

UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE • ALASKA WILDERNESS LEAGUE • BRAIDED RIVER • NATIONAL FOREST FOUNDATION

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Gwen Dobbs, Alaska Wilderness League, (202) 266-0418 or Gwen@Alaskawild.org

Wendy Zirngibl, U.S. Forest Service, Tongass National Forest, (907) 789-6272 or wmzirngibl@fs.fed.us

Celebration of the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska in Conjunction with the International Year of Forests

Events throughout Southeast Alaska to celebrate the beauty and bounty of the Tongass

United States Forest Service, Alaska Wilderness League, Braided River, and the National Forest Foundation are pleased to announce a series of events and exhibitions to celebrate the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska in conjunction with the United Nation's International Year of Forests (IYF). The series of events and exhibitions will celebrate the uniqueness of the Tongass National Forest and the Alaskans who live here.

As part of IYF, from April through September 2011, acclaimed photographer Amy Gulick will present her photographic exhibit *Salmon in the Trees: Life in Alaska's Tongass Rain Forest* throughout Southeast Alaska. The exhibit is based on Gulick's award-winning book of the same title. *Salmon in the Trees* tells the story of the Tongass rain forest, where life interconnects in unexpected ways. In this biologically rich coastal ecosystem, humpback whales, orcas and sea lions cruise the forested shorelines. Millions of wild salmon swim upstream into the forest, feeding bears, bald eagles and local communities.

"We are pleased to be sponsoring Amy Gulick and her stunning work," said Erin Uloth, U.S. Forest Service, Tongass National Forest. "The Tongass is our largest national forest in the nation. Amy's book is a celebration not only of the Tongass, but of the local people who live and recreate here. It is a perfect reflection of how Alaskans celebrate their heritage and find their inspiration from the forest in their daily lives."

Gulick will show her exhibit and give a public presentation in five communities in Southeast Alaska, including Sitka (April), Yakutat (May/June), Ketchikan (June), Wrangell (July/August), and Craig (August/September). The book features the stories and contributions of Alaskans who live in and are dependent upon the forest, including Richard Nelson, John Straley and Karl Jordan of Sitka; Ray Troll and Michelle Masden of Ketchikan; Brenda Schwartz-Yeager of Wrangell; and Jim Baichtal, Jon Rowan Jr. and Cherilyn Holter of Prince of Wales Island.

"We are proud to be partnering with the U.S. Forest Service, Amy Gulick, the National Forest Foundation, and Braided River on these events," said Cindy Shogan, Executive Director of Alaska Wilderness League. "The book is a beautiful reflection of Southeast Alaska and Alaskans' unique way of life. The photographs adeptly capture the natural and cultural heritage of the region through one of the most profound mediums – photography."

At 17 million acres, about the size of West Virginia, the Tongass is America's largest national forest, and contains nearly one-third of the world's remaining old-growth temperate rain forest. With some of the highest densities of bears and bald eagles on Earth, it is teeming with life and adventure. The region is also home to the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian, whose cultures are deeply connected on a local level to this forest of global significance.

For two years, writer and photographer Gulick paddled and trekked among the bears, islands and salmon streams to document the Tongass National Forest. Join her on an unforgettable journey to one of the rarest ecosystems on Earth – one where Alaskans recreate, make a living, and meet the subsistence needs of their families in and around Alaska’s national forests.

“The Tongass is a place where salmon, trees, bears, eagles, and people are all connected in a glorious cycle of life that has thrived for millennia,” said Gulick. “There is no other place like it in the world, and I want people to know how special it is.” The *Salmon in the Trees* exhibition during IYF will allow Gulick the opportunity to share her images of this special place with a much wider audience.

“For the past several years the National Forest Foundation, the nonprofit partner of the U.S. Forest Service, has been working to unite diverse stakeholders in Southeast Alaska, nurture community capacity to engage in resource stewardship, and support on-the-ground watershed restoration,” said Kathleen Dowd-Gailey, Northwest regional director for the National Forest Foundation. “Through our *Treasured Landscapes, Unforgettable Experiences* conservation campaign and our Tongass campaign site on Prince of Wales Island, we are directly supporting community stewardship of this incredible treasure. We look forward to engaging with local Southeast Alaskan communities to celebrate the beauty and bounty of the Tongass National Forest through this event series.”

Published by Braided River, *Salmon in the Trees*, was chosen to receive a 2010 IPPY award, an independent publisher book award. Braided River combines the arts of photography and literature to create books, media campaigns, multimedia presentations and museum exhibits that engage audiences and use visual storytelling to tap into a narrative about who we are and what we most desire as people.

“*Salmon in the Trees: Life in Alaska’s Rain Forest* is a shining example of our work and how it reflects the beauty and stories of people in their unique communities,” said Helen Cherullo, Executive Director of Braided River, “We are pleased that we can help sponsor Amy Gulick to share stories of Alaskans, personally and through Amy’s work, in their local communities throughout Southeast Alaska.”

For more information, please visit www.salmoninthetrees.org and www.myalaskaforests.com. Photographs from the book, DVD, and b-roll of the Tongass National Forest are available upon request.

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