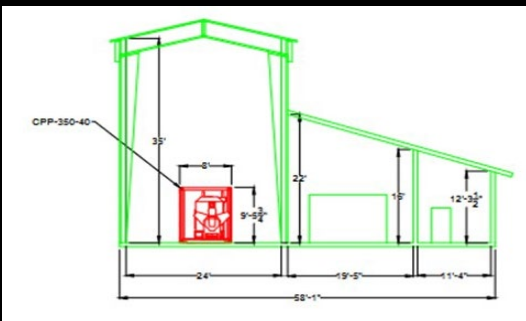
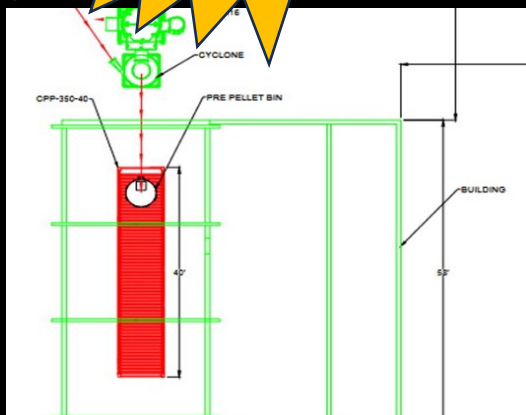
Pellet Mill Demonstration Project

- Partnering with industry and communities
- BDO Zone
- The Tongass Collaborative



COMING
SOON

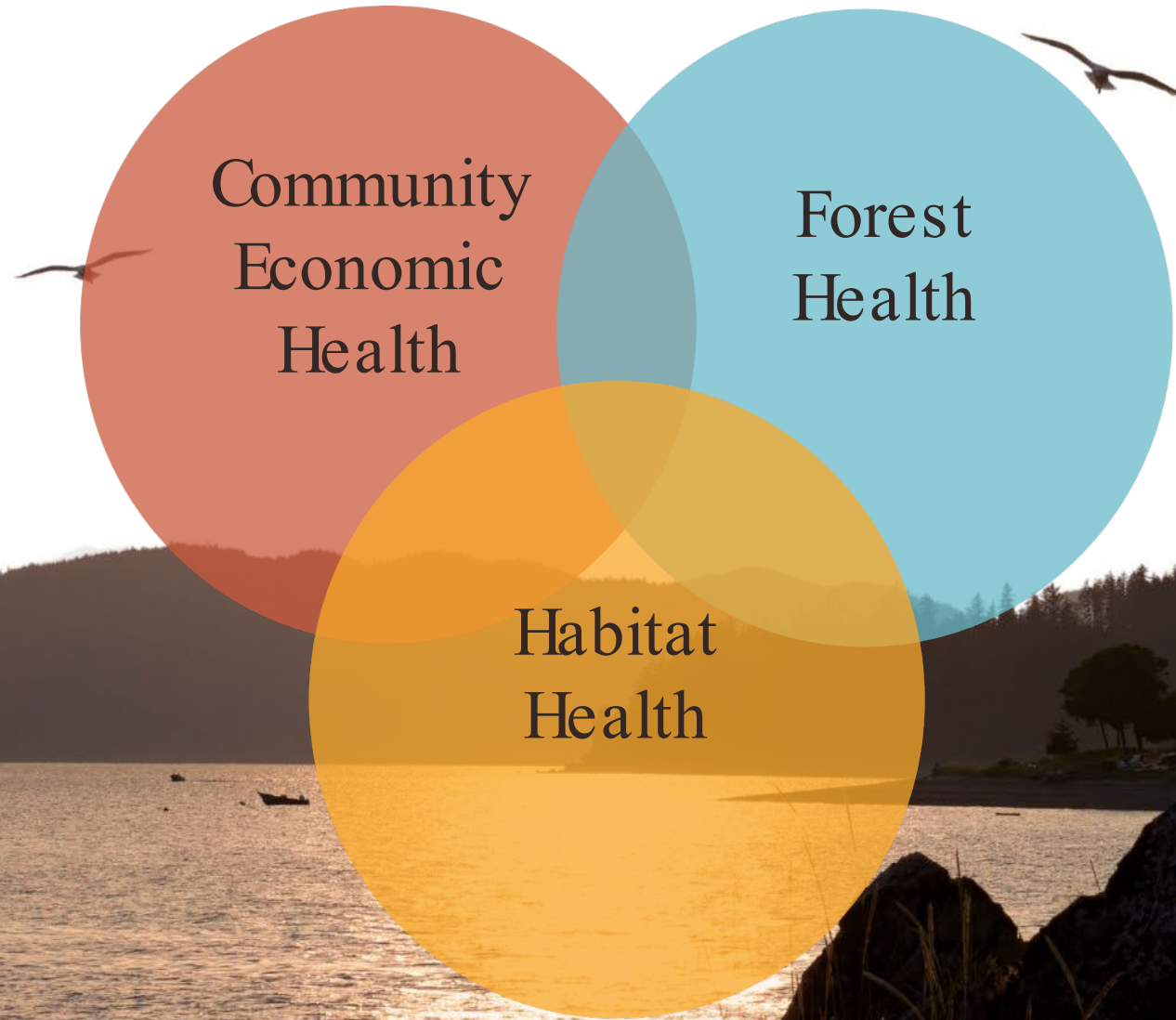
SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE PELLET PROJECT



Planned installation soon.

Anticipate Pellet Plant will produce up to 5000 tons per year

The Tongass Collaborative – ttcak.org



DIVERSITY OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

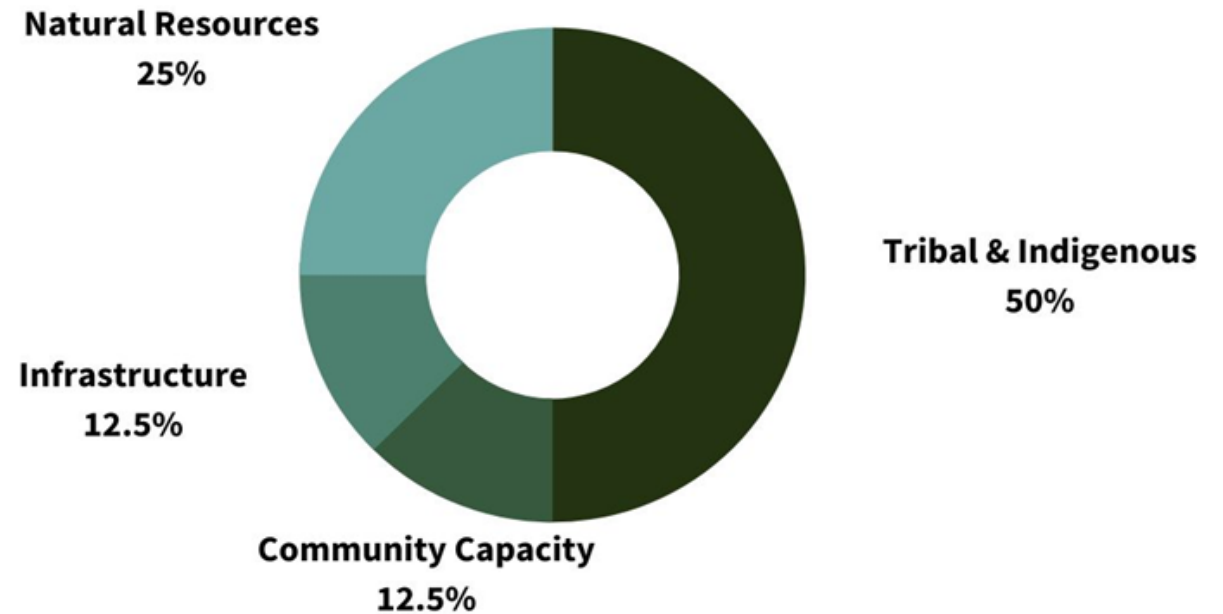
- Durable Timber Policy and Programs (with a 150 - 250 year horizon)
- BDO Zone, Young Growth Inventory, POW Integrated Forestry Campus
- Mineral Resources (is there really \$2 Billion to discover in Southeast?)
- Fisheries and Mariculture
- Recreation and Visitor Services
- Renewable Energy
- Carbon Sequestration



Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy

- \$24.8 Million Federal Investment
- 60+ Locally-Driven Projects Across Southeast Alaska
- 150+ Annualized Jobs

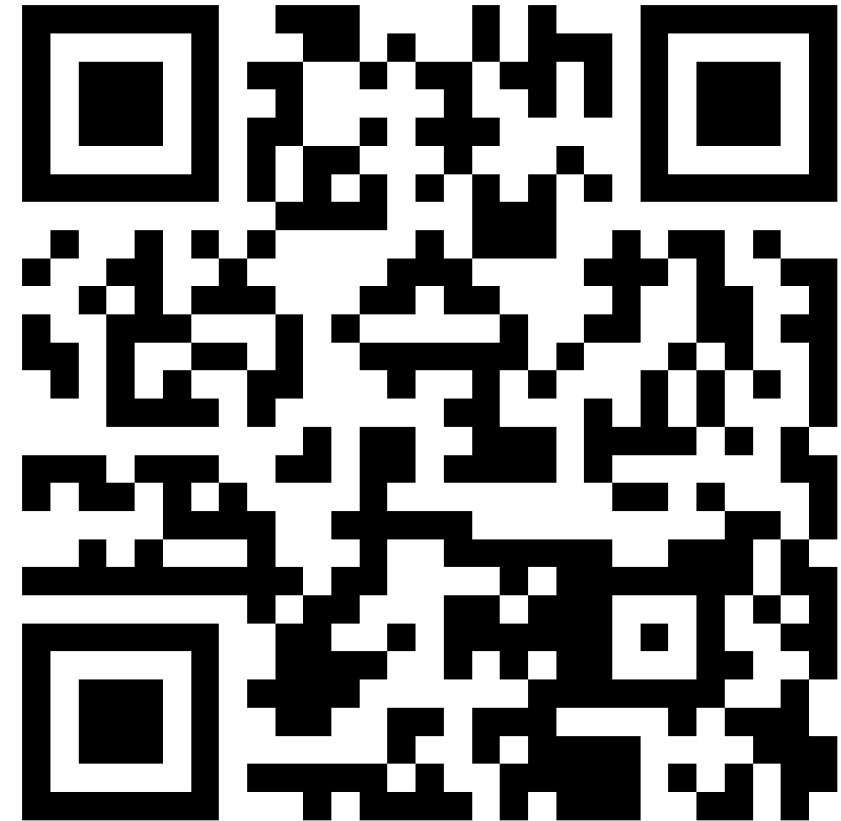
Sustainability Strategy Investments



Regional Strengthening Partners



Check out the SASS Comprehensive Report!



<https://www.seconference.org/publication/walking-the-path-together-sass/>

THANK YOU!



ROBERT VENABLES
robert@seconference.org
907.586.4360