

CHARTER TONGASS FUTURES ROUNDTABLE

I. PURPOSE

The Tongass Futures Roundtable brings together a diverse group of stakeholders long involved in the Tongass to discuss how to incorporate our economic, cultural, and ecological values in public policy issues throughout the region. The Roundtable seeks to explore how a broad range of stakeholders can address these public policy issues and work together to achieve a long-term balance of healthy and diverse communities, vibrant economies - including responsible use of natural and cultural resources while maintaining the natural and cultural values and ecological integrity of the region

II. CONVENING VALUES

The Roundtable will include all of those who care for the Tongass by using open, inclusive, and transparent processes to reach out to all Tongass voices. The Roundtable will work to create a positive dialogue and find shared solutions to meet the Roundtable purposes. The Roundtable will review the charter at its first meeting annually. From time immemorial, Tlingit, Haida and Tsimpsian peoples have maintained their stewardship of the lands and waters of Southeast Alaska. The Tongass Futures Roundtable recognizes, values, and respects their customary and traditional way of life and their traditional knowledge and further that the land and waters of southeast Alaska continue to sustain Native lives and communities.

III. GOALS

A. Land Management. Solve challenges on specific topics that may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A stabilized land base;
- ANCSA entitlements and other potential draws from Tongass National Forest lands;
- Watersheds and other areas of the Tongass that should be conserved;
- Types of resource uses that will be allowed in specific areas of the Tongass;
- A long-term stable supply of timber;
- Restoration, stewardship, and second growth management; and
- Protections of subsistence lifestyles and access to resources for cultural and sacred purposes.

B. Quality of Life. Recommend how to protect our Southeast Alaska quality of life through the responsible stewardship of cultural, economic, and biological values.

Promote this goal by engagement that gives voice to and empowers all cultures and values.

- Identify ways to celebrate and enrich cultures, protect values, and strengthen opportunities for healthy communities and vibrant economies with secure jobs
- Engage local and regional voices to empower communities to create healthy environments and vibrant economies.
- Identify ways to celebrate and enrich local and regional engagement with the Native peoples and rural communities of the Tongass.

C. Sustainable Economy. Advocate for Southeast Alaska to have a robust, community-based diversified and sustainable economy.

- Address impediments, such as high energy costs, solid waste, and infrastructure.
- Promote new industries and businesses that create jobs and are economically and environmentally sustainable.
- Collaborate and provide guidance on:
 - Restoration projects
 - Promotion of entrepreneurial investments
 - Improvement of existing industry without impacting other users
 - Maximizing value-added resources
 - Green energy
 - Subsistence-based economies.
- Work toward timber and other natural resource development that has more continuity, sustainability and reliability.

IV. MEMBERSHIP

A. General. Membership in the Roundtable is designed to be inclusive and representative of all those who care for the Tongass National Forest and Southeast Alaska communities. The Roundtable has sole authority to appoint its members. Membership in the Roundtable is limited to 35 members. The TFR will review its membership annually, or as necessary, to continue to assure broad representation.¹ The Administrative Committee will regularly review applications for membership and make recommendations to the Roundtable on potential new members.

¹ By action of the Roundtable, two organizations have been designated for membership.

B. Alternates. The Roundtable expects each member to fully and actively participate in all Roundtable meetings. However, each Roundtable member may formally designate one individual to serve as his/her alternate. An alternate may participate fully in the Roundtable, including voting, but only in the absence of the member. The alternate shall have attended and observed at least one Roundtable meeting day, and shall have agreed to assume the responsibilities of a Roundtable member, as set forth in Article VII below.

C. Withdrawal of Members. When a member chooses to withdraw from the Roundtable, the Administrative Committee will recommend a new member, subject to a 2/3 vote of the Roundtable.

D. Removal of Members. The Roundtable may remove a member when that member or the alternate has failed to attend three consecutive meetings or when in the judgment of the Administrative Committee that member has violated the Code of Conduct.

V. ORGANIZATION OF THE ROUNDTABLE

A. Roundtable. The policy making body of the Roundtable is its membership when assembled.

B. Administrative Committee. The Roundtable is assisted by an Administrative Committee (whose members are selected by the Roundtable) responsible for coordinating and promoting efficiency and effectiveness of the Roundtable, especially between meetings of the Roundtable. Thus, based upon general directions from the Roundtable, the Administrative Committee can plan agendas, communicate with the media and undertake other ministerial tasks, including processing membership applications, but may not make policy or substantive decisions. It may meet telephonically, through other electronic means, or face-to-face.

C. Roundtable Staff. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) serves as primary staff for the Roundtable.

D. Facilitator. The Roundtable may make use of a facilitator to assist in achieving an understanding of its common objectives and a consensus on any disagreements that preexist or emerge in Roundtable meetings so that it has a strong basis for future action.

E. Work Groups. The Roundtable may create Work Groups to address specific issues and develop options for consideration by the Roundtable. The Administrative Committee will provide the specific charge, establish a timeline, and exercise oversight of the Work Groups. A Work Group will be chaired by one or more Roundtable members selected by the Roundtable. Work Groups are open to any Roundtable member or member of the public, at the discretion of the chair. Work Groups are not authorized to make decisions for the Roundtable as a whole. All Roundtable members will be notified of all Work Group meetings by Work Group Chairs.

VI. ROUNDTABLE MEETINGS

A. Meeting Schedule. Meetings, whether in person or by electronic means, will be held regularly at the time and place determined by the Roundtable. Time-limited topics may propel the Roundtable to authorize action between regular meetings. While recognizing the inherent limitations of e-mail, discussions may be conducted by e-mail with distribution of each message to all members of the Roundtable and their designated alternates. Where a consensus appears possible from the e-mail exchange, the Administrative Committee may establish a teleconference of the Roundtable to allow real-time discussion and action on the topic. The Administrative Committee will ensure that Roundtable members who do not respond to e-mail notice of any such teleconference also receive phone notice.

B. Action/Decision Log. At the end of each meeting, the next meeting's location, dates, and desired/invited guests will be reviewed. An Action/Decision Log will be developed and reviewed. Each meeting will begin with a review of the Action/Decision Log developed at the previous meeting.

C. Notice of Meetings. Reasonable notice will be given of the time and place of Roundtable meetings. As a general rule, Roundtable meetings and Work Group meetings will be open to the public. Invited individuals, including specialists, may participate in Roundtable or Work Group meetings as needed and appropriate.

D. Quorum. A quorum shall consist of 2/3 of the enrolled members. For purposes of this charter, "member" means an appointee to the Roundtable or, in the absence of the appointee, the appointee's designated alternate, who may participate in all deliberations of the Roundtable, and may vote. If a quorum is not present at a Roundtable meeting, the members present may submit a matter to the full Roundtable for vote by electronic means.

E. Agenda. The Administrative Committee will seek to distribute a draft meeting agenda to the membership no later than one week in advance of the Roundtable. The Roundtable shall adopt an agenda for each meeting.

F. Rules of Order. The conduct of the meetings of the Roundtable shall be governed utilizing a facilitator until such time as the TFR determines otherwise.

G. Recess. A break for the purpose of consultation may be requested at any time by any Roundtable member. The person requesting the break will be asked for an estimate of the time needed for the consultation.

H. Meeting Materials. Roundtable staff shall distribute and post on the Roundtable's website reference materials and other associated draft documents prior to each scheduled meeting.

I. Media. All Roundtable meetings will be open to the news media, but, in order to promote a full and frank exchange of views among its members, meetings shall not be electronically recorded unless there is consensus of the members present. Roundtable members or participants who speak with the news media express their own views, but not the official Roundtable position unless authorized by the Roundtable. The facilitators and staff of the Roundtable may describe the group process and share materials with the media. Roundtable press releases or statements may be prepared for the media by the facilitator or staff at the direction of the Administrative Committee.

J. Public Participation in Meetings. Members of the public are encouraged to attend meetings of the Roundtable. The Roundtable gladly accepts written presentations and exhibits. Opportunity for oral comment also will be provided. Public comment must be germane to the subject matter under consideration by the Roundtable. The facilitator may set a time limit for public testimony, for individual speakers.

K. Voting. The Roundtable seeks rigorous discussion of issues. Endorsement of a course of action by the Roundtable will be by consensus. Where consensus is not reached on an issue, a statement setting points of agreement and disagreement shall be prepared.

Approval for membership in the Roundtable, or removal of a member, shall be by 2/3 majority.

L. Reconsideration. Decisions reached by the Roundtable may be reconsidered upon notice by any member of the Roundtable.

VII. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ROUNDTABLE MEMBERS

A. Good Faith. All members agree to act in a good faith effort to reach consensus in all aspects of the Roundtable's work by encouraging the free and open exchange of ideas, views, and information. All members recognize the legitimacy of the goals of others and assume that their own goals also will be respected. Personal attacks and prejudiced statements will not be tolerated.

B. Time. All members agree to give the Roundtable priority attention, staffing, and time.

C. Exchange of Information. The members of the Roundtable agree to exchange information in good faith. Members agree to provide information in advance of the meeting where such information will be necessary. All members agree not to divulge information shared by others in confidence.

D. Compensation for Services. The Roundtable shall not be responsible for pay, allowance, or benefits for a member's service on the Roundtable.

E. Costs and Expenses. Members of the Roundtable are responsible for their travel and expenses, though in specific cases these expenses may be reimbursed.

F. Code of Conduct. Members of the Roundtable are expected to abide by the Roundtable Code of Conduct and to renew their commitment to the Code of Conduct each year.