

Action Plan – Young-Growth Wood Products Industry Roadmap (Near-Term Priorities)

This action plan summarizes the most important near-term steps to test and refine the young-growth wood products roadmap for Southeast Alaska, with a specific focus on (1) confirming small-mill participation and service demand for a shared POW campus, (2) reducing shipping-cost risk through a barge-dominant baseline with targeted ferry/terminal pilots as a multiplier, and (3) grounding the market strategy in programmatic buyers and real project pipelines, supported by proof points from relevant analog efforts.

0. Immediate Partner Validation (Next 10–14 Days)

- Circulate the roadmap memo and the POW wood-campus service menu to all existing small mills/loggers; hold a working session to validate services, volumes, and constraints; and request letters of intent (LOIs) where appropriate.
- Confirm enabling conditions for structural lumber: coordinate with the Alaska Lumber Grading program (SB 87 / AS 41.17.610–.630) and local building officials to clarify what products can be graded/certified locally, what documentation is required, and how this can support early procurement by housing entities.
- Prepare a short leadership brief (2-page memo + a few slides) for near-term policymaker engagement that clearly contrasts YG value capture and Alaska housing outcomes with low-processing/export pathways.
- Align with Sealaska and Southeast Conference on roles: site/JV pathway (if applicable) and a shipping working group structure that keeps barges as the baseline while teeing up targeted ferry/terminal pilots.
- Identify 2–3 near-term programmatic buyers (tribal housing entities, AHFC-related projects, school districts) willing to share pipeline data and help define acceptance specs (grade, moisture, packaging, kit formats).

1. POW Wood Campus Pre-Design

- Prepare a concept-level pre-design for a Prince of Wales (POW) wood campus that can function at 25 MMBF/year and expand to 50 MMBF/year if supply, social licence, and markets allow.
- Define layout: shared log yard, scaling station, debarking/merchandizing, small-log saw line, kilns, simple remanufacturing, and staging space for unaccompanied freight vans.
- Define processing capability: optimize for young-growth spruce–hemlock and cedar; produce standard dimension lumber, timbers, and simple components suitable for housing and public-facility projects.

- Integrate residues and energy: design for on-site use of chips, sawdust, and bark for kilns and heating, with options for pellet or chip sales.
- Design freight interface: plan for efficient connections to barge operators and (where reliable) AMHS/IFA, including scales, forklifts, and covered storage.
- Phase the build-out: start with a 25 MMBF/year configuration and define clear conditions for scaling to 50 MMBF/year.

2. Logistics: Barge Baseline + Ferry/Terminal Pilots (Plus Optional Alaska-Run Corridor)

- Convene a Shipping and Housing Working Group including Tribes, communities, AMHS/IFA, barge operators, housing authorities, seafood and mariculture producers, school districts, and project owners.
- Model a barge-only baseline scenario where AMHS/IFA play no structural role; estimate delivered costs and identify the minimum inventory buffers needed to protect project schedules.
- Define 1–2 targeted ferry/terminal pilots (marshalling/staging, standardized cargo racks, unaccompanied freight where feasible) as a multiplier for time-sensitive kits and inter-island moves. Keep detailed ferry actions in a companion attachment.
- Explore an optional Alaska-run or AIDEA-facilitated corridor/barge concept (multi-sector) and compare it transparently to the baseline carrier model on cost, reliability, and governance.

3. Programmatic Demand and Buyer Strategy

- Map and quantify the Alaska housing and public-facility pipeline over the next 10–20 years, by region and building type.
- Priority validation partner: Engage Tlingit & Haida Regional Housing Authority (THRHA) early as a representative programmatic buyer to help define product specs (dimension, moisture targets, packaging), procurement constraints, and the practical appetite for bundled lumber / pre-cut housing packages.
- Identify where Alaska young-growth products can realistically be specified, and distinguish aspirational from likely volumes.
- Engage major programmatic buyers (Tribal and regional housing authorities, AHFC, state agencies, school districts, federal partners) to explore tools such as MOUs, long-term offtake agreements, and standard specifications for Alaska YG products.
- Stress-test the roadmap against a conservative scenario in which only a portion of the aspirational programmatic demand materializes, and adjust mill scale and product mix accordingly.

4. Supply Floors and Industry Scale

- Focus analytical work on confirming that a 25 MMBF/year “floor” is robust to fall-down, operability, and social-licence constraints across federal, state, and Tribal/ANC lands.
- Anchor near-term volume assumptions to the Southeast Alaska Young-Growth Timber Assessment – All Owners (July 24, 2025), and explicitly frame 25 MMBF (and early scaling) as consistent with the report’s Foundation Building period (2024–2029). Emphasize the Tongass National Forest as the most bankable near-term backbone given its public planning mandate, while treating state/private volumes as upside contingent on demonstrated outcomes and participation decisions.
- Use this floor to size the initial POW campus and associated workforce, leaving higher-volume scenarios for later rounds of analysis.

5. Workforce and Technical Capacity

- Design a decentralized technical workforce and maintenance strategy for the regional mill system, including a mobile “flying squad” of millwrights, electricians, and biomass technicians.
- Develop apprenticeships and training pathways linked to youth and workforce programs to build local capacity for mill and biomass operations.
- Explore shared service agreements to keep biomass boilers, kilns, and saw lines running reliably in smaller communities.

6. Independent Alaska-Based Advisory Support

- Retain Alaska-based economic development and technical advisors with a mandate to focus on in-state jobs, value capture, and risk management rather than generic timber economics.

7. Proof Points and Communication Products

- Prepare a short “Examples and Lessons” appendix (1–2 pages) covering relevant proof points (Kuskokwim wood-to-housing, Indigenous/community wood-to-housing in northern BC, Mexico community forest enterprises, Scandinavian building-systems clusters) and explicitly state what translates and what does not.
- Produce a partner packet that is simple but rigorous: (a) a 2-page roadmap brief, (b) a small set of figures (jobs/value capture and delivered-cost sensitivities), and (c) an attachment with the ferry action plan for those who want the deeper dive.

Key References (Selected)

- Southeast Alaska Young-Growth Timber Assessment – All Owners (July 24, 2025)
- Southeast by the Numbers (2025)
- Spruce Root BBBRC Proposal (Wood Products / Construction Components)