

## Manager's Update – August 18, 2022

**Skagway Airport:** Southcoast Region of the Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has reached out to gauge the Municipality's interest in discussing a transfer of ownership or operation of the Skagway airport. If the Assembly is interested in this possibility, please provide direction to me and I will follow up as appropriate with DOT&PF.

**Cruise Terminal Float:** 90% construction drawings have been received from Transpac Marinas, and our KPFF team will review these over the next couple of weeks. The schedule for construction of the float has been moved up, and is now due to be complete in April of 2023. Transpac's contract is to store the float until August; however, the expedited schedule could provide the opportunity to tow the float to Skagway earlier than planned.

**Rockslide:** The Municipality recognizes the importance of moving quickly to mitigate the rockslide and reduce risk for the 2023 summer season, while also taking care to thoroughly and thoughtfully consider all options in order to best protect the health and safety of citizens and visitors. Consideration of this critical issue continues to be the main focus of municipal Administration.

On August 8, municipal staff met with representatives of the State of Alaska's emergency management team to discuss the rockslide situation and potential sources of state and federal emergency funds. The Municipality will continue to share data and cost information with the State as it becomes available. It is important that the Municipality follow its competitive bidding procedures in code in order to qualify for any state or federal funding that may become available.

Municipal staff also met with Shannon & Wilson, White Pass representatives, and members of the White Pass geotechnical team to discuss technical aspects of the rockslide and options for quickly moving forward with a mitigation plan. Representatives from Shannon & Wilson, the State of Alaska, and others will be in Skagway for a site visit the week of August 22, and we hope to have more detailed mitigation options ready for consideration soon thereafter.

**SEARHC:** As detailed in the letter in your meeting packet, SEARHC will be in Skagway on Thursday, August 25 to discuss terms of a lease agreement and sale agreement, and to provide SEARHC leadership an opportunity to further familiarize themselves with Clinic operations. We hope to have draft agreements ready for Assembly consideration at the September 1 meeting.

**Police Department Analysis/Audit:** Ron Moser from McGrath Consulting will be in Skagway the week of September 5 to conduct interviews and collect data for the Police Department analysis/audit.

**Sen. Murkowski / Alaska Municipal League Infrastructure Grant Symposium:** Municipal staff will be attending this grant symposium September 6 - 9 in Anchorage. Attendance at this symposium is critical to the Municipality's efforts to advocate for its current federal grant funding requests.

**Community Assistance Program:** Skagway annually receives funding from the State of Alaska Community Assistance Program (CAP), which is used by the Municipality to cover general fund expenses such as electricity, fuel, insurance, and general administration. The Alaska Legislature has included an additional \$7.1 million appropriation to the Community Assistance Fund for FY23. The Municipality's original payment estimate was \$292,288; however, the Municipality was informed that its distribution payment for FY23 will actually be \$573,549.64 (\$463,771.32 in CAP funding and \$109,778.32 in supplemental funds). Thank you to the State of Alaska for this program, and to the Legislature for appropriating additional funds in support of local government.

**STC COVID Testing:** After almost three years running a community COVID testing site, the Skagway Traditional Council (STC) has decided to close the site down. STC will continue to have the test kits on site should there is surge and/or a need for testing, and will follow up with the Clinic and other community partners with further details. The last open public testing date is going to be September 1, 2022.

**Update from Tourism Director Jaime Bricker:**

- If you would like to be receiving e-mail communications regarding ship schedule changes and other pertinent community information related to the Visitor Department, please e-mail [skagwayinfo@skagway.org](mailto:skagwayinfo@skagway.org) to be added to our list.
- On August 10, 2022, Skagway's Jánwu Sít'i, or "Mountain Goat Glacier" also known as Denver Glacier Trail within the Tongass National Forest was the first place in Alaska to be inducted into the Old-Growth Forest Network (see attached for full press release).
- Please join Explore Skagway for short public ceremony recognizing the opening of Shoreline Park on Friday, August 26th at 4:00 pm. Local Tlingit/Haida formline artist, Beau Dennis, will introduce his artwork, currently displayed on the exterior of the new restroom, and explain his inspiration behind the design.

**Update from Recreation Director Katherine Nelson:**

- The following trainings are scheduled at the Recreation Center in September:
  - Drums Alive: Friday, September 2. 9am-1pm.
  - Red Cross Shelter Training Refresher and Building Analysis: Tuesday, September 6. NOON-3 pm.
- The Rec Board met on Wednesday, August 10th and approved a motion to award the remaining 5,000 dollars of the 2022 Recreation Grant money to Log Cabin Ski Society for the purpose of trail grooming and ski club.
- The Rec Board has scheduled a meeting for Wednesday, September 14 to address the business of a Recreation Center Expansion/Pool once again. The board is reviewing the last design and cost estimates to assess where to go from here.
- Afterschool Program started this week with 30 children enrolled. Once the Rec Center is fully staffed for the winter season, we will add Fridays to the program as well as onsite babysitting (Playgroup) pending appropriate staffing.
- I look forward to discussing the future of the community garden this fall and winter and would like to be included in any developments if at all possible.



# OLD-GROWTH FOREST NETWORK

"Connecting people with nature by creating a national network of protected, mature, native forests"

**August 10, 2022**

## **Skagway forest first in Alaska to be inducted into the Old-Growth Forest Network**

Tucked into a valley north of Skagway, Alaska is a trail that immerses hikers in the acoustic atmosphere of an old-growth forest, where footsteps are padded by layers of soft spruce and hemlock needles and the sounds of the port of Skagway tumble away with the rushing glacial waters of the East Fork Skagway River. This old-growth forest surrounds Jánwu Sít'i, or "Mountain Goat Glacier" in the Tlingit language, and is the first forest in Alaska to be inducted into the Old-Growth Forest Network (OGFN), a national network of protected and publicly-accessible old-growth forests. The hike toward Jánwu Sít'i takes visitors along the Denver Glacier Trail within the Tongass National Forest, the nation's largest national forest.

This forest is being recognized by the Old-Growth Forest Network as a place for people to easily experience and enjoy old-growth forests that will remain intact for generations. With the dedication of Jánwu Sít'i, Alaska now joins the growing Network as its 32nd state with recognized forests. OGFN aims to identify at least one old-growth or mature forest in every county or county equivalent in the U.S. where forests grow, verify or ensure protections from logging, and provide visitation and forest information to guide visitors. Jánwu Sít'i is the Network's 169th inducted forest.

The 3.2-mile trail is located 5.5 miles north of Skagway and can be reached from May to September by the White Pass and Yukon Route Railroad, a narrow-gauge railroad and Civil Engineering Landmark. While the beginning of the trail passes through forests regrown after Gold Rush-era logging, hikers soon enter into lush old-growth spruce, cottonwood, and hemlock trees characteristic of the Tongass National Forest's more northern temperate rainforests. At the trailhead, hikers disembark the train and pass a 1960s red caboos that has been converted into a basic cabin and is available for rent through the US Forest Service. The dedication of Jánwu Sít'i and the Denver Glacier Trail mark the first forest in the Network which is accessible primarily by train.

Jaime Bricker, Tourism Director for Explore Skagway states, "Jánwu Sít'i ("Mountain Goat Glacier" - pronounced "jon woo sit ee") is a majestic place full of joyful, quiet noise. To experience the Tongass in this area is awe-inspiring and will take your breath away every time. I'm grateful that the Old Growth Forest Network has recognized just how special this place is."

The Denver Glacier Trail gained broader notoriety in Skagway mayor Andrew Cremata's article, "[You can't hear voices if you ignore sound](#)" as the Roadless Rule protections across the Tongass National Forest were threatened. Many groups across Skagway participated in the celebration of Alaska's first forest in the Old-Growth Forest Network, including Explore Skagway, the Skagway Traditional Council, the White Pass &



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Yukon Route Railway, Packer Expeditions, and the US Forest Service. The dedication ceremony was held on August 10th, 2022 at the Skagway Westmark Hotel following a group hike of the trail earlier in the day. Skagway artists AnnMarie Hasskamp (Glacial Naturals), Nicole Kovacs (Trail Spice Designs), and Katie Ione Craney featured artworks inspired or created from natural materials along the Denver Glacier Trail.

OGFN Executive Director Sarah Adloo notes, "We are so thrilled for the Old-Growth Forest Network to now include forests in Alaska's Tongass National Forest, often referred to as 'the lungs of America.' Celebrating Jánwu Sí't'i in our Network recognizes how important these old-growth forests are for people near and far."

Founded in 2012 by Joan Maloof, OGFN also recognizes exceptional forest advocates, educates about the extraordinary ecological benefits of old-growth forests, and speaks out regarding immediate threats to specific ancient forests. Learn more or discover how to volunteer at <http://www.oldgrowthforest.net>.

Contact:

Old-Growth Forest Network: Sarah Adloo, Executive Director, (770) 380-4111 or Sarah@oldgrowthforest.net.



# OLD-GROWTH FOREST NETWORK



Jaime Bricker, Tourism Director at Explore Skagway, accepts the OGFN plaque from Founder Joan Maloof and Executive Director Sarah Adloo. *Photo by Cory Bricker.*



# OLD-GROWTH FOREST NETWORK



The Old-Growth Forest Network and guides from Packer Expeditions celebrate along the Denver Glacier Trail.  
*Photo by Jaime Bricker.*



# OLD-GROWTH FOREST NETWORK



Hikers arriving at the trailhead from the White Pass and Yukon Route Railroad. *Photo by Sarah Adloo.*



# OLD-GROWTH FOREST NETWORK



Views of the Jánwu Sít'i Forest and East Fork Skagway River from the Denver Glacier Trail. *Photo by Sarah Adloo.*