



Forest Service  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Southeast Conference

Alaska Region | R10-TP-167 | July 2024

# Economic Impact of the USDA Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy Investment Spending 2023



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## **R10-TP-167**

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# Economic Impact of the USDA Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy Investment Spending 2023

*This economic impact analysis of the USDA’s Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy investment funding in calendar year 2023 was performed by Southeast Conference in partial fulfillment of Challenge Cost Share Agreement 22-CS-11100100-004, Sustainability Strategy Investment Economic Monitoring.*

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## Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy Investments: 2023 Economic Impact Summary

In 2021, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy (SASS) would be undertaken in Southeast Alaska and on the Tongass National Forest with \$25 million committed for initial investments. Through an engagement and selection process, funding for 59 projects was awarded to partners across Southeast Alaska for multi-year natural resource, infrastructure, community capacity, and tribal-focused projects.

The USDA Forest Service partnered with Southeast Conference to measure the overall economic impact of SASS investments on an annual basis. Southeast Conference subsequently partnered with Rain Coast Data to develop an intake tool (see Appendix A) to collect quantitative and qualitative information from SASS funding recipients about the benefits arising from SASS funding. Rain Coast Data developed a regional economic impact model from the quantitative data using Regional Input-Output Modeling System (RIMS II) data to estimate annual direct, indirect, and induced economic benefits. Responses to the qualitative questions about SASS investment benefits are provided in Appendix B.

In 2023, the second year of the initiative, SASS partners reported spending \$4.65 million of the total USDA funding, for a combined 2-year spending of \$6 million. The combined 2022 and 2023 expenditure catalyzed \$8.8 million in economic activity, created 114 jobs (after converting all full, part-time, and temporary positions into year-round equivalents), and paid \$3.6 million in local wages to Southeast residents.

Category	2022 Impact	2023 Impact	Impact-to-date
Total direct spending reported by SASS partners <sup>1</sup>	\$1,311,374	\$4,651,757	<b>\$6 million</b>
Indirect and induced economic activity	\$597,710	\$2,222,612	<b>\$2.8 million</b>
<b>Total Impact of SASS Investment Spending</b>	<b>\$1.9 million</b>	<b>\$6.9 million</b>	<b>\$8.8 million</b>
Year-round equivalent direct jobs	14.3	82.5	82.5
Year-round equivalent indirect and induced jobs	7.5	31.5	31.5
<b>Total Direct, Indirect &amp; Induced Annualized Jobs</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>114<sup>2</sup></b>
Direct annual wages	\$529,110	\$2,094,428	<b>\$2.6 million</b>
Indirect and induced wages	\$216,617	\$779,978	<b>\$1 million</b>
<b>Total Wages, Including Multiplier</b>	<b>\$745,727</b>	<b>\$2,874,406</b>	<b>\$3.6 million<sup>3</sup></b>

<sup>1</sup> Direct spending reported by SASS investment recipients as spent in 2022 and 2023. This is self reported by partners and may not equate to totals invoiced in the grants and agreements databases.

<sup>2</sup> Since total annualized job counts are increasing, using the most recent year is the most accurate way to capture impact of cumulative annual jobs, rather than adding, or taking an average.

<sup>3</sup> Wages in the total impact table above include direct spending and indirect and induced economic activity.

## Project Background

On July 15, 2021, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy (SASS) to help support a diverse economy, enhance community resilience, and conserve natural resources in Southeast Alaska. A key element of the strategy included identifying short- and long-term opportunities for investments that reflect the diverse opportunities and needs in Southeast Alaska. USDA made a commitment of \$25 million for such investments. A OneUSDA team comprised of the Forest Service, Rural Development, and Natural Resources Conservation Service engaged Southeast Alaska partners, communities, Tribes, and Alaska Native corporations using a process to pair investment dollars with local priorities inclusive of the values and peoples in the region.<sup>4</sup> More than 270 investment proposals, amounting to more than \$276 million, were submitted. After a rigorous proposal evaluation process, 59 projects were selected and assigned to the USDA agency with authority to award funding and support project partners.

Strengthening agreements were formed with three regional organizations:

- Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
- Southeast Conference
- Spruce Root

Together, these three strengthening agreements provide pass-through funding for 25 of the projects. These 25 projects are funded through a sub-award system managed by the respective organization. The remaining 34 projects are administered directly by the partner organizations responsible for implementation.

Approximately half of the initial SASS funding was awarded to tribal and Indigenous organizations for projects focused on workforce development, food security, and cultural use of forest products. A quarter of the funds focused on natural resource management, while the final quarter was invested into community infrastructure, capacity, and economic development:

- Tribal and Indigenous interests - \$12.5 million (50%)
- Natural resources - \$6.25 million (25%)
- Infrastructure - \$3.125 million (12.5%)
- Community capacity - \$3.125 million (12.5%)

To evaluate the economic benefits generated by the SASS investments, USDA partnered with Southeast Conference to develop a regional economic impact model to quantify the impact of SASS investments over time. Project-level spending from SASS investments is being collected annually from partners to develop employment and wages multipliers. Southeast Conference is the state- and federally designated regional economic development organization for Southeast Alaska. The mission of Southeast Conference is to undertake and support activities that promote strong economies, healthy communities, and a quality environment in Southeast Alaska. Rain Coast Data collaborates with Southeast Conference to

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<sup>4</sup> For more information about the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy see the project website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r10/landmanagement/resourcemanagement/?cid=FSEPRD950023>

conduct regional economic impact modeling and economic analysis. Rain Coast Data is a Juneau-based research and consulting firm specializing in Southeast Alaska economic analysis, socioeconomic impact studies, survey research, and public outreach.

Rain Coast Data and Forest Service Alaska Region staff developed an intake tool to monitor projects. The tool is based on a questionnaire that is sent to partners annually to track the economic impact of each project selected for funding over their 5-year duration. It consists of a quantitative section on economic outcomes of SASS spending and a qualitative section with an open-ended question where partners could describe their impacts using their own voice and lens. All SASS funding recipients are required to respond to the intake tool as part of their annual reporting. Project-level annual monitoring can inform discussions about both market and non-market benefits arising from federal investments across the region. Appendices A and B contain the intake tool and responses to open-ended question responses.

## **Methods**

### **Estimation Approach**

To conduct a full economic analysis of public-sector investment programs like the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy, a systematic analysis of the economic impacts should be completed at the regional level. Regional input-output multipliers are useful tools for regional economic impact analysis. A multiplier analysis accounts for the interindustry relationships within Southeast Alaska because these largely determine how an economy responds to public investments. The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) developed a method for estimating regional input-output multipliers known as RIMS II (Regional Industrial Multiplier System), which was used to determine the full economic impact of the SASS investments. RIMS II multipliers can be estimated for any region composed of one or more counties and for any industry or group of industries.

To effectively use the multipliers, detailed project-level spending is being gathered from SASS partners regarding changes in output, earnings, and employment associated with their SASS funding on an annual basis. Once collected, the data are analyzed using RIMS II multipliers to estimate the total economic impact of SASS investments in Southeast Alaska.

### **Data Collection and Model Development**

**2023 SASS Projects:** The 2023 economic monitoring intake tool was sent to all SASS partners on March 4, 2024, to align with annual performance reporting deadlines. The intake form is an online tool developed to gather and compile all necessary data to perform the economic impact analysis (see Appendix A). Each of the 32 partner organizations managing the 59 projects, including the original pool of sub-awardees embedded in the three regional strengthening agreements, received the intake tool. Of these, 12 projects reported no expenditures of SASS funding in the study year 2023. Several partners reported that they would not be using their SASS funds until 2024. Projects with no expenditures were excluded but will be included in the 2024 analysis.

**U.S. Benchmark Input-Output (I-O) Data Codes:** U.S. benchmark I-O data codes are the standard used by federal statistical agencies in classifying business establishments for the purpose of collecting, analyzing, and publishing statistical data related to the U.S. business

economy. To estimate the regional input-output impact, project activities conducted in 2023 were assigned an industrial category before being input into the economic impact model. SASS funding recipients were asked to describe the work completed in calendar year 2023 so that it could be assigned an I-O data code. Based on analysis of SASS investments and communications with SASS recipients, 16 industry categories were selected (table 1). In 2022, only 12 industries were represented, which demonstrates the increasing breadth of work being accomplished using SASS investment funds.

**Table 1. SASS investment industry categories, 2023**

U.S. Benchmark I-O Data Codes	Description
7	Construction
52	Administrative and support services
54	Educational services
60	Recreation industry
63	Other services
111400	Greenhouse production
113000	Forestry and logging
114000	Fishing and hunting
115000	Support activities for agriculture and forestry
541610	Management consulting services
5416A0	Environmental and other technical consulting services
541700	Scientific research and development services
5419A0	Other professional, scientific, and technical services
561300	Employment services
561400	Business support services
711A00	Promoters of performing arts

## Results

After receiving 100 percent of responses to the intake tool from partners, data were compiled and input into the economic impact model. Results are as follows:

### Projects Included

The SASS-funded projects with expenditures in 2023 are presented in Table 2 below, organized by project name. The three strengthening agreements and respective sub-awards are listed first, followed by individual projects administered directly by partner organizations responsible for implementation. USDA agencies are comprised of the Forest Service and its State, Private, and Tribal Forestry, Rural Development, and Natural Resources Conservation Service.

**Table 2. SASS investment projects reporting SASS spending in 2023**

<b>Project name</b>	<b>Partner</b>	<b>Project location</b>	<b>Investment category</b>	<b>USDA agency</b>
<b>Regional Strengthening Agreement Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (administration)</b>	<b>Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska</b>	<b>Southeast</b>	<b>Tribal and Indigenous interests</b>	<b>RD</b>
<b>Subaward</b> Takshanuk Watershed Compost Project	Takshanuk Watershed Council	Haines	Infrastructure	RD
<b>Subaward</b> Lynn Canal Food Network	Northern Lynn Canal Agri Producers Assoc & Chilkat Valley Food Hub	Haines/ Lynn Canal	Natural resources	RD
<b>Subaward</b> Environmental laboratory for the SEAK Tribal Ocean Research Network	Sitka Tribe of Alaska	Southeast	Tribal and Indigenous interests	RD
<b>Subaward</b> Tribal garden to increase food security	Sitka Tribe of Alaska	Sitka	Tribal and Indigenous interests	RD
<b>Subaward</b> Food security/sovereignty/ community smoke houses and fish camps and Kayaani Network	Sustainable Southeast Partnership	Southeast	Tribal and Indigenous interests	RD
<b>Subaward</b> Regional composting network	Sustainable Southeast Partnership	Southeast	Infrastructure	RD
<b>Subaward</b> Restoring Tlingit potato gardens in traditional sites	Sustainable Southeast Partnership	Southeast	Tribal and Indigenous interests	RD
<b>Subaward</b> Food security/sovereignty/ Kayaaní Commission	Sustainable Southeast Partnership	Sitka	Tribal and Indigenous interests	RD
<b>Subaward</b> Chief Shakes Tribal House improvements	Wrangell Cooperative Association	Wrangell	Tribal and Indigenous interests	RD
<b>Subaward</b> Tribal smokehouses and education	Wrangell Cooperative Association	Wrangell	Tribal and Indigenous interests	RD
<b>Subaward</b> Yakutat Tlingit Tribal greenhouse and compost facilities	Yakutat Tlingit Tribe	Yakutat	Tribal and Indigenous interests	RD
<b>Regional Strengthening Agreement Southeast Conference (admin + microgrants)</b>	<b>Southeast Conference</b>	<b>Juneau</b>	<b>Community capacity</b>	<b>RD</b>
<b>Subaward</b> Shellfish Hatchery internship and training program	Oceans Alaska Shellfish Hatchery and Marine Science Center	Saxman	Natural resources	RD
<b>Subaward</b> Commercial fishing crew apprentice program	Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust	Southeast	Community capacity	RD
<b>Subaward</b> Local fish fund	Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust	Southeast	Community capacity	RD
<b>Regional Strengthening Agreement Spruce Root (admin + additional sub-awards)</b>	<b>Spruce Root</b>	<b>Southeast</b>	<b>Tribal and Indigenous interests</b>	<b>USFS</b>
<b>Subaward</b> Fisheries Science Education	Hoonah Indian Association	Hoonah	Tribal and Indigenous interests	USFS



Project name	Partner	Project location	Investment category	USDA agency
Subaward Sharing Our Knowledge	Wrangell Cooperative Association	Wrangell	Tribal and Indigenous interests	USFS
Tongass Young-Growth Transition	Alaska Division of Forestry	Southeast	Natural resources	USFS
Forest Products Industry Input and Expertise for Young Growth Transition	Alaska Forest Association	Southeast	Natural resources	USFS
Generations Southeast Prince of Wales Campus (was VOCTEC)	Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska	Prince of Wales Island	Community capacity	USFS
Alaska Youth Stewards	Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska	Southeast	Tribal and Indigenous interests	USFS
Seacoast Indigenous Guardians Program	Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska	Southeast	Tribal and Indigenous interests	USFS
Wildland Fire Program	Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska	Southeast	Tribal and Indigenous interests	USFS
Wrangell Area Trail Improvements	City and Borough of Wrangell-Student Conservation Association	Wrangell	Infrastructure	USFS
Snow Pack Monitoring and Deer Strategy	Hoonah Indian Association	Hoonah	Tribal and Indigenous interests	USFS
Tourism and Visitor Products	Juneau Economic Development Council	Juneau	Community capacity	USFS
Cultivating Ecotourism Opportunities	Kootznoowoo, Inc.	Angoon	Infrastructure	USFS
Cooperative Development, Planning, and Implementation of Watershed Restoration Projects in Southeast Alaska	National Forest Foundation	Southeast	Natural resources	USFS
Kake Alaska Youth Stewards Enhancement Project	Organized Village of Kake	Kake	Tribal and Indigenous interests	USFS
Keex' Kwaan Community Forest Project Enrichment	Organized Village of Kake	Kake	Tribal and Indigenous interests	USFS
The Teqe'heit Stewardship Program	Organized Village of Kasaan	Kasaan	Tribal and Indigenous interests	USFS
Klawock Indigenous Steward Partnership	Shaan-Seet, Inc.	Klawock	Natural resources	USFS
Storytelling and Public Engagement	Sitka Conservation Society	Sitka	Community capacity	USFS
SEAK Youth Education 4H Expansion Project	Sitka Conservation Society	Southeast	Community capacity	NRCS
Sitka Area Trail Development	Sitka Trail Works	Sitka	Infrastructure	USFS
Invasive Species Management on the Sitka Road System	Sitka Tribe of Alaska	Sitka	Natural resources	USFS SP&TF

Project name	Partner	Project location	Investment category	USDA agency
Sitka National Forest Partnership Collaborative Program	Sitka Tribe of Alaska	Sitka	Tribal and Indigenous interests	USFS
Special Forest Product Plan Development, Implementation and Monitoring	Sitka Tribe of Alaska	Sitka	Tribal and Indigenous interests	USFS
Watershed Restoration Workshop and Capacity Exchange	Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition	Juneau	Community capacity	NRCS
Investment Focused on Watershed Restoration	Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition	Southeast	Natural resources	USFS
Investment Economic Monitoring	Southeast Conference	Juneau	Community capacity	USFS
Regional Biomass Strategy and Pellet Mill	Southeast Conference	Ketchikan	Infrastructure	USFS SP&TF
Southeast Alaska Farmers Summit	Spruce Root	Haines	Natural resources	NRCS
Community Forest Projects	Spruce Root	Southeast	Tribal and Indigenous interests	USFS

Note: Shading denotes regional strengthening agreements and sub-awards managed within them

USFS = Forest Service Alaska Region, SP&TF = Forest Service State Private and Tribal Forestry, RD = Rural Development, and NRCS = Natural Resources Conservation Service

## Total Project Spending Impact

### Overall Spending and Output

SASS funding recipients were asked how much of their organization's SASS investment funding was spent in 2023, and what percentage of that funding was spent within the region. A total of \$4.65 million was spent across all projects in 2023. Partners reported that 90 percent of SASS funding was spent directly within the southeast region.

Table 3 shows the impact of the \$4.65 million in direct SASS project spending in 2023 by industry sector. Direct spending by recipients resulted in an additional indirect and induced impact of \$2.22 million in economic activity throughout all businesses and industries in the region. Therefore, the total SASS-related investment across all industries had a total economic impact of \$6.87 million in 2023.

**Table 3. Total output impact of SASS investments, 2023**

U.S. Benchmark I-O Data Codes	I-O Data Code Descriptions	Reported Spending by Partners	Final-demand Output Multiplier	Total output
7	Construction	\$180,000	1.402	\$252,360
52	Administrative and support services	\$844,521	1.42	\$1,199,221
54	Educational services	\$286,460	1.4641	\$419,406
60	Recreation industry	\$266,515	1.4106	\$375,946
63	Other services	\$31,346	1.4446	\$45,283
111400	Greenhouse production	\$123,813	1.417	\$175,443
113000	Forestry and logging	\$807,729	1.7949	\$1,449,793
114000	Fishing and hunting	\$465,828	1.1979	\$558,015
115000	Support activities for agriculture and forestry	\$666,187	1.4509	\$966,571
541610	Management consulting services	\$267,688	1.4811	\$396,473
5416A0	Environmental and other technical consulting services	\$293,261	1.49	\$436,959
541700	Scientific research and development services	\$57,209	1.4341	\$82,043
5419A0	Other professional, scientific, and technical services	\$55,542	1.5016	\$83,402
561300	Employment services	\$230,123	1.4088	\$324,197
561400	Business support services	\$61,686	1.4507	\$89,488
711A00	Promoters of performing arts	\$13,848	1.4276	\$19,769
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$4,651,757</b>		<b>\$6,874,369</b>

To explain the overall wages multiplier analysis, the fishing and hunting sector is used as an example. The *final demand* output multiplier for fishing and hunting is 1.198, so for every dollar spent on fishing and hunting projects, an additional 19.8 cents of economic activity was generated.

### Total Employment Impact

Employment data gathered about SASS projects include the job titles of positions created with funding and employees hired by month. These were input into the economic impact model to estimate total employment impacts.

## All Jobs Created

SASS funding recipients were asked to describe jobs created through their SASS projects. In 2023, 158 positions were created through SASS partnership project spending. Some were short-term, temporary, or began near the end of 2023. For this reason, the “year-round equivalent” number of jobs created was 82.5, or 114 with the multiplier effect. The full list of jobs created through the SASS initiative in 2023 appears in Table 4. No effort was made to combine similar job titles; each job listed is what was reported by each partner. For example, the two entries for “communications” were provided by two partners with one communications position each.

**Table 4. Jobs created from SASS investments, 2023**

Admin Assistant	Field Operations Supervisor	Program Associate (2)
Administrative Assistant	Finance Officer	Program Officer (2)
Administrative Coordinator	Fish Biologist/Deputy Director	Project Coordinator
Asst. Stewardship Coordinator	Food Security Catalyst	Quota manager
AYS Catalyst	Forester (6)	Recreation & Trails (4)
AYS Coordinator (3)	Forester Tech (6)	Resource Protection Director
AYS Crew Lead (2)	Gardener	Restoration Biologist (3)
AYS Youth Crew Member (19)	Grant Administrator	Rural development and Policy director
Cinematographer / Editor/ Camera Operator	Guide Academy participants (4)	Science Director
Communications	Guide Academy Trainers	Sitka Catalyst
Communications	Habitat Crew Leader	Sitka Sustainable Community Catalyst
Communications Specialist	Habitat Crew (2)	Sitka Youth Community Development Catalyst
Community Liaison/Communications	Hatchery Tech 2	Sitka Youth Coordinator
Compost Program Manager	Healing Catalyst	Sitka Youth Program Leader
Construction Contractor	Hoonah Catalyst	Skagway Catalyst
Coordinator	Indigenous Stewardship Director	Storytelling Specialist
Crew	Intern	SPP Program Director
Crew apprentices (12)	Jilkaat Kwaan Catalyst	Sr Coordinator
Crew Lead	Kayaani Commission Coordinator	SSP Communications
Crew Leader	KKCFP Coordinator	Stewardship Coordinator
Deputy	KKCFP Crew	Sustainability Fellow
Deputy Director	Lynn Canal Food Web	Trail Crew Leader
Director	Mariculture Catalyst	Trail Worker (3)
Director	Native Lands Sr. Director	Training Assistant
Education Coordinator	Natural Resource Planner	Tree thinner
Energy Catalyst	Natural Resource Stewardship Crew (4)	Website Designer
Environmental Director	Natural Resource Technician	Wildland Fire Program Manager
Environmental Lab Specialist	Natural Resources Coordinator	Workforce Development Catalyst
Executive Assistant	Natural Resources Technician (Entry)	Young fishermen outreach/communication
Executive Director	Natural Resources Technician (Grade 1)	Young fishermen project coordinator
Executive Director	Natural Resources Technician (Grade 2)	Youth Catalysts (5)
Facilitation and Events Program Manager	NLR Sr Director	Youth Community Catalyst

## Employment by Month

Recipients were asked how many workers were employed through SASS funding agreements during each month of the 2023 calendar year. Jobs were counted and measured by month to account for the seasonal trends where workers were hired on a seasonal or part time basis. Peak employment occurred in August, when 126 unique workers were employed using SASS



funds (Figure 1). This result is intuitive given the seasonal nature of jobs where field work is performed in the summer.

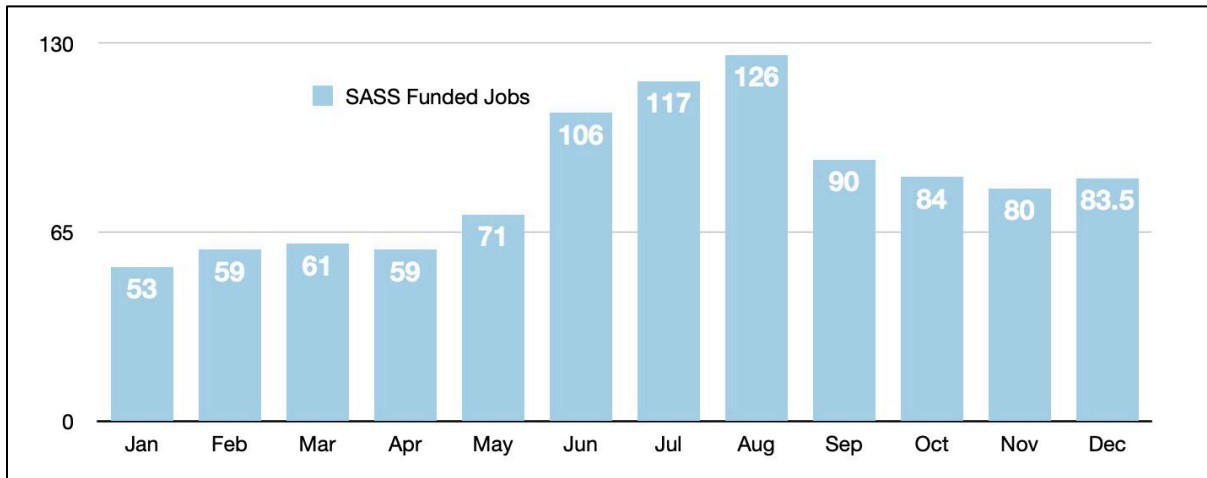


Figure 1: Number of workers funded by SASS investments in 2023, measured monthly

### Employment Impacts

To determine the overall impact of SASS investment on employment in the region, monthly totals were annualized for 2023. Jobs were annualized by adding the jobs in each month and dividing by 12. An average of 82.5 direct SASS jobs were generated in 2023 (table 5). Using direct-effect multipliers, the 82.5 jobs had an overall impact of 114 year-round equivalent jobs across the regional economy in 2023.

**Table 5. Employment impact of SASS investments, 2023**

U.S. Benchmark I-O Data Codes	I-O Data Code Descriptions	Direct Annualized Jobs Reported	Direct-effect Jobs Multiplier	Total jobs
7	Construction	1	1.5005	1.5
52	Administrative and support services	17.8	1.3372	23.8
54	Educational services	6.9	1.2087	8.4
60	Recreation industry	3.8	1.2026	4.5
63	Other services	0	1.3544	0
111400	Greenhouse production	0.4	1.3152	0.5
113000	Forestry and logging	13.7	1.9186	26.2
114000	Fishing and hunting	3.9	1.1754	4.6
115000	Support activities for agriculture and forestry	10.5	1.1084	11.6
541610	Management consulting services	2	1.3274	2.7
5416A0	Environmental and other technical consulting services	6.3	1.3652	8.6
541700	Scientific research and development services	0.7	1.6974	1.1
5419A0	Other professional, scientific, and technical services	0.6	1.6056	0.9
561300	Employment services	8.8	1.319	11.5
561400	Business support services	3.3	1.2824	4.3
711A00	Promoters of performing arts	2.8	1.2834	3.6
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>82.5</b>		<b>114</b>

To explain the overall jobs multiplier analysis results, the fishing and hunting sector is used as an example. The direct-effect *employment* multiplier for the fishing and hunting sector in Southeast Alaska is 1.175. This indicates that for each job created in the fishing and hunting sector, another 0.17 jobs were created in other businesses and industries in the region. Since the total number of jobs created is known from reporting from funding recipients, the direct-effect metric was used.

### Total Wages Impact

**Wages:** Investment recipients reported that 45 percent of all spending was utilized directly for wages to employ staff to implement the SASS projects. Wages disbursed through newly created jobs established to implement SASS projects were reported by funding recipients. In 2023, total direct wages were reported at \$2.1 million (table 6). Applying the multipliers, the total regional income impact of SASS investments amounted to \$2.9 million in 2023.

**Table 6. Wages impact of SASS 2023 Investments**

U.S. Benchmark I-O Data Codes	I-O Data Code Descriptions	Direct Wages Reported	Direct-effect Earnings Multiplier	Total earnings
7	Construction	\$15,000	1.318	\$19,770
52	Administrative and support services	\$478,479	1.3717	\$656,330
54	Educational services	\$69,386	1.2923	\$89,668
60	Recreation industry	\$108,300	1.3413	\$145,263
63	Other services	\$-	1.3363	\$-
111400	Greenhouse production	\$20,452	1.3906	\$28,441
113000	Forestry and logging	\$378,020	1.6494	\$623,506
114000	Fishing and hunting	\$75,529	1.2538	\$94,698
115000	Support activities for agriculture and forestry	\$302,102	1.2204	\$368,685
541610	Management consulting services	\$267,688	1.2912	\$345,639
5416A0	Environmental and other technical consulting services	\$137,163	1.3121	\$179,972
541700	Scientific research and development services	\$49,166	1.4211	\$69,870
5419A0	Other professional, scientific, and technical services	\$27,250	1.2855	\$35,030
561300	Employment services	\$105,591	1.2797	\$135,125
561400	Business support services	\$47,519	1.3411	\$63,728
711A00	Promoters of performing arts	\$12,783	1.4616	\$18,684
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$2,094,428</b>		<b>\$2,874,409</b>

To explain the overall wages multiplier analysis, the fishing and hunting sector is again used as an example. The direct-effect *earnings* multiplier for the fishing and hunting sector in Southeast Alaska is 1.25 (rounded). This indicates that for every dollar paid as wages in fishing and hunting projects, an additional 25 cents in wages were created in other businesses and industries in the region.

### Total Economic Impact Model Results

Table 7 provides the full economic impact of Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy investments in calendar year 2023. The model developed specifically focuses on the larger Southeast Alaska economy using the RIMS Type II multipliers from the Bureau of Economic

Analysis (US Department of Commerce 2023). Total 2023 economic impact, including the multiplier effect, was 114 year-round-equivalent jobs and \$6.9 million in total economic activity, including \$2.9 million in wages. The majority of 2023 economic impacts, in terms of direct spending, wages, total output and earnings and number of jobs created, occurred in administrative and support services, forestry and logging, and support services for forestry. These results are largely driven by hiring for forest stewardship activities (37.8 jobs) and ramping up staff for administration of individual projects and the regional strengthening agreements (23.8 jobs). Interestingly, the earnings for 2.7 jobs in management consulting services was almost equal to the 11.6 jobs in support activities for agriculture and forestry, highlighting the difference in wages and earnings between these industries.

**Table 7. 2023 SASS investment total economic impact by industry**

U.S. benchmark I-O data codes	I-O data code descriptions	Direct spending by partners	Direct annualized jobs reported	Direct wages reported	Final-demand output multiplier	Direct-effect earnings multiplier	Direct-effect jobs multiplier	Total output	Total earnings	Total jobs
7	Construction	\$180,000	1	\$15,000	1.402	1.318	1.5005	\$252,360	\$19,770	1.5
52	Administrative and support services	\$844,521	17.8	\$478,479	1.42	1.3717	1.3372	\$1,199,221	\$656,330	23.8
54	Educational services	\$286,460	6.9	\$69,386	1.4641	1.2923	1.2087	\$419,406	\$89,668	8.4
60	Recreation industry	\$266,515	3.8	\$108,300	1.4106	1.3413	1.2026	\$375,946	\$145,263	4.5
63	Other services	\$31,346	0	\$-	1.4446	1.3363	1.3544	\$45,283	\$-	0
111400	Greenhouse production	\$123,813	0.4	\$20,452	1.417	1.3906	1.3152	\$175,443	\$28,441	0.5
113000	Forestry and logging	\$807,729	13.7	\$378,020	1.7949	1.6494	1.9186	\$1,449,793	\$623,506	26.2
114000	Fishing and hunting	\$465,828	3.9	\$75,529	1.1979	1.2538	1.1754	\$558,015	\$94,698	4.6
115000	Support activities for agriculture and forestry	\$666,187	10.5	\$302,102	1.4509	1.2204	1.1084	\$966,571	\$368,685	11.6
541610	Management consulting services	\$267,688	2	\$267,688	1.4811	1.2912	1.3274	\$396,473	\$345,639	2.7
5416A0	Environmental and other technical consulting services	\$293,261	6.3	\$137,163	1.49	1.3121	1.3652	\$436,959	\$179,972	8.6
541700	Scientific research and development services	\$57,209	0.7	\$49,166	1.4341	1.4211	1.6974	\$82,043	\$69,870	1.1
5419A0	Other professional, scientific, and technical services	\$55,542	0.6	\$27,250	1.5016	1.2855	1.6056	\$83,402	\$35,030	0.9
561300	Employment services	\$230,123	8.8	\$105,591	1.4088	1.2797	1.319	\$324,197	\$135,125	11.5
561400	Business support services	\$61,686	3.3	\$47,519	1.4507	1.3411	1.2824	\$89,488	\$63,728	4.3
711A00	Promoters of performing arts	\$13,848	2.8	\$12,783	1.4276	1.4616	1.2834	\$19,769	\$18,684	3.6
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$4,651,757</b>	<b>82.5</b>	<b>\$2,094,428</b>				<b>\$6,874,369</b>	<b>\$2,874,409</b>	<b>114</b>

## Conclusion

### Summary of Results

In 2022 and 2023, 25 partner organizations reported spending SASS funds for 47 of the 59 total projects across Southeast Alaska, using \$6 million of their SASS funding. Several partners reported that projects were underway but they had not used their SASS funds in 2023. The total economic impact of that spending was \$8.8 million. Although 158 job positions were created, due to jobs being temporary, the total direct, indirect and induced jobs created on an annualized basis was 114. Overall, 2022 and 2023 SASS spending accounted for 24 percent of the entire planned investment of \$25 million with 88 percent of spending occurring in the region.

Economic impacts of the SASS investment program are summarized in table 8 below:

**Table 8. Economic impact summary of SASS investments project spending**

Category	2022 Impact	2023 Impact	Total impact
Total direct spending reported by SASS partners <sup>5</sup>	\$1,311,374	\$4,651,757	<b>\$6 million</b>
Indirect and induced economic activity	\$597,710	\$2,222,612	<b>\$2.8 million</b>
<b>Total Impact of SASS Investment Spending</b>	<b>\$1.9 million</b>	<b>\$6.9 million</b>	<b>\$8.8 million</b>
Year-round equivalent direct jobs	14.3	82.5	82.5
Year-round equivalent indirect and induced jobs	7.5	31.5	31.5
<b>Total Direct, Indirect &amp; Induced Annualized Jobs</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>114<sup>6</sup></b>
Direct annual wages	\$529,110	\$2,094,428	<b>\$2.6 million</b>
Indirect and induced wages	\$216,617	\$779,978	<b>\$1 million</b>
<b>Total Wages, Including Multiplier</b>	<b>\$745,727</b>	<b>\$2,874,406</b>	<b>\$3.6 million<sup>7</sup></b>

### 2023 Reporting Challenges

Direct spending was self-reported by SASS investment recipients. We compared spending totals reported by Forest Service partners against invoices for reimbursement and end-of-year performance reports in the grants and agreements database. Although we did not expect them to match, in several cases they diverged significantly with either no invoicing for partners that reported expenditures and more invoicing than what was reported as expenditures. There are several reasons to consider. Several partners reported they were initially using in-kind resources and leveraged funds rather than seeking reimbursement through invoicing for SASS funds in 2023. In addition, many projects had not started in 2022 so the economic impact reporting requirements and intake form were unfamiliar to several partners. Staff

<sup>5</sup> Direct spending reported by SASS investment recipients as spent in 2022 and 2023 is self-reported by partners.

<sup>6</sup> Since total annualized job counts are increasing, using the most recent year is the most accurate way to capture impact of cumulative annual jobs, rather than adding, or taking an average.

<sup>7</sup> Wages are included in the total impact figure above.



turnover within both the USDA agencies and with partner organizations led to some challenges. In several cases, agency program managers and partner staff identified to fill out the intake tool changed from 2022. To assist partners with reporting, we held office hours and worked with partners one-on-one to complete the questions in the tool. Next year, we plan to send out the intake tool earlier as well as continue efforts to streamline communication with partner organizations and offer more training early and often. These lessons learned around reporting will help ensure that economic benefits arising from SASS investment funding are accurately portrayed and meeting the intent to support and encourage economic diversity and resilience in Southeast Alaska.

## **Appendix A: 2023 Project Intake Tool**

Rain Coast Data reached out to all SASS funding recipients with an intake tool asking the following questions:

1. What is the name of your project?
2. How much of your organization's USDA Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy Investment funding did you spend on your project in 2023?
3. What percent of this above amount was spent directly in Southeast Alaska?
4. Which of the following categories best describes the work primarily completed for the project in 2023?
5. How many workers were employed through this project's agreement funding during each month of the 2023 calendar year?
6. Please list the job titles of the jobs described above.
7. How much did you pay in wages for the above workers in calendar year 2023 (excluding benefits)?

## **Appendix B: Open-ended Responses**

### **Question 1: Describe the economic impact of the project in 2023**

Open-ended responses from partners are provided here unedited except for defining acronyms used in the narratives and removal of personally identifiable information of any individuals mentioned by name.

- In 2023, diverse initiatives across in Southeast Alaska focused on planning, capacity building, and foundational work for future economic benefits. Projects included site redevelopment, construction, securing fishing quotas, establishing economic development coalitions, implementing youth apprenticeship and stewardship programs, cultural preservation activities, educational outreach, and developing visitor industry opportunities. Efforts leveraged additional grant funding to support rural opportunities and foster sustainable economic growth. While some immediate economic impacts were limited, the groundwork laid in 2023 is expected to yield substantial long-term benefits, including increased local employment, improved food security, enhanced stewardship of natural resources, and strengthened community resilience across Southeast Alaska.

- 2023 was primarily a planning and construction year in preparation for the start of operations in 2024. We surveyed, cleaned up, and re-developed a former industrial site. We constructed a large compost building and equipment sheds in partnership with a local contractor. Our Compost Program Manager has been busy throughout the winter participating in regional compost trainings and conferences.
- As yet, we have not had an economic impact and don't envision having an impact for approximately 3 years. Gardens do not happen overnight. You cannot simply put dirt in a high tunnel and have an expectation of gardening it with good result in the first year. We have had the soil we will use tested and have been advised with a long list of amendment and the need for organic matter the soil will need to breakdown to have the nutrient level in the soil produce food. Our extension service advised we need 3 years to allow the soil to mature.
- Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust leveraged this SASS funding to secure Local Fish Fund/Quota Bank grants from Catch Together and the Rasmuson Foundation (totaling just over \$1 million). These grants were used to purchase fishing quota to increase fishing opportunities for rural Alaska residents. SASS funds were used to reduce debt/increase equity in currently held quota to allow quota to be fished by rural southeast residents and advance triple-bottom line goals. Southeast Alaska is one of the most important fishing regions in Alaska, and within Southeast Alaska, seafood is the largest private sector industry in terms of workforce, size, and labor income. Many of the Southeast Alaska communities are in the top 100 fishing ports by value in the entire country. The economic output of Southeast Alaska fisheries is \$653 million. Restoring fishery access to residents of southeast Alaska small rural communities will sustainably increase cultural, social and economic health in the region while simultaneously increasing food security. As engaged fishermen, residents will actively advocate for resource health, strengthening stewardship and securing triple bottom line goals.
- Catalyzed an economic development coalition that includes over 50 entities to move the needle forward on rural prosperity. Worked with seven communities on strategic planning, including in Kake, to help support their Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. Presented on an Indigenous Perspectives panel at the Confluence Summit to co-create a regenerative and equitable outdoor recreation economy. Working to advance economic development projects with regional and community catalysts that include housing, energy, childcare, workforce development, mariculture, and regenerative tourism. The economic impact metrics for the Rural Economic Development Catalyst are reported above in the “Spruce Root’s Coordination, Navigation, Visioning” section.
- Community Compost Program Description: In 2019, a study was done on the garbage waste in Wrangell. 40 percent of waste in the community was compostable. Wrangell Cooperative Association (WCA) is developing a community compost pick-up program that will include a compost tech who will provide education and outreach to the community about composting, reducing food waste from the waste stream, and providing valuable soil free of invasive species. Funds will also be used to purchase start up supplies such as buckets, printed materials and lease of the Earth Branch Truck. A pilot

compost pick-up program was launched in 2023, but due to technical difficulties, it is paused until the Association's commercial composter (procured through a different funding source) is repaired. This will be the first community compost pick-up program in Wrangell. Economic impact includes a reduction in waste barged from the community, less expense to the City and Borough of Wrangell, and the increased ability to grow food on Wrangell Island. To be completed: Culture Camps Description: Sharing elders' knowledge of traditional food harvesting and processing with local youth and community members through educational classes. Funds will also be used for stipends, airfare, and housing. Traditional Smokehouses Description: Purchase wood for construction of two traditional smoke houses and a cement pad at the community garden. Funds will also be used for Association employee, donation, or stipend to pour the cement and construct the smokehouses.

- Completed: The Sharing our Knowledge Conference is a three-to-four-day symposium that brings together Alaska Native and First Nations traditional bearers, elders, and fluent speakers of indigenous languages with artists, academics, researchers, students, and other learners. Subjects presented include language retention, linguistics, archaeology, art and music, Alaska Native history, museum studies, cultural anthropology, indigenous law and clan protocols, fisheries, and traditional ecological knowledge. Wrangell Cooperative Association (WCA) paid a videographer to capture the entire conference, which is now available online. To be complete: the Association would like to purchase and install cultural signage for all street names and places throughout the City of Wrangell. Signs would include current street names with the names in Tlingit, as well. This will help instill a sense with visitors and citizens alike that we are on the land of the Shtax'heen Kwaan and honor the Tlingit culture of Wrangell.
- Crew Apprentice: We recognize that for many rural residents securing a first job in fishing—and feeling comfortable tackling that job—requires training and some assurance of a safe learning environment. To assist with that, we work with Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association to offer a crew apprentice program. The program provides prep and safety training then gets people out working on fishing boats in an environment where learning and safety are priorities—along with catching fish of course. We also collaborate on twice annual fishermen workshops or expos, where we offer training, presentations, and skill building help on topics ranging from gear innovation to fishing ergonomics, marine electronics, fisheries management, bookkeeping and more—with topics identified by fishermen, support sector, or our staff. The crew apprentice program provides meaningful workforce development for an industry that is challenged by a labor shortage and an aging demographic. It also provides young people from underserved communities a safe entry point into Alaska's commercial fisheries. Over half of our apprentices to date have been young women--all of whom are eager to try deck handing but are hesitant to go out on a small boat with men they do not know.
- Crews in Kake, Klawock, and Hoonah, employed 15 locals to complete stewardship work across hundreds of acres of local lands and waters. Collectively, they restored thousands of feet of salmon habitat, and hundreds of acres of young-growth forest and maintained access to traditional harvesting areas through road and culvert maintenance. Crews received a breadth of technical training, including wilderness first aid, backcountry field

navigation, digital data collection, chainsaw operation, hand tool stream restoration practices, basic engineering, money management, tribal sovereignty, and much more. The Community Forestry/Natural Resources Catalyst was supported with USDA Rural Innovation Stronger Economy (RISE) funding in 2023.

- Developed a regional composting and food recovery network to facilitate regional learning opportunities between community leaders, composting practitioners, and educators from communities throughout Southeast Alaska. The group began meeting monthly, and objectives include training and networking opportunities, coordinating community exchanges for in-person hands-on learning and support of each other's community projects, and contributing to a regional and community strategy for directing infrastructure investments in composting, food recovery, and fish fertilizer infrastructure.
- Engaged community and regional partners in the creation of sustainable visitor industry opportunities, including a community-based walking tour and an artist workshop where Tlingit art can be shared and enjoyed with visitors. Began establishing relationships with tourism companies like Alaska Dream Cruises, contracting with local traditional artists, and creating a space where artists and students can work on their art. In 2023 the Angoon Community Catalyst was supported with USDA Rural Innovation Stronger Economy (RISE) funding.
- Funds were used to support contract costs for facilitation services related to the scope. Funds were paid to a consultant based in Alaska but not in southeast.
- Hosted a Beneficial Electrification Intern who coordinated a Renewable Energy Camp for 17 middle schoolers in partnership with the City of Sitka and Renewable Energy Alaska Project and worked to make information on electrification incentives more accessible to communities. Partnered with Pacific High School to fundraise and recruit volunteers to complete a 24' x 48' greenhouse and support their Farm to Table program in which students grow food and incorporate it into student-made, from-scratch school meals. In 2023, more than 270 pounds of nutritious, organic produce was harvested!
- The work completed was to host stakeholder meetings around deer/hunter-user groups throughout the region. These conversations are important, but do not have huge economic ramifications.
- In 2023, the Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition hosted a regional watershed workshop to build capacity of agency, tribal, and non-governmental organizations restoration practitioners. Direct economic impacts include costs associated with running and organizing the workshop. Indirect economic impacts include increased capacity for conducting watershed restoration and leveraging new financial resources towards restoration around the region.
- In 2023, this project supported additional salary hours for one garden coordinator. While the position pre-existed, funding for this project enabled additional support for the existing position and expansion of the position's responsibilities.



- In 2023, the Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition helped support several tribal- and community-led stewardship crews around the region. SASS funding played a major role in supporting several of these crews. Alternative funding also played a role. Work in 2023 included supporting a five-person indigenous-led natural resource stewardship crew in partnership with the Ketchikan Indian Community and Ketchikan Ranger District. Work included stream restoration, riparian thinning, and watershed assessment.
- In 2023, the sub awardees worked compost projects; brown bear electric fence; environmental laboratory, smoke houses, a food hub. Tlingit & Haida employed one full-time employee (partially funded three positions).
- In February 2023, Spruce Root secured a contract with Red Hummingbird Media Corporation to facilitate stakeholder collaboration around community forests and economic opportunities on Prince of Wales Island, Alaska. Held over four in-person meetings in March, May, and September, where Spruce Root convened tribal, corporate, and civic leaders to establish a shared vision and goals for community forest activities and identify potential economic development projects. Attendees represented Prince of Wales tribes and villages, Alaska Native Corporations, regional entities like the Southeast Conference, and neighboring communities: Ketchikan, Metlakatla, and Kake. Based on robust public participation in the first two meetings, participants proposed forming a coalition of tribes, Alaska Native Corporations, municipal governments, and other local authorities to advocate for economic growth in southern Southeast Alaska. The fourth in-person meeting will occur in early 2024, and the participants are expected to explore the proposed coalition's structure and goals further.
- Laying the groundwork for transformational approach to how the next generation of business will be conducted in the Tongass
- No known economic impact in 2023.
- Partners are finding ways to match a growing visitor industry with the priorities of this small community. Launched "Welcome to Shgag wéi Spring Training" to help educate and provide valuable training resources to seasonal workers and ran a successful "Shop Small" event with 16 participating local small businesses. Supported watershed stewardship by creating outreach materials for Pullen Creek landowners to better understand riparian buffer zones and their crucial role in maintaining a healthy and fish-friendly creek.
- Provided seven individuals, businesses, or organizations with technical assistance while making statewide resources such as funding for seaweed farming and processing more accessible to rural and Indigenous communities. Co-facilitated programming at two community events that brought together 15 tribal and 26 non-tribal entities to collaborate on strategic planning and community engagement for mariculture. In partnership with Barnacle Foods, developed a resource to reduce the risk for bull kelp farmers while encouraging statewide research on local cultivation and processing techniques. Along with Barnacle Foods, they are evaluating and sharing methods to more efficiently dry kelp in rural Alaska.

- Provided a living wage for 4-6 people from May-December 2023, while they gained skills for future work.
- Provided energy education outreach to more than 500 K-12 students and 400 adults across Southeast Alaska. Supported biomass heating projects in Kake, Hoonah, Angoon, and communities on Prince of Wales Island. Helped plan the annual Alaska-Yukon Biomass Energy Conference. Partnered with multiple agencies, students, teachers, and community leaders in Angoon to help plan and facilitate Angoon's first Job and Career Fairs— resulting in more than 20 well-paid summer jobs for young adults.
- Provided income for five young adults.
- Providing two full time jobs during the training period, several part time jobs performing instruction to the students, providing moorage payments to Alaska Native Village, and local supply purchases.
- Rebuilt programs suspended since COVID-19 to serve residents of Klukwan and Haines focused on practicing, celebrating, and improving access to traditional knowledge, language, and arts. During Salmon Camp, instructors and 11 participants prepared salmon for winter and exchanged knowledge. Around 37 participants and 11 cultural specialists gathered for Culture Days to practice weaving, design, songs, dance, storytelling, and more. Started 'Regalia Essentials: Making Headbands, Vests, and Moccasins' --a beginner-level workshop series with 10 participants.
- Set up job creation in communities, creating a regional network for the guardians to build from.
- Southeast Conference staff on this project work and reside in Juneau, but the gatherings funded in 2023 occurred in Sitka and Ketchikan. The largest impact of Southeast Conference's work on SASS in 2023 has been in support of the sub-award projects Southeast Conference is funding at Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust, Craig City School District, Alaska Oyster Cooperative, and Oceans Alaska (these projects are reporting their impacts separately). We have provided in depth support to coordinate SASS grant scopes to compliment other available grants and resources, as well as provide technical assistance on financial management and use of federal funds. Staff have also leveraged the flexibility of SASS funding to accomplish stated goals while also adapting to emerging needs such as the relocation of the Oceans Alaska barge in Ketchikan. All four sub-award projects have evolved substantially over the course of 2023, resulting in plans and activities with much greater economic impacts in building new mariculture, biomass, and fisheries economic activity in Southeast Alaska. The regional impacts have been multi-faceted and have enabled programs that have languished to be revitalized and other new initiatives to spring up. In each case, capacity building occurs which strengthens the receiving organization to better achieve its missions and goals.
- Supported Alaska Youth Stewards crews in Angoon, Prince of Wales, Kake, and Hoonah. Nineteen crew members and 93 total youths were engaged in activities that ranged from traditional food harvesting to salmon stream restoration. Crews improved, maintained, or constructed 22 miles of local trails, planted over 500 trees and shrubs, and hauled over 5

thousand pounds of trash from local beaches and forests. Nearly 800 gallons of wild foods were harvested, processed, and distributed to community members during 17 community events and potlucks. Crews met and worked with over 100 professionals from around Southeast Alaska and were offered over 30 postseason work opportunities. This position's funding was divided between USDA Rural Innovation Stronger Economy (RISE) and SASS funds.

- Supported more than 60 youth through 'Work Readiness and Soft Skills' workshops — including to members of the Alaskan Youth Stewards program, Tlingit & Haida's Y.E.S. program, in partnership with Sitka Tribe of Alaska, and through Sealaska Heritage Institute's Northwest Coast Arts summer career programs. Provided career pathway support with the institute to 12 Indigenous arts educators, career coaching to Sealaska Internship participants, and facilitated two days of soft skills and work readiness training to Community Forest Partnerships with the Prince of Wales Island Vocational Technical Center, Shaan Seet, and Klawock Cooperative Association. Two days of strategic work planning for the Sitka Sound Science Center; and continued professional development for self-employed entrepreneurs through Spruce Root's Paths to Prosperity program; Financial wellness training to members of the Angoon Alaska Youth Stewards crew. Provided strategic planning facilitation to members of the developing Southeast Career and Technical Education (CTE) Consortium to catalyze two interns and one grant project; facilitation of monthly workforce development calls. The economic impact metrics for the Workforce Development Catalyst are reported above in the "Spruce Root's Coordination, Navigation, Visioning" section.
- Supporting Emerging, Rural, and Indigenous Storytellers through small story-driven mentorships, summer internships, and creative opportunities, the Sustainable Southeast Partnership's creative team builds regional capacity for storytelling and communications.
- The Alaska Youth Stewards program brings employment to the region. It provides job training and networking opportunities for participants. It offers leadership practice and builds connections between generations. Youth crews had partnered with numerous tribes and organizations on projects year-round that help improve and inform natural and cultural conditions within each community. The SASS funds have given a foundation from which the program may grow and continue to build from where it began.
- The catalysts developed their 2023 work plans, and the economic metrics, established in the SASS agreement were incorporated into their work plans and annual reports. Spruce Root and the Sustainable Southeast Partnership (SSP) supported seven community catalysts hosted within village-level organizations, Tribal governments, or Alaska Native corporations. Community catalysts work to identify and meet the needs of their hometown. Community Catalysts were supported by 13 Regional Catalysts who represent areas of expertise critical for building regional resiliency. Catalysts, spread across Southeast Alaska, work together and are ambassadors for our shared values and mission. They are thoughtful change-makers who connect resources, people, partners, ideas, and networks to impact our communities and region. There were 15 communities in Southeast Alaska connected to our work through the the Partnership, 45 partners

collaborating on over 78 projects region-wide, and 48 jobs catalyzed by Partnership and SASS projects.

- The economic impact of the Klawock Indigenous Stewards Forest Partnership (KISFP) goes beyond just initial wages for employees. 100% of the individuals employed through the Partnership are local people, with homes and lives in the Craig/Klawock area. The wages they earn through employment go into the local economy and circulates within the community 2-4 times adding to the general strength of the local economy. Additionally, by offering year-round employment and providing competitive wages to individuals employed through this project elevates their overall quality of life, allowing them to make significant life changes (such as purchasing a car or being able to afford dental care). Furthermore, by retaining skilled employees the Partnership is able to build upon existing skills and provide professional development for our employees.
- The economic impact of the project is to support the capacity of community composting leaders and practitioners in the region. The small project prepares the region to pursue and develop economic activities related to transforming food scraps and fish waste into usable products while at the same time saving costs of municipalities.
- The Hoonah Indian Association (HIA) and the Hoonah Native Forest Partnership (HNFP) are working on a project to convert legacy logging roads around Hoonah, Alaska, into recreational trails. In 2023, a sub-award agreement was executed between Spruce Root and the Association to support this project.
- The Hoonah Native Forest Partnership included 6 crew members— two have continued for seven years, two were new recruits from the Alaska Youth Stewards Program, and two were from Angoon acquiring new skills to apply to a restoration project in Cube Cove. The crew focused on restoration and monitoring efforts, including deer habitat, a stream restoration with hand tools, and monitoring of cohos to add to the Anadromous Waters Catalog. In two summers, crews have identified over 15 miles of "new " coho salmon habitat. The Tribe hired a local food coordinator to run a 30' x 60' greenhouse to increase local food security, establish a farmers' market, and provide youth opportunities
- The impact this program is generating in 2023 is slow but very appreciated by all who are involved. Building a wildland fire program in a region of Alaska where wildfires are not common has been a challenge, but one that Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska welcomes. As the program develops, the interest of folks in the region is rising.
- The Klawock Indigenous Stewards Forest Partnership worked with the Alaska Youth Stewards program for a second year using hand tools to restore Pickle Rick Creek- a previously undocumented salmon stream. It also performed restoration forest thinning, reaching 100 acres of riparian second-growth forest restored by 2023, They assessed numerous salmon streams across multiple watersheds, with surveys conducted on seven salmon streams by 2023. The Partnership conducted community engagement events, including harvests for herring eggs on branches, sockeye and coho salmon, a multi-week fish camp, and multiple community harvests for deer. They also organized a multi-

community firewood distribution program that provided firewood to the communities of Kasaan, Hydaburg, Klawock, and Craig.

- The majority of National Forest Foundation SASS spending in 2023 was on creating an aquatic organism passage construction training module, which catalyzed a film crew doing videography work. They travelled to remote rural communities in Alaska and spent money with lodging, car rental, guiding services, boat operation, food, and fuel. Some members of the crew continued investing in Southeast Alaska and began businesses in the region.
- The SASS Trail Crew completely constructed a new access trail, connecting the Spur Road to the Volunteer Trail. The trail is popular and heavily used by residents and visitors to Wrangell. I believe that improved trails and trail infrastructure add to the quality of life in a community and also improve property values.
- The Seacoast Indigenous Guardians Network (SIGN) officially launched to the public and hired the first official Guardian hosted by Craig Tribal Association. The network is in the process of hiring and/or onboarding five Guardians. Partnered with Sitka Sound Science Center and Oceans Conservancy to pick up 1,400 pounds of beach debris from Sitka's remote beaches. The Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska funded the SASS-supported Network position in 2023.
- The support from SASS provided critical funding for the Sitka Trail Plan, a community-wide strategy for the maintenance and development of trails across local, state, and federal jurisdictions. Few foundations are willing to support pre-development planning, making the SASS investment all the more essential. With this plan in place, Sitka is prepared to develop the outdoor recreation infrastructure that supports a sustainable tourism industry.
- The training provided to local Prince of Wales Island residents through two separate resource academies (March & April) hosted by the Vocational Technical Center was for residents that have since been hired separately by Klawock Indigenous Forest Stewards Partnership and the Prince of Wales Tribal Conservation District (TCD - Organized Village of Kasaan). These 6-10 individuals have all been employed by either entity for the majority of 2023. The economic impact is an indirect one, but significant, nonetheless. Skills acquired during the trainings have been put to use in various field projects and locations, particularly on western Prince of Wales Island and neighboring islands west and north of Craig, Alaska/
- The Visitor Products Cluster Working Group works on initiatives that help firms in the industry to overcome obstacles, develop new partnerships, and increase effectiveness.
- The work completed for our Natural Resource Conservation Service SASS Project: Farmers Summit was focused on The Southeast Alaska Farmer to Farmer forum, launched in February 2023 at the Southeast Alaska Farmers Summit in Petersburg. The forum, hosted on Discord, has 67 members, all of whom are farmers or connected with the farming community in Southeast Alaska. This forum provides a space for farmers to

build relationships with each other, share best practices for growing in Southeast Alaska, and ask questions to continue growing their connections between Farmers Summits. Topics discussed on the forum so far have ranged from pest management to preferred varieties to tips on pricing and marketing. The economic impact of this project is support for the burgeoning farming industry in Southeast Alaska. In 2024 and 2025, we plan to continue to grow membership of this forum by highlighting it at future Farmer Retreats and Farmers Summits, and support the facilitation of the Farmers Summit convenings.

- The work done in 2023 was primarily administrative, meeting with stakeholders, building the central project partnership, and defining a scope of work for project implementation, which has set the project up for hiring, contracting, and community facing activities in 2024 and 2025. In 2023, the direct economic impact was supporting the community catalyst role, and the secondary impacts of that employee spending money in the community for their costs of living.
- The Wrangell Cooperative Association is in the last phase of a three-phase project, which included the renovation of the traditional clan house located on Chief Shakes Island, the construction of the Cultural Center, and the replication of eight traditional totem poles that once surrounded the clan house on Shakes Island. Currently, only one totem remains standing. We requested funding for the replication of up to three of the eight traditional totems, which will be the first step in returning Shakes Island to its traditional, historic state. Master carvers throughout Alaska and Washington received a Request for Totem Carving Proposal and we hired two master carvers. Master carvers will work with eight local Wrangell apprentices to replicate the historic totems, in the effort to raise up master carvers for Wrangell. Local students and elders will be involved for educational purposes throughout the project. When carving is complete, we will have the first totem raisings in Wrangell in 36 years. Sealaska Heritage Foundation donated three logs for the project and the master carvers will arrive in Wrangell in June to begin the project. We are utilizing the SASS funding to leverage requests to the Rasmuson Foundation to fund the remaining totems. This project links cultural revitalization, training of artists and attraction of tourists to the community of Wrangell.
- This money has created the ability to hire for fulltime work in Hoonah supporting education. Being able to pay wages for that position has been key to having a "return" on the program in terms of youth education and job/college readiness. The results of this work create better trained youth for hire beyond school. Our youth programs have helped us place 3 youth in fulltime jobs in Hoonah since 2023.
- This project funded one full time professional position (Lynn Canal Food Web Director), one part time Media Designer/Website Developer. The Lynn Canal Food Web Director brought in additional funding to hire a Victory Garden Coordinator and inaugural Food Hub Manager to develop the Four Winds Food Hub; both positions are part time.
- This project is designed to support and sustain accredited fisheries and marine science education in Hoonah, Alaska. By sequencing coursework with the University of Alaska - Southeast Fisheries Technology occupational endorsement, students can earn credits that are applicable to other natural resources management and environmental careers while still in high school. This project builds equity for tribal citizens and Hoonah youth



interested in careers in fisheries management, natural resource management, and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

- This project is primarily to develop two tourism opportunities in Angoon with a primary focus on creating the Angoon Guide Academy to provide training for local residents to become wildlife and wilderness guides. The end goal is to offer Angoon-based tours that are operated by one or more Angoon business, and to hire local residents as paid commercial guides.
- This project provided critical employment to an area that's transitioning from commercial logging and commercial fishing to resource and land conservation and stewardship. Utilizing Indigenous Science demonstrates we promote the wise use of our natural resources. We had two cultural firewood projects that positively affected four Tribal communities on our island. Residents were overjoyed when firewood was cut, split, and delivered to homes, especially our elderly, Veterans, and disabled. Our Recreation & Trails project allowed us to do work on a high use trail that will have safety and access improvements for another emerging economic opportunity: tourism. Our department has been advocating for other projects that can dovetail into this, and we've been striving for good neighbor agreements with the Forest Service. Habitat improvement projects have been occurring, and we will be documenting other uses of small trees, whether it's for wood chip or pellet production- or to supplement a compost project by providing brown mix. This project can also open up our forest so undergrowth can establish, and forage can flourish for our wildlife. Non-usable timber will be chipped and put right back into the land, improving our customary & traditional lifestyle that Alaska Native people protected for thousands of years. This project is providing an economic boost, reducing carbon emissions, improving food security and giving a sense of stewardship.
- Though without direct correlations to economic impact, storytelling helps drive momentum around projects and initiatives that allow them to gain continued attention and sustained funding. The story outputs from this position are likely leveraged by partner organizations, individuals, and collaborators to secure additional funding for projects and initiatives related to the Sustainability Strategy. This added capacity in SASS storytelling also allows for a variety of communications services to be applied to the Sustainability Strategy that might otherwise not be pursued or be inaccessibly expensive — be it graphic design, videography, writing, or photography. In the upcoming year, time from this agreement will also be spent working with partners and collaborators to deliver small communications workshops that will provide partners an introductory skillset in sharing their own stories. Lastly, funding for this full-time position allows for employee to live, work, and contribute to the economy of the community of Sitka and Southeast Alaska.
- Twelve students were trained in forest inventory techniques and six were subsequently hired to work on the data collection for five months in 2023. The six individuals are still working in 2024.
- We have finalized the report, titled Youth Development in Southeast Alaska: Best Practices and Lessons Learned from Programs Across the Region. This report is the culmination of program visits, in-depth conversations, and desk research. It includes a synthesis of best practices, case examples of a subset of programs, and recommendations

for policy, funding, program components, and training, derived from research and discussions with youth development programs. This report is available here: [https://tongasslandmgmt.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2023/05/Portner\\_Youth-Development-in-Alaska\\_Final-Condensed.pdf](https://tongasslandmgmt.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2023/05/Portner_Youth-Development-in-Alaska_Final-Condensed.pdf). We have circulated this publication with project and program developers, policy makers, funders, corporate boards, tribal governments throughout the region, USDA leadership, program implementers, and other entities interested in doing this work. We also compiled one-pagers on each theme and some case studies that exemplify these themes and took these, along with the printed full report, to Washington D.C. with two partners that were critical in the compilation of this report – the program director of the Sustainable Southeast Partnership and the Senior Director of Shareholder Relations from Sealaska. We shared the recommendations based on research we conducted with the staff of Representative Peltola, Senator Murkowski, and Senator Sullivan and looked for potential to collaborate on moving these recommendations forward. We will continue to engage with local, state and federal decisionmakers to ensure that youth development programs in Southeast Alaska have the resources they require to meet community needs. The Youth Development Report also informed the creation of a video that describes the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy and how it is investing in local communities and workforce development in the region. When it has gone through the appropriate channels of approval at USDA, we'll look forward to sharing the video and the focus it has on youth training programs with our partners throughout the region. This is part of the set of multimedia outputs that will help communicate the resources and findings in the Youth Development Report. Finally, the team at Sitka Conservation Society and our partners at University of Alaska - Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Services have been working on formulating SMART goals and articulating our vision behind our youth programming offerings and focus areas for 4-H camps and projects for the next year. Throughout this process, we have focused on incorporating the ideals and values gathered throughout the researching and writing of the report into our programming and projects over the next year. We will continue to work with partners across the region to disseminate our learnings and approach and the values and ideals behind it.

- Working to uplift the local cultures, languages, and knowledge needed to heal and prevent violence while reckoning with injustice, transforming systems, and collectively creating a healthier world. Hosted Orange Shirt Day in Juneau in recognition of boarding school violence with hundreds of participants and shared a regional toolkit that led to more schools recognizing the day than ever. Held a Restorative Justice Circle training with the State of Alaska Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Offering seasonal Tlingit Language Classes, with over 100 registered and ~45 attending weekly. Hosted a Plants as Medicine Strategic Planning Gathering that brought eight women leaders together to dream and plan a regional plants-as-medicine program.