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Sealaska and Viking Lumber Will Examine Biomass Energy Potential

Juneau, AK— Sealaska Corporation and Viking Lumber Inc. announced today that they have entered into a Letter of Intent (LOI) to examine an alternate energy supply enterprise utilizing wood waste for Southeast customers. Production facilities will be on Prince of Wales Island in Southeast, Alaska.

“The use of woody biomass as an alternative energy source remains largely untapped,” said Ron Wolfe, Sealaska natural resources manager. “With diesel and fuel costs continuing to rise, it’s vital that we investigate alternative sources of sustainable energy. We believe that wood biomass is a promising alternative.”

Sealaska Board Chair Albert Kookesh states, “This LOI is one of several Sealaska initiatives designed to stimulate the Southeast Alaska economy.”

Both parties will collaborate on a business plan to source, construct, operate market and distribute wood biomass energy to the residential and commercial markets. The goal is to better understand the potential for utilizing wood products in pellets, briquettes or dry chips suitable for boilers. Wood products are already being utilized throughout Europe and could provide solutions to high energy costs in rural Southeast Alaska, while also alleviating the costs of disposing of wood products for Sealaska and Viking Lumber. “I’m looking forward to providing an alternate fuel source for Southeast, Alaska residential and commercial users,” said Kirk Dahlstrom, Viking Lumber general manager.

Sealaska is committed to resource stewardship and is well positioned to contribute wood product from its land base for development of alternative energy. There is potential for additional resources from other private, state and federal land holdings in the region. Sealaska also continues to study alternate fuel development for the region such as biodiesel or ethanol.

“Viking Lumber is an ideal partner to explore these opportunities,” said Chris McNeil, Jr., Sealaska President and CEO. Viking Lumber has a manufacturing facility in Klawock and has broad expertise in woods production, according to McNeil. “Viking’s manufacturing experience in southeast Alaska and Pacific Northwest brings expertise that is critical to developing a successful venture,” said McNeil.

Sealaska is an Alaska Native corporation weaving businesses with culture for the benefit of communities and the environment. Formed under federal law in 1971, Sealaska is owned by nearly 20,000 tribal member shareholders of Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian descent. Learn more at www.sealaska.com. Viking Lumber Inc. is a long established, family owned saw mill operating near Klawock, Alaska.

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Contact:

Todd P. Antioquia

Director of Corporate Communications

907.586.9295 direct

907.723.4129 cell

todd.antioquia@sealaska.com

Find Sealaska online: www.sealaska.com