



Sitka, Alaska

Sitka was known first as Shee At'iká by the Kiks.ádi, a clan of the Shee T'iká Kwáan tribe of the Tlingit nation. In the 1800s Russian traders seized Shee At'iká and designated it the capital of Russian America until the Alaska Purchase of 1867. Jesuit Volunteers (JVs) first came to Sitka in 1992. Sitka is a small port town (pop. 8,500) on an island surrounded by the waters of the North Pacific and the mountains of the Tongass National Forest. Its main industries are year-round fishing and seafood harvesting as well as seasonal tourism. About 20% of the population identifies as Tlingit or Haida. Climate changes threaten to destabilize the economies and natural resources of this rural town in the middle of the rainforest. We have seen that populations already near the margins of society are impacted first and hardest by ecological crises. JVs help build capacity at both social service and environmental agencies so they can continue their work toward uplifting the people and places most vulnerable to these crises.

Joys of being a JV in Sitka

Sitka has an active volunteer and former volunteer community, both from JVC Northwest and from other service programs. The JV house is located right in downtown Sitka, and JVs can walk or bike just about anywhere in the city, including Sitka National Historical Park and Mt. Verstovia.

There is an abundance of hiking trails near the JV house! Whale-watching, backpacking, and kayaking are just a few of many ways JVs can explore the natural diversity of this region.

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