

# FACT SHEET

Updated August 22, 2016

- The Trust has been working for the past 10 years to exchange lands with the Forest Service – during which time the Trust Land Office had numerous collaborative meetings with individuals, agencies, communities, environmental organizations, and the U.S. Forest Service to identify and select parcels that were included in the Agreement to Initiate that was signed June 30, 2015.
- The AMHTA/USFS exchange transfers Trust land adjacent to communities of Ketchikan, Wrangell, Petersburg, Sitka, and Juneau to the USFS, while transferring more remote land on Prince of Wales Island and Shelter Cove to the Trust for development and timber harvest.
- Sen. Murkowski introduced Senate bill 3006, also known as the Alaska Mental Health Trust Land Exchange Act of 2016, in May 2016. The bill directs the Department of Agriculture to move forward with a land exchange with the Trust
- The exchange is of great benefit because it protects viewsheds of the inside passage, preserves recreational trails, ecosystems services, and certain stands of old growth timber near large communities, preserves viable community economies in the communities on Prince of Wales Island, preserves and creates jobs, and provides revenues to support the Trust's mission.
- Exchange is critical in SE in order to supply the timber industry with viable timber. This will keep the timber industry from pulling out of SE during transition to young growth harvest. If they close operations, it is unlikely they will restart in the future.
- The Trust has attempted to conduct this exchange through administrative process but has not been successful. The expected timeline and cost to complete is unacceptable, therefore the legislation is critical.
- The Trust prefers to move forward with the legislation, however, if s3006 doesn't move forward in a timely manner the Trust is obligated to harvest timber to prevent the loss of its value.
- The SE Alaska timber industry is in a state of collapse, but this exchange will keep the last sawmill with about 150 jobs in operation. The land exchange will assist the transition to young growth harvest.

## **ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AUTHORITY + TRUST LAND OFFICE**

- The Alaska Mental Health Enabling Act of 1956; which evolved into the Alaska Mental Health Trust was created to provide revenue to help pay for comprehensive, integrated mental health services in Alaska. This mission is even more critical during the current Alaska fiscal crisis.
- The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, through revenue earned from its land, natural resources and cash assets supports programs for Alaskans with mental illnesses, developmental disabilities, Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, traumatic brain injuries, and substance abuse disorders.
- The Trust, on average, grants approximately \$20 million annually to various nonprofits, state agencies, projects and activities that promote long-term system change, including capacity building, demonstration projects, funding partnerships, and other activities that will improve the lives and circumstances of Trust beneficiaries.
- The Trust Land Office is a unit within the Department of Natural Resources that is contracted exclusively by the Trust to manage its approximately one million acres of land and other non-cash assets to generate income.
- Trust Land Office has a fiduciary responsibility to manage and protect the value of the Trust's land and natural resources.
- Timber is a major component of the Trust Land Office's portfolio and has provided over \$43 million in revenue to the Trust over the last 20 years.