



**Organized Village of Kasaan**

# Kasaan Bay watershed news letter

**Appreciating One of Our Own Summer Newsletter**

## Recycling Community Pick up

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The Organized Village of Kasaan’s Natural Resource Department is working very hard to get their recycling program up and running and are requesting the help of the community. We’ve added an incentive program and a pick up service for recyclables in the hopes of gaining more participation in the program. PLEASE RECYCLE!

Crush all aluminum cans, remove labels, lids and plastic from bottle necks before

requesting a pick up.

Pick up for recyclables will be done on the 1st and 15th of each month. Call Lynzee at OVK to make arrangements. 542-2230

**LETS GO KASAAN, LETS MAKE OUR TOWN A BETTER PLACE, AND RECYCLE**

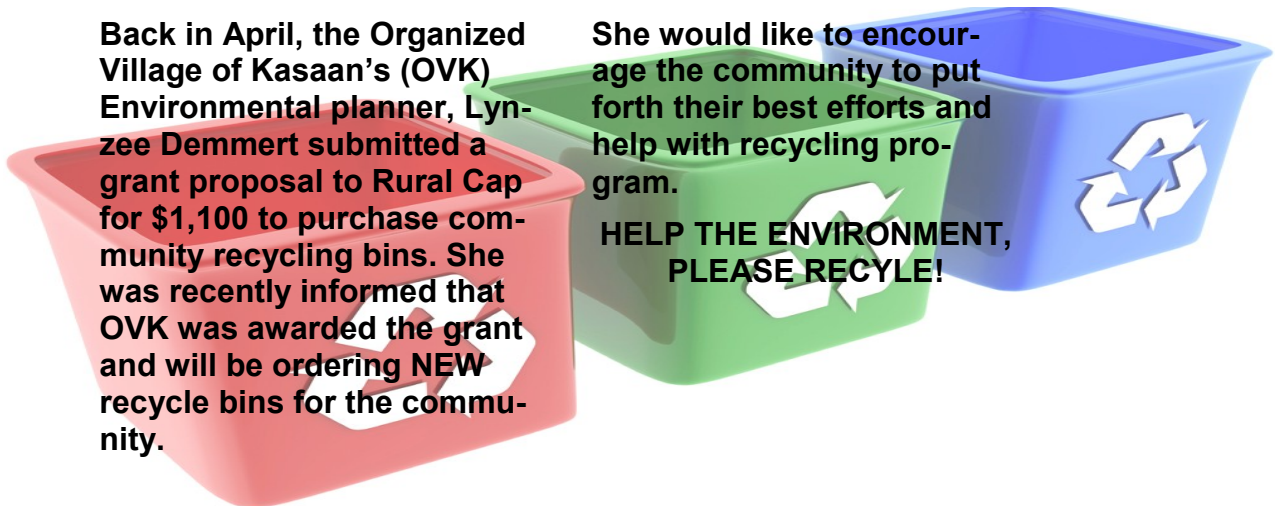


### RurAL CAP grant accepted for new community recycling bins

Back in April, the Organized Village of Kasaan’s (OVK) Environmental planner, Lynzee Demmert submitted a grant proposal to Rural Cap for \$1,100 to purchase community recycling bins. She was recently informed that OVK was awarded the grant and will be ordering NEW recycle bins for the community.

She would like to encourage the community to put forth their best efforts and help with recycling program.

**HELP THE ENVIRONMENT, PLEASE RECYCLE!**



## Appreciating One of Our Own

Mr. Richard J Peterson

During the 73<sup>rd</sup> Annual Central Council Tlingit Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska's (CCTHITA) General Assembly, April 16-19, 2008, in Juneau, Alaska, Richard Peterson was elected 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President. This is Richard's second term serving on CCTHITA's Executive Council. During General Assembly the US Forest Service acknowledged the removal of fish camps, smoke houses and cabins from the 1930s through the 1960s. Regional Forester Denny Bschor acknowledgement is the result of an October 2005 local level request from the Organized Village of Kasaan (OVK) and a November 2006 regional level request from CCTHITA. The US Forest Service doesn't have the authority to give land back nor provide compensation for past actions directed by federal law. Forester Bschor recognizes the importance of this acknowledgement and that it signals the beginning of a new era of trust between the Forest Service and the S.E. Tribes. Bschor directed Forest Service leaders at the Forest and District levels to work with local tribal governments and leaders to find ways to address these issues. The OVK has requested use of national forest land to re-establish a fish camp and smoke house at the mouth of the Karta River, this is a very important cultural/traditional site for harvesting by OVK's Tribal members; past, present, and future. The Karta River site was used by the OVK Tribal members as a summer camp; they had cabins, smoke houses, gardens, a Saltry, etc. The Thorne Bay Ranger District is working with the OVK to explore ways to make this a reality once again. The US Forest Service also presented OVK President, Richard Peterson with a "Certificate of Appreciation" for his leadership and Commitment in acknowledging the past and partnering for the future. Richard set these wheels in motion with the USFS concerning the past removal of the fish camp and smokehouses in the Karta. Richard remains passionate about this and hopes to someday see a fish camp and smoke houses once again at the Karta for tribal members. Harvesting of our resources has always been a "Way of Life" for native people.

On April 23, 2008, in Juneau, Alaska, Dr. Walter Soboleff, SEALASKA heritage Institute Council of Traditional Scholars presented Richard with Resolution 04-08; "Honoring Richard Peterson" for his service to the Tlingit and Haida people with honor and dignity. Recognizing his dedication through his work for the survival of Kasaan, for honoring his ancestors by working to retain his Haida heritage, for the benefit of future generations, and being elected to serve as First Vice President of CCTHITA and his continuing to serve our people through this office. When Dr. Soboleff was told by Richard that he wasn't Haida, but Tlingit/Tsmpisian, Dr. Soboleff told Richard, "We give you to the Haida". Richard stated a "Nicer" comment could not have been given to him. Richard has lived in Kasaan since he was approximately two (2) years old and has always felt like he was part Haida in his heart. Many people work 9-5 jobs, but few have given such dedication, devotion, and love to their community; with such a passion to make it a better place to live, work, and raise a family. To protect our rights as native people, our culture, and our "Way of Life". This dedication is not just for his community, but to all native people in S.E. Alaska.

Richard has served as a City Council member since he was twenty years old and has served as the Mayor and OVK President since he was twenty-one years old. Richard is going to be Thirty-two on June 9.

So "Haw'aa" Richard for all of your accomplishments, your dedication to our native people, but most of all for all you do for Kasaan. You are the wind beneath our wings, you honor us.



**congratulation for these accomplishments.**

**And Thank you Richard for everything you have done for the community of Kasaan**

## Steelhead Subsistence Harvest Survey

Organized Village of Kasaan (OVK) has begun a new project that will conclude in the fall 2010. This new project is the **Steelhead Subsistence Harvest Survey**. In cooperation with Hydaburg Community Association. OVK staff will work with a Bureau of Indian Affairs anthropologist and US Forest Service staff to develop an outreach plan that will be implemented by our project coordinator Kristiana Brown (Kasaan). The purpose of the outreach component is to educate the community on the importance of gathering reliable harvest information and the function of the household steelhead subsistence harvest surveys on Prince of Wales Island.

The overall objectives of this survey project are to duplicate and compare results to a survey project that was completed in 2007 and to calculate the actual amount of Steelhead being taken for subsistence use. The results will then be compared to the data from this prior survey to find the reason for the discrepancy in numbers of

steelhead accounted for between the previous survey project and in the permitting process. Surveyed households will be asked if they are willing to participate further in the interviewing portion of the data collection during which they will be asked their reasons for participation and lack of participation in the permitting process. The results are basically to troubleshoot the reasons for the differences between the numbers in the prior survey and actual numbers reported through the permitting process.

Both the survey portion and the interviewing process are completely confidential and have no bearing on the numbers of steelhead allowed for subsistence or consequence to the participants concerning noncompliance to regulations. This data will be analyzed and reported in descriptive figures allowing comparison with the Federal harvest permit reporting on a community by community basis. Additionally, participants will be given a raffle ticket for their participation for a chance to win a \$100 gift certificate for fuel

from Petrol Marine. Not a bad deal for a few minutes out of your day, huh? Surveying has already begun and we'll be looking forward to stopping by to say hello and steal a few minutes of your day. We're hoping to get through with all the surveys by the end of July. If you have any questions about this new project, please feel free to contact Kristiana at the OVK office or stop her around town J

**Kristiana L. Brown**

**Steelhead Harvest Survey  
Coordinator**

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## OVK hosts public meetings on Kasaan-Goose Creek Road

In May, OVK hosted public meetings to solicit feedback from residents regarding the preliminary design for the realignment, upgrade and paving of the Kasaan-Goose Creek road (aka Tolstoi Road). The meetings were held on May 12<sup>th</sup> in Kasaan and May 13<sup>th</sup> at Davidson Landing (Southside, Thorne Bay) with 25 and

40 (respectively) residents attending. Brian Pederson, the design engineer from R.P. Kinney and Associates gave a presentation regarding the public process and presented maps that showed the new road alignment with respect to the existing road. Feedback from the attending residents was typed into meeting notes and every-

one was asked to provide written public comments as well. There will be at least two other opportunities for the public to weigh in on the process.



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## Fisheries Update

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008 the Natural Resources Department at the Organized Village of Kasaan (OVK) finished up the study on steelhead population on the Karta River, in which our objective was to count all immigrant and emigrating adult steelhead. The crew under the leadership of crew leader Dan Frank did an excellent job of adapting to changing situations and sampled 185 immigrating adult steelhead and 4 emigrating adult steelhead (to date), and progressed fairly well minus a few bumps in the road. The crew experienced several high water episodes which force them to have to pull sections of pickets to deal with rising water levels on the 250ft

bipod weir constructed on the Karta River.

The Karta River sockeye population assessment transitioned into operation on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 with this being the third year that OVK is working in conjunction with USFS and ADF&G on a technical level. Previously this project was run in 2005 and 2006 with good results and we hope to continue the tradition with excellent results.

The Hatchery Creek sockeye assessment is off and running in its second year of operation this year under the Organized Village of Kasaan. This project is being funded through the Fisheries Information Service (FIS) program, through the Office of Subsistence Management. The second year of this

project has some added objectives, including radio tagging forty sockeye at the weir to establish their spawning ground range within the system, and a subsistence harvest survey to be conducted at the falls and lower section of Hatchery Creek downstream of the weir. Age sex and length data will be taken again this year along with scale samples from 1 out of every 10 sockeye counted at the weir. This year the crew was assembled and orientated on May 19<sup>th</sup> and the installation of the weir was completed on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. This year's crew at Hatchery Creek is Elijah Sheakley (crew leader), Russell Snook (fish tech), and another fish technician to be hired.

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## Brownsfield Article

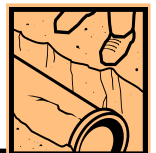
The Organized Village of Kasaan Department of Natural Resources is in negotiations with the Environmental Protection Agency to develop a Tribal Response Program that will begin inventorying potential Brownfield sites in our traditional territory. If the project is awarded, work would begin during the summer of 2008. The workplan tasks include developing an advisory group consisting of land owners, building a list of potential Brownfield sites, screening the list for meeting EPA criteria, gathering site information (including GPS) points for eligible sites, creating a database to

store all the information collected and developing a public record of the sites OVK is working on. This project stemmed from action items identified by the Kasaan Bay Watershed Council, on mechanisms to deal with potentially cleaning up the Salt Chuck mine site.

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## Replacing Culvert System

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, will be funding and working with the Organized Village of Kasaan and the City of Kasaan to replace the culvert system on Tinkum Creek Culvert located on the road into Kasaan proper. At this time, there is not a schedule put in place, but as plans progress the community will be notified when construction will begin. It is expected to be a one day project.



## Prince of Wales Tribal Enterprise Consortium

Prince of Wales Tribal Enterprise Consortium (POWTEC) is participating in a cooperative effort between The Nature Conservancy and the US Forest Service (USFS) Thorne Bay Ranger District to conduct a vegetation survey that will assist the USFS in evaluating the effectiveness of canopy gap thinning in dense second growth forests as a means of improving winter forage production for Sitka black-tailed deer.

POWTEC field crews will be under the direction of Dr. Paul Alaback, a professor of forest ecology with the University of Montana, who was hired by the USFS as the primary investigator. Dr. Alaback has several years of experience working with ecosystems in Southeast Alaska. Field crews will be conducting vegetation surveys on the island starting this summer and will continue again next summer.

In a forest, it is the understory vegetation that provides critical winter forage for deer. During winter, deer can survive by eating woody plants such as blueberry, yellow cedar and hemlock, but green leafy plants are preferred and are more nutritious. While snow accumulation can play a part in limiting leafy green food supply, the island's history of extensive logging and timber management strategies may also be a large factor

Following the extensive logging that has occurred on the island, the trees have re-grown into dense, closed canopy forest that blocks essential sun-light from reaching the understory, preventing the growth of important forage species. In these dense forests, deer have to compete for less food and may become restricted to eating woody plants. However, woody material is not a sufficient diet and deer can rapidly deplete their energy stores when restricted to such forage

The USFS has methods in place for forest thinning, but their current process is focused on maintaining the forest's high timber production. These conventional techniques do not necessarily benefit the understory vegetation important for the deer's survival. In attempt to increase deer forage, the USFS created over 600 canopy gaps throughout the island from 1983-1993. Canopy gaps are essentially openings in the tree cover, which allows for more light to reach the forest floor.

However, sufficient information about the effect these gaps have on the production of preferred forage vegetation has not been gathered. Since it takes time for the vegetation to respond, previous studies have not been able to find any difference between the traditionally thinned forests and forests with gaps. This has created some skepticism as to

whether the Forest Service should utilize canopy gaps as a future management tool to increase deer winter forage.

Since this study is occurring 15-25 years after the gaps have been created, there is a better possibility of discovering how the forage vegetation is responding. The findings of this study has the potential to greatly influence the Forest Service's current young growth management strategies and improve subsistence hunting conditions for communities on Prince of Wales Island.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns regarding this project, please contact Amy Sumner, Environmental Specialist, POWTEC at 907-523-9155.

### References:

Merriam, Harry; John Schoen and Dave Hardy. 2003. "Sitka Black-tailed Deer." Wildlife Notebook Series. Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game. [http://www.adfg.state.ak.us/pubs/notebook/biggame/bt\\_deer.php](http://www.adfg.state.ak.us/pubs/notebook/biggame/bt_deer.php)