

CITY OF TENAKEE SPRINGS

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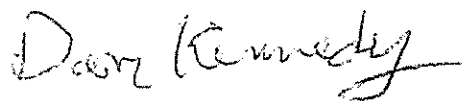
February 11, 2022

Petersburg Borough
Attn: City Council
P.O. Box 329
Petersburg, AK 99833

Dear City Council Members,

Please find attached a copy of our letter recently sent to Senator Murkowski's office, along with a copy of our Resolution 2021-17.

Sincerely,



Dan Kennedy, Mayor

CC: City Council – City of Ketchikan
City Council – City of Wrangell
City Council – Haines Borough

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February 10, 2022

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
United States Senate
522 Hart Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Senator Murkowski,

With the recent introduction of S 3269, we resubmit our resolution (attached) regarding our vision of what is good and essential for a healthy Tenakee Inlet, as well as elaborate on why we cannot support S 3269 in its current form. We would like to work with and alongside other organizations and municipalities that also care deeply for the lands and waters of this place: Southeast Alaska, the Tongass, Tlingit Aani, to create acceptable legislation.

Tenakee has a very long history of its inhabitants using and caring for the plants and animals that share this Inlet. Since time immemorial, Native peoples have shared these lands with other species that also depend on a healthy ecosystem for good lives, not only in Tenakee Inlet, but across North America.

With the advent of western influence, many of these healthy uses of the land were dropped in favor of industrial and consumptive uses, with the consequent displacement of Indigenous peoples from their lands. This happened a bit later in Alaska than much of the continent, but it certainly happened here too.

Conservationists during the late 19th through the 20th century saw the appalling loss of game and habitat and reacted to preserve what remained but failed to appreciate the key roles that aboriginal people played by participating in the ecosystem. The critical ecological knowledge Native people had gained over millennia was also completely ignored. This led to problems that persist today between conservationists and advocates of Indigenous rights when these two groups should be allies.

Residents of Tenakee Springs saw much the same ecological degradation happening in their backyard, when large commercial clearcuts threatened to decimate Tenakee Inlet. We reacted in much the same way as earlier conservationists. Since at least the 1970's Tenakee has opposed large-scale logging operations and any other development that threatens to damage not only the forest ecosystem, but the streams that support the salmon of the Inlet. However, these efforts did not address the historic displacement of the Tlingit people from their lands. We acknowledge this and strive to be open-minded about what we can do now.

At the same time, we still feel strongly that the values inherent in a stable and vibrantly healthy ecosystem must be protected, not just in Tenakee Inlet, but throughout Southeast Alaska and on our planet. Climate change, the results of increasing human populations, rampant materialism, the disparity of income and wealth, and other challenges to health and sustainability face all of us now. It is time to work together.

**City of Tenakee Springs
RESOLUTION 2021-17**

In the Council
May 27, 2021

Introduced by
Craig Mapes

**A RESOLUTION FOR THE CITY OF TENAKEE SPRINGS, ALASKA, OF
RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING STEWARDSHIP OF THE LAND AND WATERS
OF TENAKEE INLET**

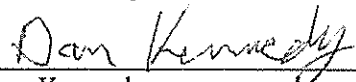
- WHEREAS, The Common Council of Tenakee Springs, Alaska, recognizes the privileges we enjoy through proximity to the richly productive watersheds, marine waters, and forest ecosystems of Tenakee Inlet; and
- WHEREAS, the best way to show respect for the people who lived here before us and concern for future generations is to protect the intact forest ecosystems and wild salmon watersheds of Tenakee Inlet; and
- WHEREAS, Tenakee Springs is a rural subsistence community in which many people engage in a mixed subsistence and cash economy that depends upon abundant fish (salmon and marine species), game (venison), plants (firewood, home-milled lumber, seaweed, berries), fungi (mushrooms), and grown produce (potatoes, vegetables, fruit); and
- WHEREAS, the economy of the area is characterized by businesses and activities that depend on productive forest ecosystems and watersheds include commercial fishing, guided charter fishing, guided hunting, local small-scale selective timber harvest and milling, arts and crafts, independent travel and small tour vessels, retired and seasonal living, municipal jobs and construction and services, and farming; and
- WHEREAS, the accelerating pace of climate change is impacting this abundance and creating uncertainty and concern for future community stability due to: increasing marine and fresh water temperatures that impact fish populations directly; changes in precipitation that alter the flow patterns of rivers and streams and increase the frequency of extreme conditions such as floods and low flow, high temperature, low dissolved oxygen events that are lethal to salmon, increasing acidity of marine waters that impairs productivity of plankton and other animals that are food for salmon and other species of fish and marine wildlife; and changes in forest conditions that render some species of trees vulnerable to extreme temperatures, forest insects, and diseases; and
- WHEREAS, the Tongass National Forest is the nation's largest national forest and plays a crucial role in mitigating the impacts of climate change; the Tongass stores the equivalent of 44% of the total ecosystem carbon for the entire national forest system, and an effective climate strategy would be to protect its carbon dense older forests while allowing younger forests time to sequester more carbon; and
- WHEREAS, the land and waters of Tenakee Inlet comprise a single integrated ecosystem region yet are managed by a mix of land owners who do not coordinate their activities effectively, including the US Forest Service (Tongass National Forest),
-

the State of Alaska (fish, wildlife, tidelands, and state marine waters), the City of Tenakee Springs, and private land owners; coordination and cooperation among land owners and governments is essential in order to achieve long-term stewardship and community viability;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Common Council of Tenakee Springs recommends:

1. The conservation of intact wild salmon watersheds of Tenakee Inlet through:
 - a. Continued protection of the Trap Bay and Kadashan watersheds as Legislative LUD II roadless areas, and
 - b. Whole watershed protection for additional watersheds including Saltry Bay, Seal Bay, Long Bay, Goose Flats, and Tenakee Head, and
 - c. Ensuring that all salmon streams and rivers are managed to provide minimum one hundred foot buffers of unlogged forest alongside salmon spawning and rearing streams and that the riparian management standards in the Tongass Forest plan are adhered to on all streams and lakes.
2. The protection of sufficient old-growth winter habitat to ensure abundant Sitka black-tailed deer populations, which support resident harvests that provide venison for local households.
3. The maintenance of critical wildlife corridors, especially the narrow connection between the Northeast section and the remainder of Chichagof Island.
4. Management of the forest ecosystem to mitigate climate change and promote resilience of local ecosystems and communities by ending clear-cut logging on the Tongass and favoring the protection of old-growth forests and allowing younger forests time to sequester more carbon, provided that selective harvest of dead and living old-growth trees, and the cutting of some younger trees and groups of trees, should be allowed in order to support local businesses that mill local wood products for local uses.
5. Addressing climate change mitigation on private lands by providing meaningful and effective economic incentives for managing forest areas for carbon storage and sequestration.
6. Promoting and welcoming independent travelers and cruises of 20 people or less that provide intimate experiences and support local economy without the degradation of natural landscapes, local lifestyle, or the overwhelming of local infrastructure.
7. Commitment by all land owner-managers and governments to coordinate and cooperate together in the stewardship of the land and waters of Tenakee Inlet, including but not limited to annual meetings to share information and plans, collaborative restoration projects, and ecosystem monitoring and scientific research projects that include indigenous knowledge and local experience.

ADOPTED 6 ayes, 1 absent THIS 27th DAY OF May 2021



Dan Kennedy
City Council President
Ex officio MAYOR

ATTEST:



Nicole Pegues, City Clerk