
The Nature Conservancy
ALASKA

In Alaska, nature speaks
to those who listen

wolves with their **haunting** chorus
caribou thundering across the tundra

hundreds of salmon slapping and **splashing**
in the gently burbling stream of their birth

the crystalline chime of **melting** glacial ice
and the crack, like a cannon, as it calves into the sea

even the **deafening** silence of a still winter night tells a story

of an ancient place
its past, present and future,

and the **enduring** lands and waters that have sustained people
for thousands of years

Alaska is still writing its story,
sitting at the forefront of change
in a world facing formidable challenges.

Alaska is a gift

In Alaska, many cultures believe that your wealth is measured by how much you give, not how much you keep.

In this place people prosper and thrive, because nature provides.

It provides fish and wildlife—unrivaled natural treasures—for Alaska's first people and the rest of the world.

Alaska feeds our families and fuels our lives. It provides seafood for our tables. Wood to shelter us. Clean water and energy. It offers a beauty that feeds our souls.

Alaska brings a richness to our lives that is only possible because its lands and waters are healthy—a largesse that can only continue as long as we remain committed guardians of this natural bounty.

Alaska matters

Holds 50% of the nation's stored terrestrial carbon

Produces 61% of the nation's seafood harvest

Yields 95% of the nation's wild salmon harvest

Sustains 98% of the nation's brown bear population

Possesses 95% of the nation's terrestrial wilderness

Alaska needs us

In Alaska, nature still gives freely, an incredible gift in a world facing pressures from a changing climate and rapidly growing population. Pressures that threaten us all, like hunger, pollution, floods and wildfires. These pressures raise urgent questions for everyone who benefits from Alaska's benevolence—questions that define three critical challenges facing the state.

Fish: How will our marine resources fare in an ever-hungrier planet? Can our coastal communities and local fishers reconnect with the sea to help fortify sustainable fisheries?

Landscapes: How can we foster a conservation-based economy, one that considers healthy forests and tundra good for business and vital to the rest of the planet?

Climate: How will Alaska feed and power the world and sustain critical wildlife populations if it continues to warm twice as fast as the rest of the globe?

The Conservancy has a plan to tackle these challenges and write a new narrative that balances the needs of the world with the needs of nature. A sustainable pathway for the planet begins in wild places like Alaska.

But time is of the essence,

because the impacts of climate change and a growing global population are increasingly affecting our daily lives.

We all have something to give

We all have a role in protecting Alaska's future, because all of us benefit from Alaska's rich and generous nature.

Those who have been here for thousands of years
Those who call it home
Those who have yet to set foot in Alaska
And those whose lives were forever altered because they have.

Help us tell the story. Together we can ensure Alaska's globally significant lands and waters continue to provide—not only for us, but for future generations.

For 30 years, The Nature Conservancy has worked to ensure Alaska's natural systems remain healthy and productive.

2.7 million acres of land protected

4.5 million acres of the most critical fish and wildlife habitats mapped

58,000 acres of TNC land transferred to public or tribal ownership

$3 million invested in growing sustainable businesses

130 green jobs supported

62,000 acres of coal deposits retired and 115,000 acres of old-growth forest protected at the Bering River Coal Field

Alaska's waters feed the world.

Each year Alaska produces more than half of the nation's seafood harvest—including salmon, halibut, crab and cod—a harvest so plentiful it could feed every person on the planet at least once. Bristol Bay alone accounts for more than half of the world's annual sockeye salmon catch.

But threats loom large.

Threats include climate change, large-scale development of resources like timber and gold in environmentally sensitive places, and fewer local commercial fishers plying Alaska's waters with a deep commitment to community and stewarding the health of Alaska's coastal ecosystems.

CONSERVATION PRIORITY

FISH

If you've ever walked through an Alaska community in summer, you know the aroma of wood smoke wafting from smokehouses loaded with the yield of a successful salmon harvest. The smokehouse is a place where people come together to share and prepare their summer catch for the long winter.

Dennis Gray is a third-generation fisherman from the Tlingit village of Hoonah, where he started commercial fishing at 11 years old. But like many Alaskans, when he decided to captain his own boat, he found that the price of entering the fisheries was daunting.

Loans made available by The Nature Conservancy and our partner Spruce Root helped make Dennis's frozen-at-sea salmon business possible. Now we're hoping that a new financing mechanism—the Local Fish Fund, recently launched with our partner the Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust—will help the next generation of Alaskans enter the fishing market and engage in ocean conservation.

The Nature Conservancy and our Alaskan partners see possibility: Towns like Hoonah—whose seining, trolling and long-lining fleets have been depleted by forces including the skyrocketing cost of fishing rights—can once again maintain vibrant local fisheries.

Alaska, and the world, can continue to share in the ocean's bounty. The Nature Conservancy—which helped conserve more than 8,000 acres of prime salmon habitat and map the biology and geology of more than 92% of Alaska's shoreline— can get us there, using science, collaboration and innovative financing mechanisms to help us live more sustainably on the riches of the sea.

$17 MILLION

GOAL ONE

Saving the last best salmon nursery

The waters of Bristol Bay produce more wild salmon than anywhere else on Earth, supporting a $1.5 billion commercial fishery and Indigenous people who have lived in the area for more than 10,000 years. Bristol Bay is also the site of valuable minerals, which if exploited could leave salmon and residents vulnerable to devastating change. For more than 20 years, The Nature Conservancy has used collaboration and science to protect salmon and wildlife in Bristol Bay. Now we are expanding our efforts with the goal of bringing communities and commercial fishers together to protect watersheds and build a resilient, sustainable, diverse economy—safeguarding Bristol Bay as the world's largest sockeye fishery.

OUR VISION: Bristol Bay has a flourishing regional economy built on the protection and sustainable use of its most renewable resource: salmon.

2023 OUTCOMES

250,000 acres of watershed are protected

12 organizations launch a partnership to improve regional economic, social and environmental prosperity

20% increase in commercial fishing permits held by Bristol Bay residents

GOAL TWO

Securing ocean health for ocean wealth

Bringing prosperity to Alaska's coastal communities means using sound science to understand the changes taking place in our oceans and ensuring that younger generations will be able to count on a fair share of the catch. We believe, and experience has shown, that communities with a stake in the future of local natural resources will defend them. We're committed to helping Alaskans do just that by providing loans to purchase fishing rights and enlisting the fleet's help in stewarding Alaska's waters.

OUR VISION: Coastal communities engage in science and policy efforts to ensure Alaska's wild and iconic fish stocks remain healthy and abundant.

2023 OUTCOMES

10 Alaskans purchase commercial fishing rights through the Local Fish Fund

A new, interdisciplinary **consortium of scientists** work together to understand climate change impacts in Alaska waters and inform fisheries management

5 Alaska fisheries partner with The Nature Conservancy to improve data collection and technology use, creating climate-resilient fisheries

The world needs Alaska.

Alaska still boasts many of the vital natural systems lost in the urban world. It contains more than half of the nation's carbon stored in forests, soils and wetlands, and more than 40% of the nation's surface water like lakes and streams. Species including brown bear, eradicated from many places, thrive here.

Alaska's environment powers its economy.

But development can pose risks to the systems that provide us with clean air, water and wildlife. We're working to foster sustainable economic growth that benefits communities and the natural world we all rely upon.

CONSERVATION PRIORITY

LANDSCAPES

Amid the towering spruce of the Tongass National Forest—between the gnarled roots of trees felled by Taku winds, beneath waters dappled with sunlight and shadow—you'll find a universe brimming with life.

Among the riches lies a legacy of old-growth logging. Ahead lies opportunity in mariculture, fishing, renewable energy, tourism and a new generation of forestry.

Don Nicholson—or Grizz, as he's known to locals—is helping us demonstrate that we don't need to rely on the forest's dwindling supply of old-growth trees. Grizz lives on Prince of Wales Island, ground zero for the most intensive industrial logging in the Tongass. On the northern half of the island, 94% of the old-growth forest has disappeared.

"I'm one of the few around who sees that a little differently," says Grizz. "The old growth should just be left where it sits." After restoring part of the forest in 2018, we helped Grizz secure young-growth logs to make construction and framing lumber. His investment has paid off as island carpenters have bought up his inventory. Using young growth to produce lumber products eases pressure on remaining Tongass old growth.

"I believe in utilizing our resources in the most logical, ecological way," says Grizz. "This is the future."

The Nature Conservancy

has helped protect the most important 2.5 million acres of the Tongass, which contains almost a third of the world's remaining old-growth temperate rainforest, and safeguarded 140 miles of salmon streams. In addition, we've led award-winning restoration of the region's forests and streams for more than a decade—all to ensure Alaska can meet the needs of an ever growing and changing world.

$16 MILLION

GOAL ONE

Old growth, new economy

The old-growth rainforests of the Tongass store more carbon than any other national forest in the nation. They are also critical to the region's vast diversity of life. We're determined to protect the remaining old growth in the Tongass by completely changing the way southeast Alaska's residents approach development: We're fostering the growth of sustainable industries like young-growth timber and tourism, restoring damaged habitat, establishing large-scale community forests, and training entrepreneurs in the triple-bottom-line business model (people, planet and profits).

OUR VISION: The rural and Indigenous communities of the Tongass thrive as renewable resource industries replace old-growth logging.

2023 OUTCOMES

60 businesses use triple-bottom-line practices

15 communities have increased capacity and authority to improve forest conditions

3.5 million acres of land are managed to benefit fish and wildlife

GOAL TWO

An Arctic for all

Even as warmer temperatures, receding sea ice and thawing permafrost cause dramatic changes for the Arctic and its communities, demand for its energy continues. One of the most biologically productive ecosystems on the planet, the Arctic supports economically valuable fisheries and is a summer breeding ground for both caribou and migratory birds from around the globe. The 23 million-acre National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska and its globally significant Teshekpuk Lake region are at risk of being opened to more oil and gas leasing. We will work with partners to achieve informed, balanced land management. We believe we can protect the natural systems that Inupiat communities, wildlife—and the world—rely on, while making room for the energy development the world demands.

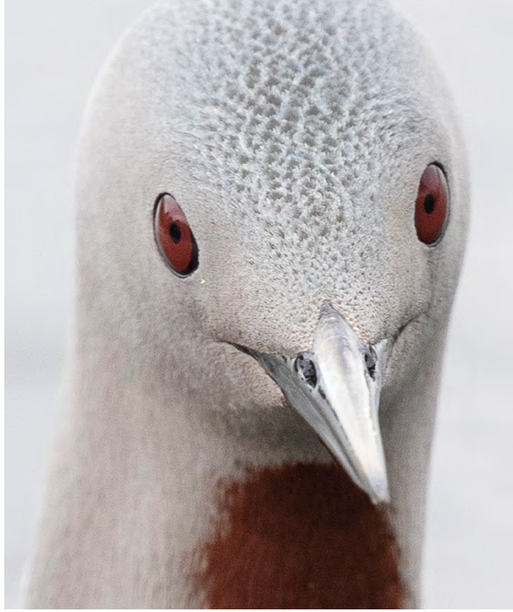
OUR VISION: Smart development conserves Arctic lands that provide for wildlife, local communities and people around the world.

2023 OUTCOMES

The **National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska** is managed to meet the needs of nature, Indigenous communities and industry

The **Teshekpuk Lake** wetlands complex is permanently protected

4 Arctic Indigenous communities have increased management authority over their territory and resources



Alaska is warming twice as fast as the rest of the United States.

We're seeing the changes up close: drought, wildfires, coastal flooding and erosion, streams too warm for the fish that return to spawn, and startling changes in our oceans. These changes make Alaska the canary in the coal mine for the U.S. as a whole—and they make Alaska's role in addressing climate change especially urgent. Because it's no longer a question of *if* the climate is changing, but how fast.

CONSERVATION PRIORITY

CLIMATE

Whether you're watching a tidewater glacier calve into the sea or wading a salmon stream at the height of the fishing season, it's easy to see Alaska is a place of dynamic change. Sometimes, it's sudden and cataclysmic: volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. Other times it's subtle: the village that waits for salmon that fail to return.

Now, in the span of a human lifetime, a changing climate is bringing on a new and unexpected transformation.

For **Denise Tommy,** climate change has literally shifted the landscape. Her home of Newtok, a Yup'ik village on Alaska's western coast, is disappearing. "The whole community has completely sunk into the land; everything is covered in puddles and mud and spooky. It's not properly freezing anymore." She recently packed up all her uncle's belongings—family art and heirlooms—because the house needs to be torn down due to the encroaching sea.

Denise joined an Alaska delegation of Indigenous women from around the world who met with The Nature Conservancy to brainstorm innovative ways for their communities to address climate change. We continue to work with people like Denise, to listen, learn, discuss and—together—create real solutions for the benefit of Alaska and the world. Because even in change there is opportunity for growth and resilience, and to create a better future.

The Nature Conservancy

is advancing bold solutions to transition to clean energy, adopt natural climate solutions that help forests and soil absorb and store more carbon, and strengthen communities' resilience to the impacts of climate change. These solutions include an agreement we struck in 2017 to protect nearly 100 square miles of coal deposits and old-growth forests near the mouth of the Copper River, keeping millions of tons of carbon dioxide locked away. We must be bold, because stories like Denise Tommy's are becoming more and more common.

$6 MILLION

GOAL ONE

North to the future

Climate change is the greatest environmental challenge facing humanity in the 21st century. Countries, cities and states are pulling out the stops in a race to limit the accelerating pace of global warming. We find ourselves on the front lines of this global crisis, ready to tell Alaska's stories and adopt policies and practices that lessen the impacts of climate change.

OUR VISION: Alaska is leading action to keep global warming well below 2°C.

2023 OUTCOMES

Alaska's leaders advance national climate change legislation

20,000 acres of timber are traded for carbon credits in innovative carbon-capture projects

80% of Alaskans support climate change policy

GOAL TWO

The cutting edge of climate adaptation

The changes already underway in Alaska—melting glaciers and sea ice, impaired forest health, rising ocean temperatures and acidification, infrastructure instability due to thawing permafrost—all pose immediate threats to Alaska's economic security and prosperity, as well as the health of human and natural communities worldwide. Outcomes like those stated here show how we'll continue to develop scalable adaptation tools, techniques and conservation strategies for Alaska and beyond.

OUR VISION: Alaska's communities have the resources to create innovative climate-resilience solutions that can be replicated around the world.

2023 OUTCOMES

663,000 square miles—all of Alaska's lands and waters—are mapped to predict their resilience to climate change

5 Alaska communities launch innovative solutions to adapt to climate change

40 organizations join together to forge a statewide climate adaptation network

The world needs Alaska, Alaska needs you.

Nature's future is our own.
We must act now.

Where we work

At TNC, we're successful because:

We're collaborators: We've built lasting relationships with local communities, tribal entities, government agencies, businesses and other conservation-focused organizations throughout the state.

We're scientists: Our chapter's biologists, foresters and ecologists collaborate with The Nature Conservancy's 400 scientists around the world, amplifying our work via access to the best scientific minds.

We're local and global: The Nature Conservancy protects the lands and waters on which all life depends, sharing best practices, ideas and resources across all 50 states and 72 countries on six continents.

We leverage our results: Our unique conservation and policy expertise positions us to achieve big, lasting results, like the U.S. Forest Service plan to shift from old-growth logging to renewable industries in the 17 million-acre Tongass—one of the greatest carbon sinks in the country.

Alaska gives abundantly to you.
Please give abundantly to Alaska.
Join us.

The Nature Conservancy
Alaska

The Nature Conservancy
Alaska Program
715 L St., Suite 100
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 865-5700 | alaska@tnc.org
nature.org/alaska

Our vision is a world where the diversity of life thrives, and people act to conserve nature for its own sake and its ability to fulfill our needs and enrich our lives.

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