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**Date:** October 11, 2024

In February of this year, the Tongass National Forest authorized the implementation of Thomas Bay Young-Growth Timber Sale project on the Petersburg Ranger District. The project is intended to increase the viability of young-growth harvest and processing capacity for the benefit of local and regional economies while also addressing restoration needs in the area. To-date, project elements include:

- the harvest of approximately 536 acres of young growth while maintaining wildlife connectivity, for an estimated 14.8 million board feet,
- aquatic organism passage improvements along NFS roads,
- cleanup of abandoned hunting camps within the project area, and
- thinning young-growth stands to improve riparian area function and wildlife habitat.

These actions align with the OneUSDA Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy (SASS) by refocusing resources on the Tongass National Forest to implement an integrated forest management program that includes watershed and wildlife habitat restoration and sustainable young-growth timber harvest.

The Petersburg Ranger District is interested in using stewardship contracting as a tool to accomplish the objectives identified in the Thomas Bay decision. For instance, bundling the restoration activities with the timber product removal into one contract would allow us to trade goods (timber) for services.

I have attached a document that describes stewardship contracting and how it's used. The document also provides details on the activities included in the stewardship proposal. I am also seeking your feedback. I would like to hear your ideas on any additional activities in the Thomas Bay area that you would like the Forest Service to consider in the stewardship proposal. And finally, I am requesting a letter showing your support of the district's proposal to use stewardship contracting to implement the Thomas Bay project.

If you have questions about the stewardship proposal or our request for support, please contact Ben Case, District Silviculturist, at [benjamin.case@usda.gov](mailto:benjamin.case@usda.gov).

Thank you for taking the time to help manage our National Forest System lands.

Sincerely,

CAREY  
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CAREY CASE  
Date: 2024.10.11  
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CAREY CASE  
District Ranger

Enclosure: Thomas Bay Stewardship Proposal Outreach  
cc: Ben Case, Rachel Brummet, Clint Kolarich, Dan O'Leary

