

FOOD SECURITY PANEL

Building a Stronger Regional Food System in Southeast Alaska



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SERVICE**



Food is a way of life.

What is food security?



Food Resources

- **Availability**
- **Access**
- **Use**

What is food security?



Food Resources

- **Availability**
 - Sufficient quantities of food on a consistent basis
- **Access**
- **Use**



What is food security?



Food Resources

- **Availability**
- **Access** (physically and economically)
 - Sufficient resources to obtain appropriate foods for a nutritious diet
- **Use**



What is food security?



Food Resources

- **Availability**
- **Access**
- **Use**
 - Appropriate knowledge of nutrition and care to utilize these resources



Conventional → Integrated

Imports



Local

- Wild foods (harvest, hunt, fish)
- Cultivated foods



Pilot Study: **Baseline of cultivation operations**



Strengths

- There are experts
- Regional support groups
- Demand for local foods
- Expansion production

Weaknesses

- Communication, collaboration, networking
- Facilities to process food for value-added products
- Distribution options
- Small proportion of food locally produced
- Labor is not affordable

Pilot Study: **Opportunities to improve efficiency of wild food harvest**



Kake Focus Group: Subsistence harvest of sockeye salmon

- Community permitting- fewer trips to distant sockeye systems- decrease fuel expenditures
- Community boat to improve safety and efficiency of conducting these activities
- Recognition that AK Natives subsistence lifestyles are self-regulating traditions

What now? **Prioritize and promote projects**

- **Collaborative Network**

- Equipment sharing
- Purchasing cooperative
- Education
- Local foods to institutions

- **Food Hub**

- Market outlet for cultivators
- Value-added processing
- Distribution services
- Bulk purchasing
- Storage space
- Business development services

- **Technology**

- Hydroponics
- Greenhouses/High-tunnels
- Waste heat recovery for greenhouse heat

- **Wild Foods**

- Community involvement
- Education
- Value-added processing

There are opportunities!

Questions?



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The Southeast Soil and Water Conservation District



**SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE MID-
SESSION SUMMIT: MARCH 13,
2014
REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY PANEL**

James Marcus, District Manager, SE SWCD

What are Conservation Districts?



- Arose from the Dust-Bowl era of the 1930s.
- Alaskan districts were established under territorial statutes.
- A district is non-regulatory quasi-state agency (AS 41.10) intended to advise and assist private landowners with their resource concerns.
- A district is a grassroots led public/private partnership. Volunteer five-person Board of Supervisors.

What is the SE SWCD?



- The SE SWCD is the newest of 12 districts in Alaska and the largest District in the Country.
- Boundaries encompass the entire SE Region (from Yakutat to Metlakatla).
- Chartered in late 2012, with 2013 being the first full year of operations.
- Still in the early stages. If you're interested you can get involved in shaping the organization.

What is the Mission of the District?



- Improve local food production, gathering, and consumption through education, technology transfer, and cooperative projects; protect terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems from the danger of invasive species; and foster conservation and local utilization of natural resources.

SE SWCD Strategic Focus Areas



- **Regional Food Security**
 - Promote and support community, commercial, and personal use agriculture.
 - Promote the use, safe processing, and storage of wild foods.



SE SWCD Strategic Focus Areas



- **Mariculture (Shellfish Farming)**
 - Facilitate increased mariculture development in Southeast Alaska to increase food security and support rural economies.



SE SWCD Strategic Focus Areas



- **Invasive Species**

- Contribute to efforts to prevent the introduction of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species in Southeast Alaska and to control/eradicate invasive species.

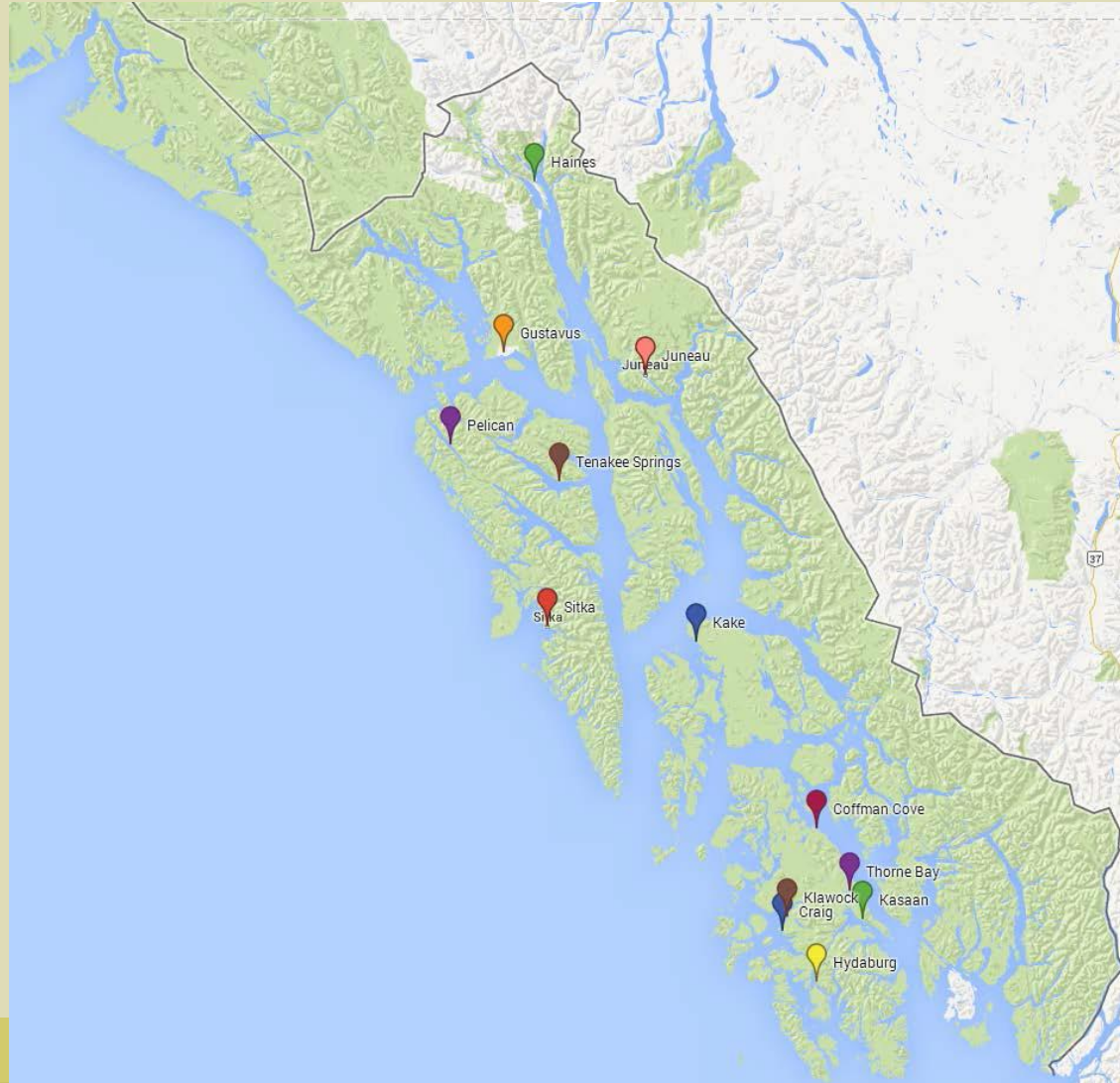


District Programs and Projects



- **Fruiting Plants Program**
 - Multi-faceted program to bring fruiting plants into small communities.
 - 5 varieties of Red Currants; Serviceberries too.
 - Visited 9 communities in 2013. Mailed plants to 3 others.
 - Will be continuing & expanding the program in 2014. Contact me if your community is interested!

2013 Fruiting Plants Program



2013 Fruiting Plants Program



District Programs and Projects



- **SE SWCD Shellfish Farming Workshop**
 - May 1 – 3, 2014 in Kake, Alaska.
 - Partners: UAF Sea Grant Marine Advisory Program, Organized Village of Kake, Hoonah Indian Association, others.
 - Aimed at beginning oyster farmers.
 - Contact the District if you're interested in participating.

District Programs and Projects



- **Regional Invasive Plant Program**
 - Started in Juneau around 2009, expanding to other areas in the region.
 - Has the expertise to provide invasive plant surveys, management plans, and control.
 - Contact the District if you're interested in learning more.

District Resources for Communities



- Provides underserved communities with a way to address their resource concerns.
- Regional Information Clearinghouse.
- Planning for programs and projects to address those concerns.
- Develop partnerships and leveraging limited resources.

Regional Food Security



- It's estimated that 95% of Alaska's food is imported.
- That makes Alaska vulnerable in times of disasters.
- What is a 'Food Emergency'? Anything that keeps food from reaching your community.
 - Natural Disasters, Weather Emergencies, and interrupted transportation networks.

Regional Food Security



- **Alaska Food Policy Council: Community Food Emergency and Resilience Template**
 - Tool to help communities understand their community food systems.
 - Identifies strengths and weaknesses in the food system and establishes a baseline.
 - Helps communities develop a plan for addressing “Food Emergencies”.
 - Helps quantify “Days of Food” in a community.

Community Food Emergency and Resilience Template



Alaska Food Policy Council: Community Food Emergency and Resilience Template

Version: February 28, 2014

Community of: _____, Alaska

Name of Plan Coordinator: _____
Position: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____
Address: _____

Supporting Communities: (Nearby Communities that may support in an emergency - Appendix A)

Supporting Agencies: (Check all that apply; individual contact names, information, and specific resources available need to be confirmed by Plan Coordinator)

- Department of Military and Veterans Affairs/State Emergency Operations Center
- Department of Health and Social Services
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game
- Alaska Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster
- Alaska Food Policy Council
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- American Red Cross
- Other (_____)
- Other (_____)

I. Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to outline procedures and resources available to _____ (community name) in the event of a food emergency. A food emergency can occur for many reasons to include natural disaster and interruption of transportation networks, weather emergency, or failure of local production. The main intent is to identify transportation requirements, storage capability, food reserves, and the procedures to release, obtain and provide food for community residents. In order to build community resilience, this plan includes local production, gathering, hunting and fishing. The plan will also better prepare for normal seasonal fluctuation common in Alaska. As a secondary benefit, this plan will potentially bolster

Community Food Emergency and Resilience Template



- **Current Community Infrastructure & Emergency Food Response Capability**
 - Transportation Network
 - Local Food Vendors
 - Food Storage Sites
- **Local Harvesting Resources**
 - Commercial, Community, & Personal use gardens
 - Subsistence Resources

Community Food Emergency and Resilience Template



- **Current Stored Food Resources (Inventory)**
 - Individuals and Families
 - Local Municipal Resources
 - Local Food Vendors and Producers
 - Traditional Storage Sites
 - Emergency Subsistence Options
- **Emergency Procedures**
- **Recovery Procedures**

Community Food Emergency and Resilience Template



- The plan will also help communities better prepare for seasonal fluctuation.
- The plan could help strengthen local economies by promoting:
 - Continuity of operations for local businesses during and after emergencies.
 - Food-related entrepreneurship and employment opportunities.

Community Food Emergency and Resilience Template



- Relates to the Alaska Community Emergency Food Cache System (ACEFCS).
- ACEFCS is program where communities can manage their community food stocks of pre-determined quality, quantity, and deployment readiness.
- Managed surplus stocks of food (stores, school districts, community centers)

The Southeast Soil and Water Conservation District



- If you're interested in getting involved, consider becoming a cooperator of the District.
- For more info, feel free to contact us:
 - districtmanager@seswcd.org
 - (907) 586-6878 (office)
 - www.seswcd.org
- Thank You!!!





USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Food Security Support in Southeast Alaska

Who is NRCS?



- Formerly known as SCS
 - *Established in the Dust Bowl to help conserve soil*
 - *Expanded its mission in mid-90s*
 - ✦ Work with nonfederal landowners on a voluntary basis
 - ✦ Funded and administered under the Farm Bill
- Provide planning and technical assistance to address natural resource concerns

Agriculture in Southeast Alaska



- Agricultural production includes:

- *Vegetables, fruits, grains*
- *Livestock, aquaculture*
- *Hay/forage/pasture*
- *Seeds, ornamentals, flowers*
- *Plant materials, fiber crops*
- *Managed forests*
- *Traditional or “subsistence” foods*

- Most of the agriculture in our region is large-scale managed forests and small-scale vegetable production.



NRCS Programs



- Conservation Technical Assistance
 - *Voluntary assistance to private landowners*
 - *Foundation for financial assistance*
- Easement, emergency, other programs as authorized



EQIP Assistance



- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
 - *Funding to offset costs for implementing conservation practices that address a resource concern*
 - *Not intended to directly assist with agricultural production, but many practices do:*
 - ✦ Nutrient and pest management on cropland
 - ✦ **High tunnels**
 - *Control pests and nutrient runoff, reduce soil erosion, and increase watering efficiency.*

High Tunnels - defined



- Seasonal, covered structures used to extend the growing season
 - *Crops grown in soil (not in containers or on tables)*
 - *Must be at least 6 ft high in the center (row covers are not considered high tunnels)*



Forest Management



- Second-growth forest management projects have included silvicultural and traditional/wild foods goals
 - Berry production
 - Structural habitat diversity
 - Wildlife travel corridors



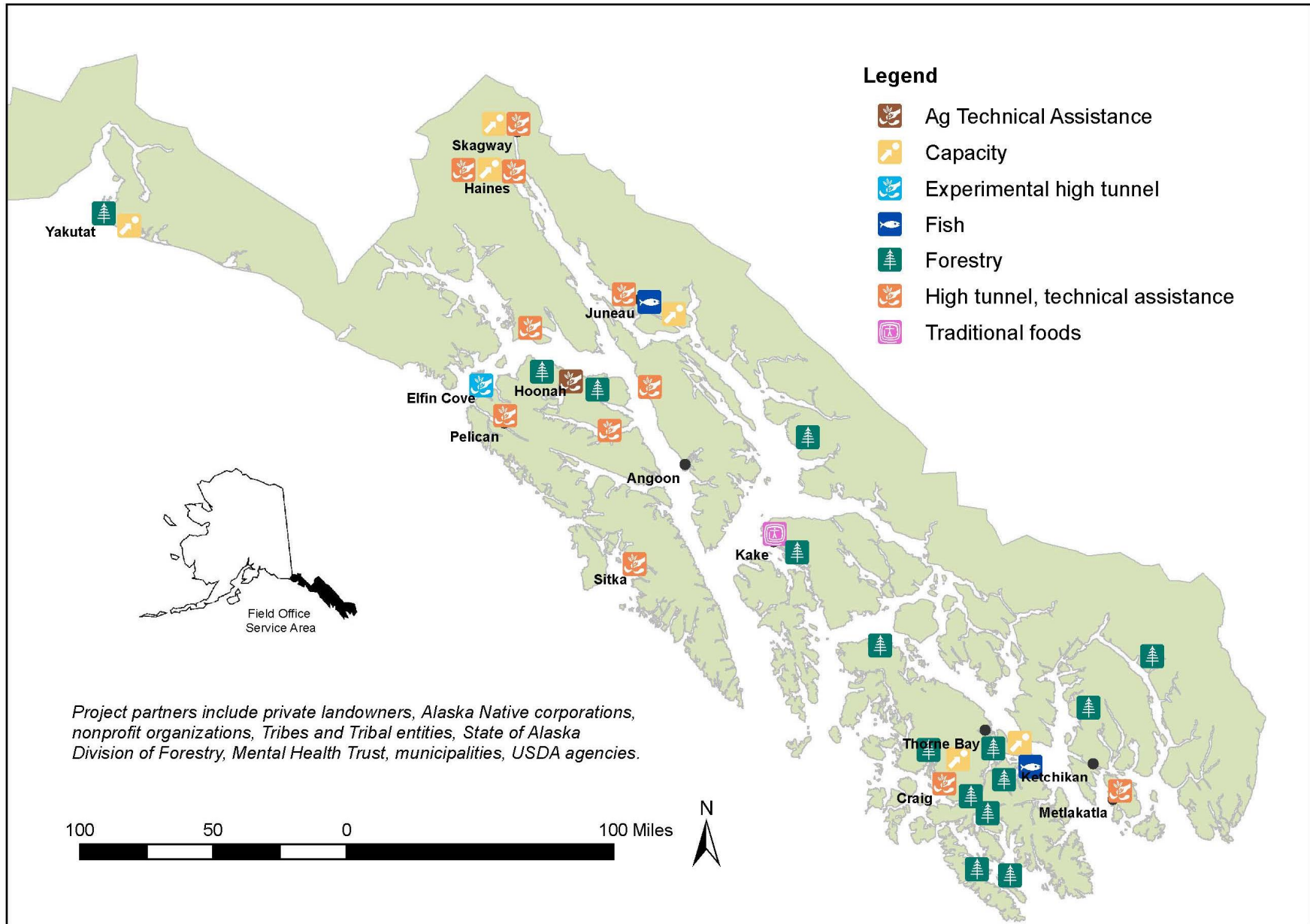
Photo courtesy of Sealaska

NRCS in Southeast Alaska



- **Juneau Field Office established in 2002**
 - *Support and initiation of watershed councils*
 - *Technical assistance*
- **Programmatic work began in 2006**
 - *Fish passage, wetland enhancement, riparian improvement*
 - *More than 45,000 acres of second-growth treatments*
 - *An additional 60,000 acres of forest management planning*
 - *16 high tunnels contracted/completed, 8 applications for 2014*

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Juneau Field Office Projects



Questions?



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**Are you interested in moving
your community forward?**



**SIGN UP ON YOUR TABLES
IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN
DEVELOPING A COMMUNITY FOOD
SECURITY VISION AND ACTION PLAN**

WE WILL CONTACT YOU ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES