

DEVELOPMENT OF A CONSERVATION EDUCATION AND
INTERPRETATION GUIDEBOOK FOR THE THORNE BAY AND
CRAIG RANGER DISTRICTS, TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST.

by:

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ABSTRACT

The Tongass National Forest has been described as a land of vast beauty, as a home to unique flora and fauna, and as a supporter of diverse and distinct cultures. It has also been said to be a land gripped by public controversy, wobbling in a state of change. Prince of Wales Island, the largest island within the Tongass, is no exception. The past decade has brought incredible change to the Island and its communities – local economies, historically based on resource extraction, are striving to diversify and find a new identity as more visitors come to experience the abundant natural wonders of the region. Managing most of land on Prince of Wales Island, the Forest Service Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts are also undergoing many of the changes that local communities are experiencing, and are seeking ways to ease the transition.

Currently, the Tongass National Forest Conservation Education and Interpretation (CE&I) Strategy, guides Forest Level programs but there is no guiding direction in place for CE&I programs at the District level. Through this research, an assessment of the past and present conservation education and interpretation programs on Prince of Wales Island, determination of audience needs, development of a mission, vision and strategies, and creation of a list of educational and interpretive opportunities a program direction for CE&I efforts has been established. As a culminating result of this research, the *Prince of Walles Island Conservation Education and Interpretation Guidebook* was developed to connect the expectations and interests of the audiences, to the resources available, in a way that increases public awareness and knowledge of the Tongass, promotes citizen investment and action, and supports the United States Forest Service's mission and goals.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

The conservation education and interpretation programs on the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts, of the Tongass National Forest lack direction for on-the-ground program development, implementation and evaluation.

By meeting the following objectives the problem statement will be addressed:

Objectives

1. Summarize the history and current status of conservation education and interpretation in the Forest Service, the Tongass National Forest and the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts based on primary and secondary sources. Identify agency program components from the past and present that should continue into future programming, as well as challenges that need to be overcome.
2. Identify the audiences that the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts serve, and determine their needs, interests and expectations.
3. Identify the interpretive and educational mission, visions and strategies of the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts.
4. Identify the educational opportunities available on the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts and prioritize the options based on District needs, budget, goals and personnel.

5. Identify the interpretive opportunities available on the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts and prioritize the options based on District needs, budget, goals and personnel.
6. Produce a Guidebook that provides directional strategies and tools that the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts can use to better meet the needs of their audience and strive toward the agency's mission and goals throughout the process of program development, implementation and evaluation.

Significance of Study

In the Forest Service's Vision to Action Strategy, the agency stated that, "By 2002, Forest Service conservation education will be an effective, dynamic means for the Forest Service to connect the American people with their environment. The Forest Service will provide the tools Americans need to participate effectively in the critical task of sustaining our Nation's natural and cultural resources. This undertaking shall be a coordinated, Service-wide effort that will affect all aspects of the agency's operations" (United States Department of Agriculture, 1998). Although the Tongass National Forest is the largest of America's forests, it has been slow to take steps towards this goal. Limited funding, personnel, time dedication and expertise in the field of interpretation and conservation have retarded many attempts at reaching out to the American people both across the nation and in the local communities of the Tongass (Frost and Atkinson, 2003).

A planning team that consisted of Forest Service employees from across the Tongass met during the summer of 2003 to develop a Tongass National Forest

Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy. This plan consists of broad guidelines and themes that give a general direction for interpretative and educational activities on the Forest.

However, these guidelines are broad, and do not give the Ranger Districts and their employees the framework they need to develop quality, comprehensive and cohesive interpretive and educational programs that strive to achieve the Tongass interpretation and conservation education goals. Because a majority of public interaction happens at the District level, having a guidebook that can help transfer the broad guidelines into an implementable plan is essential to providing quality interpretive and educational services to the audiences it serves. The Guidebook can also serve as a model for other ranger districts, creating consistency and communication lines between isolated offices.

A document that provides guidelines for on-the-ground conservation education and interpretation efforts is especially needed on Prince of Wales Island. The past decade has brought incredible change to the island. Its economy has shifted from being almost completely timber dependent to one that is in transition to a more sustainable and diverse dependence on the land and its resources. "Times of economic transition are difficult for communities. Yet the path to a sustainable economy for Southeast Alaska is no mystery...With so much land, so many resources and so few people, Southeast has the opportunity to build a sustainable economy that could become a model for others sparsely populated, resources-rich regions" (Durbin, 1999). Through these growing pains, Island communities are trying to figure out where to go, and how to get there. However, the local public is not the only factor. It is becoming increasingly apparent that more and

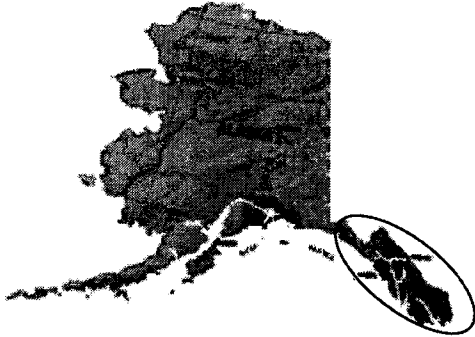
more people are coming from “outside” to the island to experience the Tongass and its many wonders.

The Forest Service is undergoing many of the same changes that the local communities are experiencing. The Ranger Districts are seeking ways to accommodate the transition that is occurring, both externally and internally. Development of an educational and interpretive guidebook would help meet the needs of the communities and schools of Prince of Wales Island, the Island’s visitors and the employees of the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts. The guidebook could also serve as a model for other ranger districts enduring similar changes.

This project will include two assessments which will guide the development of an educational and interpretive strategy (or Guidebook). First, it will identify the audiences, and their needs and expectations, on the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts. Second, it will identify opportunities and resources within the Districts that address these needs. The Guidebook will connect the needs, expectations and interests of the audience to the resources that are available, in a way that increases public awareness and knowledge of the Forest, and promotes citizen investment and action, while meeting the USFS mission and goals.

Definition of Terms

Tongass National Forest: The largest of America's national forests, it encompasses nearly 17 million acres of islands and mountains in the southeast Alaska panhandle. As a temperate rainforest, it is home to giant trees and many unique ecosystems. It is also home to a wide array of cultures unique to southeast Alaska.



Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts: These two Ranger Districts are charged with the management of land and waters on Prince of Wales Island – the 3rd largest Island in the United States and the southern tip of Alaska. Although these two Ranger Districts are distinct entities within the Tongass National Forest, they have agreed to collaborate on conservation education and interpretation efforts on Prince of Wales Island.

Conservation Education: A learning process concerned with the interrelationships among components of the natural and human-made world producing growth in the individual and leading to responsible land stewardship (Forest Service - Vision to Action Strategy for Conservation Education).

Interpretation: "...a communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the inherent meanings of the resource" (Merriman and Brochu, 2002).

Tongass National Forest Interpretation & Conservation Education Strategy: A plan put together in 2003 by a team whose members were employees from all over

the Tongass. It strives to develop a cohesive strategy and broad guidelines that will encompass all of the educational and interpretive efforts on the Tongass.

Other Tongass Ranger Districts: Hoonah, Juneau, Ketchikan, Petersburg, Sitka, Wrangell, and Yakutat

Audience Needs: What the audience is expecting or would like to see from their educational and/or interpretive experiences on the Tongass.

Program: This word will be used two ways (see second definition below). With a capital 'P', it is broad and all encompassing. It includes all conservation education and interpretation efforts happening within the Forest Service on Prince of Wales Island.

program: an individual educational or interpretive program. An example of a program could include: The seasonal interpreter will do an hour long public interpretive hike on spring wildflowers.

Conservation Education & Interpretation Guidebook: A user-friendly document that provides guidelines for education and interpretation on the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts. It can also be used as a guide for other ranger districts to develop guidelines of their own. This study will result in the creation of the Guidebook.

Alaska Marine Highway System: Southeast Alaska is a cluster of islands stung together by waterways. Travel by road is not practical to this unique landscape, so as an alternative large ferries transport passengers and vehicles to cities and towns throughout southeast Alaska.

Abbreviations

TBRD: Thorne Bay Ranger District

CRD: Craig Ranger District

Tongass or TNF: Tongass National Forest

USDA: United States Department of Agriculture

USFS: United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service

NRCE: Natural Resource Conservation Education Program

VIS: Visitor Information Services

POW: Prince of Wales Island

CE: Conservation Education

I: Interpretation

NAAEE: North American Association for Environmental Education

NAI: National Association for Interpretation

PLT: Project Learning Tree

Assumptions

- Current Forest Service educational and interpretive services on Prince of Wales Island and the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts are inadequate to fully meet the needs and expectations of the audiences they are intending to serve.
- The *Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy* is not intended to solely direct conservation education and interpretation programs at the ranger district level.

- There will be a need in the near future for individual ranger districts to evaluate individual conservation education and interpretation programs to better serve their specific audience and justify how the programs are meeting USFS goals.
- Knowing the audience, their needs, and the interpretive and educational resources available, are critical parts in providing quality conservation education and interpretation services across the Tongass National Forest.
- Development of a conservation education and interpretation Guidebook for the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts would reach out to the local POW communities, island visitors, and employees.

Delimitations

- This project will not attempt to actually implement specific interpretive and educational efforts – it is intended to act as a guide and resource, and to provide guidelines for program development, implementation and evaluation for the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts.

Chapter 2:

Review of Related Literature



II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Literature pertaining to the following topics was reviewed:

1. What is Environmental Education and Interpretation?
 - a. Environmental Education
 - b. Interpretation
 - c. Forest Service Definitions

2. History of Conservation Education and Interpretation in the USFS, the Tongass National Forest, and Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts
 - a. The United States Forest Service
 - b. The Tongass National Forest
 - c. The Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts

3. The Current Condition of Education and Interpretation in the USFS, the Tongass National Forest, and the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts

4. Mission, Visions, and Goals of the United States Forest Service
 - a. The United States Forest Service
 - b. The Tongass National Forest
 - c. The Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts

5. Strategies and Philosophies of Educational and Interpretive Planning
 - a. Interpretive Planning
 - b. Environmental Education Program Planning
 - c. Strategic Planning

6. Determining Audience Needs
 - a. Focus Group Interviews
 - b. Unstructured Interviews

7. Summary

What are Environmental Education and Interpretation?

Professionals in the fields of environmental education and interpretation, have long debated the definitions of each. Most professionals recognize that each field is intertwined and founded on the similar principles. However, professionals are also aware that the basic goals of these two disciplines are very different (Merriman and Brochu, 2002).

Environmental Education

Environmental education, as defined by the North American Association of Environmental Education (NAAEE), is “a process that aims to develop an environmentally literate citizenry that can compete in our global economy; has the skills, knowledge, and inclinations to make well-informed choices; and exercises the rights and responsibilities as members of a community” (<http://www.naaee.org/npeee/>, 2003).

Other key attributes of environmental education are that it is based on a specific curriculum, has educational goals, and specific learning objectives. Additionally, it sometimes is focused toward a more formal audience, and is part of a larger program, with pre- and post-experiences that build and re-emphasizes concepts. *Environmental education* also implies that its focus is on the environment (Merriman and Brochu, 2002).

Direction for environmental education was officially established in 1977, when the world’s first intergovernmental conference on the environment was held in Tbilisi Georgia (USSR) (Intergovernmental Conference on Environmental Education, 1977). The result of this conference was the Tbilisi Declaration which outlines the framework,

principles and guidelines for environmental education at all levels and for all age groups.

This document states three goals for environmental education:

1. To foster clear awareness of, and concern about, economic, social, political, and ecological interdependence in urban and rural areas;
2. to provide every person with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, values, attitudes, commitment, and skills needed to protect and improve the environment;
3. to create new patterns of behavior of individuals, groups, and society as a whole towards the environment.

The goals are broken down into objectives. The objective categories for environmental education are:

Awareness. To help social groups and individuals acquire an awareness and sensitivity to the total environment and its allied problems.

Knowledge. To help social groups and individuals gain a variety of experience in, and acquire a basic understanding of, the environment and its associated problems.

Attitudes. To help social groups and individuals acquire a set of values and feelings of concern for the environment and the motivation for actively participating in environmental improvement and protection.

Skills. To help social groups and individuals acquire the skills for identifying and solving environmental problems.

Participation. To provide social groups and individuals with an opportunity to be actively involved at all levels in working toward resolution of environmental problems.

Together, with a set of guiding principles and several other conference recommendations, the goals and objectives of the Tbilisi declaration provide environmental educators world-wide with a framework within which to develop programs.

Interpretation

Interpretation, on the other hand, is defined by the National Association of Interpretation (NAI) as, “a communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the inherent meanings of the resource” (Brochu and Merriman, 2002).

The profession of interpretation began nearly 100 years ago by self-made nature guide Enos Mills. As a boy, Mills left his home in Kansas to see what adventure he could find out in the west. Settling at the base of Long’s Peak in Colorado, he sought out any opportunity to explore the vast wild of the area. During this period he made the distinction between a ‘trail guide’ and a ‘nature guide.’ Trail guides lead people safely to a destination however, a nature guide goes beyond that to “guide others to the secrets of nature.” After gaining the skills he thought were essential to being a nature guide (what would become an interpreter), Mills began leading groups to the summit of Longs Peak. Through his experience as a nature guide Mills founded the basic principles of the profession. His passion to expand the profession inspired him to establish a Trail School at Longs Peak where other individuals could learn and practice the principles of nature guiding (Mills, 1990).

The profession continued to expand in the coming decades. In the 1950’s, Freeman Tilden a writer, publisher and playwright, was contracted through the National Park Service to uncover the guiding principles of interpretation taking place in the National Parks. Tilden traveled throughout the country, observing, interviewing interpreters and participating in interpretation programs. Through his appraisal he determined that there were six basic principles of interpretation that are described in his

book *Interpreting Our Heritage*. These principles still guide the profession today (Tilden, 1957).

1. Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.
2. Information, as such, is not Interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.
3. Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical or archeological. Any art is by some degree teachable.
4. The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.
5. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part, and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.
6. Interpretation addressed to children should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.

More recently, an effort has been made to expand on these principles and further the profession. In 1994, the National Park Service created standards and a thorough training program for interpretation through the Interpretive Development Program. This program is striving to “professionalize the field” and is “based on the premise that all effective interpretation links tangible resources to their intangible meanings” (Larson, 2003), (Gross and Zimmerman, 2002). To be effective interpretation must have the following components (Gross and Zimmerman, 2002):

- Knowledge of the resource
- Knowledge of the visitor
- Knowledge of interpretive methods

“Interpretation facilitates the connection between the meanings of the resource and the interests of the visitor” (Gross and Zimmerman, 2002). The National Park Service’s Interpretive Process Model defines resources as “tangible... objects, places, people, or events. Resource professionals seek to preserve, conserve, and remember tangible resources. Tangible resources include events (historical and natural) and people from the past.” (Larson, 2003). Intangible resources are “concepts, ideas, abstractions and values; the ‘spirit of place’” (Gross and Zimmerman, 2002).

Furthermore, interpretation is often a one-time experience for the audience and is meant to be used in a purely recreational context. In his book Interpretive Master Planning, John Veverka describes interpretation as “recreational learning”, something that is fun and appeals to visitors who are in a “vacation frame of mind”. Audiences of interpretation are not seeking to become experts on a particular topic but looking to have fun learning about something they find interesting (Veverka, 1994). Interpretation does not solely address environmental resources but can be applied to any topic or setting (Merriman and Brochu, 2002). Examples of interpretive activities include exhibits, publications, facilities, signage, and personal services (Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, 2004).

Interpretation is important to public land managers because “for most audiences, a flash of insight or a feeling of wonder can connect them to the resource and provoke a deep sense of stewardship. Because the visitors seek something of value for themselves, they are ready to care more about your resource” (Larson, 2003, p. 36).

Interpretation and Conservation Education as Defined by the USFS

Currently, the USFS directs environmental education efforts, such as Smokey Bear, the *Natural Inquirer*, and classroom presentations, from almost all branches of the agency. Interpretation, on the other hand, is solely directed from the recreation branch. However, future organizational visions may integrate the programs in recognition of overlapping goals. (Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, 2004)

The USFS refers to environmental education as 'conservation education' in order to reiterate the agency's focus on conservation of natural and cultural resources. The agency defines Conservation Education as: "...a learning process concerned with the interrelationships among components of the natural and human-made world producing growth in the individual and leading to responsible land stewardship." They also have identified two core themes of conservation education programs on National Forests (Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, 2004):

- Sustainability of natural and cultural resources in forest, grasslands, and aquatic ecosystems.
- Awareness and understanding of interrelationships in natural systems and between people and the land.

In the Forest Service Manual 2390, interpretation is defined as "activities and programs designed to develop a National Forest visitor interest, enjoyment and understanding of the natural environment of the National Forest, and the mission of the Forest Service in managing those lands." Interpretive services also should aim to develop intellectual and emotional connections between people and the heritage of the area, both

cultural and natural. The hope is that a respect and appreciation for America's public lands will be gained through these connections, and ultimately leads to protection and strong stewardship in the future (Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, 2004).

The History of Conservation Education and Interpretation in the USFS, the Tongass National Forest, and the Thorne Bay & Craig Ranger Districts

Conservation education and interpretive services have played a critical role in the management of national forests and grasslands since the infancy of the Forest Service (United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service, 1998). In order to understand the current condition of education and interpretation on the Tongass, a brief look into its past can be helpful in understanding the context of conservation education and interpretation projects and programs happening today.

Conservation Education and Interpretation in the United States Forest Service

Conservation education has existed in the Forest Service since the early 1900's (United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service, 1998). At that time, it was considered "a nice thing to do" and was often spurred by catastrophic events like forest fires. Women took charge of early education programs in the Forest Service, creating awareness among students and raising funds to support various school and community projects. In 1928, conservation education in the Forest Service became more formal as it was officially stated in the manual as a way, "to promote the best use of all forest

resources in the country, public and private.” The main focus of education at this time was toward children and schools.

After World War II, an emphasis was placed on protecting our forest resources from fire. As a result of the perceived wasting of forest resources, the now famous Smokey Bear program was launched. It was later dubbed as one of the most effective environmental education programs in the world (United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service, 1998).

Shortly after the Smokey campaigns began, the Forest Service realized the importance of connecting to the public and went to great lengths to provide information and interpretive services to the public. From 1962-1982 over 25 major visitor centers were built along with many other interpretive and informational sites. This marked the beginning of the Interpretive Services program within the Forest Service (United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service, 1998).

1968 was a key year for Forest Service Conservation Education (United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service, 1998). Under the direction of Chief Edward F. Cliff, training teams were sent around the country to teach employees, educators and other community members the fundamentals of conservation education. He believed that conservation education, and the public’s support and involvement, was the only way that the Nation’s natural resources would be protected and used wisely. Congress passed national environmental education acts in 1970 and again in 1990 that supported and further spread this belief. In the 1970’s environmental education in the Forest Service peaked. Formal curriculums were developed and widely used in public schools, activity

guides such as "Investigating Your Environment" is an example that is still in use today (United States Department of Agriculture – Forest Service, 1993).

Forest Service education programs soon expanded beyond schools as national programs were established that strived to reach a public that was increasingly interested in wildlife-based recreation (United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service, 1998). Programs such as *Nature Watch* educated people of all ages through pamphlets, programs, festivals, classes and countless hands-on activities. National Forests around the country still participate in many of these programs.

In February 1991, the Natural Resource Conservation Education (NRCE) Program was established (United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service, 1998). Its goal was to advance conservation education efforts beyond simple awareness of natural resources issues. NRCE was meant to educate people on how to take informed action on conservation issues throughout their lives.

Although the Forest Service has a rich history of conservation education on paper, the little institutional and financial support has been committed over the years. However, as American values continue to change, there is an increasing demand for public education programs by the American people, causing the Forest Service to more seriously consider their educational efforts (United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service, 1998).

Conservation Education & Interpretation on the Tongass National Forest

The Tongass National Forest can be described as a land of vast beauty, as the home of a wide array of natural and cultural resources, and as a supporter of a diverse

variety of unique human lifestyles. It is also said to be a land that is marked with public controversy and one that is currently undergoing dramatic change (Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, 2004).

As the largest National Forest in the United States, spanning almost 17 million acres, the Tongass National Forest is often in the public spotlight of the nation and world (Myers, 1989). Throughout its history, people from across the nation have voiced their concerns on various issues that surround this great land. But in recent decades, as the environmental movement has advanced and the impacts of timber harvest have become more apparent, these public voices have become even stronger. Since the termination of 50 year timber contracts in the late 1990's, local lifestyles and values as well as Forest Service management techniques are being held accountable by the alert public eye.



Figure 1: Clarence Strait – Tongass National Forest
Photo by: Ashley Atkinson

In regards to conservation education and interpretation, the Tongass has been no exception to the Forest Service's rich history. Many interpretive and educational

programs, such as the utilization of interpreters aboard the ferries of the Alaska Marine Highway System, are well established throughout the Forest and have been for decades (Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, 2004).

Conservation education and interpretation in the Alaska Forest Service started to flourish around 1960. Dr. Robert Hakala wrote a publication entitled “Forest Naturalists on Land and Sea,” to recognize the efforts that were occurring at this time (Hakala, 1995). This section is based on this work unless otherwise cited. The start of conservation education and interpretation was sparked by the responses to a recreational survey through which the public voiced a desire for increased recreational and educational opportunities. Increased visitation to Alaska also became apparent during this time. A statement to, “construct 100 campgrounds and picnic sites and related facilities, plan and develop five areas of special significance, and provide information services at these and other visitor concentrations,” was mandated by Forest Service administrators and sites were identified. One result was the 1960 construction of the Mendenhall Glacier Observation Area just outside of Juneau, Alaska. Mendenhall would be the first visitor center to be built in Forest Service history.



Figure 2: USFS - Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center
Juneau, Alaska

Also during that year the *Multiple Use and Sustained Yield Act* was passed which set a clear purpose for the Forest Service and established the Visitor Information Service (VIS) branch of the Forest Service in response to growing interest in the purpose, uses and conservation of resources on national forests. VIS was first officially mentioned in the "Servicewide Plan to Gear Multiple Use Management of the National Forests to the Nations' Mounting Needs." In this plan, a nation-wide policy to build the, "present on-the-ground interpretation services into a well trained, properly uniformed interpretive service," was established. Media avenues were also suggested which included "historical markers and other interpretive signs, as well as panoramic descriptions of heavily used overlooks." Within this document, there was an additional recommendation to develop 'multiple-use demonstration sites' and implement other types of multiple-use education. Schools, women's clubs and youth clubs were the main targets for these efforts.

The Alaska Region was given the responsibility of clarifying the VIS role in the coming 10 years. The following questions were to be addressed:

- Should every forest have a visitor center as the fulcrum of its program?
- How much emphasis, if any, should be promotional of Forest Service resource management program and policies?
- Would the Forest Service mission be best serviced at points of visitor concentration – the highly scenic places?
- Is VIS a recreation activity or educational?
- Could VIS achieve credibility of the Forest Service in regard to controversial resource management issues?
- Would the title "Visitor Information Service" in time, become synonymous in the public eye with interpretation?

In addressing these questions and others, the Forest Service had to undergo some challenges as it coped with using and managing this new branch – it developed a new set of administrative, philosophical and operational characteristics.

In 1962, VIS was officially established in the Alaska Region. Dr. Robert Hakala was hired to lead the program within the Regional Office of Information and Education. One of the first steps was giving an orientation on the VIS role to all Ranger Districts. Dr. Hakala stated that, "Visitor Information Services is a means to helping the public not only to enjoy the national forests, but to understand the nature of resources and their management." Reactions to this new service from employees on the Ranger Districts were both positive and negative. There were some that were skeptical about having 'entertainers' work on their forests. These skeptics felt it only served to 'keep the public happy' and they would be the ones to continue to do the real work. But others were excited and ready to lend a hand to the new program.

A few of the interpretive efforts that began in the region that year included building an interpretive trailer built at Portage Valley in the Chugach National Forest under the direction of Interpretation and Education Chief Jack Culbreath. This portable center was put in place to "test out" various sites with potential to have permanent education, interpretation or other recreational facilities built in the future. This same concept would be implemented in the Tongass National Forest in the coming years.

Limits to building at Mendenhall Glacier were also discovered and suggestions for renovations, such as an exhibit room and auditorium, were made to accommodate interpretive visions. However, these suggestions were considered too expensive and unnecessary and did not make it far in the budget proposals.

Significant changes to VIS occurred in 1963 in the Alaska Region. Activities at Mendenhall Glacier were a main focus throughout the year. An important aspect to the Mendenhall VIS program included the involvement of many professionals and

individuals from diverse fields. It brought a unique mixture of backgrounds and support to the program from a variety of angles. For example, Natives from Klawock displayed and talked about their cultural artifacts at the Mendenhall center. In addition to these activities, a school program was started. In the yearly accomplishment report put together at Mendenhall it was stated that "No aspect of the VIS program is as important as working with youth." Development of the Tongass' first self-guided trail also began that year at Mendenhall. All in all, in 1963 there were over 94,000 interpretive contacts made (each interpretive event experienced by a participant = 1 contact).

Although Mendenhall was the primary hub for VIS in 1963, other areas of the Tongass were also busy. For example, Dr. Hakala reported that the "south Tongass had no formal VIS program or budget...the district rangers and interested employees put on programs for various groups, prepared temporary displays, and installed two interpretive signs for a year's total of 8,215 interpretive contacts." These were not activities that had just been initiated; the South Tongass had been implementing many VIS efforts on their own for years.

A major interpretive opportunity occurred with the first voyages of the ferries of the Alaska Marine Highway System. Because the Forest Service was well respected as a visitor information service provider, they were invited to provide interpretation aboard the maiden voyage of the MV Malaspina. After the initial voyage, the Forest Service maintained the relationship with the ferry system, provided maps of the Tongass and developed audio message cartridges that relayed general information that could be played over the ferry's intercom system. It soon became apparent that the marine vessels offered

endless opportunities and the Forest Service began an inventory of interpretive messages that could be conveyed aboard the ferries.

During this primarily successful time, there were also a few challenges for VIS. A commercial company wanted to put in a gondola that reached to the top of a mountain near Mendenhall. This proposal would directly interfere with the services offered at the Mendenhall Visitor Center and directly affect the experience visitors would have there. This sparked the VIS team in the region to better understand and relay to others the importance of the intangible values associated with interpretation so that commercial venues would not interfere with VIS efforts. They wanted to be better prepared to defend their plans and programs against this conflict and others that would pop up in the future.

Alaska's influence extended service-wide at the first National meeting of VIS specialists held in Arizona in 1963. Alaska VIS specialists presented the interpretive proposal for the Alaska Marine Highway System Partnership; a review and recommendations on planning for an interpretive facility; and brought up a key question: "How does interpretive planning get done?" The Alaska region was setting service-wide precedents for conservation education and interpretation.

During this time, a strong push came from Dr. Hakala and other leaders to 'sell' interpretation and its importance to others. A beginning to this was the 14th Annual Alaska Science Conference. Dr. Hakala gave a presentation entitled "Enhancing Recreation through Interpretation." Within his presentation, he noted that recreation had broader goals that include: "...invigorating of mind as well as body by seeing, experiencing, and learning about new places, new things, and new and expanded ideas." As a follow-up to his presentation, he published a paper entitled "Bridging the Gap,"

which more closely defined the role of interpretation in the Forest Service. In this paper he proposed that the role of interpretation is to bridge the gap between the resource management specialist and the general public. Dr. Hakala stated that "Because National Forests belong to the public, interpretation should make the forests part of the personal environment and concern of every visitor." The objective of VIS is to "relate as accurately and honestly as we can the ecological facts of the environment and of man's use and effect upon it."

In 1964, one of the nation's largest earthquakes rocked Alaska and had an influence over the VIS program in the Region. Although the earthquake was closest to the Chugach National Forest in south central Alaska, the whole region felt that the natural phenomenon of earthquakes was an important topic to share with visitors. It was viewed that all natural phenomena should be interpreted. However, the Forest Service Fiscal Office had other ideas. Their view was that the VIS programs must only work with topics that relate to "the protection and management of our national forest resources."

In addition to discussions on what should be interpreted, there were many interpretive and educational activities being implemented throughout 1964. For instance, a television series with supplemental classroom curriculum was created in one district, wayside exhibits were constructed along Steep Creek and another exhibit was developed for the Yakutat airport. A popular newspaper article series in Juneau, "Ranger Notes," was implemented with slide illustrated lectures and motion pictures to complement it. Things were also moving forward on the South Tongass in interpretation. A VIS plan was drafted for the area that identified six interpretive areas.

Improvements were also made to the Alaska Marine Highway System VIS program with the installation of message repeaters that passengers could play at the push of a button. There were two programs they could choose from: "The Passing Scene" and "Inside the Scenery." The true value of this watery tour through the Tongass was being realized by both the Forest Service and the public they served. The Forest Service made many public contacts and the public was learning about the National Forest they were surrounded by. Along with these recognitions came the realization that personal interpretive services would probably be the most effective interpretive approach on the ferry system.

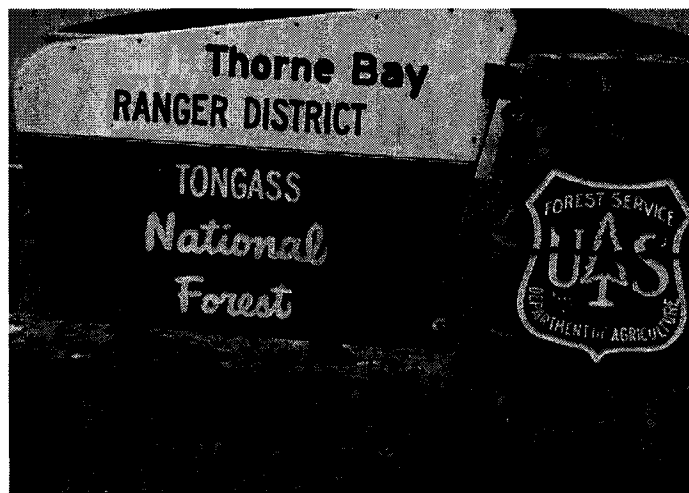
Dr. Hakala then took on an administrative challenge. The VIS was based in the Regional office and covered over 24 million acres. Although he felt that great progress had been made with the existing program organization, he felt that even more impact could be made by helping on-the-ground naturalists at the District level. In a statement of needs addressed to the Chief's office Hakala emphasized, "What VIS needs more than anything else is personnel – qualified, enthusiastic, personable forest naturalists....without forest naturalists you don't have a program." It was thought that "a well conceived program based on fundamentals of understanding can achieve for the Forest Service a deep seated respect for the best interests of the public in the long run."

The next few years would bring a huge increase in the number of interpretive contacts made, along with significant challenges that the VIS program would have to overcome. Main issues included a limited budget that left no room to expand the program, and major communication obstacles between districts in the Region and from the Alaska region to the lower 48 states. This often hindered idea exchange and

professional development for VIS employees. The Alaska region was often left to do its own thing.

Because of these challenges, Alaska Forest Service employees were forced to come up with alternative ways to get their message across. Many times this led to conducting off-forest activities such as school programs and public presentations in towns. “By whatever means were available, the goal was to reach both the general public and the schools with information that builds understanding and wise use of the environment.” The South Tongass did this through the installation of 14 new interpretive panels near Ward Lake, just outside of Ketchikan. These signs were the first products of a nationally designed signs project that resulted in the overall appearance of Forest Service signs still used today.

Figure 3: Standard Forest Service sign design. The design was developed in the mid-1960's.



The sign panels were the kick-off to a flurry of activity in the South Tongass. 1967 marked the centennial of Alaska's statehood. Nearly every district celebrated by creating exhibits to commemorate the event. The exhibits created in Ketchikan remained

up for several years. An upcoming portable visitor center in Ketchikan was proposed because of the city's recent status as a major gateway for visitors traveling to Alaska. Exhibits for the portable visitor center were developed around the theme of "Forests serving people...multiple-use management of the Tongass." The final product conveyed sensitivity to the aesthetic and cultural values of the Tongass but also told about the many ways the forest was used. A major advancement of VIS in the South Tongass was the establishment of the first VIS position. Fred Harnish, a forester, was hired to direct VIS in the area.

Back at the Mendenhall Visitor Center, discussions were held about the direction of the VIS program. There seemed to be two avenues: 1) services that focused around the visitor center, and 2) other programs that were directed toward school environmental education programs. (At that time, the Forest Service used the term *environmental education* for its educational efforts.) It was thought that the school programs were taking too much time away from the Visitor Center, impairing the quality of services offered there. As a result, the environmental education aspects of the program were moved to the regional office. However, environmental education was still funded by VIS because it shared many of the same objectives. These were, "to enhance awareness of man's role in the world environment, and to equip him with knowledge to conserve the resources that support him." The difference between the environmental education and visitor information services was that environmental education was primarily done through formal programs in schools and VIS was a voluntary form of enrichment education.

As the 1960's drew toward a close, existing programs continued to grow and new programs were developed. In the South Tongass, the Kasaan District alone reported an increase of 10,000 VIS contacts. The new portable visitor center in Ketchikan also arrived by ferry from Juneau, stopping along the way to visit schools in Petersburg and Wrangell. Many visitors and community members came to see the town's newest addition. The Forest Service also made and erected orientation signs throughout the city of Ketchikan. The "Bringing the Forest into the Schools" program was also initiated that year.

Although VIS programs in Alaska were going well at the on-the-ground level, there was little being done at the Forest or National level to plan and give direction to on-the-ground actions. A re-write of the Forest Service manual at a national level was needed and implementation would have to take place at all levels.

In 1969, a pilot study brought the much needed personal interpretive services to the Alaska Marine Highway System. There was a positive response from all parties involved. In Ketchikan, the portable visitor center was moved from downtown to Totem Bight and was staffed by two area teachers for the summer. Television lectures were developed for the area, along with three oral presentations that personally reached over 330 people!

Based on the success of the pilot study, personal services on board the ferry were made permanent in 1970. The VIS program began with intensive training for the ferry naturalists. A grand tour of the area was given, visiting towns and getting to know the area resources and their uses. The program aboard the ship was described as "standardized with lots of room for creativity." Activities such as "Whale Watch" and

“Eagle Survey” got visitors involved by awarding them small cards that recognized their achievement.

Several guidelines for the Alaska Marine Highway System’s VIS program were identified by Dr. Hakala and his staff. The guidelines are as follows:

- A comprehensive training program which includes a broad array of resource use activity is essential.
- The program should continue to involve the district rangers and select staff because, to a large extent, it’s the districts’ stories that are being interpreted.
- Critical issue interpretation – that relating to management direction and alternatives – is part of the job. However, this subject area must be handled objectively and with great skill and discretion lest we become protagonists rather than facilitators and interpreters.
- Implicit in the role of VIS on the State ferries is the requirement that we provide orientation to all of Alaska and information about all locales, resources, and recreational activities along the ferry routes.
- During the off-season, interpretive services by means of exhibits, publications, and audiovisual means should be available onboard.
- The quality of interpretive services and facilities and the competence, appearance, and attitude of shipboard naturalists must be kept at a high level.

Along with the successful beginning of the Alaska Marine Highway System VIS program, several other accomplishments occurred throughout the Tongass. In Ketchikan, the portable visitor center was moved yet again. This time it was moved to Ward Lake and used in conjunction with the self guided nature trail that had been developed there several years earlier. Plans were also made for the visitor center to travel during the winter to remote logging camps and towns, helping residents develop an understanding of the Forest Service mission. This was important because most of these people directly depended on the Forest for their livelihood.

Across the Alaska Region, planning was given more of an emphasis and standards were set. This was recognized in a visit from VIS Officer Gren Lloyd from Washington DC. He stated that "Alaska offers VIS the greatest opportunity in the National Forest System to be influential in the field of environmental education and to make people aware of the need for wise resource management. We should seize the opportunity to develop VIS impact ..."

In 1971, Alaska made yet another step forward. They developed a new emphasis on public involvement in national forests. This trend would continue into the coming decades.

From experiences during the first decade of VIS in Alaska, Dr. Hakala made several recommendations. He stated that "Visitor centers or other interpretive means should be established wherever on the forest there is a clear need for interpretation of conspicuous features, including those on which the economy is dependent." He also believed that, "Every district headquarters office should present a visible, open door invitation to the public." Although the mission of the Forest Service focused on a multiple use theme, he did not think that Forest Service management and policies should be the central point of interpretive services. Instead, an interpretive experience should lead to some understanding of an aspect of national forest management. One of the most significant observations that Dr. Hakala made was that he did not believe that Visitor Information Service (VIS) was an accurate name. He thought that interpretation was a more fitting title for the activities being done. Interpretation was not just providing information to visitors – it was working with everyone on variety of subjects.

Even as a multitude of education and outreach programs were happening throughout the Forest in the decades following the 1960's, there were also observations made that in later decades (1980's and 1990's) the Forest Service tended to shy away from the controversies plaguing the Tongass, choosing to delay or dodge the issues, often to their own detriment (Rakestraw, 2002). Even today, the Forest Service has not been able to completely shake this charge.

Throughout the Forest Service's history of the Tongass, things like mining and timber harvest, have tended to conflict with the sound management of wildlife, fish, and the ever-increasing recreational demands. These concerns were still very apparent in the late 1980's (Myers, 1989). With the abrupt decrease in timber harvest due to the termination of 50-year timber contracts, small communities historically dependent on resource extraction are finding themselves in times of economic difficulty. For most communities in the Tongass, it is a time of economic uncertainty and changing lifestyles (Durbin, 1999).

These programs touch on just a small part in the history of education, interpretation, and other forms of public outreach that has happened in the Tongass. Programs thrived throughout the decades that followed, from large to small, specific to comprehensive. Each program also varied in quality and content as well. Although all programs were beneficial, and attempts were made to unite them, the programs were never unified or part of a larger program, and this fact limited their effectiveness (Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, 2004).

Conservation Education and Interpretation on the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts

The Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts have been participants in the wide variety of conservation education and interpretation that has happened on the Tongass in the past. The content, consistency, and quality of individual interpretation and education services, however, has varied (personal communication with Sandy Frost, June 2003).

For both Districts, most public contact has been made through front desk receptionist services and informational brochures at each District's headquarters. Individual communication between Forest Service employees and the public has also been a strong point of Forest Service/public interaction. Tables 1 and 2 list conservation education and interpretation efforts that have taken place on the Prince of Wales Island in the past ten years (1994-2004).

Table 1: Conservation Education Programs taking place on Prince of Wales Island 1994-2004

Conservation Education Programs
School Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Individual Employee presentations▪ EcoVan curriculum related presentation (Thorne Bay)▪ Schools involved with FS projects (rainfall data collection, etc...)
Special Events <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Kid's Fishing Day▪ School District Science Fair
Public Meetings
Summer Youth Camp (Craig)
Passport in Time program
Youth Conservation Crew Program
Educational Training Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Project Archeology▪ Project WILD

Community guest lecturers
Weekly/monthly newspaper articles
Informal education of public through contacts (creel survey, fisherman, etc...)
Internal education between shops
"Off-time" discussions with other employees

Table 2: Interpretation Programs taking place on Prince of Wales Island 1994-2004

Interpretation Programs
El Capitan Cave Interpretive Cave tours
Front desk visitor services (Thorne Bay and Craig)
Brochures available and displayed to visitors
Prince of Wales Island Forest Service Website
Interpretive Panels at TB front office
Beaver Falls Interpretive Trail
Hatchery Creek Interpretive Trail proposal
Rio Roberts Fish pass interpretive panels (outdated)
Big Lake Fish Pass interpretive panels (outdated)
Hollis InterIsland Ferry Terminal Kiosk
Discovery Night Series
Weekly/monthly newspaper articles

The Thorne Bay Ranger District has initiated a wide array of public outreach, conservation education and interpretation programs over the past decade. Some of the programs have prevailed through the economic and land management changes that bombard the Island, and others have faded. Interpretation and public information

distribution has been primarily limited to a front desk attendant and informational brochures at the District headquarters.

Conservation education programs have sporadically taken place in schools. Forest Service professionals are asked to come into classrooms during the school year as guest lecturers and talk about various forest related topics (Atkinson, 2003).

The most established interpretation program on the Thorne Bay Ranger District can be found in the unique karst region on the Island's northern end. Here Alaska's largest cave, El Capitan weaves for more than two miles beneath the ground. The cave was officially mapped in 1987, and in 1992 a trail with more than 370 steps was built and an interpretive cave tour began. The hour and a half cave tour gives the public a unique opportunity to learn about and explore the inside of a cave (personal communication, Marcia Gilles, August 9th, 2004).

The Craig Ranger District also has had many interpretation and conservation education efforts happening in its past. One of the most diverse and established is the program surrounding archeology and heritage. Classroom field trips, the Passport in Time projects, and Archeology Month celebrations are just a few of the programs that have taken place (personal communication with Terry Fifield July 15th, 2004). In the past there have also been many youth workshops and events such as nature hikes, survival skills courses and community celebrations (personal communication with Marcia Gilles, July 10, 2004). A majority of the Craig Ranger Districts interpretive services are done through the District office front desk receptionist (personal observation June, July & August 2004).

Current Condition of Conservation Education and Interpretation in the USFS, the Tongass National Forest, and the Thorne Bay & Craig Ranger Districts

A critical component to bridging the communication gaps that often surround public land controversies, and maintaining the integrity of our public lands, are a “well-educated and ecologically sound citizenry” (Dombeck, Williams and Wood, 2002). One of the best ways to achieve this is by connecting peoples “hearts and minds” to the land (Dombeck, Williams and Wood, 2002). The USFS acknowledges this in their Conservation Education Vision-to-Action Strategy. “Public involvement and collaboration with partners are critical to the future of ecosystems, natural resources and their management, and conservation education should be the cornerstone for each” (United States Department of Agriculture – Forest Service, 1998).

In the Alaska Region, a strategy is in place that outlines conservation education and interpretation standards and a vision. Through Alaska Forest Service educational and interpretive efforts, “...people [will] value National Forests and resources, and work together to assure wise management of them” (Interpretation and Education in the Alaska Region 2003-2006). To implement these standards, the *Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy* was completed and approved in August of 2004. It gives umbrella-like guidelines under which educational and interpretative programs on the Tongass can be developed. Within the document, broad guidelines are outlined that give direction for the forest’s interpretive and educational programs. The vision of Tongass interpretation and conservation education efforts is to:

Create a future where the Tongass NF is nationally recognized in presenting effective, engaging interpretation and education services that meet the need and expectations of our public and further our land stewardship mission.

(Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, 2004)

As stated earlier in this document, the Tongass has a history of dodging critical issues rather than deal with these issues head-on (Rakestraw, 2002). However, forest-wide plans are being developed and progress is being made in changing the Forest Service's reputation from one of dodging issues, to one of being proactive (Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, 2004). Initiatives are being taken that reach out to the public through educational and interpretive programs, building knowledge and awareness of issues occurring on the Tongass. One specific program is on the leading edge of environmental education programming. America's Rain Forests, a distance learning cooperative project with the Tongass, Chugach, Olympic and Caribbean National Forests, is set to launch its live satellite broadcast on October 14th, 2005. With an interactive web-site, comprehensive curriculum and live broadcast in classrooms around the United States, this shows great promise for conservation education in the Tongass (personal communication, Sandra Frost, Feb 1, 2005). There are a number of excellent programs underway, and efforts to unify these programs are a high priority. Unification is greatly needed for sustainability and development of quality, effective programs in the future (Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, 2004).

While these overlying strategic plans are just being developed, many interpretive and educational programs are well established throughout the Forest. Forest Service

interpreters on the ferries of the Alaska Marine Highway System, school programs, visitor centers and community involvement projects are examples of the ongoing public outreach that is happening Forest-wide (Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, 2004).

Specific to the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District, one program is aimed at building a solid relationship with the Southeast Island School District (Atkinson, 2003). This partnership was initiated in the early 2000's and is still going strong in the Thorne Bay Ranger District. Forest Service employees have been invited to the school as guest lecturers, involved in projects, worked with student employees and hosted events such as Career Days. One of the unique projects that has stemmed from this relationship is a salmon incubation in the classroom project. Under the coaching of a Forest Service fish biologist, Thorne Bay's first and second graders raised salmon fry and released them into the wild.

During the summer of 2003, significant progress was made in strengthening educational and interpretive services on Prince of Wales Island (Atkinson, 2003), (Atkinson, 2003). Currently, there is a partnership program with the Southeast Island School District. The program is financially supported from Payments to State funds that were awarded to the school district for "forest conservation education." From these funds the S.C.O.P.E program (Students Classifying Observing and Probing their Environment) was established. A "Watershed Health" curriculum was developed by the Forest Service during the summer of 2003 and is now being used by many schools in the district. The purpose of the program is to provide a framework for Forest Service employees to develop classroom and field educational programs for students in grades K-12. Prior to

this curriculum, visits to classrooms were little more than isolated learning experiences. By using this curriculum, Forest Service employees now have an umbrella under which they can make connections between visits and incorporate important concepts (Atkinson, 2003).

Another step forward in education and interpretation on Thorne Bay Ranger District was taken in the summer of 2003 (Atkinson, 2003). An interpretive plan developed signage and exhibits for the front office area of the Thorne Bay district office. District employees took part in a brainstorming meeting to develop important themes and messages that were specific to Prince of Wales Island and the Thorne Bay Ranger District. These themes and messages were identified as follows (Atkinson, 2003):

Theme: The Forest Service is dedicated to helping enhance the diverse and distinct life that exists on Prince of Wales Island.

Messages:

Discover...

- Countless opportunities for exploration and enjoyment exist amongst the rugged shores, deep forests and sparkling streams of Prince of Wales Island.

Diverse...

- The land has created lifestyles and cultures that are as diverse as the land that is depended upon for support.

Distinct...

- Rare ecosystems and world-class resources thrive in this unique island environment.

Dedicated...

- The Forest Service is dedicated to caring for the land, while serving the people of Prince of Wales Island.

Although there is some quality education and interpretation already taking place on the TB and CRD, there is still no plan that provides a broad conceptual framework for these programs to operate in order to meet the goals and needs of the audiences, agency and resources (Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, 2004). In a personal letter to Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, IITF Director, and WO Staff, Forest Service Chief, Dale Bosworth wrote that:

“conservation education focused on youth is imperative to developing a stewardship ethic, an understanding and connection to natural resources, and, ultimately, to conservation of the nation’s natural resources. By signing this letter with me, the Executive Team urges you to participate in and support conservation education. Using science-based research, expanded partnerships, and opportunities afforded on America’s forests and grasslands we will create a new generation of conservation stewards and leaders to provide for the future sustainability of the nation’s forests.”

(personal communication, D. Bosworth January 26th, 2005)

Strong support for conservation education is shown by USFS leaders at all levels. It is an important time to take positive action in the fields of environmental education and interpretation (Tongass National Forest Conservation Education and Interpretation Strategy, 2004).

Mission, Visions and Goals

The Forest Service is managed operated through several administrative levels. The national, forest and district levels each have their own set of goals that guide what they do. The administrative directives that guide conservation education and interpretation on at each level of the Forest Services are described below. It is important that each directive fits within the directive of higher levels.

The United States Forest Service

The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. All of these noted visions are in some way related to education or interpretation. The Forest Service's visions are:

- Advocating a conservation ethic in promoting the health, productivity, diversity, and beauty of forests and associated lands.
- Listening to people and responding to their diverse needs in making decisions.
- Protecting and managing the National Forests and Grasslands so they best demonstrate the sustainable multiple-use management concept.
- Providing technical and financial assistance to State and private forest landowners, encouraging them to practice good stewardship and quality land management in meeting their specific objectives.
- Providing technical and financial assistance to cities and communities to improve their natural environment by planting trees and caring for their forests.
- Providing international technical assistance and scientific exchanges to sustain and enhance global resources and to encourage quality land management.
- Helping States and communities to wisely use the forests to promote rural economic development and a quality rural environment.

- Developing and providing scientific and technical knowledge aimed at improving our capability to protect, manage, and use forests and rangelands.
- Providing work, training, and education to the unemployed, underemployed, elderly, youth, and disadvantaged in pursuit of our mission.

(<http://www.fs.fed.us/aboutus/mission.shtml>, 2003)

In 1996, The US Forest Service recognized that its past conservation education activities were “fragmented...disconnected and lacked agency coordination” (United States Department of Agriculture – Forest Service, 1998). There was no cohesive strategy or prioritized key messages. As a result, conservation activities were seen as activities that were “nice to do” when the time, funds, and motivation were available. Today, a call that the past, fragmented education programs, be replaced with a coordinated and effective education system is being made. One tactic to make this change was to develop a Conservation Education Vision-to-Action Plan. Written in 1998, the goal for Conservation Education by 2002, as stated in this plan was:

Forest Service conservation education will be an effective, dynamic means for the Forest Service to connect the American people with their environment. The Forest Service will provide the tools Americans need to participate effectively in the critical task of sustaining our Nation's natural and cultural resources. This undertaking will be a coordinated, service wide effort that will affect all aspects of the agency's operations.

(United States Department of Agriculture – Forest Service, 1998)

Six implementation objectives were also stated:

1. Consistently deliver specific education messages based on identified areas where public education is needed to target audiences
2. Develop a corporate identity for conservation education to increase awareness of Forest Service conservation education efforts.
3. Build infrastructure necessary to deliver the conservation education program.
4. Identify, develop and encourage the development of conservation education products, tools, techniques that communicate the identified messages to our target audiences.
5. Support a level of professionalism in employees, volunteers and partners to enable them to participate in the delivery of quality educational experiences.
6. Monitor and evaluate the success of the conservation education program in accomplishing desired outcomes, and revise as necessary.

(United States Department of Agriculture – Forest Service, 1998)

The Forest Service Manual also states objectives for the natural resource and conservation education program. These objectives are:

1. *To promote public awareness and understanding of the importance of natural resources and call attention to particular issues related to forest productivity, protection and use.*
2. *To provide leadership in natural resources and environmental education.*

3. *To enlist the cooperation of institutions and organization in developing broad public understanding of and support for the wise management and use of forest and rangeland resources.*
4. *To assist agency personnel in better understanding natural resource issues.*
5. *To assist resource managers in meeting resource management goals.*

(Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, 2004)

In 2003, there was also an Interpretive Strategy completed. This document is meant as a guide to improve interpretive experience delivery both on and off the national forest and grassland sites. The vision for interpretation for the agency is stated below.

“The Forest Service contributes to the physical, emotional, and intellectual desires and expectations of people by providing relevant and authentic experiential opportunities both on and off the forests.”

The goal for interpretation in the Forests Service is to:

“...create intellectual and emotional connections between people and their natural and cultural heritage, thereby instilling respect and appreciation for America’s public lands and fostering their protection and stewardship through time.”

(Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, 2004)

The Tongass National Forest

The goals of the Tongass Land Management Plan were written in 1997. To specify agency vision and implementation, these goals portray the long-term desired condition of the Tongass National Forest ecosystem. Everything from timber production to wilderness area designation is specifically addressed. In spite of this, the Tongass National Forest is “managed to produce desired resource values, products, services and conditions in ways that also sustain the diversity and productivity of ecosystems” (United States Department of Agriculture – Forest Service, 1997). It is also a primary goal of the Forest Service to help people, both locally and nationally, understand and appreciate their national forests, and use them. (Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, 2004). With the Forest Service’s multiple-use management mandates, and the controversy that often results from its implementation, a way to lessen controversy and increase public understanding is needed. During 2003, a group of Tongass National Forest employees from various resource groups and administrative levels gathered to discuss a vision and develop goals for education and interpretation for the Forest. This was led by Sandy Frost, Partnership and Rural Community Assistance Coordinator for the TNF. The teams efforts created the following vision for conservation education and interpretation on the Tongass National Forest:

Create a future where the Tongass NF is nationally recognized in presenting effective, engaging interpretation and education services that meet the need and expectations of our public and further our land stewardship mission.

(Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, 2004)

The Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy also outlines the following goals for interpretation and education on the Tongass (2004):

- This plan will provide a broad conceptual framework for all resource groups and communities large and small to use to develop an integrated network of interpretive and education opportunities.
- This plan will articulate Forest –wide goals and objective for resource interpretation and conservation education services and provide a “game plan” for reaching these goals.
- This plan will provide a cohesive strategy that will prioritize, coordinate and implement projects Forest-wide.

The Thorne Bay & Craig Ranger Districts

Conservation education and interpretation mission, visions and goals have yet to be established on the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts. These will be developed as a part of this research project.

Strategies and Philosophies of Educational and Interpretive Planning

In order to develop a strategy, or plan, for conservation education and interpretation, it is important to understand the philosophies each is based on, as well as recognized strategies and techniques that are used.

Interpretive Planning

When considering how to develop an interpretive plan, it is important to consider what the plan is intended to accomplish and how the plan will be used in order to have a clear view of what direction should be taken. There are three basic uses for an interpretive plan (Veverka, 1994). A plan could address all or one of these areas. First, an interpretive plan can detail how an agency or organization's objectives could be carried out or how resources could be used in interpretation to achieve a specific management goal. Second, interpretive plans could explore marketing and managing for visitors. For example, the plan could figure out who the present audience is and if there are future changes predicted. Finally, the plan could be a resource in a fundraising initiative and provide a framework so employees within an agency can work towards the same organizational goals.

Lisa Brochu, author of *Interpretive Planning: The 5M Model of Success*, defines an interpretive plan, as a document that "will provide details about the overall interpretive or education program, thematic guidelines, media descriptions, and cost projections for development and implementation." Interpretive planning allows us to convey messages through creating meaningful experiences. Often, interpretive planning is lacking because it is sometimes based on the belief that "one size fits all" (Brochu, 2003). When this happens creativity and the effectiveness of the interpretive experience are lost.

Part of a successful interpretive plan is having a clear vision of what you want the plan to accomplish (Brochu, 2003). There are several types of plans that are developed by agencies that address interpretation. The terminology of plans is often confused and

their definitions, in the process, become unclear. This is a brief synopsis of plan definitions (Brochu, 2003):

Master Plan: This plan is all-inclusive. It does not solely address interpretation but the entire operation of an organization.

Interpretive and Education Plan (I&E Plan): This plan provides details about the overall interpretation and education program. Thematic guidelines, media depictions and estimates on costs for developing and implementing interpretation and education programming.

Interpretive Exhibit Plan or Program Plan: This plan provides even more specific descriptions than the interpretation and education plan by detailing specific media or programs (exhibits, signs, publications, or personal programs).

Strategic Plan: This plan helps define a vision or mission for an organization as well as goals, objectives, and strategies for implementing certain tasks in the near future.

Brochu states that there are six different strategies, of interpretive planning: market based, resource-based, budget-based, objective-based, and agency oriented. Although these plans have an overall goal of developing an interpretive program their components vary widely.

Market-based planning revolves around the customer (Brochu, 2003).

This plan explores customer needs and wants and then tries to meet those needs creatively while staying in the boundaries that management enforces.

This strategy for planning is usually the most successful because the customers' needs are met and the agency also benefits through increased resource protection, support or higher income. However, this plan requires an intimate knowledge of current and future audiences and is very time and cost expensive.

Resource-based Planning revolves around what is available on site, not necessarily taking into account what the customer is seeking (Brochu, 2003). This method of planning is often considered the easiest to accomplish because the messages are obvious on the landscape. But, visitors' needs and interests are overlooked so there is often a low success rate when evaluating the interpretive experience.

Budget-based planning takes into account what the organization can afford (Brochu, 2003). Sometimes partnerships, fundraising events and other creative approaches to raising money are overlooked. Strengths of this type of planning are that it is straightforward (you can only do what the budget will pay for). But, having strictly a budget consideration behind an interpretive plan often leads to interpretation that ignores the audiences wants and needs, the characteristics of the site and the vision of management.

Objective-based planning addresses what the organization wants to accomplish, and how they want to change audience attitudes or behavior through statement of specific objectives (Brochu, 2003). Methods for implementation are developed based on the objectives. Plans that result from this strategy are easy to evaluate and can be very successful if the management mission, resource and audience concerns are taken into consideration when developing the objectives. However, experience in writing solid objectives is a requirement in making the plan successful.

Agency-oriented planning is often based on a template that is used to unite interpretive efforts throughout an agency (Brochu, 2003). The agency, as a whole, develops a certain formula for what interpretive programs should look like or what messages they should convey. Recent trends have shown a movement from agencies giving a “prescription for interpretation” to supporting various forms of input for interpretive efforts (Brochu, 2003). A good example is shown in the *National Parks Service Interpretive Development Model*. Using this model, unity is established in some aspects of interpretive programming; but, there is also variety because of the many additional inputs that are considered beyond just the agency template (National Park Service, 2002). This strategy is often very helpful to beginning planners and it is a wonderful technique for giving an agency its identity. But, this strategy can also limit creativity and lower the

effectiveness of an interpretive program or media because it does not compliment the individual situations (Brochu, 2003).

Operations planning is often used to bridge the gap between having no plan at all and having an interpretive plan (Brochu, 2003). It usually details the actions that will be taken throughout a year in regards to interpretation and/or education. When used within the context of an interpretive plan this strategy can be a very effective way to carry out an action plan by outlining implementation actions. But when used alone, operations planning often just reflects what the interpreter, at that time, deems important and does not take into consideration what the management considers important, what the customer's needs are or what resources are on site.

Brochu also acknowledges that there is "no one, single, right way to approach interpretive planning" (Brochu, 2003). An interpretive and educational plan must be adapted specifically for the site. Additionally, the final plan must achieve the mission of the agency, meet the needs of the visitor, and consider the site and its resources (Gross and Zimmerman, 2002). Interpretive plans also share some fundamental elements that make them sound. Interpretive plans should have (Brochu, 2003):

- *an understanding of management requirements, needs and capabilities;*
- *an understanding of current and prospective customers;*

- *a strong and appropriate message about the available resources;*
- *an understanding of the physical opportunities and constraints of location;*
- *an appropriate mix of media to deliver the message(s) to the market(s) within the constraints of management.*

In *Interpretive Centers*, Michael Gross and Ron Zimmerman divide interpretive planning into three categories: the Vision Phase, the Concept Phase and Design-build Phase (Gross and Zimmerman, 2002). The Vision Phase is gaining a “shared perspective by all stakeholders,” on *why* the plan is needed, *who* it will serve and *what* significant stories about the resources should be told.

To carry out the vision phase, one of the first things to do is select a planning team consisting of a team leader, a supervisory staff member, and support staff (Veverka, 1994), (Byrd, 2000). The team leader is in charge of putting the plan together and has the responsibility of writing the document (Veverka, 1994). The team leader is the “keeper of the vision” (Gross and Zimmerman, 2002). This person is usually an interpretive professional. Another very important member of the team is the supervisory staff member. This should be the person that is going to approve or reject the plan. Involving supervisory staff in the planning process, particularly in the decision-making aspects, will ensure that what they think is important to the site or agency will be expressed in the plan. The rest of the planning team should be made up of support staff that are experts on the site and can provide the planning team with critical base information and review the plan’s content to ensure accuracy (Veverka, 1994). Once the planning team is established,

roles of the team members must be outlined, agreed upon and understood. A detailed timeline should also be developed that includes meeting times, draft review times, and other critical dates (Veverka, 1994), (Byrd, 2000).

After initial organizational efforts are completed, it is time to figure out what is on the site and what is going to be done about it. This is referred to as the “Information” stage of the plan (Brochu, 2003). There are many informational sources available. Most sources are categorized into primary and secondary sources. Gathering information from primary sources can be time consuming and very expensive. However, in certain situations primary sources can provide the most accurate data. On the other hand, secondary sources are numerous and significantly less expensive to utilize. Secondary sources can include surveys that have previously been done, staff observations, planning efforts that have taken place in the past and archive searches. In some cases, gathering information can be as easy as doing a library search. However, every site will vary when it comes to how much information you need and where it can be found (See Appendix 1). A thorough look into the management, market, message and mechanics are essential in developing an effective interpretive plan.

In addition to the “information” stage, the initial activities of the plan should include discovery and inventory of the Why, What, Who and How (Gross, Zimmerman and Buchholz, 2004), (Veverka, 1994).



Figure 4: Interpretive Planning Model
Sanibel Captiva Interpretive Master Plan by Michael Gross,
Ron Zimmerman, and Jim Buchholz. c. 2004.

“Why” focuses on why the organization or agency exists, and what their purpose is (Gross and Zimmerman, 2002). This is often expressed in the terms of a mission statement, goals and objectives. The mission statement should be stated in a concise way and convey who the organization is, what they do and why it is done. The mission statement should also provide a direction for all interpretive services. Goals provide a more detailed direction than the mission statement by describing content of interpretive services. Goals are a statement of what you would like to have happen, but, they are not specific and cannot be measured. In turn, goals are then broken down into objectives. Objectives are specific visions that are measurable.

Objectives are usually classified into three different areas: learning, behavioral and emotional. What the organization or agency wants the audience to learn or remember from their interpretive experience is a learning objective. What you would like the visitor to do, either on the site or after leaving the site are behavioral objectives. These are often the benefits of your interpretive programs and what you are hoping the visitor will take from the experience. Emotional objectives are what supports accomplishment of the other two objective types. Because they create feelings in the visitor, the results of these objectives spark remembering of information or an alteration of attitude or behavior. When developing objectives for a large area (an entire zoo, or park, or forest), different levels of objectives must be created for efficient interpretation. Objectives can range from broad scale objectives that direct all interpretive services at a facility or site, to smaller scale objectives that may detail what you want the visitor to learn in the introduction of a twenty-minute interpretive program (Veverka, 1994).

The “What” addresses the resources of the agency or site, and the themes and sub-themes the resources support. This includes biological, cultural, geological, sensory areas, facilities and orientation areas on site (Veverka, 1994). The driving questions are: “What is significant about this site;” “What is the spirit of place;” and “What stories will illuminate its attributes?” (Gross and Zimmerman, 2002) To inventory these resources, the best place to start is to ask professionals what the major features are that should, or could be interpreted. Once a list of the resources is put together, the team leader should overview the sites, gathering information such as site location, description, seasonal accessibility, interpretive significance and take a photograph of the site (Veverka, 1994).

It is very important to be immersed in the site, intellectually, emotionally and physically (Gross and Zimmerman, 2002).

“Who” investigates who the audience is and what they are seeking (Gross and Zimmerman, 2002). This can be determined in many different ways and cannot be based solely on intuition. Finding information about visitor demographics is a good way to get to know your visitors. Know where your visitors are coming from, how old they are, if they are male or female, what their socio-economic background is, and when and where are they visiting the site (Veverka, 1994). If an interpretive facility or program already exists, information can be gathered by interviewing staff, surveying visitors, using focus groups, interviewing visitors, or through other measures such as observation and sales. If no interpretive program exists on the site, you can still obtain information about the would-be audience by interviewing staff at similar facilities and looking at tourism statistics and census data. The target market are the people who would be the primary beneficiaries of interpretive services (Gross and Zimmerman, 2002).

When information about the “Why,” “What,” and “Who” has been gathered, it is time to move on to the next step; analyzing the data. This step synthesizes the information gathered in the information stage and delves into the implications the information portrays. In this section of the plan, the best directions for taking action are indicated. It is not enough to just look at the information. Analysis has to be made, and conclusions need to be drawn, from the information to make it valuable (Brochu, 2003). From analyzing information that determines the mission and visions of the organization or agency, the meanings behind the resources and the visitor interests themes and

messages can be developed to connect the “Why,” “What,” and “Who” components (Gross and Zimmerman, 2002).

A theme is the main idea, or key idea, of an interpretive service (Verveka, 1994). It is based on what is on-site and provides organizational structure, helping to make what is being conveyed clearer. As with objectives, it is often beneficial to determine themes for various levels. This includes everything from having broad themes that encompass all of the interpretive services for a site, to having a theme for a specific trailside sign (Veverka, 1994). Once themes are developed experiences are brainstormed to come up with ideas on how to connect themes to the visitors in an engaging and memorable way (Gross and Zimmerman, 2002). This is often where the solutions to the “problems” become visible. There will always be more than one solution and making a list of advantages and disadvantages of each option is a good way to narrow down the options and develop a solution that will work for all involved (Brochu, 2003). After an option has been selected, the actions that will result in the desired outcome must be determined. This part of the plan details what will happen next, who is responsible, how much it will cost, and a time schedule for each task (Brochu, 2003).

Gross and Zimmerman refer to this step of outlining details as the “How” step. This is when the details of the interpretive methods or concepts are outlined (Gross, Zimmerman and Buchholz, 2004). Important components to include are the purpose of the interpretive method, the messages that the media addresses, the measurable objectives that the method will accomplish, and then a description of the method. This will give enough basic information so that these concepts can be further developed and implemented in the future.

When developing interpretive plans for organizations, Gross, Zimmerman and Buchholz elaborate briefly on the interpretive planning model they developed (Figure 4) so their clients understand the process that the plan was developed within (Gross, Zimmerman, and Buchholz, 2004). The steps are described below.

Why?

Establish the vision mission and goals for developing an interpretive master plan.

Who?

Determine who the visitor is (or will be) and the experiences they are (or will be) seeking.

What?

Examine the tangible resources of the site and describe their intangible meanings, then distill these tangibles and intangibles into unifying themes and messages.

Where? When? How?

Based on the why, who, and what, plan and develop interpretive facilities, media, and programs that best facilitate resource/visitor connections.

Environmental Education Program Planning

In the *Nonformal Environmental Education Programs : Guidelines for Excellence*, the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) defines an environmental education program as “an integrated series of planned educational experiences and materials that are intended to reach a particular set of objectives” (NAAEE, 2004). Programs can be short term or long term and can focus on specific ideas or audiences or be very broad and incorporate community encompassing ideas. These environmental education programs, when used collectively, are the methods through which an organization or agency accomplishes its educational goals (NAAEE, 2004).

The NAAEE identifies six key characteristics of a nonformal environmental education programs (NAAEE, 2004). These characteristics can be used to identify educational programs, to guide program development or as indicators to assess a program.

The characteristics are as follows:

- #1. Organizational Needs and Capacities.** Effective Environmental Education Programs are supportive of their parent organization's mission, purpose and goals.
- #2. Needs Assessment.** Effective Environmental Education Programs are designed to fill specific needs and produce tangible benefits commensurate with their costs.
- #3. Program Scope and Structure.** Effective Environmental Education programs should function within a well-defined scope and structure.
- #4. Program Development and Educator Readiness.** Effective Environmental Education Programs require careful planning and well-trained staff.
- #5. Program Quality and Appropriateness.** Effective Environmental Education Programs are built on a foundation of quality instructional materials and thorough planning.
- #6. Evaluation.** Effective Environmental Education Programs define and measure results in order to improve current programs, ensure accountability, and maximize the effects of future efforts.

In addition, the six guidelines listed above can be broken down into more detailed objectives (NAAEE, 2002). These objectives can be used as a checklist for developing and evaluating environmental education programs. Refer to Appendix 2 for more details.

A publication developed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service in cooperation with the World Resources Institute entitled *How to Develop a Conservation Education Program* describes procedures that “educators can use to design programs that have significance and impact and match peoples concerns and traditions (Wood and Wood, 1990)”. They explain five steps in developing an effective conservation education program. The first step is to identify specific environmental problems on which to focus the education program and to explore technical solutions to these problems. The problems and solutions that are chosen will determine who the target audiences are and the methods, content and evaluation strategy for the program. The environmental problems should be selected based on criteria that are prioritized according to the communities needs. The solutions must be feasible for the agency and the audience (Wood and Wood, 1990).

The second step in planning a conservation education program is recognizing and getting to know the intended audience (Wood and Wood, 1990). The target audience of a conservation education program should be able to contribute to the solution of the environmental problem and believe that the program and its results would be of benefit to them on a personal level. The needs of the target audience must be taken into account for a conservation education program to be effective. Therefore, it is important to involve the audience in the planning process from the beginning to promote a sense of ownership

and local knowledge. People are far more likely to implement a program if they were involved in defining it (Wood and Wood, 1990).

Next, the message that is to be conveyed to the target audience must be identified (Wood and Wood, 1990). The environmental problem and solutions addressed in the conservation education program should be related to the audiences' interest. One of the first steps in identifying a message is writing a problem statement that describes, in detail, the environmental problem that is going to be addressed by the conservation education program. This statement can be broad or specific but must be clear and concise. A statement also needs to be developed that explains why time and resources should be invested in the program. At this point, the program goals need to be established that detail what the program will accomplish. These goals can be then broken down into objectives that are measurable - what the audience will learn, feel or do during or after the conservation education program. It is also important to develop a larger framework for the program, identifying broad concepts so the audience has context in which to learn other information.

Once goals, objectives and an organizational structure are established, educational strategies can be inventoried and selected (Wood and Wood, 1990). The strategies that are implemented should focus on reaching the program's target audience and effectively communicate the information that the conservation education program is expressing. There are countless strategies available. They include: extension programs, school programs, clubs and non-governmental organizations, mass media, printed material, exhibits, demos, special events, and one-on-one contacts.

The final step in developing an environmental education program is making sure evaluation occurs throughout the program. Evaluation criteria should be developed before the program is implemented. Assessing whether the goals and objectives of the program have been met and whether people's attitudes, skills or knowledge have changed, can be valuable factors in determining the conservation education program's effectiveness (Wood and Wood, 1990).

Strategic Planning

Whether planning for a local environmental education program or an international investment firm, strategic planning is an important aspect of moving an organization or program forward. Strategic planning is "a process and technique to engage an organization in thinking and acting together to reach a desired future (McReynolds, 2005)." Unlike other types of planning, strategic planning is future oriented and proactive instead of reactive. It focuses on the "why?" and the "what?" of the organizations relationship to its environment (McReynolds, 1991). It is a continuous process, adapting to changes, new trends, and challenges (Byrd, 2000). Other types of planning (such as master plans, program plans, etc...) focus on the "how?" and "when?" of what an organization plans to do. Often times these plans are one of the many recommended results of strategic planning (McReynolds, 1991).

So why is strategic planning important? First, it is important to know the direction before taking actions to get there. Strategic planning can provide a deliberate direction for an organization. Involvement by stakeholders is another important outcome of strategic planning. When stakeholders are involved in the process from the beginning

by having input in the plan, they build a sense of ownership and pride in the organization and what it is doing (McReynolds, 1991). Wilke and Ruskey state in their book, Promoting Environmental Education, that “EE [Environmental Education] advocacy efforts, to be successful, must include a wide variety of constituencies, organizations and individual leaders...The strategic planning process is the most effective way to involve all of these important “players” in the effort to develop, achieve, and implement the EE program (1994).” When a strategic plan is in place, it acts as valuable evidence of the organization’s initiative and innovativeness and may help to enhance credibility when seeking support from outside sources (McReynolds, 1991).

What does strategic planning entail? There are many different approaches to strategic planning and each have strengths and weaknesses. Dr. Corky McReynolds, Director of the Treehaven Environmental Learning Center at the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point, has developed a process that is simple, effective and efficient. He uses seven main steps in the strategic planning process. They include (McReynolds, lecture notes, January 2005):

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|--|
| Pre-Planning Process | → | 1. The Pre-planning Process |
| Developing the Strategic Plan | } | 2. Form a Mission Statement |
| | | 3. Develop Vision Statements. |
| | | 4. Explore Strengths and Limitations. |
| | | 5. Create strategies that address the visions. |
| | | 6. Generate action plans for each Strategy |
| Continuation | → | 7. Continue and revisit the plan. |

These steps are detailed in the following pages, supplemented by additional “best practices for strategic planning” from the Directors Guide to Best Practices (Byrd, 2000). The following steps in strategic planning can be carried out by a person within the organization; however, the planning process is most effective when completed by a

skilled facilitator who does not have any direct connections with the program. A skilled facilitator can help overcome some of challenges associated with the strategic planning process.

The Pre-Planning Process

This is the most important part of the planning process and should not be brushed aside. Determining the details of the planning process such as who to involve, what background data to collect, and determining if it is the right time for planning, is essential in starting off on the track toward a successful strategic plan (McReynolds, class lecture notes, 2005).

A Director's Guide to Best Practices states seven 'practices' that an organization should undergo during the pre-planning phase of the process, these practices are described in the paragraphs below. The seven practices include (Byrd, 2000):

- Assess if the organization is ready
- Obtain leadership support
- Create a strategic planning team
- Determine who to involve
- Design a strategic planning process
- Identify driving or key question
- Identify information needs

Is it the right time to undergo strategic planning? It is important to determine if the organization is ready to undergo strategic planning before getting too far into the planning process (Byrd, 2000; McReynolds, 2005). John Bryson and Farnum Alston have gathered a list of questions that should be asked in order to determine if an organization is ready to proceed with strategic planning. The questions are listed below (Bryson and Alston, 1996).

- Does the process have strong sponsors?
- Does the process have strong champions?
- Are resources available?
- Is the process within the organization mandate?
- Do the benefits outweigh the costs?
- Will the process have real value for the organization?
- Will the process be linked to operational plans and budgets?

In addition to answering these questions it is also important to make sure that the organization undergoing the strategic planning process is not in a crisis situation and has enough time and resources available to dedicate to the project (Byrd, 2000).

Is there leadership support? Having a variety of leaders involved in the strategic planning process can bring important resources and information to the process. Leaders can play a variety of roles. Bryson divides leaders into three categories: sponsors, champions and a skilled facilitator. Sponsors are directly involved with the creative aspects of planning. They keep the planning on track and demonstrate support through the dedication of time, resources, energy, and/or money. Champions may play a more 'outside' role but are still imperative to the planning process. They are often the people that encourage the planning team through any challenges that are encountered (Byrd, 2000), (Bryson and Alston, 1996).

Create a strategic planning team. This step establishes the basis for collective leadership for the planning process later on. This team oversees the whole strategic planning process and is ultimately the people that will provide consistent direction and support for the strategic planning initiative (Byrd, 2000).

Who should be involved? A variety of stakeholders should be involved in the strategic planning process (Byrd, 2000). The organization leader, key internal and external stakeholders, as well as staff members are all people that could be involved.

Stakeholders include individuals that are affected by the results of the strategic plan and/or have influence and can contribute to the planning process in some way. By including a variety of people in this process, internal and external support and enthusiasm for the organization or program is built.

Design a strategic planning process. Before the strategic planning process is begun, it is important to lay out details about the specific process (Byrd, 2000). This written document should include: the purpose and value of the strategic planning process, how much time and resources will be committed, individuals that will be involved and how, specific steps that will be followed, and a timeline for completing them. The document should also include a detailed schedule of meetings for throughout the strategic planning process. Important details should be included as to what group process techniques will be used in each step of the process. This document that outlines the process will be used is important for organization and consistency throughout the planning effort.

Identify the driving or key question. The development of a key question is imperative to determining the purpose of the strategic planning session. This question focuses the planning team's efforts on one issue (Byrd, 2000).

What information is needed? In order to aid discussion and get strategic planning participants on the same page, it is important to collect and organize relevant background information (Byrd, 2000). The information given to planning participants should be adequate to make well-informed decisions, but not so much as to overwhelm them. Components of information collected could include organizational mandates, budget

information, and data gathered from focus group interviews, questionnaires, individual interview, and demographic studies.

Creating the Strategic Plan

After completing the above steps, an organization is ready to move on to the next phase of the strategic planning process - creating the plan. There are seven practices identified for this phase (Byrd, 2000):

- Review, Revise or Create a Mission Statement.
- Develop a Values Statement.
- Establish an Organizational Vision of the Future
- Analyze the Organization (SWOT)
- Develop, Evaluate and Modify Strategies for each Issue.
- Develop a Strategic Plan

What is the Mission? The mission statement answers the questions: “Who are we,” and “Why are we here” (McReynolds, 2005), (Byrd, 2000). It may also identify the primary audiences that are served. The mission statement should be stated in a clear, concise way, and limited to one or two sentences. It should be something that can be easily memorized and meaningful to outside parties.

Because the mission statement is critical to the planning process, it sometimes may be best to do this in the pre-planning stage (McReynolds, 2005). A group process, such as the Adapted Nominal Group Technique, is an effective way to get equal input from all stakeholders for the mission statement components.

What are the organization’s values and beliefs? Although this is an optional part of the strategic planning process, it helps to identify issues that the organization is facing. A values and beliefs statement is “a statement of the organization’s core values and

describes “ ‘the principles by which the program wishes to be guided (Bryson, p. 160)’ ” (Byrd, 2000).

Create vision statements. Vision statements address the question: *Where do we want this program to be ___ years from now* (McReynolds, 2005)? They are desired statements of the future (Byrd, 2000). Because many changes affect organizations and programs, it may be best to answer this question in the 5 to 10 year timeframe. Then revisit the statements over the coming years to evaluate whether they are still effective.

As with developing a mission statement, creating the components of vision statements is most effectively done in a group process. Adapted Nominal Group Technique is an effective group process technique to use (McReynolds, 2005). The final products should be stated concisely, be inspiring, and effectively convey the organization’s purpose and direction. They also should be future oriented and reflect the organization’s culture and values (Byrd, 2000). The vision statements should not be reactive to a current situation but proactive (McReynolds, 2005).

What are organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats?

Gathering and analyzing information about the organization from both internal and external perspectives is important to the strategic planning process. A tool that is often used to gather information about an organization is the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) process. This activity is often done through worksheets that guide individual brainstorming processes and then are discussed in a larger group setting. The SWOT process is helpful because it identifies both the internal and external challenges and opportunities that exist (McReynolds, 2005). When these factors are

brought to attention, the group can strategically think in ways that take advantage of the opportunities and work to overcome the challenges (Byrd, 2000).

It is important, however, not to let a group get hung up on this process. The best strategy for addressing this step is to identify and discuss the results, but not let the results drive the rest of the strategic planning process (McReynolds, 2005).

How will the vision statements be achieved? Once vision statements have been developed and the internal and external strengths and challenges of the organization have been identified, strategies for reaching the vision statement/s are developed (Byrd, 2000). In order for everyone to see and reflect on the previously developed vision statements, post them on the wall. Take some time for reflection and individual brainstorming on what can be done to achieve those visions.

Strategies address the question: *How are we going to get there?* These are often goals the organization must achieve in order to overcome limitations (McReynolds, 1996) (McReynolds, 2005). However, when developing strategies, maintaining focus on achieving the vision is more important than dwelling on a particular issue. Use the issues as simply 'background' knowledge to be kept in mind when developing strategies. Identifying strategies is most effectively done through a small group facilitation process (McReynolds, 1996), (McReynolds, 2005). There should be a set of specific strategies that address each vision statement (please see the figure below).

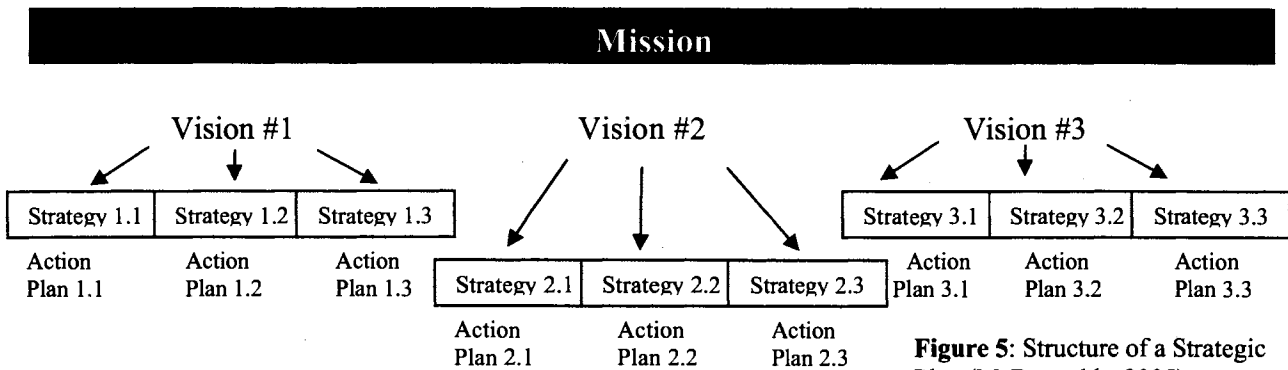


Figure 5: Structure of a Strategic Plan (McReynolds, 2005)

It is time to take action! To improve the odds of implementation, it is essential that a strategic plan should develop a set of action plans (McReynolds, 2005). Action plans outline the details of what needs to be done to accomplish the strategies. An action plan addresses several questions: *What do we need to do? Who is going to do it? When are we going to do it?* (McReynolds, 2005). It includes specifics on what will be done, who will be doing it and when it will be accomplished (McReynolds, 1996). It also may break the strategy into more specific objectives; include a list of resources that are needed, strategies for communication, and a process for reviewing and monitoring the action plan (Byrd, 2000). Action plans usually encompass a 12-18 month timeframe within the larger vision timeline. It is also important to prioritize the strategies that action plans are created for. There is no need (and it is nearly impossible) to tackle all strategies in the first year. Do a few well, and when those action plans are completed move on to the next level of priorities (McReynolds 2005). A template for developing action plans can be found in Appendix C.

Develop the planning document. Writing and formatting the written document is the next step in the process, although some may choose to do this before writing the action plans (Byrd, 2000), (McReynolds, 2005), (McReynolds, 1996). This document is usually around ten pages long and summarizes the strategic planning process. When writing the document, it is important to keep in mind that readers may not have much prior knowledge about the organization. Including a broad overview of the organization and planning process, as well as specific details, is important for meeting a diverse audience's needs.

Continuing the Process

In this phase, the organization implements, evaluates and rediscovers its strategic plan (McReynolds, 2005), (Byrd, 2000). This is done to keep it fresh and visible – not something that sits on a shelf and gets dusty. It is essential to making the strategic plan part of the organizations culture (which is the only way that it will make a difference in an organization over time) (McReynolds, 2005). During this process, new ideas can be incorporated and focus can be maintained. Most planners recommend that the strategic plan be revisited once or twice a year. At those times, the strategic planning team should review the strategies that were successful (and celebrate those successes!). Any unsuccessful strategies should be revised or replaced with new strategies that still address the vision.

Determining Audience Needs

When conducting interpretive, educational, or strategic planning, it is always important to know the audience needs and expectations (Brochu, 2003), (Gross and Zimmerman, 2003), (Verveka, 1994), (Wood and Wood, 1990), (NAAEE, 2002), (Byrd 2000), (McReynolds, 2005). Although there are many ways to gather both qualitative and quantitative data for determining audience needs, for the purpose of this research focus group interviews, unstructured interviews, and questionnaires will be used.

Focus Group Interviews

A focus group interview is “a qualitative data gathering technique that relies upon the systematic questioning of several individuals simultaneously in a formal or informal setting (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).” A key trait of focus groups that separates them

from individual interviewing or observation, two more traditional forms of qualitative data gathering, is that the data produced is based upon group interaction and discussion. Focus groups can be used as a single source of data collection or be used as a supplement to other qualitative or quantitative data collection methods. Focus groups can be useful in the following ways (Morgan, 1988):

- Orienting oneself to a new field.
- Generating hypotheses based on informants' insights.
- Evaluating different research sites or study populations.
- Developing interview schedules and questionnaires.
- Getting participants' interpretation of results from earlier studies.

Historically, focus groups have been used in everything from political campaign studies, marketing research, to sociology studies. Today there are many forms of focus group interviews that all fall under the same title. Several basic components are consistent throughout all types. These include: an interviewer that directs inquiry and group interaction, a set of questions or topics to discuss, and pre-planning steps to avoid potential problems that may arise (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).

There are several advantages to conducting focus group interviews as opposed to other data gathering techniques. Focus groups are able to provide a safer environment for interviewees than individual interviews. Participants are also empowered and stimulated by the process; they learn about the research and take more of an interest because they are involved. Because focus groups are based on group interaction and discussion, the results are cumulative and often elaborated upon – ideas come up that may not when talking to one individual (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).

On the other hand, there are several disadvantages of focus group interviews. The most significant is that the results from focus groups cannot be generalized to other

groups or society in general. It is also difficult to discuss sensitive issues within focus groups; often individuals are uncomfortable discussing certain topics within a group.

In addition to the above disadvantages, there are also several challenges that can occur and become disadvantages if not effectively handled. Without proper facilitation, it is easy for one person, or group of people, within the focus group to dominate the session. It is important for the facilitator to squelch this trend early, while at the same time encouraging reluctant participants to contribute to the discussion. To ensure the highest quality focus group the facilitator needs to be comfortable and confident enough to balance facilitation of the focus group process, the diverse group dynamics that can occur, as well as keeping the questions and flow of the interview in mind (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).

Unstructured Interviews

There are two basic types of interviews: structured and unstructured. Structured interviews “aim at capturing precise data of a codable nature in order to explain behavior within established boundaries” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Unstructured interviewing “attempts to understand the complex behavior of members of society without imposing a prior categorization that may limit the field of inquiry” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).

When conducting unstructured interviews, the researcher has general topics of interest in mind and asks open ended questions in an informal way to gain answers. Each unstructured interview is different; however, there are several basic steps in the unstructured interview approach. The steps are as follows (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000):

1. Assess the setting – find a way to ‘get it’
2. Understand the language (verbal and non-verbal) and culture of the respondents.

3. Decide on the way to present one-self.
4. Locate an informant – someone that can act as a guide through the culture.
5. Gain trust.
6. Establish a rapport – be able to see things from the respondent’s point of view.
7. Take notes regularly and promptly (but be inconspicuous about it)
8. Write down everything, even if it seems insignificant.
9. Analyze notes frequently.

Summary

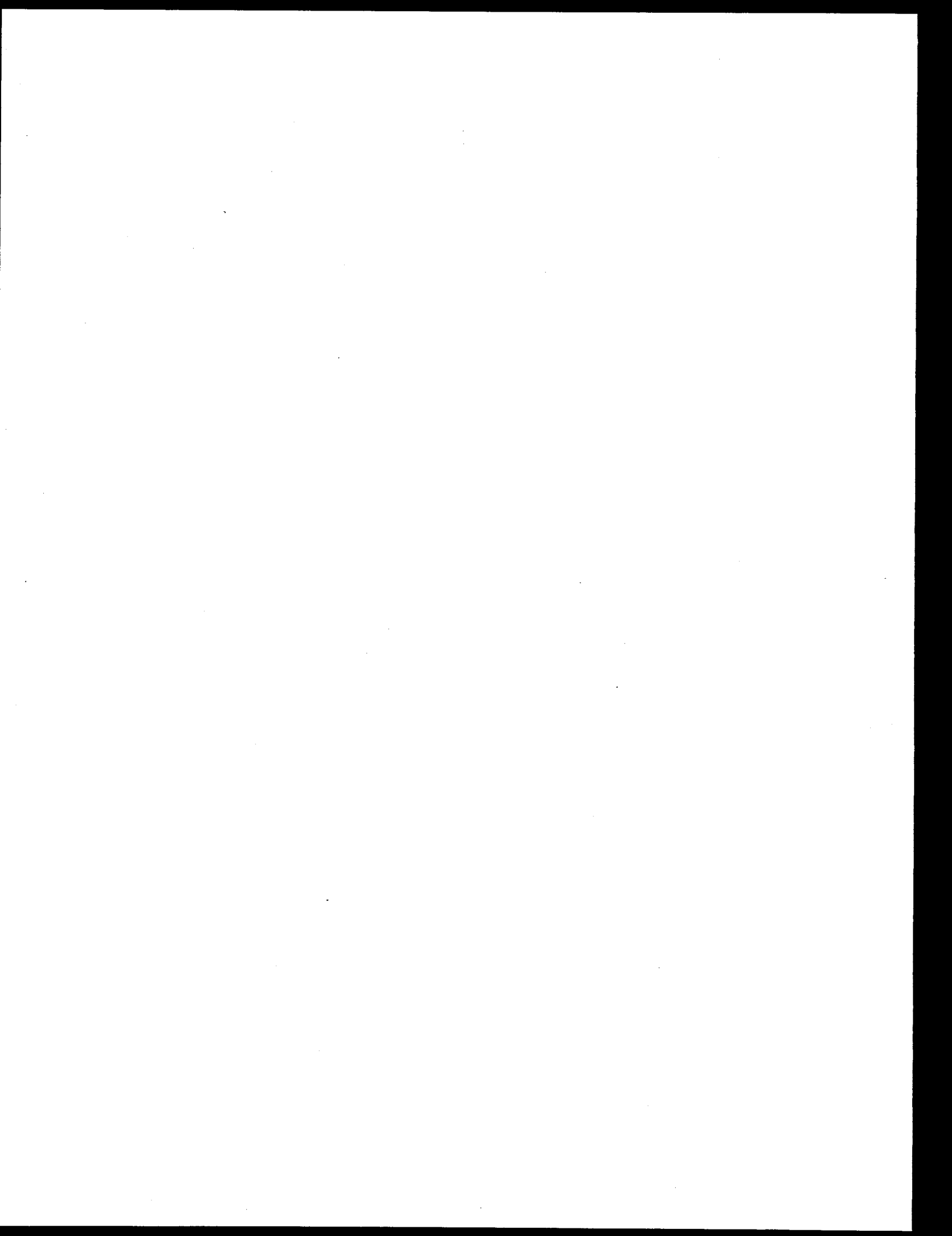
A critical component in maintaining the integrity of our public lands is a “well-educated and ecologically sound citizenry.” And one of the best ways to achieve this is by connecting peoples “hearts and minds” to the land (Dombeck, et al., 2002). Both interpretation and education strive to achieve this goal. Environmental education does this through techniques which develop “an ecologically literate citizenry,” and interpretation through a process that “forges emotional and intellectual connections between...the audience...and the resource” (<http://www.naaee.org/npece/>, 2003), (www.interpnet.org, 2003). The Tongass National Forest, including the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts, do not have an education and interpretation plan in place that strives to pull together the audience needs, agency’s goals and the interpretive and educational resources available to develop a comprehensive strategy (Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, 2004). By keeping in mind that interpretive and educational plans can be used to address agency goals, determine audience needs and

manage resources, a plan specific to the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts can be developed (Veverka, 1994).



Chapter 3:

Methodology



III. METHODOLOGY

Objective #1: *Based on the review of literature, summarize the history and current status of conservation education and interpretation in the Forest Service, the Tongass National Forest and the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts and identify agency program characteristics from the past and those that are currently in place, that should continue into future programming.*

It is important to know the history of a program so trends, challenges and successes can be identified and taken into consideration during the planning, development and implementation of new conservation education and interpretation programs. It is also vital to recognize where a program currently stands in order to strengthen what exists instead of recreating it. Information related to past and present conservation education and interpretation programs on the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts, as well as the Tongass National Forest were gathered through several means. A literature search, informal interviews with key Forest Service employees (past and present), and questionnaires completed by present employees.

Literature Search

Electronic and paper files from the Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger Districts were searched for information relevant to conservation education and interpretation efforts. These documents were reviewed to gain a sense of what had been done in the past as well as help to determine what types of programs have been successful or unsuccessful. These documents were also insightful to what amount of philosophical and monetary support existed for programs. When combined these details paint a historical backdrop in which the development of a new conservation education program can fit into. There were also a few documents that gave a good overview of what was currently happening in

conservation education and interpretation. The following documents were helpful in addressing this objective:

Craig Ranger District Interpretive Plan (1995)

Forest Naturalists on Land and Sea (Hakala, 1995)

TB & CRD Conservation Education Meeting Notes (Jan 8th 2002)

Tongass National Forest Interpretation & Conservation Education Strategy (2004)

These resources have been reviewed and summarized into a brief history and current condition of conservation education and interpretation on the Tongass and more specifically the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts. Through the summarization the development, challenges and successes of the past and current programs can be seen.

Based on the literature reviewed, historical and current trends and program approaches were identified based on sound education and interpretation principles and used to guide the development of the Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education and Interpretation Guidebook. Key components of the existing conservation education and interpretation program were also identified.

Interviews

Throughout the summer of 2004, the researcher discussed the development of a conservation education and interpretation program with many of the staff working for the Thorne Bay Ranger District, Craig Ranger District and Tongass National Forest. These discussions usually took place using an unstructured interview process and several important points were brought up. Chad VanOrmer (Craig Ranger District – Recreation),

Susan Howell (Thorne Bay RD – Fish and Wildlife Staff Officer), Sandy Frost (Tongass National Forest – Partnership and Rural Community Assistance Coordinator), Terry Fifield (Zoned Archeologist – Craig and Thorne Bay RD), Kristi Kantola (Tongass National Forest – Conservation Education Coordinator) were all interviewed.

Questionnaires

During March and April of 2004, the researcher developed a questionnaire for Forest Service employees on the two ranger districts. The purpose of this questionnaire was to gain input from current employees of the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts on the conservation education and interpretation efforts on the District, both historically and currently. The questionnaire was reviewed and commented on by various stakeholders and then submitted to the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure that the survey process would not harm participants. After minor edits, the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District employee questionnaire (Appendix D) was approved on April 20th, 2004.

In June and July of 2004, employees of every discipline on the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts were invited to participate in the questionnaire. In order to get as many participants as possible each discipline group was given the option of A) each employee filling out the questionnaire individually or B) answering questions #1 and #6 individually and discussing the other questions in a group. The Engineering and Silviculture discipline groups chose to fill out the whole questionnaire individually. The Fish and Wildlife, Timber, (Public Affairs) and Recreation discipline groups all answered questions #1 and #6 individually and then discussed the rest as a group. The Planning

shop was unable to participate due to a supervisory decision. During group discussions, the researcher and/or the researcher's assistant took notes on what was brought-up during the session.

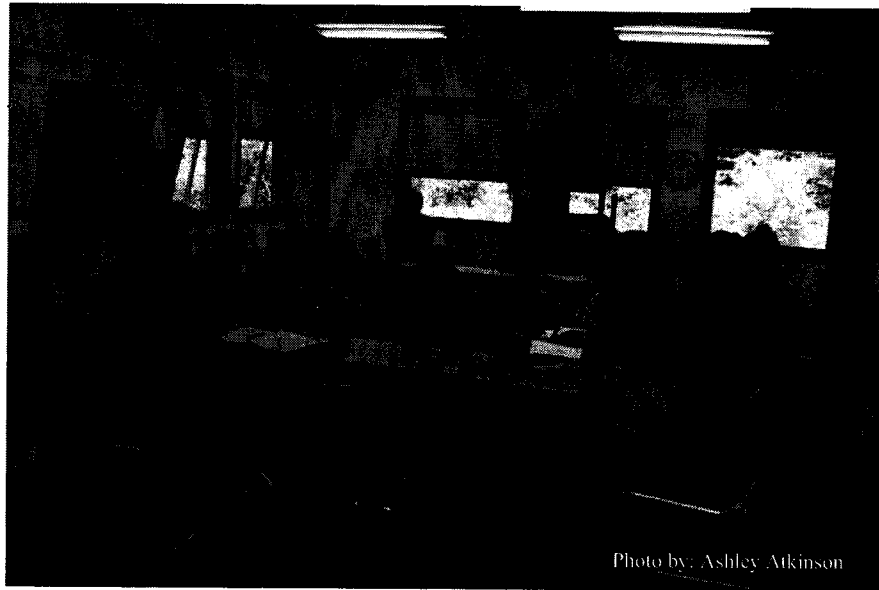


Figure 6: Forest Service Employee Questionnaire Discussion Group. Employees from nearly all discipline groups participated in a questionnaire/interview regarding conservation education and interpretation on the Prince of Wales Island Ranger Districts.

The data from the questionnaires was compiled, organized and analyzed using the following methodology:

All responses to each question were typed into a Microsoft Word document, keeping all responses separate according to resource discipline. Each relevant comment was considered. When all data was typed, the researcher began to form categories from the data by grouping similar comments together. As comments were grouped, category titles emerged and were recorded. When the researcher had finished categorizing data, an uncategorized copy of the data and category titles were given to two neutral individuals. The individuals were asked to place the data into the categories they felt it belonged. If it

was felt that a category was missing, the category title could be added by the individual. This step was an effort to reduce researcher bias from the results of the employee questionnaires. Categorized results of the researcher and two individuals were compared and discussed. Changes were made until consensus was reached on the categories that the data belonged in. If everyone felt that the comment belonged in two different categories, the comment was placed in both.

As it has been stated before, knowing how employees view the current conservation education and interpretation program, and what they are or are not involved in, will help make program recommendations and guidelines. The recommendations and guidelines that are based on this data is more realistic than being solely perceived from an outside source. Results from analyzing the questionnaire data regarding the history and current status of conservation education and interpretation were taken into consideration when creating the Guidebook and making program development, implementation and evaluation recommendations.

Objective #2: *Identify the educational and interpretive mission and goals of the Thorne Bay Ranger District.*

The Tongass National Forest Conservation Education and Interpretation vision is to (Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, 2004):

Create a future where the Tongass NF is nationally recognized in presenting effective, engaging interpretation and education services that meet the need and expectations of our public land and further our land stewardship mission.

This goal however, encompasses a broader forest level and there is no educational or interpretive mission or a set of goals to help the individual Ranger Districts implement and carry out this vision at a local level. In order to develop a conservation education and interpretation guide for the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District, the goals and mission of the District have to be established. In a personal communication with Lynn Kolund, Tongass National Forest Wilderness and Tourism Recreation Planner, on November 12th, 2003, he expressed a concern that a plan may be developed for a ranger district but may never be implemented because there is no employee buy-in. A Director's Guide to Best Practices states that the best way to get long-term investment and commitment to a plan is to get employees involved right from the beginning, making sure it is the voice of the people who will be implementing the program instead of the planner's (Byrd, 2000).

In order to maximize Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District employee involvement and excitement about the project, a meeting was held in which a conservation education and interpretation mission, vision statements, and strategies to implement the visions were developed. All employees were invited to take part in the 2-4 hour brainstorming and idea development meeting. An informal, friendly atmosphere was created to encourage sharing of any and all ideas. Snacks were provided by the researcher and each participant received a packet of information that gave an overview of this research project. A brief summary of the history and current condition of conservation education and Interpretation on the Districts and a brief overview of the Tongass National Forest vision and mission were included in the overview document. An initial analysis of the data gathered through employee questionnaires and interviews, community focus groups and school district questionnaires was included in the packet, as

well as a description of the meeting's agenda and the group processes that will be used.

This information packet and meeting guide can be viewed in Appendix E.

To develop the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District conservation education and interpretation program mission, vision and strategies the adapted nominal group process format described in A Directors Guide to Best Practices was used (Byrd, 2000). The researcher facilitated the meeting that was held on July 13th, 2004.

Adapted Nominal Group Technique

STEP #1 Key Question: Before the meeting, a key question was developed by the

researcher and approved by key members of the Ranger Districts (Dave Schmid - TBRD Ranger; Susan Howell – TBRD Staff Officer for Fish, Wildlife and Watershed Shops; Sandy Frost – Tongass National Forest Partnership and Rural Community Assistance Coordinator). The key question was: *What should the island-wide conservation education and interpretation mission include?* As recommended by The Directors Guide to Best Practices the key question clearly identified the information being sought, and only sought one thing in its answer (Byrd, 2000).

STEP #2 Idea Sharing: After the key question was presented, participants were given ten minutes to write down on paper any ideas they felt addressed the key question. Then all ideas brainstormed were vocalized in round robin fashion (by going around the group in a circle, everyone gets the chance to share one of their ideas before beginning the next round) and recorded on large pieces of papers hung on the walls. Each idea was numbered.



Figure 7: Forest Service Employee Strategic Planning Session. All employees' ideas for components of the Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education and Interpretation Mission were recorded on large sheets of paper and narrowed down through Adapted Nominal Group Technique.

STEP #3: Clarification: After all ideas were gathered, participants were asked to look over the ideas and see if any were not understandable. If an idea was not clear to a participant, the person who put the idea on the list explained their idea in more depth until an understanding was reached. The facilitator made sure that no criticism of ideas was given during this process and that only ideas that were asked to be clarified were given an explanation.

STEP #4: What Best Answers the Key Question? When everyone was clear about all of the ideas, then each participant was asked to individually pick and record on paper three ideas that they believed best answered the key question. For each of the three ideas they picked, the participants were also asked to write a statement justifying why it answered the key question. The round robin sharing circle began again, and as participants shared their selected ideas and the corresponding statements of support, the numbered idea was circled.

STEP#5: What Does Not Answer the Key Question? Then participants were asked to select two of the circled ideas that they believed did not address the key question, and write a statement of support for their reasoning again. The ideas and comments were shared and an 'observation check' was placed next to each idea that received a comment.

STEP#6: Combining. The facilitator then offered the group the opportunity to decide if two or more of the circled ideas should be combined into one. After minimal discussion, the group decided to move onto step seven without combining any ideas.

STEP #7: Voting. Group participants took a short break while the facilitator rewrote the circled ideas onto one sheet of paper. When the meeting resumed each participant was given ten round stickers with instructions to vote for their favorite ideas. Everyone had to use all of their stickers but could place no more than four stickers on one idea.

STEP #8 Tally Votes and Draft Mission Statement: The facilitator tallied the votes. The ideas with the most votes became the components that would comprise the mission statement. Three volunteers from the group of participants volunteered to draft the mission statement.

Through the Adapted Nominal Group Process used to develop the mission statement, several vision statements were also identified and written. After the mission statement and a set of strategies were drafted it was sent by email to ALL employees on the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts (even those who did not participate in the brainstorming session) with a request to respond only if the

employee had a question or suggestion (the process of negative approval) about the mission or vision statements. After a few revisions, the statements were adopted as the *Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education & Interpretation Program Mission and Vision Statements*.

Following this session and the approval of the Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education and Interpretation Mission and Vision Statements, the researcher identified several strategies that could be taken in order to reach the vision statements. These strategies were reviewed, edited and approved by the Conservation Education and Interpretation Team.

Objective #3: *Determine the needs, interests, and expectations of the audiences the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts serve.*

There are four identified audiences that “use” the land that the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts encompass. These audiences were identified by the researcher through observation while working on conservation education and interpretation projects for the District and talking with Thorne Bay Ranger District employees during the summer of 2003. Identified audiences include: local community members, Southeast Island School District employees and students, visitors to Prince of Wales Island, and Forest Service employees.

The Communities of Prince of Wales Island

The first audience identified includes the members of the rural communities on Prince of Wales Island: Thorne Bay, Craig, Klawock, Kasaan, Coffman Cove, Point Protection, Whale Pass, Hollis, Hyder, Naukati and Port Alexander.

Traditionally, there has been little interaction beyond business transactions between the Forest Service and the community members of Prince of Wales Island. Little is known about community needs and expectations of the Forest Service in regards to conservation education and interpretation, or ways the Forest Service could attempt to meet the communities' needs and expectations more effectively.

In March and April of 2004, the researcher designed research protocol and interview questions (Appendix F) for focus group interview sessions that would be conducted in the coming summer. The questions were designed to explore the educational and/or interpretive needs and interests of the community, and their expectations for the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts Conservation Education and Interpretation Program. After the protocol was developed, it was reviewed and commented on by Dr. Michael Gross, Susan Howell (Fish, Wildlife and Watershed Staff officer; TBRD), and Sandy Frost (Partnership and Rural Community Assistance Coordinator; Tongass). The suggestions were taken into consideration, and the protocol submitted to the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Institutional Review Board. Approval was granted on April 20th, 2004.

During June of 2004, the researcher held six focus group interview sessions in the communities of Naukati, Craig (2), Klawock, Thorne Bay and Coffman Cove. These communities include a majority of the Island's population. Each focus group interview was arranged prior to the session by contacting community organizations and/or leaders, telling them about the research project, the length of the focus group session, and their session format. If the organization or community leader agreed to host the focus group session, a time and place was arranged at the convenience of the participants and the

session was publicized. Usually the session took place as a part of a larger meeting (ie: Homeowners Association meeting, City Council meeting, etc...), in those cases the focus group was part of the meeting agenda and announced publicly. Due to time and budget constraints, as well as community member commitment, not every community was reached.

Prior to the focus group interview sessions, the researcher also developed a standardized record sheet for the assistant researcher to record notes on. This sheet can be viewed in Appendix F.

Focus Group Interview Sessions: The researcher and researcher's assistant arrived at each focus group interview session early to set out cookies and refreshments and interact with some of the community members. When the formal session began, the researcher briefly explained the research project, what the results of this interview session were going to be used for, and the format and rules for the focus groups session. The researcher then asked the group if it would be acceptable to tape record the session. If permission was granted, the tape recorder was placed in the middle of the group and turned on. Following the introduction, the cover letter and questionnaire were handed out and participants were given the opportunity to decide whether or not to participate in the session. If they decided to participate in the session, they had time to individually read and respond to each question. After 5-10 minutes, the researcher asked participants what their thoughts, beliefs and views were within the context of conservation education and interpretation for the following questions:

1. What do you believe are the strengths of current Forest Service and community interaction?

2. What do you believe are the weaknesses of current Forest Service/community interaction?
3. What future interaction would you like to see between communities and the Forest Service?
4. If the Forest Service was to offer education and/or interpretation programs what would be important components? (ie: topics, location, time, advertising techniques, type of program...)

When needed, clarifying questions were asked by the researcher. All responses were recorded by the researcher's assistant. To conclude the focus group session, participants were thanked for their time and encouraged to contact the researcher with any further questions or comments. The contact information (either email or mail address) was collected (if participants wanted to) so the compiled results of the community focus groups sessions could be sent and verified.

Immediately following the focus group interview session the researcher and research assistant reviewed the notes taken and interview tape (if applicable) and added any comments or notes that were missing from the records, while the session was fresh in their minds.

Analyzing Focus Group Data. Following the collection of the focus group interview data from the six communities, the researcher typed all notes taken (and verified session notes with cassette tape recording – when recording was allowed) into a Microsoft Word document. Each relevant comment was considered. After data entry, the researcher began to form categories from the data by grouping all like comments

together. As comments were grouped, category titles emerged and were recorded. When the researcher finished categorizing data, the uncategorized data and category titles were given to two neutral individuals. The individuals were asked to place the data into the categories they felt it belonged. If it was felt that a category was missing, the category title could be added by the individual. This step was an effort to reduce bias from the results of the community focus group interviews. Categorizing results of the researcher and two individuals were compared and discussed. Changes were made until consensus was reached between the researchers and two neutral parties on the categories the data belonged in.

The Island School Districts

The second audience includes the Southeast Island School District's (SISD) students, teachers, staff and administration. During the 2003-04 school year there was a significant increase in Forest Service and Southeast Island School District contacts. In the Fall of 2002, the SISD received "payments to the states" money to specifically fund *forest conservation education* projects. With this money the S.C.O.P.E (Students **C**lassifying **O**bserving and **P**robing their **E**nvironment) program was initiated and the "EcoVan" program was created. This van and its contents traveled to the nine rural schools of the SISD stocked with conservation education and outdoor recreation materials and gear. As part of that project, a curriculum was developed by the Forest Service during the summer of 2003 that strives to bring Forest Service, Alaska Department of Fish and Game and other natural resource professionals into classrooms and get students into the field and involved in real life conservation projects.

This program has strengthened the relationship between the Thorne Bay Ranger District and the SISD. However, gaps in the relationship exist and improvements to the new program need to be made after its pilot year. Additionally, the Craig Ranger District has not been involved in the program thus far. In order to assess what gaps exist and what improvement needed to be made, a questionnaire was developed (Appendix H) during March and April of 2004 for Prince of Wales Island school district teachers. The purpose of the questionnaire was to determine perceived strengths and weaknesses of the Forest Service conservation education program by teachers, as well as what teachers would like to see in the future. The questionnaire was submitted, reviewed and then approved by the Institutional Review Board on April 20th, 2004.

In May of 2004, during the SISD teacher in-service, the researcher requested a block of time to administer the questionnaire. Due to scheduling conflicts, the researcher was given enough time to introduce the research project and hand out the questionnaires. Teachers were encouraged to fill them out and return them to the researcher by the end of the week-long teacher in-service. Approximately 25 questionnaires were given out.

Data collected from the questionnaire was analyzed using the same methods described for the community focus group interviews described on pages 90 and 91 of this document.

An attempt was also made to give the questionnaire to the Craig Ranger District school teachers, but by the time the researcher arrived on Prince of Wales Island, those schools had adjourned for the summer and it was not possible to get a group of teachers together to complete the questionnaire.

Forest Service Employees on Prince of Wales Island

An additional audience that will be addressed in this research is the internal audience, the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District employees. There are approximately 35 permanent employees at the Thorne Bay Ranger District and 20 on the Craig Ranger District as of August 2003. Included in the same questionnaire that was described on pages 76-77 and can be seen in Appendix D, were questions regarding what skills and resources the employees felt were needed in order to incorporate conservation education and interpretation into their day-to-day jobs. The responses to these questions were compiled into one 'master document' in Microsoft Word that included answers from all resource disciplines. Each resource discipline's answers were also kept separate in order to distinguish specific needs.

The needs that were stated by employees in the questionnaires were organized into categories and taken into account when developing the *Conservation Education and Interpretation Guidebook* for Prince of Wales Island. It gave insight to what the employees of the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts see as important aspects of conservation education and interpretation on Prince of Wales Island. It also determined what is needed, from their point of view, in order to develop and implement the programs to meet the public audience's needs.

Prince of Wales Island Visitors

Another audience that the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts serve are the visitors to Prince of Wales Island. Most of these visitors are hunters and anglers from other areas of Southeast Alaska or family members of Island residents.



Figure 8: Black Bear with Salmon. Most visitors come to Prince of Wales Island to take advantage of the abundant hunting and fishing opportunities.

However, this audience is quickly expanding as people from the lower 48 states discover the abundant outdoor recreation opportunities that are available on the Island. Information needs to be gathered to determine why the current audience is visiting Prince of Wales Island and how the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts could better meet their needs and expectations. An in-depth needs assessment that focuses entirely on this audience would be the best way to find out information regarding this group. Due to time limitations and it not being a current priority audience for the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts a literature review was conducted. However, for the purposes of this project a brief review of resources related to visitation on Prince of Wales Island was completed by the researcher and then summarized to determine general characteristics and needs. The following documents were reviewed to gain a surface understanding of this audience:

The InterIsland Ferry usage summaries from 2003

2000 Census Data for Prince of Wales Island

Objective #4: *Identify the educational opportunities available on the Thorne Bay Ranger District and prioritize the options based on District needs, budget, goals and personnel.*

Throughout the summers of 2004 and 2005, the researcher interacted with the resources, people and agency that are intricately intertwined on Prince of Wales Island. Through conversations, observations and the results from school district questionnaires, employee questionnaires, and community focus group interviews, the researcher gained a solid understanding of the educational opportunities available on the Island.

The researcher compiled these opportunities into a master list. These opportunities were analyzed for feasibility, administrative and financial support, employee interest, how well it fits with the Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education and Interpretation Mission and Strategies, and whether it meets a stated need of the audience. Several opportunities were selected and the initial stages of planning and implementation were done during the summer of 2004. The list will be prioritized by the Conservation Education and Interpretation Team and will be available for future use on the Districts.

Objective #5: *Identify the interpretive opportunities available on the Thorne Bay Ranger District and prioritize the options based on District needs, budget, goals and personnel.*

Throughout the summers of 2004 and 2005, the researcher interacted with the resources, people and agency that are intricately intertwined on Prince of Wales Island. Through conversations, observations and the results from school district questionnaires, employee questionnaires, and community focus group interviews, the researcher gained a solid understanding of the interpretive opportunities available on the Island.

The researcher compiled these opportunities into a master list. These opportunities analyzed for feasibility, administrative and financial support, employee interest, how well it fits with the Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education and Interpretation Mission and Strategies, and whether it meets a stated need of the audience. Several opportunities were selected and the initial stages of planning and implementation were done during the summer of 2004. The list will be prioritized by the Conservation Education and Interpretation Team and will be available for future use on the Districts.

At future date, it may be valuable for the Ranger Districts to take these interpretive opportunities and conduct an analysis of the interpretive resources for specific locations on the Prince of Wales Island. This is part of creating an interpretive master plan. The following steps will guide the interpretive resource analysis process.

1. Identify the site.
2. Describe the site.
3. Describe the seasonal accessibility.
4. State the interpretive significance of the site.
5. Include photos, maps, or sketches if appropriate.

After identifying and analyzing interpretive sites, develop themes, sub-themes and messages for each site. Themes are one main idea that reveals the purpose of the interpretive effort. It should be stated in an interesting manner and in one complete sentence. Sub-themes break the main theme down into more manageable and specific ideas. Messages are more specific stories that can be told through personal and non-personal interpretation methods. The themes, sub-themes and messages should all strive to connect tangible resources to their intangible meanings in a way that relates to the site

visitor. This process will give the interpretative services a purpose (Verveka, 1994) (Gross, Zimmerman, and Buchholz, 2004).

Objective #6: *Produce a Guidebook that provides a directional strategy and tools that the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts can use to better meet the needs of their audience and strive toward the agency's mission and goals throughout the process of program development, implementation and evaluation.*

Based on the results obtained from objectives #1-5, a comprehensive, user-friendly plan has been developed that provides direction for the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts to develop, implement and evaluate educational and interpretive programs on Prince of Wales Island. The plan, or Guidebook, will strive to give guidance and direction to many aspects of both educational and interpretive programming. By using this guide, employees can begin to understand what a quality conservation education and interpretation program consists of and knows what steps can be taken to develop, implement and evaluate a program. Quality programs ensure that interpretation efforts meet the mission and goals of the Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education and Interpretation Program, and make connections between the resources, needs, and interests of the audiences. Similarly, educational efforts are striving toward teaching people of all ages about interrelationships among the natural and human-made world, helping the individual to grow and become motivated to take actions toward responsible land stewardship. The Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education and Interpretation Guidebook can be found in Appendix M.



Figure 9: The Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education and Interpretation Guidebook. This plan incorporates the results of objectives 1-5 of this research study.

Chapter 4:

Results



IV. RESULTS

This chapter summarizes the results obtained from methodology described in the previous chapter. In information obtained during the process of addressing each objective was used to make the recommendations found in Chapter 5 regarding conservation education and interpretation programs on the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts. This project should give the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts the direction for on the ground program development, implementation and evaluation they otherwise lack. The methodology was completed by October of 2004. In addition to the Guidebook located in Appendix M, the results described below will detail and explain the findings from the methodology for each objective and ultimately guide the conservation education and interpretation program on Prince of Wales Island.

Objective 1: *Summarize the history and current status of conservation education and interpretation in the United States Forest Service, the Tongass National Forest and the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts based on primary and secondary sources. Identify agency program components from the past and present that should continue in future programming, as well as challenges that need to be overcome.*

The results from reviewing secondary sources related to conservation education and interpretation in the Forest Service can be found in Chapter 2 and in the Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education and Interpretation Guidebook (Appendix M). The information summarized is essential background information that was critical to gaining a solid understanding of what the current program has been built on. In the review of secondary sources, numerous program components were found to be important to building successful conservation education and interpretation programs in the United States Forest Service, the Tongass National Forest and the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger

Districts. The components listed below were selected because they contributed to a quality education and/or interpretation program in the past or because they are proven techniques for building solid programs today.

**Quality Components of Historical
Conservation Education & Interpretation Programs**

The following components were derived from Dr. Robert Hakala's recommendations made in the 1960's (Hakala, 1995):

- A comprehensive training program which includes a broad array of resource use activity is essential.
- The program should continue to involve the district rangers and select staff because, to a large extent, it's the districts' stories that are being interpreted.
- Critical issue interpretation – that relating to management direction and alternatives – is part of the job. However, this subject area must be handled objectively and with great skill and discretion lest we become protagonists rather than facilitators and interpreters.
- The quality of interpretive services and facilities and the competence, appearance, and attitude of naturalists must be kept at a high level.
- Every district headquarters office should present a visible, open door invitation to the public.

- Interpretive experiences should lead to some understanding of an aspect of national forest management.

Current Conservation Education Activities

When interviewed, Forest Service employees on Prince of Wales Island elaborated on many activities that they were currently doing related to conservation education, interpretation and communication. These efforts included:

Thorne Bay & Craig Ranger Districts

- Kid's Fishing Day. An annual nation-wide event, established in the 1980's and coordinated by the Forest Service, that encourages families to come out and fish for the day. In the process, the public learns about catch and release principles, fish anatomy, fly-tying and what they can do to help ensure that they can take their kid's fishing in the future.
- Public Meetings. Whenever the Forest Service proposes a new project, it holds a series of public meetings, comment periods, and other opportunities for public involvement. Although these activities usually have very low attendance, there is an opportunity to interact with a few members of the community face-to-face.
- Internal Education. Often, Forest Service employees from different disciplines must work on a project or conduct field work together. Learning regularly takes place across disciplines on an individual and internal basis.

- Informal communication/education. Since the communities of Prince of Wales Island are small, and a large percentage of the population is employed by the Forest Service, there is a lot of on and off-time interaction with the public. Conversations often bring up public land related issues and questions. Employees are often called upon to field phone calls regarding where to fish, how to deal with animal pests, hunting locations, etc... The Forest Service also hires many seasonal employees from around the country. After learning about the Tongass through work, they often educate family, friends and others when they return home.

- Youth Conservation Corp. Frequently there is a group of youth working with the Forest Service to maintain trails, make cabin repairs and perform other odd jobs. While helping out for several weeks during the summer, a Forest Service employee helps them to learn about the environment that they are working in.

- Leave No Trace Demonstration Traveling 'Exhibit'. This interactive demonstration site illustrates a proper and improper Leave No Trace campsite. From school science fairs to Kid's Fishing Day, this exhibit teaches people of all ages the reasons for this important philosophy.

- Archeology education. Prince of Wales Island has a rich cultural history. Through well-planned and practiced programs, the Island archeologist educates students, teachers and volunteers about the role that historical inhabitants of the Island played.

- America's Rainforest. An innovative international conservation education program that will connect the rainforests and school classrooms of Prince of Wales Island to those of Puerto Rica. A

full curriculum will be available and a live satellite broadcast will be held on Prince of Wales Island in October of 2005.

Thorne Bay Ranger District

- EcoVan/Students Classifying Observing and Probing their Environment Program. This recently developed program has opened the lines of communication between Forest Service employees, school district teachers, administration, students, and families. This program, and the Ecosystem Health curriculum that was created to compliment it, provide a framework for students to learn about the forest and its resources. Students are also able to become involved with Forest Service projects and learn about recreational opportunities out-of-doors.
- Other School Programs. Some Forest Service employees have become involved in school activities through individual initiative. Current activities include: a salmon incubation program in Thorne Bay and a greenhouse project in Coffman Cove.
- Karst and Cave Curriculum. An electronic interactive curriculum developed in cooperation between the Forest Service and partners, to help school teachers teach lessons about the unique karst landscape of Prince of Wales Island.

Craig Ranger District

- Summer Youth Camp in Craig. Every summer, USFS seasonal employees coordinate and conduct summer day camps for Prince of Wales Island resident youth. Topics include: native culture, fisheries, stream biology, hiking, Leave No Trace, kayaking, fly-fishing, dutch-oven cooking etc...

- School Programs. Upon invitation, Forest Service employees go into classrooms as guest speakers to discuss specific topics.

Current Interpretation Activities

Thorne Bay Ranger District

- El Capitan Cave Program. Alaska's largest cave, El Capitan, has become a regular stop for visitors to the Island. Forest Service Interpreters guide the public through the cave explaining its cultural and natural significance to the visitors and residents of Prince of Wales Island. There are plans to expand the personal interpretive services to Beaver Falls and Cavern Lake, two other prominent karst features on Prince of Wales Island.
- Beaver Falls Interpretive Boardwalk. Here, visitors can walk safely along a beautifully designed boardwalk over and amongst the dangerous topography of a karst landscape. Along the path, they can read interpretive panels that describe unique landscape features and show pictures of what lies beneath the ground.
- Hatchery Creek Interpretive Panels. Developed in 2003-2004, the panels will be put in place in 2005 at this favorite fishing and fish-viewing location. Interpretive panels explain the importance of salmon to the river's ecology and what anglers can do to help, instead of harm, the delicate fishery.
- Rio Roberts Fish Pass Trail and Overlook. Interpretive panels were put in place several decades ago to explain what a fish pass was and how it works. These signs are faded and outdated.

- Big Ratz Fish Pass Overlook. Interpretive panels were also put in place several decades ago at an overlook above the Big Ratz fish pass to explain what the man-made channel in the stream was and how it influenced fish behavior. These signs are outdated and faded.

Craig Ranger District

- Hollis Kiosk. A small informational board was erected near the ferry terminal in Hollis. Currently a map of the island, pictures and small informational blurbs are there to help orient visitor's to the Island. This information was produced 'in house' and could be updated to be more interpretive versus strictly informational.

Both Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger Districts

- Special Event Speakers. Several times every year each Ranger District hosts guest speakers. Guest speaker presentation topics have ranged from wolf telemetry and invasive species, to recreational opportunities on the Island.

Visitor Information Services Activities

Thorne Bay & Craig Ranger Districts

- Front Desk Services. Many people come to the Forest Service Ranger District offices looking for information. A variety of information is sought. Some very technical documents are distributed this way. Other times Island visitors or community members simply come in looking for things to do on the Island (such as recreation, special events, etc...) or to learn more about the Island and its resources. There is a diverse array of information available.

- Telephone & Email. Because Prince of Wales Island is off the beaten path, planning a trip to the Island can be difficult. People from all over the country call inquiring about cabins, hunting, fishing, recreation, and other island opportunities. The front desk personnel, as well as other USFS employees respond to these inquiries through personal communications and distribution of printed materials.

- Displayed Information: Until recently all information was in a 'back closet' and was brought out when a person stopped in and inquired about a specific topic. During the summer of 2004, brochure racks were hung and information was displayed in an area readily accessible to anyone coming into the office.

- Prince of Wales Island Forest Service Website. During the summer of 2004, a Forest Service website specific to Prince of Wales Island was developed. It provides a new and easily accessible way to relay information to both the local and national publics. Information topics range from forest management techniques and current research to recreational opportunities and education activities.

Current Education and Interpretation Direction

A critical component to bridging the communication gaps that often surround public land controversies, and maintaining the integrity of our public lands, are a "well-educated and ecologically sound citizenry." One of the best ways to achieve this is to connect peoples "hearts and minds" to the land (Dombeck, Williams and

Wood, 2002). The USFS acknowledges this in their Conservation Education Vision-to-Action Strategy. "Public involvement and collaboration with partners are critical to the future of ecosystems, natural resources and their management, and conservation education should be the cornerstone for each," (USDA Forest Service, 1998).

In the Alaska Region, a strategy is in place that outlines standards and a vision. This document strengthens Alaska Forest Service educational and interpretive efforts by setting a vision that , "...people [will] value National Forests and resources, and work together to assure wise management of them" (Interpretation and Education in the Alaska Region 2003-2006).

Along those same lines, the *Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy* was completed and approved in August of 2004. It gives umbrella-like guidelines under which educational and interpretative programs on the Tongass can be developed. Within the document, broad guidelines were developed that give direction for USFS interpretation and conservation education programs. The Guidebook developed by this study will fit within this forest-wide strategy. The vision of Tongass interpretation and conservation education efforts is to:

Create a future where the Tongass NF is nationally recognized in presenting effective, engaging interpretation and education services that meet the need and expectations of our public and further our land stewardship mission.

Although there is some quality conservation education and interpretation already taking place on the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts, there is still no plan that

provides a broad conceptual framework for these programs to operate in (Tongass Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, 2004).

By looking at the programs listed previously in this chapter, and understanding what is currently taking place in conservation education and interpretation on Prince of Wales Island, essential components to future conservation education and interpretation efforts can be identified. These components can and should be carried into future program planning:

- School Partnerships. The Thorne Bay Ranger District has built a strong relationship with the Southeast Island School District – local partnerships should continue to be built.
- Passionate Employees. There are USFS employees from all disciplines that can and want to do education and/or interpretation in their jobs. They are passionate, motivated and excited to be involved in the efforts.
- Increasing Support. Through internal education efforts and public demand, philosophical support from the Agency, Forest, and District levels for conservation education and interpretation efforts is rising.
- Technology-based Programs. There is a recent trend in the development of technology-based programs, curriculums, and web-sites to help facilitate understanding of natural and cultural history on Prince of Wales Island for visitors, residents, school teachers and students.

- Special Events. Hosting and attending special events such as Kid's Fishing Day, open house events, and school science fairs help to build a positive relationship with local residents.

Along with successful program components that should be continued, there are also challenges that have roots in the past that need to be acknowledged and overcome in future program plans. The paragraphs below outline some of those challenges that have emerged from the past.

Challenges from the Past

Little or no guiding direction. In a conversation with Sandy Frost, Partnership and Rural Community Assistance Coordinator for the Tongass, it was stressed that past programs (not just on Prince of Wales Island but across the Forest Service) have had little or no guiding direction from the agency. There have been good solid programs in the past, but mainly because of individual dedication. There lacks a connectivity between levels of the agency and programs. Frost played a crucial role in the development of the *Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy* and believes that this document, if used to its fullest potential, could serve as a crucial link between all interpretation and education programs on the Forest and move them forward in a common direction.

Lack of interdisciplinary support. In recent history, interpretation has been primarily facilitated through the Recreation department on Prince of Wales Island. Likewise, conservation education's main coordinator has been within the Fish, Wildlife and Watershed department (with input from the Archeology and Geology departments on

specific projects). Although each of these departments are doing some exceptional activities and are officially given the responsibility of coordinating these programs, there are major holes in the content of what is being conveyed because departments such as Timber, Silviculture, Engineering, and Planning are not involved. Lack of involvement in conservation education and interpretation from other departments also increases the pressure on the employees and supervisors in the Recreation and Fish, Wildlife and Watershed departments through financial strain, employee learning curves, and time commitments.

Inability to publicize achievements and meet critics. In “The History of the United States Forest Service in Alaska,” Lawrence Rakestraw states that, “Perhaps the greatest deficiency of the Forest Service has been its failure to publicize its real achievements and to meet its critics promptly and forthrightly.” For reasons that date back to the establishment of the Forest Service at the turn of the 20th century, not publicizing the good things that they do, and avoiding critics instead of making issues has been a long-held reputation they have not been able to shake even in recent years (Rakestraw, 2002).

Environmental groups from all over the world have often focused their efforts on the Tongass, sometimes Prince of Wales, specifically. Forest Service actions on the Tongass have not always been viewed as being done in the best interests of the land and public that they serve. (To see the views of a few environmental groups please see the following websites: Alaska Coalition, www.alaskacoalition.org, Green Peace, www.greenpeace.org, Southeast Alaska Conservation Council, www.seacc.org, The Nature Conservancy <http://nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/alaska/>) From

the passing of the Tongass Timber Act and establishment of 50-year timber contracts in 1947, to the early 1990's, documented controversy was prevalent in issues surrounding Tongass timber harvest. The controversial actions during these years ended only by order of a federal judge (Durbin, 1999).

Often the Forest Service's response to critics is reactive instead of proactive, or the critics are ignored. With the increase in popularity of environmental groups throughout the United States since the 1970's, the Forest Service has built a repertoire within the public of not acknowledging critics. This has often proved detrimental when working with the public (Rakestraw, 2002). It may prove worthy to the Forest Services' future reputation for the agency to discuss concerns with their critics, and understanding at a fundamental level that they are serving the American public as a whole.

However, the Forest Service on Prince of Wales Island has also participated in many worthwhile, leading-edge projects such as in-depth karst research, archeology studies, stream restoration projects and watershed assessments. These projects are those that even the most intensive environmental groups would acknowledge as a job well done. However, these projects, and others, are often not talked about or publicized. As a result the public has access to little information with which to make educated decisions. Because of this, the stakeholders, both local and national, are frequently slow to become involved in public land management decisions.

Conservation education efforts are not fully developed. Often the conservation education efforts do little more than build awareness and knowledge in the audience being served. The higher goals of environmental education, such as building values and

action skills, are often not done. Helping citizens to develop the motivations necessary to take action in the management of their public lands also is not addressed.

Interpretation efforts often lack the incorporation of accepted techniques and principles. Interpretation strives to connect the interests of the audience to the meanings of the resource through activities and media that actively engage the whole person. Some of the interpretation efforts on Prince of Wales Island do not successfully accomplish this. Most of this is simply due to lack of employee training and knowledge in interpretive techniques when developing programs, signs, exhibits and engaging in visitor services.

Summary of Objective One

An array of programs and activities have played essential roles in past Forest Service efforts in Alaska and many continue to have influence today. As you can see from the paragraphs above, the Forest Service on Prince of Wales Island also has many existing programs. Both the past and current programs are diverse in content and each brings strengths and challenges with them.

At times, the challenges facing the Tongass National Forest, have seemed overwhelming. However, by acknowledging these challenges, the first steps have already been taken in working to overcome the challenges and move into the future.

Dedicated employees have played an essential role in overcoming challenges and building a successful base on which to ground a future Conservation Education and Interpretation Program. Future program success will be dependent upon the employees of the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District.

It will be up to them to realize the importance of conservation education and interpretation in public land management, and take the necessary steps to carry out these efforts in a efficient and high-quality manner.

Objective #2: *Identify the audiences that the Prince of Wales Island Forest Service serves, and determine what their needs, interests and expectations are.*

Based on the review of primary and secondary sources, it was determined that the four main audiences of the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts are 1) school teachers, administration and students, 2) Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District employees (internal audience), 3) Island community members, and 4) Island visitors (Atkinson 2003).

From June 1 through July 6, 2004, Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District employees, six different community groups, and the Southeast Island School District teachers gave their feedback on conservation education and interpretation through paper questionnaires or focus group interviews, in regards to education and interpretation on Prince of Wales Island. All of the comments gathered were categorized, summarized and will be used to make recommendations for future conservation education and interpretation program development and implementation.

Southeast Island School District

The summer of 2003 marked the kick-off of the EcoVan program with the Southeast Island School District. Many Forest Service employees participated in this unique program in a variety of ways, from developing curriculum to teaching lessons.

Once minor improvements were made, the program is continuing during the 2004 - 05 school year.



Figure 10: The EcoVan. Transporting students and gear to the far corners of Prince of Wales Island, the EcoVan helps to facilitate the activities of the Forest Service/ Southeast Island School District forest conservation education program.

In response to the questionnaire developed in this research project, asking about the strengths and weaknesses of the Forest Service conservation education program on Prince of Wales Island, the teachers gave many comments and suggestions for improving the EcoVan program, as well as additional conservation education needs that the USFS could address. Approximately 30 questionnaires were given out and six were completed and returned. Because there is only a 20% response rate, the results from the questionnaire are not representative of the Southeast Island School District. However, the comments gathered can be used much like focus group interview data – to orient the researcher to what individuals would like to see from the Forest Service’s Conservation Education Program.

The following categories were identified as aspects of conservation education and interpretation that the Forest Service could improve on.

Category	# of Comments
Address <i>conservation</i> vs. just forest resources	5
Improve Communication ...about EcoVan activities (1) --about larger Forest Service functions (3)	4
A wider variety of educational programs/topics/opportunities	3
More continuity and expertise in programs/topics	2
More time with students on lessons and projects	2
More contact with communities off the road system	1
More information about current research and papers	1

Table 3: Southeast Island School District Forest Service Conservation Education Program Suggestions (sample size 6)

The teachers who responded also stated several strengths of the current Forest Service Conservation Education Program. One teacher that had invited several Forest Service employees to her classroom over the school year stated that, "They [FS presenters] were enthusiastic and knowledgeable and knew how to work with and spark student's interest. They offered great resources and talked about local issues that were important to the students." Other specific strengths included:

- Watershed Health curriculum notebook was valuable
- Provided age-appropriate information
- Quality involvement in science fair
- Participation in Project WILD training
- EcoVan program was easily adapted to be cross-curricular
- Forest Service were and provided great resources
- Helping to build a 'conscience' about the environment

Overall, teachers seemed excited about the new partnership with the Forest Service, but would like to see more in the future. They made several recommendations about conservation education needs that the Forest Service could help address in the future.

- Topics such as: What can we do with our waste?; pollution awareness; management of fresh water; wildlife; estuary; beach life; King Salmon
- Offer more opportunities to become involved in hands-on, real-life projects.
- More information for teachers about current research such as: invasive plant surveys, mapping, trails, and stream surveys.
- More contact with real research and scientists.
- Supplements to Discovery Center Kits.
- Kit and information available that teachers/students can access on their own.
- Teach more about conservation and respect for the land and local culture.

Please see Appendix I for the complete data sheets.

Forest Service Employees

One of the largest audiences, and often the most overlooked, is the internal employees of the Forest Service. These are the people that make daily connections between the Forest and the public they serve. Forest Service employees from all disciplines were surveyed during June of 2005. Thirty-one out of ninety Forest Service employees from the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District participated. Nearly all participants were from the Thorne Bay Ranger District or were zoned employees between the two Districts. Below are a few key points from each question, the full data results can be found in Appendix J.

When employees were asked how important education and interpretation is to achieving the Forest Service mission, 29 out of 31 responses stated that education and interpretation were *very important* or *important*.

The responses as to why the employees felt that way varied, both by individual and resource discipline group. A few of the comments are captured below.

“In order for the public to support the Forest Service mission they need to have knowledge of the Forest and a connection to the land, which will create a desire to act to support or change the FS goals. Interpretation and Education help give a sense of place & appreciation for science, cultural history, natural history, etc...”

“Interpretation and education are the fundamental building blocks for gaining public support for Forest Service projects and programs. Education helps to reach understanding and a sense of stewardship for the land and resources.”

“Without education, the needs of present and future generations will not be formulated in a manner in the public’s best interest. Interpretation, I feel, is different and less critical to the mission.”

“Well, while talking to a local logger several weeks ago he seemed very upset with the Forest Service. He felt we were out to get him; said there were too many restrictions on cutting now and sales were much lower than in the past; said he doesn’t have that much work because of us. Judging from this conversation I feel that some people aren’t educated about what the Forest Service mission really is.”

“Interpretation & education provides a direct connection between the general public and the FS. The National Forests belong to everyone and so it is important for people to have an understanding of what we do. Also generating interest in the environment and conservation will hopefully help to get people involved.”

“Through education and interpretation we can inspire young minds and adults to think outside of the “box” and become aware of the issues that may be ongoing in this communities. We can assist in giving them a base upon which to make informed decisions, whether they agree with the Forest Service or not.”

“Educating the public is crucial to completing the Forest Service. The public must be fully aware of what and why we do, in effort to re-establish a high degree of credibility.”

Although a majority of the employees interviewed viewed education and interpretation important to what the Forest Service is trying to accomplish, there were several employees that thought alternatively. The two participants that did not consider education and interpretation as important to achieving the Forest Service mission, listed the following reasons:

“Does not meet the literal reading of the mission.”

“The FS should manage the land. Colleges and universities should teach.”

Forest Service employees were also asked what additional skills or resources they would need in order to feel comfortable executing conservation education and interpretation programs. Four out of five resource disciplines identified that trainings or workshops were needed in order to gain basic or more advanced skills in conservation education and interpretation. Topics mentioned ranged from creating brochures, teaching techniques, writing for the public, developing education and interpretation programs, seasonal employee trainings and additional ways to effectively reach the public. An abbreviated list of other stated needs is below. A full list can be found in the survey results Appendix J, Question #4.

- A coordination of conservation education and interpretation efforts.
- CE&I has to be a priority from the top-down.
- Additional resources for developing education and interpretation programs.
- Development of manuals for education and interpretation (both broadly and for specific topics)
- More time!

Employees from each discipline also listed many techniques specific to their field they felt could be used to reach the public. Responses ranged from basic communication techniques to elaborate visions of an education/visitor center. One employee stated that a combination of “short term” (interpretive signs) and “long-term” (school programs) would be a good long-term strategy for education and interpretation. Having a diverse array of education and interpretation opportunities available to the public at any given time seemed to be stressed throughout all resource departments. A complete list of responses can be found in Appendix J, Question #3.

Community Members

Six focus group interviews were held at various community group meetings around the Island. Due to time and budget constraints, as well as community member commitment, not all communities were visited. Citizens from the communities of Naukati, Craig (2), Klawock, Thorne Bay and Coffman Cove participated. The Thorne Bay Business Association (on June 8th, 2004), the Naukati Homeowners Association (on June 9th, 2004), the Craig City Employees (on June 10th, 2004), the Native Community Council (on June 15th, 2004), the Klawock City Council (on June 15th, 2004) and the Coffman Cove City Council (on June 18th, 2005) were the six community groups that participated in this study. The Thorne Bay City Council, the Prince of Wales Chamber of Commerce, the Prince of Wales Island Community Council, The City of Hydaburg, and the Kaasan Watershed Council were also asked to participate but were unable to work out logistics.

Each meeting gave valuable insight into citizen views on Forest Service/community interaction in regards to conservation education and interpretation. The focus groups sessions lasted anywhere from 20 – 60 minutes and had from 3-20 participants. A total of 58 participants were involved in the six focus group interview sessions. The following is a list of nine categories that were determined by the comments voiced at the community focus group interviews. These categories were determined by grouping like comments together and labeling each group. This process was done by the researcher and two neutral parties. For more information please see Chapter 3.

Categories	# of Comments
Improve communication between Forest Service and communities	47
More recreation opportunities (including interpretive trails/signs)	24
Additional events, programs & other education/interpretation opportunities	9
Play a more active role in the community	8
Increased cultural awareness	8
More school involvement	7
Develop an Interpretive/Education Center	6
Develop more local partnerships	3
Institutional (agency) barriers	5

Table 4: Prince of Wales Island community member suggestions for conservation education and interpretation efforts

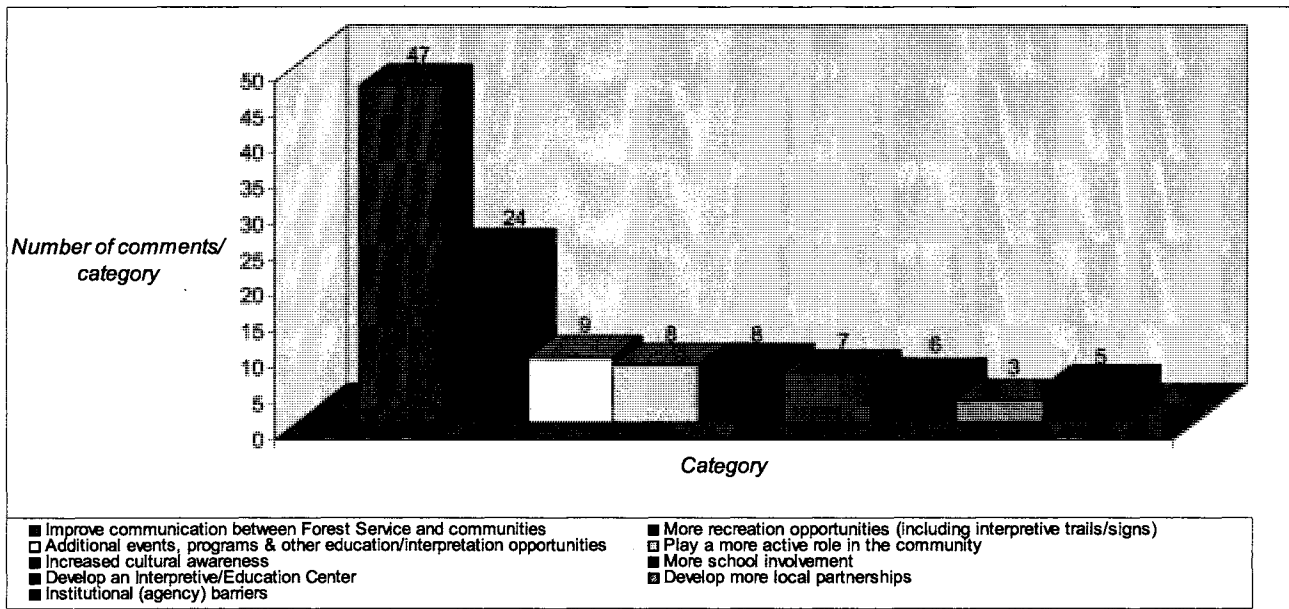


Figure 11: Prince of Wales Island community member suggestions for conservation education and interpretation efforts

Visitors

Visitors are increasing on Prince of Wales Island. With twice daily ferry service from Ketchikan during the summer, along with numerous float plane companies shuttling people, the Island is becoming more easily accessible. The ease of access will increase with the new ferry terminal in Coffman Cove, predicted to open in 2006. In the past two years, travel on the InterIsland ferry from Ketchikan to Hollis has increased by 3,000 to 4,000 passengers per year. There is a 3,000 passenger increase predicted for 2005 (Kent Miller to Board of Directors of InterIsland Ferry Authority, July 1, 2004). See Appendix K for full details of this data.

Little is known about visitor characteristics on POW Island. It is believed that many people come to the Island for the abundant hunting and fishing opportunities,

taking advantage of the hundreds of guiding services and resorts that are scattered throughout the Island. Other characteristics and information regarding this audience is only hypothesized.

However, by taking a broader look at State and Region-wide statistics we may be able to get a general idea of what visitors are doing on the Tongass National Forest (Alaska Division of Community and Business Development, 2001).

- Visitor arrivals have been steadily increasing since 1993.
- Most people visit for vacation or pleasure, the second reason is visiting friends & relatives.
- Commercial recreation businesses in Southeast Alaska report they most frequently engage in the following activities with their customers

(multiple answers could be given):

Saltwater fishing	63%
Nature viewing/sight seeing	49%
Wildlife viewing	44%
Photography	35%
Motorized boating	25%
Freshwater Fishing	21%
Bird watching	21%

By understanding the audiences of Prince of Wales Island, and identifying some of their needs and expectations of Forest Service conservation education and interpretation programs, the Forest Service can better serve them.

Objective #3: *Identify the interpretive and educational mission, visions and strategies of the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts.*

During July of 2004, a team of seven interested and influential employees from both the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts gathered to devise a course of direction for the conservation education and interpretation program on Prince of Wales Island. Equipped with the background information gathered from the community focus groups, employee questionnaires, and school district questionnaires, the CE&I Team brainstormed and developed the following statements through the Adapted Nominal Group Technique described on pages 80-83. The meeting minutes and agenda's can be found in Appendix L.

The POW Conservation Education & Interpretation Mission

Through strategic planning and development of a professional staff, the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District's Conservation Education and Interpretation Program fosters an awareness and understanding of cultural and natural resources on Prince of Wales Island ensuring long-term wise use and respect for our resources.

After creating the statement, it was sent out by email to all employees of both districts for approval and, with the exception of a few minor edits, it was accepted and adopted by the Districts.

Vision Statements

Following the development of the mission statement the CE&I Team developed four vision statements that the Districts hope to achieve in the next 5-10 years. Each vision statement is followed by several strategies needed to achieve the vision statements.

1. *Develop a strategic, Island-wide conservation education & interpretation program that encompasses all disciplines.*
 - a. Create a guidebook for conservation education & interpretation program development, implementation and evaluation in order to maintain consistency and sustainability.
 - b. Involve both Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger Districts.
 - c. Address a variety of resource management issues in a non-bias way.
 - d. Involve all resource management disciplines in CE & I efforts.

2. *Establish and retain a professional Interpretive Services and Conservation Education team on Prince of Wales Island.*
 - a. Establish a multi-disciplinary CE&I team with roles, a variety of members, an organizational framework, a support network, etc...
 - b. Involve stakeholders in CE & I Team functions.
 - c. Recruit representatives from all disciplines to be on the CE & I team.
 - d. Obtain solid support and funding for interpretation & conservation education staff and programs for a sustained period of time.
 - e. Offer opportunities for professional development for education and interpretation on the Island; include all resource disciplines when applicable.

3. *Provide products and services that are high-quality, reflect Thorne Bay & Craig Ranger District priorities, address key messages and fit within the Tongass Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy.*
 - a. Develop effective program evaluation methods.
 - b. Adhere to conservation education and interpretation “best practices” as well as Tongass excepted practices.
 - c. Provide Forest Service & Tongass conservation education and interpretation guidelines to educators, interpreters and POW I&CE Team members.
 - d. Create programs that relate to POW key messages (see list below).
 - e. Develop all publications, signs and panels using a similar ‘identity theme.’

4. *Address the current needs and expectations of our customers - including local, national and global publics as well as Forest Service employees.*
 - a. Create programs and materials that reach out to a variety of audiences. (local & national public, visitors, Native, school students, teachers, employees, etc...)
 - b. Create programs and material that meet identified needs and expectations.
 - c. Develop partnerships with local communities, community groups/organizations, school districts, etc...
 - d. Regularly monitor and update customer needs and expectations data.

To compliment and help meet the goals established by the Conservation Education and Interpretation Team in the summer of 2004, Forest Service employees devised “key messages”, or important ideas, specific to Prince of Wales Island through a similar group brainstorming process during the summer of 2003. These messages are intended to guide interpretation and education programs.

POW Island Interpretive and Educational Messages

Discover... Countless opportunities for exploration and enjoyment exist amongst the rugged shores, deep forests and sparkling streams of Prince of Wales Island.

Diverse... The land has created lifestyles and cultures that are as diverse as the land that is depended on for support.

Distinct... Rare ecosystems and world-class resources thrive in this unique island environment.

Dedicated... The Forest Service is dedicated to caring for the land, while serving the people of both the local and national publics.

The statements developed in these meetings will help to guide conservation education and interpretation programs on Prince of Wales Island. Establishing direction ensures that all efforts are moving toward the same goal in an integrated and strategic fashion.

Objective #4: Identify the educational opportunities available on the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District and prioritize the options based on District needs, budget, goals and personnel.

The following is a list of educational opportunities that are currently available on the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts. The advantages and disadvantages are based on researcher observation and discussions with Susan Howell (Thorne Bay Ranger District Fish and Wildlife Staff Officer) who will be directing the program until a full-time employee is hired. These advantages and disadvantages are listed as the opportunity relates to District and audience needs, District budgets, goals and personnel. The list will be prioritized by the Conservation Education and Interpretation Team during the fall of 2005 and will be available for future use on the Districts.

Table 5: Conservation Education Opportunities available on Prince of Wales Island

Educational Opportunity	Advantages	Disadvantages
<i>Directive Level</i>		
Create plans to establish direction for CE & I program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give future and current CE & I efforts direction. • Can save money by spending where it will have the most impact. • Can help develop a high- quality program. • Creates program sustainability through administrative and personnel changes. Will set a positive example for the rest of the Tongass and agency. • Initial plans are in place with this document and support has been given in this effort thus far. • Specifically addresses POW CE & I visions 1 and 3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes an initial investment of time and money. • Requires personnel with expertise in education, interpretation and program planning, as well as a diversity of other areas. • Will have to be updated and revisited on a regular basis.

<p>Create and support a full time CE & I position.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will improve quality of CE & I program by adding expertise. • Will take pressure off of other staff members. • Bring a new and diverse point of view to the Districts. • Will set a positive example for the rest of the Tongass and agency. • Can aid in all aspects of public outreach. • Create interdisciplinary connections. • Specifically addresses POW CE & I visions 1 and 3. • If open-minded and unbiased can effectively create bridges between public and all resource disciplines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional monetary investment.
<p>Provide professional development opportunities in CE & I for Forest Service employees. For example: trainings, workshops, literature, guidebooks, etc...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help create a well rounded education and interpretation program with a variety of viewpoints and backgrounds. • The FS employees as a whole would be more equipped to deal with all public relations situations. • It would meet employee interest and needs (see responses to questionnaire in Appendix J) • Build credibility in CE & I programming. • Give employees additional skills that will make them more competent and efficient at all aspects of their jobs. • Addresses POW CE & I vision 1 and 3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires financial investment in employees salary, facilitator (or trainer) expenses, and resources and materials needed. • Dedication of time for employees. • Limited by expertise to facilitate training sessions and recommend and develop guides and literature. •
<p>Develop evaluation program that meets FS Credibility through Accountability (CTA) standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes all levels accountable for their actions. • Motivates districts, forests and regions to create and improve CE & I programs. • Can help to improve and redirect program to meet its goals. • Can show value to other disciplines. • Portrays accountability to the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTA standard may not evaluate long-term effectiveness of a program. • Evaluation takes investment of time and money to be done well. • Requires expertise in CE & I, as well as methods

	<p>public.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will be ahead of the program – CTA will be required in a couple of years. • Can help to better meet internal and external audience needs. 	<p>of evaluation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires significant planning and follow through.
<p><i>Program Level (School)</i></p>		
<p>School Programs (General)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already a solid relationship established with the Southeast Island School District. • Programs have potential long lasting and far reaching impacts. • Relates specifically to POW CE & I visions 3 and 4. • Meet several identified teacher needs. • Lots of existing resources available. • Can get community involvement in projects. • Can be a window to other community opportunities. • Many chances for constant evaluation and improvement. • A variety of resource disciplines can be involved many ways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No full time staff to help coordinate program, provide training and continue to evaluate and improve program. • Dedication of employee time depends on supervisor's direction, not on program need. • If not coordinated, program may not have much impact. • Not much is known about teacher needs in the Craig Ranger District. •
<p>Career Days</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many student contacts with minimal investment in time and resources. • May spark interest in future employment opportunities in the FS. • Also positive contacts with teachers/administration and other community members. • Can involve all Forest Service resource disciplines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just reaches the awareness and knowledge levels of environmental education. •
<p>Externships with local high school students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-on-one interaction between student and employee has high impact for learning and future decisions. • Forest Service is helped through students work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaches a very small number of students. • Financial investment to students reached ratio is high. •

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student can learn about future career opportunities. • Potential for high-quality, long-lasting learning experience for student. 	
Continue EcoVan Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already established and first phases have been evaluated and improved. • Minimal financial investment needed to continue program. • Relates specifically to POW CE & I visions 3 & 4. • Gives direction and brings cohesion to FS school programs – ties lessons together so all of the goals of environmental education are reached. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly dependent on school EcoVan coordinator for success. • Often depends on teacher motivation. • High time commitment for employees.
Involve students in FS and community projects (ie: stream data collection, community/highway clean-ups, exotic species invasion, etc...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students can feel like they are helping. • FS benefits. • Teaches real-world skills that may influence future decision making. • Minimal financial investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes coordination and commitment by employees. • High time commitment.
Create teacher/student resource kits for schools to use. (i.e.: Stream Watch kits, Watchable Wildlife, What goes into a road?, What do we use the Forest for?, etc...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little investment in employee time after establishment. • Gives teachers additional resources to better prepare their kids before FS project. • Compliments EcoVan program. • Can help FS employees with in school presentations. • Easy to evaluate teacher use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial investment of money. • May not be as effective as contact with an employee. • Can be difficult to evaluate effectiveness.
<i>Program Level (Community)</i>		
Public Educational Programs (evenings and weekends)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal monetary commitment. • Can appeal to a diverse audience. • Flexible. • Meets stated needs of community members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be challenging to get people to come initially. • Small facilities at the FS offices. • Effectiveness may depend heavily upon

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can help build partnerships with other agencies and organizations. • Can bring in outside perspective, if hosting a guest speaker. • FS employees can develop programs based on personal interest. • Variety of ways for Forest Service employees from all disciplines to be involved. • Positive interaction with Forest Service employees. 	<p>education/presentations skills of presenter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to measure effectiveness. • Requires 'after hours' work schedule for employee participants.
<p>Community workshops (topics i.e.: Dealing with Invasive species, Medicinal Plants, Exploring POW's past, etc....)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FS employees can develop workshops based on personal interest. • Flexible. • Meets stated needs of community members. • Can help bring in outside perspective if hosting a guest speaker. • Potential to make significant impact on participants lives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant time investment for employee; may include evening or weekend hours. • Effectiveness may depend heavily upon education/presentations skills of presenter. • Small facilities at the FS offices. • May be challenging to get people to come initially.
<p>FS Field Day (community members and/or students/teachers have the opportunity to go in the field with FS employees to 'see what they do')</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community members would have the chance to see and learn about what employees really do – some myths would be eliminated. • Personal relationships would be built and the FS wouldn't be just seen as a large unapproachable agency. • FS employees wouldn't 'lose' valuable field time to do educational activities. • Hands-on community involvement in the Forest has potential for greater impact than listening to a speaker, reading a brochure, etc... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FS employees may not be able to get as much work done when out in the field with others. • Possible liability. • Couldn't provide transportation to community members.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FS employees may have extra field help. • Almost no extra time or monetary commitment. 	
Educational booths at community events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal monetary commitment. • Display board and other resources are already developed at TBRD. • High visibility to the community. • Many public contacts may be made. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectiveness hard to measure. • Just awareness and maybe knowledge goals of environmental education are being met. • Significant time investment by a few employees.
Workshops/guides for public regarding FS processes (TLMP, NEPA, EIS, etc...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little employee time needed after development. • Can be broadly distributed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited interest. • Take significant time commitment to create workshop/guide that is user friendly and effective. • May be more beneficial to teach way people should care about these processes.
Weekly radio shows and/or newspaper articles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large local audience reached. • By doing weekly, expectations and routine is established. • More public visibility. • Little monetary commitment. • Can involve all disciplines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be time consuming to write article each week if only one employee is working on it. • Effectiveness depends on public appeal of article.
FS Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already in place with tons of great information. • Can reach both the local and national publics (including school districts, employees and visitors). • Once developed costs little money or time to maintain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires at least one employee to have web-site development skills.
Plan and build an education/interpretive center.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential long lasting impacts on community, not only through education but also economically. • Increase visibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extremely expensive • Takes lots of time, commitment and planning to create successful center.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to teach about a variety of topics. • Offers welcoming facility for community members. • Allows FS to 'tell their story' in an engaging way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside expertise needed.
Regular "Discovery Nites" (open house, education/interpretation programs, with other activities going on throughout the evening as well)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several Discovery Nites have taken place, with a great public involvement – it is becoming established in the community. • Gives community members and employees a chance to interact in an informal setting. • Flexible! It can be what the employees involved want it to be. • Can involve a variety of age groups at the same time. • Little monetary investment for a high number of public contacts. • Meets several stated audience needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not reach the higher levels of environmental education. • Moderate investment of time for employees involved. • Can be difficult to evaluate effectiveness.
Annual educational pamphlet on FS plans for the year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal time and money investment. • Easy to distribute. • Demonstrates proactive approach vs. reactive approach. • Meets stated community member need. • High number of public contacts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectiveness may heavily depend on design and public appeal. • Takes skill in writing and designing documents for public use. • Requires prior planning and initiative.
Lunch with the Ranger (hold annual/semi-annual informal question and answer sessions with the Ranger, staff officers and representatives from each community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates proactive approach vs. reactive. • Minimal time/monetary investment. • Meets stated community need. • Builds a positive relationship within the communities. • May prevent myths/rumors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May encounter bitterness from community members. • Requires employees involved to have a vast knowledge and be prepared for a variety of questions.

Objective #5: Identify the interpretive opportunities available on the Thorne Bay & Craig Ranger District and prioritize the options based on District needs, budget, goals and personnel.

The following is a list of interpretive opportunities that are currently available on the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts. The advantages and disadvantages are based on researcher observation and discussions with Susan Howell (Thorne Bay Ranger District Fish and Wildlife Staff Officer) who will be directing the program until a full-time employee is hired. These advantages and disadvantages are listed as the opportunity relates to District and audience needs, District budgets, goals and personnel. The list will be prioritized by the Conservation Education and Interpretation Team during the fall of 2005 and will be available for future use on the Districts.

Table 6: Interpretive Opportunities available on Prince of Wales Island

Interpretive Opportunity	Advantages	Challenges
<i>Directive Level</i>		
Create plans to establish direction for CE & I program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give future and current CE & I efforts direction. • Can save money by spending where it will have the most impact. • Can help develop a high- quality program. • Creates program sustainability through administrative and personnel changes. Will set a positive example for the rest of the Tongass and agency. • Initial plans are in place with this document and support has been given in this effort thus far. • Specifically addresses POW CE & I visions 1 and 3. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes an initial investment of time and money. • Requires personnel with expertise in education, interpretation and program planning, as well as a diversity of other areas. • Will have to be updated and revisited on a regular basis.

<p>Create and support a full time CE & I position.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will improve quality of CE & I program by adding expertise. • Will take pressure off of other staff members. • Bring a new and diverse point of view to the Districts. • Will set a positive example for the rest of the Tongass and agency. • Can aid in all aspects of public outreach. • Create interdisciplinary connections. • Specifically addresses POW CE & I visions 1 and 3. • If open-minded and unbiased can effectively create bridges between public and all resource disciplines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional monetary investment.
<p>Provide professional development opportunities in CE & I for Forest Service employees. For example: trainings, workshops, literature, guidebooks, etc...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help create a well rounded education and interpretation program with a variety of viewpoints and backgrounds. • The FS employees as a whole would be more equipped to deal with all public relations situations. • It would meet employee interest and needs (see responses to questionnaire in Appendix J) • Build credibility in CE & I programming. • Give employees additional skills that will make them more competent and efficient at all aspects of their jobs. • Addresses POW CE & I vision 1 and 3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires financial investment in employees salary, facilitator (or trainer) expenses, and resources and materials needed. • Dedication of time for employees. • Limited by expertise to facilitate training sessions and recommend and develop guides and literature.
<p>Develop evaluation program that meets FS Credibility through Accountability (CTA) standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes all levels accountable for their actions. • Motivates districts, forests and regions to create and improve CE & I programs. • Can help to improve and redirect program to meet its goals. • Can show value to other disciplines. • Portrays accountability to the public. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTA standard may not evaluate long-term effectiveness of a program. • Evaluation takes investment of time and money to be done well. • Requires expertise in CE &I, as well as

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will be ahead of the program – CTA will be required in a couple of years. • Can help to better meet internal and external audience needs. 	<p>methods of evaluation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires significant planning and follow through.
<i>Program Level</i>		
Develop interpretive programs for community members and visitors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be used in conjunction with Discovery Nite (see above) and/or independently. • Requires minimal monetary investment. • Flexible. • Face-to-face interaction is effective. • Requires little time investment for audience. • Meets stated audience need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires time investment for interpreter. • An effective interpretive program requires significant skill on behalf of the employee.
Develop additional interpretive trails on the Island.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current interpretive trails have received positive comments. • Meets stated audience need. • Many opportunities for additional interpretive trails on POW. • Can deal with semi-complex issues. • After initial investment of time and money, little additional needed. • Can explain ideas and identify meanings of a site without having someone there is person. • Can make connections to public any time of day or week. • Can spark awareness and connect people to what they are seeing and experiencing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires significant time investment. • Development of effective interpretive panels requires significant skills and experience. • May not be as effective as face-to-face contact. • Possibility of vandalism. • Must be well planned and developed.
Develop road side interpretive panels and/or an interpretive road guide.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could address many issues that are seen from the road system. • Have potential to reach a large audience. • Meet stated audience need. • Can make connections to public any time of day or week. • May reach a new audience. • Can spark awareness and connect people to what they are seeing and experiencing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High potential for vandalism. • Development of effective interpretive panels requires significant skills and experience. • May not be as effective as face-to-face contact.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would involve all resource disciplines. 	
Create an interpretive trail near the FS office.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitors/community members stopping by will have a way to learn a little about the Forest. • Less potential for vandalism close to office. • Potential to interpret forest succession and forestry practices. • Addresses stated audience need. • Can reach visitors coming to office after hours. • Potential to be very effective when coupled with face-to-face interaction at office. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of effective interpretive panels requires significant skills and experience. • Initial investment of significant time and money.
Create POW specific brochures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves employees from a variety of disciplines. • Visitors/community members can read them at own leisure. • Addresses stated audience need. • Don't have to worry about vandalism. • Can interpret a wide variety of topics. • Can deal with more complex issues. • Already have source of photos to develop brochures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to measure effectiveness. • Initial investment in time and money is significant. • Development of effective interpretive brochures requires significant skills and experience. • May not have any long-lasting impacts.
Plan and build an education/interpretive center.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential long lasting impacts on community, not only through education but also economically. • Increase visibility. • Opportunity to teach about a variety of topics. • Offers welcoming facility for community members. • Allows FS to 'tell their story' in an engaging way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extremely expensive • Takes lots of time, commitment and planning to create successful center. • Outside expertise needed.
Develop additional interpretive tours.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example program (El Cap) is already successful and established. • Face-to-face interaction is effective. • Addresses stated audience need. • Many opportunities for other tours on the Island (Beaver Falls, salmon runs, forest succession, etc...) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment in seasonal employees to run tours. • Investment in quality training time for interpreters. • Investment in site improvement so it

		<p>will be accessible to visitors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May or may not be universally accessible.
<p>Improve front desk services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal contact is the most effective way to make connections to the public. • Can be a resource for community members, school districts, and FS employees. • Can give an overview of what the FS does and the opportunities available on POW. • Improvements have already begun. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some change involved. • Slight investment in time and money.

Objective #6: *Produce a Guidebook that provides a directional strategy and tools that the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts can use to better meet the needs of their audience and strive toward the agency's mission and goals throughout the process of program development, implementation and evaluation.*

The results that are summarized under the first five objectives have been used to create the *Prince of Wales Conservation Education and Interpretation Guidebook* found in Appendix M. The *Guidebook* is a multi-dimensional resource that serves a wide array of user needs. From broad guidelines and tips about program development, to specific information about the Prince of Wales Island conservation education & interpretation program, components of this guidebook strive to meet the needs of the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District staff. The Guidebook also has potential to reach a larger Forest Service audience, as well as acting as a tool and resource to any educator or interpreter that works in a rural area.

Purpose of this Guidebook. This Guidebook will provide research-based guidance and direction, for conservation education and interpretation program development, implementation, and evaluation.

The Guidebook is divided into three main parts. Part one gives an overview of the Guidebook and how it was developed. Part Two is a general guide that nearly any educator or interpreter could find useful, and Part Three is specific to Prince of Wales Island, but also may be useful to others as a case study.

Part One - An Introduction. This section of the Guidebook gives an overview of the Tongass National Forest and Prince of Wales Island. It also describes the philosophy used throughout the *Guidebook*, the research project in which the *Guidebook* was developed, and provides working definitions for environmental education and interpretation.

Part Two - Building a Program How do I determine my audiences' needs? What can I do to evaluate my program? This section can answer these questions and many more! It takes a step back from the specificity of Prince of Wales Island, to give general guidelines and tips to anyone who has questions about rural environmental education and interpretation program development, implementation and evaluation. Topics include: determining a program's history and current status, assessing audience needs, establishing a steering team, developing mission and goals, implementation strategies and evaluation techniques.

Part Three - Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education & Interpretation Program The third part of the Guidebook specifically focuses on the Prince of Wales Island's Forest Service Ranger Districts - Thorne Bay and Craig. This section can be used as a 'case study' or an example of how the methods outlined in Part Two can be carried out. It also serves as a coordinating guide for the conservation education and

interpretation efforts being planned on the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts of Prince of Wales Island, Tongass National Forest.

Who can use this Guidebook?

Thorne Bay & Craig Ranger District Employees

There is a plethora of information that is specific to the Prince of Wales Island Forest Service conservation education and interpretation program. Part One and Three are specifically written for these audiences. It offers general information about the area (great for introducing new employees to the District) while also offering specific guidelines on improving, developing, implementing and evaluating conservation education and interpretation efforts. It also may be helpful to any employee engaging in an action related to public outreach (public meetings, newsletter or brochure development, informational presentation, etc...). Resources such as web-sites, curriculum guides and books will also be available.

Tongass National Forest Ranger District Employees

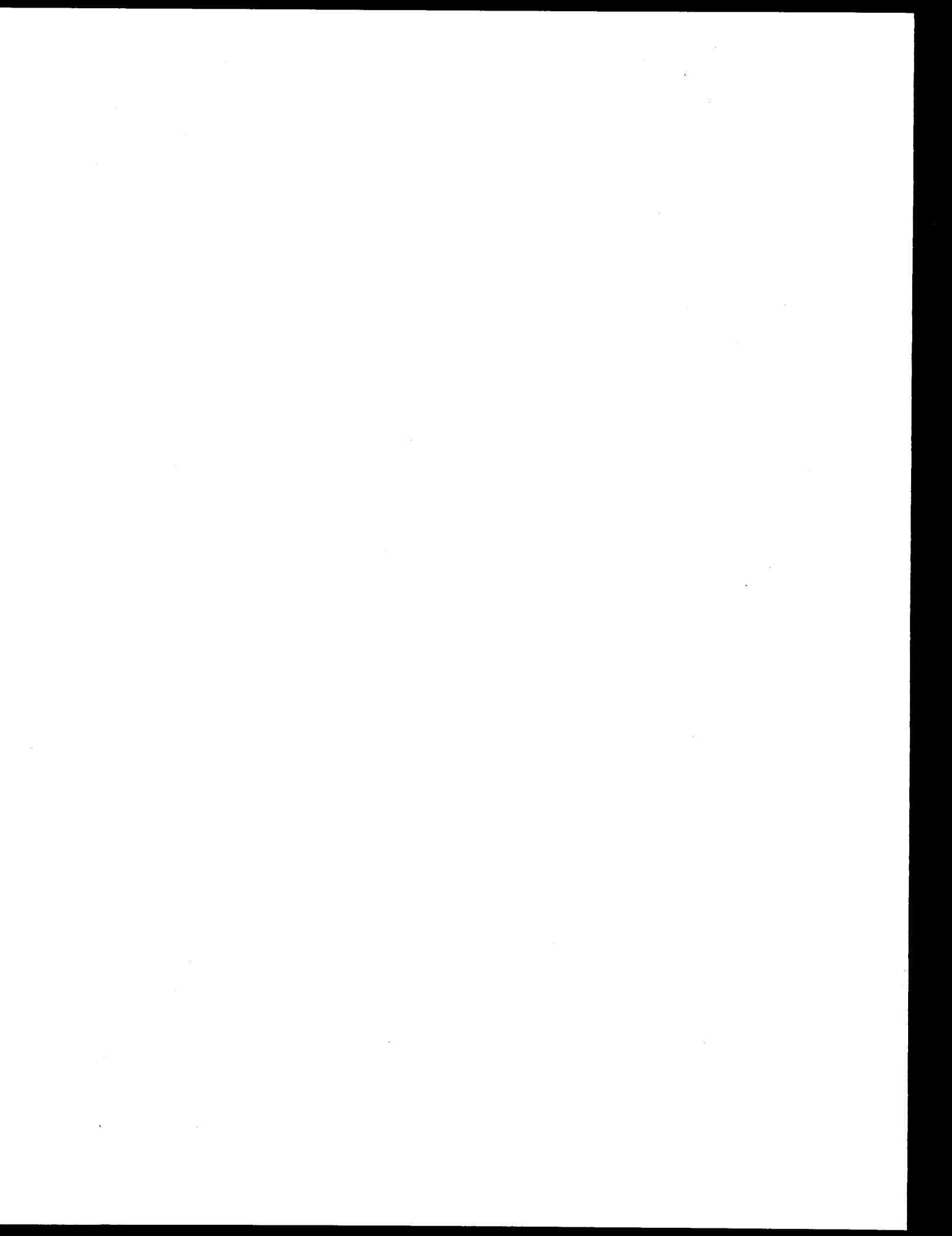
All parts of this Guidebook may be beneficial to use as a resource, example and guide for programs in the Tongass National Forest. In Part One, general information about the Tongass is included, as well as Forest Service management direction. Part Three gives specific information on the process that the Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger Districts have gone through to develop, implement, and evaluate a conservation education and interpretation program that can be used as a model for other Districts. Part Two gives guidelines on how to go about developing, implementing and evaluating a conservation education and interpretation program specific to another Ranger District.

Educators and Interpreters seeking to build or improve programs

Part Two offers solid, universal guidelines, techniques and strategies for developing implementing and evaluating an environmental education and/or interpretation program. In an easy to use workbook format, it can guide program coordinators through all aspects of program planning. Whether collecting data on audience needs or determining the best evaluation techniques - there are tips on how to start and carry out the process.

Summary

The *Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education and Interpretation Guidebook* is a resource that has been in demand by Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District employees as well as employees across the Tongass National Forest. This document will initially be distributed to each Ranger District in the Tongass.



Chapter 5:

Discussion and Recommendations



V. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this research study gave insight as to what would improve the conservation education and interpretation program on Prince of Wales Island. The following pages summarize conclusions drawn, numerous recommendations for future programming, successful outcomes of the research thus far, limitations brought to light, and project implications.

Conclusions

Prior to this project the conservation education and interpretation program on Prince of Wales Island lacked cohesive program direction and coordination, did not seek (and therefore did not address) audience needs, and had little insight into program successes and lessons learned from the past. A major reason for these shortcomings was the lack of strategic direction and program cohesiveness within the USFS at the Forest and District levels.

In the past ten years, national and regional direction has been established through documents such as the *Conservation Education Vision-to-Action Strategy*, *Interpretation and Education in the Alaska Region* and other Forest Service standards and guidelines. In August of 2004, the Tongass National Forest implemented their guiding document, *The Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy*. This manuscript provides direction for forest-wide projects and programs. However, most public contacts are made at the District level, leaving a gap in directional guidance between the Forest direction and where the public contacts are made.

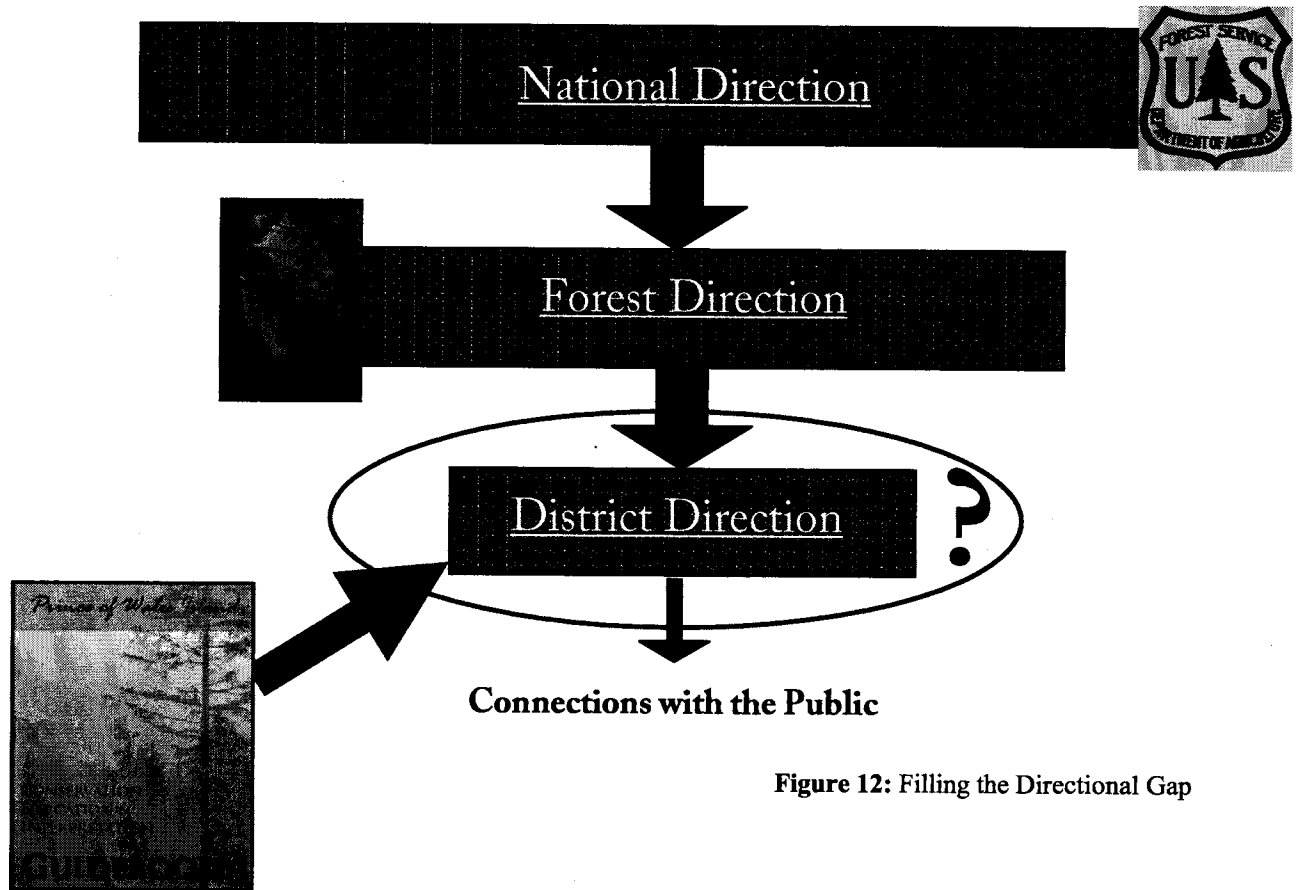


Figure 12: Filling the Directional Gap

The Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education and Interpretation Guidebook takes steps to fill this gap - providing direction for District-level program development, implementation and evaluation on Prince of Wales Island. The *Guidebook* can also be used as a guide and model for other Ranger Districts on the Tongass. For the purpose of this research project, the research methods and development of the *Guidebook* were considered the best tools to address the directional gap that existed in Forest Service guidance of conservation education and interpretation.

Recommendations

Based on the first five objectives of this research, several factors have become apparent that will help to create a high-quality, interdisciplinary conservation education and interpretation program. With these recommendations, the Forest Service Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education and Interpretation Program will help the agency achieve its mission by inspiring the public to become involved in public land management decisions.

Tips from the past.

The recommendations of Dr. Robert Hakala, Alaska's first Regional Officer of Information and Education, for developing a high quality education/interpretation program still hold true today. The following recommendations can be applied to the conservation education and interpretation program on Prince of Wales Island with slight adaptations (Hakala, 1995):

- A comprehensive training program, which includes any employees involved with conservation education, interpretation or public outreach efforts, is essential to develop a program with sufficiently skilled employees.
- The program should be based at the Ranger District level, involving the District Rangers and select staff because that is where most public contacts are made.
- Critical issues should be addressed but must be handled objectively.

- The quality of interpretive services and facilities and the competence, appearance, and attitude of educators and interpreters must be kept at a high level.
- The District headquarters offices should present a visible, open door invitation to the public.
- Interpretive and educational experiences should lead to some understanding of an aspect of national forest management.

There are many excellent conservation education and interpretation efforts currently taking place in the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts. However, in order for the program to move forward, several recommendations need to be taken into consideration.

A strategic direction needs to be established and regularly updated. This process was begun in objective three of this research but it will be up to the employees of the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts to develop action plans to implement the strategies already established (see Guidebook for an *Action Plan template*). Without a larger strategic direction, a program has little hope for long term impact. Below are a few things to keep in mind in future program development.

- The Program should fit within National and Forest level guidelines, as well as effectively implement 'best practices' for conservation (environmental) education and interpretation.

- Audience needs, interests and expectations should be addressed and regularly assessed, so contacts with specific audiences can be most effective.
- The strategic direction that was developed in this research project and continued by employees in 2005 should be revisited on an annual basis to assess what has been accomplished and set new visions, strategies and action plans as needed.

Hire a full-time conservation education and interpretation staff position. The researcher has been intricately involved with the conservation education and interpretation efforts on Prince of Wales Island for two full summers. During these summers it became apparent that in order for the Island-wide conservation education and interpretation program to be effectively coordinated, a full-time position would need to be created and filled. (Please see the Guidebook for recommended skills needed for this position). A full-time employee would take some of the workload off of employees from various departments, allowing those employees to continue with their principle duties while assisting in the coordinated conservation education and/or interpretation efforts of the Districts.

Strive for interdisciplinary support. Traditionally, education and interpretation has been primarily carried out through the Fish, Wildlife and Watershed department, the Recreation department, and through other individuals who have a personal passion. However, when interviewed, employees from all disciplines stated that education and interpretation was critical to what the Forest Service does.

Employees from all disciplines should be involved in education and interpretation efforts, to ensure diverse ideas and program objectivity. Employees from all disciplines stated that they would like to see more trainings and workshops regarding conservation education and interpretation techniques, so that they may more effectively carry out education and interpretation in their field.

Several techniques follow on how to involve a variety of disciplines in the Conservation Education and Interpretation Program:

- Involve at least one employee from each discipline in the CE&I Team meetings.
- Offer alternative ways to be involved in CE&I efforts such as: writing newspaper articles; helping develop the content for discipline specific brochures; involvement in planning a school program (but not necessarily giving it); mentoring individual students by involving them in projects; conducting an adult workshop on a topic of choice; and many other ways!
- The future CE&I full-time staff should make a concerted effort to get input from all disciplines when developing and/or implementing a conservation education and/or interpretation program.

Publicize achievements and meet critics. Throughout the past, the USFS has had a reputation for dodging issues, refusing to meet critics and not publicizing the good things that are being accomplished. Conservation education and interpretation can help to change this reputation by acknowledging and bringing awareness to the environmental, administrative, social and economic issues that the Forest Service is a part of. Both

internal and external education and/or interpretation can open lines of communication between the agency and the public.

Taking a proactive role and letting the public know what the Forest Service is doing (both the acceptable and debatable actions), will give the public more visible opportunities to get involved in the management of their public lands by either taking educated action for or against agency actions. Education and interpretation can be a means of building credibility with the public and support for agency actions. Education and interpretation can also bring debatable actions into the public eye so citizens have a chance to respond and give input on what happens on their public lands.

Address critical issues in a straight-forward, objective manner. In managing our public lands, the Forest Service must address many controversial issues of great public importance (i.e. timber harvest, mining, endangered species, multiple-use land management, etc...) (Rakestraw, 2002). While it likely is impossible to accommodate all the competing interests placing demands upon public land all the time, past controversies and scandals have caused many people to become increasingly skeptical of the Forest Service (Durbin, 1999). In order to overcome this skepticism, the Forest Service needs to deal with the critical issues it faces by being straight-forward and objective.

Conservation education and interpretation efforts, as well as all other management decisions need to incorporate sound science and reflect those values held by the public.

Incorporate accepted conservation education and interpretation techniques. In the past decades, many studies have been conducted in both environmental education and interpretation. These studies have indicated that there are specific techniques that are most effective for each discipline. A few of the accepted techniques for non-formal

environmental education are listed in Appendix B. Accepted techniques for effective interpretation discussed on page 30 of the Guidebook. By incorporating these techniques into education and interpretation efforts, the intended message and program goals will more effectively be conveyed to the audience.

Continue involvement in special events. The Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts have built a positive reputation with communities and schools of Prince of Wales Island through their involvement and hosting of special events. These family and school-based events (such as Kid's Fishing Day, School Science Fair, and The Deer Celebration) provide an informal environment for personal interaction with the public in which both parties benefit. Expanding and refining these events will continue to build a positive reputation with the local public.

Continue and improve current quality education and interpretation programs. There is a diverse array of education and interpretation efforts already taking place on both Districts (see Chapter 4 for a list). Many of these have had a significant impact on the community members, students, or visitors of Prince of Wales Island. The purpose of this research and the *Guidebook* is to improve and guide current efforts while investigating future opportunities. The recommendations made in this section can help to continue, improve and expand upon the education and interpretation programs that are currently in place on Prince of Wales Island.

Improve communication with public and schools. Both community members and school teachers, responded, "More communication!" when asked what they would like to see in the future from the Forest Service conservation education and interpretation program. Although all communication is not conservation education, or interpretation -

all education and interpretation are forms of communication. Increasing the number of conservation education and interpretation programs may help to lessen this plea for, “More communication!”

Discuss conservation issues more in school programs. Based on survey responses, several teachers want more discussion of conservation issues in Forest Service school programs. Learning about streams, trees, fish, wildlife, and other natural components, gives students an excellent knowledge-base regarding the resources on the Island. However, in order to give students the skills they need to make informed decisions about their public lands, presentations need to go beyond just knowledge and awareness of resources to addressing what conservation is and the issues that surround it. This does NOT mean only presenting ‘the Forest Service viewpoint’. High-quality conservation education gives students the tools and skills needed to make their own decisions – it does not try to push an agenda.

Develop additional interpretive opportunities. Following the need for improved communication by the Forest Service, community members wanted to see more recreational opportunities offered on Prince of Wales Island. Within the list of desired recreational opportunities, many involved interpretation. Overall, people were thrilled about the Beaver Falls interpretive trail and wanted to see more opportunities like that around the Island. Developing a few additional site-specific interpretive trails around the Island would offer community members and visitors alike, an opportunity to learn about the Forest that surrounds them. If appropriate sites exist, it may be beneficial to develop these interpretive efforts near communities for easier access.

Although this Guidebook gives guiding direction and suggestions for developing interpretation programs and efforts on the Island, it may be beneficial to engage in developing an interpretation specific plan that outlines specific interpretive sites, themes and messages, and priorities.

Develop internal education programs. Although a majority of the employees think education and interpretation are important to what they do, many don't have the skills or resources currently available to them to effectively carry out conservation education and/or interpretation. Developing internal education programs regarding techniques in environmental education and/or interpretation will be essential in building support for the program and a well-equipped staff to help effectively implement conservation education and interpretation efforts. The following are recommendations for internal education programming:

- Develop internal education workshops/trainings that would be valuable in an employee's job outside of traditional conservation education and/or interpretation programs. For example: "How to develop an effective oral public presentation", "How to write for the public", "Developing reader-friendly posters, brochures and newsletters", and many others!
- Gain support from the District Ranger so that employees from all disciplines are encouraged to attend these programs (if it is a priority in the Rangers eyes – the employees will deem it a priority too!)
- Include ways that employees can use the skills they have gained in the workshops when working with the public through education and interpretation programs or other public outreach efforts.

- Create a conservation education and interpretation library that all employees can use to look for ideas, lesson plans, techniques, etc...

The conservation education and interpretation opportunities list is only a starting point. The list of conservation education and interpretation opportunities that is discussed in Chapter Four, Objectives #4 and #5, is only a starting point. There are many other activities that can be done to both meet audience needs and Prince of Wales Island USFS goals. However, when looking at this list, it may be important to implement the 'Directive' opportunities first since they will often affect the quality of other conservation education and interpretation efforts.

Successful Outcomes

The development of this research project was based on the forward-thinking insight from Susan Howell, Thorne Bay Ranger District Fish, Wildlife and Watershed Staff Officer, and Sandra Frost, Partnership and Rural Community Assistant Coordinator for the Tongass National Forest. Because of these two women, dedication from several Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District employees, and the efforts made by this research project there are already several successful outcomes.

1. A large gap in the Tongass National Forest's conservation education and interpretation program was identified and the first steps were taken to fill that gap. Educators and interpreters now have two quality documents that are based in current research to guide their programs. The *Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Education Strategy* gives broad direction, while the *Guidebook* helps to specify those broad directions to developing, implementing, and evaluating District-level programming.

2. This research has already begun to breach long-lasting animosity between the local public and the Forest Service. By the project's initiative in finding out what the audience seeks from the Forest Service conservation education and interpretation program, barriers have started to crumble. Community members have begun to become involved in public land management where there was little action before. Now it is up to the Forest Service employees on Prince of Wales Island to take the results of this research and develop a strong program that addresses some of the needs stated in the focus group interviews and questionnaires. Because the public has been involved from the beginning, they will have a more vested positive interest in future actions.

3. Many Forest Service employees who have traditionally had no interest or desire to be involved in conservation education and interpretation efforts have taken a notice in what is happening. This new interest in the conservation education and interpretation program from a variety of disciplines will only strengthen it and ensure its sustainability over time. Employees from all disciplines are beginning to realize how important conservation education and interpretation are to their professions.

4. Another aspect of this project that will contribute to the conservation education and interpretation program's success is that recommendations are based on a diverse combination of information including, secondary source reviews, personal interviews, questionnaire and focus group data, and knowledge of best practices in conservation education and interpretation. Drawing from all of these sources helps to create a program that is grounded in current and pertinent data, contributing to the program's effectiveness, justifiability, usefulness, and individual and agency value.

5. Efforts throughout this research study have focused on creating a user-friendly document that won't sit on a shelf and get dusty. Initially it appears that these efforts have paid off as several programs have been developed and implemented that specifically relate to stated audience needs unveiled in this project, as well as address agency direction. Hopefully future conservation education and interpretation efforts on Prince of Wales Island will be based on this document.

Limitations

There are also numerous limitations in this research that are important to acknowledge so the results and recommendations can be used effectively. Below each bulleted limitation a recommendation is listed in an attempt to lessen the effects of the limitation.

- The audience needs assessment results cannot be generalized. Although attempts were made to recruit a diversity of view points and backgrounds, the data from focus groups, interviews and questionnaires only represents the opinions and thoughts of the participants.

Recommendation: Future needs assessments should be done on a regular basis for evaluation purposes and the sample size should be expanded.

Specific groups to focus on include:

- Visitors to Prince of Wales Island (this is a growing audience)
- Off the road-system communities
- Tourist industries (lodges, guiding services, bed and breakfasts, etc...)
- The school districts within the Craig Ranger District.

- Additional teachers from the Southeast Island School District
- Revisit participant groups involved in this project.
- Although this research project was designed and effort was made to include both the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts, there was weak input on many aspects of the research from the Craig side. Therefore, the results may only partially portray the history, current status, audience needs and opportunities, of the Craig Ranger District.

Recommendation: CRD should acknowledge that the results portrayed in this research project may not accurately convey the current condition or best plan of action. Supplemental audience needs assessments should be conducted.

- Successful use of the Guidebook is strongly dependent on the establishment of a full-time CE&I position on POW.

Recommendation: Hire a full time CE&I staff for POW. Without a full-time staff member devoted to the program, the recommendations made in this guidebook will be unable to be implemented to their full potential.

- This project focuses its audience needs assessments on the local public. However, the Forest Service serves the national and local publics at equal levels. Therefore, the research project is lacking assessment of needs of the national public.

Recommendation: When implementing this research it is crucial to acknowledge that the national public may have a very different view than the local public, and all needs should be taken into account equally.

- The implications of this project are somewhat dependent on a change in Agency culture. A majority of the history of land management on the Tongass has been

resource extraction-based. Many of those actions have caused much controversy on Prince of Wales Island and the Alaska Region. There must be a shift in core culture from all levels of the Agency to fully engage in effective, objective conservation education and interpretation efforts.

Recommendation: Since the Forest Service serves the nation, the culture and actions of the Forest Service should reflect the majority views of the national public.

Project Implications

Despite its limitations, this research project has the potential to have impact beyond just Prince of Wales Island. There are regional and national implications as well.

The Guidebook will be distributed to the seven other Ranger Districts on the Tongass National Forest. Should they choose to implement the Guidebook, Part II will guide them through the methodology used in this research. This will establish a solid base upon which to build a conservation education and interpretation program specific to that Ranger District but consistent with other District programs throughout the Tongass.

The Alaska Region, including both the Tongass and Chugach National Forests, has often been a region that has sparked national change in conservation education and interpretation. With the acceptance of the *Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Education Strategy* in August of 2004, a precedent was set in considering conservation education and interpretation distinct parts within the same program. The *Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education and Interpretation Guidebook* will be part of the

precedent by providing on-the-ground direction in this new strategy to approaching the two disciplines.

Nationally, *The Guidebook* could have impact by being a resource to help educators and interpreters guide education and interpretation program development in rural areas. *The Guidebook* can be used both inside and outside of the Forest Service.

Implementation Action Plan

The following is a suggested action plan for carrying implementing the results of this research project.

Figure 13: Project Action Plan

Action	Person Responsible	Date	Details
1. Review and Comment period for the Guidebook, graduate committee.	Researcher: Nelli Atkinson	April 25 – May 2, 2005	Distribute Guidebook to graduate committee.
2. Revise Guidebook, incorporate comments.	Researcher: Nelli Atkinson	May 3 – 21 st , 2005	
3. Presentation: Overview of Project	Researcher: Nelli Atkinson	June 20 th , 2005	A general presentation will be given to all TB& CRD staff. A more detailed presentation will be given to the CE&I team. Explain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of project • Results • Recommendations • Future...
4. Comment and Review period: CE&I Team (and other key individuals).	Distribute: Nelli Atkinson Review: CE&I Team	June 20- July 15, 2005	
5. Incorporate	Researcher: Nelli	July/August	

comments, create final document.	Atkinson	2005	
6. Publish Guidebook, get administration support.	Forest Service contracted publisher (?)	August/Sept 2005	Copies for each Ranger District. Letter of support from Forest Supervisor.
7. Distribute copies of Guidebook to all Ranger Districts on the Tongass.	Forest Supervisor? Kristi Kantola? Dennis Neil?	Sept 2005	
8. Hold Guidebook 'orientation workshops' for district representatives and/or at each district.	Researcher: Nelli Atkinson	Fall/Winter 2005/06	
9. Prince of Wales Island CE&I Team meeting to discuss Guidebook Contents.	Prince of Wales Island CE&I Team members	Fall 2005	Develop action plans Identify Priorities
10. Begin and continue to implement action plans developed at Sept 2005 Meeting	Prince of Wales Island FS staff indicated on action plans.	Winter 2005/06	
11. Hold internal education workshops for TB&CRD and/or Tongass employees regarding various topics in public relations/education/interpretation.	Outside contracted educator/interpreter??	Continually	
12. Revisit recommendations and use the Guidebook a working document that adapts to current conditions while providing consistency.	CE&I Team Employees involved with CE&I. Other Tongass Ranger Districts	Continually	

As an educator and interpreter, I believe that connecting people of all ages to the land, through hands-on, real-life experiences, is imperative to building an ecologically

literate citizenry. Quality education and interpretation programs help citizens develop the skills and motivation necessary to take action on issues they find important by cultivating awareness and knowledge of the world we live in and by helping to instill positive values through experiences in the natural environment. Through this research project, I hope to have given the Forest Service on Prince of Wales Island a tool that will help them develop, implement and evaluate a quality education and interpretation program that will increase national and local public's desire to take positive action on public land management decisions.

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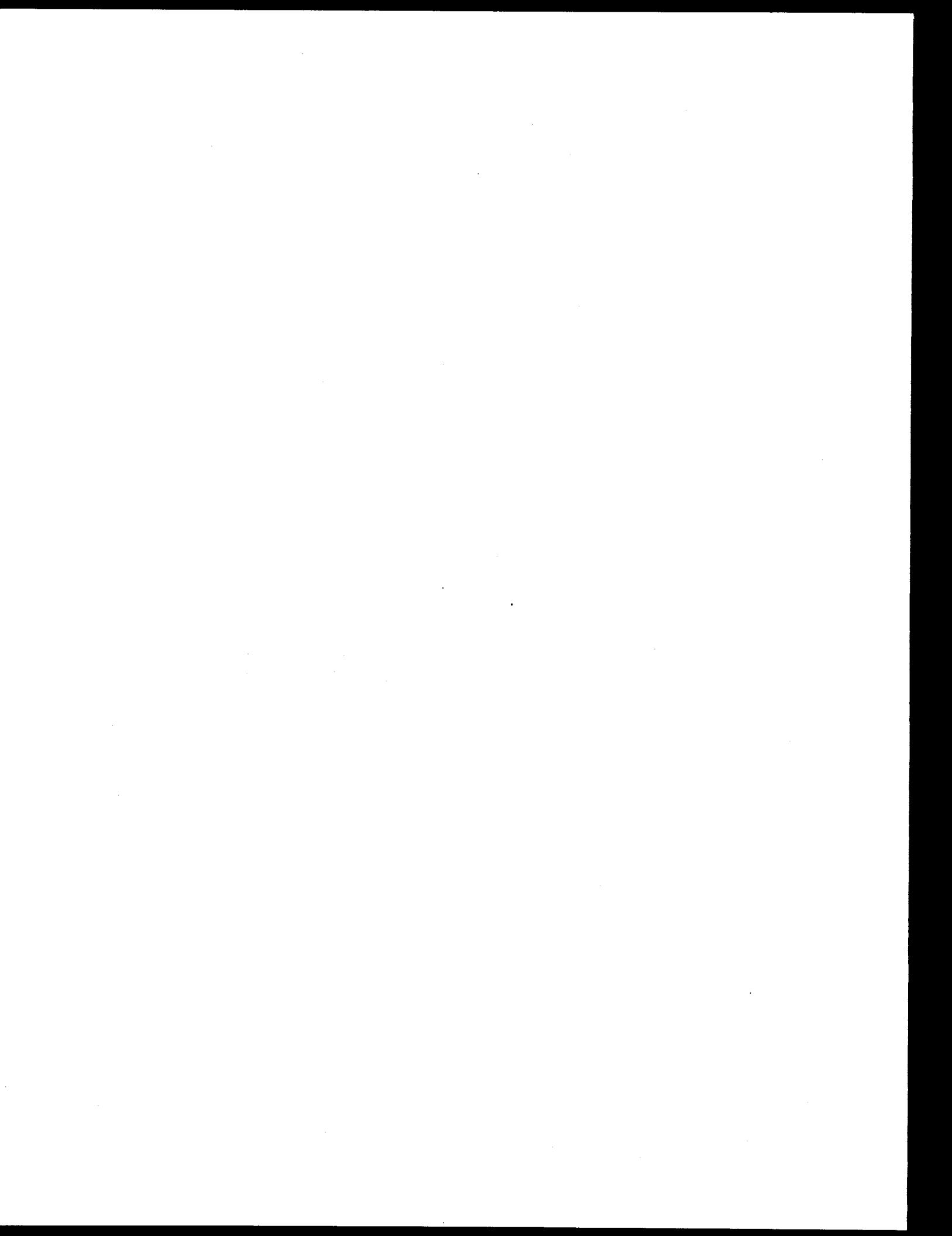
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Appendices



Appendix A – Information Needs Checklist (Interpretive Planning, by Lisa Brochu)

Management

- “Memorandum of Understanding” with other agencies (federal state, county, local, non-profit groups, etc.) that may affect operations.
- Maintenance system, land management plan, signage plan
- Contracts and concessionaires
- Existing staff levels
- Planned staff additions/deletions
- Annual reports(s)
- Budget for last five years
- Budget sources (both capital and operating)
- History of capital improvements financing and projects
- Other sources of funding
- Easements and other property restrictions
- History of your organization (when founded, significant growth/changes, etc.)
- Objectives (interpretive, program, exhibit, building, lands, management)
- Guidelines or constraints

Markets

- Demographic profiles for nearest cities and surrounding counties
- Cooperating association member information package, number and profile of members
- Promotional materials
- Who else provides leisure/educational services in what types of complementary and competitive facilities within 100-mile radius
- Statistics on use of programs and services (profile of users: schools, families, etc.)
- History with accessible programs (what types, attendance, etc.)
- Special events (what, when, attendance)

Message

- Base maps for sites (including topo, surveys, soils/geology, toxic waste sites for county, access)
- Environmental-assessment information (climate, air quality, water quality, etc.)
- Vegetation and wildlife checklists, indicate threatened and endangered species
- Cultural-history information (previous owners of site, archeological surveys, etc.)

Mechanics

- Existing facilities/functions, square footage
- Currently planned facility additions/deletions and square footages required for various functions

Media

- Delivery system (how are current programs and services delivered to public)
- List of interpretive resources (slide files, mounts, equipment, etc.)



Summary of
Nonformal Environmental Education Programs:
Guidelines for Excellence

Key Characteristic #1 – Needs Assessment.

Nonformal environmental education programs are designed to address identified environmental, educational, and community needs and to produce responsive, responsible benefits that address those identified needs.

- 1.1 Environmental issue or condition;
- 1.2 Inventory of existing programs and materials; and
- 1.3 Audience needs.

Key Characteristic #2 – Organizational Needs and Capacities.

Nonformal environmental education programs support and complement their parent organization's mission, purpose, and goals.

- 2.1 Consistent with organizational priorities;
- 2.2 Organization's need for the program identified; and
- 2.3 Organization's existing resources inventoried.

Key Characteristic #3 – Program Scope and Structure.

Nonformal environmental education programs should be designed with well-articulated goals and objectives that state how the program will contribute to the development of environmental literacy.

- 3.1 Goals and objectives for the program;
- 3.2 Fit with goals and objectives of environmental education;
- 3.3 Program format and delivery; and
- 3.4 Partnerships and collaboration.

Key Characteristic #4 – Program Delivery Resources.

Nonformal environmental education programs require careful planning to ensure that well-trained staff, facilities, and support materials are available to accomplish program goals and objectives.

- 4.1 Assessment of resource needs;
- 4.2 Quality instructional staff;
- 4.3 Facilities management;
- 4.4 Provision of support materials; and
- 4.5 Emergency planning.

Key Characteristic #5 – Program Quality and Appropriateness.

Nonformal environmental education programs are built on a foundation of quality instructional materials and thorough planning.

- 5.1 Quality instructional materials and techniques;
- 5.2 Field testing;
- 5.3 Promotion, marketing, and dissemination; and
- 5.4 Sustainability.

Key Characteristic #6 – Evaluation.

Nonformal environmental education programs define and measure results in order to improve current programs, ensure accountability, and maximize the effects of future efforts.

- 6.1 Determination of evaluation strategies;
- 6.2 Effective evaluation techniques and criteria; and
- 6.3 Use of evaluation results.





Appendix D - *Forest Service Employee Questionnaire*

Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District employee Questionnaire

Technique: Paper questionnaire

Sampling Population: employees of the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District employees

Purpose: To gather a data base from this audience, so the planning team will have an accurate depiction of employee needs and expectations for Conservation Education and Interpretation (CE & I) on the island, to take into consideration when developing the CE & I plan for the Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger Districts.

Objective:

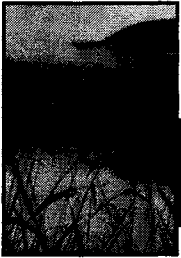
- To determine employee CE & I priorities and individual interest.
- To gather recommendations on plan components that would better meet employee needs in order to implement the CE & I program.
- To gather recommendations

Methods:

- Develop questions and cover letters
 - Approve by graduate committee
- Submit to IRB for approval
 - Intro letter to District Rangers
 - Distribute to employees (as soon as approval is gained)
 - Return by May 15th to TBRD receptionist.

Analysis:

- Type up all comments
- Categorize
- Summarize (how??)
 - Use to "educate" planning committee



Prince of Wales Island
Education and Interpretation Planning Project

USDA – Forest Service
Thorne Bay & Craig Ranger Districts

Project Coordinator
Nelli Atkinson
907-828-3304
natkinson@fs.fed.us

Hello fellow POW Forest Service employees!

As many of you know, I am currently working on my research project of developing an education and interpretive plan for the Prince of Wales Island Ranger Districts that will strive to connect our educational and interpretive goals, the needs of our audiences, and our commitment to caring for the land. Since you are a valuable part of this research, we are asking for your help in determining how the Forest Service can better meet your interests and needs as both an employee and community member. The information gained from the subsequent questions will be used to better meet employee needs, public needs, prioritize education and interpretation goals and will be presented in my thesis and project presentations this summer and school year.

The following pages contain six questions that we hope you will take time out of your busy day to complete. It will only take about 20-25 minutes and your comments, suggestions and ideas are essential to helping us serve you better.

The following information will help you when answering the questions on pages two and three.

Interpretation is “a communication process that forges intellectual and emotional connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings of the resource. This can be in the form of oral communication, trails, signs, brochures, programs, etc... Interpretation is aimed at the recreating public, usually it takes place in a leisurely atmosphere with a non-captive audience.

Conservation Education is “...a learning process concerned with the interrelationships among components of the natural and human-made world producing growth in the individual and leading to responsible land stewardship.” Conservation education is primarily aimed at more formal groups such as school children, adult workshops and other captive audience situations.

Please return the questionnaire to the front desk of either the Thorne Bay or Craig District Office in the envelope provided by June 4th. I will pick them up from there. If you have any questions, comments or concerns about this survey I would happy to listen and help out! Please contact Nelli Atkinson at the Thorne Bay Ranger District Office at 828-3304 or by email natkinson@fs.fed.us. There are no risks involved with this study other than dedication of your time, and the plan that results from this information will hopefully help you to better meet your professional needs, however, if you want to withdraw from the study at any time, you may do so without penalty.

If you have any complaints about your treatment as participant in this study, please call or write:

Dr. Sandra Holmes, Chair
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Department of Psychology
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
Stevens Point, WI 54481
(715) 346-3952

**Although Dr. Holmes will ask your name, all complaints are kept in confidence.*

The information collected in this survey will be used to develop a list of what interpretive and educational efforts will best serve the audiences of the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts, including the employees. If you would like to see the list of educational and interpretive efforts upon its completion please contact me via email and the results will be emailed to you during the Fall of 2004.

Thank you so much for your time and interest in this project! It is very much appreciated!

Sincerely,

Nelli Atkinson

Public Affairs Specialist – Education and Interpretation Projects
US-Forest Service Thorne Bay Ranger District
Graduate Student – University of Wisconsin Stevens Point

****By completing and submitting this survey you will be consenting to participate in this research study****

Conservation Education and Interpretation Planning Strategy

Thorne Bay & Craig Ranger District Employee Questionnaire

- 1. How important do you think education and interpretation is in achieving the Forest Service's mission?**

The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Very Important Important Neutral Not very important Shouldn't be considered

- 1b. Why do you feel this way?**

- 2. List, in order of priority, what you think would be the most important components of an education and interpretation program on the District.**

- 3. If the District would implement your above priorities what additional skills or resources would you want (trainings, manuals, workshops, etc...) to feel comfortable in executing the priorities?**

- 4. If you are interested in being a part of the District education interpretation program how would you like to take part?**

5. **Based on your needs and interests, what are your ideas on how the Forest Service can convey the following messages through *interpretive* services (ie: trails, brochures, signs, public programs, etc...)? *Please be as specific as possible***

Discover...Countless opportunities for exploration and enjoyment exist amongst the rugged shores, deep forests and sparkling streams of Prince of Wales Island.

Diverse...The land has created lifestyles and cultures that are as diverse as the land that is depended upon for support.

Distinct...Rare ecosystems and world'-class resources thrive in this unique island environment.

Dedicated...The Forest Service (the TB and C Ranger Districts) is dedicated to caring for the land while serving the people of Prince of Wales Island.

6. Based on your needs and interests, what are your ideas on how the Forest Service can convey the following messages through *educational* programs (ie: school programs, community workshops, educational pamphlets, etc...)?

Discover...Countless opportunities for exploration and enjoyment exist amongst the rugged shores, deep forests and sparkling streams of Prince of Wales Island.

Diverse...The land has created lifestyles and cultures that are as diverse as the land that is depended upon for support.

Distinct...Rare ecosystems and world'-class resources thrive in this unique island environment.

Dedicated...The Thorne Bay (or Craig) Ranger District is dedicated to caring for the land while serving the people of Prince of Wales Island.



A Sneak Preview...

Prince of Wales Island

Conservation Education & Interpretation Strategy

Kick-Off

CE & I Steering
Committee
Meeting!

July 13th, 2004



Tongass National Forest

Thorne Bay & Craig Ranger Districts





Tuesday July 13th, 2004

9 am - noon

9:00 - 10:00 Welcome & Thank You!

Project Purpose & Summary

Who are our Audiences?

What are they looking for?

10:00 - 10:10 Break

10:10 - 11:30 Brainstorming Session

Purpose of Session

What is Education & Interpretation?

Where does POW fit in? (Sandy Frost)

Group Discussion

Key Question:

What should the island-wide Conservation

Education & Interpretation mission include?

11:30 - 12:00 Future Role of the CE&I Steering Committee

Purpose

Roles

Meeting times

***Thank you for your time & dedication!
This effort couldn't happen without you!***



Project Summary

Project Purpose

The purpose of this Conservation Education and Interpretation Strategy will be to help guide development, implementation and evaluation of current and future education and interpretation programs Thorne Bay & Craig Ranger Districts. The document will also act as a model for other Tongass Ranger Districts to use when developing programs of their own.

Project Summary

The following paragraphs give a brief summary of what this project has entailed so far and where it is going in the near future.

Summarize History & Current Status

In the past few months documents have been reviewed, observations have been made, employees have been surveyed and interviews have taken place in regards to education and interpretation programs that have happened and are currently happening on Prince of Wales Island. This information has provided a baseline to work from, and gives an understanding of the impacts past efforts have on current and future endeavors.



Determine Audience Needs

Last year it was determined that the four main audiences of the TBRD were: the school district, island residents, island visitors, and FS employees. One of the key components in developing an education and interpretation program is to find out what the audience's expectations and educational needs are and then creating programs that help to meet those needs. In June, information was gathered from Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District employees, the teachers of the Southeast Island School District, and community groups through questionnaires and focus group interviews. This resulted in many interesting findings about employee and community needs—some of which are summarized in pages to come!

Establish a Planning Team

Also critical to program sustainability is developing an island-based steering team that will be responsible for helping to guide plan development this summer and to champion its implementation in the future. Members of this team would ideally be from a variety of backgrounds and excited about the project's progression. Having employee involvement throughout the process will be critical to the sustainability of the program—this is a crucial part!

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Project Summary



Establish Interpretation and Conservation Education Mission & Goals

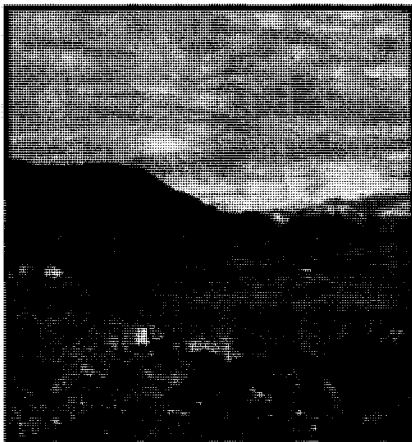
One of the most important components of building a program is to establish a program mission and set of goals. In the Forest Service, it is also important that the program mission & goals fit within the larger agency management framework. The Tongass National Forest's Vision for conservation education and interpretation is to:

Create a future where the Tongass NF is nationally recognized in presenting effective, engaging interpretation and education services that meet the need and expectations of our public and further our land stewardship mission.

Using this Forest Vision, the Tongass Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy, the themes all of you came up with last summer (Discover, Diverse, Distinct, & Dedicated), and questionnaire responses, an Island specific mission statement will be developed and specific goals will be established by the Steering Committee.

Interpretation & Conservation Education Program Development, Implementation & Evaluation

A guide to developing, implementing and evaluating conservation education & interpretation will be created. The development portion will focus on processes used to develop programs. A list of specific projects that could be implemented will be devised, based on audience needs. An inventory of resources & examples will accompany this list and some direction for implementing these projects. Evaluation processes will be described in the guide and based on Tongass-wide evaluation techniques.



The Guide

Towards the end of the summer and this fall, a usable and comprehensive booklet will be created that will provide direction for the TBRD and CRD to develop, implement, and evaluate education and interpretation programs that meet the mission and goals of the agency, take the audience interests into account, and make connections between people and the resources of the forest. This plan will be specific to POW but will also have broad guidelines so that other rural Ranger Districts can use the plan to develop interpretation and conservation education programs of their own.

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Part Two – Prince of Wales Island's CE & I Strategy

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Appendices



Our Audience

From June 1st through July 6th, TBRD & CRD employees, six different community groups, and the Southeast Island School District teachers gave their feedback through paper questionnaires or focus group interviews, in regards to education and interpretation on POW Island.

All of the comments gathered were categorized into more manageable 'themes'. The following themes were identified needs conveyed by the groups.

Southeast Island School District

The past year marked the kick-off of the EcoVan program with the Southeast Island School District. Many Forest Service employees participated in this unique program in a variety of ways, from developing curriculum to teaching lessons. The program is continuing this coming school year, after changes are made to improve the program. When interviewed about strengths/weaknesses of the FS conservation education program, the teachers gave many comments and suggestions for improvements to the EcoVan as well as additional needs that the FS could fill. The following themes were identified:



Five Themes

Teach more about *conservation*, not just about forest resources. (5)

A wider variety of educational programs/topics (2)

Improve Communication (3)

...about EcoVan activities (1)

...about larger FS functions (2)

Lack of Continuity and Expertise in programs/topics (2)

Lack of contact with communities off the road system (1)

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Our Audience



Forest Service Employees

One of our largest audiences, and often the most overlooked, is our internal audience; the people that make daily connections with the Forest and the public that the Forest Service serves. Forest Service employees from all disciplines were surveyed over the course of the past month, here are a few of the results from the questions.



- **29** out of 31 responses stated that education & interpretation were **very important or important** to achieving the Forest Service mission.

When asked why, a few responses were:

- Interpretation & education provides a direct connection between the general public and the FS. The National Forests belong to everyone and it is important for people to have an understanding of what we do.
- Within the District it could help employees better understand the important rolls of all the divisions.
- Needed for multiple-use management.
- Interpretation and education are the fundamental building blocks for gaining public support for Forest Service projects and programs. Education helps to reach understanding and builds a sense of stewardship for the land and resources.
- Educating the public determines what we can & can't do.
- There are many myths and misconceptions about what the Forest Service does.

A few stated needs:

- Signs, trails, brochures etc... that explains what the FS is doing and why.
- An open-minded interpreter/educator that will help resource groups 'tell the story'
- Newspaper articles
- District-wide involvement in education & interpretation.
- Workshops/manuals on public outreach/programs etc..
- And many more!!

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Our Audience

Community Members

Six focus group interviews were held at various community group meetings around the Island. Due to time and budget constraints, as well as community member commitment not every community was visited. However, citizens from the communities of Naukati, Craig (2), Klawock, Thorne Bay and Coffman Cove participated. Each meeting gave valuable insight into community views on Forest Service/community interaction. The following list is a summary of nine themes that reoccurred in nearly every community that was visited.



Nine Themes

Improve communication between Forest Service and communities (16, 36, 47)

Improve communication techniques (20)

Topics of Interest (11)

More recreation opportunities (including interpretive trails/signs) (24)

Additional events, programs & other education/interpretation opportunities (9)

Play a more active role in the community (8)

Increased cultural awareness (8)

More school involvement (7)

Develop an Interpretive/Education Center (6)

Develop more local partnerships (3)

Institutional (agency) barriers (5)

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Our Audience

Visitors

Visitors to Prince of Wales Island are an ever increasing audience of the Forest Service. With twice daily ferry service during the summer, along with numerous floatplane companies, there is fairly easy access to the Island. The ease of access will increase with the new ferry terminal in Coffman Cove, set for opening in 2006. In the past two years, travel on the InterIsland ferry from Ketchikan to Hollis has increase by 3,000 to 4,000 passengers per year. There is a 3,000 passenger increase predicted for 2005.

There is not much currently known about visitor characteristics on POW Island. It is believed that many people that come to the Island are here for the abundant hunting and fishing opportunities, taking advantage of the multitude of guiding services and resorts that are scattered about the Island. Other characteristics and information is unsure and only hypothesized.



By looking at State and Region-wide statistics we may be able to get a general idea of what visitors are doing on the Tongass.

- Visitor arrivals have been steadily increasing since 1993.
- Most people visit for vacation or pleasure, the second reason is visiting friends & relatives.
- Commercial recreation businesses in Southeast Alaska report they engage in the following activities with their customers most frequently:

Saltwater fishing	63%
Nature viewing/sight seeing	49%
Wildlife viewing	44%
Photography	35%
Motorized boating	25%
Freshwater Fishing	21%
Bird watching	21%

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Mission & Goals

A successful education and interpretation program requires interdisciplinary support and cooperation. There are many roles to fill, with an incredible amount of opportunity and flexibility for individuals create roles that spark and hold their interest. The bottom-line is that reaching out to the local and national public, and the children whose hands will hold the future of our public lands someday, will be successful only through your dedication & support. Thank you for taking part in this tremendous opportunity to make a difference!

In order to have and gain support for a program, it is essential to be heading in a solid direction. Establishing a mission, goals and objectives, for a program early, are crucial in creating a vision for a program.

Group Brainstorming Session

Purpose: To brainstorm & prioritize the components of the POW conservation education & interpretation mission & goals.

Background

What is Conservation Education & Interpretation:

Conservation (environmental) Education:

“...a learning process that increases people’s knowledge and awareness about the environment and associated challenges, develops the necessary skills and expertise to address the challenges, and foster attitudes, motivations and commitments to make informed decisions and take responsible action (UNESCO, Tbilisi Declaration, 1978).”

Characteristics:

- Captive audience
- More structured, formal setting
- School groups
- Employee workshops
- Curriculum Development
- Often sequential





Mission & Goals

Interpretation

“A communication process that forges intellectual and emotional connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings in the resource (National Association for Interpretation).”

Characteristics:

- Non - Captive audience
- Flexible/ not as structured of setting
- Visitors
- Evening programs
- Brochures/trails/signs etc...
- Usually a one time experience

Where does POW fit into the larger Tongass picture?

Recently, an intensive and dedicated effort has been taken at the Forest level to establish a direction for education and interpretation on the Tongass. Employees from all over the Forest have met several time to discuss the future of education and interpretation, these discussions in addition to many more hours of hard work resulted in the ***Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Education Strategy***. The document strives to focus Tongass conservation education and interpretation efforts, maximize resources and make connections with the public. The vision & goals of the document are as follows, these are aligned with national Forest Service direction.

Vision: *Create a future where the Tongass NF is nationally recognized in presenting effective, engaging interpretation and education services that meet the need and expectations of our public and further our land stewardship mission.*

Goal 1: Promote a coordinated, sustainable I & E program at all levels of the Forest.

Goal 2: Provide products and services that are high-quality, reflect Forest priorities and key messages, and meet the needs and expectations of our customers.

Goal 3: Increase and enhance interpretive services and conservation education partnerships on the Tongass National Forest.

Goal 4: Develop and retain a professional Interpretive Services and Conservation Education Staff on the Tongass NF.



Mission & Goals

Key Question:

What should the island-wide Conservation Education & Interpretation mission include?

A mission statement: should...

- reflect the purpose of the program & organization.
- be clearly stated, to the point, and easy to remember.

Adapted Nominal Group Technique

Step 1: Please take 10 minutes to brainstorm and write down your ideas that answer the question above.

Mission & Goals



Step 2: Idea Sharing Round Robin

Step 3: Idea Clarification (as needed)

Step 4: Individually pick three ideas you think *best* answers the key question and write a statement of support for each.

Number _____

Number _____

Number _____

Step 5: Individually pick two of the circled ideas that you think *doesn't* answer the key question well, and write a statement of why you think that way for each.

Number _____

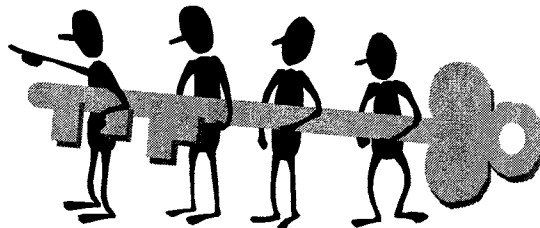
Number _____

Step 6: *As a group* decide whether any of the circled ideas should be combined.



Mission & Goals

- Step 7: The circled answers will be rewritten and posted in the conference room. All employees will be given 20 votes (dots). No more than 4 votes can be used per idea.
- Step 8: When results are tallied, the ideas that received the most points will be drafted into a mission statement & a set of goals by _____.
- Step 9: The mission statement and goals will be sent out to all employees and approved through the “negative approval process” (a response is necessary ONLY if there is a problem).
- Step 10: Yippee!!!!!! Once approved the mission & goals will guide Forest Service interpretation & education on Prince of Wales Island.



Steering Committee



What is the future role of the CE&I Steering Committee?

What is your purpose?

What are the Roles of the Committee?

As a group

Individuals

Will you recruit others to be part of the committee (community members? School staff?)

Who?



Steering Committee

When/How often will you meet?

Next Meeting: August _____, 2004

After that? _____

Will you select a chairperson?

Who (list of ideas):

Other positions?

Position

Person(s)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Goals for next meeting:

Nelli: Have a rough, preliminary draft for Steering Committee to review.



Thank You!

I sincerely appreciate and am amazed by the effort, dedication and energy everyone has shown in their involvement in conservation education & interpretation thus far. Amazing things are being done on this Island and it is because of you! With your continued dedication & support an incredible and innovative program will soon be underway on Prince of Wales Island. A program like this can ensure that the unique qualities that make POW & the Tongass so special will be here for future generations that will come.

Thank You!



Community Focus Group

Session Format

1. Welcome and Thank You!

2. Introduction

Myself & Emma

Project (Overview, How this will help the community, etc...)

Overview of the session

State Purpose:

To gather recommendations on how the Forest Service on POW island can better meet community needs through education and interpretation.

3. Ground Rules

- Everyone will be asked to participate, but participation is not mandatory.
- However, any and all input is valuable to us!
- Please don't interrupt.

4. Handout questions & cover letter (give people time to jot down ideas and think about them)

5. Ask questions.

Explore answers with probing questions

6. Thank you!

If you would like to see the results of these sessions please call the Forest Service and ask for Nelli (828-3304) or leave your name and contact info with the receptionist.

Appendix F (continued) – Focus Group Interview Data record sheet

Date:

of Participants:

Location:

Group Name:

The following questions will be asked during the Focus Group Session:

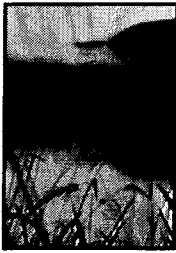
1. What do you feel are strengths of current Forest Service and community interaction?

2. What do you feel are weaknesses of current Forest Service and community interaction?

3. What future interaction would you like to see between communities and the Forest Service?

4. If the Forest Service was to offer education and/or interpretation programs, what would be important components? (ie: topics, location, time, advertising, type of program....)

Overall Observations:



Prince of Wales Island
Education and Interpretation Planning Project

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point
USDA – Forest Service
Thorne Bay & Craig Ranger Districts

Project Coordinator
Nelli Atkinson
907-828-3304
natkinson@fs.fed.us

Dear Prince of Wales Island resident,

The Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts are currently in the process of developing an education and interpretive plan that is striving to better meet the needs of its audiences through my graduate student research project. Since you are a valuable member to this audience, we are asking for your help in determining how the Forest Service can make a concerted effort to better meet your interests and needs. You are invited to take part in a community focus group session. Information gained from this session will be used to develop education and interpretive programs that will hopefully serve you better. The focus group discussion will be held July 1st, 2004 at 7pm at the Thorne Bay City Hall.

The focus group session will last no longer than 45 minutes and the following pages contain the questions that you will be asked. Your comments, suggestions and ideas during the session are essential to helping the Forest Service serve you better. To show our appreciation for your help, I will provide snacks and drinks that night. The session will be recorded on audiotape, the contents of the tape will be anonymously transcribed and then the tapes will be erased to ensure confidentiality.

The following information may help you when answering the questions.

Conservation Education is "...a learning process concerned with the interrelationships among components of the natural and human-made world producing growth in the individual and leading to responsible land stewardship."

Interpretation is "a communication process that forges intellectual and emotional connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings of the resource." This can be in the form of oral communication, trails, signs, brochures, programs, etc... Interpretation is aimed at the recreating public; it is in a leisurely atmosphere with a non-captive audience.

If you are unable to make the focus group session, or do not wish to take part, please contact Nelli Atkinson at 907-828-3304 or by email at natkinson@fs.fed.us. Also, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, comments or concerns about this survey, I would be happy to listen and help out! There are no risks involved with this study other than dedication of your time and the costs of getting to the focus group site. The plan that results from this information will hopefully help to better meet your individual and community needs; however, if you want to withdraw from the study at any time, you may do so without penalty.

If you have any complaints about your treatment as participant in this study, please call or write:

Dr. Sandra Holmes, Chair
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Department of Psychology
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
Stevens Point, WI 54481
(715) 346-3952

*Although Dr. Holmes will ask your name, all complaints are kept in confidence.

The information collected during the focus group session will be used to develop a list of what interpretive and educational efforts will best serve the community members of the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts, the information will also be summarized and presented as part of my research project. If you would like to see any of the results upon their completion please contact me by email or phone, and leave your name and contact information.

Thank you so much for your time and interest in this project! Your help is very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Nelli Atkinson

Graduate Student – University of Wisconsin Stevens Point
Public Affairs Specialist – Education and Interpretation Projects
US-Forest Service Thorne Bay Ranger District

****By participating in this focus group you will be consenting to participate in this research study****

Community Focus Group Questions

Technique: Focus Groups

Sampling Population: Community members of Prince of Wales Island (selected by community leaders and Ranger District Administration)

Purpose: To gather a data base from this audience, so the planning team will have an accurate depiction of community member needs and expectations for Conservation Education and Interpretation (CE & I) on the island, to take into consideration when developing the CE & I plan for the Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger Districts.

Objective:

- To determine the needs and expectations of community members for a Forest Service CE & I program.
- To gather recommendations on how the Forest Service on POW island can better meet the community members CE & I needs.

Methods:

- Develop questions
 - Approve by graduate committee
 - Submit to IRB for approval
- Get list of community leaders...contact them. (april)
 - Intro letter to community leaders giving background on project, etc...
- Set up focus group times (end of May, first week in June)
- Develop pre-focus group information packet (explanation of project, define CE & I, list of questions that will be asked, time, date, location, etc...)
- Facilitate focus group (tape record and notes)
- Send thank you notes to all group participants (offer some incentive, compensation?)

Analysis:

- Type up all comments
- Categorize
- Summarize (how??)
 - Use to "educate" planning committee

The following questions will be asked during the Focus Group Session:

1. What do you feel are strengths of current Forest Service and community interaction?

2. What do you feel are weaknesses of current Forest Service and community interaction?

3. What future interaction would you like to see between communities and the Forest Service?

4. If the Forest Service was to offer education and/or interpretation programs, what would be important components? (ie: topics, location, time, advertising, type of program....)

Appendix G: Community Focus Group Interview Comments and Categories

What are the Communities of Prince of Wales looking for from the Forest Service?

Reoccurring themes from Focus Group interviews
conducted on Prince of Wales Island
June 2004

The following comments and 'themes' are based on reported comments from six different community groups throughout Prince of Wales Island. Comments were gathered in an informal group discussion based on four guiding questions. Comments were then categorized into nine 'reoccurring themes' in order to address the issues that arose. These comments will be taken into consideration when developing a conservation education and interpretation plan for Prince of Wales Island so that the Forest Service can strive to better meet its audience's needs and expectations..

Nine Reoccurring Themes

Increased communication between Forest Service and communities (17)

11/1/04

11/1/04

11/1/04

More recreation opportunities (including interactive trails/signs) (24)

Additional events, programs & other education/interpretation opportunities (9)

Play a more active role in the community (8)

Increased cultural awareness (13)

More school involvement (7)

11/1/04

11/1/04

Institutional (agency) barriers (5)

Theme Comments

Increased communication between Forest Service and communities (16, 36, 47)

- Communication needs to improve. Its difficult to do, but has to be better – need to figure out ways to communicate to the community
- Want to know long term plans and projects that are happening (maybe in the form of a colorful flyer with bold items (sometimes presentations and public notice announcements are boring)
- Hatchery Creek
 - o BUT trail made Hatchery Creek too accessible and closed the fishery to locals.
 - o Recreation vs. subsistence
 - o F.S. should pay more attention to local communities; not just the broad public
 - o Most of Coffman Cove protested boardwalk but FS was not receptive
 - o F.S. public comment is moot (lip-service). Should take into consideration what the public is saying! Not just go through the procedure.
- There is misinformation given out or a lack of information available (ex: scenic byway)
- During a recent trails and recreation project, the city felt overlooked and ingnored. A lot of money was spent on analysis and planning, then during the final stages the FS heard what the city really wanted and the project was dropped. This left a sore point with the City council.
 - o Break down of communication and a breakdown of process...Concerns and alternatives should have been heard and considered prior to last minute.

- The process was there but the city council felt ignored at the end of it all...the process wasn't being implemented properly.
- Think that people from Alaska cannot reserve FS cabins...they are only from out of state (lack of communication!)
- Better communication between FS & communities on all things, not just timber.
- The FS has no long range plans for logging...can't give their input
- More trust and belief in the local community – trust in what people say is true and really matters. Fore example, with logging, if people say an area is important and logging shouldn't happen there, they should trust that and not have to 'see for themselves'.
- Need to know what's going on with archeology especially if they are investigating areas that are culturally important to Klawock (digging up graves, village sites, etc...)
- Communication.
- Knowing about what is going on with roads closer to communities.
- Snow removal – the Forest Service should do it. (But, it is illegal for the FS to plow snow-
→Lack of communication.
- Campgrounds in disrepair (actually site they were talking about is no longer if FS hands but the public didn't know this)
- Communication. The FS doesn't get the word out about what is going on. Severely lacking. (example: North Thorne Mtg. not many knew about it.)
- Example: the Science fair was a great event but no one except those immediately involved new about it.

- Seasonal community – public involvement stuff should be done in the winter when people are around...in the summer the locals are all out and about.
- Do education things in late fall and early winter.
- Want to know long term plans and projects that are happening (maybe in the form of a colorful flyer with bold items (sometimes presentations and public notice announcements are boring)
- Slide presentations so people who haven't been to these places can see what they look like
- A resource directory of what the Forest Service offers
 - Personnel chart so people know who to contact about specific concerns.
- The communities are unaware of what opportunities the FS has to offer.
 - Cave tours (when, who, how??)
 - Signage
 - Difficult to give directions (lack of signs on roads)
 - Road signs/names
 - Recreation signs (for sights, trailheads, karst etc...)
 - There are a few people that DON'T want signs
- Advertising and Promotion
 - Simple flyers
 - Radio
 - Bigger posters
 - Actually calling people/businesses
 - More public notice
 - More advertising

- Island News is probably the most effective way of reaching people but it still doesn't reach everyone.
- Maybe internet/email interest lists
- People often don't hear about public meetings...but this problem is not limited to the FS...there is just a lack of community involvement in general.
 - "the world is run by those that bother to show up"
- Invite people to join a list-serve and get information through email or through an online calendar.
- Bi-annual meetings with the FS to answer questions.
- Face-to-face interactions
- Interpretive signs on trails are great for tourists – also brochures to give out.
- Interpretive Signs are really important – also trail signs so you can tell where the trail is at (Sarkar canoe route for example)
- Signs about what opportunities are available in the area.
- Signs that tell about the cabin/trail.
- Advertise louder and sooner! Its frustrating for those who want to participate but can't because other plans are already made.
- Don't just advertise but PROMOTE! Like the road dedication – you need cheerleaders for events.
- Try starting up the online community calendar again...the FS can use that too.
- Anything that helps the community find out what is going on.
- Advertise!!! Promote!!!

Topic: _____

- Topic: plants; recreational places that people haven't been; animals.
- Presentation on the caves
- Presentation about the Forest Service cabins
- Logging history / education the most important
- Timber/logging
- Archeology
- King Salmon
- History and culture of town and area
- Use of plants: edible and medicinal uses
- Any natural resources are interesting if presented in the right way
- Slide shows of recreation opportunities...get the word out about opportunities

More recreation opportunities (including interpretive trails/signs) (24)

- Cabin opportunities and trail systems are great – would like to see more of these opportunities available especially as the Coffman Cove ferry terminal goes in and more people come to the island.
- More multiple use – providing recreational opportunities for the public is important.
- More money spent on recreational opportunities.
- More cabins, trails, campgrounds
- How about a west coast kayak route? More & more kayakers are showing up...this could be an opportunity for development (mooring buoys, etc...)
- More trails and trail improvement (trail to Memorial beach needs to be redone)

- RV parks and camping areas.
- Picnic places and fire rings
 - There is no place to do this right off of the road (short hiking trail/atv trail etc...)
- Overall more places to recreate!
- More infrastructure around fishing areas
- Campgrounds in disrepair (actually site they were talking about is no longer if FS hands but the public didn't know this)
- More emphasis on multiple use – so far most has been on logging – we want to see more access to lakes, water, etc...
- Boat ramps
- Parks near roads
- Port-a-potties
- Interpretive signs on trails are great for tourists – also brochures to give out.
- Attractions are needed - things to do - Trails and other recreation area's closer to town (gravelly and Sandy Beach are great!)
- Interpretive trails, like Beaver Falls, close to town. Maybe a boardwalk to the petroglyphs and protecting them.
 - Give people a reason to visit HERE not just travel through on there way to somewhere else
- Interpretive Signs are really important – also trail signs so you can tell where the trail is at (Sarkar canoe route for example)
- A lot more trails like Beaver Falls!
- Recreation trails for four-wheelers/quads
- Picnic beaches/areas
- Signs about what opportunities are available in the area.
- Signs that tell about the cabin/trail.

Additional events, programs & other education/interpretation opportunities (9)

- Island-wide events (pot-lucks – some sort of relaxed atmosphere at first then do a presentation.)
- More informal special events (ie: like the 100th anniversary – old FS boat in Craig; the going away party for Dale Canyon)
- Focus on opportunities with the new Ferry terminal
- The educational lectures that have taken place have been great – but would like to see more of them.
- More public programs – lectures on topics of Forest Service expertise.
- More special events like the Deer Celebration
- Monthly presentations for the community! (Topics: mushrooms, edible plants)
- Nature Talks, show me trips, recreational opportunities available.
- Quarterly evening programs (slide shows, plants of the forest, etc...)
 - a. But these must be well promoted!
 - b. Maybe combine with potluck/entertainment

Play a more active role in the community (8)

- Seasonal community – public involvement stuff should be done in the winter when people are around...in the summer the locals are all out and about.

- Zoned staff creates a lack of service in remote communities (off pavement)
- FS employees are individually actively involved in the community, but these people are seen as individuals not part of the Forest Service. Personal vs. institutional
- Should try to be more proactive rather than reactive – especially with increasing visitors and changing tourism, etc... The FS could look to other places for lessons and prevent conflicts
- The stigma of the FS needs to be broken down....that can be overcome by just taking an active role in the community on a regular basis.
- There are institutional barriers that are inherent to the FS...they will limit what the FS can do. But, locally things can be worked out.
- The Forest Service needs to breakdown the agency stigma they have – need to take responsibility to actively reach out.
- Take some initiative on planning and starting events of your own. The FS is great at jumping into help but it would be great if the community could be the ones that could jump in and help once in awhile as well.

Involve the community

- There should be more cultural awareness and sensitivity (example Sunahae mountain miss-spelled on map – native name and it is pretty insulting to have it misspelled)
- The difficulty in getting one log to restore a totem pole – it is such a long process and should be easier...especially for totems
- More trust and belief in the local community – trust in what people say is true and really matters. For example, with logging, if people say an area is important and logging shouldn't happen there, they should trust that and not have to 'see for themselves'.
- Need to know what's going on with archeology especially if they are investigating areas that are culturally important to Klawock (digging up graves, village sites, etc...)
- More involvement with the tribe especially with archeology
- Cultural interpretive center – important to have members of the community do this.
- Change Island names back to their native names
- Don't make sacred sites MORE accessible
 - o Cultural areas and wild areas

More school involvement (7)

- Forest Service needs to work more closely with the schools – kids need to know about the FS and the FS is here.
- Education in the schools
- FS should work more with the schools
 - o EcoVan curriculum
 - o Be more available throughout
 - o (This was counteracted by teacher who said the FS has been very involved!)
- King Salmon project with Coffman cove school
- Archeology project with school
- Need to be more active in the schools. Forest service gets involved upon invitation but do not take initiative to do it themselves. (why not do something during River Clean Up week)
- Start in the schools – easy step to take into the community)

Develop an Interpretive Education Center (6)

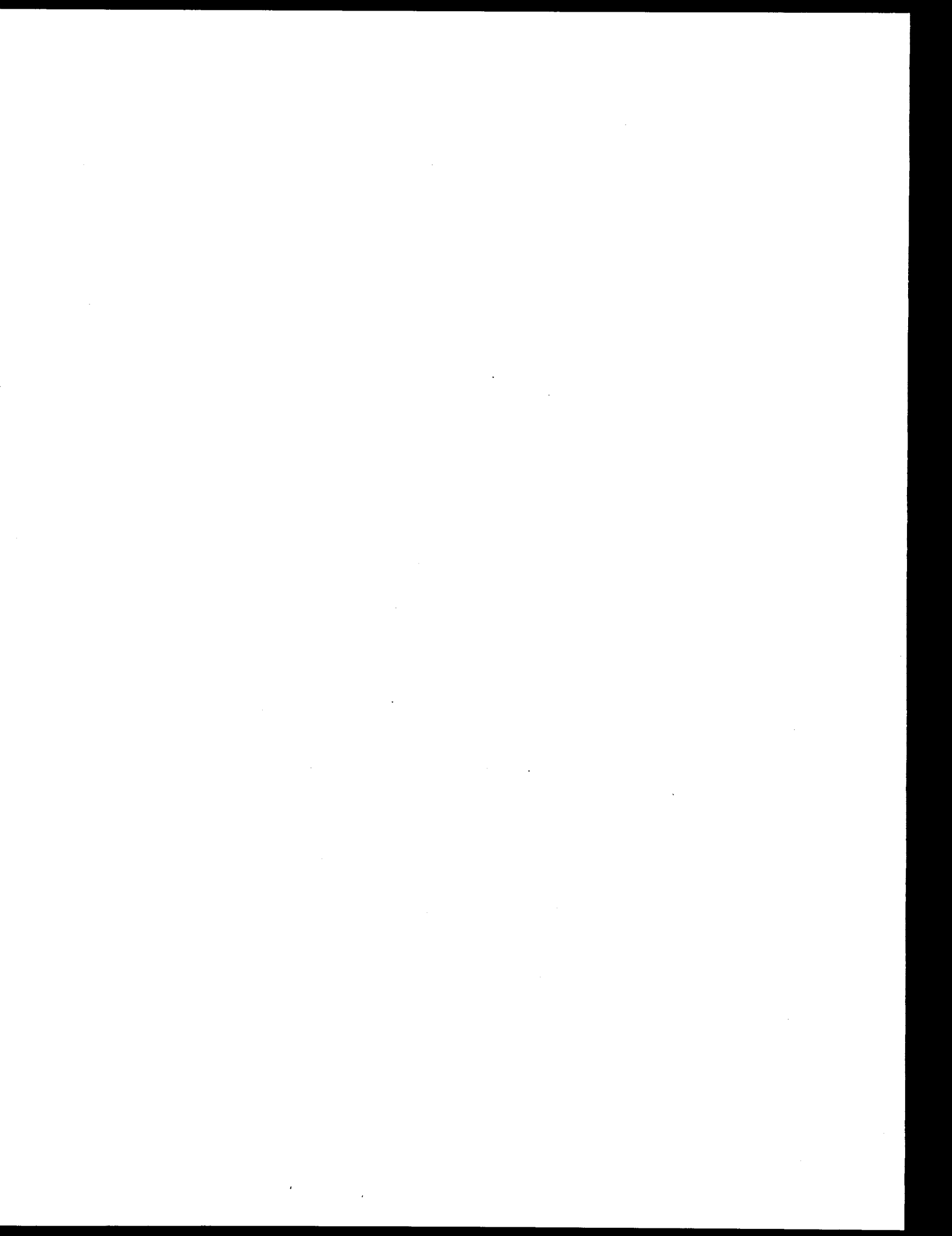
- Focus on opportunities with the new Ferry terminal
- Ferry interpretive center
 - o Aquarium with local sea life
 - o Incorporate history of logging
 - o How logging is the basis of roads economy
- Interpretive center
- Provide a facility or fund a facility where community people can teach visitors about their culture and the Island (Visitor's Center type thing)
 - o The people that live here are the best to relay info about their own culture.
- Cultural interpretive center – important to have members of the community do this.
- An interpretive Center or museum. If there was a place for things to be displayed historical stuff would come back (Thorne River Basket) People would donate things to the museum...we are running out of time because soon that generation will be gone and that stuff would disappear. Can the FS help with this?
 - o KPC shop (the large white building) is registered as a National Historic Landmark...it would be a great place for a museum of interpretive center.
- More Forest Service representation on the Economic Development Committee.
- Would like to see the Forest Service more actively pursue collaborative efforts
 - o Alaska Native sisterhood
 - o Craig Community Association
 - o Cannery site...to farmers market?
 - o Opportunity in above listed items it would just take actively pursuing a partnership!
- Reconnecting with the community should be a passion (NOT just a job)

Other things that came up:

Institutional (agency) barriers (5)

- Staff replacement procedure to slow and cumbersome (ex: recreation positions)
- Zoned staff creates a lack of service in remote communities (off pavement)
- F.S. should pay more attention to local communities; not just the broad public
- National Constituence
 - o Locals know the local area best and should be listened to the most.
 - o There are bureaucratic problems
 - o "area of influence" should be addressed
- There seems to be disconnect between regional & district communication and internal operations
- Should try to be more proactive rather than reactive – especially with increasing visitors and changing tourism, etc... The FS could look to other places for lessons and prevent conflicts
- There are institutional barriers that are inherent to the FS...they will limit what the FS can do. But, locally things can be worked out.
- Takes a long time for anything to happen
- The difficulty in getting one log to restore a totem pole – it is such a long process and should be easier...especially for totems
- Tied by national policies that don't fit too well with local issues/policies.

- Policies change – makes getting things accomplished difficult because we don't know what direction to go in.



Appendix H - Southeast Island School District Questionnaire

School District Employee Questionnaire

Technique: Paper questionnaire

Sampling Population: teachers and administrators of the schools on Prince of Wales Island (POW)

Purpose: To gather a data base from this audience, so the planning team will have an accurate depiction of POW school district teachers and administrator's needs and expectations for Conservation Education and Interpretation (CE & I) to take into consideration when developing the CE & I plan for the Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger Districts.

Objective:

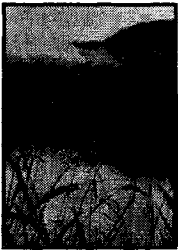
- To determine the weaknesses of the existing CE program
- To determine the strengths of the existing CE program.
- To determine how the POW Forest Service can further meet the CE needs of the School Districts of POW.

Methods:

- Develop questions and cover letters
 - Approve by graduate committee
 - Submit to IRB for approval
- Intro letter to school administrators
- Distribute to teachers (send up as soon as all is approved????)
- Return by mid in-service (middle of May???)

Analysis:

- Type up all comments
- Categorize
- Summarize (how??)
 - Use to "educate" planning committee



Prince of Wales Island

Education and Interpretation Planning Project

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point

USDA – Forest Service

Thorne Bay & Craig Ranger Districts

Project Coordinator

Nelli Atkinson

907-828-3304

natkinson@fs.fed.us

Dear Prince of Wales Island resident,

The Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts are currently in the process of developing an education and interpretive plan that is striving to better meet the needs of its audiences through my graduate student research project. Since you are a valuable member to this audience, we are asking for your help in determining how the Forest Service can make a concerted effort to better meet your interests and needs. You are invited to take part in a community focus group session. Information gained from this session will be used to develop education and interpretive programs that will hopefully serve you better. The focus group discussion will be held July 1st, 2004 at 7pm at the Thorne Bay City Hall.

The focus group session will last no longer than 45 minutes and the following pages contain the questions that you will be asked. Your comments, suggestions and ideas during the session are essential to helping the Forest Service serve you better. To show our appreciation for your help, I will provide snacks and drinks that night. The session will be recorded on audiotape, the contents of the tape will be anonymously transcribed and then the tapes will be erased to ensure confidentiality.

The following information may help you when answering the questions.

Conservation Education is "...a learning process concerned with the interrelationships among components of the natural and human-made world producing growth in the individual and leading to responsible land stewardship."

Interpretation is "a communication process that forges intellectual and emotional connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings of the resource." This can be in the form of oral communication, trails, signs, brochures, programs, etc... Interpretation is aimed at the recreating public; it is in a leisurely atmosphere with a non-captive audience.

If you are unable to make the focus group session, or do not wish to take part, please contact Nelli Atkinson at 907-828-3304 or by email at natkinson@fs.fed.us. Also, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, comments or concerns about this survey, I would be happy to listen and help out! There are no risks involved with this study other than dedication of your time and the costs of getting to the focus group site. The plan that results from this information will hopefully help to better meet your individual and community needs; however, if you want to withdraw from the study at any time, you may do so without penalty.

If you have any complaints about your treatment as participant in this study, please call or write:

Dr. Sandra Holmes, Chair
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Department of Psychology
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
Stevens Point, WI 54481
(715) 346-3952

*Although Dr. Holmes will ask your name, all complaints are kept in confidence.

The information collected during the focus group session will be used to develop a list of what interpretive and educational efforts will best serve the community members of the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts, the information will also be summarized and presented as part of my research project. If you would like to see any of the results upon their completion please contact me by email or phone, and leave your name and contact information.

Thank you so much for your time and interest in this project! Your help is very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Nelli Atkinson

Graduate Student – University of Wisconsin Stevens Point
Public Affairs Specialist – Education and Interpretation Projects
US-Forest Service Thorne Bay Ranger District

****By participating in this focus group you will be consenting to participate in this research study***

Please answer the following questions (use the back of this sheet if needed):

#1. What are the strengths of the conservation education services offered by the Prince of Wales Island Forest Service?

#2. What are the weaknesses of the conservation education services offered by Prince of Wales Island Forest Service?

#3. What are other conservation education needs that you have, that the POW Forest Service could address in the future?



Appendix I: School District Questionnaire Results

School District Questionnaire Results

1. What are the strengths of the conservation education services offered by the Prince of Wales Island Forest Service?

- A. *Having F.S come to our school and work with our students on watershed education. All pre- and post- activities in the (EcoVan) notebook were very helpful. I did them all but I still fell like my students were not as well prepared as the F.S. would have liked them and I did not know (if) I should have done more...Or what I should have done...Never did quite get a handle on rotations 2 & 3- I believe the F.S got too busy and could not do the schedule that was planned – no big deal – We had lots of help with the greenhouse from Brandi and had a great Science Spring!*
- B. *Technology, resources, personnel who are educated, caring and a lot of pros. Not all are pros.*
- C. *To be honest, during my year here I have not heard the Forest Service mention conservation. Through the ecovan the Forest Service came to talk about local watersheds, but conservation was not mentioned (or at least I don't remember it). At Forest Service sties (like the karst) there are great signs about fragile areas.*
- D. *Willingness of Forest Service to work with schools/students. I'm not exactly sure about the specifics of Conservation education efforts to date – but there is an emphasis on recycling – taking care of the environment, etc...They (the FS) are building a “conscious” regarding conservation of the environment with our youth.*
- E. *Assisting in setting up the Watershed notebook.*
- F. *It was an awesome program that was offered to the students. The people that came to see the Hollis student were great. They were enthusiastic and knowledgeable and knew how to work with and spark student's interest. They offered great resources and talked about local issues that were important to the students. The books and hands on equipment suggested to the district (and purchased for the Ecovan) was age appropriate for the students in our district. They also made their presentation relevant to the student's lives (logging industry) and explained why issues were important. They were instrumental in finding resources or books to help teachers out, they were flexible with their schedules and worked around our schedule too. They helped bring Ray Troll to Thorne Bay. The program and booths that the USFS manned during the science fair in Thorne Bay was great. The booths were interesting and fun for the students. The hands on booths covered a variety of subjects that met the needs and interests of all students (newts, salmon spawning scents, caving, plants,). I was really impressed with the number of employees that participated in Project Wild training on their own time and on a Saturday as well. They were actively involved and this program will help them in our classroom as well. I can't say enough about the involmnet. Another strength was the program was easily adapted to be cross curricular.*

2. What are the weaknesses of the conservation education services offered by the Prince of Wales Island Forest Service?

- A. *See question #1 Comments*
- B. *Depending on which team is responding, investigating, on duty, those Forest Service personnel who are not professional. Example: I call at 2am, you show up the next day expecting to do something about a situation. Examples – bear hunters from down South who do not harvest the meat. South guides bring their buddies, ARROW a sow and leaves two cubs to die this past winter.*
- C. *I think (and I could be reading into this) there is a bit of fear in discussing conservation of our island's ecosystems. There is a long history of controversy over industry vs. conservation, and are still some hard feelings about it. I say, go for it! Now that logging is at a low point on the island, it would be a good time to be more bold about conservation education. More people will be involved.*
- D. *Some initiatives lack continuity ie: start/stays depending on their area(s) of focus. Lack of staff knowledge regarding environmental/conservation efforts. Forest Service staff don't have time to build staff expertise of topics.*
- E. *(We) Located off island does not allow for personal interaction. We look forward to opportunity to be involved through 2-way interactive video.*
- F. *The one weakness I found was there was not enough time in the day for the employees to spend time with the students. I had prepared my students and I felt like we could have done more hands on – in the field work, but the employees ran out of time to complete the field work. I would like to see the employees spend more time with the students, but I also realize that education of students is not the mission of the USFS so I do appreciate the time they spent with the students. I really think we need more than one day, they need to do at least 2 days in a row with the students so there is some follow up and reinforcement of what was taught.*

3. What other conservation education needs do you have, that the POW Forest Service could address in the future?

- A. *We will have King Salmon smolt in CC (Coffman Cove) bay within the next few years – I would like help – more info- on what to do to help with this project. Also (would like to see other information): Wildlife, estuary, beach life, a list of kits and such that we (the teachers) can access ourselves without bothering you (FS). We will be studying wolves in September with*

Discovery (Southeast Alaska Discovery Center in Ketchikan) kit – anything you can add to this?

- B. Respect the island people ALL! What to do if you see someone kill indiscriminately not harvesting (meat) Trash (litter) this is our island down south folk don't respect our island. Speeding down log road where the vehicle mirror hits mine as we pass each other. Now do something. Whale Pass.*
- C. More discussion about it in education.*
- D. Waste management – ie: what do you do with old cars so as not to damage the environment. Better management of fresh water. Pollution awareness.*
- E. No response written*
- F. The USFS could offer more opportunities for students and teachers to become involved in a hands on community service project that would benefit both the community and the USFS image. They could also offer information to interested teachers about the current research and papers that USFS employees are currently involved in and offer the students and teachers an opportunity to become involved in collecting data to help out the projects. I am thinking along the lines of invasive plant surveys, mapping, trails, stream surveys. I think they could do a better job of letting us know about speakers that come into talk to the USFS employees and see if we could video tape or share those speakers. The more exposure that students have to real scientists and real research the more likely they will become interested in the jobs that the USFS does.*



Appendix J – FS Employee Questionnaire Results

Forest Service Employee Questionnaire

Business Management Staff (3ppl)

6-8-04

1. How important do you think education and interpretation is in achieving the Forest Service's mission?

The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Very Important Important Neutral Not very important Shouldn't be considered

- A. Very Important
- B. Very Important

1b. Why do you feel this way?

- A. In the past the FS on the Tongass (TNB particularly) has not done a good job of putting itself forward – it was difficult because TM (timber management) was the emphasis. Now we have opportunity to change public perception.
- B. The public needs to know why we cut trees, protect streams, etc..

2. Are you currently doing anything in your job to educate the public or other FS employees about what you do? If so, what things are you doing?

Group Comments (notes taken by researcher)

- Dissemination of public information (although we need to be more prepared – what do we do if sherri is not around?)
- Telephone (cabins, hunting, fishing, recreation, etc...)
- Display information (although we need to display more)
- Outside “off-time” education goes on.
- Front desk services
- Email inquiries and responses
- Letters responding to public inquiries.
- Web-site!
- Sherri did a power point on “how we can help the school” at SISD in-service.
-

3. Specific to your field, what do you think are the most effective ways of reaching the public (community members & visitors)? (ie; signs, trails, brochures, public programs, school programs, one-on-one interactions, community workshops, educational pamphlets, etc...)

Group Comments (notes taken by researcher)

- Being visual to the public
- ***Newspaper Articles!!!***
- Tell people what we do (and what we don't do) and WHY!
- Need to understand why we are doing certain things (ie: thinning, etc...)
- Distinguish between state, native and federal lands
- Let people know that there are other things besides timber going on.
- Public presentations "like the Discovery Center" (challenge is getting the public here – how do we do it?)
- InterIsland Ferry – brochures specific to island
- Make other brochures (El Cap, tree types, flowers, Beaver Falls)
- Booths at community events (Christmas bazaar, logging show, etc...)
- Activities like Adopt – A- Highway get the whole district involved!
-

4. If the District would implement education and interpretation programs, and you had the time and resources available, what additional skills or resources would you need to feel comfortable in executing educational and interpretive programs? (trainings, manuals, workshops, etc...)

Group Comments (notes taken by researcher)

- Want to know more about the island so we can tell the public
 - Visit and be familiar with places
- Know how to make brochures; develop programs
- Training on techniques for reaching the public (only go if on the District) Needs to be done by a local.
- Updated info letters
- "browsing info"

5. **Based on your needs and interests, what do you feel are the most important messages and/or stories the Forest Service can convey? If you wish you can use the following categories to organize your ideas. *Please be as specific as possible.***

Discover...Countless opportunities for exploration and enjoyment exist amongst the rugged shores, deep forests and sparkling streams of Prince of Wales Island.

Group Comments (notes taken by researcher)

- What we convey most successfully

Diverse...The land has created lifestyles and cultures that are as diverse as the land that is depended upon for support.

Group Comments (notes taken by researcher)

- Evolution of culture

Distinct...Rare ecosystems and world-class resources thrive in this unique island environment.

Group Comments (notes taken by researcher)

- No comment made

Dedicated...The Forest Service (the TB and C Ranger Districts) is dedicated to caring for the land while serving the people of Prince of Wales Island.

Group Comments (notes taken by researcher)

- Important but difficult
- Top priority – THIS IS OUR MISSION

- Is there anyway we can convey this in a unique way???

6. Are you interested in being a part of the District education and interpretation program? If so, how would you like to take part?

- A. I think our "front line duties" will be the way I will take part- greeting publics, supplying information and by interacting in the community on my own.
- B. No response written
- C. No response written

Forest Service Employee Questionnaire

Engineering (6ppl)

6-4-2004

1. How important do you think education and interpretation is in achieving the Forest Service's mission?

The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Very Important Important Neutral Not very important Shouldn't be considered

- A. Very Important
- B. Not very important
- C. Shouldn't be considered
- D. Very Important
- E. Very Important
- F. Very important

1b. Why do you feel this way?

- A. Educating the public is crucial to completing the Forest Service. The public must be fully aware of what and why we do, in effort to re-establish a high degree of credibility.
- B. Does not meet the literal reading of the mission.
- C. The FS should manage the land. Colleges and universities should teach.
- D. The politics some special interest groups skew numbers to make the general public feel that our practices are wrong. We need some realistic education to the public so they know the truth ob what we are doing in their national forest.
- E. The forest will come under increased pressure to continue to fulfill a variety of uses. Ie: Recreation, timber harvesting, etc...
- F. The Forest Service is misunderstood, I feel in what we are about and do.

2. Are you currently doing anything in your job to educate the public or other FS employees about what you do? If so, what things are you doing?

- A. I routinely interact with the public and various contractors as to the intent and status of transportation upgrades and overall infrastructure on Prince of Wales Island.
- B. Job – no. Outside job – Proactive on Forest management.
- C. No. I have done surveying demonstrations at White Cliff school in Ketchikan.

- D. No
- E. No
- F. No

3. Specific to your field, what do you think are the most effective ways of reaching the public (community members & visitors)? (ie; signs, trails, brochures, public programs, school programs, one-on-one interactions, community workshops, educational pamphlets, etc...)

- A. Community workshops, Prince of Wales Community Advisory Council (POWCAC), City Council Meetings.
- B. Signs, trails, educational pamphlet.
- C. School programs
- D. School programs are the most important – we need to educate out children, then work to the general public – interp. signs, & community workshops. The problem is only people who visit or live in national forests get the real info on what is being accomplished.
- E. Community workshops
- F. I think career days are beneficial to students. To have someone discuss engineering can be very educational and helpful.

4. If the District would implement education and interpretation programs, and you had the time and resources available, what additional skills or resources would you need to feel comfortable in executing educational and interpretive programs? (trainings, manuals, workshops, etc...)

- A. Workshops, manuals and maps.
- B. Do not have the time or desire.
- C. None.
- D. Training and workshops
- E. All of the above – primarily training opportunities in applying interpretation programs.
- F. In the past I've had students spend the day with me out in the field (working along side) to experience and see what types of things someone in engineering does.

5. **Based on your needs and interests, what do you feel are the most important messages and/or stories the Forest Service can convey? If you wish you can use the following categories to organize your ideas. *Please be as specific as possible.***

Discover...Countless opportunities for exploration and enjoyment exist amongst the rugged shores, deep forests and sparkling streams of Prince of Wales Island.

- A. The extensive road system on POW
- B. Need access to more & signs to opportunities.
- C. Just let people do their own thing. Let them camp where they want, hike where they want, etc... Maybe have pamphlets available so they can see what to look for in plants, historical artifacts etc...
- D. Hunting, fishing, camping, very remote areas, beach combing... All of our activities we do as a family have a sense of Discovery and a chance to learn. I know that I touched on this earlier but we need to educate the public in a way to show that we are good land stewards and that most of what is taught about timber harvest and road construction is on one point of view and everyone who has an opinion based on one point of view needs to research and educate themselves to see the other side; sometimes the most spread point of view is only partially right but there are always other factors that need to be conveyed to the public to correct our image and inform the people. We don't do very much to counter special interest groups views & perception. Until we do, our image will be tarnished.
- E. Public needs to be aware that after 50plus year of intense timber harvest, that there is still much beauty here. (especially regenerated second growth)
- F. To make access for enjoyable and beautiful recreational opportunities.

Diverse...The land has created lifestyles and cultures that are as diverse as the land that is depended upon for support.

- A. Evolution of Prince of Wales economics and infrastructure. The transition from a totally dependent timber-based economy to a

more diverse approach including robust recreation opportunities.

- B. Lot of people just surviving hoping for something better.
- C. No written response
- D. No written response
- E. The Forest Service needs to educate the public on prior, current & future uses. There are virtually no interpretive signs which discuss regenerated clear-cuts/thinning areas etc..., as one can see in lower 48 National Forest.
- F. No written response

Distinct...Rare ecosystems and world'-class resources thrive in this unique island environment.

- A. A discussion on karst would be good.
- B. The only world-class resource is caves and similar ecosystems found on other islands & co(a)sts of Canada and Northern Washington.
- C. No written response
- D. No written response
- E. No written response
- F. No written response

Dedicated...The Forest Service (the TB and C Ranger Districts) is dedicated to caring for the land while serving the people of Prince of Wales Island.

- A. Committed to improving the economics and infrastructure, long-term on Prince of Wales.
- B. Most do a good job.
- C. No written response.
- D. No written response.
- E. No written response
- F. Providing safe and informative access to this beautiful island.

6. Are you interested in being a part of the District education and interpretation program? If so, how would you like to take part?

A-F. N/A

Forest Service Employee Questionnaire

Fish & Wildlife (10 ppl)

6-8-04

1. How important do you think education and interpretation is in achieving the Forest Service's mission?

The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Very Important Important Neutral Not very important Shouldn't be considered

- A. Very Important
- B. Very Important
- C. Important
- D. Important
- E. Very Important
- F. Very Important
- G. Very Important to Important
- H. Very Important
- I. Very Important
- J. Very Important

1b. Why do you feel this way?

- A. People need to know all the fact to make an informed decision – They need to know the consequences of actions on forests today & tomorrow (includes animals & plants that live in the forest).
- B. Education & interpretation could help both internally and with the public. Within the district it could help employees better understand the important rolls of all the divisions. From a public point of view it could help eliminate myths people have about what the Forest Service is trying to accomplish.
- C. Without education, the needs of present and future generations will not be formulated in a manner in the public's best interest. Interpretation, I feel, is different and less critical to the mission.
- D. Well, while talking to a local logger several weeks ago he seemed very upset with the Forest Service. He felt we were out to get him; said there were too many restrictions on cutting now and sales were much lower than in the past; said he doesn't have that much work because of us. Judging from this conversation I feel that some people aren't educated about what the Forest Service mission really is.
- E. Interpretation & education provides a direct connection between the general public and the FS. The National Forests belong to everyone and so it is important for people to have an understanding of what we do. Also generating interest in the

environment and conservation will hopefully help to get people involved.

- F. Through education and interpretation we can inspire young minds and adults to think outside of the "box" and become aware of the issues that may be ongoing in this communities. We can assist in giving them a base upon which to make informed decisions, whether they agree with the Forest Service or not.
- G. Education is crucial in achieving the Forest Service mission. People need to base their decisions less on emotions and more on scholarly and experiential processes. Interpretation could be used as the means to provide this education but I feel it must not be presented by individuals acting on their emotions and personal feelings.
- H. Helping people understand the natural world and why we do what we do in the FS is a key part in the future of our public lands and how they should be managed. There are too many "idealist" views out there in the world today which have the power and money to lock-up the way the FS manages public land. By reaching these people, they may get a better understanding on the FS mission.
- I. We have to communicate what we are doing to alleviate perceptions of FS being the "black helicopter" Feds. It is important not to force a personal agenda on public while at the same time understanding that this is a National Forest , not a local forest.
- J. The more that is known about a resource, especially one as large and dynamic as POW island, the more effectively it can be managed. For this reason having as much communication as possible with the main audiences you pointed out (the school districts, visitors, FS employees and communities), is extremely vital for the resource and the different communities. The perception of this resource should be broadened as much as possible in order to show the various benefits, which might have previously been overlooked.

2. Are you currently doing anything in your job to educate the public or other FS employees about what you do? If so, what things are you doing?

- I. Yes, science fair, Kid's Fishing Day, and animated discussion at keg parties and potlucks.
- J. One aspect of the creel survey is explaining why I'm trying to gather the data and how it's going to be used in terms of fishing

and river usage. If there is an open line of communication, the audience will feel more involved with the resource, and would therefore be more involved with the resource.

Group Comments (notes taken by researcher)

- Kids Fishing Day
- Educating adults through public meetings (examples: North Thorne public meeting, EIS meetings, etc...)
- Field work with employees from other shops, educate each other.
- Talking with public (during on and off time)
- Phone calls from public regarding animal pests, fishing & hunting spots etc...
- Seasonal workers educate family, friends and others when they go back home.
- EcoVan and other school activities (salmon aquarium project, greenhouse, etc...)
- Youth Conservation Corp group
-

3. Specific to your field, what do you think are the most effective ways of reaching the public (community members & visitors)? (ie; signs, trails, brochures, public programs, school programs, one-on-one interactions, community workshops, educational pamphlets, etc...)

- I. I think one-on-one interactions are underrated as to effectiveness, with the Island grapevine system if you positively influence one person, several hundred will hear about it. (and vise-versa)
- J. I believe that a combination of outreach efforts will be effective. Specifically, I would like to see more interp work done in regards to forest ecology and timber management. In addition, I think more trail development (hiking & biking) along with more water usage (hiking & biking) along with more water usage (canoeing & kayaking) opportunities would be a great addition to the island. In regard to exact method of interaction, I think that past efforts on the island and efforts on other forests, even other agencies should be looked at for a model. This look at prior efforts, coupled with some trial and error should gauge the effectiveness of the method.

Group Comments (notes taken by researcher)

- Interpretation signs are effective for "read & see" approach
- One on one interaction is important! The "grape-vine" Both positive and negative are spread this way.

- Booths at community events
- Internal education in order to get other shops involved in school programs, the EcoVan and other educational activities.
- Next step needs to be taken: Currently, 'ecosystems consideration' is taught in the classrooms. Now we need to teach why we have to know why ecosystems work! (TLMP)
- Educate public about FS processes (NEPA, EIS, EA, etc...) and why we use them.
- Field trips (associated with field work) is essential for internal education
- Externships with HS students (this has been done – challenge: Motivation and commitment by students and employees to find meaningful work.
- Weekly paper column (get all experts involved)
- Weekly Radio Shows (like Pete Griffith in Juneau)
- Internet! Get the word out.
 - Commonly asked questions page
 - Common misconceptions about the FS
- Combination of “short term” (interpretive signs) and “long-term” (school programs) would be good long-term strategy
- Colaborative stewardship network
- Need to not “dumb things down” for people but also don’t “talk over there heads”.
- Teach public (subsistence use) on how and why to do it sustainably.
- Cliff Notes for TLMP – guide to the plan, why FS has a plan
- Need “buy off” by whole district. Ranger needs to “be on our butt’s” to get things done.
- EcoVan Coordinator talks with each shop for summary of what is happening.
- Community/FS museum and/or visitor center.

4. If the District would implement education and interpretation programs, and you had the time and resources available, what additional skills or resources would you need to feel comfortable in executing educational and interpretive programs? (trainings, manuals, workshops, etc...)

I. I feel very comfortable with resources at my disposal at this time.

J. Again, I would need a combination of things due to my minimal interp. and educational experience. I would gladly participate in this type of training and effort.

Group Comments (notes taken by researcher)

- "I am not a teacher" and its hard to work with the kids – especially the younger ones. We have to rely on the teachers for help. Teaching techniques and tips (booklet, day/half-day training on how to deal with different age groups, "quick and dirty workshop for teaching CE", etc..)
- Tips on how to write for the public
- An "EcoVan", set of teaching resources, for the Forest Service.
- Coordinate what is done!

5. **Based on your needs and interests, what do you feel are the most important messages and/or stories the Forest Service can convey? If you wish you can use the following categories to organize your ideas. *Please be as specific as possible.***

Discover...Countless opportunities for exploration and enjoyment exist amongst the rugged shores, deep forests and sparkling streams of Prince of Wales Island.

I. ranked #4

Group Comments (notes taken by researcher)

- None made

Diverse...The land has created lifestyles and cultures that are as diverse as the land that is depended upon for support.

I. Ranked #2

Group Comments (notes taken by researcher)

- Taylor's manual

Distinct...Rare ecosystems and world'-class resources thrive in this unique island environment.

I. Ranked #3

Group Comments (notes taken by researcher)

- Island biogeography & endemic species "If we mess it up here, there is no redispersal"
- Unique archipelago – unique to whole planet!
- Forest Service History – get it out!
 - What has happened
 - Lessons Learned
 - Future direction
 - "We know we haven't always walked the walk"

Dedicated...The Forest Service (the TB and C Ranger Districts) is dedicated to caring for the land while serving the people of Prince of Wales Island.

I. Ranked #4

Group Comments (notes taken by researcher)

- Community/FS interaction
- Highlight what we do more – the F&W job is to protect the resources!

6. Are you interested in being a part of the District education and interpretation program? If so, how would you like to take part?

- A. YES, I already do.
- B. Yes, I am not sure at this time.
- C. Yes, however, I'm unsure where best I could be utilized.
- D. No, its not quite my cup of tea.
- E. Yes, I already am. I would enjoy doing programs in the schools or possibly guided hikes, or evening programs for the public.
- F. Yes, I would like to continue with classroom activities, field trips, public interp, whenever assistance is needed.
- G. I would be interested in providing assistance.
- H. Yes
- I. Yes...
- J. I would like to take part in the program. I'm not sure where help is needed, and would gladly participate in any planning or implementation efforts.

Forest Service Employee Questionnaire

Recreation Crew (4ppl)

6-15-2004

1. How important do you think education and interpretation is in achieving the Forest Service's mission?

The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Very Important Important Neutral Not very important Shouldn't be considered

- A. Very Important
- B. Very Important
- C. Very Important
- D. Very Important

1b. Why do you feel this way?

- A. In order for the public to support the Forest Service mission they need to have knowledge of the Forest and a connection to the land, which will create a desire to act to support or change the FS goals. Interpretation and Education help give a sense of place & appreciation for science, cultural history, natural history, etc...
- B. Often time people don't realize what they have. Sometimes they have no clues as to how to go about learning about the forests and grasslands. As educated people, in these topics, I feel it is our duty to provide those people with the education needed to interact with the forests and enjoy them as we do.
- C. I feel this because in the mission the main point that I see is sustain. Sustaining anything is a very difficult task for anyone. I feel that the best way for something to be maintained or sustained is through education and knowledge.
- D. Interpretation and education are th fundamental building blocks for gaining public support for Forest Service projects and programs. Education helps to reach understanding and a sense of stewardship for the land and resources.

2. Are you currently doing anything in your job to educate the public or other FS employees about what you do? If so, what things are you doing?

- A. No response written
- B. Leave No Trace, fly-fishing day camp, hiking day camp, El Captain Cave Tour.

- C. Beaver Falls/El capt; LNT
- D. Leave no Trace camp demo; Hollis kiosk; Fly fishing day camp; Hike Day Camp; Cave Program (El Cap, Beaver Falls, Cavern Lake)

Group Comments (Notes taken by the researcher)

- Leave No Trace booths/presentations
- El Cap Cave Program – possibly expanding to Beaver Falls and Cavern Lake
- Summer Youth Camp in Craig - Native culture, fisheries, stream biology, hiking, leave no trace
- Hollis kiosk
- Fly fishing & Hiking day camp (open to adults and kids)
- Kids fishing day
- In school presentation
- Special events

3. Specific to your field, what do you think are the most effective ways of reaching the public (community members & visitors)? (ie; signs, trails, brochures, public programs, school programs, one-on-one interactions, community workshops, educational pamphlets, etc...)

Group Comments (Notes taken by the researcher)

- Personal communication
- Takes all of the above – people respond differently so you need to cover all bases.
- Takes a lot of effort

4. If the District would implement education and interpretation programs, and you had the time and resources available, what additional skills or resources would you need to feel comfortable in executing educational and interpretive programs? (trainings, manuals, workshops, etc...)

Group Comments (Notes taken by the researcher)

- Has to be a priority – the boss has to think it is a good idea
- Takes time to establish good programs
- Props; things to touch – to use for programs
- Time to focus on it – seasonal workers

- For some a workshop is a good starting point, for others just having time to put together a program and do the research is needed.
- Connections to community by seasonals should be maintained after summer is over.
- Two-hour workshop
- Orientation packet for new employees
- Pre-training for ed & interp
- A boardwalk trail through an area of second growth with interpretive panels to explain timber harvest, some benefits of harvesting, new plants & wildlife habitat that are created, forest succession, etc...Turn something that may look 'bad' into an educational experience. Might be especially important once more outside visitors start coming through.

5. **Based on your needs and interests, what do you feel are the most important messages and/or stories the Forest Service can convey? If you wish you can use the following categories to organize your ideas. *Please be as specific as possible.***

Discover...Countless opportunities for exploration and enjoyment exist amongst the rugged shores, deep forests and sparkling streams of Prince of Wales Island.

Diverse...The land has created lifestyles and cultures that are as diverse as the land that is depended upon for support.

Distinct...Rare ecosystems and world'-class resources thrive in this unique island environment.

Dedicated...The Forest Service (the TB and C Ranger Districts) is dedicated to caring for the land while serving the people of Prince of Wales Island.

6. Are you interested in being a part of the District education and interpretation program? If so, how would you like to take part?

- A. Yes, School programs, cave tours, guided walks evening programs. As the Rec. Planner in TNB, I would like the tools/skills needed to help coach other employees give well-developed interpretive programs.
- B. Possibly, but I have no clue how much time I could devote due to the short stay and being busy in the time that I have.
- C. Yes, I would be glad to teach interp & ed programs to all levels of individuals.
- D. Yes, I would like to help by incorporating Interp/Ed programs and features into the recreation opportunities on the Forest. Programs such as the El Cap Cave tour, and interpretive trails like Beaver Falls are good examples. I'd like to expand to more sections of the forest and involve the local community to a greater extent.

Additional questions....

Would some sort of education and interpretation master plan be helpful?

- It would be helpful to read before I came here – orient
- Beginning point to get projects done
- A place to go for resources – to use as a resource
- Help with non-fun stuff – help figure out how to do programs; find audience and audience interests
- Help with audience needs
- Knowing what people want

Current projects

- Gravelly creek
- Standardized trailhead kiosks

Forest Service Employee Questionnaire

Timber Staff (6ppl)

6-20-04

1. How important do you think education and interpretation is in achieving the Forest Service's mission?

The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Very Important Important Neutral Not very important Shouldn't be considered

A. Very Important

B. Very Important

1b. Why do you feel this way?

A. Information needs to be correct, not biased.

B. Public opinion controls what we can and can't do.

2. Are you currently doing anything in your job to educate the public or other FS employees about what you do? If so, what things are you doing?

Group Comments (notes taken by researcher)

- Word of mouth advertisement on what is going on (sale contracts, bids, microsals, NEPA, etc...)
- Informally talk to others – there is a general skewed perception of what we do.

3. Specific to your field, what do you think are the most effective ways of reaching the public (community members & visitors)? (ie; signs, trails, brochures, public programs, school programs, one-on-one interactions, community workshops, educational pamphlets, etc...)

Group Comments (notes taken by researcher)

- Brochure on timber management
- Roadside signs describing harvest techniques, forest succession, etc...
- Society of American Foresters numbered post 'tour' with brochure telling about the site.
- Reaching out to the visitors
- Overcome lack of interest in public meetings – more interaction.

4. **If the District would implement education and interpretation programs, and you had the time and resources available, what additional skills or resources would you need to feel comfortable in executing educational and interpretive programs? (trainings, manuals, workshops, etc...)**

- Prep time to deal with complex issues. There is tons of misinformation and only outside of work time available to deal with it.
- Demonstration area to show management techniques. (possibly North Thorne?)
- Open-minded educator/interpreter/public relations person.
- Information portrayed needs to be correct not biased.

5. **Based on your needs and interests, what do you feel are the most important messages and/or stories the Forest Service can convey? If you wish you can use the following categories to organize your ideas. *Please be as specific as possible.***

Discover...Countless opportunities for exploration and enjoyment exist amongst the rugged shores, deep forests and sparkling streams of Prince of Wales Island.

No comments

Diverse...The land has created lifestyles and cultures that are as diverse as the land that is depended upon for support.

No comments

Distinct...Rare ecosystems and world-class resources thrive in this unique island environment.

Group Comments (notes taken by researcher)

- Roads exist because of logging – that's what makes POW unique. However, that is no longer commonly known.

Dedicated...The Forest Service (the TB and C Ranger Districts) is dedicated to caring for the land while serving the people of Prince of Wales Island.

Group Comments (notes taken by researcher)

- There are many local employment opportunities available through the forest service...it still supports much of the local economy.

6. Are you interested in being a part of the District education and interpretation program? If so, how would you like to take part?

Group Comments (notes taken by researcher)

- Overall consensus that yes, would like to be more involved with education but there currently is not any time to devote toward it.





An Alaskan Port Authority
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Memorandum

To: Board of Directors
From: Kent Miller
Date: July 1, 2004
Subject: Recap of FY 2004 Traffic and FY 2005 Forecast

As shown in the following tables FY 2004 passenger traffic was 59,218, compared with 59,221 forecast, exceeding FY 2003 by 5.9%; vehicle traffic was 15,332, compared with 15,223 forecast, exceeding FY 2003 by 5.8%.

The historical tabulation attached indicates FY 2004 January-June traffic, at 26,933, was almost double 2001 January-June traffic and almost equal to combined 2000-2001 first-half traffic of 27,550.

FY 2005 traffic is forecast at 62,200 passengers and 16,000 vehicles, in both cases 5.0% over FY 2004 volumes.

Inter-island Ferry Authority
Monthly Traffic CY 2002, 2003 and 2004
with FY 2003, 2004 and 2005 (estimated)

	CALENDAR YEAR					
	2002		2003		2004	
	Pass.	Veh.	Pass.	Veh.	Pass.	Veh.
Jan ^a	1,137	295	3,366	848	3,137	775
+ AMHS ^b	-	-	-	-	3,184	779
Feb	2,077	534	3,054	879	3,753	928
Mar	3,340	732	4,127	1,036	4,559	1,172
Apr	2,940	848	3,574	1,160	4,308	1,160
May	4,391	1,150	4,385	1,181	4,672	1,213
Jun	5,078	1,270	5,756	1,394	6,457	1,537
Jan-Jun	18,963	4,829	24,262	6,498	26,933	6,789
Jul	6,584	1,547	6,254	1,608		
Aug	7,215	1,586	7,426	1,885		
Sep	3,749	1,059	4,345	1,145		
+ AMHS	3,907	1,104	-	-		
Oct	4,058	1,276	4,508	1,382		
Nov	3,986	1,087	4,810	1,316		
+ AMHS	4,736	1,292	-	-		
Dec	5,179	1,191	4,942	1,207		
Jul-Dec	30,771	7,746	32,285	8,543		
Total	49,734	12,575	56,547	15,041		
Δ% 2002/YTD			13.7	19.6		

	FISCAL YEAR				
	2003		2004		2005 est.
Passengers					
Jul-Dec	30,771	Jul-Dec	32,285	Jul-Dec	33,900
Jan-Jun	24,262	Jan-Jun	26,933	Jan-Jun	28,300
Total	55,033		59,218		62,200
Δ%			7.6		
Vehicles					
Jul-Dec	7,746	Jul-Dec	8,543	Jul-Dec	9,000
Jan-Jun	6,498	Jan-Jun	6,989	Jan-Jun	7,100
Total	14,244		15,532		16,100
Δ%			7.6		5.0

a. Service started January 15, 2002.

b. Out of service for scheduled drydocking January 5-11, 2004, AMHS substitute service provided

Inter-island Ferry Authority
Traffic Comparison ^a
12 Months to Date, 2002-2004
Passengers

	2001		2002		2003		2004	
	Mo.	12 Mo.TD	Mo.	12 Mo.TD	Mo.	12 Mo.TD	Mo.	12 Mo.TD
Jan	1,903		2,324	37,845	3,366	53,185	3,184	56,365
12 mo. Δ						1.405		1.060
Feb	1,911		2,391	38,325	3,054	53,848	3,753	57,064
12 mo. Δ						1.405		1.060
Mar	2,118		3,340	39,547	4,127	54,635	4,559	57,496
12 mo. Δ						1.3815		1.052
Apr	2,199		2,940	40,288	3,574	55,269	4,308	58,230
12 mo. Δ						1.3718		1.066
May	1,765		4,391	42,914	4,385	55,263	4,672	58,517
12 mo. Δ						1.288		1.059
Jun	3,898		5,078	44,094	5,756	55,941	6,457	59,218
12 mo. Δ						1.269		1.059
Jul	5,103		6,584	45,575	6,254	55,611		
12 mo. Δ						1.220		
Aug	6,220		7,215	46,570	7,426	55,822		
12 mo. Δ						1.1990		
Sep	4,486		3,907	45,991	4,345	56,260		
12 mo. Δ						1.223		
Oct	2,046		4,058	48,003	4,508	56,710		
12 mo. Δ						1.181		
Nov	3,091		4,736	49,648	4,810	56,784		
12 mo. Δ						1.144		
Dec	2,684	37,424	5,179	52,143	4,942	56,547		
12 mo. Δ				1.393		1.085		

a. Including AMHS traffic.

Inter-island Ferry Authority
Traffic Comparison ^a
12 Months to Date, 2002-2004
Vehicles

	2001		2002		2003		2004	
	Mo.	12 Mo.TD	Mo.	12 Mo.TD	Mo.	12 Mo.TD	Mo.	12 Mo.TD
Jan	464		538	10,180	848	13,378	779	14,972
12 mo. Δ						1.314		1.119
Feb	553		603	10,230	879	13,723	928	15,021
12 mo. Δ						1.341		1.095
Mar	538		732	10,424	1,036	14,027	1,172	15,157
12 mo. Δ						1.346		1.081
Apr	633		848	10,639	1,160	14,339	1,160	15,157
12 mo. Δ						1.348		1.057
May	548		1,150	11,241	1,181	14,370	1,213	15,189
12 mo. Δ						1.278		1.057
Jun	1,027		1,270	11,484	1,394	14,494	1,537	15,332
12 mo. Δ						1.262		1.058
Jul	1,334		1,547	11,697	1,608	14,555		
12 mo. Δ						1.244		
Aug	1,587		1,637	11,747	1,885	14,854		
12 mo. Δ						1.265		
Sep	1,183		1,104	11,668	1,145	14,895		
12 mo. Δ						1.277		
Oct	656		1,276	12,288	1,382	15,001		
12 mo. Δ						1.221		
Nov	927		1,519	12,880	1,316	15,025		
12 mo. Δ						1.167		
Dec	656	10,106	1,191	13,415	1,207	15,041		
12 mo. Δ						1.121		

a. Including AMHS traffic.

**Hollis-Ketchikan Ferry Service
Passenger Traffic Worksheet
CY 1990 - 2004**

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Ave. Mo.	
																1990-2003	%
January	2,715	3,684	3,616	2,701	2,555	2,135	1,928	2,290	2,173	2,749	1,539	1,903	2,324 ^a	3,366	3,184 ^e	2,591	5.53
February	2,116	1,834	2,226	1,672	1,905	1,918	1,365	1,894	2,022	1,807	1,820	1,911	2,391 ^b	3,054	3,753	2,113	4.33
March	3,460	2,681	4,153	2,401	2,571	3,224	2,785	2,225	2,257	3,879	2,686	2,118	3,340	4,127	4,559	3,098	6.49
April	3,702	2,692	4,812	1,961	2,531	3,208	4,014	2,274	1,959	1,776	1,949	2,199	2,940	3,574	4,308	2,927	6.13
May	3,453	3,207	4,653	3,173	4,033	4,107	3,726	3,940	1,656	2,030	2,072	1,765	4,391	4,385	4,672	3,418	7.22
June	4,272	4,746	5,246	4,709	4,888	4,847	4,959	4,307	4,104	4,631	3,690	3,898	5,078	5,756	6,457	4,773	10.09
Subtotal	19,718	18,844	24,706	16,617	18,483	19,439	18,777	16,930	14,171	16,872	13,756	13,794	20,464	24,262	26,933		39.78
July	4,704	5,401	6,323	5,586	6,433	5,775	5,386	5,835	5,292	5,548	5,854	5,103	6,584	6,254		5,720	12.40
August	5,611	5,403	6,801	6,569	5,918	5,516	5,043	5,890	5,676	5,575	5,552	6,220	7,215	7,426		6,030	13.07
September	4,245	4,740	4,753	3,540	5,230	3,504	3,268	3,954	3,797	4,113	4,286	4,486	3,907 ^c	4,345		4,155	9.01
October	3,307	3,010	4,399	3,516	3,590	2,888	2,810	3,921	4,227	3,547	1,911	2,046	4,058	4,508		3,410	7.39
November	2,870	3,668	4,963	3,219	3,220	2,301	2,746	4,122	3,738	3,033	3,758	3,091	4,736 ^d	4,810		3,591	7.79
December	5,900	6,062	6,141	5,477	4,213	5,076	3,378	4,865	4,762	4,828	4,689	2,684	5,179	4,942		4,871	10.56
Total	46,355	47,128	58,086	44,524	47,087	44,499	41,408	45,517	41,663	43,516	39,806	37,424	52,143	56,547		46,694	100.00

a. AMHS service continued through Jan. 16, 2002, carrying 887 passengers in January. IFA service began Jan. 15, 2002. Jan. 28 (W) - Jan. 31 out of service, passenger-only service Jan. 29. Jan. 29.

b. Feb. 1-2 out of service, substitute passenger-only service Feb. 1; Feb. 8 - Feb. 14 (E) out of service, AMHS substitute service carried 314 passengers in February.

c. Sep. 4-5 out of service. Sep. 6 out of service exc. 4(W). Sep. 8 out of service exc. 1(E), Sep. 9 out of service 4(W), Sep. 10 out of service 1(E). AMHS substitute service carried 158 passengers in September.

d. Nov. 1-5, out of service for scheduled dry docking. AMHS substitute service carried 750 passengers.

e. Jan. 5-11, out of service for scheduled dry docking. AMHS substitute service carried 47 passengers.

Source: Alaska Marine Highway System, "Annual Traffic Volume Report", and Inter-island Ferry Authority, monthly traffic reports.



Appendix L – CE & I Team Meeting Agendas and Minutes

**Conservation Education & Interpretation
Steering Committee Meeting**

July 21st, 2004

9AM – Thorne Bay Ranger District Conference Room

AGENDA

1. Summary from last meeting.
2. Share Mission Statement
 - a. Comments?
 - b. Discuss Goals
3. Discuss Future Role of Steering Committee
 - a. Purpose
 - b. Roles – Committee, employees, staff, etc....
 - c. Member positions
 - i. Chairperson?
 - ii. Board of Directors?
 - iii. Sub-Committees?
 - d. Additional members?
 - e. Meeting Schedule
4. Establish next meeting time & date.
5. Set Goals for next meeting.

Feel free to bring relevant questions & comments to the meeting to discuss!



Conservation Education & Interpretation
Steering Committee Meeting
July 21, 2004 9:00AM

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Brenda McDonald, Harvey McDonald, Gary Lawton, Shelia Jacobsen (phone), Susan Howell, Emma Carcagno, Nelli Atkinson

RSVPed but couldn't make it: Dave Schmid, Mike Shira, Ray Slayton, Adam Cross, Brandy Prefontaine, KK Prussian, Sandy Frost

Discussion:

Nelli will facilitate - but by end of August another facilitator will be selected

Summary of CE & I Strategy Project given and discussed.

- Important that both Rangers are involved throughout the process.

Mission Statement Discussion:

Linking people to the Land...

Through strategic planning and development of a well trained, professional staff, the Conservation Education and Interpretation Program will strive to foster an awareness and understanding of the cultural and natural resources of Prince of Wales Island to ensure the long-term wise use of and respect for our resources.

- May condense a little wording to make to shorter.
- Otherwise it looks good !
- Goals & objectives need to be established.

Future of Steering Committee

Brainstormed ideas

- Must combine both Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger District!
- Should be interdisciplinary – “blended philosophies”
- Rangers need to be closely involved from the beginning
- Guide priorities & possible permanent position duties
- Role of committee will change over time
- Initially should involve outside FS people.
- Eventually will be....employees? Staff? Different Committees?

Committee Roles

Brainstormed Ideas

- Guide permanent staff duties/role/priority
 - Internal Education
 - Public contact
 - Workshop/orientation
 - Priorities

- Need to convey message: It is important to have positive public contact! A necessity! Top priority in everyone's job!
 - This needs to come from the 'top down'
 - Need to create understanding that less education & public contact equals less funding and support for what we do.
 - Develop hiring guidelines – skills that the CE&I staff should have.
 - Champion the CE & I effort! Promote it!
 - Establish stable funding source.
 - Determine workload and priorities for Island.
 - Not in charge of specific results.
- Questions about possible permanent CE& I position on Island
- What shop would he/she work through?
 - How will it be financed?

Back to Mission....

Brainstormed an initial list of potential GOALS (or components of Goals):

- Get message to public
- Educate in schools
- Influence public perception
- Internal Ed (on how to educate external) & about what other shops are doing.
- Reach a variety of groups
 - Tourists
 - Natives
 - Local public
 - National public
 - School
 - Etc...
- Logistical stuff
 - Staff position
 - Steering Committee role
 - Money
 - Priorities
 - Professional development
- Use of media/public affairs activities
- Meet needs of customers.
- Take a look at Tongass goals and incorporate.

NEXT MEETING:

Nelli : Create Draft set of Goals based on brainstormed list and Tongass goals.
Schedule next meeting with Dave and Greg. (The 1st week of August????)

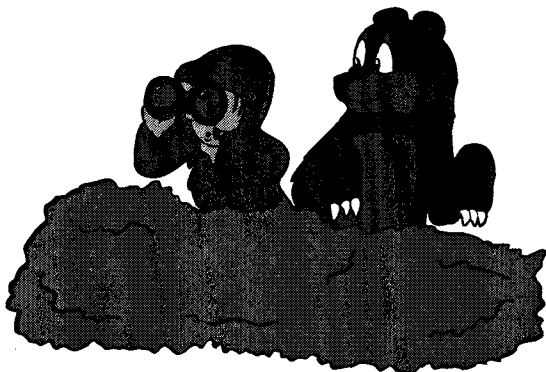
All: Recruit others to be involved!
Think about committee roles and positions.

CE&I Team Meeting

August 4th, 2004
9:30am – 11:00am

Agenda

1. Summary from last meeting.
2. Update on CE&I Status on the Tongass.
Dave (& Greg?)
3. Update on CE&I Strategy for POW & project summaries
Susan
4. Review and amend goals and objectives.
5. Committee
 - a. Organizational Structure.
 - b. Roles
 - c. Who needs to be involved?
6. Discussion of future/committee roles & purpose/funding.
 - a. Questions for Dave and Greg...
7. Next meeting
 - a. Date August _____, 2004
 - b. Goals for next meeting
 1. Nelli – rough draft of Strategy to team before August 20th
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.



Thank you!

It is wonderful to see so much excitement, dedication and support!
Keep up the excellent work!

Conservation Education & Interpretation Steering Committee

Meeting Minutes

August 4, 2004

Attendees: Greg Killinger, Dave Schmid, Gary Lawton, Susan Howell, Dale Fife, Dennis Sylvia, Sandy Frost, Terry Fifeild, Aaron Prussian, KK Prussian, Cory Mlodik, Ray Slayton, Brandi Prefontaine, Emman Carcagno, Nelli Atkinson

RSVP'd but couldn't make it: Mike Shira, Shirley Matson

Thanks for your involvement and commitment everyone!

Initial Discussion

- Coordination between Thorne Bay & Craig is needed
 - Totally different opportunities
 - Two positions
- Opportunity for us to serve as a model for the entire agency—this is the first time that a strategy like this has been put together
 - Not just a guide for POW also a workbook with process outlined so that other districts (or whoever) can figure out how to create their own strategy

About Objectives & Goals

Any changes/comments/suggestions to draft goals and objectives?

- Put in goals - a way to re-evaluate program throughout
 - How to evaluate success for CE&I
 - Credibility through accountability - in the future
 - Results are long-term, difficult to quantify
- First two goals - infrastructure (reference proposed goals)
Second two goals - implementation
- Once we start this we need to make sure that it continues forward - counterproductive to have people come & go, projects come & go, fizzle out, etc.
- Overall general approval of goals.

Things to think about

- New ferry audience - people from other southeast communities (Wrangell, Petersburg, Ketchikan)
-

Committee Logistics

What should the committee do/be?

- In charge of Program of work for 2005
 - How much of KK's (for example) time should be spent doing education, etc.
 - Prioritizing projects and people's time (district wide)
 - Get education plugged in at front end by prioritizing
- Champion for the program - try to get others involved

- Role - get strategy in place, get tools in place, NOT an active role so much - then annual/semi-annual meetings to ensure things are on track
- Objective & goals will change over time
- Implementation should be by staff NOT committee
- At least one person from each resource group (between the two districts) - will be very important - need staff officers (budget & funding) - multiple levels
- Any new project (the CE&I program for example) needs re-evaluation at all levels
- The purpose & goals of the committee should be in writing so all are on same page

Purpose of Committee

- Priorities & funding - if priorities are set & in right order funding follows - getting right parts in order is more important
- Awareness of cost
- Strategies & priorities
- Fine-tune workload - what % of individual's time spent on CE&I
- Monitoring, re-evaluate - consistency & sustainability
- Advise Rangers on CE&I program.

Who's Involved in the Committee

- Cross-section with a couple/several staff officers (not the rangers)
 - *NEED TO HAVE REPRESENTATION FROM ALL DISCIPLINES!*
- Several permanent employees - variety of disciplines (not necessarily staff officers)
- Permanent I&E employees
- Members of public - annual meeting to include members of public, all other meetings are nuts & bolts of FS policy stuff
- Total number of people - not beyond 6-7 players but open to ALL on annual basis (or semi-annual)

Specifics of WHO (nominations)

Staff

- Susan Howell
- Dale Fife
- Gary Lawton
- Erik Spillman
- Brenda McDondald

Resource Pro.

- Terry (rec)
- I&E permanent
- Timber - Chuck?
- KK
- Marcia
- Tory

Additional Comments

- Two steering committees - one for Craig & TB each (because there may be two CE&I perm employees)

- Don't want to lose the KK's, Terry's, and Baichtal's, etc. The on the ground - hands on folk...

Goals for next meeting - Friday August 13th 9am

The next meeting will be in Craig! There will be a carpool going over - and you are welcome to join us on conference call!

- Susan will have recommendations (for permanent CE&I pos.) for next meeting after discussing with other staff officers
 - Two or one positions
 - Grade & type
- Nelli will have a rough draft of the CE&I manual available for review & comments.
- Nelli will also put in writing a rough draft of committee logistics stuff for review and approval.
- Gary Lawton and Dennis Sylvia will talk to Chuck about being involved.
- Be ready to talk about more committee logistics and program object objectives.

Conservation Education & Interpretation Steering Team

Agenda

8-13-04 9:00 AM

1. Overview of 8-4-04 meeting
2. Rough Draft of Strategy to Committee
3. Discussion of Position Description (Susan)
4. Program Goals and Objectives – Review
5. Steering Committee Purpose – handout
 - a. Finalize roles and committee members

Member	Role

(Chair

- b. Future meetings (times, who is involved, etc...)
6. Questions & Discussion
7. Next Meeting
 - a. Date _____
 - b. Place _____
 - c. Goals for next meeting.
 - i.

Prince of Wales Island

Interpretation & Conservation Education Steering Meeting *Minutes*

Friday August 13th, 2004
Craig Ranger District Office

Attendees: Jeff, Tim, Norm, Katie, Shirley, Valerie, Marla, Gary, Gary L., Marcia, Emma, Tory, KK, Susan, Terry & Nelli - there were others too! Thanks for coming everyone!

Overview of last meeting.

- Tongass Strategy – leadership team signed and support.
- POW Strategy (Nelli) - The final product will be in three parts: first – an introduction, second – a workbook that any district could use to develop a I&CE program, third – POW specific guidebook (it basically will have implemented all the steps of the workbook in second part.

Overview of Program Guidebook (nelly)

- POW Specific guidebook – the meat of it is the Program Development, Implementation & Evaluation sections. Logic model was used for these parts...organizing things this way forces us to make sure that you are doing evaluation throughout and that you have all the resources and steps you need to reach your goals.
 - Nelli's hopes on what this plan will do overall:
 - Increased number of I&CE programs
 - More people involved – more disciplines involved.
 - Increased communication – both internal & external
 - Establishment of a permanent position
 - Improved quality of I, CE & other outreach efforts.
 - Awareness of audiences needs.
 - Ultimately: Build a solid and sustainable program that can grow and change with the times.
- What POW is doing is a new thing in the FS – not just the Tongass, the whole agency. We can be a role model locally and nationally.

Discussions

- Difference between interp & education: there is lots of debate! Please see pg 12-14 of the Guidebook draft for a brief explanation.
- Addition of “Permanent position skills” page to manual? Or at least to committee.

Permanent I&CE position Discussion (Susan)

- Presentation & Review of workforce analysis
- Discussion of several points:
 - What job series this should be in.
 - Skills that applicants should have.
 - Big debate = Logistics: Two positions? Vs One position? Zoned or not zoned? If not zoned what position will go on which district. Etc....

Nelli will be returning to school on August 20th. Please let her know if you have any questions! She will also be available to have conference calls with committee whenever needed!

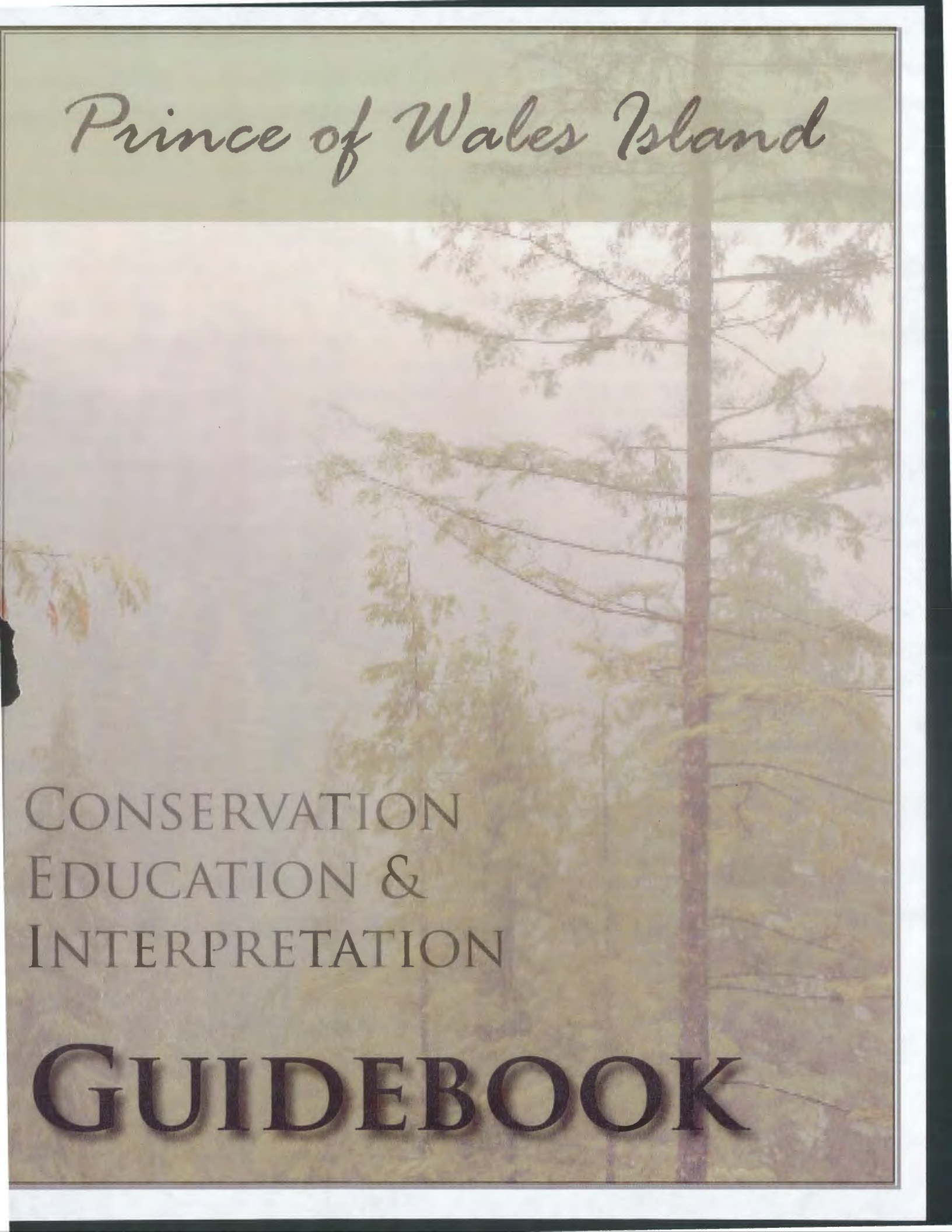
NEXT MEETING: time and place to be determined

Discuss and decide on committee logistics:

Members, Roles, reporting system, goals, etc....

Appendix M

*Prince of Wales Island
Conservation Education & Interpretation Guidebook*



Prince of Wales Island

CONSERVATION
EDUCATION &
INTERPRETATION

GUIDEBOOK

*This Guidebook was produced by College of Natural Resource
graduate student, Nelli Atkinson at the University of Wisconsin
Stevens Point in collaboration with the
US Forest Service - Thorne Bay Ranger District.*

May 2005

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The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry, no matter how small, should be recorded to ensure the integrity of the financial statements. This includes not only sales and purchases but also expenses and income. The document provides a detailed list of items that should be tracked, such as inventory levels, accounts receivable, and accounts payable. It also outlines the proper procedures for recording these transactions, including the use of double-entry bookkeeping and the importance of regular reconciliations.

The second part of the document focuses on the analysis of the financial data. It explains how to interpret the various components of the financial statements, such as the balance sheet, income statement, and cash flow statement. It provides a step-by-step guide to calculating key financial ratios and metrics, such as the current ratio, debt-to-equity ratio, and return on investment. The document also discusses the significance of these ratios and how they can be used to assess the financial health and performance of the organization.

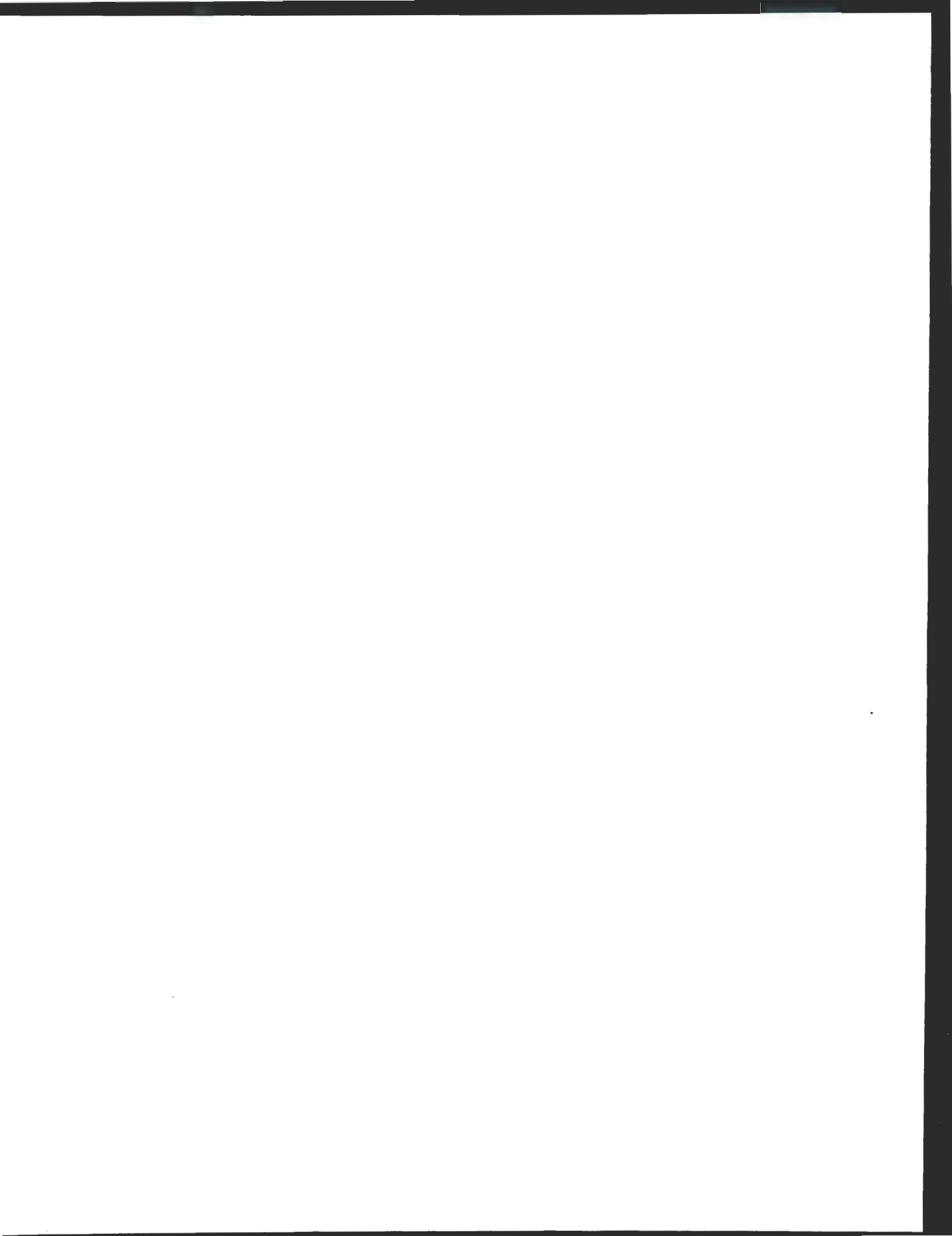
The final part of the document addresses the reporting requirements for the financial statements. It outlines the format and content of the financial statements, including the required disclosures and the role of the auditor. It also discusses the importance of transparency and accountability in financial reporting, and provides guidance on how to communicate the results of the financial analysis to stakeholders.



PART ONE

An Introduction

*How to Use this Guidebook
A Program Overview*



Chapter One

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry, no matter how small, should be recorded to ensure the integrity of the financial statements. This includes not only sales and purchases but also expenses, income, and any other financial activity.

Next, the document outlines the various methods used to collect and analyze data. It mentions the use of surveys, interviews, and focus groups to gather information from a diverse group of participants. The data is then analyzed using statistical techniques to identify trends and patterns. This process is crucial for understanding the underlying factors that influence the results.

The document also addresses the challenges of data collection and analysis. It notes that obtaining a representative sample can be difficult, and there is always a risk of bias. To mitigate these risks, the researcher uses a variety of methods and ensures that the data is collected in a consistent and unbiased manner. Additionally, the document discusses the importance of transparency in reporting the results and the limitations of the study.

Finally, the document concludes by summarizing the key findings and their implications. It highlights the need for continued research in this area and suggests potential areas for future study. The overall goal is to provide a comprehensive overview of the research process and the results obtained.

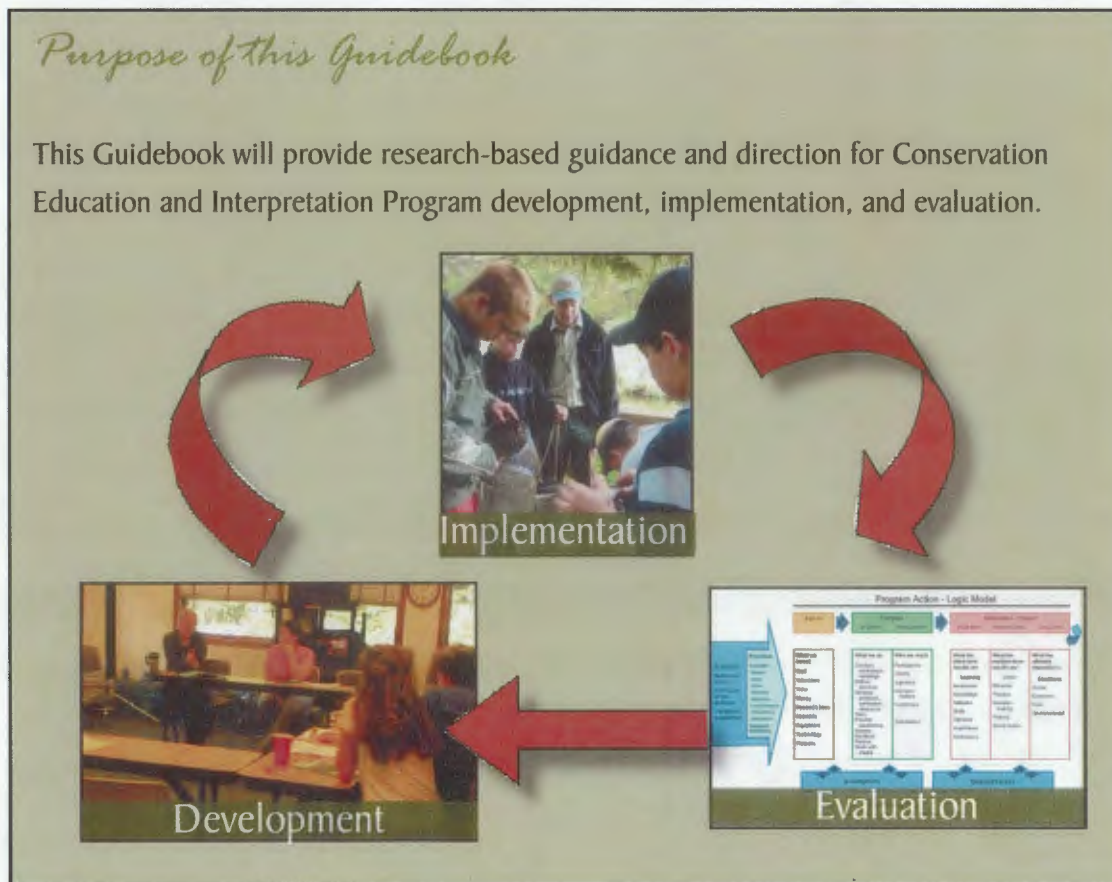
HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Guidebook Overview

The Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education & Interpretation *Guidebook* is a multi-dimensional resource that serves a wide array of user needs. From broad guidelines and tips about program development, to specific information about the Prince of Wales Island conservation education & interpretation program, components of this guidebook strive to meet the needs of the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District staff while reaching out to a larger Forest Service audience. This Guidebook can also be a tool and resource to any educator or interpreter that works in a rural area and wishes to begin or improve an education and/or interpretation program.

Purpose of this Guidebook

This Guidebook will provide research-based guidance and direction for Conservation Education and Interpretation Program development, implementation, and evaluation.





How to Use this Guide

Guidebook Organization

The Guidebook is divided into three main parts. Part one gives an overview of the Guidebook and how it was developed. Part Two is a general guide that nearly any educator or interpreter could find useful. Part Three is specific to Prince of Wales Island, but also may be useful to others as a case study.

Part One - An Introduction

This section of the Guidebook gives an overview of the Tongass National Forest and Prince of Wales Island. It also describes the philosophy used throughout the Guidebook, the research project in which the Guidebook was developed, and provides working definitions for environmental education and interpretation.



Purpose: To fill the gap that exists in the Forest Service management direction of conservation education and interpretation between the Forest and Ranger District levels.

Part Two - Building a Program

How do I determine my audiences' needs? What can I do to evaluate my program?

This section can answer these questions and many more! It takes a step back from the specificity of Prince of Wales Island, to give general guidelines and tips to anyone who has questions about rural environmental education and interpretation program development, implementation and evaluation. Topics include: determining a program's history and current status, assessing audience needs, establishing a steering team, developing mission and goals, implementation strategies and evaluation techniques.

An Introduction



Part Three - Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education & Interpretation Program

The third part of the Guidebook specifically focuses on the Prince of Wales Island's Forest Service Ranger Districts - Thorne Bay and Craig. This section can be used as a 'case study' or an example of how the methods outlined in Part Two can be carried out. It also serves as a coordinating guide for the conservation education and interpretation efforts being planned on the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts of Prince of Wales Island, Tongass National Forest.

Who can use this Guidebook?

Thorne Bay & Craig Ranger District Employees

There is a plethora of information that is specific to the Prince of Wales Island Forest Service Conservation Education and Interpretation Program. Part One and Three are specifically written for the employee(s) who are coordinating the Program, as well as the employees implementing conservation education and interpretation programs on Prince of Wales Island. It offers the following resources:

- General information about the area (great for introducing new employees to the district)
- Specific guidelines on improving, developing, implementing and evaluating conservation education and interpretation efforts.
- It also may be helpful to any employee engaging in public outreach (public meetings, newsletter or brochure development, informational presentation, etc...)
- Conservation Education and Interpretation resources (books, web-sites, curriculums, etc...)

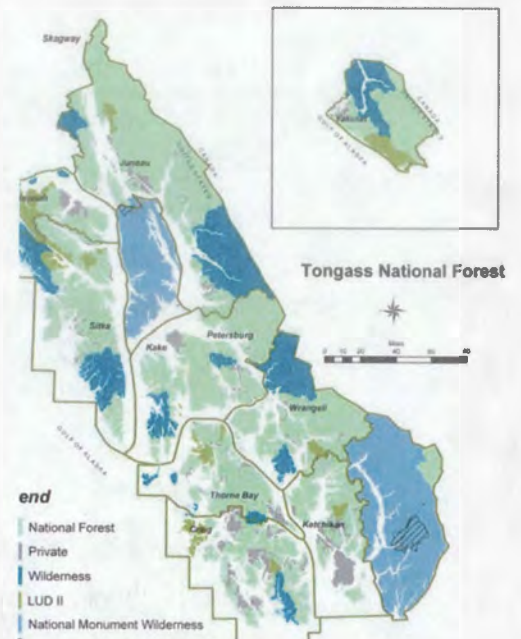




How to Use this Guide

Tongass National Forest Ranger District Employees

All parts of this Guidebook may be beneficial to use as a resource, example and guide for programs in the Tongass National Forest. In Part One, general information about the Tongass is depicted, as well as Forest Service management direction. Part Two gives guidelines on how to go about developing, implementing and evaluating a conservation education and interpretation program specific to other Ranger Districts. Part Three gives specific information on the process that the Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger Districts have used to develop, implement, and evaluate a conservation education and interpretation program - this can serve as a model for other Districts.



Educators and Interpreters seeking to build or improve programs



Part Two offers solid, universal guidelines and techniques for developing implementing and evaluating an environmental education and/or interpretation program in rural areas across the country. In an easy to use, workbook style it can guide program coordinators through all aspects of program planning. Whether collecting data on audience needs or determining the best evaluation techniques - there are tips on how to start and carry out the processes.

An Introduction



How was this Guidebook created

The Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education & Interpretation Guidebook was created as part of a graduate research project completed by Nelli Atkinson. Nelli was a graduate student in environmental education and interpretation at the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point from August of 2003 to May of 2005. Through this research she developed this Guidebook for the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts on the Tongass National Forest. The contents of this Guidebook are based on the results of an in-depth primary and secondary source review, community focus group interviews, local school teacher questionnaires and Forest Service employee surveys. If there are any questions regarding the research project or the Guidebook please contact the Thorne Bay Ranger District 907-828-3304 for more information.

Thank You!

This project could not have been completed without the help and support from the following individuals and organizations.

UW Stevens Point Faculty/Organizations

*Dr. Michael Gross
Dr. Rick Wilke
Dr. Robert Holsman
Ron Zimmerman
Jim Buchholz
Dr. Brenda Lackey
GEM Education Center*

The USDA - Forest Service

*Thorne Bay Ranger District Employees
Susan Howell
Emma Carcagno
Dave Schmid
Craig Ranger District Employees*

Tongass National Forest

*Sandy Frost
Ashley Atkinson (photographer)
Ron Medel and the Tongass Fish & Wildlife Shop*

Others

*Austin Williams
Jan Atkinson
Rand Atkinson*

Page Layout



Chapter Title

Section Title

Each section will contain paragraphs with content regarding the section heading.

Helpful tidbits on carrying out the process described in the content section

Tips



Resources

Additional sources for information will be listed in colored text boxes.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry, no matter how small, should be recorded to ensure the integrity of the financial statements. This includes not only sales and purchases but also expenses, income, and any other financial activity. The document also highlights the need for regular reconciliation of accounts to identify any discrepancies early on.

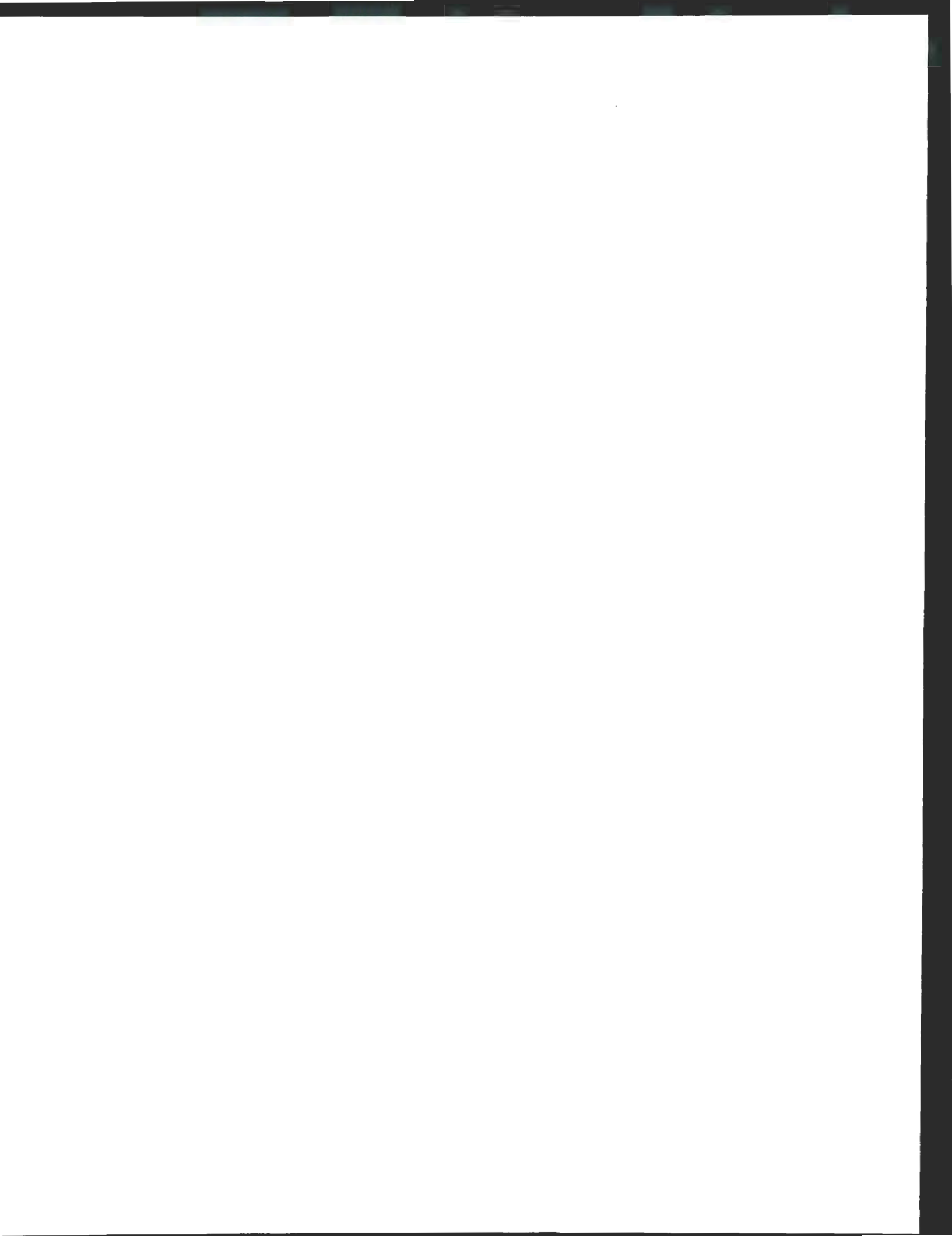
In addition, the document provides a detailed overview of the accounting cycle, which consists of eight steps: identifying the accounting cycle, analyzing and recording the business transactions, posting to the ledger, preparing a trial balance, adjusting the accounts, preparing financial statements, and closing the books. Each step is explained in detail, with examples and practical tips to help the reader understand the process.

The document also covers the classification of accounts into assets, liabilities, and equity, and how these are recorded in the ledger. It discusses the importance of debits and credits, and how they are used to record transactions. The document also provides a detailed explanation of the double-entry system, which is the foundation of modern accounting.

Finally, the document discusses the preparation of financial statements, including the balance sheet, income statement, and statement of cash flows. It explains how these statements are prepared from the ledger and how they provide a comprehensive overview of the company's financial performance. The document also discusses the importance of auditing and how it helps to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the financial statements.

Chapter Two

A PROGRAM OVERVIEW



A PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A Sense of Place

The Tongass National Forest

The Tongass National Forest is a hidden treasure. A misty land of emerald islands-scattered in an icy ocean and laced with shimmering streams. A rain saturated blanket of towering trees drapes the hill slopes, giving the region it's temperate rain forest character.



As with most treasures, conflict and controversy often surround the Tongass. America's largest national forest often finds itself in the middle of an intense and constant game of tug-of-war. Each action or inaction leads to controversy, on local to global scales. This perpetual struggle with many players, catalysts and components, has been in existence since humans first set foot on this mystical island archipelago.



A Program Overview

Prince of Wales Island

Prince of Wales Island, at the southern tip of the Tongass, has managed to capture a diverse array of natural wonders within its watery borders. Enormous spruce and cedar thrive on karst soils, miles of unexplored caves meander beneath the ground, thriving salmon populations rush the Island's rivers each year, and rugged mountain peaks jut up above soft green hills.

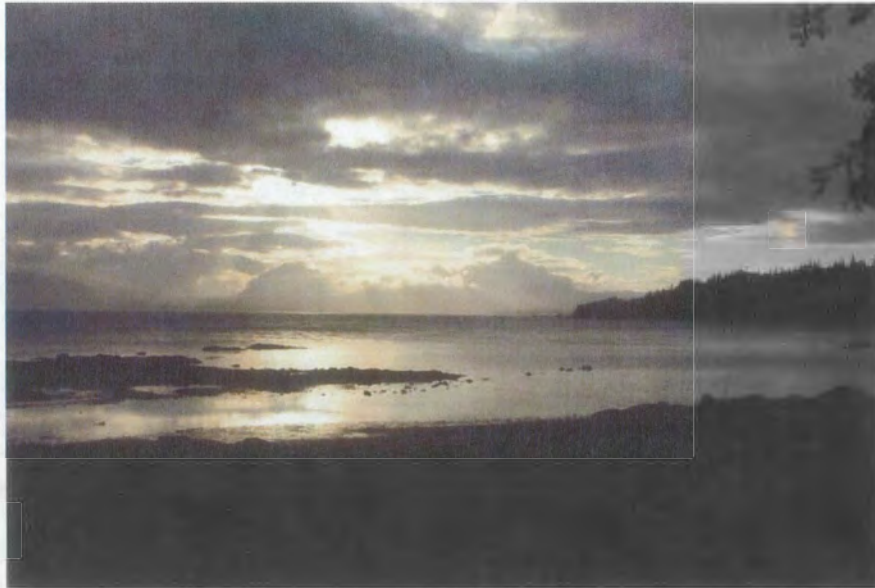
Not aloof from the Tongass' conflict and controversy, battles have waged for decades amongst the Island's natural beauty. Land management issues, socio-economic struggles, and a constant state of social, economic and environmental change are just a few factors that play a role in weaving the dynamic atmosphere that exists on the Island.



An Introduction



An additional factor that has compounded controversy, both on Prince of Wales Island and across the Tongass, is the lack of educated involvement by America's citizens in the management of their public lands. Recently, the Tongass National Forest has initiated a strategic movement in developing a comprehensive and coordinated effort to reach out and educate the local, national and global public about the issues that surround this precarious treasure.



"So numerous are the islands that they seem to have been sown broadcast; long tapering vistas between the largest of them open in every direction. "

John Muir



A Program Overview

Creating Connections

For the purpose of this guidebook, environmental (or conservation) education and interpretation will be looked at as two separate and distinct disciplines that strive to make connections to the public. However, this Guidebook will follow the guidelines set up in the Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy by coordinating efforts between two philosophically and historically separate disciplines. Conservation education and interpretation, together, will be a critical component in reaching out to America's citizens, sparking interest, fabricating connections, building knowledge and giving them the tools they need to make educated decisions about their public land and its management.



An Introduction



Purpose

A critical component to bridging the communication gaps that often surround public land controversies and maintenance of the integrity of our public lands, are a “well-educated and ecologically sound citizenry.” One of the best ways to achieve this is by connecting peoples “hearts and minds” to the land (Dombeck, Williams, and Wood, 2002).

How do we, as employees of the Tongass National Forest, help people make connections to this national treasure where we live, work, and play?



Education and interpretation are two of the primary ways the Forest Service makes connections with their internal and external public. This *Conservation Education and Interpretation Guidebook* will help to facilitate building a base upon which to construct a Conservation Education and Interpretation Program. It will achieve this in two ways:

- The Guidebook will explore the diverse education and interpretation efforts that exist, the audience needs that are present, and approaches that the Forest Service on Prince of Wales Island can use to make effective connections to its local, national and global audiences. Program development, implementation and evaluation techniques will be addressed.
- Additionally, the Guidebook can act as a manual for other rural ranger districts across the Tongass National Forest to use to develop quality, sustainable conservation education and interpretation programs that fit the needs of its audience, consider the resource, and help carry out the Agency’s mission and goals.



A Program Overview

What is Environmental Education?

Environmental education, as defined by the internationally recognized professional organization - North American Association of Environmental Education (NAAEE), is "a process that aims to develop an environmentally literate citizenry that can compete in our global economy; has the skills, knowledge, and inclinations to make well-informed choices; and exercises the rights and responsibilities as members of a community." (<http://www.naaee.org/npeee/>, 2003) Beyond the definition, environmental education programs may also have certain traits:



- It is based on a specific curriculum.
- Educational goals and specific learning objectives are set.
- A more formal audience (like schools children or adult workshops) is usually addressed.
- Part of a larger program, with pre- and post-experiences that build and reemphasize concepts.

(Merriman and Brochu 2002).

Direction for environmental education was officially established in 1977, when the world's first intergovernmental conference on the environment was held in Tbilisi Georgia (USSR) (Intergovernmental Conference on Environmental Education, 1977). The result of this conference was the Tbilisi Declaration which outlines the framework, principles and guidelines for environmental education at all levels and for all age groups. The Tbilisi Declaration states three goals for environmental education:



The Goals of Environmental Education

1. To foster clear awareness of, and concern about, economic, social, political, and ecological interdependence in urban and rural areas;
2. to provide every person with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, values, attitudes, commitment, and skills needed to protect and improve the environment;
3. to create new patterns of behavior of individuals, groups, and society as a whole towards the environment.



A forest conservation education program built between the Southeast Island School District and the Thorne Bay Ranger District gives students opportunities to learn about forest resources from field experts.



A Program Overview

The goals are broken down into objectives. The objective categories for environmental education are:

Levels of Environmental Education

Awareness. To help social groups and individuals acquire an awareness and sensitivity to the total environment and its allied problems.

Knowledge. To help social groups and individuals gain a variety of experience in, and acquire a basic understanding of, the environment and its associated problems.

Attitudes. To help social groups and individuals acquire a set of values and feelings of concern for the environment and the motivation for actively participating in environmental improvement and protection.

Skills. To help social groups and individuals acquire the skills for identifying and solving environmental problems.

Participation. To provide social groups and individuals with an opportunity to be actively involved at all levels in working toward resolution of environmental problems.

An Introduction



Environmental education is referred to as 'conservation education' by the Forest Service in order to reiterate the agency's focus on conservation of natural and cultural resources. Although, conservation education is often seen as a forerunner to environmental education, the definitions of both efforts are, in this case similar. The Forest Service defines conservation education as:

"...a learning process concerned with the interrelationships among components of the natural and human-made world producing growth in the individual and leading to responsible land stewardship."

Tongass National Forest Interpretation & Conservation Education Strategy, 2004





A Program Overview

What is Interpretation?

Interpretation is defined by the National Association of Interpretation as “a communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the inherent meanings of the resource.”

Often interpretation is a one-time experience for the audience and is meant to be used in a purely recreational context. In the book *Interpretive Master Planning*, John Veverka describes interpretation as “recreational learning”, something that is fun and appeals to visitors who are in a “vacation frame of mind.” Audiences of interpretation are not seeking to become experts on a particular topic, but

Goals of Interpretation

As they relate to the Site:

- Foster proper use.
- Develop advocates for the site.

As they relate to the Agency:

- Enhance the image of the agency.
- Encourage public participation in management.

As they relate to the Visitor:

- Provide recreation.
- Heighten awareness and understanding of their natural and cultural environment.

The Interpreters Guidebook
by Michael Gross, Ron Zimmerman &
Kathleen Regnier



This sign panel on the Prince of Wales Island Beaver Falls Interpretive Trail is a form of non-personal interpretation.

An Introduction



looking to have fun learning about something they find interesting (Veverka, 1994). Interpretation does not solely address environmental resources but can be applied to any topic or setting (Merriman and Brochu 2002). Examples of interpretive methods include exhibits, publications, facilities, signage, and personal services (TNF I&CE Strategy, 2004).

The Forest Service defines interpretation as,

“activities and programs designed to develop a National Forest’s visitor interest, enjoyment and understanding of the natural environment of the National Forest, and the mission of the Forest Service in managing those lands.”

(Forest Service Manual 2390)

Interpretive services should also develop intellectual and emotional connections between people and the heritage of the area, both cultural and natural. Through these connections, a respect and appreciation for America’s public lands will be gained, and ultimately lead to protection and strong stewardship in the future (Tongass National Forest Interpretation & Conservation Education Strategy, 2004).



This program about the El Cap Cave on Prince of Wales Island is a form of personal interpretation.



A Program Overview

Forest Service Management & Direction

To achieve consistency, leaders at national, regional, forest and district levels of the Forest Service have established guiding principles to steer education and interpretation programs throughout the agency. It is important for programs at all levels to fit within this management framework in order to be justifiable and supported. The current hierarchical framework within which Forest Service conservation education and interpretation programs should function is outlined below. National guidelines are stated as well as guiding principles for the Alaska Region and the Tongass National Forest.



National Direction

US Forest Service Mission

The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivities of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.



The Forest Service Manual Direction

Forest Service Manual (FSM) 2390 states, "Interpretive services activities and programs are designed to develop a National Forest visitor's interest, enjoyment and understanding of the natural environment of the National Forest and the mission of the Forest Service in managing those public lands."



FSM 1623 states that the objectives of the Natural Resources and Conservation Education Program (NRCE) are:

- To promote public awareness and understanding of the importance of natural resources and call attention to particular issues related to forest productivity, protection, and use.
 - To provide leadership in natural resource and environmental education.
 - To enlist the cooperation of institutions and organizations in developing broad public understanding of and support for the wise management and use of forest and rangeland resources.
 - To assist agency personnel in better understanding natural resource issues.
 - To assist resources managers in meeting resource management goals."
- (Tongass National Forest Interpretation & Conservation Education Strategy, 2004)



A Program Overview

Interpretive Services Strategy

Completed in 2003, the agency-wide Interpretive Services Strategy provides guidance for enhancing delivery of interpretive experiences through services and facilities. It also strives for excellence in service to the American public, both on and off national forests and grasslands. The goal of Interpretive Services in the Forest Service is to,

“create intellectual and emotional connections between people and their natural and cultural heritage, thereby instilling respect and appreciation for America’s public lands and fostering their protection and stewardship through time.”

The strategy also addresses the relationship between the Forest Service and their neighbors and visitors. “The Forest Service contributes to the physical, emotional and intellectual desires and expectations of people by providing relevant and authentic experiential opportunities both on and off the forests.”



Beaver Falls Interpretive Trail, Prince of Wales Island.

An Introduction



Conservation Education Vision-to-Action Strategy

Completed in 1998, this multi-disciplinary produced plan was developed to establish an agency-wide vision for all Forest Service education programs. The mission of the Forest Service's conservation education program is:

"By 2002, Forest Service conservation education will be an effective, dynamic means for the Forest Service to connect the American people with their environment. The Forest Service will provide the tools Americans need to participate effectively in the critical task of sustaining our Nation's natural and cultural resources. This undertaking will be a coordinated, service wide effort that will affect all aspects of the agency's operations."

There are two core themes that support this mission:

- Sustainability of natural and cultural resources in forest, grasslands, and aquatic ecosystems.
- Awareness and understanding of interrelationships in natural systems and between people and the land."

Conservation Education Strategic Plan - Mission Statement

Through education, we connect people to the land so they can take informed actions to sustain natural and cultural resources.



A Program Overview

Alaska Region Direction

Interpretation and Education in the Alaska Region 2003-2006

A regional planning meeting resulted in the following statements.

Mission: Sparking imaginations, fostering stewardship of Alaska's National Forests.

Vision: Through our efforts, people value National Forests and resources, and work together to assure wise management of them.

Strategic Direction

The Interpretation and Conservation Education programs of the Alaska Region, emphasize the following key messages:

- Ecosystems

Alaska's National Forests are dynamic ecosystems, shaped by nature, woven by culture.

- World Class Resources

People can discover a unique combination of resources in the National Forests of Alaska. These world-class resources are important globally, nationally, and locally.

- Management and Stewardship

We, and our partners, care for your National Forests in Alaska using the best information to sustain the use and protection of resources for today and tomorrow.



- People and the Land

Alaska's coastal lands and waterways have met people's social, physical, and spiritual needs for thousands of years. Alaska's National Forests will continue to nurture the region's natural and cultural diversity for future generations.



Tongass Direction

Tongass Land & Resource Management Plan (TLRMP)

This document, completed in 1997, is the manual that directs actions on the Tongass. The plan offers some guidance in regards to Interpretive Services but there is little that specifically addresses conservation education. Instead, conservation education direction is interspersed among disciplines' Standards and Guidelines.



Interpretive Services

- Provide an Interpretive Services program that is designed to accurately develop an interest in the environments of Southeast Alaska, and the mission of the Forest Service.
 - Conduct on-site interpretive activities to a level consistent with Land Use Designation objectives.
-
- Assist visitors and users to understand the role of natural and cultural resources in the development of industry, heritage and culture in SE Alaska.
 - Promote visitor understanding of the National Forest System.
 - Inform visitors of the distribution, differences and roles of Federal, state and private lands found in Southeast Alaska and the range of recreation and cultural interest opportunities and facilities available.
 - Follow a coordinated program of awareness and training for all employees, and partners to ensure a consistent program of public service.



A Program Overview

Heritage Management

- Identify opportunities and priorities for interpretation of Heritage Resources for public education and recreation.

Karst/Cave Management

- Develop public education and interpretive programs to foster an increased appreciation for cave resources.



An Introduction



Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Education Strategy

In 2003, representatives from across the Tongass met to discuss and brainstorm a strategic plan for conservation education and interpretation efforts on the Tongass. The result of this meeting, and the meetings and legwork that followed, was a comprehensive and cohesive document that provides a directional framework for the Tongass. It was endorsed by the Tongass Leadership Team in July 2004, and will now guide all Interpretation and conservation education efforts on the Forest.

Vision

Create a future where the Tongass NF is nationally recognized in presenting effective, engaging interpretation and education services that meet the needs and expectations of our public and further our land stewardship mission.

Goal 1: Program Coordination

Promote a coordinated, sustainable I & E program at all levels of the Forest.

Goal 2: Quality Services that Meet Needs

Provide products and services that are high-quality, reflect Forest priorities and key messages, and meet the needs and expectations of our customers.

Goal 3: Building Partnerships

Increase and enhance interpretive services and conservation education partnerships on the Tongass National Forest.

Goal 4: Professional Development

Develop and retain a professional Interpretive Services and Conservation Education Staff on the Tongass NF.



A Program Overview

Tongass National Forest Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes were also developed for the Tongass. These themes do not include everything that is to be conveyed in interpretive efforts, but they communicate the ideas that are essential in order for visitors to understand the dynamic Tongass.

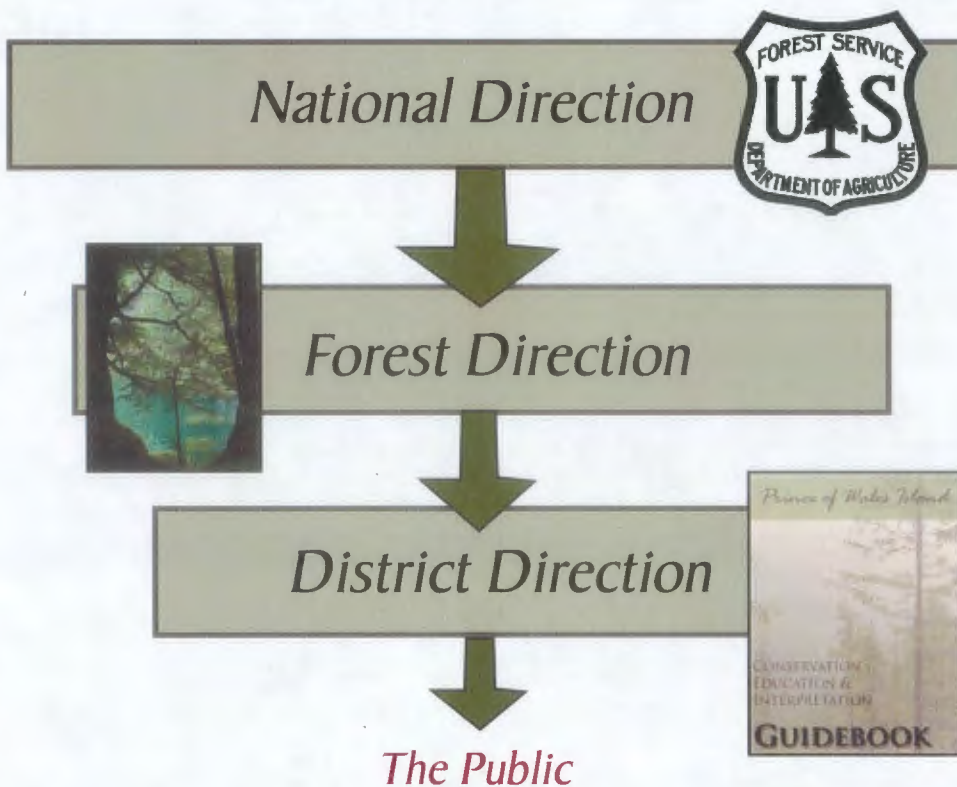
1. The Tongass National Forest is a dynamic ecosystem, shaped by nature, woven by culture.
2. People can discover a unique combination of resources in the Tongass National Forest. These world-class resources are important globally, nationally, and locally.
3. Alaska's coastal lands and waterways have met peoples' social, physical, and spiritual needs for thousands of years. The Tongass National Forest will continue to nurture the region's natural and cultural diversity for future generations.
4. We, and our partners, care for your Tongass National Forest using the best information to sustain the use and protection of resources for today and tomorrow.





Ranger District Direction

Some districts have taken steps in the past to develop interpretive plans. However, these plans often sat on shelves because they were not part of a larger framework. Now that national and forest level direction is in place, the only step missing in providing strategic direction for conservation education and interpretation is on the District level. Since that is where most of the public contacts are made, it is a crucial step to the success of conservation education and interpretation efforts. This Guidebook attempts to fill the District level directional gap, while also providing on-the-ground guidelines for program development, implementation and evaluation.







PART TWO

Building A Program

*Gaining Perspective
Establishing A Team
Determining Direction
Creating A Program*





Overview

Part Two of the *Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education & Interpretation Guidebook* is a program development, implementation and evaluation workbook for Ranger Districts seeking to build or improve their conservation education and interpretation program. This section will detail who should be involved in a program, what steps should be taken to develop a sustainable and dynamic program, and the methods used to carry out each step. This section can be used independently or in conjunction with Part Three - which details implementation of the methods described in this section to develop a program specifically for the Ranger Districts on Prince of Wales Island, Tongass National Forest.





Chapter Three

GAINING PERSPECTIVE



GAINING PERSPECTIVE

Looking Back

An important part of moving forward is looking at the past and reflecting on how it influences the future. It is important to know the history of a program so trends, challenges and successes can be identified and taken into consideration during the planning, development and implementation of new conservation education and interpretation programs. It is also vital to recognize where a program currently stands in order to strengthen what exists.



There are many techniques you can use for gaining insight into the past, below are a few places to start looking for information about your program's past. This Guidebook gives a broad overview of conservation education and interpretation in the Forest Service, and specifically the Tongass National Forest



Gaining Perspective

Resources

National

Myers, Connie. (1989). "Understanding the Past...Designing the Future." USDA – Forest Service.

United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service. (November 1999). "Conservation Education in the Forest Service." Washington DC: United States Forest Service.

United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service. Cooperative Forestry. (May 1998). "Conservation Education Task Force Report and Recommendations: Vision-to-Action Strategy." Washington, DC: United States Forest Service.

Forest

United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service. Tongass National Forest. (August 2004).

"Tongass National Forest Interpretation & Conservation Education Strategy." United States Forest Service.

Rakestraw, Lawrence. (2002). A History of the United States Forest Service In Alaska. USDA – Forest Service, Alaska Region.

Hakala, R. (1995). "Forest Naturalist on Land and Sea." United States Department of Agriculture-Forest Service, Alaska Region.

Collecting local information

- Interview current employees who have been at your location for a extended period of time.
- Interview past employees that may have been involved in conservation education and interpretation efforts.
- Check the local library for pictures or documents describing community programs that may have been done in the past.
- Develop an informal questionnaire for current employees.
- Search District files, documents, pictures for evidence of past programs.



Current Condition

It is just as important to know where a program currently stands as it is to understand its history and future direction. In order to determine your program's current condition you can use many of the same techniques mentioned in the "Looking Back" section. Additionally, the following techniques can help you gain an understanding of the components of your current program.

- Observation - What do you see happening?
- Annual reports - What do other people report as happening?
- In-depth employee Questionnaires (see Appendix A for an example)
- Community member insight
 - Focus Group Interviews (see Appendix B)
- School District Insight
 - Teacher Questionnaire (see Appendix C)
- Additional ways specific to your program.





What Should You Do?

When gathering information regarding a program's history and current status, it may be valuable to keep your eye's open for several categories of information. Contemplating the questions below will help you more deeply understand your program.

Ask yourself the following questions:

History

What are strengths of past programs? Should those strong components be continued into future programming?

What are weaknesses of past programs? How can we overcome those weaknesses in future programming?

What challenges existed in past programs? Are there ways that we can surmount those challenges (and others) in the future?

Current Status

What currently exists? What are the strengths and weaknesses?

What do our audiences perceive as strengths and weaknesses? What other needs and expectations do they hold?

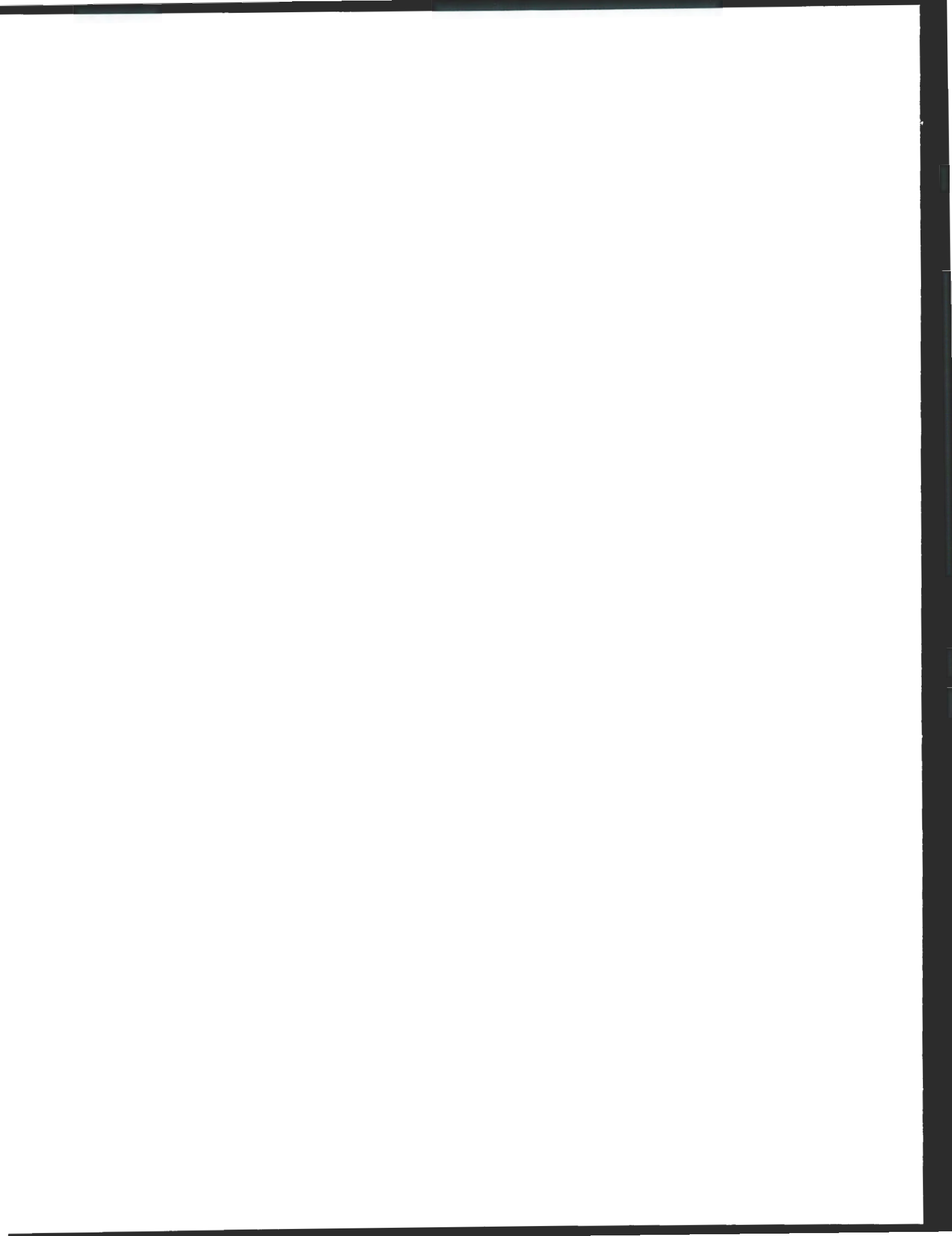
What is the current philosophy and atmosphere regarding conservation education and interpretation in the Agency?

What internal goals, expectations, and objectives must be met?

Developing a written account of your understanding to the above questions will be helpful in facilitating program progress in the coming chapters. Please see Part Three, Chapters 7 & 8 of this Guidebook for an example in the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District.

Chapter Four

ESTABLISHING A TEAM



ESTABLISHING A TEAM

Teams make better decisions. Teams foster learning. Teams share information and ideas. However, teams can be a nightmare if not developed and facilitated in an effective manner (Harbridge Consulting Group, Ltd, 1994) (McReynolds, 2005). The following pages will describe tips and techniques for developing and managing an effective conservation education and/or interpretation team.



Why a Team?

Conservation education and interpretation both strive to pull together a variety of components of the natural world and connect people to them. Conservation education and interpretation incorporate the content of nearly every discipline. Therefore when developing and directing a program, it is important to have involvement from a variety of disciplines to gain their perspective, buy-in and support.



Benefits of a Team

- Opportunities for shared learning
- Are needed to create and implement action plans.
- More likely to complete action plans.
- Many minds working toward the same goal!



Establishing a Team

Who should be

When considering who should be on your conservation education and interpretation team there are many factors to take into account, below are some recommendations:

- 5-10 people on the team
- A wide-variety of disciplines involved (if not ALL disciplines)
- A few people with the ability to make or influence decisions (staff officers, district rangers, etc...)
- The CE & I program coordinator
- People who have been in the Ranger District for awhile.
- * People who are new to the area/organization.
- People who are passionate and committed to the team's purpose.
- Members that have a wide-variety of individual strengths.

What is a Team

Before a group of people can become an effective team, they need to know what a team is. There are many resources that will give you definitions of the word *team*.

Once the group understands what a team is, it is best to figure out the details of what the team will do, how it will function, what the outcomes will be and other important aspects of an effective team. Corky McReynolds, a professor at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, uses the Five P's as a way to break down the visible components of an effective team. The Five P's stand for: Purpose, Protocol, Progress, People and Product.



Purpose

Having a sense of direction is essential to being an effective team. So developing a purpose is the first thing a team must discover. Some teams, when created, already have a purpose, others may have to better define their purpose or develop a purpose from scratch. If your conservation education and/or interpretation team doesn't have purpose take time to clearly define what the team will be doing, and why it exists.

Our Conservation Education & Interpretation Team Purpose:

Things to Keep in Mind

- Is the team working within the larger Forest Service mission?
- Is the team's purpose clear and concise?
- Does the team have outcomes that support its mission and purpose?

All team members should contribute to the development of the team's purpose and be accepting and supportive of it. The purpose will be the team's base for determining success and achievements.



Establishing a Team

Protocol

In order for the team to make progress toward its purpose and goals. It must develop a set of rules on how basic team functioning will occur. It also must make sure that the limits that the team is functioning within are clearly understood. To develop a team protocol there are three main avenues to address - Parameters, Methods of Operation and Decision Making.

Parameters

Parameters are outside restrictions on the group. For example: Administration states that the team will not be in charge of budget issues. Or, the administration states the team will only make recommendations, not actually implement their ideas.

It is important that these limits are as clear as possible when the group is developing their protocol. The clearer these parameters are, the less issues and frustrations that will arise further into the process. If a parameter is unclear, ask administrators, or others that may have outside control on your teams influence.

Things to Keep in Mind

Parameters could be from...

- Administration
- Budget restrictions
- Time of members
- Member skill/resources
- Many others!

Identify the parameters that the team must function within.



Rules and Methods of Operation

As with almost anything, having a basic set of rules is very important when working with a group of people. In a team setting, having a set of principles that everyone in the team is accountable for will often diffuse conflict before it arises. These rules can deal with everything from basic team functions (such as creating and sticking to an agenda), to how the team members will treat each other (such as only one person may talk at a time). Again, everyone should agree to this set of rules and be a part of their development. These rules should be written and visible to the entire team at every meeting.

Our Team Rules:

Things to Keep in Mind

Do your rules...

Ensure that all personalities are heard?

Clearly outline how the team will operate?

Define how the team will make decisions?

Decision Making

One of the most beneficial results of a team is its ability to make better decisions. However, in order to make better decisions, it is important to have a clear process in place to guide discussion and the process leading up to a decision. The team's decision



Establishing a Team

making process can be stated as part of the team rules, or through another understood method. Whatever the decision making process is, it should consistently implemented. It should also encourage all group members to be actively involved, innovative, and thoughtful in their approach to decision-making.

How will our Team make decisions?

Things to Keep in Mind

A few options...

- Discussion
- Consensus
- Voting
- A form of group process
- A combination...

Progress

In order for a team to fulfill its purpose it must make progress toward it. To make progress, priorities need to be identified and addressed.

Priorities

There are many techniques used to prioritize actions. One way that provides equal opportunity for participation from everyone is nominal group technique. This process is described in Chapter 5 when developing mission and vision statements.



Our Team Priorities Are.

Actions

Once priorities are identified, plans must be made to address priorities. This is when details become important! Developing an “action plan” outlines the who, what, where, when and how of what the team does. An action plan template can be found in Appendix D. This is a very important step in keeping the team moving forward and accountable for its actions.

People

The people that make up your team each bring specific personal strengths to the table. It is important to acknowledge each individual within the team and make sure that the team processes are meeting their more personal needs. Making sure each person has a role, is committed, and there is a plan in place to deal with personal conflict are essential in building an effective team.



Establishing a Team

In a truly effective team, individual roles (such as facilitator, time keeper, record-keeper, etc ..) are dynamic and interchangeable. However, in the beginning stages of a team it may be more effective for everyone to take on one specific role. Make sure that each member has a purposeful role within the team that is based on the priorities. When a member is actively involved, they have personal 'buy-in' into the team.

What role/s will each team-member play?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Everyone has probably been on a team in which some of its members were not committed to the team and its purpose. *How did you feel about that experience? Was the team successful?* If a team is not fully committed it will not be successful.



Product

As the team moves toward achieving its priorities, evidence of its progress should be seen along the way. This evidence is used to show a clear closure to one task and illustrate a point in which the team is ready to move on to the next task. For each success, it is important to celebrate. This emphasizes a sense of achievement in the group. Progress can be shown in a many ways. A few examples are; through task accomplishment, positive outside feedback, meeting goals and objectives, positive team experiences for all team members, and many others!

Continuation

This may also be a time where the team revisits its purpose, makes sure it is still relevant and determines whether or not the team needs to continue. For a conservation education and interpretation 'steering' team that may be in place over a long period of time, it may be beneficial to revisit the team's members, purpose and protocol on a regular basis. Having the opportunity to refine the purpose and methods of functioning, and add members who may bring needed strengths to the team keeps the team fresh, motivated and having impact.

Maintaining Motivation

There are many strategies for maintaining motivation within a team. For the most part, if the Five P's mentioned above are present, motivation is internally built into the team. However, there are always additional motivators to try in different situations. A few are listed below.

- Achieve your goals! (It creates a sense of accomplishment)
- Keep lines of communication open so frustrations can be voiced.



Establishing a Team

- Recognize individuals for specific contributions.
 - Celebrate successes along the way (both big and small).
 - Reward individuals in a personality preference specific way.
 - Create a sense of belonging for individuals in the team.
 - Create opportunities for personal ownership in the team.
 - Provide encouragement/evidence that what we are doing is making a difference.
 - Get feedback from an outside source.
 - Bring food, drinks, treats!
 - Develop some spontaneity in meetings.
 - Hold a meeting in an alternative location.
 - Make sure the purpose is clear to everyone.
 - Keep it simple!
 - Others? _____
-





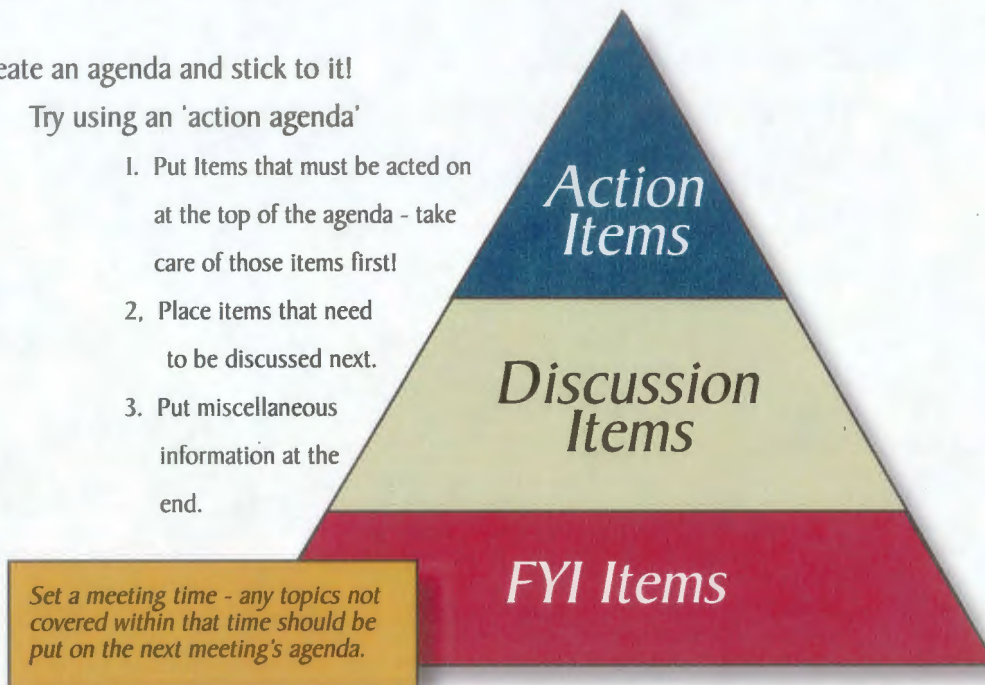
Tips for Running Effective Team Meetings

Running effective meetings is important to maintaining motivation and making the team feel like their time is being used effectively.

- Create an agenda and stick to it!

Try using an 'action agenda'

1. Put Items that must be acted on at the top of the agenda - take care of those items first!
2. Place items that need to be discussed next.
3. Put miscellaneous information at the end.



- Send out the agenda prior to the meeting so people have the opportunity to think about items beforehand.
- Make sure everyone in the meeting has the chance to participate and be involved.
- Send out meeting minutes to update members unable to be there.
- Make sure responsibilities are clear.



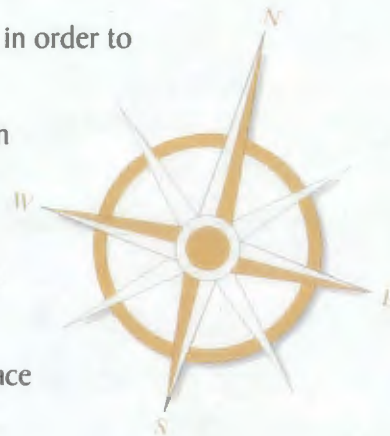
Chapter Five

DETERMINING DIRECTION

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DETERMINING DIRECTION

When exploring new territory, it is important to have a map in order to find your way. It is equally important to have a guide when developing a new program or revisiting one that is already in place. This chapter will lead you through determining a direction, or strategy, for your conservation education and interpretation program, as well as steps to take towards implementation. When the steps that are laid out in this chapter are complete, a 'map' or strategic plan will be in place to act as a guide through the new territory you are creating.



Strategic Planning

Whether planning for a local environmental education program or an international investment firm, strategic planning is an important aspect of moving an organization or program forward. Strategic planning is "a process and technique to engage an organization in thinking and acting together to reach a desired future" (McReynolds, 2005)" Unlike other types of planning, strategic planning is future oriented and proactive instead of reactive. It focuses on the "why?" and the "what?" of the organizations relationship to its environment (McReynolds, 1991). It also is process that is continuous; adapting to changes, new trends, and challenges (Byrd, 2000). Other types of planning (such as master plans, program plans, etc...) focus on the "how?" and "when?" of what an organization plans to do. Often times these plans are one of the many recommended results of strategic planning (McReynolds, 1991).

So why is strategic planning important? First, it is important to know where you are heading before you take actions to get there. Strategic planning can provide a solid direction for an organization. Getting buy-in from stakeholders is another important



Determining Direction

outcome of strategic planning. When stakeholders are involved in the process from the beginning and have input into the plan, they gain a sense of ownership and pride in the organization and what it is doing (McReynolds, 1991). Dr Richard Wilke and Abby Rusky state in their book, Promoting Environmental Education, that, "EE [Environmental Education] advocacy efforts, to be successful, must include a wide variety of constituencies, organizations and individual leaders.. The strategic planning process is the most effective way to involve all of these important "players" in the effort to develop, achieve, and implement the EE program" (1994). When a strategic plan is in place it is also valuable evidence of initiative and innovativeness and may help when seeking support from outside sources (McReynolds, 1991).

Why is it important to develop a strategic plan?

- Stimulates forward thinking.
- Improves organization/program performance.
- Organizations can do well with less funds/resources/etc...
- To build teamwork and expertise.
- Provides energy in which to propel organization forward.
- Can be useful for funding/support efforts

Although, there are many different approaches to strategic planning (see list of resources on pg. 87), each have their own strengths and weaknesses. Dr Corky McReynolds, Director of the Treehaven Environmental Learning Center at the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point, has developed a process that is simple, effective and efficient through his research and experiences. He uses seven main steps in the strategic planning process.



They include:

1. Pre-Plan the Planning Process
2. Form a Mission Statement Meeting #1 (1/2 day)
3. Develop Vision Statements. Meeting #2 (2 days)
4. Explore Strengths and Limitations.
5. Create strategies that address the visions.
6. Generate action plans for each Strategy
7. Continue and revisit the plan Meeting #3 (annual basis)

Challenges of Strategic Planning

- Organizations start but can't finish.
- Don't agree on a process.
- Don't agree on a technique
- Forget to follow through
- Try to tackle too much at one time
- Don't build support.
- Think that it will solve anything.

These steps are outlined in detail in the following pages so that they can be done 'in house'. However, the planning process is most effective when carried out by a skilled facilitator that does not have any direct connections with the program. A skilled facilitator can help overcome some of challenges associated with the strategic planning process (see Box to the left).

The Pre-Planning Process

Details

This may be the most important part of the planning process and should not be brushed aside. Determining the details of the planning process such as who to involve, what



Determining Direction

background data to collect, and determining if it is the right time for planning, is essential in starting off on the track toward a successful strategic plan (McReynolds 2005). This is often done by a small core group of people. Within this section it is important to determine the following.

Is it the right time to undergo strategic planning?

It is important to determine if the organization is ready to undergo strategic planning before getting too far into the process. John Bryson and Farnum Alston in their book Creating and Implementing Your Strategic Plan have gathered a list of questions that should be asked in order to determine if an organization is ready to proceed with strategic planning. By answering the questions on the following pages, you can assess whether or not your organization is ready to begin the strategic planning process. In order to answer some of these questions it may be useful to conduct both an internal and external assessment (please see Appendix A, B & C, and Chapter 8 for more information on assessments.)

1. Does the process have strong sponsors? If so who are they? _____

2. Does the process have strong champions? If so who are they? _____



Sponsors & Champions

Sponsors are directly involved with the creative aspects of planning, keep the planning on track and demonstrate support through the dedication of time, resources, energy, and/or money.

Champions may play a more 'outside' role but are still imperative to the planning process and are often the people that encourage the planning team through any tough spots that are encountered (Byrd, 2000).

3. Are resources available? If so what are the resources? _____

4. Is the process within the organization's mandate? If so, how?___



Determining Direction

5 *Do the benefits outweigh the costs?*

<i>Benefits</i>	<i>Costs</i>

6 *Will the process have real value for the organization? If so why?* _____



7. *Will the process be linked to operational plans and budgets? If so, how?*

If you have answered yes to the above questions and can support your answers, your organization is ready to undertake the strategic planning process. Other details now need to be determined in order to build a solid base for your strategic planning process.

What pre-planning information do I need? In your earlier assessment of your program's readiness, you may have found that you would like additional information on specific things (i.e.: audience needs, current education/interpretation activities, prior plans, etc...). Now is a good time to determine what other information would be beneficial to developing your strategic plan, as well as how the information will be gathered and who will gather it.



Who should be on the strategic planning team? This is a critical step because it establishes the basis for collective leadership of the planning process later on. This team oversees the whole strategic planning process and is ultimately the group of people that will provide consistent direction and support for the strategic planning initiative.



Determining Direction

Strategic Planning Team Members

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____

Others?

Who should be involved? Effective strategic planning efforts involve key stakeholders throughout the process. Identify the strategic planning participants and determine their roles or why they should be part of the team. The organization's leader, key internal and external stakeholders, as well as staff members are all people that could be involved. Diversity of stakeholders can strengthen the process by looking at the same process in a slightly different way. Stakeholders include individuals that are affected by the results of the strategic plan and/or have influence and can contribute to the planning process in some way. Including a variety of people in this process can help build support and enthusiasm for the organization or program both internally and externally.



Participant	Role/Connection to the organization
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	

Do not determine who to involve by selecting a specific number of participants. Choose based on contributions a participant can make to the process.

Is the administration on board? An essential component to the success of a strategic plan is to have the 'boss' (or bosses) on board and involved throughout the process. Without their support, even the most well developed strategic plan can fail.



Determining Direction

What is the purpose of this session? What do you hope to accomplish? Having a defined purpose and set of goals in mind when beginning a strategic planning session will help keep participants and session planners focused

The purpose of our strategic planning process is _____

Our goals for strategic planning are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Design a strategic planning process. Before the planning process is underway it is important to lay out details about the planning process itself. This written document should include the purpose and value of the strategic planning process, how much time and resources will be committed, what individuals will be involved and how, specific steps that will be followed and a time line for completing them, as well as a schedule of meetings for the process. It is important also to include what group process techniques will be used in the specific planning steps. This document is important for organization and consistency in the planning process (Byrd, 2000)



Identify the driving or key question. The development of a key question is imperative to determining the purpose of the strategic planning session. This question focuses the planning team's efforts on one issue. The key questions should be clearly conveyed and only seek one answer. Don't try to do or say too much!

Example:

Where would you like to see this program be in the next 5-20 years?

What do you hope this program accomplishes in the next 7 years?

Develop a Mission Statement. The mission statement answers the questions: *Who are we and why are we here?* It may also identify the primary audiences that are served. The mission statement should be stated in a clear, concise way, and limited to one or two sentences. It should be something that can be easily memorized and meaningful to outside parties.



Because the mission statement is critical to the planning process, it may be best to do this in the pre-planning stage. A group process, such as the Adapted Nominal Group Technique, is an effective way to get equal input from all stakeholders for the mission statement components. Please see Appendix E of this document to help guide you through the process.

Once you have gone through the steps of the pre-planning process (this could take anywhere from a half-day workshop or a several month process to gather needed



Determining Direction

information) you are ready to begin the actual strategic planning session. Although many groups try to rush through this process and cram everything into an afternoon or day long session, it is best to budget two days for the session. This will give you time to fully develop your strategic plan and put quality time into its creation. These are keys to the success of the plan.

Checklist:

Supplies for a Strategic Planning Session

- A neutral out-of-the-way location.
- Creative minds
- Flip Charts
- Colored Markers
- Masking Tape
- Colored Dots
- Scratch Paper
- Agenda for Session
- Snacks
- Caffeine

Time needed: 2 days



The Strategic Planning Session

Vision Statements

Vision statements address the question: *Where do we want this program to be ___ years from now?* They are desired statements of the future. Because there are so many changes that affect organizations and programs today, it may be best to answer this question in the 5 to 10 year time frame. And then revisit the statements over the coming years to evaluate whether they are still effective.

As with developing a mission statement, creating the components of vision statements is most effectively done in a group process and again Adapted Nominal Group Technique is an effective way to accomplish this. (Please see Appendix E)



Our vision statements are:

Once you have developed vision statements post them on the wall so they are visible to everyone in the room. Take a short break for reflection and individual brainstorming on what can be done to achieve those visions.

Strengths and Limitations (internal & external)

Identifying the programs strengths and limitations is important to the strategic planning process. However, they should not drive the strategic planning effort. Limitations are factors within the organization that hinders its ability to reach the desired state of the future (the above visions statements that were just created). Strengths are the opposite, they can help an organization reach its desired state of the future by providing resources, support, direction, etc... When identifying strengths and limitations, have the group brainstorm on paper individually and then transfer these comments to large pad of paper and post in the room for everyone to see. After, these factors have been identified and posted they are just reference materials – things for the group to keep in mind.



Determining Direction

Questions Addressed in the Strategic Planning Process

Who are we and why are we here?
Mission Statement

Where do we want this program to be ___ years from now?
Vision Statements

What inhibits or helps the organization reach its desired state of the future?
Strengths & Limitations

How are we going to get there?
Strategies

What do we need to do? Who is going to do it? When are we going to do it?
Action Plans

Strategies

It is now time to try to figure out what needs to be done to achieve your visions. Strategies address the question: *How are we going to get there?* These are often goals the organization must achieve in order to overcome limitations. However, when developing strategies, focusing on achieving the visions is more important than dwelling on a particular issue. Use the issues as just 'background' knowledge to be kept in mind when developing strategies.

Developing strategies that work toward each vision can be done in several ways. Adapted Nominal Group Technique can be done again to brainstorm and prioritize strategies for reaching the vision statements. However, this is time consuming and sometimes hard on group morale to go through this process several times in one day. Another way to do this



is through small group discussion. Although this technique is less structured, groups often have enough direction at this point to easily come up with a set of strategies to propose to the larger group. A technique for using small groups to develop strategies follows:

1. Spread the vision statements around the room by attaching them to the wall.
2. Tell individual participants to select a vision statement they would like to work on.
 - a. There must be at least 3 people in each group.
 - b. If a vision statement is not selected – leave it for now.
3. When the small groups are established give each group a set of guidelines and a template for developing strategies.
 - a. Each group must reach consensus on primary strategies.
 - b. They can choose to use Adapted Nominal Group Technique within the small groups.
4. Have each group bring a priority strategy back to large group – post these strategies on the wall.





Determining Direction

Action Plans

The action plans address several questions *What do we need to do? Who is going to do it? When are we going to do it?* (McReynolds 2005). Although it may be tempting to quit after developing strategies, it is important to outline a plan of action for the group in order to keep the process going. It is essential in order for all the work up until now to be implemented.



Actions plans outline the details of what needs to be done in order to accomplish strategies. It includes specifics on what will be done, who will be doing it and when it will be accomplished (McReynolds 1996). It also may break down the strategy into more specific objectives; includes a list of resources that are needed, strategies for communication, and a process for reviewing and monitoring the action plan (Byrd 2000). It may help to think of these action plans as encompassing a 12-18 month time frame with in the larger visioning time line. It is also important to prioritize the strategies that action plans are created for. There is no need (and it is nearly impossible) to tackle all strategies in the first year. Do a few well, and when those action plans are completed move on to the next level of priorities (McReynolds 2005)

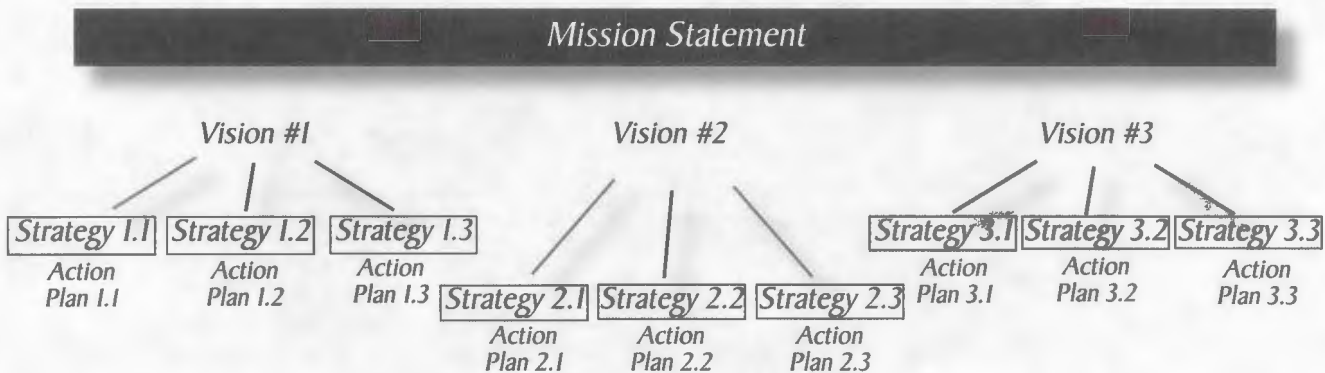
A small group activity, similar to the process used to develop strategies, can also be effective when creating action plans.

1. Again, post priority strategies around the room.
2. Have individuals choose which strategy they would like to work with by going to the location in the room.



3. Give participants the worksheet found in Appendix D.
4. Set a time frame (20-30 minutes) for group to work on an action plan.
5. After 20-30 minutes, have one spokesperson from each group stay put. The rest of the team rotates to another team.
6. Teams then have to opportunity to contribute resources and comments to others.
7. Record everything! Including the strategies or visions that haven't been addressed yet.

When you are finished the strategic planning session you should have a structure similar to the diagram you see below. The number of vision statements, strategies, and action plans will depend on your program and strategic planning results.





Determining Direction

Continuing the Process

This phase is the process in which the organization implements, evaluates and rediscovers its strategic plan. This is done to keep it fresh and visible – not something that sits on a shelf and gets dusty. It is essential to making the strategic plan part of the organizations culture (which is the only way that it will truly make a difference in an organization over time). During this process, new ideas can be incorporated and focus can be maintained. Most planners recommend that the strategic plan be revisited once or twice a year. At those times, the strategic planning team should review the strategies that were successful (and celebrate those successes!). Any unsuccessful strategies should be revised or replaced with new strategies that still address the vision.





Strategic Planning Resources

Barry, Bryan W. (1986). *Strategic Planning Workbook for Nonprofit Organizations*. St Paul: Amherst Wilder Foundation.

Bryson, John M. (Revised 1995). *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations: A Guide to Strengthening and Sustaining Organizational Achievement*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Bryson, J., Alston, F., (1996). *Creating and Implementing Your Strategic Plan*. Jossey-Bass Inc.: San Francisco, CA.

Byrd, Norma Jeanne. (2000). *Directors Guide to Best Practices*. Dayton, OH: Association of Nature Centers Administrators.



Chapter Six

CREATING A PROGRAM



CREATING A PROGRAM

Program Development, Implementation & Evaluation

Building a successful, quality education and/or interpretation program is dependent upon comprehensive and strategic planning for all aspects of the program. When developing a conservation education and interpretation program it is CRITICAL to keep the following things in mind.

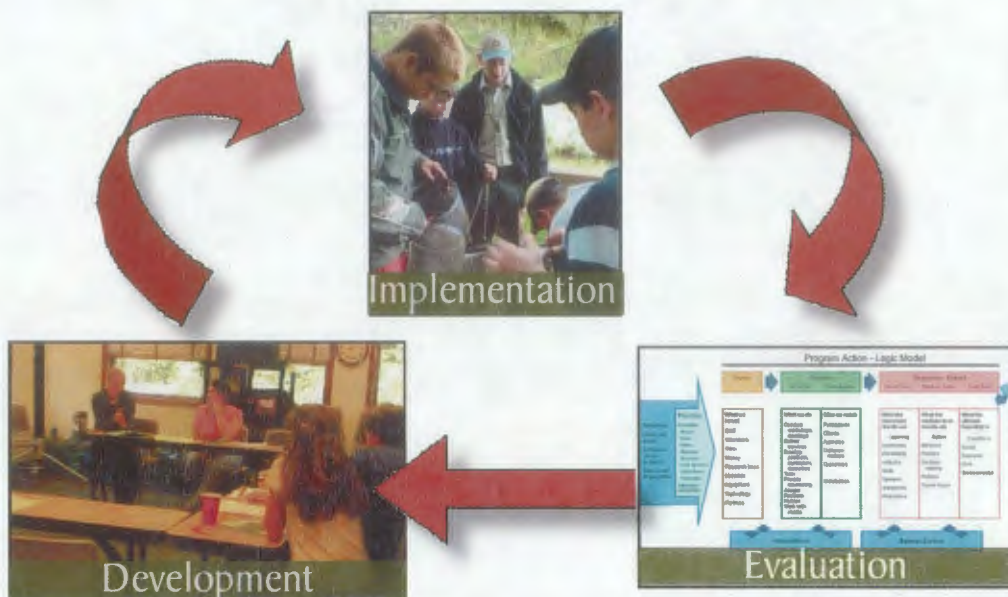
1. Keep the mission and vision statements in sight.

All activities developed should in some way help to reach toward achieving one of the program's visions.

2. Create a dynamic and adaptive program.

The most effective programs are constantly changing, adapting to situations, and continually reassessing and improving aspects of the program.

3. Develop program components with the "best practices" of the field.





Creating a Program

In order to develop a program that is both adaptable and strives to meet the programs mission and visions, the following steps are recommended.

1. Prioritize CE & I program visions and strategies.
2. Develop Action Plans for each strategy.
3. Create a Logic Model incorporating the priority strategy action plans.

Prioritize Vision and Strategies

The Conservation Education & Interpretation Team should revisit the vision statements and the strategies for reaching each vision statement. It is impossible to address all of the vision and mission statements at one time, so they need to be prioritized. When prioritizing keep in mind the following:

- Does it depend on other vision statements for success? If so, are those vision statements a higher priority?
- Is there monetary and philosophical support? Or can it be gained?
- Is there someone who is willing to take the lead on carrying the plan out?
- Are the resources that are needed realistic to obtain?
- Is the number of priority vision statements realistic for the people involved to work with?



Develop Action Plans

When priorities are selected, separate into smaller 'work groups' and create an action plan for each of the prioritized strategies. Filling out as many details as possible will make implementing the action plan much easier! (this is the same step that is carried out at the end of the "Determining Direction Chapter"

Tip
 Make sure the people who will be most involved with implementing the strategy are involved in creating the action plan.

Action Plan

Strategy__: Write out strategy that is being addressed so it is constantly visible to the group

Actions Steps:	Who:	Time line:	Resources Needed:	Additional Details
<i>What will be done?</i>	<i>Who will do it?</i>	<i>When will it be implemented? What date will it be complete?</i>	<i>What is needed? (money, time, books, skills, personnel, etc...)</i>	<i>Any other important details?</i>

Tip
 When completing this form, include enough detail so that if someone else was to take over its implementation they could complete it using only the details provided in the action plan.

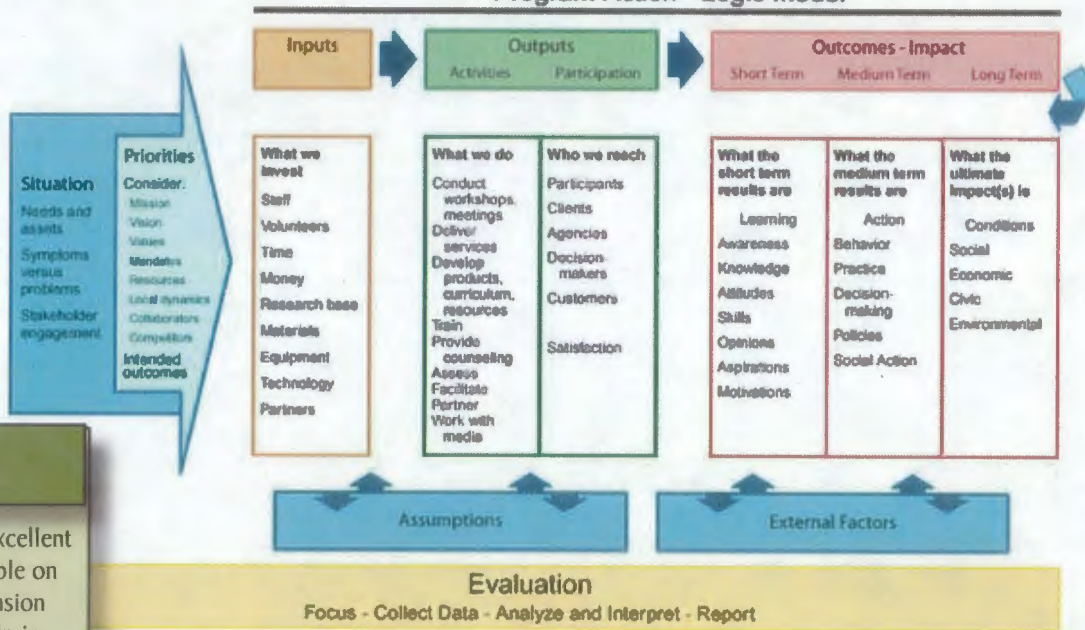


Creating a Program

Create a Logic Model

Logic models are a visual way to depict a program and are a useful tool in all aspects of developing, implementing and evaluating a program. Logic models help to show connections, flow and gaps in a program. An increasing number of institutions are using logic models as a way to develop, implement and evaluate programs. An example from the University of Wisconsin extension is below.

Program Action - Logic Model



Tip

There are many excellent resources available on the UW - Extension web-site to help in developing logic models.

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html>

Logic models can be created for individual programs or meetings or for larger, more complex efforts. It is recommended that a entire program logic model is created, along with one for each vision and/or strategy. An example of a logic model for a component of the Prince of Wales Conservation Education & Interpretation Program can be found on page 161 & 162.



Best Practices - Environmental Education

In 2004, the North American Environmental Education Association published the *Non-Formal Environmental Education Programs: Guidelines for Excellence*. This document identifies six key characteristics of a non-formal environmental education program. These characteristics can be used to identify educational programs, to guide program development or as indicators to assess a program. The characteristics are as follows:

- #1. Organizational Needs and Capacities. Effective Environmental Education Programs are supportive of their parent organization's mission, purpose and goals.
- #2. Needs Assessment. Effective Environmental Education Programs are designed to fill specific needs and produce tangible benefits commensurate with their costs.
- #3. Program Scope and Structure. Effective Environmental Education programs should function within a well-defined scope and structure.
- #4. Program Development and Educator Readiness. Effective Environmental Education Programs require careful planning and well-trained staff.
- #5. Program Quality and Appropriateness. Effective Environmental Education Programs are built on a foundation of quality instructional materials and thorough planning.
- #6. Evaluation. Effective Environmental Education Programs define and measure results in order to improve current programs, ensure accountability, and maximize the effects of future efforts.



Creating a Program

Another document that gives guidelines for environmentally-based education is *The Best Practices Workbook for Boating, Fishing and Aquatic Resources Stewardship Education* a publication developed by the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation.

Best Practices for Program Planning

Effective Programs Using Best Practices in Initial Planning.

- Are relevant to the mission of the agency or organization sponsoring the program.
- Clearly define the "Educational Purpose," which includes the program's mission, goals, and objectives, and assures that all are aligned with each other.
- Plan for program evaluation in the initial stages of planning
- Are based on and shaped by some form of needs assessment and/or logic model.
- Receive adequate support, resources, and staffing to become sustainable over time.
Rely on experienced, well-informed, prepared and ethical staff to develop, implement, and evaluate programs.
Provide educational opportunities that are frequent and sustained over time.
- Involve stakeholders and partnerships at all levels of program development.
- Are inclusive of all audiences (accessible/available to anyone with an interest in participating).



Best Practices for Program Development

Effective Programs:

- Consider delivery systems and involve stakeholders during program development.
- Are relevant to the mission of the sponsors and to the educational objectives of the audience.
- Align curricula with national and state educational standards when appropriate.
- Recognize the critical role of ongoing professional development.





Creating a Program

Interpretive Planning



Interpretive Planning Model
*Sanibel Captiva Interpretive Master Plan by
Michael Gross, Ron Zimmerman, and Jim Buchholz.
c. 2004*

An interpretive plan ties together the mission and goals of an organization, audience needs, and the tangible resources and their intangible meanings to guide the where, when and how of the interpretive method.



Why?

Establish the vision mission and goals for developing an interpretive master plan.

Who?

Determine who the visitor is (or will be) and the experiences they are (or will be) seeking.

What?

Examine the tangible resources of the site and describe their intangible meanings, then distill these tangibles and intangibles into unifying themes and messages.

Where? When? How?

Based on the why, who, and what, plan and develop interpretive facilities, media, and programs that best facilitate resource/visitor connections.

Gathering information about potential interpretive opportunities is an important part of the planning stage. The template and example on the following pages may be a helpful starting point.

It is also important to understand how to develop interpretive themes, messages and objectives. *Interpretive Centers* by Dr. Micheal Gross & Ron Zimmerman give a detailed explanation of this process

Themes

Themes are one main idea that reveals the purpose of the interpretive effort. It should be stated in an interesting manner and in one complete sentence.

Messages

Messages are more specific stories that can be told through personal and non-personal interpretation methods

Objectives

Objectives describe what the visitor will learn, feel and do after the interpretive experience.



Creating a Program

Site Name:

Give the site a specific and meaningful name.

Gravelly Creek Trail & Picnic Area: Thorne Bay Ranger District, Tongass National Forest.

Site Location & Access:

Describe the site location in detail, along with how to access it.

The parking lot for this site is located a short 4 mile drive from the town of Thorne Bay, Alaska on the FS20 Road. At the parking lot a granite trail meanders about a half a mile to the banks of Gravelly Creek where several picnic tables and the shelter building are located.

Description:



Describe the physical and aesthetic qualities of the site in detail. Including pictures can help give a better sense of place.

This short trail scenically winds through towering cedars, dripping with moss. After a sharp bend in the trail it meanders along the Thorne River, offering great fishing and photography opportunities. At the trail's end a 24 x 24 foot shelter building is situated along the river with several picnic tables and grills for scenic picnicing opportunities.

Interpretive Resources:

Describe some of the stories/resources that could be interpreted.

Tangibles

This area was one of the earliest timber harvest sites on Prince of Wales Island. Large trees tower over even larger stumps that lend an insight into the dynamic past that has shaped much of the Island. The Thorne River is also one of the Island's major rivers, offering not only a place for recreation but also serves as the life-blood for many of the plants and animals in the area. This is evident of the thousands of salmon that migrate up stream each summer.

Intangibles

This area surrounding this site is rich in the cultural history of the



island. Just a few miles down stream a 10,000 year old basket was found. It also shows many opportunities to talk about the mood and stories surrounding the logging heydays of several decades ago. The amazing feats of migrating salmon can also be seen during certain seasons in the Thorne River.

Significance to the Themes and Messages:

After developing themes and messages, state how this site is significant to a specific theme and/or message.

Significance to the Target Audience:

Describe how this site may meet audience needs.

Gravelly Creek offers a great place for Island residents and non-residents to enjoy recreational opportunities, close to home. There has been a stated need by several community groups for more interpretive services close to the Islands towns.

Potential Modes of Interpretation:

Describe best interpretive methods for site.

Because it is close to town and a fairly high-traffic area, a combination of personal and non-personal interpretation would work best for this site. Developing interpretive panels to tell some of the main stories would be appropriate while also having a roving interpreter on site a few hours each week will to make more personal contact with the site visitors and answer specific questions they may have.

Development Priority:

Rate the priority for interpretive development of the site. Be sure to take into consideration audience needs, budget, internal and external enthusiasm and support, etc...)

1 - (2) - 3 - 4 - 5
high low

This is a convenient place to reach both the local and visiting audience.

Planner's Comments and Recommendations:

Room for insight from the interpretive planner.

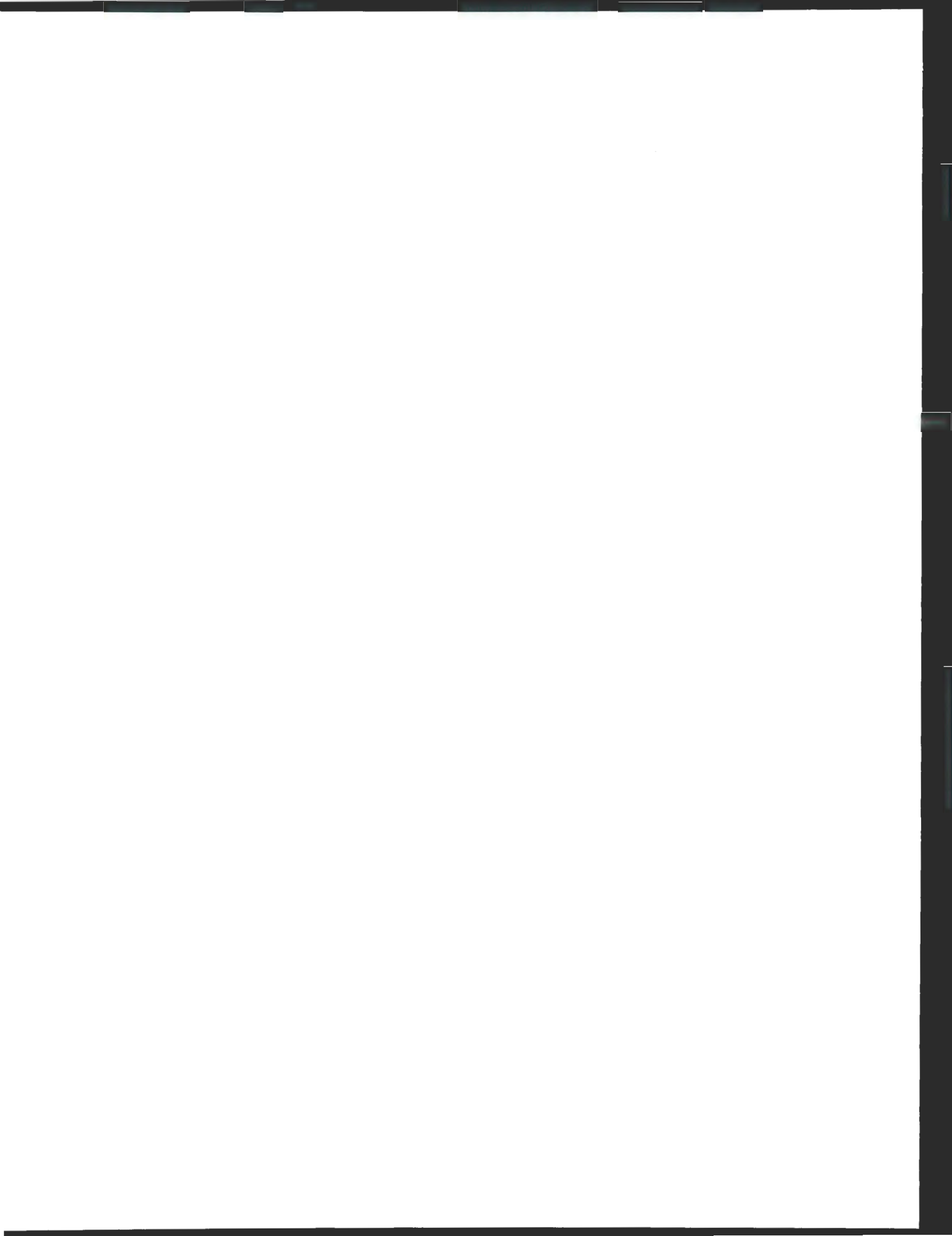




PART THREE

Prince of Wales Island CE&I Strategy

*A Look into the Past
Current Condition
Determining Direction
The Program
Bibliography*



OVERVIEW

Part Three of the *Conservation Education & Interpretation Guidebook* focuses specifically on the Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger Districts of Prince of Wales Island. The steps and techniques described in Part Two were implemented on the Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger Districts. Within this section, background information is gathered and a strategy is put in place to develop, implement and evaluate the Island's Conservation Education and Interpretation Program. This Part serves two purposes.

1. It provides direction and guidelines for Forest Service conservation education and interpretation efforts on Prince of Wales Island.
2. It provides a case study example that other Ranger Districts on the Tongass National Forest can refer to when going through the steps outlined in Part Two.





Chapter Seven

A LOOK INTO THE
PAST

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry, no matter how small, should be recorded to ensure the integrity of the financial statements. This includes not only sales and purchases but also expenses and income. The document provides a detailed explanation of how to categorize these transactions and how to use a double-entry system to ensure that the books are balanced.

The second part of the document focuses on the process of reconciling the bank statement with the company's records. It outlines the steps to identify any discrepancies and investigate their causes. Common reasons for differences include timing issues, bank errors, and unrecorded transactions. The document provides a clear checklist for performing a bank reconciliation and offers advice on how to handle any identified errors.

The final part of the document discusses the preparation of the financial statements. It explains the relationship between the trial balance and the income statement, balance sheet, and statement of cash flows. The document provides a step-by-step guide to calculating net income, determining the ending balances for the assets and liabilities, and preparing the final financial statements. It also includes a section on how to interpret these statements and what they tell you about the company's financial health.

A LOOK INTO THE PAST

To ensure the conservation education and interpretation program for the Prince of Wales Island Forest Service is developed upon sure footing, it is important to know and understand the history upon which it has developed. This chapter focuses on establishing a solid understanding of the educational and interpretive efforts that have had an influence on current program development. In this chapter, program components that should be carried into future efforts will be identified as well as challenges to overcome. National, regional, forest and district level historical efforts are summarized below.

A Historical Overview

Conservation education and interpretive services have played a critical role in the management of national forests and grasslands since the infancy of the Forest Service (United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service, 1998). In order to understand the current condition of education and interpretation on the Tongass, a brief look into its past can be helpful in understanding the context of conservation education and interpretation projects and programs happening today.





A Look into the Past

Conservation Education and Interpretation in the Forest Service

Conservation education has existed in the Forest Service since the early 1900's. At that time, it was considered "a nice thing to do" and was often spurred by catastrophic events like forest fires. Women took charge of early education programs in the Forest Service, creating awareness among students and raising funds to support various school and community projects. In 1928, conservation education in the Forest Service became more formal as it was officially stated in the manual as a way, "to promote the best use of all forest resources in the country, public and private." The main focus of education at this time was toward children and schools.

After World War II, an emphasis was placed on protecting our forest resources from fire. As a result of the perceived wasting of forest resources, the now famous Smokey Bear program was launched. It was later dubbed as one of the most effective environmental education programs in the world.

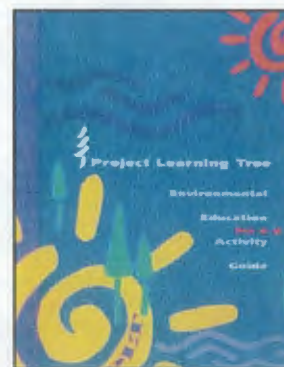


Shortly after the Smokey campaigns began, the Forest Service realized the importance of connecting to the public and went to great lengths to provide information and interpretive services to the public. From 1962-1982 over 25 major visitor centers were built along with many other interpretive and informational sites. This marked the beginning of the Interpretive Services program within the Forest Service (United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service, 1998).

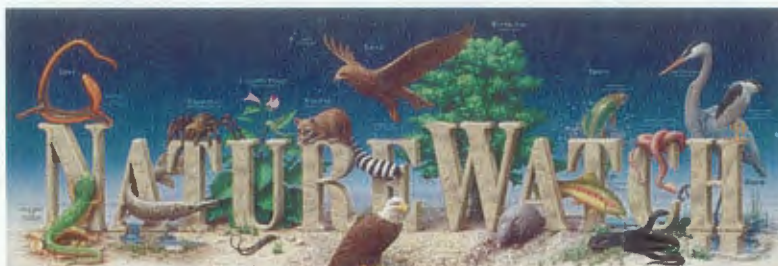


1968 was a key year for Forest Service Conservation Education (United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service, 1998). Under the direction of Chief Edward F. Cliff, training teams were sent around the country to teach employees, educators and other community members the fundamentals of conservation education. He believed that conservation education, and the public's support and involvement, was the only way that the Nation's natural resources would be protected and used wisely. Congress passed various national environmental education acts from 1970 to 1990 that supported and further spread this belief.

In the 1970's environmental education in the Forest Service peaked. Formal curriculums were developed and widely used in public schools. Activity guides such as Project Learning Tree (PLT) and "Investigating Your Environment" are two examples that are still in use today (American Forest Foundation, 2002), (United States Department of Agriculture – Forest Service, 1993).



Forest Service education programs soon expanded beyond schools as national programs were established that strived to reach a public that was increasingly interested in wildlife-based recreation (United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service, 1998). Programs such as Nature Watch educated people of all ages through pamphlets, programs, festivals, classes and countless other hands-on activities. National Forests around the country still participate in many of these programs.





A Look into the Past



In February 1991, the Natural Resource Conservation Education (NRCE) Program was established (United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service, 1998). Its goal was to advance conservation education efforts beyond simple awareness of natural resources issues. NRCE was meant to educate people on how to take informed action on conservation issues throughout their lives.

Although the Forest Service has a rich history of conservation education on paper, the initial movement of education just being a "nice thing to do," and not a financially and philosophically supported program still holds true today. However, as American values continue to change, there is an increasing demand for public education programs by the American people, causing the Forest Service to more seriously consider their educational efforts (United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service, 1998).

Conservation Education & Interpretation - Tongass National Forest

The Tongass National Forest has been no exception to the rich history of education and interpretation that has taken place in the Forest Service. Many interpretive and educational programs are well established throughout the Forest. For instance, the Forest Service interpretive programs onboard the ferries of the Alaska Marine Highway System have existed since the 1960's. Education programs like a mobile education center in Ketchikan, have also been recognized since the early days of the Forest Service.



Mendenhall Visitor Center, the first Forest Service Visitor Center in the nation, was built in 1960. Over the decades this visitor center has educated and served millions of people that come to see the magnificent Mendenhall Glacier. Since its renovation in 1995 it has become the primary way through which many visitors make connections to the Tongass.





A Look into the Past

These programs touch on just a small part of the education, interpretation and other forms of public outreach that was happening Forest-wide. Programs thrived throughout the forest, from large to small, specific to comprehensive. Each program also varied in quality and content as well. Although all programs were beneficial, these programs were never unified or part of a larger program, this fact limited their effectiveness (TNF I&CE Strategy, 2003).

Even as all of these education and outreach programs were happening, there were also observations that the Forest Service tended to shy away from the controversies plaguing the Tongass, choosing to delay or dodge dealing with issues, often to their own detriment. (Rakestraw, 2002) Even today, the Forest Service has not been able to completely shake this charge, as public bitterness is revealed in many Forest Service and public interactions on both a local and national scale.

Where can I find more Information?

Forest Naturalists on Land and Sea: A history of interpretation on the Tongass
by Dr. Robert Hakala (1995)

Development of a Conservation Education and Interpretation Guidebook for Prince of Wales Island by Nelli Atkinson (2005)

Tongass National Forest Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy
Ketchikan Supervisors Office (2004)

A History of the United States Forest Service In Alaska by Lawrence Rakestraw

Tongass: Pulp Politics and The Fight for the Alaskan Rain Forest
by Kathie Durbin

The Book of the Tongass by Carolyn Servid



*Conservation Education & Interpretation History on
Prince of Wales Island*

The Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts have participated in the wide variety of conservation education and interpretation articles that have happened on the Tongass in the past. The content, consistency, and quality of individual interpretation and education services, however, has varied.

For both Districts, most public contact has been made through front desk receptionist services and informational brochures at each District's headquarters. Individual communication between Forest Service employees and the public has also been a strong point of Forest Service/public interaction. The tables on the following pages list conservation education and interpretation efforts that have taken place on the Prince of Wales Island in the past ten years (1994-2004).





A Look into the Past

Conservation Education Programs taking place on Prince of Wales Island 1994-2004

Conservation Education Programs
School Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Individual Employee presentations• EcoVan curriculum related presentation (Thorne Bay)• Schools involved with FS projects (rainfall data collection, etc...)• Karst and Cave Curriculum
Special Events <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kid's Fishing Day• School District Science Fair
Public Meetings
Summer Youth Camp (Craig)
Passport in Time program
Youth Conservation Crew Program
Educational Training Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project Archeology• Project WILD
Community guest lecturers
Weekly/monthly newspaper articles
Informal education of public through contacts (creel survey, fisherman, etc...)
Internal education between shops
"Off-time" discussions with other employees





Interpretation Programs taking place on Prince of Wales Island 1994-2004

Interpretation Programs
<i>El Capitan Cave Interpretive Cave tours</i>
<i>Front desk visitor services (Thorne Bay and Craig)</i>
<i>Brochures available and displayed to visitors</i>
<i>Prince of Wales Island Forest Service Web site</i>
<i>Interpretive Panels at TB front office</i>
<i>Beaver Falls Interpretive Trail</i>
<i>Hatchery Creek Interpretive Trail proposal</i>
<i>Rio Roberts Fish pass interpretive panels (outdated)</i>
<i>Big Lake Fish Pass interpretive panels (outdated)</i>
<i>Hollis InterIsland Ferry Terminal Kiosk</i>
<i>Discovery Night Series</i>
<i>Weekly/monthly newspaper articles</i>



A Look into the Past

Thorne Bay Ranger District

The Thorne Bay Ranger District has initiated a wide array of public outreach, education and interpretation programs over the past decade. Some of the programs have prevailed through the economic and land management changes that bombard the Island, and others have faded.



Interpretation and public information distribution has been primarily limited to a front desk attendant and informational brochures at the District headquarters. Conservation education programs have sporadically taken place in schools. Forest Service professionals are asked to come into classrooms during the school year as guest lecturers and talk about various forest related topics (Atkinson, 2003).



Prince of Wales Island CE&I Strategy



The most established interpretation program on the Thorne Bay Ranger District can be found in the unique karst region on the Island's northern end. Here Alaska's largest cave, El Capitan weaves for more than two miles beneath the



ground. The cave was officially mapped in 1987, and in 1992 a trail with more than 370 steps was built and an interpretive cave tour began. The hour and a half cave tour gives the public a unique opportunity to learn about and explore the inside of a cave.

Thorne Bay Ranger District has been dedicated in the past few years to building a solid relationship with the Southeast Island School District. Forest Service employees have been invited to the school as guest lecturers, involved in projects, worked with student employees, and hosted events such as Career Days. One of the unique projects that has stemmed from this relationship is a Salmon Incubation in the Classroom project. Thorne Bay first and second graders raised salmon fry and released them into the wild.





A Look into the Past

Craig Ranger District

The Craig Ranger District also has had many interpretation and conservation education efforts happening in its past. One of the most diverse and established are the programs surrounding archeology and heritage. Classroom field trips, the Passport in Time projects, and Archeology Month celebrations are just a few of the programs that have taken place. In the past there have also been many youth workshops and events such as nature hikes, survival skills courses and community celebrations. A majority of the Craig Ranger Districts interpretive services are done through the District office front desk receptionist.





Where can I find even MORE Information?

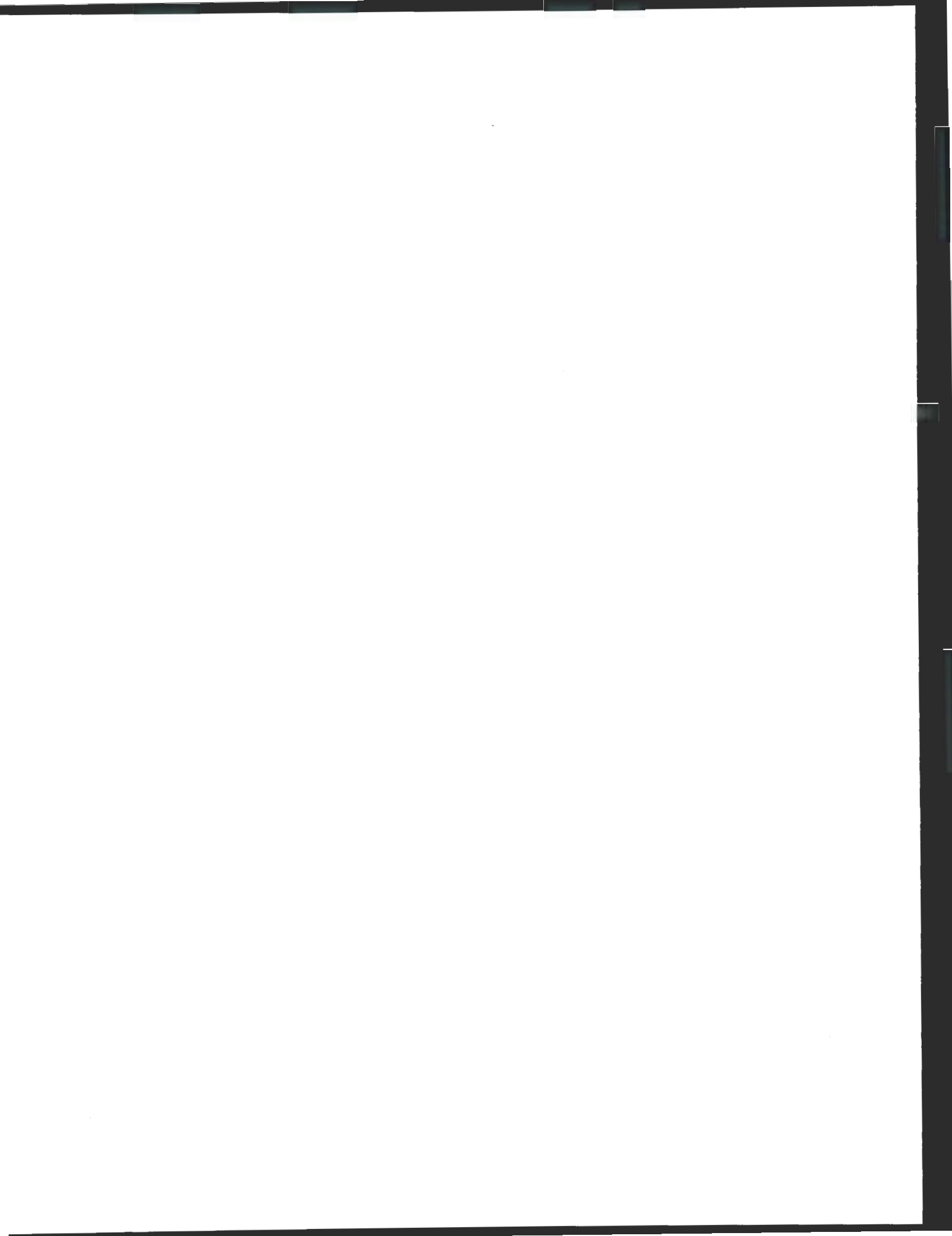
In addition to the resources found on page 94...

Craig Ranger District Interpretive Plan

End-of-the-Year Summaries - "Tracking Success Prince of Wales Island"

Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District Computer and Paper Files

Talking with Employees!



CURRENT CONDITION

Overview

“Public involvement and collaboration with partners are critical to the future of ecosystems, natural resources and their management, and conservation education should be the cornerstone for each.” (Conservation Education Vision-to-Action Strategy, 1998).

A slow realization of the importance of education and interpretation in natural resource management has recently begun to take place in the Forest Service. Across the country, educational and interpretive programs have taken great strides from isolated, on-the-side programs that were often spurred by personal motivation and interest, to important and integrated parts of land management. Evidence of this gradual transition from disconnected low-priority programs, to integrated educational and interpretive programs that are supported both in word and finances can be observed across the Tongass.

Currently, every District across the Tongass offers some sort of interpretive or educational services. These services range from major interpretive facilities, such as the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center and the Southeast Alaska Discovery Center, to small district level programs that include wilderness kayak rangers, interpretive trails, and educational programs in schools. In 2003, about \$1.3 million dollars were spent in support of a wide variety of programs. Since 2000, there has been a marked increase in education and interpretation programs across the Tongass.



*The Southeast Alaska Discovery Center
Ketchikan, AK*



Current Condition

Staff

In addition to monetary support, there are 16 permanent and usually over 10 seasonal Tongass employees that spend more than 25% of their time on education or interpretation. Most of the Interpretive Services personnel



dedicate all of their time to some aspect of interpretation. On the other hand, employees providing conservation education programs are usually scattered among disciplines and there are few personnel that spend all of their time on conservation education efforts.

During the summer of 2004, the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts hired 7 seasonal employees to be involved almost full-time with conservation education and/or interpretation on Prince of Wales

Island. Permanent employees from fisheries, wildlife, recreation, hydrology, and archeology have also spent a significant percentage of their time doing education programs during the school year, at special events, and at summer school sessions.

Through the efforts of these dedicated employees education and interpretive services have improved leaps and bounds from what formerly existed on Prince of Wales Island. However a problem that, prior to the Tongass National Forest Conservation Education and Interpretation Strategy, existed at the Forest level comes into play on a District level: the educational and interpretative services that are offered lack continuity between each other, in leadership and direction, and over time.



During the summer of 2004 three seasonal employees were involved with running the El Capitan interpretive cave tour. Two employees on the Craig District were dedicated to developing summer educational opportunities for children and adults. Another seasonal employee is spending much of the summer working on improving the EcoVan program, a partnership with the Forest Service and the Southeast Island School District.

Publications and Media

In addition to personal contacts made between Forest Service employees and the public, both the Tongass and the Ranger Districts of Prince of Wales Island, have other techniques for reaching out to the diverse audiences they serve. The Tongass National Forest web-site reaches nearly 4,000 people every year, informing them about the natural and cultural history of the area, management practices and recreational opportunities.

There are also various media and publication resources available throughout the Tongass. One of the largest sources of interpretive/educational materials about the Tongass, is through a partner – the Alaska Natural History Association (ANHA). ANHA operates 5 sites throughout the Tongass producing books, site specific publications and a wide-array of other informational products. 8% of all revenue from these sites goes to funding conservation education efforts on the Tongass.



Current Condition

Other than ANHA publications, few visitor-oriented publications are printed by the Forest Service. However, there are two popular radio shows put on by the Forest that address resource and management issues.

Specific to Prince of Wales Island, information has been added to the Tongass web-site – offering a variety of information specific to the Island's ecosystems, people and the Forest Service's activities there. At both the Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger Districts a wide array of informational brochures can be found on many topics (including wildflowers, temperate rainforests, karst, black bears, and many others!).



Few Island specific, Forest Service produced brochures exist. The Prince of Wales Chamber of Commerce creates a Visitor's Guide every few years that dedicates a few pages to telling visitors about the Tongass National Forest and the recreational opportunities that exist. The Forest Service creates the map that accompanies this guide, and they also developed a more detailed map of the Island that is available at District offices. This map however, is outdated and is not very visitor-friendly.





Trails & Exhibits



Each District on the Tongass has at least one well-developed interpretive trail or boardwalk. Often these trails are beautifully built and show off unique features of our incredible forest. However, the signage on these trails vary in quality. Some trails have no signs, or some signs are out-dated or in disrepair. Often these trails are not tied to a larger Forest-wide theme and they lack design consistency, making it hard to distinguish which trails are provided by the Forest Service.





Current Condition

Prince of Wales Island boasts several of the Tongass' interpretive trails. Just finished in the Spring of 2004, the Beaver Falls interpretive boardwalk weaves



through forest and muskeg and reveals the unique features of the karst landscape. It was beautifully constructed blending into the landscape well and leaving little impact on the land.

The also recently finished Hatchery Falls boardwalk is

scheduled to have interpretive panels installed in 2005. The panels will focus on the delicate stream ecosystem that exists and the impacts people can have on a fishery. There are several other interpretive signs in place across the Thorne Bay Ranger District that are older and outdated. There are several interpretive panels at the Big Ratz Creek fish pass and at the fish viewing platform at the end of the Rio Roberts Trail. The panels at these two sites are in dire need of being updated, redesigned and having the inaccurate information corrected.

Very few interpretive exhibits exist on the Tongass outside of major interpretive facilities. Most of these sites are located at airport and ferry terminals and offer a wide array of accuracy and appropriateness, as well as content & design quality. At the Hollis ferry terminal on Prince of Wales Island, a small exhibit was recently redesigned. It now includes an orienting map of the island and pictures of the many sights and opportunities that





visitors to the island can experience. In the next few years, the Forest Service will be developing an interactive kiosk for the MV Prince of Wales of the Inter-Island ferry, so visitors can learn about the Island as they are traveling to or from it.

Major Interpretive Facilities

There are two major interpretive facilities in the Tongass National Forest. Both have been constructed or renovated since 1995 and boast a variety of high quality interpretive exhibits, audio visual media, and personal services. The Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center in Juneau is the forest's largest interpretive program, serving over 300,000 visitors each year. The Center helps visitors explore the impacts of glaciers on life and the landscape. In Ketchikan, another beautiful facility exists, the Southeast Alaska Discovery Center. This facility is operated by nine federal and state agencies but managed by the Forest Service. Each year nearly 55,000 visitors come to learn about the Tongass National Forest, Southeast Alaska and its peoples. Both of these visitor centers primarily serve cruise ship passengers during the summer and local residents the rest of the year.



The Southeast Alaska Discovery Center, briefly addresses stories specific to Prince of Wales Island, but there are no other "major" interpretive facilities related to the Island. Visitors and residents alike can find informational brochures, a receptionist to answer questions, Forest Service maps and ANHA products at both the





Current Condition

Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District offices. Currently, the Craig Ranger District's front office area is fairly well set up for serving the public with



brochure racks, an ANHA display, an aquarium with local sea life and a helpful receptionist. Thorne Bay has recently added interpretive panels to their front office area, as well as brochure racks. Also, in the planning stage is a glass display rack that will hold education exhibits that can be changed throughout the year. A computer available for public use will also be in the front office area so visitors can surf the Forest Service sites. The front office area was completed by Fall of 2004.



Renovations completed during 2004 have helped to turn a 'cold' business-like front office area into a more welcoming place for visitors, residents, and employees.



Non-Facility Based Programs

The Tongass has a large variety of programs that have been developed over the years to meet unique local needs. These programs have since evolved in to some of the most distinctive programs in the Forest Service. One of the longest and most well known is the Alaska Marine Highway Shipboard Interpreter's program. Each summer, seasonal Forest Service naturalists travel on eight different ferries to communities scattered throughout south central and southeast Alaska. The naturalists give interpretive programs, offer informational brochures and answer questions about the Tongass. This program has a comprehensive training program in place that gives naturalists the skills and experience needed to provide a quality interpretive experience.



Other programs are increasing in popularity across the Tongass as well. Pack Creek, Anan Creek, Margaret Bay and Fish Creek all offer unique wildlife viewing experiences and a staffed interpreter on-site to answer questions and keep both the visitors and bears safe. In Misty Fjords, kayak rangers paddle to and board small cruise ships, giving interpretive presentations and answering questions about the Tongass and wilderness issues.





Current Condition

The Forest Service on Prince of Wales Island is also responsible for several programs that take place outside of a facility. The El Capitan interpretive cave tours are the most well-known and well established of the existing programs. Annually, hundreds of visitors tour the cave with a Forest Service Interpreter. After ascending nearly 300 vertical feet by way of 370 steps, visitors learn about Alaska's largest cave and the karst landscape that covers the northern half of Prince of Wales Island. The program has been in place since 1992 with improvements being made each year. In the coming years even more improvements are planned with additional tour times, expansion to Beaver Falls Interpretive Site and possibly building an interpretive facility or campground near the cave trail.



New Programs

The Tongass is currently piloting a new interpretive program in partnership with the Princess Cruise lines. While Princess Ships are docked in Ketchikan, Forest Service interpreters board the ships to give presentations and answer passenger questions. The initial response to the program is positive, but evaluations will continue and changes are sure to take place in the coming years. Expansion to other cruise lines is possible in the future.

Currently, there are several new programs that have been implemented in the



past year. During the summer of 2003 progress was made in developing both educational and interpretive services on the Island.

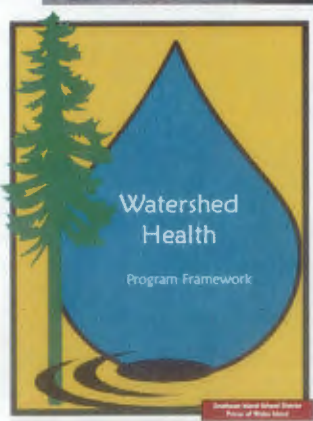
There is a solid partnership program with the Southeast Island School District.



The program is financially supported from *Payments to State* funds that were awarded to the school district for 'forest conservation education.' From these funds the S.C.O.P.E (Students Classifying and Observing their Physical Environment) program was established. A curriculum was developed by the Forest Service during the summer of 2003 and used during

the 2003-04 school year by many schools in the district. The purpose of the program is to provide a framework for Forest Service employees to develop classroom and in field experiential educational programs for the students in grades K-12. Prior to this curriculum, visits to classrooms were little more than isolated learning experiences. By using this curriculum, Forest Service employees now have an umbrella under which they can make connections between visits and

about important concepts. During the summer of 2004 feedback was gathered and changes were made to the curriculum to better meet both employee and teacher needs.





Current Condition

Another step forward in education and interpretation on TBRD was taken the summer of 2003. There was an interpretive media plan that developed signage and exhibits for the front office area of the Thorne Bay District Office. District employees took part in a brainstorming meeting to develop important themes and messages that were specific to POW and the Thorne Bay Ranger District.



Theme: The Forest Service is dedicated to enhancing the diverse and distinct life that exists on Prince of Wales Island.

Messages:

Discover...

- Countless opportunities for exploration and enjoyment exist amongst the rugged shores, deep forests and sparkling streams of Prince of Wales Island.

Diverse...

- The land has created lifestyles and cultures that are as diverse as the land that is depended upon for support.

Distinct...

- Rare ecosystems and world-class resources thrive in this unique island environment.

Dedicated...

- The Forest Service is dedicated to caring for the land, while serving the people of Prince of Wales Island.



Prince of Wales Island CE&I Strategy



As you can see, there are many quality education and interpretation efforts already taking place on the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts. However, up until the creation of this document, there has been no plan in place that provides a strategic direction for these programs to operate within. This Guidebook strives to connect the goals of the agency, the needs of the audiences, and the natural and cultural resources of Prince of Wales Island through guidelines for program development, implementation and evaluation. In order to do this, it is important to find out what the needs the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts audiences are.

Our Audience

From June 1st through July 6th, Thorne Bay & Craig Ranger District employees, six different community groups, and the Southeast Island School District teachers gave their feedback to several questions regarding conservation education and interpretation on Prince of Wales Island through paper questionnaires or focus group interviews.

Southeast Island School District

2003 marked the kick-off of the EcoVan program with the Southeast Island School District. Many Forest Service employees participated in this unique program in a variety of ways, from developing curriculum to teaching lessons. The program continued during the 2004 - 05 school year, after changes had been made to improve the program after its pilot year. When interviewed about strengths/weaknesses of the FS conservation education program, the teachers gave many comments





Current Condition

and suggestions for improvements to the EcoVan as well as additional needs that the FS could fill. The following categories were identified:

Teach more about conservation, not just about forest resources. (5)

Improve Communication (4)

...about EcoVan activities (1)

...about larger FS functions (3)

A wider variety of educational programs/topics/opportunities (3)

More Continuity and expertise in programs/topics (2)

More time with students on lessons and projects (2)

More contact with communities off the road system (1)

More information on current research and papers (1)





The teachers who responded also stated several strengths of the current Forest Service Conservation Education Program. Specific strengths included:

- o Watershed Health curriculum notebook was valuable
- o Provided age-appropriate information
- o Quality involvement in science fair
- o Participation in Project WILD training
- o EcoVan program was easily adapted to be cross-curricular
- o Forest Service were and provided great resources
- o Helping to build a 'conscience' about the environment

Overall, teachers seemed excited about the new partnership with the Forest Service, but would like to see more in the future. They made several recommendations about conservation education needs that the Forest Service could help address in the future.

- Topics such as:
 - What can we do with our waste?
 - Pollution awareness
 - Management of fresh water
 - Wildlife
 - Estuary/beach life
 - King Salmon
- Offer more opportunities to become involved in hands-on, real-life projects.
- More information for teachers about current research such as: invasive plant surveys, mapping, trails, and stream surveys.
- More contact with real research and scientists.
- Supplements to Discovery Center Kits.
- Kit and information available that teachers/students can access on their own.
- Teach more about conservation and respect for the land and local culture.

"They [FS presenters] were enthusiastic and knowledgeable and knew how to work with and spark student's interest. They offered great resources and talked about local issues that were important to the students."

~SISD teacher~



Current Condition

Forest Service Employees

One of the largest audiences, and often the most overlooked, is the internal employees of the Forest Service. These are the people that make daily connections between the Forest and the public they serve. Forest Service employees from all disciplines were surveyed during June of 2005.

When employees were asked how important education and interpretation is to achieving the Forest Service mission, 29 out of 31 responses stated that education & interpretation were *very important* or *important* to achieving the Forest Service mission.

When asked why, a few responses were:

"In order for the public to support the Forest Service mission they need to have knowledge of the Forest and a connection to the land, which will create a desire to act to support or change the FS goals. Interpretation and Education help give a sense of place & appreciation for science, cultural history, natural history, etc..."

"Interpretation and education are the fundamental building blocks for gaining public support for Forest Service projects and programs. Education helps to reach understanding and a sense of stewardship for the land and resources."

"Without education, the needs of present and future generations will not be formulated in a manner in the public's best interest. Interpretation, I feel, is different and less critical to the mission."



“Well, while talking to a local logger several weeks ago he seemed very upset with the Forest Service. He felt we were out to get him; said there were too many restrictions on cutting now and sales were much lower than in the past; said he doesn’t have that much work because of us. Judging from this conversation I feel that some people aren’t educated about what the Forest Service mission really is.”

“Interpretation & education provides a direct connection between the general public and the FS. The National Forests belong to everyone and so it is important for people to have an understanding of what we do. Also generating interest in the environment and conservation will hopefully help to get people involved.”

“Through education and interpretation we can inspire young minds and adults to think outside of the “box” and become aware of the issues that may be ongoing in this communities. We can assist in giving them a base upon which to make informed decisions, whether they agree with the Forest Service or not.”

“Educating the public is crucial to completing the Forest Service. The public must be fully aware of what and why we do, in effort to re-establish a high degree of credibility.”





Current Condition

Forest Service employees identified several things they felt they need in order to more effectively carry out conservation education and interpretation efforts.

Trainings and workshops. Four out of five resource disciplines identified that trainings or workshops were needed in order to gain basic or more advanced skills in conservation education and interpretation. Topics mentioned ranged from creating brochures, teaching techniques, writing for the public, developing education and interpretation programs, seasonal employee trainings and additional ways to effectively reach the public.

Coordination of Efforts. Employees felt that conservation education and interpretation would be more effective if a coordinated effort was facilitated between all the disciplines.



Trainings and workshops, related to education and interpretation was a stated need of Forest Service employees. Terri Fifield (above) has coordinated several trainings with teaches in regards to archeology education.

Priority in leadership. In order for employees to make conservation education and interpretation an integrated part of their daily jobs, it has to be a priority from the 'top-down'. The District Rangers need to be actively involved in promoting and supporting conservation education and interpretation.

Additional Resources. More activity guides, teaching and interpretation program props, books, field guides, demonstration models, etc... are needed so employees can more effectively develop conservation education and interpretation programs.

Manuals & Guides. "How To" books that will help employees learn about and incorporate quality conservation education and interpretation techniques. Desired topics included creating brochures, teaching techniques, writing for the public, developing education and interpretation programs, how to work with different age groups, etc...

More time! Nearly all employees stated that they felt that they would need more time to focus on conservation education and interpretation efforts in order to more effectively carry them out.

Prince of Wales Island CE&I Strategy



Forest Service employees also gave insight, specific to their fields, as to what conservation education and interpretation techniques may most effectively reach the public. The following techniques surfaced.

- Signs, trails, brochures etc... that explain what the FS is doing and why.
- An open-minded interpreter/educator that will help resource groups 'tell the story'
- Newspaper articles
- Education/visitor center.
- Community programs.
- More programs in schools.
- A diverse array of programs that are available at any given time.





Current Condition

Community Members

Six focus group interviews were held at various community group meetings around the Island. Due to time and budget constraints, as well as community member commitment not every community was visited. However, citizens from the communities of Naukati, Craig (2), Klawock, Thorne Bay and Coffman Cove participated. Each meeting gave valuable insight into community views on Forest Service/community interaction. The following list is a summary of nine themes that reoccurred in nearly every community that was visited.



Nine Categories of Stated Needs

- Improve communication between Forest Service and communities

 - Improve communication techniques

 - Specific Topics of Interest

- More recreation opportunities (including interpretive trails/signs)

- Additional events, programs & other education/interpretation opportunities

- Play a more active role in the community

- Increased cultural awareness

- More school involvement

- Develop an Interpretive/Education Center

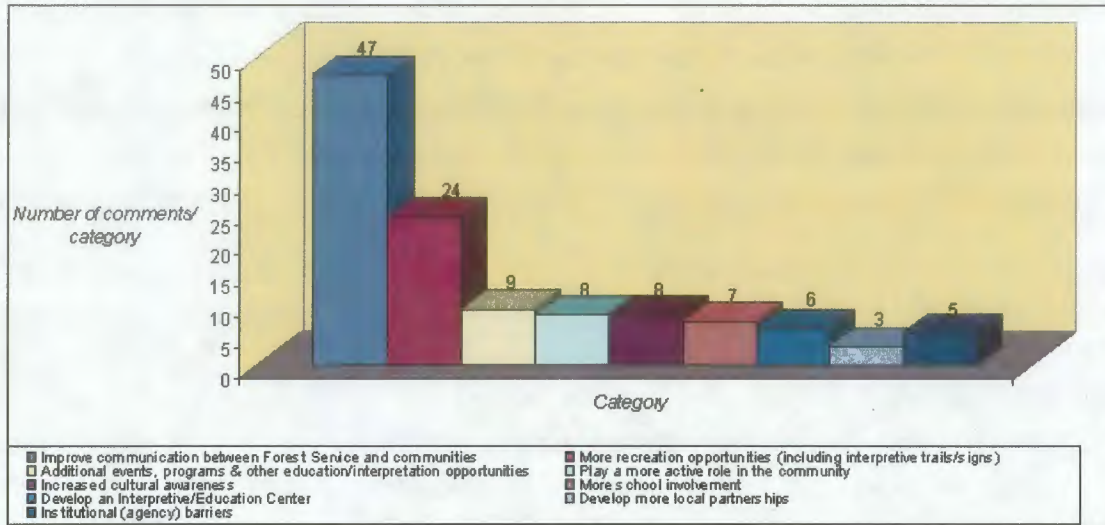
- Develop more local partnerships

- Institutional (agency) barriers

Prince of Wales Island CE&I Strategy



Prince of Wales Island community member suggestions for conservation education and interpretation efforts



Visitors

Visitors are increasing on Prince of Wales Island. With twice daily ferry service from Ketchikan during the summer, along with numerous float plane companies shuttling people, the Island is becoming more easily accessible. The ease of access will increase with the new ferry terminal in Coffman Cove, predicted to open in 2006. In the past two years, travel on the InterIsland ferry from Ketchikan to Hollis has increased by 3,000 to 4,000 passengers per year. There is a 3,000 passenger increase predicted for 2005 (Kent Miller to Board of Directors of InterIsland Ferry Authority, July 1, 2004).





Little is known about visitor characteristics on Prince of Wales Island. It is believed that many people come to the Island for the abundant hunting and fishing opportunities, taking advantage of the hundreds of guiding services and resorts that are scattered throughout the Island. Other characteristics and information regarding this audience is only hypothesized.

However, by taking a broader look at State and Region-wide statistics we may be able to get a general idea of what visitors are doing on the Tongass National Forest (Alaska Division of Community and Business Development, 2001).

- Visitor arrivals have been steadily increasing since 1993.
- Most people visit for vacation or pleasure, the second reason is visiting friends & relatives.
- Commercial recreation businesses in Southeast Alaska report they engage in the following activities with their customers most frequently:

Saltwater fishing

Nature viewing/sight seeing

Wildlife viewing

Photography

Motorized boating

Freshwater Fishing

Bird watching



Chapter Nine

DETERMINING DIRECTION



DETERMINING DIRECTION

Mission, Visions and Strategies

During July of 2004, a team of seven interested and influential employees from both the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts gathered to devise a course of direction for the conservation education and interpretation program on Prince of Wales Island. Equipped with the background information gathered from the community focus groups, employee questionnaires, and school district questionnaires that were discussed in the previous chapter, the Conservation Education & Interpretation Team (CE&I Team) brainstormed and developed the following statements.



The POW Conservation Education & Interpretation Mission

Through strategic planning and development of a professional staff, the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District's Conservation Education and Interpretation Program fosters an awareness and understanding of cultural and natural resources on Prince of Wales Island ensuring long-term wise use and respect for our resources.



Determining Direction

After creating the statement, it was sent out by e-mail to all employees of both districts for approval and, with the exception of a few minor edits, it was accepted and adopted by the Districts.



Vision Statements

Following the development of the mission statement, the CE&I Team developed four vision statements that the Districts hope to achieve in the next 5-10 years. Each vision statement is followed by several strategies needed to achieve the vision statements.

1. Develop a strategic, Island-wide conservation education & interpretation program that encompasses all disciplines.
 - a. Create and implement a guidebook for conservation education & interpretation program development, implementation and evaluation in order to maintain consistency and sustainability.
 - b. Involve both Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger Districts.
 - c. Address a variety of resource management issues in a non-bias way.
 - d. Involve all resource management disciplines in CE & I efforts.
2. Establish and retain a professional Interpretive Services and Conservation Education team on Prince of Wales Island.
 - a. Establish a multi-disciplinary CE&I team with roles, a variety of



- members, an organizational framework, a support network, etc...
- b. Involve stakeholders in CE & I Team functions.
 - c. Recruit representatives from all disciplines to be on the CE & I team.
 - d. Obtain solid support and funding for interpretation & conservation education staff and programs for a sustained period of time.
 - e. Offer opportunities for professional development for education and interpretation on the Island; include all resource disciplines when applicable.
3. Provide products and services that are high-quality, reflect Thorne Bay & Craig Ranger District priorities, address key messages and fit within the Tongass Interpretation and Conservation Education Strategy.
- a. Develop effective program evaluation methods.
 - b. Adhere to conservation education and interpretation "best practices" as well as Tongass excepted practices.
 - c. Provide Forest Service & Tongass conservation education and interpretation guidelines to educators, interpreters and POW CE&I Team members.
 - d. Create programs that relate to POW key messages (see list below).
 - e. Develop all publications, signs and panels using a similar 'identity theme.'





Determining Direction

4. Address the current needs and expectations of our customers - including local, national and global publics as well as Forest Service employees.
 - a. Create programs and materials that reach out to a variety of audiences. (local & national public, visitors, Native, school students, teachers, employees, etc...)
 - b. Create programs and materials that meet identified needs and expectations.
 - c. Develop partnerships with local communities, community groups/ organizations, school districts, etc...
 - d. Regularly monitor and update customer needs and expectations data.



Prince of Wales Island CE& I Strategy



In order to implement the above strategies, it is important to have a plan of action in place to keep the program direction on track. The next step that needs to be taken to keep the Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education and Interpretation Program moving in the direction of achieving its mission is to complete an action plan for each strategy. An action plan template is below.

<i>Action Plan</i>				
<i>Actions Steps</i>	<i>Who:</i>	<i>Time line:</i>	<i>Resources Needed:</i>	<i>Additional Details</i>



Chapter Ten

THE PROGRAM

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry, no matter how small, should be recorded to ensure the integrity of the financial data. This includes not only sales and purchases but also expenses and income. The document provides a detailed explanation of how to categorize these transactions and how to use a double-entry system to maintain the accounting equation.

Next, the document covers the process of reconciling bank statements. It explains that this is a crucial step in ensuring that the company's records match the bank's records. The process involves comparing the company's cash account with the bank statement, identifying any discrepancies, and determining the reasons for them. Common causes of discrepancies include bank fees, outstanding checks, and errors in recording.

The document then discusses the preparation of financial statements. It outlines the steps involved in calculating the net income for the period and how this information is used to prepare the income statement, balance sheet, and statement of cash flows. It also provides a brief overview of the accounting cycle, which is a systematic process for recording and summarizing financial transactions.

Finally, the document concludes with a summary of the key points discussed. It reiterates the importance of accuracy and consistency in accounting and provides some final thoughts on the role of accounting in the success of a business. The document is intended to serve as a practical guide for anyone involved in the financial management of a company.

THE PROGRAM

Program Development, Implementation & Evaluation

Building a successful, quality education and/or interpretation program is dependent upon comprehensive and strategic planning for all aspects of the program. When developing the components of the Prince of Wales Conservation Education and Interpretation program it is **CRITICAL** to keep the following things in mind.

1. Keep the mission and vision statements in sight.

All activities developed should in some way help to reach toward achieving one of the program's visions.

2. Create a dynamic and adaptive program.

The most effective programs are constantly changing, adapting to situations, and continually reassessing and improving aspects of the program.





The Program

In order to develop a program that is both adaptable and strives to meet the programs mission and visions, the following steps are recommended.

1. Prioritize CE & I program visions and strategies.
2. Develop Action Plans for each strategy.
 - Use educational and interpretive opportunities listed on pages 165-167 as a resource.
3. Create a Logic Model incorporating the priority strategy action plans.

Prioritize Vision and Strategies

The CE & I Team should revisit the vision statements and the strategies for reaching each vision statement. These statements can be found on pages 132-34. It is impossible to address all of the vision and mission statements at one time, so they need to be prioritized. When prioritizing keep in mind the following:

- Does it depend on other vision statements for success? If so, are those vision statements a higher priority?
- Is there monetary and philosophical support? Or can it be gained?
- Is there someone who is willing to take the lead on carrying the plan out?
- Are the resources that are needed realistic to obtain?
- Is the number of priority vision statements realistic for the people involved to work with?



Develop Action Plans

When priorities are selected, separate into smaller 'work groups' and create an action plan for each of the prioritized strategies. Filling out as many details as possible will make implementing the action plan much easier!

Tip

Make sure the people who will be most involved with implementing the strategy are involved in creating the action plan.

Action Plan

Strategy ___: Write out strategy that is being addressed so it is constantly visible to the group

Actions Steps:	Who:	Time line:	Resources Needed:	Additional Details
<i>What will be done?</i>	<i>Who will do it?</i>	<i>When will it be implemented? What date will it be complete?</i>	<i>What is needed? (money, time, books, skills, personnel, etc...)</i>	<i>Any other important details?</i>

Tip

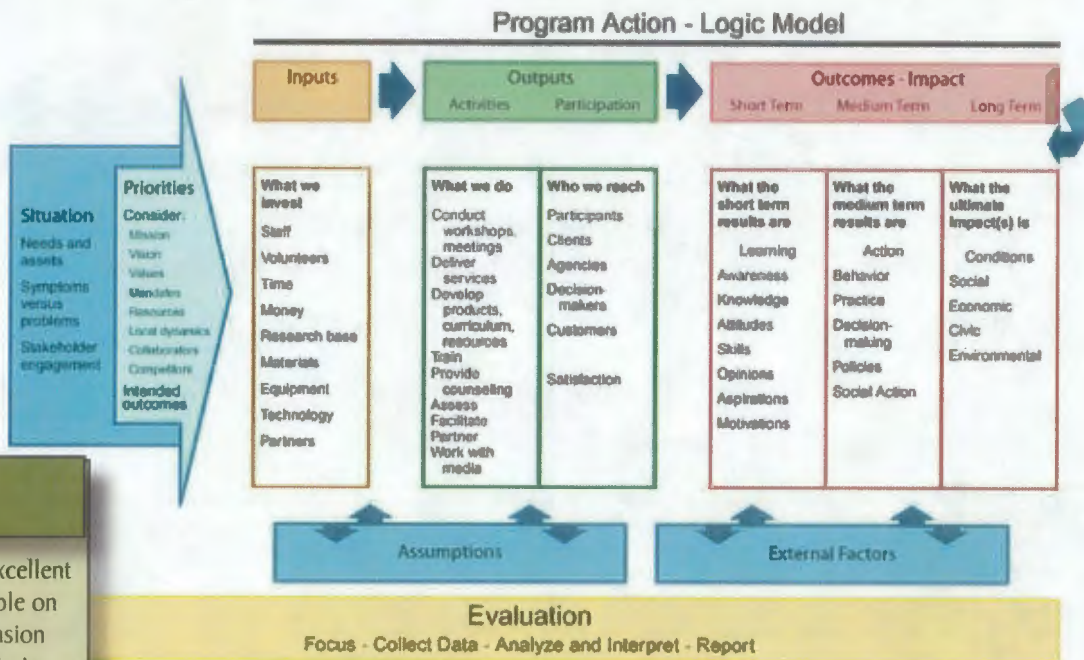
When completing this form, include enough detail so that if someone else was to take over its implementation they could complete it using only the details provided in the action plan.



The Program

Create a Logic Model

Logic models are a visual way to depict a program and are a useful tool in all aspects of developing, implementing and evaluating a program. Logic models help to show connections, flow and gaps in a program. An increasing number of institutions are using logic models as a way to develop, implement and evaluate programs. An example from the University of Wisconsin extension is below.



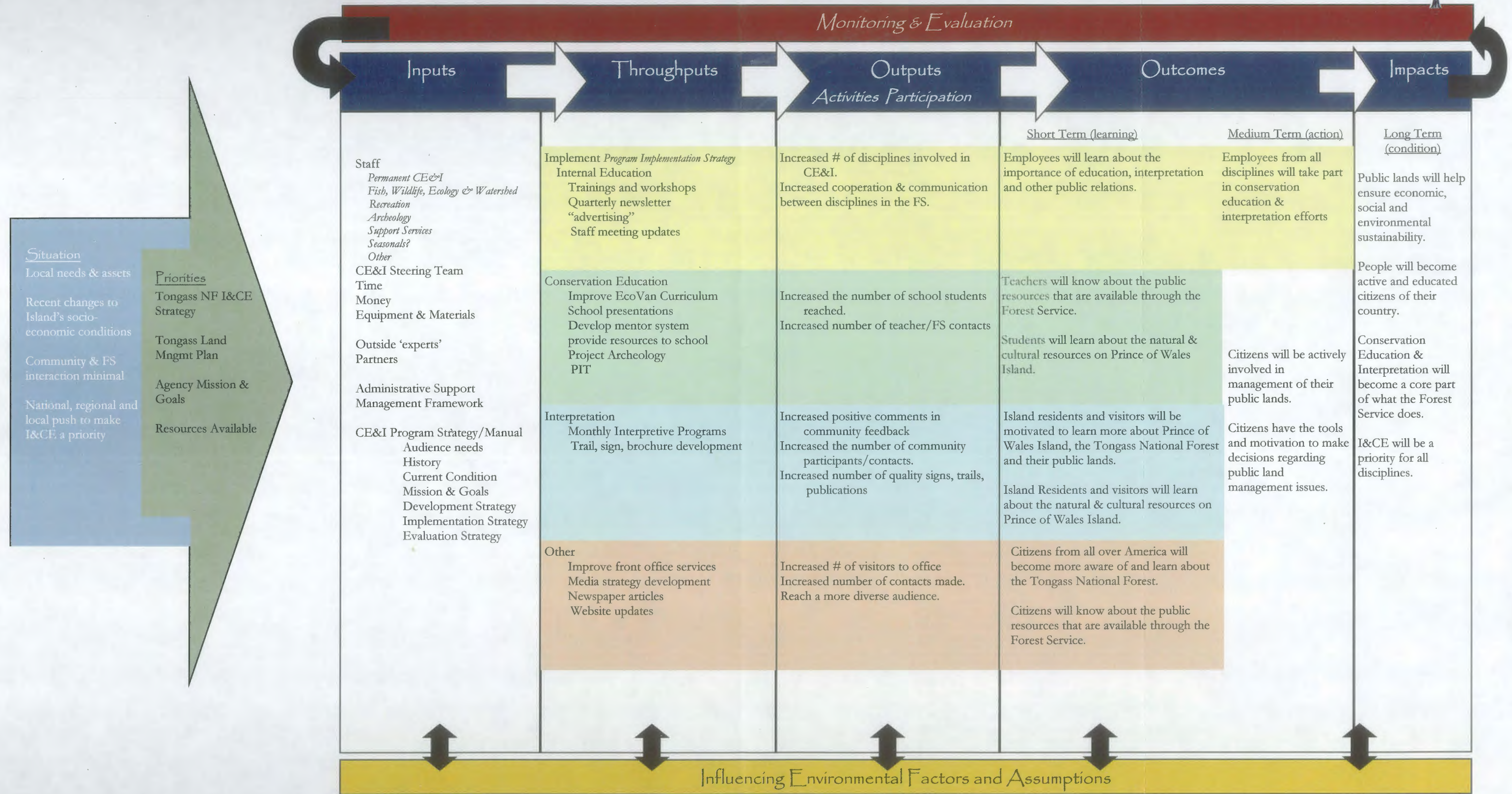
Tip

There are many excellent resources available on the UW - Extension web-site to help in developing logic models.

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html>

Logic models can be created for individual programs or meetings or for larger, more complex efforts (such as the entire Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education and Interpretation Program). It is recommended that a entire program logic model is created, along with one for each vision and/or strategy. An example of a logic model for Vision I is on the following page.

Logic Model - Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education & Interpretation Program





Vision 1: Develop a strategic, Island-wide conservation education & interpretation program that encompasses all disciplines

Situation

- Local needs
- Recent changes to Island's socio-economic conditions
- Community & FS interaction minimal
- National, regional and local push to make I&CE a priority

Priorities

- Tongass NF I&CE Strategy
- Tongass Land Mngmt Plan
- Agency Mission
- Resources Available

Strategy A: Create a guidebook for conservation education & interpretation program development, implementation and evaluation in order to maintain consistency and sustainability.
Obj. 1: All components of the program will adhere to CE & I "Best Practices."

Strategy B: Involve both Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger Districts.
Obj. 1: Involve at least two employees from each District in all aspects of the program plan

Strategy C: Address a variety of resource management issues in a non-bias way.

Strategy D: Involve all resource management disciplines in CE & I efforts.
Obj. 1: Develop an internal education program to train and teach employees about CE & I.

What we Invest.

- Staff
 - Fish, Wildlife, Ecology & Watershed*
 - Recreation*
 - Archeology*
 - Support Services*
 - Timber*
 - Silviculture*
 - Planning*
 - Engineering*
 - Others!*
- CE&I Steering Team
 - Staff from Thorne Bay RD
 - Staff from Craig RD
- Time
- Money
- Equipment & Materials
- Administrative Support
- Management Framework
- Background Knowledge
 - History & Current*
 - Condition Summary*
 - Audience Needs*

What do we do?

- Guidebook Development*
 - Audience Needs Assessment*
 - o Communities
 - o School
 - o Employees
 - CE & I Team meetings
 - Program Development Strategy*
 - Program Implementation Strategy*
 - Program Evaluation Strategy*
- Address needs
 - Employee training in CE&I
 - Manual development for CE&I basics
- Establishment of a permanent CE&I position on Prince of Wales Island
- Increase # and quality of CE&I projects & programs
- Increase # of employees involved with education & interpretation efforts
- Establish permanent, stable funding for CE&I
- Increase # of disciplines involved in CE&I.
- Increased cooperation & communication between disciplines in the FS.
- Increased cooperation & communication between the Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger Districts.

Who do We Reach?

- Directly
 - Thorne Bay Ranger District employees
 - Craig Ranger District employees
- Indirectly
 - Local public
 - POW Island Visitors
 - School Districts
 - Our partners

Short Term (learning)

- Improved quality of I&CE programs carried out by FS employees
- Increased awareness & knowledge of audience needs & expectations by Forest Service employees.
- Understanding of importance of CE&I to all disciplines.

Medium Term (action)

- I&CE is looked at as a more 'professional' field within the Forest Service.

Long Term (condition)

- A solid and sustainable conservation education & interpretation program will be established on Prince of Wales Island.
- Conservation Education & Interpretation will become a core part of what the Forest Service does.

Influencing Environmental Factors and Assumptions



Conservation Education & Interpretation Opportunities

A list of educational and interpretive opportunities are on the pages that follow. These items are just the 'tip of the iceberg' when it comes to ways to reach the public. These opportunities and others, should be done as part of a strategic effort, not as an isolated experience. Use these opportunities (and other ideas that are developed) when developing action plans as a way to implement strategies.

Conservation Education & Interpretation Opportunities

Directive Level

- Create specific plans to establish implementation strategies for CE & I programs (i.e. Interpretive plan for new interpretive developments on the Island)
- Create and support a full time CE & I position.
- Provide professional development opportunities in CE & I for Forest Service employees. (For example: trainings, workshops, literature, guidebooks, etc...)
- Develop evaluation program that meets FS Credibility through Accountability (CTA) standards as well as helps to improve program.

External Efforts - Conservation Education

- School Programs (General)
- Career Days
- Externships with local high school students.
- Continue EcoVan Program
- Involve students in FS and community projects (ie: stream data collection, community/highway clean-ups, exotic species invasion, etc...)





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- Create teacher/student resource kits for schools to use. (i.e.: Stream Watch kits, Watchable Wildlife, What goes into a road?, What do we use the Forest for?, etc...) (check out this web-site for NPS example http://www.nps.gov/aplic/fieldtrip/anch_local.html#2)

- Public Educational Programs (evenings and weekends)
- Community workshops (topics i.e.: Dealing with Invasive species, Medicinal Plants, Exploring POW's past, etc....)
- FS Field Day (community members and/or students/teachers have the opportunity to go in the field with FS employees to 'see what they do')



- Educational booths at community events.
- Workshops/guides for public regarding FS processes (TLMP, NEPA, EIS, etc...)
- Weekly radio shows and/or newspaper articles.
- FS Web site
- Plan and build an education/interpretive center.
- Regular "Discovery Nites" (open house, education/interpretation programs, with other activities going on throughout the evening as well)
- Annual educational pamphlet on FS plans for the year.
- Lunch with the Ranger (hold annual/semi-annual informal question and answer sessions with the Ranger, staff officers and representatives from each community)



External Efforts - Interpretation

- Develop interpretive programs for community members and visitors.
- Develop additional interpretive trails on the Island.
- Develop road side interpretive panels and/or an interpretive road guide.

Prince of Wales Island CE&I Strategy



- Create an interpretive trail near the FS office.
- Create POW specific brochures.
- Plan and build an education/interpretive center.
- Develop additional interpretive tours/hikes.
- Improve front desk services.



Internal Efforts - Conservation Education and Interpretation

- Develop Forest/Island-wide design template for all signs/brochures created.
- Employee Trainings/Workshops
 - * communication techniques
 - * Setting up and running a public meeting
 - * Education techniques for elementary/secondary students
 - * How to develop an effective oral public presentation
 - * How to write for the public
 - * Developing reader-friendly posters, brochures and newsletters
 - * Setting up and implementing a student field project
 - * Many more topics!
- Develop manuals for above topics and others.
- Create CE&I newsletter on a regular basis to celebrate and share successes with District employees.





Recommendations for Program Development, Implementation & Evaluation

There are many excellent conservation education and interpretation efforts currently taking place in the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts. However, here are some additional recommendations that may help the program move forward.



A strategic direction should be established and regularly updated. This process has begun with the work leading up to, and the development of this Guidebook. It will be up to the employees of the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts to carry this through. Without a larger strategic direction, a program has little hope for long term impact. Below are a few things to keep in mind in future program development.

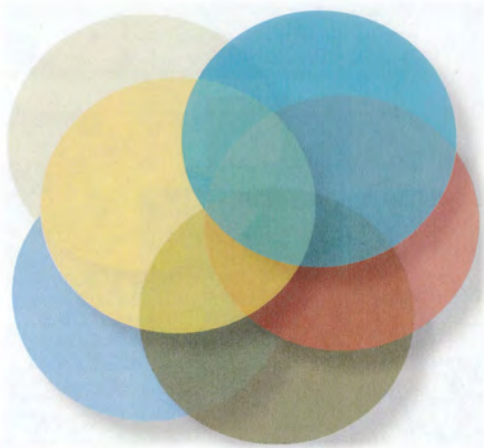
- The Program should fit within National and Forest level guidelines, as well as effectively implement 'best practices' for conservation (environmental) education and interpretation.
- Audience needs, interests and expectations should be addressed and regularly assessed, so contacts with specific audiences can be most effective.
- The strategic direction that was developed in this research project and continued by employees in 2005 should be revisited on an annual basis to assess what has been accomplished and set new visions, strategies and action plans as needed.

Hire a full-time conservation education and interpretation staff position. The graduate student that developed this Guidebook was intricately involved with the conservation education and interpretation efforts on Prince of Wales Island for two full summers. During those summers, it became apparent that in order for the Island-wide conservation education and interpretation program to be effectively coordinated, a full-time position would need to be created and filled. (Please see the Appendix for

The Program



recommended skills needed for this position) A full-time employee would take some of the workload off of employees from various departments, allowing those employees to continue with their principle duties while assisting in the coordinated conservation education and/or interpretation efforts of the Districts.



Strive for interdisciplinary support. Traditionally, education and interpretation has been primarily carried out through the Fish, Wildlife and Watershed Shop, the Recreation Shop, and through other individuals who have a personal passion. However, when interviewed, employees from all disciplines stated that education and interpretation was critical to what the Forest Service does.

Employees from all disciplines should be involved in education and interpretation efforts, to ensure diverse ideas and program objectivity. Employees from all disciplines stated that they would like to see more trainings and workshops regarding conservation education and interpretation techniques, so that they may more effectively carry out education and interpretation in their field

Several techniques follow on how to involve a variety of disciplines in the Conservation Education and Interpretation Program:

- Involve at least one employee from each discipline in the CE&I Team meetings.
- Offer alternative ways to be involved in CE&I efforts such as: writing newspaper articles; helping develop the content for discipline specific brochures; involvement in planning a school program (but not necessarily giving it); mentoring individual students by involving them in projects;



The Program

- conducting an adult workshop on a topic of choice; and many other ways!
- The future CE&I full time staff should make a concerted effort to get input from all disciplines when developing and/or implementing a conservation education and/or interpretation program.

Publicize achievements and meet critics. Throughout its past, the Forest Service has had a reputation for dodging issues, refusing to meet critics and not publicizing the good things that are being accomplished. Conservation education and interpretation can help to change this reputation by acknowledging and bringing awareness to the environmental, administrative, social and economic issues that the Forest Service is a part of, both through internal and external education and/or interpretation.

By taking a proactive role and letting the public know what the Forest Service is doing (both the acceptable and debatable actions), will give the public more visible opportunities to get involved in the management of their public lands by either taking educated action for or against agency actions. Education and interpretation can help build support for as well as hold the agency accountable for its actions.

Address critical issues in a straight-forward, objective manner. In managing our public lands, the Forest Service must address many controversial issues of great public importance (i.e. timber harvest, mining, endangered species multiple-use land management, etc ..) (Rakestraw, 2002). While it likely is impossible to accommodate all the competing interests placing demands upon public land all the time, past controversies and scandals have caused many people to become increasingly skeptical of the Forest Service (Durbin, 1999). In order to overcome this skepticism, the Forest Service needs to deal with the critical issues it faces by being straight-forward and objective. Conservation education and interpretation efforts, as well as all other management decisions need to incorporate sound science and reflect those values held by the public.



Incorporate accepted conservation education and interpretation techniques. In the past decades, many studies have been conducted in both environmental education and interpretation. These studies have indicated that there are specific techniques that are most effective for each discipline. A few of the accepted techniques for non-formal environmental education are listed in Appendix F of the Guidebook. Accepted techniques for effective interpretation are discussed on page 30. By incorporating these techniques into education and interpretation efforts, the intended message and program goals will more effectively be conveyed to the audience.

Continue involvement in special events. The Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts have built a positive reputation with communities and schools of Prince of Wales Island through their involvement and hosting of special events. These family and school-based events (such as Kid's Fishing Day, School Science Fair, and The Deer Celebration) provide an informal environment for personal interaction with the public in which both parties benefit. Expanding and refining these events will continue to build a positive reputation with the local public.





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Continue and improve current quality education and interpretation programs. There is a diverse array of education and interpretation efforts already taking place on both Districts. Many of these have had a significant impact on the community members, students, or visitors of Prince of Wales Island. The purpose of this research and the Guidebook is to improve and guide current efforts while investigating future opportunities. The recommendations made in this section can help to continue, improve and expand upon the education and interpretation programs that are currently in place on Prince of Wales Island.

Improve communication with public and schools. Both community members and school teachers, responded, "More communication!" when asked what they would like to see in the future from the Forest Service conservation education and interpretation program. Although all communication is not conservation education, or interpretation; all education and interpretation are forms of communication. Increasing the number of conservation education and interpretation programs may help to lessen this plea for, "More communication!"

Discuss more about conservation issues in school programs. Based on survey responses when surveyed, several teachers want more discussion of conservation issues in Forest Service school programs. Learning about streams, trees, fish, wildlife, etc..., give students an excellent knowledge-base regarding the resources on the Island. However, in order to give students the skills they need to make informed decisions about their public lands, presentations need to go beyond just knowledge and awareness of resources to addressing what conservation is and the issues that surround it. This does NOT mean only presenting 'the Forest Service viewpoint'. High-quality conservation education





gives students the tools and skills needed to make their own decisions – it does not try to push an agenda.

Develop additional interpretive opportunities. Following the need for improved communication by the Forest Service, community members wanted to see more recreational opportunities offered on Prince of Wales Island. Within the list of desired recreational opportunities, many involved interpretation. Overall, people were thrilled about the Beaver Falls interpretive trail and wanted to see more opportunities like that around the Island. Developing a few additional site-specific interpretive trails around the Island would offer community members and visitors alike, an opportunity to learn about the Forest that surrounds them. If appropriate sites exist, it may be beneficial to develop these interpretive efforts near communities for easier access.



Although this Guidebook gives guiding direction and suggestions for developing interpretation programs and efforts on the Island, it may be beneficial to engage in developing an interpretation specific plan that outlines specific interpretive sites, themes and messages, and priorities.

Develop internal education programs. Although a majority of the employees think education and interpretation are important to what they do, many don't have the skills or resources currently available to them to effectively carry out conservation education and/or interpretation. Developing internal education programs regarding techniques in environmental education and/or interpretation will be essential in building support for the program and a well-equipped staff to help effectively implement conservation education and interpretation efforts. The following are recommendations for internal



The Program

education programming:

- Develop internal education workshops/trainings that would be valuable in an employee's job outside of traditional conservation education and/or interpretation programs. For example: "How to develop an effective oral public presentation", "How to write for the public", "Developing reader-friendly posters, brochures and newsletters", and many others!
- Gain support from the District Ranger so that employees from all disciplines are encouraged to attend these programs (if it is a priority in the Rangers eyes – the employees will deem it a priority too!)
- Include ways that employees can use the skills they have gained in the workshops when working with the public through education and interpretation programs or other public outreach efforts.



- Create a conservation education and interpretation library that all employees can use to look for ideas, lesson plans, techniques, etc...



Develop Forest/Island-wide design theme for all interpretive media created. A similar design for sign panels, brochures, newsletters, and any other media created by the Forest Service can help to create an identity for the organization.

An example of a design template that could be used for panels on Prince of Wales Island is on the following page. The fonts, colors and other elements are described below.

Seaweed

C=0 M=32
Y=82 K=12

Treebark

C=14 M=60
Y=100 K=8



River

C=100 M=62
Y=10 K=12

Forest

C=70 M=28
Y=95 K=41

Typography

The typeface (or font) and sizes should be consistent for all the interpretive panels. *Pepita MT* was used for the title and sub-headings on this panel example because it is an eye catching font that seems to illustrate dynamism. Baker Signet was used for the longer text excerpts because it is easy to read and compliments the *Pepita MT* typeface used.

Color

Colors were chosen based on those that are dominant in the temperate rainforests of southeast Alaska. (the letters and numbers are the CMYK color values)

Unifying Elements

Faded background pictures. Colored text boxes that can be changed according to the theme of the interpretive panel (i.e., if the panels are illustrating estuary life *seaweed* may be the appropriate dominant panel color). Top and side color bars. Forest Service shield and other icon in the corner (in this case a tree).

Island Life...



Prince of Wales Island is dynamic. People, nature, and a rich culture all thrive quietly amongst the rocks, waters and forest of the Island's watery borders.

Island Time

Life in southeast Alaska is different. The pace is slower. Distant noise doesn't clutter the air, people don't rush around unnecessarily. Sometimes it almost seems that time has stopped.

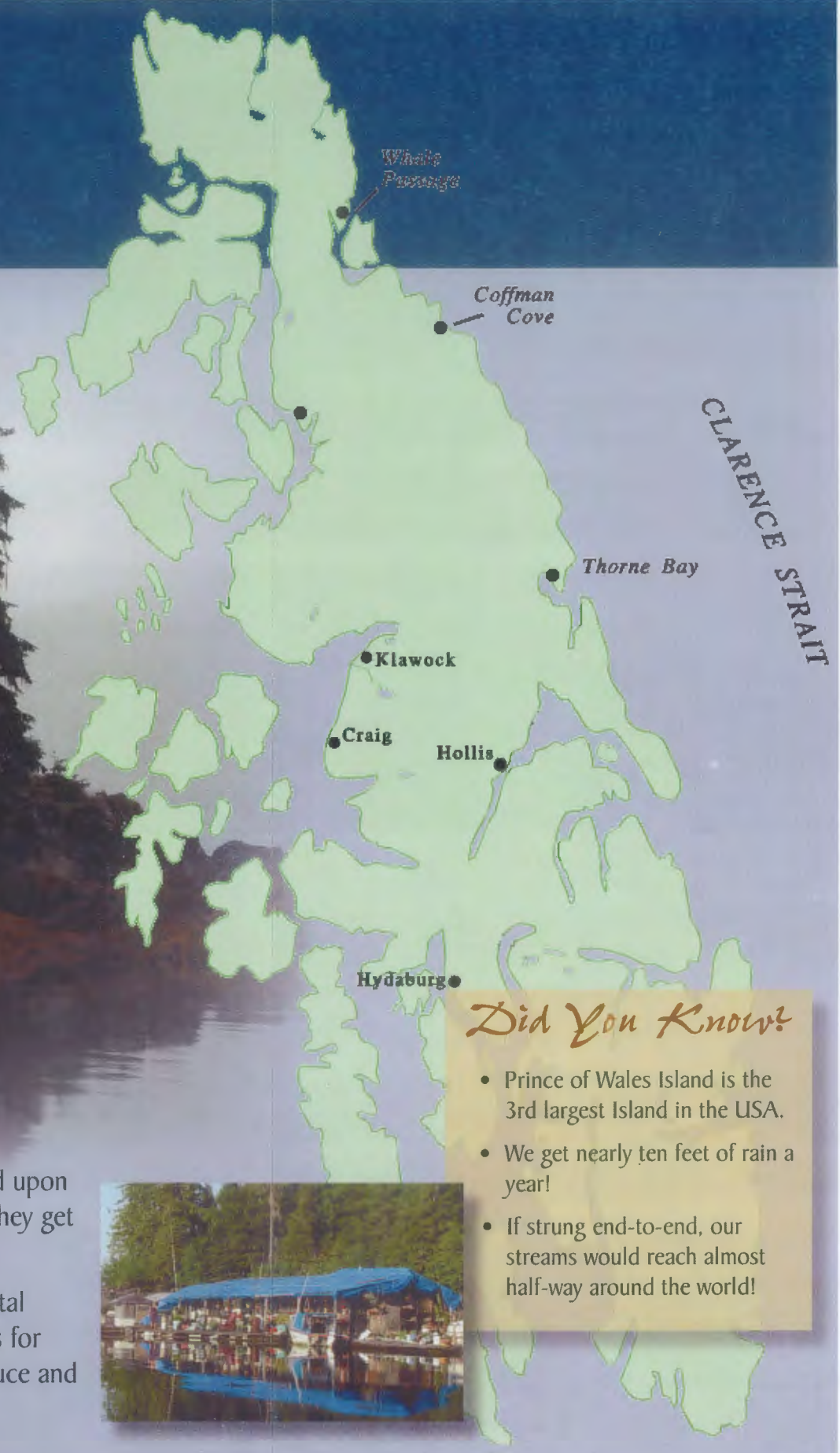
Instead of letting clocks and watches dictate your day, try it like Alaskans do - let sunlight rule your day!



Water Ways...

Life here is influenced by water. Not only do people depend upon it for daily life functions but it also how they travel, where they get their food, and how many make a living.

The temperate rainforest ecosystem also depends on this vital component. Water has carved the island, funneling streams for fish populations, and helping to build soil for the giant spruce and cedar that thrive here.



Did You Know?

- Prince of Wales Island is the 3rd largest Island in the USA.
- We get nearly ten feet of rain a year!
- If strung end-to-end, our streams would reach almost half-way around the world!







The Program

Limitations

There are numerous limitations in the information presented in this Guidebook that are important to acknowledge so the information and recommendations can be used effectively. Below each bulleted limitation is a recommendation on how to lessen the effects of the limitation.

- The audience needs assessment results cannot be generalized. Although attempts were made to recruit a diversity of view points and backgrounds, the data from focus groups, interviews and questionnaires only represents the opinions and thoughts of the participants.

Recommendation: Future needs assessments should be done on a regular basis for evaluation purposes and to expand sample size.

Specific groups to focus on include:

- o Visitors to Prince of Wales Island (this is a growing audience)
- o Off the road-system communities
- o Tourist industries (lodges, guiding services, bed and breakfasts, etc...)
- o The school districts within the Craig Ranger District.
- o Additional teachers from the Southeast Island School District
- o Revisit participant groups involved in this project.





- Although the Guidebook was designed and effort was made to include both the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts, there was often weak input from the Craig side. Therefore, the results may only partially portray the history, current status, audience needs and opportunities of the Craig Ranger District.

Recommendation: Craig Ranger District should acknowledge that the results portrayed in this research project may not accurately convey the current condition or best plan of action. Supplemental audience needs assessments should be conducted.

- Successful use of the Guidebook is strongly dependent on the establishment of a full-time CE&I position on POW.

Recommendation: Hire a full time CE&I staff for POW. Without a full-time staff member devoted to the program, the recommendations made in this guidebook will be unable to be implemented to their full potential.

- This project focuses its audience needs assessments on the local public. However, the Forest Service serves the national and local publics at equal levels. Therefore, the research project is lacking assessment of needs of the national public.

Recommendation: When implementing this research it is crucial to acknowledge that the national public may have a very different view than the local public, and all needs should be taken into account equally.





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- The implications of this project are somewhat dependent on a change in Agency culture. A majority of the history of land management on the Tongass has been resource extraction-based. Many of those actions have caused much controversy on Prince of Wales Island and the Alaska Region. There must be a shift in core culture from all levels of the Agency to fully engage in effective, objective conservation education and interpretation efforts.

Recommendation: Since the Forest Service serves the nation, the culture and actions of the Forest Service should reflect the majority views of the national public.



The Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education & Interpretation Team

During August of 2004, the Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education and Interpretation Team was formed. An initial organizational structure was established and ideas of roles, activities, members and directives were discussed.

To provide strategic direction and establish priorities for the Conservation Education Program on Prince of Wales Island so that program sustainability and consistency is achieved.



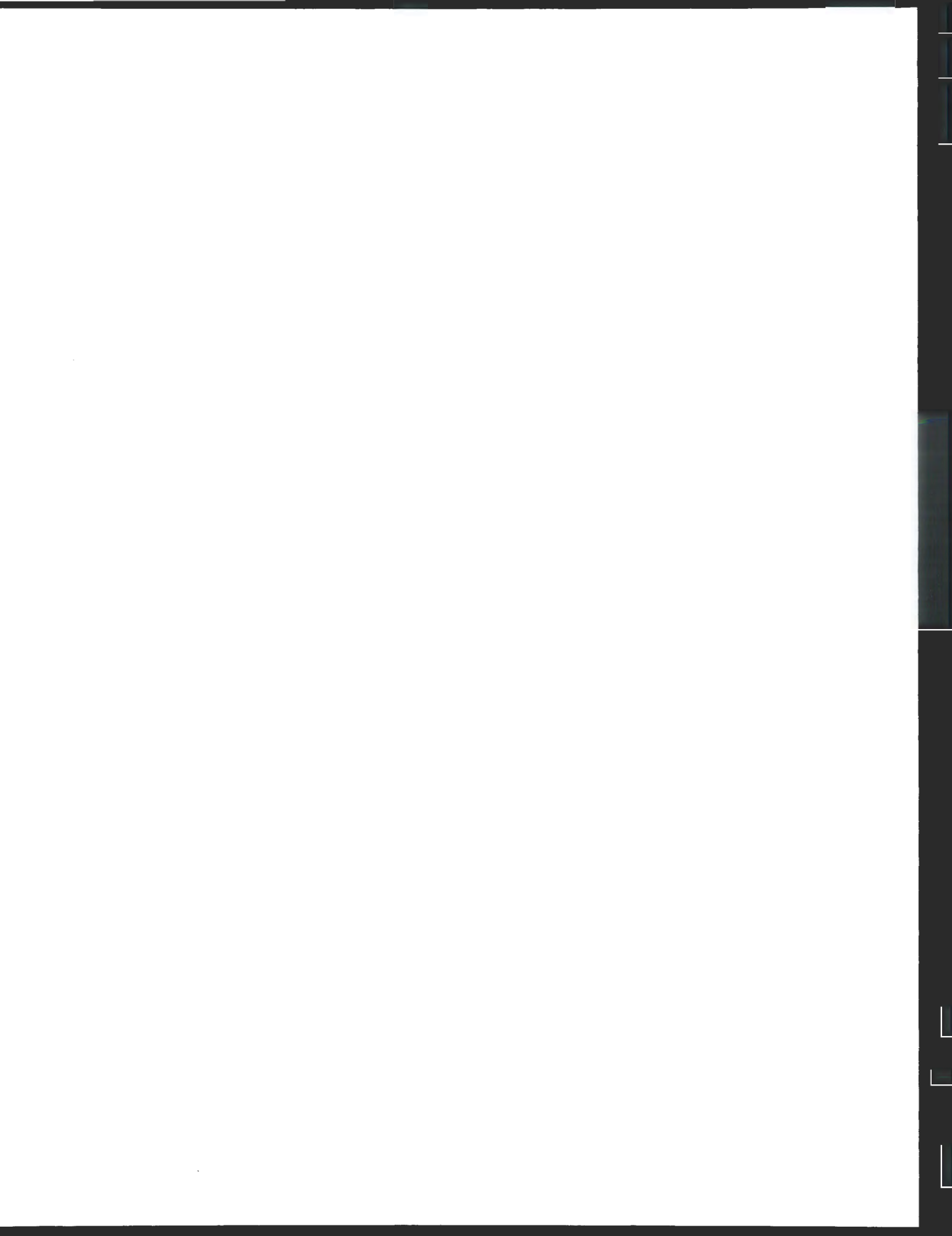
The

- Be Interdisciplinary
- Advise the Rangers
- Set CE&I Program priorities
- Relay information to rest of Island employees
- Provide a long term monitoring & reevaluation system
- Involve a diversity of players (staff officers, resource professionals, external stakeholders, etc...)
- Consist of 6-8 people

Potential Members

Susan Howell	CE&I Permanent
Dale Fife	KK Prussian
Gary Lawton	Terry Fifield
Brenda McDonald	Marcia Gilles
Erik Spillman	Tory Gray
Chuck Klee	

Please see Chapter 4 for more information on how to further develop the Prince of Wales Conservation Education and Interpretation Team



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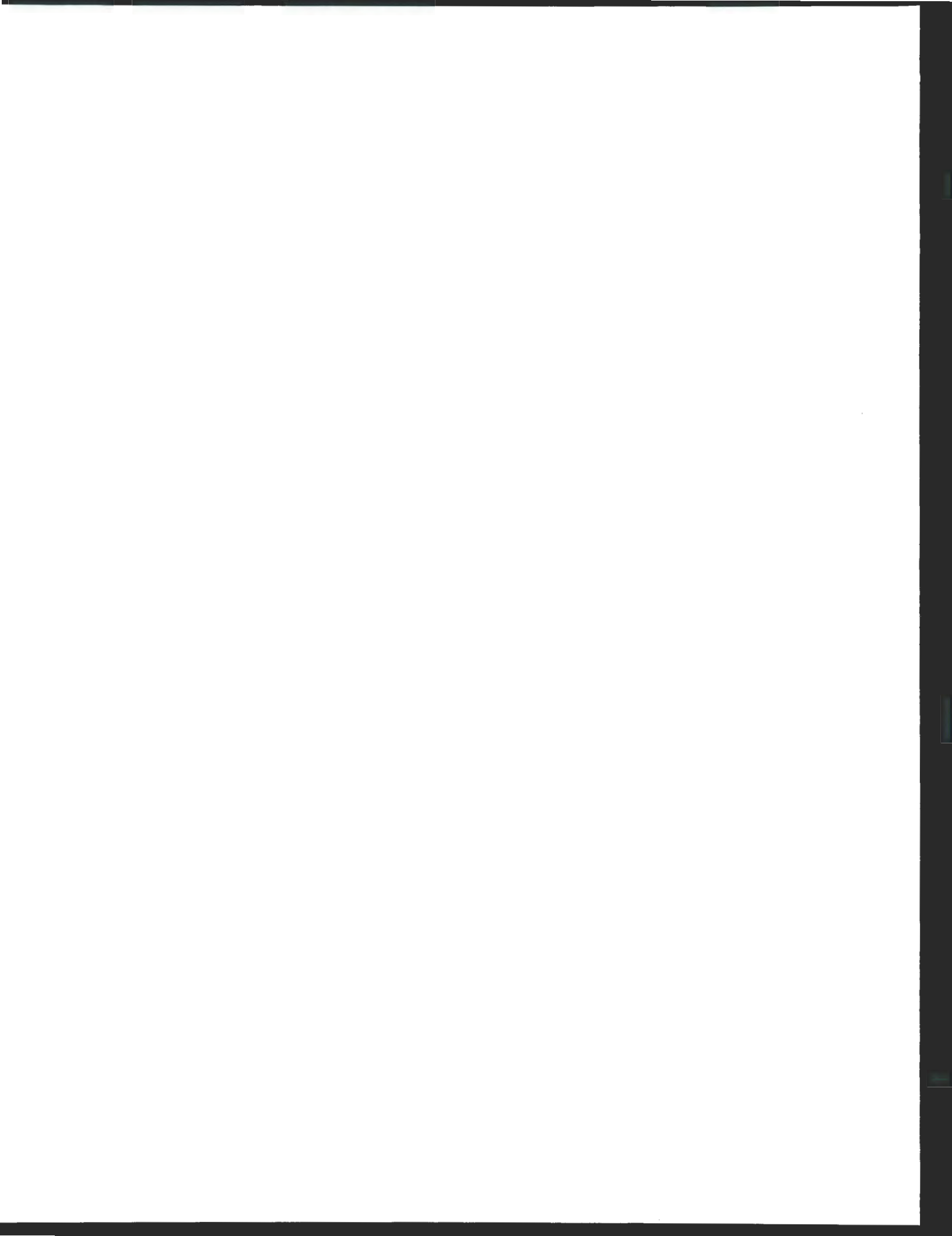
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APPENDICES





Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District employee Questionnaire

Technique: Paper questionnaire

Sampling Population: employees of the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District employees

Purpose: To gather a data base from this audience, so the planning team will have an accurate depiction of employee needs and expectations for Conservation Education and Interpretation (CE & I) on the island, to take into consideration when developing the CE & I plan for the Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger Districts.

Objective:

- To determine employee CE & I priorities and individual interest.
- To gather recommendations on plan components that would better meet employee needs in order to implement the CE & I program.
- To gather recommendations

Methods:

- Develop questions and cover letters
- Approve by graduate committee
- Submit to IRB for approval
- Intro letter to District Rangers
- Distribute to employees (as soon as approval is gained)
- Return by May 15th to TBRD receptionist.

Analysis:

- Type up all comments
- Categorize
- Summarize (how??)
- Use to "educate" planning committee



Employee Questionnaire

Conservation Education and Interpretation Planning Strategy

Thorne Bay & Craig Ranger District Employee Questionnaire

1. How important do you think education and interpretation is in achieving the Forest Service's mission?

The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Very Important Important Neutral Not very important Shouldn't be considered

1b. Why do you feel this way?

2. List, in order of priority, what you think would be the most important components of an education and interpretation program on the District.

3. If the District would implement your above priorities what additional skills or resources would you want (trainings, manuals, workshops, etc...) to feel comfortable in executing the priorities?

4. If you are interested in being a part of the District education interpretation program how would you like to take part?



5. ***Based on your needs and interests, what are your ideas on how the Forest Service can convey the following messages through interpretive services (ie: trails, brochures, signs, public programs, etc...)? Please be as specific as possible***

Discover...Countless opportunities for exploration and enjoyment exist amongst the rugged shores, deep forests and sparkling streams of Prince of Wales Island.

Diverse...The land has created lifestyles and cultures that are as diverse as the land that is depended upon for support

Distinct...Rare ecosystems and world'-class resources thrive in this unique island environment.

Dedicated...The Forest Service (the TB and C Ranger Districts) is dedicated to caring for the land while serving the people of Prince of Wales Island.



6. **Based on your needs and interests, what are your ideas on how the Forest Service can convey the following messages through educational programs (ie: school programs, community workshops, educational pamphlets, etc...)?**

Discover...Countless opportunities for exploration and enjoyment exist amongst the rugged shores, deep forests and sparkling streams of Prince of Wales Island.

Diverse...The land has created lifestyles and cultures that are as diverse as the land that is depended upon for support.

Distinct...Rare ecosystems and world'-class resources thrive in this unique island environment.

Dedicated...The Thorne Bay (or Craig) Ranger District is dedicated to caring for the land while serving the people of Prince of Wales Island.



Community Focus Group Questions

Technique: Focus Groups

Sampling Population: Community members of Prince of Wales Island (selected by community leaders and Ranger District Administration)

Purpose: To gather a data base from this audience, so the planning team will have an accurate depiction of community member needs and expectations for Conservation Education and Interpretation (CE & I) on the island, to take into consideration when developing the CE & I plan for the Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger Districts.

Objective:

- To determine the needs and expectations of community members for a Forest Service CE & I program.
- To gather recommendations on how the Forest Service on POW island can better meet the community members CE & I needs.

Methods:

- Develop questions
 - Approve by graduate committee
 - Submit to IRB for approval
- Get list of community leaders...contact them. (april)
 - Intro letter to community leaders giving background on project, etc...
- Set up focus group times (end of May, first week in June)
- Develop pre-focus group information packet (explanation of project, define CE & I, list of questions that will be asked, time, date, location, etc...)
- Facilitate focus group (tape record and notes)
- Send thank you notes to all group participants (offer some incentive, compensation?)

Analysis:

- Type up all comments
- Categorize
- Summarize
 - Use to "educate" planning committee



Community Focus Group

The following questions will be asked during the Focus Group Session:

- 1. What do you feel are strengths of current Forest Service and community interaction?*

- 2. What do you feel are weaknesses of current Forest Service and community interaction?*

- 3. What future interaction would you like to see between communities and the Forest Service?*

- 4. If the Forest Service was to offer education and/or interpretation programs, what would be important components? (ie: topics, location, time, advertising, type of program....)*



School District employee Questionnaire

Technique: Paper questionnaire

Sampling Population: teachers and administrators of the schools on Prince of Wales Island (POW)

Purpose: To gather a data base from this audience, so the planning team will have an accurate depiction of POW school district teachers and administrator's needs and expectations for Conservation Education and Interpretation (CE & I) to take into consideration when developing the CE & I plan for the Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger Districts.

Objective:

- To determine the weaknesses of the existing CE program
- To determine the strengths of the existing CE program.
- To determine how the POW Forest Service can further meet the CE needs of the School Districts of POW.

Methods:

- Develop questions and cover letters
- Approve by graduate committee
- Submit to IRB for approval
- Intro letter to school administrators
- Distribute to teachers
- Return by mid in-service

Analysis:

- Type up all comments
- Categorize
- Summarize



School District Questionnaire

*****Please answer the following questions (use the back of this sheet if needed):***

#1 What are the strengths of the conservation education services offered by the Prince of Wales Island Forest Service?

#2. What are the weaknesses of the conservation education services offered by Prince of Wales Island Forest Service?

#3. What are other conservation education needs that you have, that the POW Forest Service could address in the future?



<i>Action Plan</i>				
Strategy ____:				
Actions Steps:	Who:	Timeline:	Resources Needed:	Additional Details



Appendix E

Adapted Nominal Group Technique



To develop the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger District conservation education and interpretation program mission, vision and strategies the adapted nominal group process format described in *A Directors Guide to Best Practices* was used (Byrd, 2000). The researcher facilitated the meeting that was held on July 13th, 2004.

Adapted Nominal Group Technique

STEP #1 Key Question: Before the meeting, a key question was developed by the researcher and approved by key members of the Ranger Districts (Dave Schmid -TBRD Ranger; Susan Howell – TBRD Staff Officer for Fish, Wildlife and Watershed Shops; Sandy Frost – Tongass National Forest Partnership and Rural Community Assistance Coordinator). The key question was: What should the island-wide conservation education and interpretation mission include? As recommended by *The Directors Guide to Best Practices* the key question clearly identified the information being sought, and only sought one thing in its answer (Byrd, 2000).

STEP #2 Idea Sharing: After the key question was presented, participants were given ten minutes to write down on paper any ideas they felt addressed the key question. Then all ideas brainstormed were vocalized in round robin fashion (by going around the group in a circle, everyone gets the chance to share one of their ideas before beginning the next round) and recorded on large pieces of papers hung on the walls. Each idea was numbered.

STEP #3: Clarification. After all ideas were gathered, participants were asked look over the ideas and see if any were not understandable. If an idea was not clear to a participant, the person who put the idea on the list explained their idea in more depth until an understanding was reached. The facilitator made sure that no criticism of ideas was given during this process and that only ideas that were asked to be clarified were given an explanation.

STEP #4: What Best Answers the Key Question? When everyone was clear about all of the ideas, then each participant was asked to individually pick and record on paper three ideas that they believed best answered the key question. For each of the three ideas they picked, the participants were also asked to write a statement justifying why it answered the key question. The round robin sharing circle began again, and as participants shared their selected ideas and the corresponding statements of support, the numbered idea was circled.



STEP#5: What Does Not Answer the Key Question? Then participants were asked to select two of the circled ideas that they believed did not address the key question, and write a statement of support for their reasoning again. The ideas and comments were shared and an 'observation check' was placed next to each idea

STEP#6: Combining. The facilitator then offered the group the opportunity to decide if two or more of the circled ideas should be combined into one. After minimal discussion, the group decided to move onto step seven without combining any ideas.

STEP #7: Voting. Group participants took a short break while the facilitator rewrote the circled ideas onto one sheet of paper. When the meeting resumed each participant was given ten round stickers with instructions to vote for their favorite ideas. Everyone had to use all of their stickers but could place no more than four stickers on one idea.

STEP #8 Tally Votes and Draft Mission Statement: The facilitator tallied the votes. The ideas with the most votes became the components that would comprise the mission statement. Three volunteers from the group of participants volunteered to draft the mission statement.

Through the Adapted Nominal Group Process used to develop the mission statement, several vision statements were also identified and written. After the mission statement and a set of strategies were drafted it was sent by email to ALL employees on the Thorne Bay and Craig Ranger Districts (even those who did not participate in the brainstorming session) with a request to respond only if the employee had a question or suggestion (the process of negative approval) about the mission or vision statements. After a few revisions, the statements were adopted as the Prince of Wales Island Conservation Education & Interpretation

Nonformal Environmental Education Programs: Guidelines for Excellence



Summary of Nonformal Environmental Education Programs: Guidelines for Excellence

Key Characteristic #1 – Needs Assessment.

Nonformal environmental education programs are designed to address identified environmental, educational, and community needs and to produce responsive, responsible benefits that address those identified needs.

- 1.1 Environmental issue or condition;
- 1.2 Inventory of existing programs and materials; and
- 1.3 Audience needs.

Key Characteristic #2 – Organizational Needs and Capacities.

Nonformal environmental education programs support and complement their parent organization's mission, purpose, and goals.

- 2.1 Consistent with organizational priorities;
- 2.2 Organization's need for the program identified; and
- 2.3 Organization's existing resources inventoried.

Key Characteristic #3 – Program Scope and Structure.

Nonformal environmental education programs should be designed with well-articulated goals and objectives that state how the program will contribute to the development of environmental literacy.

- 3.1 Goals and objectives for the program;
- 3.2 Fit with goals and objectives of environmental education;
- 3.3 Program format and delivery; and
- 3.4 Partnerships and collaboration.

Key Characteristic #4 – Program Delivery Resources.

Nonformal environmental education programs require careful planning to ensure that well-trained staff, facilities, and support materials are available to accomplish program goals and objectives.

- 4.1 Assessment of resource needs;
- 4.2 Quality instructional staff;
- 4.3 Facilities management;
- 4.4 Provision of support materials; and
- 4.5 Emergency planning.

Key Characteristic #5 – Program Quality and Appropriateness.

Nonformal environmental education programs are built on a foundation of quality instructional materials and thorough planning.

- 5.1 Quality instructional materials and techniques;
- 5.2 Field testing;
- 5.3 Promotion, marketing, and dissemination; and
- 5.4 Sustainability.

Key Characteristic #6 – Evaluation.

Nonformal environmental education programs define and measure results in order to improve current programs, ensure accountability, and maximize the effects of future efforts.

- 6.1 Determination of evaluation strategies;
- 6.2 Effective evaluation techniques and criteria; and
- 6.3 Use of evaluation results.

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