

Prince of Wales- Tribal Conservation District

Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition
**2018 Southeast Alaska Watershed Restoration
Workshop**

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**Prince of Wales-Tribal Stewardship Consortium and
Prince of Wales- Tribal Conservation District**

*Presentation will cover the following objectives:

1. What is a Tribal Conservation District (“TCD”) and how it can benefit your Tribe, community and landscape.
2. How a Tribal Conservation District is implemented by a Tribe and/or community.
3. How do technical, social and political bottlenecks slow or halt restoration projects and how did we overcome them?

“What lies behind you and what lies in front of you, pales in comparison to what lies inside of you”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

*What is a TCD???

- * A Tribal Conservation District blends local and traditional knowledge with technical resources to actively manage natural resources in a defined area.
- * A TCD sets local priorities for conservation so natural resources can continue to thrive for subsistence, economic opportunity, resource development and cultural preservation.
- * A TCD is “non-regulatory”

*What is a TCD???

- * A TCD is formed by gathering Tribal Resolutions. In Alaska, a Tribe may form a TCD on their own or it may join with other Tribes, villages, and/or ANCSA Corporations. All entities are signatories on the agreement.
- * A Mutual Agreement (“MA”) is prepared by the NRCS Alaska Native Liaison.
- * The “MA” is sent to Washington D.C. for final review and approval.

*What is a TCD???

While the draft MA is in review, you must:

- Designate equal representation from each Tribal entity.
- Work together to identify your top ten natural resource related concerns.
- Draft, review, amend and approve Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation.
- Review process to apply for 501(c)(3), or “non-profit” status under the Internal Revenue Code.

*The four POW Tribes started their process in 2012.

*What is a TCD???

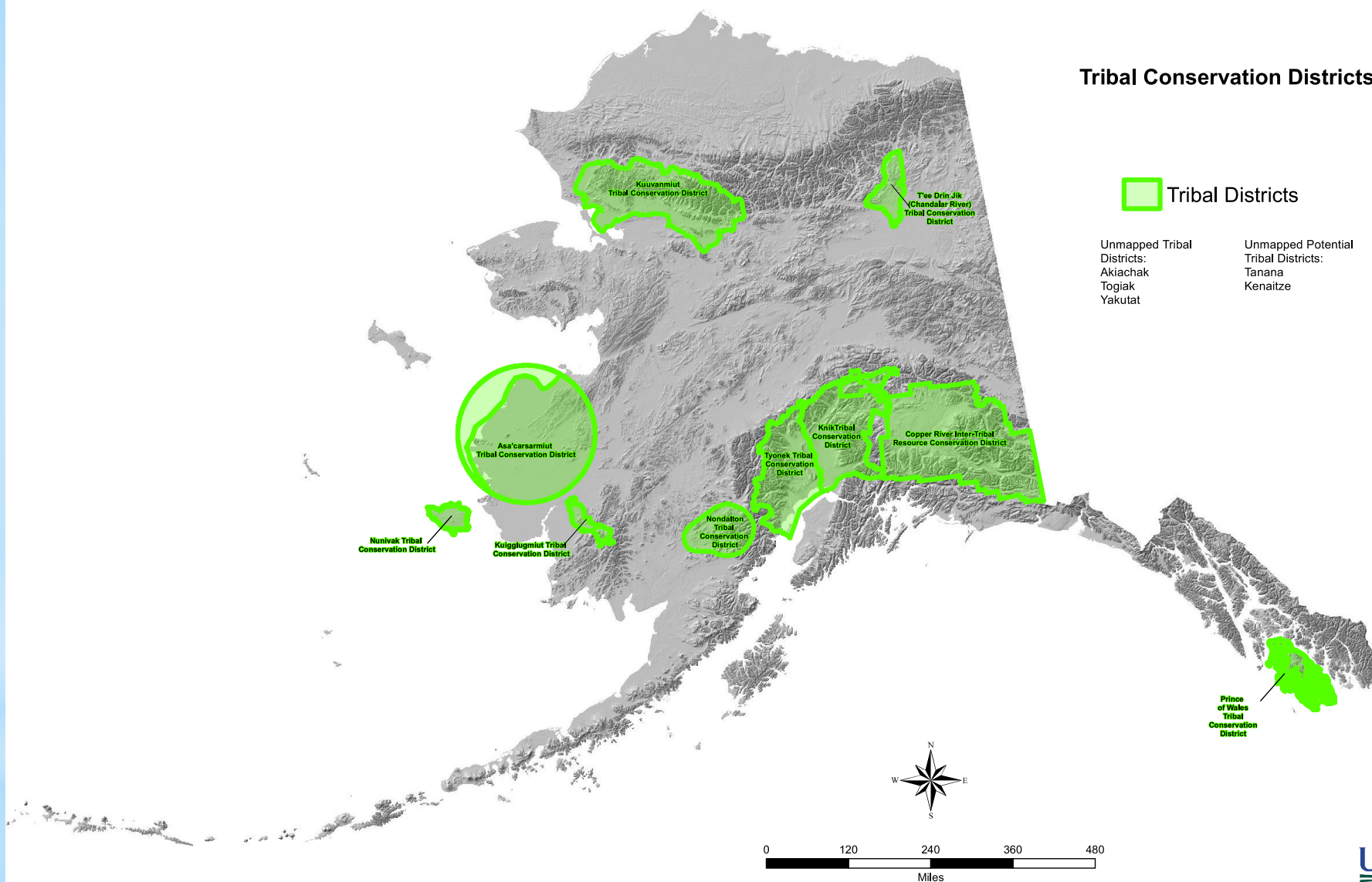
- * February 2014, USDA-NRCS Tribal Liaison, Kristine Harper hand delivered the Mutual Agreement to POW-TCD. It was signed by USDA-NRCS office in Palmer, AK and Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture.
- * Within months, each Tribal President signed the Mutual Agreement, making the POW-Tribal Conservation District official.
- * Since 2014, all four ANCSA Village Corporations on POW joined.

Tribal Conservation Districts

 Tribal Districts

Unmapped Tribal
Districts:
Akiachak
Togiak
Yakutat

Unmapped Potential
Tribal Districts:
Tanana
Kenaitze



Natural Resources Conservation Service - November 2015



TCD's in Alaska

*What is a TCD???

- * Sealaska has also been invited and encouraged to join. A representative attends our meetings.
- * A TCD requires a boundary. POW-TCD unanimously agreed to include all of POW and surrounding islands, extending three miles beyond the shoreline.
- * Funding and/or technical assistance is available by USDA and its eighteen agencies.
- * Capacity building funds were awarded to POW-TCD to attend conferences and create a priority list.

POW Tribal Conservation District

- * Craig Tribal Association
- * Hydaburg Cooperative Association
- * Klawock Cooperative Association, Tribe
- * Organized Village of Kasaan
- * Shaan Seet, Inc.
- * Haida Corporation
- * Klawock Heenya Corporation
- * Kavilco

*What is a TCD???

- * Board members volunteered to attend such conferences as Alaska Tribal Conservation Alliance's (ATCA) *Preserving Alaska* Symposium and Intertribal Agricultural Council (IAC) "Gathering" in Las Vegas, Nevada.
- * These conferences display the capabilities of a TCD. They exist across Alaska and Our Nation and all have different objectives.
- * ATCA provides technical assistance to TCDs in Alaska.

* POW-TCD's Top 10

- * Our top 10 natural resource related concerns evolved during planning meetings.
- * POW-TCD is concerned about:
 1. The reduction in our annual salmon returns.
 2. Our herring, herring roe and herring roe on kelp stock.
 3. Sustaining our clean drinking water and our water rights.
 4. Our future role in natural resource co-management efforts with local, state, private and federal agencies.

*POW-TCD's Top 10

5. Our Sitka black tail deer population and its ecosystem.
6. How the Endangered Species Act can affect our customary & traditional harvesting and gathering.
7. The commercialization of our natural resources.
8. Climate change and how it can negatively affect our natural resources.

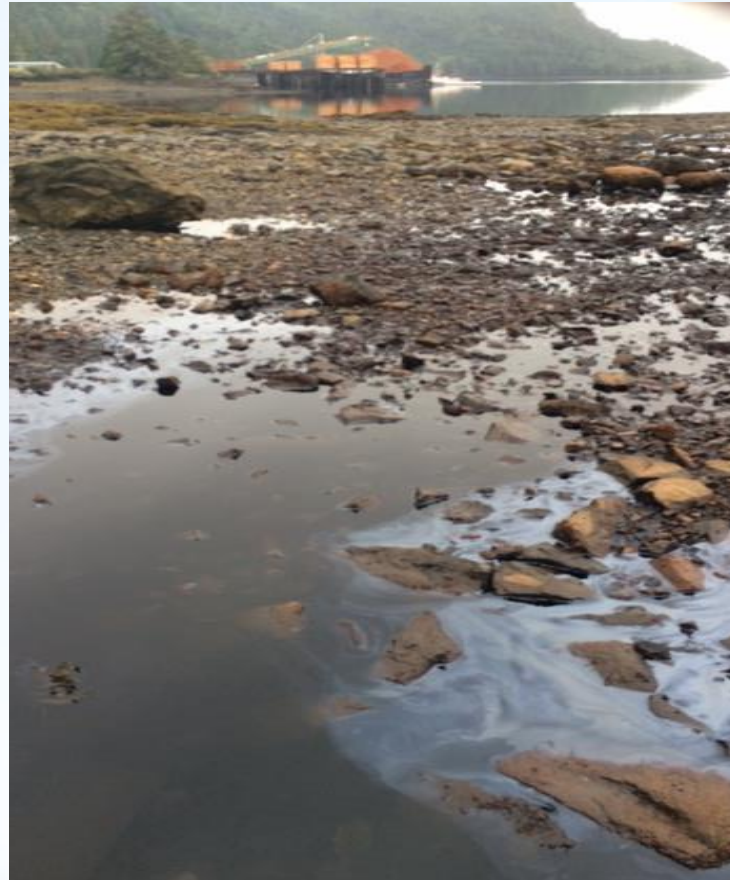
*POW-TCD's Top 10

9. Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP) and Harmful Algal Blooms (HAB) and how they can affect our Food Safety & Security.

10. Balanced and sustainable environment regarding effective removal of invasive or noxious plants, birds, wildlife and sea plants.

Our Top 10 concerns are approved. USDA offers funding and/or technical assistance through Omnibus, or “The Farm Bill”.

Subsistence related activity is allowable project or activity in Alaska (the only state w/ this exemption).



“When the Earth is sick, the animals will begin to disappear, when that happens, The Warriors of the Rainbow will come to save them”

Chief Seattle

*TCDs & Omnibus

Multiple funding and/or technical assistance opportunities exist within Omnibus. Having a TCD doesn't guarantee funding, but it can increase your chances of receiving funding.

Partnerships is a key ingredient to future funding and/or technical assistance.

Your community can look at natural resource related concerns. Projects in many areas can merge to become many projects that serve to goal of creating a pristine environment for generations.

*Omnibus or “The Farm Bill”

Here are a few funding opportunities:

Rural Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP):

Promotes conservation assistance & funding to landowners through partnership agreements and through program contracts or easements.

RCPP can increase restoration and sustainable use of soil, water, wildlife and related natural resources on regional or watershed scales.

* Omnibus or “The Farm Bill”

Environmental Quality Incentive Program, or “Equip”:

Financial assistance to agricultural producers (in Alaska: subsistence activity) to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, reduced soil erosion and sedimentation or improved or created wildlife habitat.

Applicants must: control or own eligible land; compliant with highly erodible land and wetland conservation requirements; and have a NRCS EQIP plan of operations (additional restrictions).

* Other USDA funding:

High Tunnel System: are seasonal polyethylene covered structures used to cover plants to extend the growing season (2-4 weeks). These depend on plastic covering to raise the temperature. EQIP funding can be used.

Other Funding include: Stabilizing Streambanks, Emergency Watershed Protection, Agricultural Marketing Service, Conservation Stewardship Program, Voluntary Public Access-Habitat Improvement Program, Agricultural Conservation Easement Program and Protecting Traditional Land Use by Hardening Trails.

Other programs are available.

*Possible TCD Projects:

Imagine such projects as:

Culvert replacement to improve fish passage, community gardens & high tunnel systems, Saturday markets, trails projects, clean drinking water, value added products, invasive plant eradication & management program, etc.

Imagine Trainings:

Financial Management, Silviculture, wildfire suppression, first-aid, CPR, gardening, marketing & advertising, etc.

POW-TCD's first grant

Bureau of Indian Affairs-Hatchery Maintenance funding to do salmon & habitat restoration at a river system selected by POW-TCD representatives. The Klawock River was unanimous.

In 2018, efforts will start with habitat restoration (tribal youth) and equipment purchase (mist incubation system).

We can secure funding in 2019 to start Tribal Operations for salmon restoration.

We're advocating to SSRAA to start a sockeye project at the Klawock River Hatchery.

“Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap, but by the seeds that you plant”

Robert Louis Stevenson

* POW-TCD's second grant

Organized Village of Kasaan is also fiscal sponsor for our Alaska Conservation Foundation-Alaska Native Fund to host two conferences in 2018:

1. POW Gathering II. Part two from our 2017 to gather Tribes, local, state and federal agencies and align our TCD priorities with projects identified in POWLAT.
2. 2018 Traditional Plant & Medicine Conference- Establish a process to protect our traditional medicinal plants from commercial interests. We don't want outside interests to exploit these natural resources.

* Implementing your TCD

Establishing a TCD is a milestone, putting it into action is a challenge.

Tribes have limited funding and must be innovative.

Communication creates success. You must assure that each board member, personnel and administration stays informed of your project or department activity.

Efforts must be made to outreach to your community(ies) as well.

*Implementing a TCD

Tribal departments can include IGAP, TRP or “Brownfields”, TTP (Tribal Transportation Program), and SSP (Sustainable Southeast Partnership). Others include Fisheries, Energy, Economic Development and Historic Preservation.

Each can play a pivotal role with your community or regional Tribal Conservation District.

Once your natural resource related concerns are identified, this is where your Tribe’s Departments come into play.



An IGAP program has an approved Work Plan with Components.

EPA allows the value of your Component to be used as “match” or “in kind”.

If your TCD wants community gardens or high tunnel systems, your IGAP can do composting.

USDA can assist with soil sampling. This assures that a site you designate has sufficient soil to grow produce. Informed decision making.

Since composting expires soon, time is essential to get these projects implemented.



Our first task was to network with our EPA Project Officer. Ours is Michelle Davis who has an office in Anchorage.

EPA encourages a sustained program for environmental & natural resource protection.

Working with your other departments can make projects a success. Funds through TCDs can help.

Our thoughts:

TCD focuses on Natural Resources.

IGAP focuses on Environmental Protection.

*Tribal Response Program

TRP or “Brownfields” focuses on (but not limited to) clean up or remediation of such things (but not limited to) as asbestos.

If a site is cleaned up, a TRP can turn that site into a community garden. Funds from TRP can get the site prepped, EQIP can create the community garden and IGAP can create compost to start growing fresh produce.

TRP and IGAP can demonstrate capacity and success by utilizing funds from USDA to create a “sustainable” program for your community.

* Tribal Transportation Program

Formerly “IRR”, if a Tribe has a TTP, they can use funds identified in your Transportation Improvement Program, or “TIP” as match.

Community gardens need parking lots, roads, trails and/or paths. Identifying and prioritizing these opens up match or in kind.

This is a good time to consider “higher ground” for gardens. Evacuation sites are also helpful.

“Glassphalt” can be used on paths only. IGAP & TTP can work together to collect & crush glass. Speed limit must be below 35mph.

* Community Garden can be created from three Tribal Programs:

IGAP: composting program

TRP: site remediation (if it exists)

TTP: parking lot, lighting, sidewalk, etc.

USDA has funding & technical assistance for gardens and high tunnels (i.e., EQIP).



* **Community goals:** Increase physical activity; family bonding; fresh produce; improve social, cultural and family economic structure.

* Tribal Transportation Program

An inventory of equipment for a Tribe is required for audit purposes. This can also be used for project match.

Determine a fair market value of heavy equipment and vehicles and you will have a dollar amount that contribute for funding.

Example:

1 dump truck at \$ 150/day or \$ 600/week for a 12 week project= \$ 7,200.00 for match.

* Tribal Transportation Program

Culvert replacement is another project that can improve surface transportation, salmon returns and habitat.

Routes with culverts need to be assessed. A determination helps, along with consideration of a “proposed bridge” (if a span is >20’)

* Insufficient Culverts

Culverts are “side-by-side”

Rusted

Perched

Blocking prime spawning habitat
(past logging practices caused
negative effects)

This qualifies as a “proposed
bridge” in a Tribe’s *Inventory* under
TTP.



- * Most federally recognized Tribes or Consortia have departments such as IGAP, TRP, TTP and SSP. They all have an opportunity to make a project successful utilizing teamwork and communications.
- * Tribes must network with awarding officials, catalysts and project officers to assure that funds are not jeopardized.
- * This is a learning process. We encourage communicate, network and document, document, document.



**What are the technical, social and political
bottlenecks that can slow or halt restoration
projects?**

“Don’t give up. Don’t ever give up!”

Jim Valvano, Former Head Coach
North Carolina State Basketball

Technical Hiccups

- ✓ **Capacity Building.** In the past, our industry was logging, commercial fishing and mining. Most residents capitalized on the “rush” for Alaska’s once abundant resources.

These industries halted, having a minimal impact to our economic future. The new bubble is tourism and restoring or enhancing the fragile ecosystem.

Solutions:

- Create a long-term vision and goals that our POW-TCD supports.
- Align the issues. We identified protection and preservation of our natural resources that will help our cultural, social and economic future.
- Capacity Build. We started to attend conferences and create a networking program with other TCDs that utilize funding/technical assistance for their projects.

Technical Hiccups

- ✓ This Vision formed an Alliance between two separate forms of Tribal Government:

Federally Recognized Tribes that organized pursuant to the Wheeler-Howard Act, or “Indian Reorganization Act” of 1934, amended in 1936 to include The Territory of Alaska that is also recognized as a “non-profit”.

Tribal Corporations recognized by the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, or “ANCSA”.

Non-profit and For profit Tribal Governments working together.

Technical Hiccups

- ✓ **Elections.** Tribes and Village Corporations have annual elections that result in leadership changes with Tribal Council Member or a Board of Director. Sometimes, our representative doesn't get re-elected.

This is unavoidable, since elections will always occur.

Solution:

Keep our Tribes and Village Corporations updated on projects and emergent issues regarding natural resources.

Our plan remains as a living document that is subject to change-based off the unified efforts of the TCD.

Reports and updates are provided to each Tribe and Village Corporation. We also discuss during our meetings.

We're not a perfect solution, but can be part of the solution.

Social bottlenecks

✓ We're a new organization.

A TCD is a new concept and we must get our message out there.

Alaskans- especially Alaska Natives have struggled since 1867. A lot of promises and deals were given to natives with one condition: abandon your culture and way of life.

Another bottleneck is explaining how USDA funding and technical assistance can benefit Alaskans. We often hear “We’re not farmers. How can this help us?”

Solution

- ✓ Continue getting your message out. “Toot your own horn”.
- ✓ Translate USDA. “We don’t cultivate the land, the land cultivates us.” Our reliance to healthy land, water and air are all necessary for abundant natural resources.

Political bottlenecks

✓ **Politics. What used to be simple is now complex**

Political action affects our future. This fact is often hard to swallow. Our state and national legislation carves a path for us to follow. Sometimes a “transition of power” can halt or alter your direction.

Solution

- ✓ Our Tribal Conservation District is “non-regulatory”. Our primary objective is to complete projects. All we want to do is get projects completed with qualified local hire.
- ✓ We removed politics from our equation and focused solely on completing projects with partnerships and local hire.

Future of POW-TCD

- ✓ We like to promote of the wise use of our natural resources.
- ✓ That simple statement can be achieved by protecting, preserving and maintaining natural resources and our environment.
- ✓ Our grandchildren will have the Traditional Ecological Knowledge to harvest and even some day co-manage natural resources.

We will continue to capacitate and create partnerships. Training for our residents is another goal for qualified local hire.

Future Projects Include (but not limited to):

501(c)(3), or “non-profit” status. Our TCD has each entity reviewing and approving By-laws and Articles of Incorporation. Application (w/ required application fee) to Internal Revenue Service will be completed in 2018.

Future of POW-TCD

Salmon Restoration

- ✓ POW-TCD will start with Tribal Youth doing habitat restoration.
- ✓ Future funds will be for hatchery operations (early as 2019).
- ✓ Network with Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association, or “SARA”.
- ✓ Educate the public on historic run of salmon in Alaska and the cultural significance of salmon.
- ✓ Current funding from Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Fish Passage Improvement- POW has a vast highway system. Past methods for culvert installation often blocked prime spawning grounds for salmon. Sockeye is the primary salmon that’s been used since time immemorial.

Rural Conservation Partnership Program, or “RCPP” funds.

Future of POW-TCD

Community Gardens- Each POW Tribal Community will have a garden site. We'll have classes on growing produce & marketing. Schools can be contacted to help (already planting seeds). Communities will have fresh produce.

Sites will be selected, based off soil sampling with USDA-NRCS. Environmental Quality Incentive Program, or “EQIP”.

High Tunnel Systems- POW-TCD envisioned high tunnel systems for such things as berries. Safe access to this resource is important. It improves safety from wildlife and reduces injury (terrain).

Our residents (especially our elderly or disabled) will have better access to berries and an extended growing season. Southeast Alaska is considered “berry country”.

“EQIP” funding can be used for High Tunnel Systems. Eligibility requirements must be met.



“Everyone here has the sense that right now is one of those moments when we are influencing the future”

Steve Jobs



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*** Thank you for your time**
Questions?