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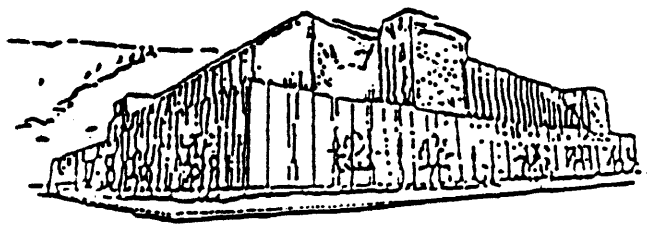
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Collaborative Approaches
in Natural Resource Decision-Making:
A Southeast Alaskan Perspective

Kimberly S. Baker

B.A., University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 1995

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of the Department of Environmental Studies
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Science

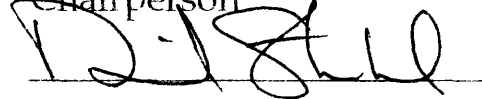
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Collaborative Approaches in Natural Resource Decision-Making: A Southeast Alaskan Perspective

Director: Donald Snow



Collaboration is a problem-solving process that entails the formation of a group of people, often adversaries, who work together to find a mutually satisfying solution to their collective problem. As natural resource conflicts persist, especially in the public land states of the American West, collaboration is one alternative strategy to employ in natural resource decision-making. Collaborative groups such as watershed councils, ranching cooperatives, and forest-related partnerships are proliferating throughout the West. These groups seek to improve upon traditional public participation approaches by working with natural resource agencies and personnel to responsibly influence management goals and implementation techniques.

Collaborative efforts are often initiated in response to a perceived economic disaster. Many western communities have experienced hardships as traditional resource-extraction industries, such as logging and mining, decline. As demographics change and economies diversify, many citizens face new challenges and opportunities. Collaboration is one tactic being utilized by western residents facing transition.

Southeast Alaska has been experiencing a transitional period similar to that of many towns across the West. Since the 1950s, the economy of southeast Alaska has been integrally tied to a pulp mill industry set in the midst of the Tongass National Forest which makes up eighty percent of the region's land base. Two large pulp mills and one sawmill have closed during the 1990s. A large percentage of the milltowns' populations were employed and/or affected by the mill closures. An opportunity to restructure local economies presented itself as the era of long-term contracts between the U. S. Forest Service and the pulp mills ended.

Although collaboration is experiencing prodigious growth in the West, it doesn't seem to be garnering the same attention in southeast Alaska. An investigation of collaborative efforts in the region does yield a few nascent experiments; however, these attempts at collaboration seem to be in the early developmental stages. There are obstacles in the region that prohibit collaboration. The largest barrier is probably due to the ingrained dependency of local economies on federal policies and funds. The pervasive effects of federal land management in the region impact citizens' abilities and motivation to engage in collaboration.

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Introduction

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the complexity of natural resource management is at an all-time high. Natural resource agencies are confronted with the simultaneous difficulties of appropriately managing lands, serving people's needs, and striving for a healthy balance among the interactions of both. Natural resource conflicts arise out of these interactions and have multiplied throughout the latter decades of the twentieth century, in part, as a result of greater demand by the public for increased involvement in natural resource decision-making. Designing environmental or natural resource policy employs human judgments in deciding how to balance competing values. Agencies that have traditionally relied on science to guide decision-making are challenged by the need to find a system that can adequately incorporate other values into the management equation. A new method for dealing with natural resource conflicts has been gaining visibility in recent years and is the focus of this paper.

Collaboration is a problem-solving process that seeks to bring a diverse set of people together to constructively generate inventive solutions. Although collaboration can be employed in a variety of arenas, its growth as a mechanism for utilization in land management spheres has risen dramatically across the American West. Collaboratives or community-based conservation initiatives aim to influence public sector decision-making. They bring into question a whole set of considerations underlying traditional assumptions about government and the way in which decisions are made. A shift away from top-down delegated decrees or command-and-control regulation to more grassroots-level, on-the-ground solutions is leading some communities to take an active role in confronting local issues and solving natural resource problems. Concerned,

active communities represent a largely untapped reservoir of creative and enduring solutions.

The majority of these communities or groups of people acting to resolve natural resource disputes can be found throughout the West. The economies of the western states have undergone changes in the past few decades, placing the region in a period of transition. The region no longer depends on agriculture, mining, logging, and ranching as the mainstays of the economy. Communities in the West are dealing with these economic changes in various ways. Watershed initiatives, ranching cooperatives, and forestry groups are exploding all over the region.

However, while there are many examples of collaboration sprouting up across the Western landscape, southeast Alaska, a region experiencing similar transitions in the local economy, seems to host few collaborative efforts. Several sawmills and pulp mills have closed throughout southeast Alaska over the course of the last decade. As a region that heavily relied on timber for its economic stability, southeast Alaska has been faced with the task of reinventing local economies. The current circumstances of the region seem to provide a likely setting for collaboration to occur, yet collaboration has not been enthusiastically embraced by citizens and organizations. An investigation of why the collaborative approach to making environmental, economic, and natural resource decisions does not seem to be proliferating in southeast Alaska is the central purpose of this thesis.

This paper begins with an introduction to southeast Alaska and the Tongass National Forest which makes up eighty percent of the region's total land base. Chapter one describes the history of the timber industry in the region with an emphasis on the origins and recent closures of two large pulp mills which have heavily influenced the region's economy.

In chapter two the discussion turns toward collaboration. The concept is defined in terms of its current use as a management tool in conservation and natural resource management. Many factors have led to the current adoption of collaboration by both agencies and citizens. Chapter two examines the combination of circumstances that has led to the current appearance of collaboration including, lessons from the alternative dispute resolution field, the historical context of natural resource policy in the West, revised mandates of natural resource agencies, evolving views of appropriate methods for seeking environmental improvements, and changing economies and demographics throughout the West. Collaboration has brought to light many questions regarding the appropriate role of citizens in natural resource decision-making. These questions are examined in the section that outlines the debate surrounding collaboration. Finally, several characteristics of successful collaborative efforts are introduced in order to inform the discussion in chapter three.

The focus in chapter three shifts back to southeast Alaska in an examination of the extent to which collaboration is occurring in the region. Southeast Alaska and many towns across the West seem to be experiencing a similar social and economic transition. The outgrowth of collaboration in response to some of the circumstances of this transitional period in the West is not matched by an equal display of collaboration in southeast Alaska. There are, however, a few examples of collaborative activities that exist in the region. Following a description of collaborative activity in Southeast is an analysis of what obstacles may be present in the region that prohibit collaboration as well as several positive factors that are present in southeast Alaska which might help support future collaboration.

Southeast Alaska is a region heavily affected by federal management of virtually all its lands. As a result, communities and citizens have become

dependent on federal policies and funds associated with pulp mill contracts and the wood products industry, which have been an integral part of the regional economy. This dependency may have acted to forestall any attempts at collaboration shortly after mills closed throughout the region. Accustomed to the historical power structure in place on the Tongass, composed of pulp mill company executives, U. S. Forest Service officials, and Alaska congressional members, citizens have not had ample opportunities in the past to influence economic directions. Perhaps as citizens in the region adjust to a much smaller timber industry and shifting power balances, collaboration will be increasingly utilized as a method to address natural resource conflicts and economic concerns.

Several qualities of the region and its inhabitants would also seem to support future efforts to collaborate. The spirit of cooperation and a historical reliance on subsistence activities are both aspects of southeast Alaskan culture that might help encourage residents to experiment with collaboration. Many residents in the region also promote sustainable livelihoods and economies. These factors could provide a support system on which to cultivate future collaboration.

Although collaboration has been slow to enter southeast Alaska, it is gaining greater visibility and one can find evidence of growing interest in the subject in various locales throughout the region. As forest policies regarding the Tongass National Forest continue to decrease timber harvests, and as local economies adjust accordingly, new opportunities for collaborative activities may develop. Citizens in southeast Alaska may require more time than has passed since the mill closures to fully adapt to their unprecedented independence.

SOUTHEAST ALASKA



(Simmerman 4)

Chapter One

Southeast Alaska and the Tongass National Forest

The currency of the state of Alaska is measured in its abundant natural resources. Many of these natural resources lie in and among Alaska's 322 million acres of public lands. Almost sixty percent of Alaskan land is federally owned (Soderberg and DuRette 78). Two-thirds of all the national park land in America is located in the state. In addition, Alaska holds within its boundaries two national forests, the Chugach National Forest in the southcentral region and the Tongass National Forest in the southeastern panhandle of the state.

Southeast Alaska in particular is a veritable federal fortress that contains a national park, two national monuments, and a national forest. Federal lands in the region account for ninety-five percent of the total area with almost eighty percent in the Tongass National Forest (USDA). Between the western Canadian border and the Gulf of Alaska, southeast Alaska spreads across the 500-mile stretch of the Alexander Archipelago from Dixon Entrance south of Ketchikan to Yakutat in the north (USDA). Encompassing fiords and glaciers, rugged mountain peaks and muskeg, this panhandle of the largest state in the U. S. contains a wealth of natural resources. The 70,000 people who inhabit the southeastern region have historically depended on natural resources for their livelihood (USDA). The natural beauty of the landscape and waterways have drawn people with visions of limitless riches and boundless freedom.

Comprising seventeen million acres of southeast Alaska, the Tongass National Forest is a unique national treasure (USDA). It is the largest national forest in the United States, and accounts for nearly one-third of the remaining temperate rainforest on the planet (Satchell 74). With rainfall exceeding thirteen feet a year over most parts of Southeast, the Tongass rainforest supports stands

of Sitka spruce and western hemlock, along with Alaska yellow cedar and western red cedar (Richards 104; Soderberg and DuRette 56). Tongass forest lands comprise critical habitat for the world's largest concentrations of bald eagles, grizzly bears, and Sitka black-tailed deer, along with healthy salmon populations (Satchell 74).

The small communities of Southeast, about thirty-three in all with only eight having a population of 1,000 or more, are scattered throughout the archipelago and are surrounded by the Tongass (USDA). Small parcels of land, held in state, native and private ownerships, are interspersed throughout the southeastern land and constitute the five percent of the region not under federal control. Local communities have been and continue to be economically dependent upon the natural resources and related industries of the Tongass, including timber, mining, fishing, and recreation. The integral relationship between the people and the land has built economies that strongly bind southeast Alaskans to the natural resources that sustain their communities. For these people, protection of the resources is not only desirable, but essential. Maintaining the grandeur and integrity of such a rich ecosystem, while also providing opportunities for use of abundant natural resources, is of great concern to both community residents and those who oversee management of national forest lands. Sustainability of the natural resources, of the economies, and of the communities is a topic of great and immediate importance.

The relationship between the U. S. Forest Service, which manages national forest lands, and the various southeastern Alaskan communities is a complicated one mirroring the complexities underlying the attitudes flowing between Alaskans and the federal government. The Alaskan "identity" is itself a perspective held vigorously, yet sometimes subtly, by those who inhabit this last American frontier. Nancy Lord, an author from the southcentral region,

states in her book Fishcamp, “To this day distrust of the federal government and outside influences dominates both the Alaskan psyche and the state’s politics” (82). The federal government is often referred to as the “Feds” on local news broadcasts. The term “Outside,” often used by Alaskans to describe the other forty-nine states, is indicative of the region’s mindset and individualism found in and among Alaska’s smaller communities, which is to say, most of Alaska’s towns.

The role of timber in southeast Alaska has long dictated the economies. Recent changes in timber contracts and reductions in harvests have resulted in mill closures and vanishing jobs. Many southeastern communities have been forced to look for alternative economic development strategies. Some residents are looking forward to the opportunity to develop sustainable economies that grow in harmony with the natural resources of the region. Others are fearful of collapsed livelihoods and uncertain futures. For certain, southeastern communities are facing a period of transition.

Historically, timber from this coastal forest has always supported the local populations. The Tlingit and Haida Indians used the raw material to provide building materials for housing and boats, for heating and cooking, and to fashion utensils and significant religious items such as totem poles. Later, the forest provided materials for wood-burning river boats, mines, canneries, and new settlements (Weeden 103-104).

Though settlements began to grow, Alaska was still very much a sparsely populated territory when Henry Gannett, head of the Geological Survey and a member of the famous Harriman Expedition of 1899, noted the potential value of the forests of the Alexander Archipelago, remarking on both timber resources and tourism opportunities (Rakestraw, History 15). Due in part to reports such as Gannett’s concerning timber resources in Alaska, on August 20, 1902,

President Theodore Roosevelt established the Alexander Archipelago Forest Reserve (Rakestraw, History 15-16). Five years later, on September 10, 1907, a second reserve, comprising two million acres, was created and designated as the Tongass National Forest. In 1908 on July 1, these two reserves were consolidated into one area totaling 6.7 million acres and named, collectively, the Tongass National Forest (Richards 104; Soderberg and DuRette 100).

Since 1908, ten million acres have been added to the Tongass National Forest. For perspective, the Tongass is three times the size of Massachusetts or equal to the size of Maryland, New Hampshire, and Vermont combined (Richards 104; Soderberg and DuRette 65). The Tongass is the largest national forest in the U. S. and three times the size of the second largest of the 155 federally-managed forests (Richards 104). The sheer size of the Tongass requires a management structure slightly different in arrangement from other national forests. The entire national forest system has nine regional offices, 118 forest supervisor offices, and 590 ranger districts or grasslands ("Overview"). The basic hierarchy is as follows: each district ranger reports to a forest supervisor who reports to a regional forester who reports to the Chief of the Forest Service. Rather than have one forest supervisor as do all other national forests, the Tongass National Forest is divided into three administrative areas with a forest supervisor at the helm of each area. The northern portion of the Tongass, designated the Chatham Area, is headquartered in Sitka. The central portion of the Tongass is called the Stikine Area, and its headquarters are located in Petersburg. Finally, the southern part of the Tongass, the Ketchikan Area, maintains its headquarters in Ketchikan. In addition to the three Forest Supervisor offices, there are nine ranger districts and two national monuments (USDA). All fourteen of these offices are under the jurisdiction of the regional forester, who is in command of the Alaska Region.

From the beginning of federal proprietorship, Tongass lands were administered under the U. S. Department of Agriculture, initially by the Division of Forestry and later by the U. S. Forest Service. Gifford Pinchot, first chief of the U. S. Forest Service and previous head of the Division of Forestry, intended that the purpose of the reserves, and later the national forests, be "conservation." However, conservation is a word with variable meanings. In Pinchot's day, the word meant the multiple or wise use of resources (Richards 104). The Organic Administration Act of 1897 stated that the purposes of the reserves were to preserve and protect forests, to secure favorable water flows, and to provide a continuous supply of timber to the people of the United States (Organic 35).

With all seventeen million acres under federal dominion, the U. S. Forest Service became interested in how the Tongass might prove profitable. Timber sales were initiated in 1905 on the Tongass while still in forest reserve status (Durbin 7). Early on, forest prospectors saw the potential for a pulp industry in the Tongass. Trees used in the production of dissolving pulp, which today is an ingredient in rayon fabrics and photographic film, need not be of uniform diameter and straightness as is necessary for dimensional lumber. The pulp industry is able to utilize overmature, even rotting trees, as well as trees with substantial defects. The forest of the southeast was thought to be an ideal site for a pulpwood industry.

Regional forester in 1937, Frank Heintzelman was integral in securing a pulp industry in southeast Alaska (Rakestraw, History 117, 128). Ten years before his appointment as regional forester, Heintzelman, then a Forest Service officer, noted in an article he wrote for Alaska Magazine his belief that the production of pulp could provide a basis for permanent development and long-term stability of the economy (Heintzelman). He spent much of his time traveling in the lower forty-eight states, pursuing capital for the industry he

envisioned (Rakestraw, History 119). He appealed to pulp companies to give the Tongass a try, despite market distance and logistical costs associated with placing a capital intensive industry in the middle of a remote territory. Considering the eventual possibility of Alaska becoming a state, politicians in Congress identified the Tongass as a means to promote the settlement and development of the Alaskan territory. Economic independence would, however, need to precede statehood.

The implementation of a viable timber industry in the Tongass was accelerated by the United States' entry into World War II in 1941. The war effort created the need for more planes, and planes required strong, lightweight wood for their construction. Boeing Aircraft Company, based in Seattle, looked toward the Tongass and its abundant supply of Sitka spruce. In 1942, the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration established the Alaska Spruce Log Program, which was administered by the U. S. Forest Service (Rakestraw, History 120). The purpose of the program was to produce 100 million feet of airplane lumber per year (Rakestraw, History 121). The Forest Service employed contractors to do the logging, towing, and rafting of the timber. After logging was completed and the logs were gathered at tidewater, huge rafts of logs were assembled and towed by tug to Puget Sound mills (Rakestraw, History 122). The program lasted only two years, but the experience prompted new interest in the Southeast forest and provided a jumpstart for a new industry in Alaska.

After the war, forest products remained in high demand as housing markets grew and newspapers proliferated. During this time, Heintzelman succeeded in convincing several companies to establish pulp mills within the Tongass. Puget Sound Pulp and Timber Company and American Viscose Corporation formed a joint venture named Ketchikan Pulp Company or "KPC." This company was awarded a timber contract in 1948 and soon after established

the first of two fifty-year contracts with the U. S. Forest Service for exclusive cutting rights on 786,000 acres of the Tongass National Forest. The first contract, signed in 1951, led to the construction of a pulp mill in Ward Cove near Ketchikan. The company, today owned by timber giant Louisiana-Pacific Corporation, was guaranteed approximately 8.25 billion board feet of timber in exchange for providing the capital to build and operate the mill (Richards 107; Soderberg and DuRette 60).

In 1957, a second fifty-year contract was signed by the U. S. Forest Service and the Alaska Pulp Development Company, later termed the Alaska Lumber and Pulp Company and now known as Alaska Pulp Corporation or "APC." Originally, in 1951, a group of Japanese businessmen approached the U.S. government via the Forest Service with the idea of purchasing Alaskan timber. During World War II, Japan had suffered a reduction in timber acreage to levels far below the demand for the commodity at war's end. Japan desperately needed wood and pulp supplies for reconstruction (Rakestraw, History 128; Richards 108). The U. S. Department of State worked in conjunction with the Forest Service to secure Japanese investment in Alaskan mills, thereby ensuring that Japan would not seek timber supplies from Siberia or elsewhere (Rakestraw, "Alaska Forests" 10). After several years of muddling through red tape, a solution was finally crafted in which a Japanese company would be incorporated in the United States, provide the capital to build a pulp mill near Sitka and lease a sawmill in Wrangell, hire American workers, and process the timber within Alaskan boundaries before export. APC was granted almost five billion board feet of timber in its contract with the U. S. Forest Service (Richards 108).

These contracts were unique in the national forest system. They reflected the risks involved in establishing industry in new areas that were far from markets and suppliers. Part of the U. S. Forest Service's impetus for supporting

and developing a timber trade on the Tongass was community stability of the various locales within the region (Muth 216). Whether the region's inhabitants were harvesting sea otter pelts or salmon or gold, a natural resource in ready supply was, historically, always being exploited. The exploits translated into an economy that was usually either "booming" or "busting." By the 1950s, as other local commodities were in decline, timber was viewed by many as the logical new economic focus. As G. W. Rogers noted in a 1985 report to the Forest Service, "The economic plight of the region at mid-century brought increased pressure on the Forest Service to create an expanded timber industry within the region" (qtd. in Muth 216). Custodial management of the Tongass by the U. S. Forest Service prior to 1950 evolved into intensive timber management as a result of the two contracts detailed above. The contracts have been criticized by many and termed "sweetheart deals" by some who felt the contracts allowed public timber to be liquidated by subsidizing mill operations with taxpayers' money (Satchell 75).

Pulp reigned as king in southeast Alaska from the 1950s to the 1990s. Other industries undergirding the economic base in Southeast include commercial fishing and processing, tourism, healthcare, education, and government (Boucher 2). However, the mills in Sitka and Ketchikan, as well as smaller sawmill operations in Wrangell and other remote towns, provided the largest share of these communities' employment base for many years. In Sitka, with a population of 8,600, about four hundred family-wage jobs were provided by APC during the nineties. In Ketchikan, with 15,000 residents, the KPC mill employed another four hundred workers directly, and provided additional jobs indirectly (Durbin, "Sawdust" 20). In addition to direct employment provided by the mills, income and consumerism of the industry's workforce affected other businesses within the communities. In almost any timber-dependent town, as

job cutbacks or mill shutdowns occur, a ripple effect is felt by residents throughout the entire community. The chainsaw repairman no longer has as many requests for services; grocery stores, restaurants, and supply stores see declines in their sales; and city and borough coffers are reduced as a result of the dwindling tax base. The effects of so many job losses in small communities are felt by a greater percentage of the population than just those people who receive pink slips. The unemployed ranks signified "King Pulp's" encroaching demise.

During its forty years of production, the pulp industry in Southeast Alaska witnessed several boom and bust cycles. In the 1960s, environmental awareness across the U. S. began to rise. This decade saw more protective resource legislation enacted than in the previous fifty years. The Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, Multiple Use-Sustained Yield Act, and the 1964 Wilderness Act were a few of the many laws passed during this era. Many of these laws, including the 1969 National Environmental Policy Act, which called for environmental assessments and impact statements, had far-reaching effects on the way the timber industry operated.

In 1971, another law resulted in heavy consequences for the status quo of the Tongass. The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, or ANCSA, sought to settle native claims to lands that conflicted with state lands selected under the Alaska Statehood Act of 1958. In addition, upon discovery of oil at Prudhoe Bay in 1968, the settlement of aboriginal claims to Alaskan lands was viewed as an even greater matter of urgency by both oil company executives and state and federal legislators (Berger 40). The resolution of aboriginal claims by ANCSA resulted in Alaskan Natives receiving forty-four million acres of land and \$962.5 million in compensation for lands that were then placed under federal or state ownership (Berger 37). ANCSA required the creation of native corporations to serve as the management scheme for business operations involving the new

acquisitions of land and money. Twelve regional corporations and 200 village corporations were established in Alaska, and one additional regional corporation was based in Seattle (Berger 40).

Collectively, the corporations were allowed to select 600,000 acres of Tongass land to be placed under native ownership. In addition, the native corporations would not be bound by federal laws, including manufacture or sustained yield policies. This meant that, on native land, any quantity of timber cut would be legal, and the highly-valued round logs could be exported without processing. On the other hand, timber sold by the U. S. Forest Service fell under the Primary Manufacture rule, which states that any timber cut on federal forest must be chipped for pulp or sawn into lumber or cants within the United States (Soderberg and DuRette 81-82). Essentially, the natives could do with their land what they wished, while non-natives faced numerous restrictions.

As managers of the “kingdom” of pulp, the U. S. Forest Service has been saddled with conflict over the rules of the Tongass for decades. The agency, mandated with a multiple-use doctrine and traditionally and overwhelmingly concerned with timber in the Tongass above other considerations, has dealt with many controversies since the mid-seventies. The National Forest Management Act, or NFMA, was passed in 1976 to alleviate some of the uncertainty over forest planning. NFMA mandated that every national forest develop an integrated land management plan, or LMP, and that the plans be updated and revised at least every fifteen years (Soderberg and DuRette 133). The first Tongass Land Management Plan, known as TLMP, was developed between 1976 and 1979. As K. A. Soderberg explains in People of the Tongass, “It tells us industry folk everything we can and can’t do on the Tongass. It tells us where we can log and where we can’t. It tells us how we can log and how we can’t. It

tells us how to take care of fish streams and wildlife habitat and recreation areas and a dozen other things" (133).

Another law passed in 1980 further affected the timber industry's land base in Alaska. The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, or ANILCA, was a sweeping lands bill. Called the largest conservation act in United States history, it designated 50 million acres of Alaska as wilderness, including 5.4 million acres within the Tongass National Forest. An additional 2.1 million acres of the Tongass were designated "roadless," thereby closing those areas to logging (Richards 109; Rosen 3). The timber harvest was reduced by ANILCA from 520 million board feet (MMBF) per year to 450 MMBF per year (Soderberg and Durette 131). Out of this 450 MMBF, 300 MMBF were allocated for the two pulp mills, while the remaining 150 MMBF went to other bidders, 80 MMBF of which was required to be sold to small businesses. Though the timber base was reduced, the industry in this same year generated its highest product value of \$356 million while providing 4,365 jobs (Richards 109). Through ANILCA, the industry also received a \$40 million annual subsidy earmarked for roadbuilding and timber sales (Durbin, "End" 12).

John Sandor, regional forester in Juneau from 1976-1984, has remarked that, "...the strong support of a pulp industry and opposition to Wilderness designations in the 1950s stood in sharp contrast to interest group and political opposition to the pulp industry and support for Wilderness in the 1970s" (Soderberg and DuRette 131). From the passage of the many environmental acts in the 1960s to the historical ANSCA, ANILCA, TLMP and its successor TLMP II, the Tongass and its pulp industry witnessed many changes in the way business was conducted.

Unfortunately, the provisions included in ANILCA concerning the Tongass did not help stabilize management of the forest. Rather, the hefty

annual subsidy seemed to encourage overcutting and rampant spending. In 1988, the U. S. General Accounting Office (GAO) found that the U. S. Forest Service had spent \$257 million preparing timber sales on the Tongass between 1981 and 1986. Half of these sales were never brought to fruition. As Kathie Durbin reported in an article for The Amicus Journal, "That year [1988] the Forest Service spent \$58 million to put up Tongass timber, but took in only \$3.3 million in receipts" ("Sawdust" 21). In addition, \$15 million of the \$40 million subsidy, dedicated specifically to road-building, resulted in numerous roads being built that were never utilized appropriately. These discoveries, along with reports of discharge violations and pollution at the mill sites, mill worker health and safety concerns, and questionable business practices by the pulp mills' parent companies, gave birth to a national Tongass reform campaign in the late eighties (see Durbin, Tongass). Growing environmental consciousness, coupled with national articles and books written on the subject of Tongass mismanagement, strengthened public sentiment against the current situation.

A host of problems lay in wait for the mill operators in the final decade of the twentieth century. In 1990, although vehemently opposed by industry supporters and the Alaskan Congressional delegation, the Tongass Timber Reform Act canceled the annual subsidy and modified the fifty-year contracts. Pulp companies were finally required to pay market rates for timber (Durbin, "End" 12). The bill also removed the timber mandate of 450 MMBF per year, and replaced it with the condition that the harvest level be set each year according to market demand. In addition, one million acres of the Tongass were protected from logging and set aside for wilderness recreation and subsistence (Durbin, "End" 12). Though the contracts survived, the Tongass pulp industry was finally ordered to operate without federal largesse.

The pulp companies, however, had not seen their last battle. A U. S. News & World Report article published in 1996 stated that "In 1991 and 1992, the Environmental Protection Agency ranked KPC No. 1 in the Pacific Northwest for toxic discharges into ocean waters" (Satchell 74). According to the EPA's Toxic Releases Inventory, between 1990 and 1994, KPC's mill released 14.3 million pounds of toxic chemicals and heavy metal, including methanol and hydrochloric acid, directly into Ward Cove (Durbin, "End" 10). In 1995, as a result of these infractions and others, the company paid more than \$6 million in fines for violations of the Clean Water Act (Durbin, "End" 10; Satchell 74). Alaska Pulp Company was not without its violations either. Prior to 1990, APC discharged one million pounds of dioxin-contaminated waste into Silver Bay, leaving layers of sludge on the bottom of the bay. Dioxin-contaminated fly ash made its way into the soil on the hillside behind the mill and also into the landfill of the City of Sitka (Durbin, "End" 14).

In addition to concerns over pollution and the high costs of bringing their aging plants into compliance with environmental laws, pulp company executives were also faced with unfavorable pulp market conditions on the global stage (Durbin, "Sawdust" 22). In 1996, world prices for dissolving pulp fell sharply. KPC experienced a resulting \$40 million loss that year (Durbin, "End" 10; Satchell 75).

In the biological arena, reports issued from expert panels assembled by the Forest Service for its new Tongass Land Management Plan did not bode well for timber interests. Habitat loss due to logging was threatening several forest species including the Alexander Archipelago wolf, the Sitka black-tailed deer, and the Queen Charlotte goshawk. Several other wildlife populations, such as river otters, great blue herons, brown bears, marten, mountain goats, and

northern flying squirrels, were placed at risk as well (Durbin, "End" 12; Durbin, "Sawdust" 21).

All of the factors listed above, the successful Tongass reform campaign, timber base reductions, poor market conditions, repeated violations of state and federal environmental standards, and aging mills, came together to spell out a message of impending doom for the forty-year-old pulp industry. In October of 1993, the Japanese investors who owned Alaska Pulp Company closed the mill. Silver Bay in Sitka would no longer host the 430 workers APC employed. The "sweetheart deal" contract was officially canceled by Forest Service Chief Jack Ward Thomas in 1994, ten years before its contractual end (Durbin, "End" 9). A sawmill in the small town of Wrangell, population 2,300, closed that same year, putting 225 people out of work (Whitney C-1).

Three years to the month after the closure of the Sitka mill, Louisiana-Pacific, Ketchikan Pulp Company's parent company, announced in October 1996 that the Ketchikan plant would close as well. By March, 1997, the mill was officially shut down, placing another 400 to 500 people of southeast Alaska in the unemployment lines (Durbin, "Sawdust" 20).

The demise of the pulp industry signaled the end of an era in the Tongass. As the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council, an environmental group based in Juneau, put it: "...the future of the forest will no longer be dictated by long-term contracts established when Alaska was a territory and the timber supply seemed endless" ("Brief").

Chapter Two

Collaboration: A New Direction in Natural Resource Management of Public Lands in the American West

The end of an era in southeast Alaska and the Tongass National Forest would logically seem to also mark the beginning of something else. New industries, new economic directions, new opportunities to chart a course for the future are all possibilities for citizens of the region to consider. Whether or not and to what extent they have done such visioning or confronted such questions will be the subject of the following chapter. The focus of this chapter will move farther south to examine the American West and recent efforts across this region to reevaluate public lands management.

Many towns across the American West have experienced circumstances similar to those of southeast Alaskan communities in recent times. Nearly all resource-dependent towns must inevitably face the same challenges of existence once a resource becomes scarce or other industrial factors impede the status quo. Communities born of resource extraction is the story of contemporary human settlement throughout the West. Many of the exploited natural resources lie on (trees), within (water), or under (minerals) public lands. These lands, owned by the American public and managed by the federal government, include national forests and grasslands, national parks and monuments, wildlife refuges, and rangelands. Due to the wide array of constituents who have an interest in the public lands, the management of these lands has often been characterized by contention and strife.

Many factors have led to the development of a new process for dealing with land management conflicts. Collaboration in natural resource management has been growing over the last decade or so as a different method for sorting

through difficult issues, a different approach to problem-solving, and a different regime for decision-making. Its newfound popularity (or notoriety as some view it) has provoked many discussions, debates, and experiments. A great many of these discussions, debates, and experiments have occurred in and around the American West where the majority of public lands, fifty-five percent, are found (Bates 85). Another thirty-seven percent of U. S. public lands are in Alaska, leaving eight percent of public lands in the eastern half of the U. S. (Bates 85).

This chapter will describe what collaboration is in its present form with respect to public land management, the conditions that led to its development as a management tool, and the debate surrounding collaboration.

What is Collaboration?

At its most basic level, to collaborate is to work together. Thus, a collaborative effort or a collaboration is simply a venture in which people work together. Collaboration is obviously not a new phenomenon; people do not live, work, and play in vacuums. However, collaboration, as currently practiced in land management strategies, is a relatively new, or at least far from traditional, way of conducting the business of managing public lands.

Collaboration between humans has been around since the time of cavemen, or Adam and Eve, depending on one's take on human history. It has occurred many times in many different places under many different circumstances. The academic disciplines of education, organizational behavior, economics, history, political theory and others have long acknowledged the concept of collaboration. The focus of this discussion of collaboration, however, will be on collaboration within the fields of natural resource and land management, and more specifically, within the realm of public lands in the

western U. S. In addition, unless otherwise indicated, comments and examples will pertain to community-based collaboratives as opposed to those that are strictly policy-based as described below, and when natural resource agencies are included in the discussion, the focus will largely apply to the U. S. Forest Service for comparison purposes in the following chapter.

Collaborative groups have been assigned a multitude of names including collaborative resource management partnerships, watershed councils, consensus groups, resource advisory councils, stakeholder groups, sustainable community initiatives and others. The number of groups that have arisen in the West over the last decade and the breadth of topics tackled by such groups combine to make the landscape of collaboration confusing, hard to grasp, and difficult to classify. Like traversing a slippery, icy road in the middle of a foggy night, understanding and qualifying the collaborative ground swell undulating across Western lands can be a sizable and delicate task.

A recent report, published in July 1999 by The Sonoran Institute and written by Barb Cestero, offers a useful framework in which to categorize many of the collaborative conservation efforts now in operation. The report proposes two fundamental types of collaborative initiatives: those that are place or community-based and those that focus on policy or are interest-based (Cestero v). Place/community-based initiatives “focus on a specific geographic locale that encompasses nearby human communities and public land” (Cestero 10). They are comprised largely of voluntary members of the community, representing their own interests, and often come together in response to some crisis (Cestero 10-12). Policy/interest-based collaborative groups focus on policy issues that are most often regional or national in scope. They involve representatives of interest groups or government agencies who are regarded as stakeholders in the particular issue at hand. The policy collaborative is usually initiated “in

conjunction with, or as part of, a formal governmental planning or decision-making process" (Cestero 12).

Place-based collaboration entails a diverse, often adversarial, group of people, or "stakeholders," who meet voluntarily in order to attempt to solve complex problems with innovative solutions. Stakeholders in a collaborative may vary from resource agency personnel to ranchers to environmentalists to hunters to politicians to everyday citizens. Don Snow, executive director of Northern Lights Institute based in Missoula, Montana, has often referred to these groups as "coalitions of the unlike" (Cestero 9; Snow, "Lines" 1; Snow, "Talking" 35). Individuals forming these coalitions usually come together by their own volition, rather than as the result of an agency mandate or legal directive. The purpose of coming together is to solve problems by avenues other than traditional litigative or legislative methods, which often result in transitory winners and embittered losers. The aim is to discover a workable solution that none of the parties could accomplish alone, but all accomplished together. In general, collaboration entails the formation of a group of people, sharing a common interest but opposing viewpoints, who work together to find a mutually satisfactory solution to their collective problem.

There are several distinguishing features of the type of collaboration introduced above. First, and perhaps most important, is the inclusive nature of collaboratives. Their memberships must be comprised of "multiple, diverse, and opposing perspectives" in order to work (Cestero 9). Just as in ecosystems in nature, the strength of a collaboration lies in its diversity. Coalitions of classic adversaries possess an interesting and powerful force not easily ignored by agency officers and politicians.

A second distinguishing feature of place or community-based collaboratives is the origin and nature of their formation. These types of

collaboratives tend to develop in grassroots fashion rather than as a result of an administrative or legal directive, and meetings are rather spontaneous and informal. Because the meetings are not constrained by complex bureaucratic rules or laws, the group is free to experiment with possibilities. This informality is very valuable and is often responsible for attracting members to the process and keeping them committed (Snow, "Talking" 35).

A third notable aspect of collaboration as a problem-solving approach and as a decision-making mechanism is the importance of the process itself. A collaboration proponent would argue that, as more attention is directed to the details of *how* a group will operate, rather than on what stakeholder positions are, the likelihood of a well-crafted, long-lasting, durable solution is increased.

Collaborative groups tend to more closely resemble participatory democratic structures, in which all participant opinions are carefully listened to and considered, rather than following the model of representative democracy, in which voting and majority rule are adhered to. In a collaborative process, the majority does not automatically "win," but rather, disagreements are studied, and attempts to resolve disagreements often utilize a consensual approach. According to one author, "Consensus is achieved when each of the stakeholders agrees that they can live with a proposed solution, even though it may not be their most preferred solution" (Gray 25). A second definition of consensus that has been agreed upon in an actual collaborative situation states that, "Consensus is reached when the participants agree on a package of provisions that address the range of issues being discussed. The participants may not agree with all aspects of an agreement; but they do not disagree enough to warrant their opposition to the overall package" (McKinney, "Consensus" 49). Many are careful to point out that consensus does not necessarily mean compromise. The Montana Consensus Council asserts, "No one is asked to give up anything....

Participants continue working, inventing options and accommodating one another's interests, until they develop a solution that everyone can agree to" (Montana Consensus Council 6). It should be noted that not all collaborative groups use consensus processes (Snow, "Talking" 35), and also, that it is feasible to use the consensus process without reaching a consensus decision (Cestero 14).

Collaboration between different community factions is being adopted more readily and more often as a mechanism for dealing with natural resource issues in many communities across the West. Although the number of active collaborative groups has been on the increase during the nineties, the western stage on which collaboration is set was constructed over a period of decades. A confluence of ideas and events has led to the modern collaborative frenzy.

The Road Leading to Collaboration

The proliferation of collaborative groups and widespread attention being directed to such gatherings seem to warrant calling the phenomenon a social movement. It is estimated that there are at least one hundred, and possibly as many as four hundred, watershed groups operating in the West at the end of the twentieth century (Kenney 494). If not a full-fledged movement, the independent births of so many groups cropping up across the western landscape signify an emerging paradigm shift in land and natural resource management. This shift cannot be traced back to a single source, but is the result of many different factors. This section will briefly describe some of the more important conditions that have led to collaboration.

Collaboration, as a problem-solving technique and decision-making process, has been influenced by and is a partial outgrowth of the alternative dispute resolution field. A complete picture of collaboration, however,

encompasses more than the origins of process techniques. A much broader view of the circumstances leading to collaboration is necessary to understand its contemporary arrival on the western stage. Certainly, the historical context of natural resource policy in the West, including facets of its political, economic, and social characteristics, has contributed immensely to the opportunity for collaboration to arise. In addition, revised mandates and modification of natural resource agencies have led to an increased promotion of collaboration. Evolving views of the appropriate strategy for seeking environmental improvements have also increased attention directed at collaboration. Finally, changing economies and demographics across the West have magnified the need for better ways to deal with natural resource and land issues.

Alternative Dispute Resolution

Collaboration as a problem-solving technique is, in part, a derivative of the field of alternative dispute resolution (ADR). ADR refers to “a variety of approaches that allow the parties to meet face to face to reach a mutually acceptable resolution of the issues in a dispute or potentially controversial situation” (Bingham xv). ADR’s roots lie in labor management and negotiation methodology (Rasker). During the 1970s, ADR began to gain attention, outside labor issues, as a method for solving environmental disputes, largely in response to increasing dissatisfaction with more traditional decision-making processes (Bingham xv,1). ADR has gained increased usage as a means of avoiding more costly and time-consuming litigious methods. Rather than following the normal model of solving conflicts between parties by appearing before courts or legislatures where someone else decides the outcome, participants using ADR are given the responsibility to decide for themselves. ADR techniques aim to

shift the focus of disputants from bargaining positions to the underlying interests of each party (Maguire and Boiney 33). These processes tend to bring forth the “real” issues of a dispute rather than only the litigable ones (Campbell and Floyd 236). Also, disputants are encouraged through these processes to move from an attitude of negative opposition, which is destructive to relationships, to one of more positive problem-solving that engenders better understanding and trust (MacDonnell 16).

Environmental dispute resolution, or environmental mediation, expanded into a profession as more mediators, organizations, and institutions entered the scene in the late seventies and during the eighties. Foundations, in particular the Ford Foundation and the William A. and Flora Hewlett Foundation, strongly encouraged the study and practice of ADR processes applied to environmental disputes (Bingham 24). In addition, a large body of literature on environmental dispute resolution developed and organizations offering mediation services, such as the Center for Collaborative Problem Solving in San Francisco and Western Network in New Mexico, formed. Also, several academic programs focusing on dispute resolution, including a Project for the Study of Environmental and Natural Resource Conflict within the School of Natural Resources at the University of Michigan and the Institute for Environmental Negotiation at the University of Virginia, were initiated (Bingham 27). ADR processes also began to receive attention from public resource agencies at the state and federal level. The U. S. Forest Service revised its administrative appeal process in 1988 to include negotiations (Manring 50). All of these developments contributed to the way in which collaboration processes are currently being utilized to confront natural resource issues.

A Historical Context

As mentioned earlier, public lands abound in the western states. Nearly eighty percent of Nevada's land base is owned by the federal government. Federal ownership of lands in Utah and Idaho amounts to more than sixty percent, while about half of the land base of Oregon and Wyoming is federally-owned land (USDI). The reality of housing vast acreages of federal land within western boundaries, coupled with the fact that local residents often wield little influence on matters such as how federal lands are managed, have been influential in shaping the personality of the West. Many rural communities depend on activities that take place on public lands for their economic welfare. Stereotypic westerners are depicted as hardy, rugged, vehemently independent individuals. The West was "won," after all, implying in one sense that the land, with all of its inherent challenges, was conquered. This "victory" was attributed to the skill and doggedness of western settlers, who were able to eke out livelihoods from the tough landscape, thus contributing to a legacy of pride and self-reliance.

In contrast to fiercely-held ideals of independence, however, the region itself is not independent. The economy of the West has traditionally been built from the exploitation of natural resources. The region's cultural identity and many of its political and social institutions rest squarely on a platform of resource extraction. The extraction of natural resources in the region, coupled with heavy exportation of these typically raw, unmanufactured resources to other areas of the country and the world, have contributed to an almost colonial status for the West. The region has a long-standing tradition of economic and political dependence on the federal government in the form of subsidies, regulations, and federal land and water management. This dependence is a

thorn in the side of every westerner who, like a teenager struggling to exercise freedom from parental rules, wishes to be rid of federal constraints. This odd relationship between the West and the U. S. government underlies much of the complexity in modern day conflicts surrounding the land and its inhabitants. A closer look at the way in which public lands came to be and the various national attitudes and policies directing management of these lands sheds light on some of the reasons collaboration is now receiving such attention.

It could be argued that the West has captured Americans' imaginations since the beginning of Eastern settlement. There was always the question of what lay to the west. When the vastness of these western lands was understood and popularized in the nineteenth century after the famous expedition of Lewis and Clark, a series of land policies and land-hungry settlers began their initial descent upon the unfamiliar terrain. The federal government, whose expansionist view partially fulfilled a lofty "manifest destiny," sought to develop western lands by opening the public domain to private citizens. From the perspective of the settlers, however, this development was hampered by extensive distances, aridity, and the presence of Native Americans. The wealth of natural resources in the region was looked at favorably by leaders of the young nation as a source of economic prosperity. The way in which the government chose to capitalize on such resources was, in western law historian Charles Wilkinson's words, "...for the federal and state governments to open the gates, step back, and allow American ingenuity to take over" (18). A western free-for-all was encouraged by programs such as the Homestead Act of 1862, railroad grants, and numerous government subsidies, including what Wilkinson calls the "lords of yesterday." Two examples of these "lords of yesterday" are the Hardrock Mining Act of 1872 that still allows anyone to extract minerals from public lands virtually for free, and the Reclamation Act of 1902 which led to the

damming of the West's largest rivers (Wilkinson 18-22). Essentially, the government willingly and enthusiastically gave away land, timber, minerals, range, and water. This policy of land disposal, often referred to as "the Great Barbecue" as historian Vernon Parrington quipped (qtd. in Wilkinson 18), continued throughout the nineteenth century (Nelson 1).

As a result of the land disposal policy, rampant wastefulness and lawlessness beset the frontier West. The best public domain lands were claimed by private interests while marginal lands were picked over, abused, and left for the sponsors of the barbecue (Wondolleck 21-22). These marginal lands, in part consisting of deserts, high mountain ranges, and remote forests, became the modern day public lands, and are still sometimes referred to as the "lands that no one else wanted" (Nelson 1). During the late nineteenth century, cries of reform began to permeate government offices and the media. A new social movement was gaining force that called for a halt to unregulated capitalism and a different approach to federal management of the public domain, among other national reforms.

During the Progressive era (1890-1920), public sentiment regarding conservation, paired with changing values toward the appropriate role of government and industry (Wondolleck 23) plus a new zealous faith in science and technology, took hold of the nation. The conservation movement was able to closely align itself with the political and social reforms of the Progressive era that were being espoused as a result of the collective shift in ideology among Americans (Fox 108). The frontier period of unfettered development and growth was left behind in favor of a more rational approach to achieving the progress of the nation (Wondolleck 23). This rational approach took form as scientific management, by which, it was believed, almost any public policy problem could be solved with the aid of science. Promoted by public officials with unceasing

fervor, the “gospel of efficiency,” as Progressive beliefs came to be referred to, was especially embraced by two important conservationists, Gifford Pinchot, first chief of the U. S. Forest Service, and President Theodore Roosevelt (Wondolleck 24-26).

The governmental approach to public lands during this period was one of retention and preservation, rather than disposal and prodigality. In order to efficiently manage these lands, it was believed that operations required centralization. Centralized government management of public lands led to the creation of several bureaucratic agencies and numerous policies. Although Yellowstone National Park was established in 1872 (Nash 1982), prior to the Progressive era, its management agency, the National Park Service, was not founded until 1916 (Nelson 2). Other land management agencies created during this era include the Bureau of Reclamation in 1902 and the Forest Service in 1905 (Nelson 2). Land management was handed over to professional “experts” who were directed to ensure the efficient use of all resources. Thus, “bureaucratic control through regulation, rather than private entrepreneurialism (often buttressed by governmental subsidies and inattention), became a dominant expression of natural resources democracy during the early twentieth century” (Kenney 51). Scientific management would become the overriding basis for decision-making concerning public land management and policies during the twentieth century.

The United States Forest Service

In the case of the Forest Service*, original forest reserves were transferred from the Department of Interior to the Department of Agriculture in 1905 and renamed national forests in 1907 (Hirt 33). Stemming from his progressive

ideals, Pinchot assured that the purpose of forest administration policy be geared toward *use* of the resources (Hirt 34). The Forest Service has followed the tenets of scientific management since its inception, relying on science to resolve questions of competing uses of resources. The Forest Service was largely involved with custodial management of lands during the first forty years of its existence. After World War II, economic expansion led to increased demand for public timber supplies, creating a shift in forest policy to more intensive management focused on timber harvests and related issues (Wondolleck 32). As of 1960, however, it became clear that American citizens expected the national forests to be managed for more uses than timber only. The Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act, passed in 1960, directed the Forest Service to consider other uses of the national forests, stating that they “shall be administered for outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, and wildlife and fish purposes” (Multiple 528).

The Forest Service, as a historically widely-respected institution with an acclaimed record of carrying out its mandates in an effective and efficient manner, began to enter a period of increasing complexity. Its mission had evolved from one of custodial management to more intensive management of its lands, with timber production being the overriding concern. The agency

*Note: The details of this story span a century, and a full account is beyond the scope of this paper. Many excellent sources have been written regarding the history of the U. S. Forest Service and management of the national forests. See generally: Steen, Harold. The U. S. Forest Service: A History. Seattle: U of Washington P, 1976; and, Hirt, Paul W. A Conspiracy of Optimism: Management of the National Forests since World War Two. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1994.

was confronted in the sixties, and more so in the seventies, with a series of internal and external alterable forces. New laws like the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960 required changes in the make-up of the Forest Service, with new professional discipline additions such as ecologists, wildlife and fishery biologists, and landscape architects, in addition to increased numbers of women employed by the agency. These factors, in the words of former Chief Jack Ward Thomas, created "some growing pains" for the agency, as it sought to move forward with the times (Thomas 18-19). Integration of these new disciplines into forest planning policy created challenges for old-school foresters, silviculturists, and engineers, and complicated management objectives and implementation on the ground. The agency began to appear and operate differently, in response to a growing environmental awareness and resultant legislation in the external world.

In April 1970, the first annual Earth Day event was celebrated, signaling the national presence of the environmental movement. The environmental movement owed much of its awakened public awareness to the 1962 publication of Rachel Carson's landmark book, Silent Spring, a well-researched and indicting account of chemical pollution affecting wildlife and human health. It also represented a fusion of many previously established environmental-concern campaigns such as resource conservation, wilderness preservation, anti-pollution regulation, occupational health, public health reform, energy conservation, and population control. Mark Dowie, author of Losing Ground: American Environmentalism at the Close of the Twentieth Century, contends, "The modern environmental movement evolved from these many issues and causes in the context of a post-World-War-II urban environment whose degradation had become insistently obvious to people of all classes and races" (24).

Environmental groups gained increased popularity during the late sixties and early seventies, witnessing membership expansion of such well-known groups as the Sierra Club and the National Audubon Society. New organizations formed including the Environmental Defense Fund in 1968, the Natural Resources Defense Council in 1969, and Greenpeace in 1972 (Schnaiberg and Gould 148-149). Two government entities, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), were established in 1970 (Kraft and Vig 11, 15). A host of environmental legislation was passed during this time period, beginning with the Wilderness Act in 1964, moving on to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in 1970, the Clean Air Act of 1970, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 1973, the Safe Drinking Water Act in 1974, the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA), and the Clean Water Act in 1977 (Dowie 32-33). This list is not exhaustive, but representative of the environmental focus of the times.

Much of the legislation listed above, coupled with the historical timber production focus of the Forest Service, combined to make management of national forest lands a conflict-laden, nearly impossible task by the 1980s. The Forest Service became embroiled in controversy as user groups gained increased standing and greater access to forest management procedures from laws like NEPA, ESA, and NFMA. The agency was essentially directed by Congress, which controls its operating budget, to continue voluminous timber harvests, while at the same time satisfying the various competitive interests of the public (Hirt). The Forest Service, in its doomed effort to be all things to all people, and at the expense of either being sued or suffering budget cuts, has been attacked from all sides for supposed management failures. In a heightened state of chaos in recent years, the Forest Service has been struggling to redefine itself, in part by revisiting the progressive roots of its scientific management paradigm that it has

so firmly relied upon throughout the course of its existence. The fact that values, not simply science, must inform public lands policy is gaining greater recognition. The evolving philosophies of the Forest Service and the ever-increasing complexities of balanced and sound management of the national forests have prompted the agency to strive for better methods by which to oversee the land and involve the public.

Collaboration, as a management tool, entered the agendas of natural resource agencies during the last decade of the twentieth century. In 1997, “collaborative stewardship” was touted as the new management philosophy of the Forest Service by its head administrator, Mike Dombeck (Burchfield 31). Associated with contemporary ecosystem management goals of the Forest Service, collaboration was viewed as one avenue by which the agency could repair its collapsed reputation by improving relationships and resource stewardship (Collaborative 1). Collaboration also seemed to be an acceptable supplement to the traditional public participation process. The traditional method for involving the public in forest planning entails several stages beginning with scoping in which the public is contacted through mailings or public hearings regarding the issue. A plan is then drafted by agency personnel and submitted to public input. After a final plan is released, citizens’ only recourse to affect the plan or propose changes is through formal appeals and adjudication (Moote and McClaran 474). Unlike the traditional public participation process, collaboration allows citizens to participate in the actual development of a plan rather than only being able to offer comments before and after a plan is written and published. Although widely talked about, collaboration in practice between the agency and citizens has been slow to develop (Burchfield).

Integration of collaborative planning into national forest planning and management is constrained by many different factors including lack of training in the processes, lack of supervisor support, lack of resources or incentives, and concerns about legality in terms of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) (Selin, Schuett, and Carr 26). As one Forest Service official stated, collaboration is “a kind of awkward dance that none of us know the steps to” (qtd. in Wondolleck and Ryan 118). However, the most important barrier to collaboration may be the agency itself. One study concerning the current application of collaborative planning found that “institutional funding, rewards, and policy structures constrain the adoption of collaborative methods” (Selin, Schuett, and Carr 26). Perhaps the most enduring barrier standing in the way of agency adoption of collaborative processes is the U. S. Forest Service’s legacy of “expert management.” Stemming from Pinchot’s era to the present, Forest Service personnel, unlike everyday citizens, are equipped with the appropriate training, credentials, and information necessary to carry out the duties of managing national forest lands and resources. Collaborative groups that request agency participation are essentially asking to share in the duty of land and resource management. Many agency personnel view themselves and their colleagues as the experts and are prevented from meaningful participation in collaborative processes by agency mentality. Certainly, reinvention and the mastering of new techniques by an individual or an organization are challenges that require courage, patience, and careful attention. For an institutional federal bureaucracy, the challenge may be ten-fold or higher.

Environmental Policy Design

Another factor that has widened the door for collaboration to enter is the strategy by which natural resource and land policies have been created, codified, and implemented over the last thirty years. "Command and control" regulation, in which federally dominant standards are set, enforced, and handed down to state and local governments for compliance (Kraft 19), has been the primary game plan by which environmental lobbyists, legislators, and regulatory agencies have sought to resolve environmental problems. Many regulations have had far-reaching effects on state governments, local communities, and citizens. Certainly, air and water pollution were curbed, management of hazardous waste improved, and many other benefits were realized as a result of environmental legislation. However, the extensive network of rules has often been accompanied by inadequate financial, technical, or administrative support from the federal government. One environmental policy authority reports, "...environmental and resource agencies at all levels of government often [lack] the capacity -- scientific, financial, administrative, and political -- to implement environmental policies" (Kraft 22).

The top-down approach by federal officials to confront growing environmental problems has sometimes led to resentment and even rebellions from state and local governments which have been asked to do much of the policing and pay many of the costs. John Freemuth, a political science professor at Boise State University in Idaho, has stated, "...some of the states' rebellions may have as much to do about unfunded mandates as they do about public lands" (Stuebner 1). Western states, in particular, have not been pleased with ever-increasing, burdensome dictates from the federal government. Westerners have often viewed new regulations, however beneficial they might be, as another

assault on their land, as more regulations impose restrictions on lands outside the already-intrusive boundaries of the public domain.

Such sentiments sparked an uprising in the West against environmental regulation and federal oversight. The Sagebrush Rebellion of the late seventies and early eighties sought the transfer of federal lands to the states. The movement was largely supported by timber, mining, and grazing interests which wanted to privatize public lands, placing them in the hands of the commercial users. However, the backlash eventually died as western politicians and resource exploiters realized that if federal owners disappeared, so too would federal dollars (Nelson 5). As Robert Nelson has aptly stated, "...those who propose decentralization as a matter of principle often become less enthusiastic once they realize that the benefits they enjoy under the current regime could be placed at risk as a result of the new administrative framework" (5). Other attempts to gain local control over federal lands have originated in the West throughout the end of the twentieth century (see Brick and Cawley). The "Wise Use" movement grew popular among private property rights supporters and resource extraction industry sponsors who sought to fight for control of public lands resources (Krannich and Smith 678). The "county supremacy" movement has promoted resolutions and ordinances that claim the federal government doesn't have the authority under law to manage public lands. County supremacists contend that the authority to manage lands within county boundaries lies with the local county government (Krannich and Smith 679). Although social movements like those described above have arisen in the western states since the 1920s with great popular appeal in the region, in actuality, residents are often stymied as to how they might survive in the absence of federal subsidies. The West has never had experience in doing so, and the notion of gaining "indigenous control over [their] land and resources" and thus "transcending

[their] colonial heritage" (Kemmis 127), is a challenge that westerners have not so far been willing or able to meet.

During the early eighties, on the heels of the "environmental decade," and with President Reagan at the helm of the nation's executive branch, a period of regulatory reform began. Reagan's policy agenda included environmental deregulation, which sought to reduce governmental regulation, shifting more responsibility to the states and private sector (Kraft and Vig 13). Sharp budget cuts in environmental agencies and programs and key like-minded presidential appointees, such as Department of the Interior's Secretary James Watt, were part of Reagan's reform plan. Reagan was a hero for many westerners who cheered any decrease of federal power.

Throughout the late eighties and the nineties, despite the backlash against pervasive federal regulation and Reagan's attempts to weaken or cancel environmental regulations, the environmental concern of many citizens that had spurned so many regulatory measures persisted. The environmental movement successfully withstood attacks; however, like their opposition, many environmental activists began to seek alternatives to regulation. Valid questions began circulating about the lasting efficacy of traditional environmental regulatory methods. Standing alone, regulations do not constitute a complete battle plan against environmental threats. Details of implementation are often overlooked or simplified (Kraft 22-23). It is becoming apparent that additional complements to regulation are needed. Many environmentalists, weary of struggling to "hold the line" against attacks on gains made throughout the last thirty years, agree that command and control is not sufficient by itself (Kraft 15, 32). Often confronted by impasse and gridlock, environmentalists and others have been searching for alternatives to the regulatory labyrinth. Collaboration seems to have the potential to fill the void in many ways, though many

environmentalist representatives of national organizations harbor much skepticism about this new approach, as elaborated on in the collaboration debate section below.

The Current Western Landscape

The public lands of the West are valuable in many respects. The natural resources contained within their boundaries have long been recognized as a source of wealth. Other qualities inherent in these lands, such as open space, beautiful scenery, and recreational opportunities, have been gaining increased stature over the last few decades. The traditional resource-extraction economy of the region has undergone major changes throughout the recent past. Quality-of-life concerns have brought an influx of new residents from urban areas to the small towns and rural communities that make up the West.

Many of these newcomers arrive as part of new “footloose” industries that are changing the region’s economic base (Baden 117; Rasker 193-194). “Footloose” industries and companies are able to base their operations in any locale. The nature of their business is not constrained by such factors as distance to market, as are extractive-oriented industries. With the advent of telecommunications and streamlined, efficient delivery services, knowledge-based and service industries (Rasker 193-194) as diverse as manufacturers of fiberoptic materials, travel agencies, or investment banking, are able to offer their employees proximity to public lands and recreational opportunities and a high quality-of-life area in which to reside. Others seeking high quality of life migrate to the West as retirees, bringing with them sources of unearned income in the form of Social Security payments, pensions, and retirement benefits (Baden 117-118).

This shift in demographics is occurring in conjunction with a downsizing period in agriculture and resource-extractive activities. Ranching, mining, logging, and farming no longer occupy the central role in the West's economy. Certainly, these occupations are not obsolete, but their historical dominance of the region's economy, social mindset, and political institutions is weakening, creating great controversy. Although it is healthy for the West's economy to experience diversification, circumstances have not combined to yield an easy transition for the region and its inhabitants. One writer has referred to the West as a "grouchy place...where nobody gets what they want" (Jones 1).

For certain, everyone in the region seems to have an opinion about the land and its proper role in human systems. Whether one views the vast spaces as a repository of exploitable natural resources or a recreational playground, everyone seems dissatisfied in some respect with the management of the public lands. To propose any kind of suitable solution to the current contention of the West is a heady challenge. Collaboration, however, is one mechanism by which to try. By encouraging residents to sit down with one another and search for common goals, instead of focusing on differences, collaborative processes can perhaps foster a series of breakthroughs that can help form a vision for the future of the West. Until residents find a thoughtful way to confront and resolve the many resource issues in the region, the path to maturation of the West will remain obscured.

The Collaboration Debate

Issues of Governance

Collaboration, in many instances, especially when the subject is public lands, falls outside the boundaries of the current system of politics and government. Therefore, it is a different approach toward governance with implications that have sparked a growing and robust debate concerning both its merits and drawbacks. While skeptics and proponents alike have filled journals and reports with important questions and insights regarding the pros and cons of the collaborative approach to natural resource decision-making, a larger context undergirds the collaboration hype. Citizen involvement in governmental decision-making is not a new debate. Questions surrounding the appropriate level of citizen involvement have certainly been bandied about since this nation's founding and have long occupied human thought.

More than two hundred years ago, as a young United States was forming the foundation for a government based on democratic ideals, a debate ensued between proponents of participatory democracy and those of representative democracy. These two views, not necessarily in total opposition to one another but rather as two points located on the democratic spectrum (deBuys 14), are often historically represented by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. During the debates on the U. S. Constitution in the summer of 1787, Jefferson and Madison exchanged a series of letters discussing which form of governance would best fit and serve the new country's populace (Kemmis 9). Madison believed that a government could be designed whereby certain mechanisms were put in place to provide for society and to protect society from itself. He thought that human nature was such that, as he wrote in the Federalist Papers:

“...the causes of faction cannot be removed, ...relief is only to be sought in the means of controlling its effects” (qtd. in Kemmis, 14). The control was to be found in a well-designed system of checks and balances, including separation of powers into executive, legislative, and judicial branches, and a hierarchical structure of federal, state, and local governments. Jefferson, on the other hand, believed that people could be responsible for their own governance without relying on the federal government to act as referee during disputes (deBuys 14). He believed in the validity of a civic virtue (Kemmis 12-16), and placed his faith in the people, proclaiming in a letter to William Charles Jarvis, “I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education” (qtd. in Kenney 53).

Although Madison’s perspective prevailed and is largely reflected in the U. S. Constitution, the debate between “the procedural republic” and “the politics of engagement” (see Kemmis) is far from settled. Aspects of these two democratic perspectives abound in the literature surrounding collaboration. The discussion regarding collaboration is part of the modern installment of a historic debate. New interest in face-to-face democracy and in the rebirth of civility seems to be signaling a period of renewal as Jefferson’s ideals course through the veins of this new dialogue across the West.

Best and Worst Tendencies of Collaboration

As with any theory or method, there are both advantages and disadvantages associated with collaboration. First, the prominent disadvantages are described. Collaboration efforts, by their inclusive nature, are slow and

tedious. Including everyone with a stake in the discussion takes time. From determining who should be at the table, to convincing people to meet together, to giving all the voices a chance to be heard, collaboration does not occur overnight. More likely, months and sometimes years need to be committed to the process.

Many groups have trouble maintaining momentum and solidarity after the threat to their community is gone or after solutions have been proposed. People cannot attend meetings indefinitely and continue to accommodate work schedules and the daily obligations of family, religion, and community. As Coggins calls them, collaborative groups are “transient entities...[who]...Without a permanent institutional structure,...are destined to wither away as the perceived crisis passes” (Coggins 31).

The volunteer nature of collaboration is sometimes a related drawback. An intensive level of energy is often required of participants, who grow prone to burnout when a sustained process endures. In addition to high levels of energy expended, attending meetings not only requires time commitments, but financial commitments as well. Funding transportation costs, newsletter mailings, etc., can be an important consideration and challenge of collaborative groups. A recent field guide to collaborative conservation reports, “Without funding, collaborative efforts may find themselves constrained in their ability to get projects implemented on-the-ground, as well as in their ability to engage a broad range of people in their efforts” (Cestero 77).

Additionally, many observers of collaboration have questioned the ultimate effect on the lands that these groups have focused their efforts on. It is true that beneficial consequences can stem from “successful” collaboratives including improved relationships, increased political and ecological literacy, and a sense of community empowerment. However, tangible results from

collaboratives involving true improvement on the lands themselves have largely remained unproven. A collaborative conservation field guide reports, "Much is still unknown about the results of these initiatives and whether the on-the-ground projects will ultimately succeed at broad conservation goals such as preserving ecological integrity" (Cestero 78). In many cases, land improvements occur slowly and monitoring efforts take time. It will require additional time commitments to gauge real success upon the land.

These are all tangible problems which the groups themselves have to deal with. There are other philosophical problems with collaboratives and questions concerning legality that have been brought to light. Opponents of collaboration have pointed out that local groups are not duly empowered to make decisions about public or national lands. Federal administrative agencies are bound by congressional guidelines and law to make final decisions concerning management of lands and resources under their jurisdiction. It is illegal for a federal agency to hand over decision-making power to any advisory group. The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) was passed in 1972 as a measure intended to "reduce narrow special interest group influence on decision makers, to foster equal access for the public to the decision-making process, and to control costs by preventing the establishment of unnecessary advisory committees" (Cestero 79). FACA has often been referred to as a barrier to agency participation in collaborative endeavors (Selin, Schuett, and Carr 26). Anytime natural resource agency personnel are involved with collaborative groups, FACA guidelines must be carefully followed in order to avoid legal challenges. The constitutional authority of federal administrative agencies is an important, but sometimes overlooked, consideration of both opponents and proponents of collaboration.

Another related issue regarding the shortfalls of collaboration is that of representation. Many national environmental groups, including the Sierra Club and The Wilderness Society, oppose local collaboratives due to the fact that local groups can seldom adequately represent a national constituency. Michael McCloskey, Sierra Club chairman, has stated "This re-distribution of power is designed to disempower our constituency, which is heavily urban...Few of the proposals for stakeholder collaboration provide any way for distant stakeholders to be effectively represented" (McCloskey 7). Others have long contended that the local view is often a short-sighted one in which short-term economic gains are the deciding factor. Louis Blumberg of The Wilderness Society, maintains "Our system of national environmental laws was designed precisely to ensure that national interest would be properly represented so that local interests wouldn't manage public resources in an unsustainable manner" (Blumberg 3).

Other philosophical arguments against collaboration pertain to human nature. In some cases, irreconcilable values among people do not lend themselves to agreement, ever (Coughlin et al. 3-6). In such instances, collaborative methods are not likely to overcome personal differences. Other problem-solving mechanisms may be better suited and are often recommended by practitioners of collaboration (McKinney, "Consensus" 50). In contrast to irreconcilable values, another aspect of human nature that critics have seized upon is the desire to avoid conflict and "get along." This tendency is illustrated by one collaborative participant's comment, "It is human nature to blend together, to let the differences fade. We're uncomfortable with difference so we focus on the sameness, minimize the difference to get along, and get things done" (qtd. in Cestero 78). In some cases, group dynamics can discourage diversity, leading participants to sacrifice principles in exchange for relationships. Another former participant warns, "...citizen group participants

learn that the other parties at the table are reasonable people, individuals not too different from themselves and, thus, in that desire to reach agreement, they cannot let the congeniality and momentum of the process let them lose sight of why they are there" (Wondolleck, Manring, and Crowfoot 257). Other critics have termed this notion complacency and contend that a dedication to collaborate shuts out other, perhaps better, alternatives (Coughlin et al. 3-5).

Contrary to the critical perspectives outlined above, collaboration enthusiasts have recounted numerous advantages of the collaborative approach. Even those people who support collaboration are careful to point out that these ideas cannot work in all arenas, and do not constitute a panacea for all the environmental ills we face. Where circumstances come together in a way that collaboration can find a niche, however, the process can produce some noteworthy achievements.

Collaborative groups provide a forum in which communication can be effective. Unlike public hearings or written public statements, the nature of collaborative settings involves talking *to* one another, not simply talking *at* an audience. The setting may not be comfortable for participants at the beginning, due to the fact that adversaries are present; but the environment is less hostile than a courtroom or public hearing setting. As one study of collaboration maintains, "A well-structured collaborative process can remedy some of the imbalances and other stumbling blocks inherent in traditional forums" (Wondolleck, Manring, and Crowfoot 253). Ideally, more purposeful and more mature interaction will occur during a collaborative meeting.

Collaboration fosters understanding between participants and allows for beneficial working relationships to be built, thus engendering a sense of trust and community well-being. A heightened sense of civility often emerges from the process. The building of trust and the rekindling of a civic virtue among

community members may yield a better product and allows the group to face future challenges with less animosity and more confidence. In fact, the benefits elicited from a collaborative process can “extend beyond the life of the initial conflict” (Wondolleck, Manring, and Crowfoot 259). Social capital (Coleman S95-S120; Fukuyama 10-11; Jacobs 138; Putnam 65-78), a term gaining in popularity, refers to the ability of a group of people to work together toward a common goal and to use these networks of relationships of “trust and reciprocity [to] promote civic cooperation” (London 4). These relationship networks are invaluable to collaborative efforts. They contribute to information sharing and collective learning, and have been referred to as “knowledge pools and relationships” (Yaffee and Wondolleck 60). Most collaborative projects lead to an increase in social capital, resulting in improved relationships among residents which, in turn, can help build stronger communities. People involved in collaborative efforts often feel empowered after working hard to find common ground, create solutions and implement collectively agreed-upon plans of action. Such empowerment, combined with increased ecological literacy, negotiation skills, and political savvy among community members, can lead to sustainable communities.

In many instances, collaborative efforts by unlikely coalitions of people have been able to accomplish what other avenues of conflict resolution could not. Collaboration is not always entered into as a first choice, but sometimes as a final option. Don Snow observes, “They [collaboratives] are often efforts of last resort; they typically arise in settings and issues in which other ways of making decisions proved intractable” (Snow, “Talking” 35). When a contentious issue results in gridlock, neither side can move in any direction. Seeking to resolve the issue in court only produces winners and losers. When two sides become weary of passing the ball back and forth, each “win” only temporarily settles the issue

and is in danger of being overturned during the next legislative session or the next appeal. It would seem that a different solution arrived at through a different process could be a better answer in many situations.

In addition, solutions proposed by participants in a collaborative often contain a quality of innovation. Collaborative solutions are frequently more creative and adaptive than are bureaucratically-crafted top-down decrees. One observer contends that, "Bureaucracies are not known for finding creative solutions to complex social and political problems--they simply are not set up to do this..." (Brick 35). Collaboration embraces the adage that "two heads are better than one." By combining all participant contributions, collaborative efforts enable "participants to broaden not only the issues of concern, but also the potential solutions" (Wondolleck, Manring, and Crowfoot 253). Such cross-fertilization among members of a group is essential in the creation of innovative solutions that transcend individual proposals born out of self-interest. Another observer of collaboration has stated, "...a kind of synergy emerges from these highly creative efforts: the result seems to exceed the sum of the parts" (Snow, "Lines" 5).

Characteristics of Successful Efforts

Due to the dramatic growth of collaboration as a problem-solving process, many academics, practitioners, and others have been struggling to define collaboration, clearly outline its make-up, and catalogue the many types of groups appearing throughout the West and elsewhere (Cestero 3; Coggins 603; Kenney 1). However, this is no easy task. There is great variability among collaborative groups including the reasons for their emergence, their purposes and missions, the processes utilized, etc. In an effort to clarify the discussion

surrounding collaboration, many “lessons learned” from collaborative experiences have been set forth, several “how-to guides” have been offered, and a number of different checklists or “recipes” for successful collaborative efforts have been contributed to the overall discussion. Though there can not be a one-size-fits-all, master instruction list for collaborative groups to follow, there are several recurring, seemingly basic ingredients that seem to be present in those collaboratives deemed successful. An overview of the key factors underlying successful efforts will aid in the following chapter’s discussion of Alaskan collaboration.

Several commonalities seem to be present among the various templates for success submitted by collaboration practitioners and observers. As previously stated, a single checklist for successful collaboration cannot be constructed to apply to all efforts. However, when the following general principles are carefully considered and built into the structure of a collaborative process by its conveners and participants, worthwhile results are likely to emanate from the endeavor. The success of collaboratives is largely determined by the following eight factors.

First, a somewhat obvious, but particularly important ingredient is the fact that there must be a clear need for action. Some observers of collaboration have associated this factor with community readiness (Propst 34) or ripeness of the situation (deBuys 12). As one practitioner points out, “People have got to acknowledge that the problem at hand needs solving” (deBuys 12). Others have noticed that collaboration often occurs in response to a perceived crisis or threat (Cestero 75; Snow, “Talking” 36). Economic crises are well-documented motivations for action. Stalemate and gridlock, if left to fester long enough, are also situations in which people, ironically, turn to action. They are seemingly forced, by a period of inaction, to try something new. The timing of a

collaborative initiative is important, too. As Barb Cestero, a program associate with the Sonoran Institute, clearly states, "A critical number of people with diverse perspectives must be ready to explore alternative approaches to problem solving...If the timing is not right and participants are not genuinely ready to work together, collaboration can become little more than talk or can get nowhere due to some parties' unwillingness to collaborate" (Cestero 75). Collaboratives, then, should not form to be discussion groups, but as a critical mass responsive at the right time to a threat or opportunity for change.

Secondly, a collaborative's membership should include adequate representation of as many parties as possible with a stake in the problem. This is often termed inclusiveness. Many people who have studied collaboration point to the nature of a full range of interests in an issue as a key to the process's success. Broad-based involvement of stakeholders is a defining characteristic of collaborative efforts and one of its most important foundations. Observers have warned that, without full inclusion of all affected parties, the process is doomed to fail (deBuys 13). However, it should be pointed out that in most cases, with most issues, complete representation of all possible interests is an impossible standard to which other problem-solving methods have never been held (Snow, "Talking" 37). To remedy this problem, collaboratives should strive to be as inclusive as possible, engage in outreach activities, and involve regional and national interests as well as the gamut of local interests.

A third factor required for effective collaboration entails the distribution of power. Several of those studying collaboration contend there must be a balance of power among the stakeholders (Cestero 74; KenCairn 40; Snow, "Talking" 36). A collaborative process, in order to be useful, has to be free of hierarchies (London 2). Everyone at the table should have equal influence on group proceedings. If a "level playing field" (Cestero 74) is not realized, the

more powerful party is bound to dominate the process, thus defeating the purpose of collaboration.

Fourth, a credible, open process is another important ingredient of successful collaboration (Blumberg 3; Cestero 72; Chrislip and Larson 52). If the process is constructed so that operations are viewed as fair and no party seems to hold dominance over other participants, then the process is credible.

Stakeholders provide meaningful input and participate in decision-making.

“There is an open invitation to interested parties or people to join the process” (Cestero 72). Thus, a process deliberately designed to be both credible and open encourages potential participants to enter the group. As David Chrislip and Carl Larson, authors of Collaborative Leadership, affirm, “If it is a credible process (that is, it has both integrity and a fair chance of producing results) and an open process (that is, the dialogue is both honest and receptive to different points of view), then people will invest the energy—the enormous expenditure of energy necessary to make collaboration succeed” (79-80).

Fifth, the presence of strong and mediative leadership in a collaborative is often mentioned as a key ingredient (Cestero 75; Chrislip and Larson 53; Propst 34; Snow, “Talking” 36). Leadership of the collaborative process, rather than of a particular point of view, is an important distinction and is invaluable to the successful operations of a group. In many collaborative efforts, it is often the case that a single person cements the group (Propst 34). Mediative leaders are able to help people work together by “keeping stakeholders at the table through periods of frustration and skepticism, acknowledging small successes along the way, helping stakeholders negotiate difficult points, and enforcing group norms and ground rules” (Chrislip and Larson 53). They maintain an open mind and help guide stakeholders toward a collective vision. However, they are also “willing to engage in open conversation that may lead to entirely unpredictable

results” (Snow, “Talking” 36). Strong and mediative leaders are mature individuals with just the necessary personality traits to get the job done. They are invaluable assets.

A sixth important building block to effective collaboration is the inclusion of the ultimate decision-maker in the process. One researcher noted the importance of this factor during the implementation phase: “The most significant, measurable factor in the likelihood of success in implementing agreements appears to be whether those with the authority to implement the decision participated directly in the process” (Bingham xxiv). Essentially, the individuals or agencies with real decision-making power, though not required to be actual participants in the collaborative activities, must be notified of the collaborative action and must be receptive to collaboration. They must also be able to legally engage in such a process. For instance, governmental agencies are many times constrained by statute to participate in collaboration. This groundwork is essential to collaborative efforts, for the process must have authority (deBuys 13). Chrislip and Larson also agree that the support or acquiescence of established authorities is a reality that collaborative efforts must recognize, accept, and nurture (53, 84-85).

The two final success factors are appropriate scale and legal consistency (Blumberg 4; Cestero 73-75). Appropriate scale refers to the size of individual projects. It is generally agreed upon that large projects, encompassing greater land base and more jurisdictional boundaries, will increase the number of stakeholders and the complexity surrounding the issue. As scale increases, the chances for success decrease. Blumberg contends that “Limiting the size of a project will generally result in less contention and a greater chance for success. Projects so large that they trigger the need for major administrative processes...will likely be more controversial, costly, and time consuming” (4).

Cestero adds, "The initiatives that succeed in avoiding controversy and conflict tackle projects on a relatively small scale that is appropriate to their communities, that is, the scale makes sense as a landscape that local people identify with" (73). Legal consistency, in the collaborative context, refers to the idea that agreements or proposals stemming from collaborative initiatives meet or exceed all environmental laws, regulations, and public land management standards (Blumberg 4, Cestero 74). Hence, the circumvention or weakening of existing policies and law is strictly prohibited. This "collaborative rule" is designed to keep accountability resting within the current system of laws and standards. Adhering to legal consistency will help assure skeptics that accountability will remain with implementing authorities and will not disappear as a result of group disbandment or other circumstances.

Deliberate inclusion of these elements in a collaborative effort will yield promising potential for a group's effectiveness and long-term success. As stated earlier, no set of guidelines can be applied to all collaborative endeavors in all places and time periods. The nature of collaboration must incorporate a level of informality and flexibility. However, as more case studies are examined and more experience is gained utilizing this process, it behooves all practitioners and observers of collaboration to pay careful attention to the hard-earned lessons emanating from the field.

Chapter Three

Southeast Alaska and Collaboration

This paper has discussed the history of the wood pulp industry in southeast Alaska and has provided the reader with a framework for understanding collaboration. This chapter seeks to forge these two discussions together, utilizing both as the backdrop to an investigation of the extent to which collaboration is occurring across southeast Alaska. Following a profile of collaborative experiments that have been initiated thus far is an analysis of the obstacles that may prohibit collaboration in the region and several positive factors that may support more collaboration in the future.

During the last decade sawmill and pulp mill closures throughout southeast Alaska resulted in a period of economic transition for the region. Both before and after the mills shut down, many decried the loss of lucrative jobs and feared for the future economic stability of their communities. With such long-term heavy dependency on a single industry, southeastern communities were filled with tension as residents speculated about potential ramifications of the closures.

Much was made of the mill closures and their likely ill effects on the region by congressional delegates, state politicians, industry representatives, and others. The media embraced a negative viewpoint as well, capitalizing on many people's fear of the unknown. However, not all southeast Alaskans subscribed to the "deathmarch" propaganda. Some saw opportunity in contract cancellations and the industry's exit from the region---opportunity to restructure local economies in a more sustainable fashion, making them less dependent on a single industry and less vulnerable to federal decisions made in Washington, D. C.

It would seem that the circumstances prevailing in southeast Alaska during the nineties would have prompted local citizens to actively pursue a redefined economic course for their communities. Within this time of transition, when people were searching for new economic directions in which to steer their communities, collaboration, as described in the previous chapter, was one strategy available to southeastern residents. From an outside perspective, the situation in southeast Alaska amidst the high-stakes mill closures appeared to possess a certain ripeness for collaboration to occur, especially after decisions were finalized and the last mill ceased to operate. The fight to perpetuate the mills' existence was over. The time to hold discussions about how best to chart a course for a regional sustainable economy had arrived. The stage was set for people to come together and decide on an appropriate course of action.

An investigation of collaborative efforts occurring in southeast Alaska, however, does not yield a long list of different groups of people following similar patterns to those of collaborative groups now proliferating across the western states of the continental U. S. Peer-reviewed journal articles comparing case studies of collaborative groups and regional newspaper human interest stories capturing the collaborative spirit in action within the context of southeast Alaska are not in abundance. This scarcity does not mean that citizens of the region are not concerned about their economic situation or are not taking measures to confront current problems; for residents are discussing the issues that affect their lives, and they are pursuing solutions in traditional ways, through city councils and citizen initiatives. What this scarcity does point to is that collaboration has not taken hold of the region in the same way that it seems to have infiltrated the American West.

Certainly, Alaska is different than the lower forty-eight states in many respects. Low population densities and the immensity of the land area are the

most obvious differentiations. Southeast Alaska as a separate region of Alaska (nearly physically separate) has its own set of idiosyncrasies including the lack of a connecting road system, the climate and topography, a strong reliance on subsistence activities, and the overwhelming presence of federal lands. Even by Alaskan standards, Southeast embodies various extremes, illustrated by its ninety-five percent federally-owned land base and its half-inch daily rainfall average in the southern portion of the region (“Our Community”).

However, in spite of what makes southeast Alaska unique, the region and its communities share many characteristics with places in the West where collaboration is occurring. These common characteristics include generally, the presence of federal lands, the constant and usually contentious interplay between federal lands management and local communities, a reliance on the natural resources of the area, a strong sense of individualism among area residents, and a sense of pride in residing and making a livelihood in what is (or what used to be) the “last American frontier.” During the last ten to fifteen years, perhaps the most significant commonality shared by southeast Alaska and many Western communities is the loss of a town’s major employer. Southeast Alaska does not stand alone in its plight of mill closures and economic recovery. Dubois, Wyoming, Grays Harbor, Washington, and Kremmling, Colorado, are all resource-dependent towns that were faced with recent economic disasters (Bates 101-103; Howe, McMahon, and Propst 68-71; Rasker 202). Rural communities across the West have experienced circumstances similar to those of Southeast as large mills close down, timber corporations leave town, and displaced, unemployed workers are faced with hard questions and hard times. This pattern has repeated itself again and again, forcing residents to either reinvent and diversify the local economy, pack up and move, or do nothing and witness the rapid extinction of their town.

Economic shifts continue to occur throughout the American West, as the regional economy diversifies and moves away from its historical, singular dependency on resource-extraction activities toward a more services-oriented economy that focuses on medical care, education, business management, communications, finance, and engineering (Power 2). Some repercussions from this shift in economic direction materialize as shadows behind the veil of western collaboratives. In other words, in some cases, participants involved with collaborative efforts are motivated to engage fellow townspeople in discussions as a result of economic concerns. Certainly, southeast Alaskans have had economic concerns in their collective mindset for some time, yet collaboration does not seem to be the primary course they've followed in pursuit of economic recovery and stability---at least not in the time period directly before, during, and after the mill closures.

The fact that collaboration is not proliferating throughout Southeast in numbers to inspire academic reporting, however, does not prove that collaborative efforts haven't been attempted before or aren't being nurtured presently. A closer inspection of southeast Alaska reveals that collaborative efforts have occurred within the region and nascent episodes of collaboration are beginning to take shape. Before describing several collaborative endeavors that have been launched recently in response to the region's economic situation, one story of collaboration in the annals of southeast Alaskan history deserves recounting and may serve as a beacon to potential collaborators in the region as a prime example of what might be accomplished through similar efforts in the future.

The Alaska Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve

An unusual, natural phenomenon of open water on the Chilkat River during the cold winter months in Alaska is responsible for the engaging story of how one southeast Alaskan community worked together to protect a local scene of spectacular nature. Haines is one of the northernmost towns of the archipelago, sitting between Lynn Canal of the famed Inside Passage and the Chilkat River flowing from Canada. It is along this river that as many as 4,000 bald eagles gather along a four mile stretch to participate in an annual "feeding frenzy" (Anderson 9). The confluence of three rivers, the Chilkat, Klehini, and Tsirku, form a kind of warm water reservoir that remains unfrozen in winter, providing an attractive place for bald eagles to convene and consume the huge amounts of spawned-out salmon that pervade the area ("Alaska Chilkat").

This natural display of wildlife is the largest gathering of eagles in the world ("Alaska Chilkat"; "American" 1). Tlingit Indians report that the eagles have always come to this place, aptly referred to as the "Valley of the Eagles." The eagles have had a significant influence upon traditional culture. Also known as "The Council Grounds" (a gathering of eagles is known as a council), this area was established as the Alaska Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve in June of 1982 (Anderson 10). A brief review of literature sources about the Preserve, including informational brochures from the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, indicate no hint of the much larger story behind its formation. It is a rare story of triumph in Alaskan collaboration.

In 1980, the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), the largest U. S. conservation act ever, designated 106 million acres as protected areas, including parks, wildlife refuges, and national monuments (Rosen 3). Around this same time in December of 1980, Glacier Bay National Monument,

less than twenty-five miles from downtown Haines, was established as Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. These two acts had the residents of Haines, population 1,200, intensely wary of any more restrictive federal land designations close to home (Cline). Now sharing a town border with acres of protected wilderness numbering in the millions, it seemed the Feds were on a roll. The "Valley of the Eagles" just twenty miles north of Haines, north of the Tongass and not on federal land but on state land, had been a target for preserved status consideration by various groups, including the state which had previously been unsuccessful at acquiring protected status for the area. In fact, state officials had given up the task when faced with overt opposition from local residents. When talk of establishing some sort of protection for the area came up again in the late 1970s and early 1980s, many of the townspeople were again vocally adverse to any more land being "locked up" in protective designations. Local mining and timber interests thought the idea especially unnecessary (Cline).

The National Audubon Society entered the action in the late 1970s with hopes of seeking maximum protection designation for the eagle grounds in the form of a National Wildlife Refuge. This national environmental group saw the eagle gathering in the Chilkat Valley as a national interest threatened by resource extraction in the form of commercial logging and mining. David Cline, of the Alaska Audubon Society, working in Juneau at the time, was given the authority to see what could be done in Haines regarding this situation. Fully aware of the volatile nature of his group's objective, Cline aimed to utilize a science-guided approach with the very important, if not required, companion of community support. After a couple of introductory meetings between Cline and community leaders, it became obvious that the community representatives held little trust in any national representatives, and were wary of hidden motives. In order to

dispel any myths and alleviate concerns about Audubon's motives, Cline tried a new angle. He proceeded to convince a retired U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service biologist from Colorado named Erwin Boeker to move temporarily into the community and ascertain and improve the chances of success amidst the contention among community residents (Cline). This move proved to be a turning point in the debate.

Boeker was a biologist who had previously been involved with ranchers in the West on other eagle issues. Golden eagles and other raptors were often shot by angry ranchers who viewed the birds as preying on their sheep and young lambs. Thus, Boeker was no stranger to eagles or the problems surrounding their protection. It had been said by other conservationists familiar with the Haines area that an "eagle lover" entering the Rip Tide Bar in Haines would likely be beaten up by the local bar crowd. So that was the very first place that Boeker began his work in Haines. Both captivating and able to talk "their language," as David Cline relates, Boeker was able to integrate himself into the community without receiving the same hostility that other researchers and concerned conservationists before him had (Cline). He conducted a series of studies on the eagle habitat along the prime stretch of the Chilkat river where they gathered each year. Rather than covertly reporting his findings to the national environmental group that hired him, he sought to convey the information he was gathering to both Audubon and the local townspeople in a public manner. He brought schoolchildren out to the area and illustrated his radio-collaring technique; the kids were thrilled. He went to Chamber of Commerce and other town meetings and helped others explore and understand his results (Cline). Essentially, he listened to what the eagles had to say about this critical habitat and relayed that information back to the community in a way

that was less threatening than previous investigations of the area had been perceived.

After much research and politicking, Boeker invited John Schnabel, owner of the local timber mill, to help draw the boundaries for a future eagle preserve. This invitation, more than anything else, helped squelch the community's fear that anything other than protection for the eagles was the central motive. In addition, Dave Olerud, a Haines resident who owned a sporting goods store in town, later to be founder of the American Bald Eagle Foundation, helped lobby for community support for the protection of the eagle habitat. After previous warnings to David Cline that "you'll need an army to protect those eagles...," Olerud recognized that there could be future economic gains for the community with the Preserve proposal (Cline). Thus, the tide began to turn in favor of protected status for the area. Strong reservations among the community remained, but the discourse began to progress.

Meetings were held to begin discussing particulars. David Cline, Erwin Boeker, and others involved on the pro-Preserve side stressed the importance of finding and developing a solution in a timely fashion. National politics were swirling around the issue, and it became clear that something would be done with regard to establishing a protected sanctuary, with or without Haines' approval. Eventually, all of the concerned citizens realized that an agreeable solution for all parties involved would best be crafted in Haines. With that decided, a public meeting was called, and the city chambers were filled to the brim with Haines residents. Chart paper went up on the walls and various interests began calling out what it was they wanted (Cline). In this way, individual and various parties' needs were identified, and in the end, largely met.

An agreement was reached that a Bald Eagle Preserve be established--a *preserve*, not a sanctuary or a wildlife refuge or anything else. The set of regulations established for the Preserve were uniquely Alaskan. Most traditional uses of the land at the time of the agreement were kept in place and continue to be allowed in the Preserve such as the cutting and gathering of firewood, the use of motorized vehicles, skiing, gathering berries, and hunting and fishing. Only mining and commercial timber operations were prohibited (Cline; Menaker). Eight representative groups and individuals signed the agreement, including the mayor of the City of Haines; the mayor of the Haines Borough; the Schnabel Mill; the Alaska Miners' Association - Haines chapter; the Lynn Canal Conservation Society; the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council; the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service; and the National Audubon Society (Menaker). With the stipulation that no changes be made, the agreement was sent to Alaska Governor Jay Hammond for his final signature.

Hence, the Alaska Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve was signed into law in June 1982, placed under the jurisdiction of the Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, and is jointly managed by the agency and a thirteen-member Alaska Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve Advisory Council ("Alaska Chilkat"; "American" 2). Governor Hammond later called the Preserve the "crown jewel of Alaskan collaboration" (Cline; Henry; Menaker). The consensual agreement has remained in place with very few problems for nearly eighteen years.

Perhaps the most valuable aspect of the unique formation of the Preserve was an increase in civility among the various members of the Haines community. Clearly, trust was cultivated, developed and maintained among the different participants. People with diverse viewpoints, often violently diverse, were able to negotiate a plan of action for the area in question. Ray Menaker, one of the leading participants involved in the process, has noted, "It has been interesting

and rewarding to see that many people who had steam coming out of their ears at the thought of setting aside an inch of ground for eagles--often phrased as 'locking up the valley'--are now proudly proclaiming Haines as the 'eagle capital of the world' and recognizing the eagle preserve as an important addition to the economy of the region. Proponents and opponents of the eagle preserve smile at each other now, talk with each other now, listen to each other now. It may not be easy, but resource conflicts can be resolved. Perhaps that's the most important thing about the Alaska Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve" (Menaker 7).

Between 1978 and 1982, a transformative process happened among many of the residents of Haines that allowed different sides to come to the same council chambers and hammer out an agreement. The participants were able to move from incivility to acceptance. Barriers were broken and a successful outcome still exists today. The Chilkat Preserve brings hundreds of eagle watchers, photographers, and visitors to the town each year. There is an annual Alaska Bald Eagle Festival in November to celebrate the yearly migration of eagles coming home for the winter. These tangible reminders exist, yet similar efforts utilizing the collaborative strategy that produced such a success story in this case have not come forth in great number. The "crown jewel" of Alaskan collaboration kept its place for many years as the solitary example of a natural resource issue tackled in such a manner. Only very recently has collaboration begun to resurface within the region.

Recent Collaborative Efforts

In Wrangell, citizens began to meet in 1991 to address concerns about the future direction of their town's economic base. Though it would be three more years until the sawmill in town actually closed, citizens felt the need to begin to

formulate an economic diversification plan known as Wrangell 2001. Bob Gorman, district agent for the Alaskan Cooperative Extension Service, and Keene Kohrt, Wrangell district ranger for the U. S. Forest Service, coordinated a series of meetings that included a wide spectrum of the town's residents ("Sustainable"). People with different viewpoints came together and developed a set of recommendations that included providing opportunities for small businesses to engage in value-added specialty products, designing a unified approach to dealing with natural resource issues, and developing support services for the fishing industry so that fisherman and fish processors would be inclined to remain in Wrangell ("Sustainable"). The group was also instrumental in persuading the city council to hire an economic development planner to help implement their plan ("Sustainable").

The Island Institute, located in Sitka, has been one of the most progressive organizations in Southeast in dealing with change in the region. The mission of the Institute, as described in the 15th annual Sitka Symposium brochure, is "to promote thoughtfulness about two primary sets of human relationships: how people can best live together in communities; and how people can best inhabit the places they live." The Institute runs many programs each year which help Sitkans and other people from the region and elsewhere better understand their relationships with each other and with the natural world. One of the Institute's programs which dealt directly with community health was the Sitka Indicators Project. This project sought to identify, measure, and follow trends in Sitka's social, environmental and economic assets. A preliminary report was available to the public in January 1998. The report compiles data on twenty indicators, defined as measurable conditions of the community, and is an important resource in helping Sitkans gain access to an accurate picture of their community (Island Institute 2). When an economic crisis occurs in a locale, a worthwhile

first step in developing solutions is to set forth a factual perspective of the town and its assets. The Sitka Indicators Project allows citizens and community leaders to recognize their town's current standing in many different areas, enables them to gauge subsequent progress, and helps them base future decisions on good information. This is a deliberate, methodical way for citizens to help shape change in desirable directions.

Later that year in April 1998, a conference was held in Sitka to bring people from the region together to discuss their concerns, opinions, and ideas regarding their region's economic future. Sponsored by the Tongass Community Alliance, a nonprofit group advocating sustainable economic development of southeast Alaskan communities, the Tongass Community Futures Conference provided a public forum for participants to learn from and share with each other. Over eighty people gathered to hear presentations and to collectively develop an agreed upon vision "...for the future of Tongass communities and the region..." (McConnell 1,6). They identified ten key areas in which to place their best efforts and generated possible action steps to take. Fostering community values that maintain quality of life, fostering economic development that avoids boom and bust cycles and is sustainable, and fostering good communication among community residents and among southeastern communities were some of the broad categories first concentrated on. Also targeted as key areas to focus on were politics, education, tourism, transportation, and amenities. The natural resources and native heritage of the region were also discussed as being very important to conference participants and within the larger southeast Alaskan context (McConnell 6-10).

The conference resulted in a clearer sense of purpose for participating southeast Alaskans. Presentations by executive director Luther Propst and lead economist Ray Rasker of the Sonoran Institute, a nonprofit organization based in

Tucson, Arizona, introduced the audience to collaborative methods being undertaken in the western United States in communities experiencing similar circumstances (McConnell 4,5). The conference proceedings illustrated that change across the region was not to be feared, but instead could be a valuable opportunity to create a more stable and sustainable region in which to live. Vicki Wisenbaugh of Tenakee Springs, a conference participant, summed up her response to the conference by saying, "For the first time I thought about how small Southeast communities are more alike than different. Getting together to talk about our views of the future shows that despite our isolation we have many common concerns. Actually, there seems to be little that makes us different from each other" (McConnell 3).

The Alaska Region of the U. S. Forest Service declared in a February 1999 report that, "Collaborative Stewardship will become our primary way of doing business in the Alaska Region" (USDA). Initiated in 1997, the "Collaborative Stewardship" program in the Alaska Region was part of the U. S. Forest Service's new emphasis on shared leadership and heightened citizen involvement in national forest management (USDA 4). To that end, two Collaborative Stewardship Symposia were held in Ketchikan and in Anchorage in late April 1998. The purpose of the symposia was to discuss "what collaborative stewardship is; the underlying principles of collaborative stewardship; steps involved in a collaborative stewardship process; opportunities and challenges collaborative stewardship offers; and whether and how collaborative stewardship is, or might be, used in Alaska" (USDA 7). The Ketchikan session included 105 participants representing southeast Alaskan communities from A to Z (almost), including: Angoon, Coffman Cove, Craig, Douglas, Edna Bay, Gustavus, Haines, Hollis, Hoonah, Juneau, Ketchikan, Klawock, Metlakatla,

Naukati, Pelican, Petersburg, Point Baker, Saxman, Sitka, Tenakee Springs, Thorne Bay, Ward Cove, Whale Pass, Wrangell, and Yakutat (USDA 6).

Participants, like those in the Tongass Community Futures Conference, learned of examples of collaborative processes occurring in different parts of the country. Several collaborative projects were begun during the small group sessions of the symposium. These and others are outlined in the Forest Service report named above. Many of the activities featured in the report are simply examples of various parties working together with the Forest Service on different projects. For example, the community of Hoonah established the Hoonah Economic Development Committee of which the Hoonah District Ranger is a member (USDA 15). Other featured events involve a Forest Service professional helping local groups by offering technical assistance. For instance, in Hydaburg, high school students are planning to build a traditional clan house to serve as a youth and cultural center for the community. A Forest Service archaeologist is acting as an advisor to the project (USDA 22).

Though these are worthwhile endeavors for the Forest Service to be involved in, they are not of the collaborative vein this paper has been outlining, in which entire communities seek to map out responsible action plans for the future. In fact, none of the previous examples fit the general model of collaboration detailed in the previous chapter. All the efforts described above certainly lean in a collaborative direction, but they do not fully constitute distinct groups that have organized themselves into unlikely coalitions determined to search together for solutions to a common problem which all members clearly identify. This does not minimize the efforts being put forth by concerned citizens to promote responsible measures. It simply means that in southeast Alaska, true collaboration, where one can find proof of such an endeavor, is in the early stages of development.

One illustration of a deliberately-designed collaborative group was born out of a previously failed attempt at collaboration initiated by the U. S. Forest Service. The Ketchikan Working Group grew from the ashes of the initial project and for more than a year, represented one of the only true collaboratives in southeast Alaska. For a time, the Ketchikan Working Group seemed to be a promising stab at collaboration by historically antagonistic parties.

The Tongass National Forest has nine different ranger districts. Each district has been encouraged to involve its respective community in some type of collaborative stewardship project. The Ketchikan Ranger District became involved with collaboration by implementing a project known as the Cleveland Collaborative Planning Process (USDA 14). The initial purpose of the project was “to collaboratively plan a harvest alternative for the proposed Port Stewart timber sale project on the Cleveland Peninsula,” a portion of the Tongass National Forest that has often been argued about (USDA 14). The Forest Service felt that it had delayed harvest activities on the Cleveland Peninsula for as long as it could. The agency viewed the collaborative stewardship project as a method by which to obtain community support for the 1999 harvest schedule (Hummel). Four public meetings were held from June through August of 1998 in which attendees included Ketchikan community members, and representatives of Ketchikan Pulp Company, Alaska Forest Association, Tongass Conservation Society, and the Ketchikan Ranger District.

Meetings were described as contentious by some attendees, mediative leadership was not present, and participants failed to develop a common vision (Hummel, “Ketchikan”). Efforts dwindled in August 1998 after the Cleveland group failed to make notable progress. Frustrations among participants increased as it became obvious that the project had not been planned effectively and suffered from a lack of definition. Eric Hummel, executive director of

Ketchikan's environmental group Tongass Conservation Society and member of the steering committee of the Cleveland group, said that "the Forest Service botched it [the Cleveland Collaborative Planning Process] in that they didn't make sure the right people were in the room with good information with the intention of talking and working something out. They told different sides different reasons for the project" (Hummel). Essentially, the Cleveland group failed because the various parties involved did not have true collaborative aims and were not truthful about their actual motivation for participating. The Forest Service convened the project in hopes of avoiding litigation regarding potential timber sales, conservation groups attended in order to stop any timber sales, and industry interests came to the meetings specifically to design a timber sale (Hummel, "Ketchikan"). These polarities conspired to negate any efforts at creative problem-solving. Participants later observed that the project "started from the unrealistic premise that we would find a way to make a project work without defining what project we wanted to work on, how we could work together and even why we were at the table in the first place" (Hummel, "Ketchikan"). The absence of a shared vision of the future prevented group participants from engaging in meaningful dialogue.

The Cleveland project's steering committee canceled future public meetings after the last public forum in August 1998, but continued to meet throughout the winter about every two weeks in order to analyze and deliberate on the reasons for the project's failure. Although the original project failed to yield good results, members of the steering committee agreed they did not want to let the effort die. Each steering committee member felt that the collaborative process was still a worthwhile endeavor and all members acknowledged their dissatisfaction with current decision-making processes. All agreed that if consensus among the diverse interests present could be attained, the

achievement would empower this community in which many people often feel disenfranchised by decision-making based in Washington, D. C. (Hummel, "Ketchikan"). Members concluded that "True consensus builds intrinsic power" (Hummel, "Ketchikan").

These deliberations led to the formation of a new effort known as the Ketchikan Working Group. Conveners of the new venture included Pete Griffin, former Ketchikan Ranger District ranger; Eric Hummel, executive director of the Tongass Conservation Society; Jerry Ingersoll, Ketchikan Ranger District/Misty Fjords National Monument ranger; Larry Jackson, commercial fisherman; Rachael Moreland, representative of the industry group Alaska Forest Association; and Kent Nicholson, representative of Ketchikan Pulp Company. One of the group's broadest goals is to "identify areas of agreement in a consensus process that would remind us all that we have a great deal in common with each other." Their specific mission is to "reach consensus recommendations on the future land-uses within the Ketchikan Ranger District and Misty Fjords National Monument" (Hummel, "Ketchikan"). Involving many of the same people who were part of the Cleveland Collaborative Stewardship project, the Ketchikan Working Group has carefully structured its aims and processes, taking into account the factors responsible for the deterioration of the initial effort. Most importantly, the group has focused its efforts on developing a broad-based, commonly-held vision of the future management of nearby Tongass lands.

The Ketchikan Working Group worked diligently to assure that the process they were engaging in was carefully planned. The group's vision statement reads, "We have recognized that we must take the time to work through the preparatory steps completely and not try to rush into decisions when the time is not ripe" (Hummel, "Ketchikan"). The group is aware that achieving consensus will take time and will require patience and the building of

trust among members. An important motivating factor for the Ketchikan Working Group is the fact that for many years, Ketchikan has been used as a pawn in national debates among Ketchikan Pulp Company/Louisiana-Pacific executives, politicians, and the federal government. The Ketchikan Working Group recognizes that, "National and regional influence is greatest when local communities are divided" and that, "If we do not work together we will continue to be buffeted by the political winds" (Hummel, "Ketchikan"). They also acknowledge that this collaborative strategy "may sound like an unlikely dream, or not practical at all, but if we do not sit down and determine our own future, somebody else will do it for us" (Hummel, "Ketchikan").

Currently, the Ketchikan Working Group is in a self-described "holding pattern" due to community response regarding a federal policy in the making that might affect future uses of roadless lands on the Tongass National Forest (Hummel). On October 13, 1999 President Clinton directed the U. S. Forest Service to initiate a public process to formally readdress the issue of roadless lands within the national forest system (USDA, "Questions"). The Roadless Area Initiative, which seeks to establish future management directions for unroaded lands that house clean water supplies and prime wildlife habitat, has served to raise tensions in Ketchikan once again, creating renewed polarization among residents. Some fear the initiative will decrease the timber harvest even further, while others maintain that roadless areas should remain undeveloped and be preserved permanently. The Ketchikan Working Group has not disbanded, but as of April 2000, about a year and a half after the group's initial formation and one month before the roadless initiative's draft environmental impact statement is due to be released to the public, the Ketchikan Working Group is no longer an actively "working group" (Hummel).

Collaboration in Southeast: A Tool to Utilize or Ignore?

From citizen initiatives, to conferences featuring collaboration, to the Ketchikan Working Group, collaboration as a problem-solving technique has slowly begun to infiltrate the boundaries of southeast Alaska. Although steps toward collaboration have been tentative thus far, it is a process that is starting to be more widely recognized and utilized. Most of the growth in collaboration has occurred in the last two years, in 1998 and 1999, as evidenced by the reports, conferences, symposia, and creation of a collaborative group described above. More southeast Alaskans are being introduced to collaboration as a method to utilize in actively designing appropriate and sustainable economic pursuits and as a tool to employ in the arena of natural resource management.

The point has been made so far in this paper that indeed, a critical opportunity existed shortly after a mill closed in which new economic directions were unknown and susceptible to modifications from local residents. However, residents of Southeast did not follow the patterns of many resource-dependent communities in the West in which citizens embarked on a collaboratively-designed course of action in response to an economic catastrophe. There must be reasons why such a lack of collaborative activity exists in a region experiencing many of the same circumstances that have bred collaboration in other places. There are obstacles in the way of a full-scale adoption of collaboration that are not present in other geographic areas, or at least not to the degree that they exist in Southeast. A summary of possible obstacles to collaboration in southeast Alaska follows.

One impediment to collaboration in the region is due to the overwhelming presence of federal lands in the area and the resultant inextricable relationship between local communities and federal policies and monies. Local

communities possess a peculiarly unique dependency on federal largesse that has figured so prominently in the economic machinations of Southeast and in the mindset of the citizen body that it may have precluded any motivation to engage in collaboration. The U. S. Forest Service is responsible for managing seventeen of twenty-one million acres of Southeast, or about eighty percent of the land base. Another fifteen percent is also under federal management by the National Park Service. As a recent Forest Service report acknowledges, "Given this distribution, it is not difficult to imagine the pervasive effects that Tongass management has on the people of southeast Alaska" (Allen, Robertson, and Schaefer 7). Management of the Tongass National Forest has been restricted by the long-term contracts between the two pulp mills and the Forest Service, resulting in one overriding concern--timber. Pulp mill company executives, Forest Service administrators, and the Alaska congressional delegation have worked in conjunction with one another for decades to ensure the availability of timber for pulp mill production. Anytime threats to that availability arose, including national environmental laws, a member of the congressional delegation, or simply the contracts themselves, put a stop to any deviation from the operational status quo on the Tongass (Durbin, Tongass). In fact, the Tongass National Forest and the policies that direct its management have been exempt from the "normal" rules of the Forest Service on several occasions. Due to its size, its role in local communities, and its previous allegiance to the fifty-year contracts, the Tongass National Forest is sometimes given special consideration in policy decisions. For instance, the Tongass Timber Supply Fund, a \$40 million pool of money designated by ANILCA's section 705 to maintain the timber supply from the Tongass to dependent industry, was not subject to review by Congress in the annual appropriations process (Durbin, Tongass 100). One source about the Tongass National Forest points out that this fund was also "not

subject to deferral by the administration, *something true of no other federal expenditures, including those of national defense*" (emphasis added) (Ketchum 72). The recent Roadless Initiative, which ironically stymied efforts of the Ketchikan Working Group, and its draft environmental impact statement, place the Tongass National Forest in a special provisional status, offering different methods for applying the prohibitions and procedures of the initiative to the Tongass (USDA, "Roadless"). Unlike any other national forest in the country, restrictions placed on other roadless areas do not necessarily apply to the Tongass. The residents of Southeast may have been wont to exempt themselves from unpleasant events like the mill closures, just as the surrounding national forest has often been granted special consideration.

It is conceivable that southeast Alaskans grew so accustomed to the economic stability stemming from pulp mill activities, and to the business-as-usual attitude of those in power, that envisioning life in Southeast without the timber production and pulp mills seemed preposterous. Dorik Mechau, a resident of Sitka for the past eight years, spoke about the initial reactions of citizens to the 1993 APC mill closure. "Timber was considered for so long a fundamental component of the town's and of Southeast's economy. It was unimaginable that without a major employer in the wood products' industry, the town could survive" (Mechau). Perhaps the impetus to collaborate wasn't realized during the time period surrounding the mill closures because many residents held onto the belief that someone, the chief of the Forest Service, a state senator, or a company executive, would "fix" the problem.

In addition to the full-time, lucrative mill jobs which supported a substantial proportion of Southeast's milltown residents, the Forest Service's practice of revenue sharing also contributed to the heavy reliance of Southeast communities on federal dollars. The Forest Service reports, "Twenty-five

percent of all revenue received by the Tongass National Forest is paid to the State of Alaska” (Allen, Robertson, and Schaefer 54). These funds are then distributed to communities, based on acres of federal land within community and borough boundaries, as additions to public school and public road budgets. Residing in a federal fortress, surrounded by federal dollars flowing into the region as subsidies and operating budgets, and flowing out of the forest in the form of timber and pulp, southeast Alaskans developed an inescapable, complex dependency on federal resources. Tim Bristol, a Juneau resident and employee of the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council, has observed, “...there has been a long, chronic dependence on government handouts. Until the region is weaned from them, it’s going to be difficult to get people to sit at the same table and look for alternatives” (Bristol). Larry Edwards, who has made his home in Southeast for twenty-three years, has said, “If they [mill supporters] could let go of timber and of needing a security blanket, it would be easier to talk about other options” (Edwards).

Other Southeasterners have pointed out the dependency of their fellow townspeople not only on federal dollars, but on those responsible for directing federal dollars into the region--the state congressional delegation. Senators Ted Stevens and Frank Murkowski, along with Congressman Don Young have lengthy tenure and now hold powerful positions on Senate and House committees. Alaska’s senior senator, Ted Stevens, has served in the Senate since 1968 (Durbin, Tongass 25) and now chairs the Senate Appropriations Committee. Senator Murkowski heads the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, while Congressman Young serves as chairman of the House Resources Committee. Eric Hummel of the Tongass Conservation Society notes, “People in Ketchikan complain that decisions are made in Washington, D. C., but as soon as we can’t handle our problems we run to D. C. and Stevens and Murkowski for

help" (Hummel). Tim Bristol agrees, saying, "Southeasterners are used to running to Stevens with cries for help. And Murkowski was born and raised in Ketchikan, so there are plenty of connections" (Bristol).

A prime example of the type of power Senator Stevens wields in the Senate is evidenced by the 1995 securement of a \$110 million fund designed to provide immediate assistance to the timber-dependent communities of Southeast and to aid communities in diversifying their economies (Allen, Robertson, and Schaefers 60; Durbin, "Sawdust" 26). The money, provided by taxpayers over four years at an average cost of \$75,000 per lost job, represented compensation for jobs lost in the region since 1990 as the result of changes in forest policy. One Anchorage Daily News article referred to the money as "the price Alaska Sen. Ted Stevens extracted from the Clinton administration for a forest policy he said is intended to shut down the Tongass timber industry" (Whitney, "Tongass" C1). The fund, titled the Southeast Alaska Economic Fund, was to be used specifically to hire displaced timber workers for community development projects. The lion's share of the money went to those towns hit hardest by unemployment stemming from mill closures: Sitka (\$18 million), Ketchikan (\$25 million), and Wrangell (\$32 million) (Whitney, "Tongass" C10). Certainly, these funds helped soften the blow from mill closures and may have delayed residents from assuming full responsibility in reorganizing local economies.

To the dismay of doomsayers, Sitka, the first town to experience a mill closure, seemed to weather the "disaster" just fine according to a number of residents and several economic reports. A 1996 State of Alaska report states that, "...fortuitously timed growth in other industries cushioned the community from the full blow of the mill closure. So far, Sitka has weathered its loss surprisingly well" (qtd. in Allen, Robertson, and Schaefers 59). Although the closure was perceived as a crisis by many in the community, the town's economy was

diversified enough to withstand the loss of the APC mill. Sitka has a healthy commercial fishing industry, a thriving health industry centered around two regional health care facilities, and several educational centers including, the Sitka campus of the University of Alaska Southeast, Sheldon Jackson College, and the Alaska State Troopers Training Center (Boucher 2-3). Dorik Mechau, co-director of the Island Institute, noted that there was not a “mass exodus” from the town (Mechau). Programs were set up to retrain and relocate mill workers, which many took advantage of. Another Sitkan, Larry Edwards, owner of a kayak shop, pointed out that there had been a lot of turnover at the mill as the result of a labor strike in 1986. He contends that a lot of the mill’s employees never intended to become permanent residents of the town. Thus, when the mill closed, they simply moved on. Excellent severance packages and other transitional aids, such as free shipping of furniture and other items on company barges to the continental states, helped ease the impact (Edwards). The fact that Sitka’s economy experienced an easier transition than expected may also have forestalled any attempts at collaboration.

In Wrangell, where the population was smaller and the economy was not as diversified or equipped to deal with a major sawmill loss, a local resident observed that many of the unemployed mill workers moved into the commercial fishing industry. Others who took advantage of retraining programs were sometimes trained for positions not available in Wrangell, thus a segment of the workforce left town (Valentine). Another Southeasterner observed that, “Wrangell was almost totally dependent on their mill, so they were more heavily affected [than was Sitka]” (McConnell). In Ketchikan, where the last mill closure in the region occurred, many residents tended to cling to the industry even as it was exiting the region. Eric Hummel relayed that city officials had concentrated their focus on economic planning in the years shortly after the closure; however,

these efforts were largely geared toward creating new ventures in the same, familiar industry. Hummel said, "People who have been running those planning processes have been trying to return us to the way it was" (Hummel). Ketchikan officials offered seven million out of the town's twenty-five million dollar share of the Southeast Alaska Economic Fund to Louisiana-Pacific to help build a wood veneer plant at Ward Cove (Hummel). In May 1999, Louisiana-Pacific opted, instead, to leave the region entirely and sell its southeast Alaskan assets to Gateway Forest Products, a new corporation with former KPC managers at the helm, which adopted the veneer plant plan (Durbin, Tongass 309). An agreement was reached in August 1999 between the companies, the state congressional delegation, and the U. S. Forest Service and Clinton administration to provide the venture with a three-year supply of Tongass timber (Whitney, "Deal" E-1).

Each of the towns in which mill closures occurred dealt with the impacts from the shutdowns in different ways. Due to other bright spots in its economy, Sitka entered the post-pulp mill era with relative ease. Wrangell experienced greater economic suffering, but received the largest windfall of mitigating funds out of the "Stevens money." Effects from Wrangell's sawmill closure may be slow to surface. One 1998 report states, "...much of the indirect impact of the mill closure may not yet be present or may have been partially mitigated through state and federal programs" (Allen, Robertson, and Schaefers 52). In some ways, Ketchikan and its residents seemed to have the toughest time accepting the fate of the KPC mill. Eric Hummel noted, "From a social and political standpoint, the main driving force has been withdrawn. For forty years, KPC ran Ketchikan, partially in an economic sense, but also in a big way. Now Louisiana-Pacific is moving out of Southeast. As a result, that socio-economic and political power is no longer there" (Hummel). Perhaps an adjustment period is necessary before

Southeasterners can begin to look toward collaboration. A maturative process requires time as people adapt to a new way of conducting community business, different “from when all was taken care of by the power structure in place--the mill” (Hummel). Regardless of the opportunity present for collaboration to enter the southeast Alaskan picture, it was not the method chosen to help find solutions. Due to a variety of factors like the “Stevens money,” severance packages, retraining programs, and potential delayed effects, in addition to the sense of disbelief and denial of the closing events by some residents, most citizens were not in a position to accept or attempt collaboration.

Other hindrances to collaboration in southeast Alaska might be attributable to circumstances of human settlement upon the Alaskan landscape. Unlike the West, Alaska does not have a 150-year-long history of resource conflicts permeating the social fabric of the land. Intense resource conflicts in southeast Alaska, barring disputes between Russians and natives over sea otter pelts, have largely come about during the latter half of the twentieth century. Custodial management of the Tongass prior to the long-term pulp contracts resulted in few divisive feuds over forest matters. Only since intensive management of the Tongass began in the 1950s, and the region experienced a greater influx of people over the last few decades, have resource issues become contentious and nationally publicized. Perhaps residents of the region are not yet weary of fighting tactics and therefore, have not reached the last resort of collaboration. Collaboration may require a gestational period in which to form and develop in the minds of citizens facing change. It is likely that Southeasterners have not had enough time to develop and build upon collaborative ideas.

Another facet of contemporary human settlement in the region is an authentically Alaskan trait. Similar to stereotypical westerners, Alaskans are

independent individuals. However, there is a substantial portion of migrators to Alaska who elevate such independence to a high artform. They venture north to escape the confines of the continental U. S. They come to Alaska to live as they please, to travel as far away from mainstream America and Uncle Sam as they possibly can, while still enjoying American freedoms. These people want to be left alone, they don't wish to "work things out with those who disagree." Individuals in this subset greet visitors encroaching on their private property with shotguns held at eye-level. People who fit this description are not born collaborators and do not usually embody the characteristics of mediative leadership.

There are additional barriers to collaboration, attributable to the nature of the region's geography, which act to obstruct region-wide collaborative activities. Although collaboration need not occur on a regional scale, cross-fertilization of ideas and methods between Southeast's communities can only benefit those experimenting with collaboration. Southeast Alaska is a series of settlements separated by waterways. The principle means of transportation are in the form of boats or small planes. Taking the family car out for a drive will only allow one to circle around the island. Only three locations in the region have roads leading out, and those roads lead to a foreign country, Canada. Thus, the inclusive requirement of collaboration, in which all stakeholders with an interest in the issue at hand are to be included in the discussion, is hindered by the geography of the region. A discussion of disadvantages of collaboration in the previous chapter mentioned prohibitive costs such as mailing newsletters and paying for automobile fuel to and from meetings. Such costs escalate quickly, and are complicated, when transportation is measured in nautical and air miles. Time commitments increase as well. Mim McConnell, author of the Tongass Community Futures Conference report, writes, "Juneau, our capital, is

the largest community with a population of 30,000. With the other 45,000 residents scattered around the many islands, bay, and inlets, the region's extraordinary geography makes it difficult for the 75,000 residents to gather and discuss common interests, issues, and needs (McConnell 2). Essentially, the logistics of including all who should be at the table become exponentially more complex in a landscape like southeast Alaska.

Another factor that may act as an obstacle to regional collaborative efforts is the issue of scale. Although the towns of Southeast constitute only one region of one state, the actual landmass is quite large, totaling twenty-one million acres (Allen, Robertson, and Schaefer 7). Natural resource management issues in the area only focus on one national forest, but it is the largest national forest in the U. S. With regard to collaboration, Barb Cestero reports, "As the scale gets larger..., the number of stakeholders and level of complexity increases exponentially, requiring a sophistication in facilitating broad participation that so far seems to elude most interest groups" (Cestero 73). She also advises collaborative groups to work at a scale appropriate to place. Certainly, collaborative projects initiated in the region will not fail to be confronted with issues of scale and the associated challenges inherent in the region.

Although collaborative groups are currently not prevalent throughout southeast Alaska, several unique qualities of the region and its inhabitants form a foundation of support for collaboration and may serve as catalysts for future efforts. One of the more prominent qualities that might encourage increased collaboration is the spirit of cooperation among many members of southeast Alaskan communities. In sharp contrast to the curmudgeon description above (although the validity of this segment of the population remains), a minimum standard of neighborliness is maintained as an almost unspoken rule in most Alaskan locales. Features of the landscape necessitate such a rule. Southeast's

geographic location places the region right in the path of Pacific storms that run headlong into the various islands. As the first obstacles to stand in the way of a storm's unobstructed course across the northern Pacific, southeast Alaskan islands are vulnerable to sudden changes in weather patterns. This fact, coupled with the remote nature of most Alaskan territory, forces area citizens to be ready with a helping hand when situations demand it. In speaking about the West in a 1997 address to a Western Governor's Association conference audience, Wyoming Governor Jim Geringer stated that, "...cooperation hasn't always meant neighborliness, it can often mean survival" (Geringer). This concept is perhaps even doubly true in Alaska.

Closely associated with the cooperative spirit, and integral to local economies in Southeast, is the practice of subsistence. Subsistence activities, as defined by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, entail, "the customary and traditional uses by rural Alaska residents of wild, renewable resources for direct personal or family consumption as food, shelter, fuel, clothing, tools, or transportation; for the making and selling of handicraft articles out of nonedible byproducts of fish and wildlife resources taken for personal or family consumption; for barter, or sharing for person or family consumption; and for customary trade" (qtd. in Allen, Robertson, and Schaefer 38; Muth 212-213). Subsistence activities, although historically based in native culture, apply to the non-native population of Alaska as well. As Richard Nelson, an author who resides in Sitka, writes, "Almost everyone, native or nonnative, eats wild foods harvested from the land or ocean. Unlike towns in the lower forty-eight states, subsistence fishing, hunting, and edible plant gathering are integral parts of Sitka's economy. In our home, for example, the staple foods are venison and salmon we harvest ourselves, plus a variety of edibles ranging from abalone to huckleberries to red snappers" (Nelson 58). Larry Edwards, another

Sitkan, estimated that, “eighty percent of Sitka’s families use subsistence hunting or fishing to a certain extent” (Edwards). A Forest Service report about economic trends in Southeast confirms that eighty-five percent of rural households harvest subsistence food (Allen, Robertson, and Schaefer 39). The same report also notes “participating in subsistence activities contributes to the self-reliance, independence, and ability to provide for oneself, values that are important reasons why many people move to or remain in southeast Alaska” (Allen, Robertson, and Schaefer 38).

A finer point of subsistence relates to the norms by which harvests are distributed. In most cases, some portion of a harvester’s bounty is shared among households, and exchange of products takes place as well. Subsistence originally developed as an institution for coping with uncertainty (Muth 214). Any number of catastrophic events might affect resource availability including major storms, prolonged cold, disruptions in salmon migration patterns, avalanches, or bear encounters. Resource sharing provided a measure of stability for early populations. Though natural catastrophes are more easily mitigated in modern times, subsistence remains an important feature of the Alaskan social structure, and helps support rural populations during modern periods of uncertainty, such as those experienced during the region’s seasonal and cyclical patterns of employment. Based on this system of mutual obligation and reciprocity undergirding much of the region, the increased adoption of collaboration as a technique for problem-solving would seem to be supported by these traditions.

Another quality of Southeast that might serve as an encouraging factor for increased use of collaboration is due to the low population density throughout much of the region. Because the number of residents in many southeastern locales is relatively low, individuals often occupy more than one role in their community. A theoretical demonstration of this could be a local waitress, who is

a mother, also serves on the town's museum board of trustees and is a member of the local land trust organization, while her husband is a commercial fisherman, a city council member, and also a representative of the local snowmachine group. These two individuals, then, represent and are tuned into many different interest groups within the community.

Public land managers who are directed by law and superior officers to gather public input often view the public as a composite of individual interest groups. As the U. S. Forest Service begins to encourage increased collaboration between the agency and the public, adopting a larger community view would aid all those involved in a greater understanding of common interests. One commentator has stated that, "a community view emphasizes the multi-dimensional nature of every individual, and assumes that people share common interests as well as differences....Public land managers would do well to recognize individual complexities and to build on this existing sense of community in efforts to resolve conflicts over land uses" (Bates 105). In the small towns and outposts of Southeast, the numerous roles played by individual citizens promotes understanding and may minimize divisiveness among residents.

An additional characteristic that may act as a positive factor in support of more collaborative efforts is the fact that many southeast Alaskans promote sustainability of the natural resources around them. Sustainability is supported by several regional facts. The heavy use of subsistence throughout the region helps people to appreciate the health of the ecosystem that provides them sustenance. In speaking about subsistence, Larry Edwards commented, "We need the ecosystem around us. We want to maintain [it]" (Edwards). Richard Nelson writes, "Living in close contact with their surroundings, rural and small-town folks are perhaps more likely than urbanites to think about people

who grow the crops that become their groceries, who raise the animals or catch the fish they eat, who cut the trees that become their lumber and paper” (Nelson 60). Alaska has the second youngest population in the U. S. and a higher proportion of the population completed high school or higher education compared to the rest of the U. S. (Allen, Robertson, and Schaefer 9). These factors may also contribute to regional support of sustainability. In addition, tourism is an important component of the regional economy and is the fastest growing natural resource industry. The Inside Passage, the heavily-laden cruise ship pathway through the islands of Southeast, was Alaska’s most frequently visited tourist attraction in 1993 (Allen, Robertson, and Schaefer 63, 31). It is important to the local economy that the scenery tourists come to see remains intact.

A more sustainable timber industry has been envisioned by many who live side by side with the Tongass. The mill closures of the region have provided an excellent opportunity for residents to diversify local economies and to develop a smaller-scale, value-added timber industry. A 1997 Southeast Alaska Conservation Council report that models such an industry claims that three times as many jobs per million board feet of timber could be produced by a high-value-added operation than the number that was employed by the traditional volume-based industry (Katz 1). The secondary manufacturing timber industry proposed in the report would “require less timber, encourage economic diversity, aid timber supply stability, and facilitate the coexistence of the timber industry with other economic and non-economic uses of the Tongass forest such as hunting, sport and commercial fishing, subsistence, and the protection of fish and wildlife habitat” (Katz 1). Examples of value-added timber businesses include guitar and piano wood processing and furniture production. Other sustainable businesses being pursued by area residents include

value-added seafood processing, ecotourism ventures, and outdoor-based educational programs (Southeast Alaska Conservation Council).

Conclusion

Throughout the last decade of the twentieth century, southeast Alaska was enveloped by an economic transition. As a result of timber base reductions, poor market conditions, repeated failures to comply with regulations, and the successful Tongass reform campaign, two large pulp mills in Sitka and Ketchikan and a sawmill in Wrangell ceased operations and permanently shut down during the nineties after more than forty years in business. Recently, southeast Alaskan communities have been in a period of adjustment, as local economies shift focus from pulp production to other economic pursuits. Although this region shares much in common with the American West where collaboration has grown rapidly during the 1990s, often in response to similar economic events, southeast Alaska and its inhabitants have not followed suit and jumped on the collaboration bandwagon.

Collaboration, or the process by which typical adversaries enter into civil dialogue to collectively consider possible solutions, is becoming an increasingly important strategy to address environmental conflicts and economic changes in the West. As natural resource and land management continues to be a complex task, collaboration has been utilized as another tool by which to confront and seek solutions to the many competitive interests surrounding public lands and their designated use. A combination of circumstances has led to the current appearance of collaboration including, lessons from the alternative dispute resolution field, the historical context of natural resource policy in the West, revised mandates of natural resource agencies, evolving views of appropriate

methods for seeking environmental improvements, and changing economies and demographics throughout the West.

One can find examples of collaborative activities beginning to emerge throughout Southeast; however, many of these have not evolved into full-fledged collaborative groups. Conferences, workshops, and efforts by the U. S. Forest Service throughout the region have featured collaboration. Thus, the concept has been receiving increased attention and study which may serve to produce collaborative action in the future.

Several obstacles to collaboration exist within the region that make widespread utilization of the concept more difficult than in other areas of the country. Circumstances surrounding the mill closures have discouraged southeast Alaskans from embracing collaboration. The massive presence of federal lands and the resultant dependency of local communities on federal policies and subsidies hinders collaborative activities in which citizens assume responsibility for community viability. Southeast Alaskans have often relied on politicians, pulp mill company executives, and Forest Service officials to maintain the economic status quo in the region. Now that the power structure in place throughout the Tongass has shifted as the region no longer caters to corporate pulp mills, many residents are struggling with economic concerns as well as readjusting to new forms of political correctness. The omnipotent force of pulp mill politics and the timber industry that resulted from two unprecedented contracts have been drastically altered during the nineties, leaving many residents wondering how to behave in this new situation. In several instances throughout the West during the last decade, the politics of confusion has lead to collaborative action. However, in southeast Alaska, local citizens are not wholly accustomed to making decisions about or influencing the direction of land use or economic planning. Those issues have traditionally been predetermined by the

federal agencies that have jurisdiction over most nearby lands and corporate executives of the pulp mill industry on the Tongass. The legacy of the timber industry and the associated revenues that have undergirded the region's economy continue to profoundly affect the mentality of the region. One can sense the legacy's grip on the region with local news broadcasts still warning of delayed effects from the pulp mill closures nearly seven years after the fact. It is difficult, if not impossible, to employ creative problem-solving within such an atmosphere of lingering dependency.

Other factors impeding collaboration may be the relatively short time period of resource conflicts in the region and that segment of the population that wishes to be "left alone." Residents of those southeast Alaskan towns most heavily affected by the mill closures don't seem to have arrived at the necessary critical point at which to initiate collaborative efforts. The region's unique physical situation regarding its isolated geographical position and its largely federal land base combine to limit citizens' motivation to collaborate. The ingredients to support collaboration have not yet fallen together in the right combination to yield formations of working groups.

However, the increase of discussion in the region concerning collaboration may signal the inception of a move toward increased growth in collaborative endeavors. The existence of the Alaska Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve in Haines, and several other features of the social fabric in the region already in place including, traditions of cooperation and subsistence activities, the numerous roles played by citizens in small towns, and a propensity toward sustainability of local resources, can help support future collaborative efforts. Perhaps recent events in southeast Alaska have primed the region and its residents, making them more receptive to collaboration.

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