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2016 Annual Report

Neil MacKinnon
President

First things First Alaska Foundation has been active during 2016 in Juneau and Southeast Alaska to encourage economic and resource development.

Rosemary Hagevig
Vice President

Juneau Economic Development Plan

Joseph Kahklen
Secretary

FTFAF continues its partnership with the Juneau Chamber of Commerce working to see implementation of the recommendations of the Juneau Economic Development Plan.

Frank Bergstrom
Treasurer

Juneau Access and Southeast Transportation Plan

Directors
Corey Baxter
Richard Burns
Wayne Coogan
Naomi Hobbs
John Sandor
Scott Spickler
Karen Taug

FTFAF funded a study at the end of 2015, *Regional Economic Benefits of a Lynn Canal Highway*, by the McDowell Group, to show the positive benefits of Juneau Access to the individuals living in Southeast Alaska. In 2016 It used the report as a basis for MY Turn articles, community presentations, presentations to Governor Walker and other key administration officials. The report kept the road issue in the front of policy maker and public discussions.

Denny DeWitt
Executive Director

The Board commissioned a second report, *Southeast Transportation Network*, that reported on roads and shuttle ferries. It was distributed through the Juneau Empire, Capital City Weekly and the Ketchikan Daily News as an insert. We included a postcard for folks to return indicating support for the road. We have delivered over 400 postcards to Governor Walker. Again, the report and postcards have kept support for the road in front of policymakers and the community.

During the Juneau municipal elections, First Things First Alaska Foundation worked with First Things First, Inc. who surveyed candidates on their position on the road then sent out a postcard reporting the results. All three candidates that were elected indicated strong support for the road.

Tongass Forest and Land Management Plan

In commenting on the scope of the Tongass Forest and Land Management Plan, FTFAF emphasized the need to deal with hydropower and economic access to mining claims and timber. When activities are permitted without road access, the permits are hollow.

FTFAF also commented on the draft Record of Decision and participated in the six day Objection Resolution Meetings held by the U.S. Forest Service in October. President Neil MacKinnon and Treasurer Frank Bergstrom represented First Things First Alaska Foundation and spoke to our objections articulated in our letter to the Forest Service.

First Things First Alaska Foundation (FTFAF) is dedicated to preserving the economic viability and future of Alaska through education. There is a clear need to educate the public on the benefits of responsible economic development and natural resource management.

We contacted our federal delegation individually and as part of a group of objectors encouraging them to contact the Trump Transition Team demanding that the revisions to the Tongass Land Management Plan not be adopted.

Big Thorne Project Litigation

FTFAF has joined as interveners in defense of three cases brought by SEACC against the Forest Service. The cases are attempting to prohibit the sale of timber in the Big Thorn Project. The timber sale is critical to the continued viability of the Viking Lumber Company and the conservation activities in the Big Thorne area. The litigation will proceed in 2015 as we defend against an appeal to the 9th Circuit Court. Our brief has been filed and action is expected in spring of 2016

Roadless Rule Litigation

In November 2015 a request was filed for the US Supreme Court to hear an appeal of the 9th Circuit Court decision upholding the Roadless Rule in the Tongass National Forest. FTFAF joined as a party to an Amicus Brief requesting a hearing at the Supreme Court Level. FTFAF is also a financial contributor to this appeal.

The case FTFAF is supporting as a party and financially in the federal district court in the District of Columbia is also continuing.

Waters of the United States Regulations

Understanding the devastating nature of the proposed EPA regulations, in 2015 FTFAF President Neil MacKinnon penned a My Turn column for the Juneau Empire. US Senator Lisa Murkowski found it so strong that she sent the link out on her webpage and twitter account. Subsequently in 2016, the regulations were challenged in federal court. Resolution of that case is pending. We expect withdrawal of the regulations to be a priority of the Trump administration.

Other Activity

Support letter to Juneau Hydro Power (JHP), with proposals to develop the Sweetheart Lake and District Heating projects, has described an intriguing opportunity to grow the renewable hydroelectric energy supply in Juneau as an independent power producer. Under that structure JHP would assume all risk associated with their business venture.

The Board met with Caelus Energy Alaska to discuss the new oil discovery at Smith Bay on the North Slope. The Board offered its support in bringing the project to production.

Gold Rush Days

FTFAF continued its annual participation in Juneau's Gold Rush Days sponsoring a booth, shared with CPR, displaying many position papers supporting economic development.

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