

Alaska Department of Natural Resources
Division of Forestry

Annual Report 2014

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The Alaska Department of Natural Resources
Division of Forestry:

- Manages a wildland fire program on public, private and municipal land
- Encourages development of the timber industry and forest products markets
- Conducts timber sales for commercial use, personal use and fuel woods
- Protects water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and other forest values through appropriate forest practices and administration of Forest Resources and Practices Act
- Manages the Southeast, Haines and Tanana Valley state forests, which cover a total of 2.1 million acres
- Administers Community Forestry, Conservation Education, Forest Health and Forest Stewardship programs
- Gives technical assistance to owners and managers of forested land.

The State Forester's Office is located in Anchorage. In addition, the division has two regional offices and nine area offices responsible for program support and field work. In 2014, the Division has 70 permanent full-time employees, 182 permanent part time and seasonal positions and 13 interns.



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STATE FORESTER'S COMMENTS

Each year as the time approaches for me to pen my portion of the annual report, I spend some moments reflecting on the past year and the projects and tasks we collectively accomplished. I also think about my personal list and what I was able to complete, but more importantly, what I was not able to get done. Why I didn't get a task done, what should I do differently to move the item back into play, and how can I be more effective in my position with the Division. I'm sure many of you might go through this same mental exercise from time-to-time and realize that priorities change or shift as the year progresses. Sometimes there are external or internal factors that cause things not to get done or delay a project and it is easy to leave it at that, blame it on those things you can't control. I see individuals and organizations that take this approach and they are not the most responsive or successful examples of how a public employee or agency should operate. I'm pleased to say that our Division and employees model a much different approach and are creative and proactive when it comes to problem solving. As we all know, there are many ways to solve issues, be they technical or organizational and it boils down to being adaptable and flexible. Conducting our business the way we have in the past is not an option and we have an opportunity to change and develop an organization that is more nimble and ready for the challenges of managing our states' 48 million acre forest endowment and 150 million acres of wildland fire protection.

On this note, it was another busy year for our wildland fire program despite a relatively low acreage burned statewide. The Funny River fire on the Kenai near the community of Soldotna demonstrated what a large urban interface fire can take to manage and control; Lots of resources and top level employees from the field level up thru management. This project fire demonstrated the value of a proactive fuels mitigation program that was based on interagency cooperation, community planning and a landscape level approach to establishing fuel breaks. The recently completed fuel break project played a key role in the successful outcome of this incident and aided in the protection of over 250 million in assessed values of homes and businesses in the areas evacuated during the fire. Yes this fire was an expensive one to fight, but the alternative cost to the community and individual lives would have been many times larger had we not been successful.

As our fire season waned, we began providing support to several states in the west that were experiencing one of their worst fire seasons on record. The state of Oregon and Washington were hit particularly hard by the season and we deployed crews, aircraft and incident management teams to assist in the response effort.

While all this activity was going on, the forest management program assisted with key tasks during the fire season and kept their eye on the goal of producing sufficient timber sales to support the timber sector and communities reliant on wood for space heating in public and private buildings. The state offered approximately 28 million board feet of timber from state lands. These sales provide economic opportunities across the state and are going a long way to keeping an industry alive in southeast Alaska as the federal government struggles with its timber management program.

Across all our programs, I see individuals and teams of staff making a difference and I want to say thank you. I believe we are establishing a standard for what a hardworking, lean public agency can accomplish and it's because of people like you.

As I always like to say, "I'll see you in the woods or on the fire line".



John 'Chris' Maisch
Alaska State Forester



Chris Maisch during forest inventory work near Galena.



National Association of State Foresters. Chris Maisch, Alaska State Forester back row, third from left on the steps.

ALASKA STATE FORESTER HONORED FOR SERVICE WITH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

October 1, 2014

(Fairbanks, AK) – Alaska State Forester Chris Maisch was honored last week for his work during the past year as president of the National Association of State Foresters (NASF).

Maisch, who has served as Director for the Alaska Division of Forestry since 2005, was presented with a plaque for his efforts during the NASF annual meeting in St. Paul, Minn., last Friday.

“The National Association of State Foresters is appreciative of the leadership by Alaska State Forester Chris Maisch during his term as our president,” NASF executive director Jay Farrell said. “His vision, work ethic, and the support he lent our staff and his colleagues (are) an inspiration.”

During Maisch’s tenure, the U.S. Congress reviewed multiple pieces of legislation dealing with the topic of working forests and the role of federal management. To that end, Maisch traveled to Washington, D.C., to meet with members of the State Energy and Natural Resources Committee to discuss NASF’s proposed reforms to federal forest management.

“From a legislative standpoint, the past year was one for the history books in terms of what was accomplished for forests,” Maisch said in his outgoing address to NASF members. “The Agricultural Act of 2014 – known as the Farm Bill – was the best yet for forests and NASF helped ensure that the final bill addressed many of our key priorities.”

Established in 1920, the NASF is a non-profit organization comprised of the directors of forestry agencies in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The organization is recognized as a leading authority on forest policy and advocates legislation and policies that promote healthy and sustainable trees and forests.

Maisch had previously served as the NASF’s vice president and was on the board of directors from 2010 until his appointment as president last year.

Alaska Department of Natural Resources Commissioner Joe Balash complimented Maisch for his work on behalf of the division and NASF.

“Alaska has world-class resources and we are very fortunate to have world-class managers like Chris working on behalf of Alaskans,” Balash said.

Florida State Forester Jim Karels was appointed to replace Maisch as the new president of the NASF at last week’s annual meeting.



“We are proud of Alaska State Forester Chris Maisch, who was honored for his work during the past year as president of the National Association of State Foresters. Alaska is fortunate to have terrific resource managers like Chris working on behalf of Alaskans.”

Governor Sean Parnell

2014 AT A GLANCE

Resource Management

Some of the notable activities and trends for CY 2014 follow:

- Forest practices activity on private, municipal, and trust land was at record low levels for DPOs, acreage in new notifications, and road miles notified.
- In FY14, DOF sold 28.5 million board feet of timber to 34 Alaskan businesses.
- DOF used DOTPF Roads to Resources funding to construct a 6.7 mile winter forest road with two ice bridges across Matanuska-Susitna Borough lands leading to the State's Fish Creek Management Area where future timber sales are planned. This road starts a short distance from the Port Mackenzie Rail Extension currently under construction and may serve as an opportunity for value added forest products to serve markets throughout Alaska or the Lower 48 using the port facilities at Port Mackenzie. Matanuska-Susitna Borough timber and agricultural lands have also been accessed with this road. Winter forest roads are constructed to accommodate commercial log trucking and equipment access while the ground is frozen with a road surface of ice and snow. Ice bridges are constructed by flooding the surface of the river ice with additional water to bring the ice thickness up to where it can support truck traffic. Winter Forest roads and ice bridges need to be prepared annually for operations and their use or feasibility can be subject to varying weather conditions. The cost to construct the winter road was approximately \$70,000 per mile which included clearing, excavation and surface preparation. Winter road construction provides a good economic solution for short distance commercial haul and development of forest resources.
- Significant progress was made on meeting reforestation standards on Kodiak and Afognak operations. One landowner was verified as meeting the standards, and backlogged areas on three other ownerships were planted.
- Continued to work through the State Tongass Team to provide coordinated state comments to the US Forest Service (USFS) in regard to federal timber sales in the Tongass National Forest.
- DOF and the ADF&G Habitat Division convened a Science & Technical Committee to review the FRPA reforestation standards.

Overall, FRPA continues to be effective in protecting water quality and fish habitat, while providing for continued timber and fishing industry opportunities. DOF was able to sustain adequate field presence this year to ensure that the Act is implemented properly.

ALASKA STATE FORESTERS

Earl Plaurde
October 1959 to June 1968

William Sacheck
July 1968 to June 1974

George Hollett
July 1974 to June 1976

Theodore Smith
July 1976 to April 1982

John Sturgeon
May 1982 to June 1986

George Hollett (acting)
July 1986 to February 1987

John Galea
March 1987 to May 1988

Tom Hawkins (acting)
June 1988 to December 1988

Malcolm "Bob" Dick
January 1989 to November 1992

Dean Brown (acting)
December 1992 to February 1993

Tomas Boutin
March 1993 to January 1997

Dean Brown (acting)
January 1997 to July 1997

Jeff Jahnke
July 1997 to July 2005

Dean Brown (acting)
July 2005 to October 2005

John "Chris" Maisch
October 2005 to present

2014 AT A GLANCE

Fire Management

- Suppressed 99.9% of fires in Critical and Full Management Areas at 10 acres or less.
- Minimized losses due to wildland fire to 4 residences and 12 outbuildings.
- Safely managed 393 fires for 233,529 acres burned statewide, including the 195,858-acre Funny River Fire on the Kenai Peninsula.
- During Funny River Fire project fire, protected 2,400 structures valued at over \$250 million.
- Mobilized and employed 727 Emergency Firefighters (EFF) paying more than \$6 million in wages to emergency firefighters, many of whom are from rural Alaska villages where other employment opportunities are scarce.
- Utilized contract services to private sector businesses ranging from heavy equipment to food services from over 450 vendors for more than \$11 million in expenditures.
- Filled 22 non-permanent positions with graduates of the State of Alaska Wildfire Basic and Advanced Firefighting Academies to provide on-the-job training.
- Provided fire training and physical fitness tests to more than 3,500 personnel, including more than 1,100 Emergency Firefighters and more than 2,100 Volunteer Fire Department (VFD) and local government firefighters and Forestry personnel.
- In cooperation with interagency partners, mobilized overhead personnel and 20 fire crews to Lower 48 to supplement the national firefighting effort, providing extended employment to over 360 Alaskans.
- Supported the U.S. Forest Service in the Lower 48 with two Alaska Air Attack planes and three air tankers.
- Participated in Northwest Compact agreement by sending personnel and resources to Washington, Oregon and Northwest Territories.
- Expanded relationship with the University of Alaska Fairbanks Fire Science Program by developing university credits for wildland fire courses, providing division employees as instructors in the UAF Fire Science curriculum and supporting the formation of a Type II UAF Fire Crew for the 2015 fire season.
- Provided \$294,937 in pass through grants to 34 fire departments statewide and trained more than 900 fire department personnel.
- Developed one Community Wildlife Protection Plan that reduced hazard fuels on 81 acres.
- Collaborated with local Borough governments to provide 2,127 Home “Firewise” assessments in 2014.
- Completed hazardous fuels mitigation work on more than 170 acres of state land utilizing federal grants to reduce the threat of fire in wildland urban interface areas.
- Issued 151 warnings and 15 citations while initiating 3 criminal court cases and 3 civil trials for burning violations.
- Issued more than 16,300 burn permits and handled more than 16,400 burn permit call-ins.
- Reduced the potential number of human-caused fires by providing 131 fire prevention presentations to schools, civic groups, youth organizations, hunting and fishing organizations, homeowners and contractors, as well as sponsoring 112 appearances by Smokey Bear at schools, parades and fairs..
- Purchased three new Type 7 engines, four new Type 6 engines and two new Type 4 engines for use during 2015 fire season.
- Updated a new Statewide Prevention Plan, Prevention Manual, Area Prevention Plan and continued with development of a new online burn permit program that will be instituted for 2015 fire season.
- Assisted two communities – McCarthy/Kennicott and Ester – in gaining Firewise recognition.
- Organized foundation for Alaska Fire Prevention Team as a result of DOF personnel participating as members of national prevention team created to raise wildfire awareness during the Funny River Fire in June. The Prevention team had over 1,200 contacts with local residents on the Kenai Peninsula and produced and distributed more than 5,000 Funny River Fire calendars with photos and tips on safe burning practices and Firewise principles with funding from Western States Stewardship WUI grant.
- Recognized by states of Oregon and Washington, as well as British Columbia, for lending support and resources during their difficult 2014 wildland fire seasons.

FOREST RESOURCES AND PRACTICES

Forest Practices Implementation on Private, Municipal and Trust Land

Notifications and inspections

In 2014, DOF received and reviewed 28 new DPOs and 25 renewals for private, municipal, and state trust lands. New DPOs covered 6,181 acres and 61 miles of road. The Division conducted 59 inspections on private, municipal and trust land. The number and acreage of new notifications was the lowest on record (since 1991); there was a slight increase in total acreage due to operations in Interior Alaska. DOF also conducted 128 FRPA inspections on state timber sales. This was a decline from last year, due to a decrease in inspections in the Fairbanks Area.

Variations

DOF reviewed six variation requests in 2014 for timber harvests within riparian buffers – five in the Southern Southeast Area, and one on Kodiak Island. Of the 282 trees requested for harvesting in buffers, 259 were approved (92%). The number of trees requested was about half the number from last year.

Enforcement

DOF issued no new directives, charging documents or stop work orders in 2014. DOF carried over one notice of violation case for harvesting in an anadromous estuarine area on Afognak Island. DOF anticipates resolving that case in 2015.

Compliance monitoring

During 2014, DOF conducted compliance monitoring on 100 % of all FRPA and state timber sale inspections.

DOF has had good inspection coverage on all forest operations throughout the State. Region I and II continued to have excellent compliance, with more than 90% of all BMPs rated 4 or 5. Region II compliance was down slightly due to road construction BMP's, however, the issues have been rectified by maintenance. Region III compliance improved from last year, reflecting efforts to correct previously identified issues with road and bridge maintenance. Some of the road maintenance had to be delayed in 2014 due to heavy summer rains. Drainage ratings are low due to multiple operators using the road system at the same time. Follow up maintenance upon unit completion rectified problems.

The Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (FRPA) is designed to protect fish habitat and water quality during forestry operations. FRPA (AS 41.17) and the best management practices (BMPs) in its regulations (11 AAC 95) govern timber harvesting, reforestation, and road design, construction, maintenance, and closure.

The Act requires compliance monitoring and effectiveness monitoring to ensure that the resource protection goals are met. Compliance monitoring assesses whether timber operations are properly implementing FRPA and its regulations. Effectiveness monitoring evaluates whether the BMPs successfully protect water quality and fish habitat if they are implemented properly.

2014 COMPLIANCE MONITORING SUMMARY BY REGION

Region	# Score sheets		# BMP ratings	Mean score for all BMPs	% of all BMPs rated >4
	State	Private/Other Public			
Region I	27	54	1650	4.8	96
Region II	31	4	273	4.7	93
Region III	70	1	905	4.2	85
Total	128	59	2828	4.6	92.1

A rating of 5 means the BMP was consistently and effectively implemented where applicable; a rating of 1 means the BMP was rarely implemented where applicable or was implemented ineffectively.

FRPA data is reported on a calendar year basis because 11 AAC 95.220 requires Region I DPOs to be submitted by calendar year. Data on state forest management (e.g., state timber sale volumes) are reported by fiscal year to be consistent with state budget documents.

Effectiveness Monitoring

DOF continues to work with agencies and affected interests to prioritize new effectiveness research, and seek funding for high priority projects. Funding for effectiveness research is exceedingly difficult to find.

During 2014, DOF and the Aquatic Restoration & Research Institute submitted a proposal to resample three streams in the Mat-Su, which were pre-harvest sampled in 2006. Stream characteristics to be re-measured include physical, chemical and biological parameters. The acceptance or denial of the proposal is still unknown as of January 2015.

Road condition surveys

DOF, with the assistance of ADFG, surveyed 180.6 miles of road in the southern Kenai Peninsula Borough on forest lands owned by Seldovia Native Association and Port Graham Corporation during 2014. The road system was in good shape and compliance overall was met. There were individual culverts and log stringer bridges identified which received low ratings. The land owners know about the problems and funding sources are being sought for remediation. Three new nominations to the Anadromous Waters Catalog occurred in 2014 as a result of the surveys. In 2014 Kenai Peninsula landowners replaced two culverts that received low ratings in 2012.

The 2014 surveys complete the Kenai Peninsula Borough-wide forest road condition survey which began in October of 2011. The survey covers the entire forest road system. A final report is under review and will be available in early 2015. The survey determined that 620 miles of road were constructed in the KP which would be applicable under FRPA. The RCS examined 432 of the 620 miles.

Funding for the much of the Kenai Borough survey was from the Sustainable Salmon Fund, with matching funds from DOF. The Tyonek portion of the survey was funded by the Kenai Peninsula Borough, Spruce Bark Beetle Program.

For 2015, DOF plans to refine an unfunded Sustainable Salmon Fund proposal to replace a low rated culvert in Tyonek and examine four other culverts for replacement or removal based on upstream habitat surveys. DOF will coordinate with the ADF&G Habitat Division on the proposal. The low ratings occurred on a State logging road built before the FRPA was passed.

For the 2015 field season, road condition survey work will take place in the Mat-Su Borough on forest roads owned by the State, Mat-Su Borough and Knikatu Corporation. DOF will fund this survey.



John Winters, Forester II, Kenai-Kodiak Area on FRPA Inspection. This culvert doesn't work!

FRPA Reforestation standards review

In recent years, landowners, researchers, and agencies have raised questions about the appropriateness of the current reforestation standards for interior and southcentral Alaska (Regions II and III). Issues include stocking standards, reforestation timelines, mixed regeneration, distribution of regeneration, scarification methods, herbivory on hardwood seedlings, and effects of climate change on target species and sites. In 2014, under the oversight of the Board of Forestry, DOF and the ADF&G Habitat Division convened a Science and Technical Committee to review these standards. The Committee is charged with compiling and synthesizing the best available information, and where appropriate, recommending changes to the Board of Forestry. The Committee is nearing completion of an annotated bibliography of publications and reports relevant to reforestation in Alaska boreal and transitional forests. The bibliography is available on the DOF website at <http://forestry.alaska.gov/forestpractices.htm#reforestation>. The Committee will submit its recommendations to the Board in 2015.

Kenai-Kodiak Area FRPA reforestation compliance

The reforestation backlog area includes harvest units that have insufficient stocking levels within the required post-harvest timeframes. Afognak Joint Venture has no remaining backlog. Afognak Native Corporation, Koncor, and the State have planted all their backlog areas. Stocking levels on these sites will be verified after they've been in the ground two years, in compliance with the FRPA regulations. Acres planted are shown for some of the owner-ships and some units that have been planted, but have not received plantation survival surveys to verify the required two-year survival. Multiple landowners conducted large plantings or established stocking during the past field sea-

REFORESTATION BACKLOG IN THE KENAI-KODIAK AREA BY LANDOWNER

Landowner	Acres of backlog	Remarks
AFOGNAK ISLAND		
Afognak Native Corporation	00	Backlog planted during the 2014 field season
Afognak Joint Venture (AJV)	00	Stocking levels were verified during the past field season. AJV has no remaining backlog.
Koncor (Ouzinkie Native Corp./ Natives of Kodiak)	00	Backlog planted during the 2014 field season
KODIAK ISLAND		
Leisnoi, Incorporated	372	Leisnoi plans to plant 250,000 seedlings during upcoming field season in backlog units and current logging units
KENAI PENINSULA		
State of Alaska (DNR)	00	60,000 seedlings were planted during the 2014 field season addressing backlog acres

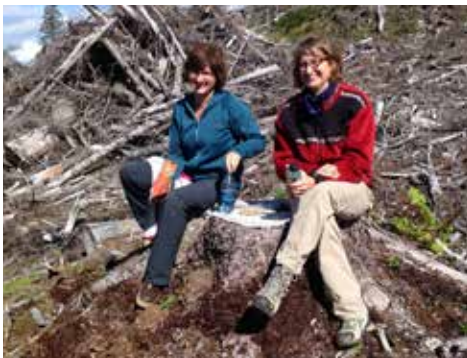
son. The acreage of reforestation backlog on Afognak Native Corporation, Leisnoi, Afognak Joint Venture and State land were all reduced significantly from last year. Remaining backlog acres on Leisnoi ownership will be addressed in future field seasons.

Reforestation exemptions

Harvests that are significantly composed of dead or dying trees may request exemption from the FRPA reforestation requirements. DOF received no new requests for reforestation exemptions in 2014.

Landowner/operator training

Training for landowners and operators is provided by DOF area office and regional office staff. Sessions vary from formal classroom presentations to more informal “tailgate” sessions conducted during field inspections. DOF also provides training in the form of DPO reviews and inspection reports that recommend ways to conduct operations to implement the BMPs. In 2014, DOF conducted 10 sessions attended by a total of 41 individuals. DOF is incorporating information on the new mass wasting regulations into its FRPA training. Training sessions were conducted in Southern Southeast, Kenai-Kodiak, Mat-Su and Fairbanks.

**USFS STATE AND PRIVATE FORESTRY GRANT**

In FY12, S&PF provided \$200,000, with a Sealaska match, to continue Dr. Douglas Martin’s work on Trends and Conditions of Fish Habitat and develop a final report.

In 2014 Dr. Martin:

- Completed a comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of modern BMPs to protect aquatic habitat, provided a final report, and presented the findings to the Board.
- Evaluated and summarized the applicability of findings to modern forest practices with emphasis on riparian management as it relates to forest stewardship.
- Developed a landscape scale context for project findings for private timberlands in Southeast AK.
- Helped organize and facilitate a Forest & Fish Symposium held at the October 2014 meeting of the American Fisheries Society, in Juneau, AK, and presented project findings at the symposium.

Left: Board of Forestry field trip in Kodiak. Erin McLarnon (Recreation Board seat) and Devany Plentovich (Alaska Energy Authority). Photo by Jim Schwarber.

Right: Carl Potts (Leisnoi) and Chris Maisch on Board of Forestry field trip in Kodiak. Photo by Jim Schwarber.

2014 FRPA ACTIVITIES ON PRIVATE, MUNICIPAL AND TRUST LANDS**2014 FRPA ACTIVITIES ON PRIVATE, MUNICIPAL, AND TRUST LAND: HARVEST ACREAGE IN NEW NOTIFICATIONS**

	2011	2012	2013	2014
SSE	5,577	8,373	8,350	1,724
NSE	2,241	6,379	707	0
Mat-Su/SW	--	--	131	554
Kenai-Kodiak	4,684	8,918	836	3,826
COASTAL	12,502	23,670	10,024	6,104
Fairbanks	--	161	174	238
Delta	--	--	--	--
Tok	2940	3,685	--	--
Copper R.	205	--	--	--
NORTHERN	3,145	3,846	174	238
TOTAL	15,647	27,516	10,198	6,342

2014 FRPA ACTIVITIES ON PRIVATE, MUNICIPAL, AND TRUST LAND: NUMBER OF NEW NOTIFICATIONS (DPOS)

	2011	2012	2013	2014
SSE	54	32	28	14
NSE	6	3	5	0
Mat-Su/SW	11	--	2	2
Kenai-Kodiak	0	13	7	9
COASTAL	71	48	42	25
Fairbanks	0	5	12	4
Delta	0	0	0	0
Tok	4	4	0	0
Copper R.	1	0	0	0
NORTHERN	5	9	12	4
TOTAL	76	57	54	29

TEN-YEAR RECORD OF TIMBER VOLUME SOLD (MBF)

	Coastal: Southeast	Coastal: Southcentral	Northern Region	State Total	# Sales Sold Statewide
FY 05	16,003	4,564	5,594	26,161	76
FY 06	10,777	1,703	12,478	24,959	63
FY 07	24,437	30,110	6,420	60,967	65
FY 08	4,059	4,316	7,163	15,538	67
FY 09	5,597	1,451	11,036	18,084	91
FY 10	4,626	2,460	5,445	12,531	69
FY 11	12,865	3,913	7,281	24,053	71
FY 12	8,556	1,260	7,739	17,555	50
FY 13	4,976	1,918	2,662	9,556	50
FY 14	8,512	379	19,621	28,512	58

NUMBER OF PERSONAL USE PERMITS - FISCAL YEAR 11-14

	Coastal Region/ Southcentral	Northern Region	State Total
FY 11	546	864	1410
FY 12	--	--	1325
FY 13	--	--	1366
FY 14	--	--	1440

**TIMBER PROGRAM REVENUE BY FISCAL YEAR
(IN THOUSAND DOLLARS)**

FY 05	834.5
FY 06	502.5
FY 07	661.9
FY 08	1260.5
FY 09	617.0
FY 10	521.9
FY 11	371.9
FY 12	601.7
FY 13	860.9
FY 14	753.1

Note: Timber program revenue is primarily from timber sales; approx. 2% of the revenue comes from other sources, including log brands, seedlings, retained damages and document fees.

Units of measurement: Board foot (bf) = the unit used to measure lumber. One board foot equals one foot square by one inch thick
MBF = thousand board feet
State Fiscal Year runs from July 1 through June 30.

Board of Forestry

The nine-member Board of Forestry advises the state on forest practices and provides a forum for discussion and resolution of forest resource issues. The board also reviews all proposed changes to the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (FRPA) and its regulations. Board members are appointed by the governor for three-year terms and represent a variety of forestry-related interests. All board meetings include an opportunity for public comment.

In 2014, the board held hearings in Fairbanks, Juneau, and Kodiak. Key issues included:

- Southeast forest management, including Tongass National Forest plan revisions, shortages in the Tongass National Forest timber supply; land ownership issues involving Sealaska Corporation, the Mental Health Trust, and the US Forest Service; litigation on implementation of the Roadless Rule in Alaska
- Road and infrastructure needs to support forestry in Southeast and DOF road and engineering projects
- Wood energy expansion across Alaska, including Alaska Energy Authority projects for feasibility assessment, design, and construction of wood energy facilities, and DOF timber sales to support wood energy projects
- Reforestation standards for Interior and Southcentral Alaska (see below), and findings from University of Alaska reforestation research
- Consideration of state assumption of federal wetlands permitting (Section 404 permits)
- Forest marketing proposals from the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development
- Effectiveness monitoring and road condition survey results
- Proposed establishment of a Susitna State Forest
- Ongoing implementation of the Alaska Timber Jobs Task Force recommendations
- Budgets and funding to implement the Forest Resources and Practices Act.

The Board meeting in Kodiak included a field visit to Leisnoi, Inc. timber roads and harvest areas on the Chiniak Peninsula.



Board of Forestry on Kodiak Island, August 2014. Left to right: Marty Welbourn Freeman, Denise Hertzog, Matt Cronin, Ron Wolfe, Erin McLarnon, Chris Maisch, Chris Stark, Eric Nichols, Mark Vinsel, Wayne Nicolls. Photo by Jim Schwarber.

2014 BOARD OF FORESTRY

Matthew A. Cronin, Ph.D.

Non-governmental Fish or
Wildlife Biologist,
Anchorage

Denise Herzog

Mining Organization,
Fairbanks (from July 2014)

Jeff Foley

Mining Organization,
Anchorage (through June 2014)

Chris Maisch, Chair

State Forester,
Fairbanks

Erin McLarnon

Recreation Organization,
Willow

Eric Nichols

Forest Industry Trade Association,
Ketchikan

Wayne Nicolls

Non-Governmental Forester,
Juneau

Chris Stark

Environmental Organization,
Fairbanks

Mark Vinsel

Commercial Fishery,
Juneau

Ron Wolfe

Native Corporation,
Juneau

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

State Land: Coastal Region

The timber industry in the Southeast continues to struggle due to insufficient short-term and long-term timber supplies from the Tongass National Forest, and the lack of harvestable timber on Native corporation land. The USFS has changed their timber management focus to restoration and second-growth management, drastically reducing the amount of old-growth harvesting. The amount of second-growth timber available for harvest is not sufficient at this time for the local industry to retool for second-growth manufacturing, other than on a limited basis. For the short term, Sealaska Timber Corporation is projecting one more year of timber harvesting remaining on their lands, with a possibility of another year if they can purchase outside timber sales. Higher logging costs, transportation costs, and fuel costs, also make it harder for the local industries to compete in national and world markets. Only one mid-sized mill remains in the Southeast. The local small mills in the SSE and Haines area are continuing at their normal rate, providing lumber, house logs, and firewood for the local communities.

Timber harvest operations continue on Afognak and Kodiak islands, primarily harvesting spruce logs for export. On the Kenai Peninsula, the main focus for state sales is on commercial and personal use fire wood sales. The local timber industry in the Mat-Su continues to produce lumber and the local mills are slowly building high-value-added capacity.

The long-term demand for State timber continues to be high in the Coastal Region and the Division has worked hard to meet those demands. The Southern Southeast Area office continues to prepare timber sales to supply volume for the Viking mill, along with providing small sales for the local operators. Demand for state firewood is high in Southcentral Alaska, especially for personal use.

High fuel prices have increased interest in alternative energy sources, such as pellet mills, ethanol plants, and co-generation plants. Private sector companies are exploring possibilities of commercial operations on Prince of Wales Island, in Haines, on the Kenai Peninsula, and in the Mat-Su area. Commercial operations such as these focus on total fiber supply, rather than log volume and quality. These new industries would benefit the local communities and help build an integrated timber industry. New operations would also increase the demand for State timber in areas that have had minimal harvest in past years.



Blowdown from windstorm in Tok-Delta area.

Local communities throughout the Coastal Region continue to explore the feasibility of wood-fired furnaces to heat schools and office buildings and reduce high heating costs. The City of Craig continues to heat their community swimming pool and their school with a chip-fired furnace. The Coastal Region continues to provide technical assistance and expertise to these communities during their studies. If these projects become operational, there will be a high demand to provide State timber to fuel these burners.

Demand for firewood continues to be high, especially on the Kenai Peninsula and in the Mat-Su. On-line permitting has made the firewood permitting process easier. The Mat-Su Area developed a personal use firewood area in Dillingham and will assist other local communities in the Southwest to address these firewood needs. The Little Susitna project provides new access for personal use and commercial firewood areas. The Willer-Kash road (Willow) and the Zero Lake road (Houston) were upgraded to improve access for personal use and commercial firewood areas.

State Land: Northern Region

Maintaining a sustainable supply of timber and meeting the needs of both the forest products industry and the public continues to be a focus of the Northern Region. High fuel oil prices continued to boost personal-use and commercial firewood demand throughout the Region.

A DPO was submitted from Tozitna Ltd. for the yarding and disposal of wood from the right-of-way clearing along the full length of the DOT&PF Road to Tanana Project. Toghoththele Corporation submitted a DPO for the harvest

of house logs and firewood. Three DPOs were also received from the Fairbanks North Star Borough for two fire wood sales and one sawlog sale.

Oil prices continued to influence personal-use and commercial fuelwood harvests throughout the Region. The Division continues to provide information to communities concerning the benefits of burning dry, well-seasoned wood compared to burning freshly-harvested green wood.

The Large Project Team helped with timber sale preparation in Delta, the Galena forest inventory, a biomass tree weight study, and the best interest finding for a long-term, high-value-added timber sale for Superior Pellets. The Team is also working with the University on timber sale projects on University land.

The Fairbanks Area held an auction in October. Four of the six sales sold, including sawlogs and firewood. Two unsold mixed species sales are now available over-the-counter. A total of 15 sales are available over-the-counter – 4 all-season, and 11 winter-only sales. The best interest finding for Salcha area salvage is complete. Twelve public firewood areas are open, and Fairbanks Area issued 172 firewood permits from July through September. Standard Creek Bridge repair work is underway. The Area planted spruce seedlings and collected white spruce cones which got media coverage. A project is underway to install fuel breaks in hazardous fuel areas. The wet summer created maintenance needs on forest roads in Fairbanks and Delta.

The Delta Area built 1.5 miles of new road and extended the Quartz Lake Road. The road accesses fuelwood lots and timber sales and provides a fuel break. Fuelwood sales are popular – people compete to be first in line.

The Tok Area timber industry is continuing to expand. Eleven operators have active state timber sale contracts. New small log mills came on line last year and more are scheduled in 2015. Fire-killed fire wood is in high demand, and is delivered as far away as Fairbanks. Planning is underway for press log and pellet manufacturing in Tok beginning in 2015. Custom-milled, kiln-dried log homes are shipped across the state and around the world. An estimated \$3 million dollars has been invested in the Upper Tanana timber industry the last six years. Other Tok Area activities follow:

- Completing large timber sale projects for harvesting blowdown from the 2012 wind storm in Johnson Slough, Dry Creek and Eagle Trail just west of Tok. Sales total 9,150 acres of firewood, biomass, and sawlog products.
- Cleaning up blown down trees around the village and decked the material for use in the village wood boilers. USDA Forest Health grants target cleanup and disposal of spruce blowdown at Dry Creek to help prevent a beetle outbreak and reduce the threat of wildfire. The Tanana Chiefs crews worked on these projects. The community was very supportive.
- Partnering with the USFS Sitka research station to assess biomass potential for spruce, aspen, birch, and poplar. Results show that the Tok area forests have far more biomass that could be used for energy than was previously assumed.
- Working with the Ruffed Grouse Society of Alaska to enhance habitat on 120 acres on state forest lands in the 1990 Tok River Fire. More work is planned for 2015.
- Bidding farewell to George Pine who operated Pines Sawmill for over 40 years. George announced his retirement this year at age 79.
- Tanacross village installed two cordwood boilers and Mentasta village installed the first mini-chip system in the state. The Tok School installed a greenhouse to teach students about growing food and help supply the lunch program. The school generates its heat and power with biomass.

Regeneration of harvested or naturally disturbed areas is an essential part of forest management on state land. To achieve a sustained yield of wood fiber from forestland, the Division collects cones for seed extraction, contracts for seedling production, and plants seedlings to improve reforestation.

DOF cooperates with research organizations to enhance reforestation and forest productivity in Alaska.

The Valdez/Copper River Area (V/CRA) continues to offer sawlog sales, but firewood sales are the focus of forest management activity. Three commercial timber sales are available over the counter. New infrastructure is being planned in the form of approaches and road design is being engineered to facilitate the largest of these three sales. Engineering for the road should be completed early in 2015. The Area is also considering new access points along the Glenn Highway as part of its long range plan for commercial timber sales.

Beetle-killed spruce is still in high demand for fuel, but most of the accessible beetle-killed spruce has been harvested. Available funds are being used to create new firewood opportunities. In 2014, the Area office plowed access into three local woodlots, making dry spruce readily available to local residents. V/CRA worked with the Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, and US Forest Service to add more than 50 acres to the personal use wood cutting area in Cordova. At least 250 thousand board feet (MBF) will be salvaged from airport property this year and made available for public distribution while saving the State logging costs.

Cross Roads medical center installed an automated pellet system and two solid wood boilers in 2013. These systems have now run over a year and meet all their heating demands. The Copper River School District, using Alaska Energy Authority (AEA) funding, installed a pellet boiler system in the Kenny Lake Elementary/High School; operation is in the trial stages.

State Forest Management Activity

State timber sales

In FY14, DOF sold 58 sales on 3,336 acres of land. Thirty-four different Alaskan businesses purchased 28.5 million board feet.

The Southern Southeast Area continues to sell its full annual allowable cut on a decadal basis while the other Areas seek to meet local demand. In FY15, the state timber sale program will focus on meeting increasing demand for timber sales. Demand is increasing in all Areas except Mat-Su/SW where demand for new timber sales has dropped off as evidenced by no bidders attending the fall 2014 timber sale auction.

Reforestation

Regeneration of harvested or naturally disturbed areas is an essential part of forest management on state land. To achieve a sustained yield of wood fiber from forestland, the Division collects cones for seed extraction, contracts for seedling production, and plants seedlings to improve reforestation. DOF also cooperates with research organizations to enhance reforestation and forest productivity in Alaska.



In 2014, DOF planted 112,400 seedlings on 346 acres, and scarified 412 acres for natural regeneration. Another 17 acres were pruned in the Haines State Forest, 10 bushels of cones were collected in Fairbanks, and 6 acres direct-seeded on the Kenai.

Thinning and pruning

Two contractors completed 17 acres of pruning in 2014. An additional 27 acres of pruning contracts are being worked on this winter. With the completion of these contracts 409 acres will have been pruned in the Haines State Forest since this program began in 2000. The pruning areas are the second growth stands that were harvested in the late 1960s and early 1970s. A local contractor prunes the branches from the base of the tree to 16 feet up. The larger diameter dominant trees are selected for pruning at a density of about 75 to 90 trees per acre. Through pruning we hope to provide clear or knot free lumber over the remainder of the 120-year rotation age, which will provide higher future values. Pruning also has the added benefit of making the trees more resistant to bark beetle attacks.

A total of 2,035 acres have been pre-commercially thinned on the Haines State Forest since the program began in 1993. Thinning, by removing trees competing for sunlight, maintains the tremendous growth these stands are presently producing and will create larger trees in a shorter period. Thinning has the added benefit of maintaining browse species for moose. Additional prescriptions were implemented in 2002 in an attempt to provide release for the dominant trees while retaining some of the smaller trees to provide for natural pruning of the future crop trees. Several areas are not being thinned for the purpose of comparison and to provide diversity. The stands where most of the thinning is occurring were harvested in the late 1960s and early 1970s and now average 60 to 65 feet tall with 10 to 13 inch diameters.

FY14 TIMBER SALES SOLD ON STATE LAND

Note: some sales are offered in cords, green tons or cubic feet rather than board feet. For comparison in this chart, all volumes have been converted to board feet. Therefore, the total volumes are approximate.

Area	# Sales	Acres	Vol. (MBF)
SSE	7	245	8107
NSE	17	53	405
Kenai-Kodiak	2	220	313
Mat-Su/SW	1	41	66
Coastal Total	27	559	8891
Fairbanks	10	532	1871
Delta	5	195	3845
Tok	15	1970	13905
Copper River	1	80	Scale
Northern Total	31	2777	19621
STATE TOTAL	58	3336	28512

**34 Alaskan businesses purchased
28.5 million board feet of timber.**

**Forestry sold 58 timber sales on
3,336 acres of state land.**



REFORESTATION AND STAND IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS ON STATE LAND IN 2014

LOCATION	ACRES PLANTED	ACRES SCARIFIED	ACRES THINNED	ACRES PRUNED	ACRES REGENERATION SURVEY
FAIRBANKS DOF	176	0	0	0	70
DELTA DOF	0	0	0	0	0
TOK DOF	0	350	0	0	0
VALDEZ/COPPER RIVER DOF	0	0	0	0	0
SSE DOF	0	0	0	0	0
NSE DOF	20	0	0	17	0
KENAI DOF	150	0	0	0	32
MAT-SU DOF	0	62	0	0	171
DOF TOTAL	346	412	0	17	273

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Federal Land & Tongass Management

DOF does not conduct FRPA inspections on federal land. However, in 2014, the Division participated in a number of forest management projects for the National Forests in Alaska.

DOF continued its involvement with the US Forest Service in the implementation of the Tongass National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. As part of the State-Tongass Team, the Division addresses forest management objectives and project economics for inclusion in the consolidated State comments on USFS National Environmental Policy Act documents.

The State Forester is a member of the Tongass Plan Advisory Committee which was appointed by the USDA Secretary to advise the USFS on the Tongass Forest Plan revision process, particularly the transition from old growth to young growth management.

DOF is also participating in The Working Forest Group (TWFG), which in 2014 completed a study on old growth within the Tongass National Forest for the Division of Forestry and a future industry report under a USFS challenge cost-share agreement. The future industry report suggests, based on interviews of current mill owners, that the timber industry in Southeast will cease to exist without old growth timber sales. TWFG continues to promote the “working forest” concept throughout the State of Alaska.

The USFS timber volume offered for sale in federal fiscal year (FFY) 2014 was 105 million board feet (MMBF, see Table 6 below), including the Big Thorne timber sale which was originally offered in 2013 but not awarded. The USFS awarded the Big Thorne Timber Sale with the stipulation that it could not be operated until April 2015. The timber sale, as well as the 2008 Forest Plan, is the subject of on-going litigation.

TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST TIMBER SALE PROGRAM 2001-2014 (Volumes in MMBF)

Federal Fiscal Year	TTRA Volume Offered	Timber Volume Offered	Timber Volume Sold	Timber Volume Harvested	Timber Volume Under Contract
2001	119	68	50	48	283
2002	110	57	24	34	296
2003	151	89	36	51	193
2004	153	73	87	46	149
2005	143	110	65	50	104
2006	143	24	85	43	111
2007	116	32	30	19	114
2008	99	42	5	28	97
2009	146	36	10	28	84
2010	173	46	46	36	98
2011	110	44	38	33	105
2012	127	53	53	21	131
2013	143	115	16	36	110
2014	142	105	105	39	154.5
AVERAGE	133.9	63.8	46.4	36.5	144.9

TTRA VOLUME IS THE TONGASS TIMBER REFORM ACT SEC. 101 “SEEK TO MEET” MARKET DEMAND ESTIMATE.
 ALL VOLUME NUMBERS BASED ON FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR. FISCAL YEAR IS OCTOBER 1 TO SEPTEMBER 30.
 TIMBER VOLUME OFFERED FOR ANY YEAR MAY INCLUDE VOLUME OFFERED PREVIOUSLY BUT NOT SOLD.
 MMBF IS MILLION BOARD FEET.

DOF Roads Office

2014 was the first full year for which DOF has had two engineers in the roads office. Major projects include access planning for Vallenar Bay on Gravina Island; planning, surveying, and permitting for an Edna Bay log storage and transfer site; and construction of the 6.7-mile Little Susitna winter road. DOF hired a non-permanent position to expedite permitting for log transfer facilities, log rafting grounds, and ship mooring locations in Southeast. In the Fairbanks Area, repair of the Goldstream bridge is complete and a Standard Creek road repair project is in design. The roads office is working on a proposal for statewide road standards. DOF solicited regional contracts for engineering design to increase efficiency and reduce costs. DOF engineers completed training that will reduce our need to contract for external services.

Forest Inventory

DOF has continued to inventory forested areas to address the wood supply needs of existing, new, and developing value-added wood processing facilities. A significant amount of state land is present in the middle Yukon River valley and middle and lower Kuskokwim River valley that has the potential of supplying villages and towns in these areas with a wood fiber resource. Timber typing has been completed in the Yukon area and initiated in the Kuskokwim area. Timber sampling field work has also been completed in the Yukon area near Galena. The field data is currently being compiled and overall estimates point to favorable volumes that can support timber development. Galena has been awarded an Alaska Energy Authority grant for the construction of a new wood chip boiler that will replace diesel boilers at the Galena Interior Learning Academy. Approximately 3,000 tons of trees (100 to 150 acres) would be harvested per year. State timber as well as village corporation lands would be available for harvest.

Other ongoing inventory projects include an update of the 1994 Haines State Forest inventory. This was previously timber typed, and the inventory uses data from a series of permanent sample plots originally installed in 1965. The plots were re-measured and augmented in 1985 with a third measurement in 2011. The Haines update will adjust volume estimates for bark beetle mortality and tree growth. As part of this project a growth model has been developed for the Haines State Forest. This model is the first of its kind for DOF and allows the user to input cruise data for a particular stand or tract and project the growth over a selected period of time. Further installation of permanent sample plots in second growth stands will serve to improve the model estimates over time.

The Division has invested in stand-based inventories in other areas of the state including the Tanana Valley, Mat-Su, Copper River and Kenai. With these updated inventories in place, installation of permanent sample plots similar to those in Haines will provide the means to update inventory results and save costs over conducting a complete new inventory. DOF provided assistance to the Forest Service for a pilot project conducted by the Pacific Northwest Research Station's Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) group. Interior and most of Southcentral Alaska are the only areas in the country currently lacking an FIA program. The program provides a nationwide inventory of forest trends. The Forest Service has been trying to expand its set of permanent sample plots in Alaska but has been hampered by excessive field costs. This pilot project installed 70 permanent sample plots in the Tanana Valley State Forest at a grid spacing less intense than the rest of the country. A new method, based on pilot studies in the Tok area and ongoing collaboration with NASA, can combine field sampling, airborne LiDAR, and hyperspectral imaging that can potentially conduct a forest inventory with fewer ground plots at 1/10th the cost. In support of this effort DOF provided ground support at its area offices in the Tanana Valley as

DOF is also participating in The Working Forest Group (TWFG), which in 2014 completed a study on old growth within the Tongass National Forest for the Division of Forestry and a future industry report under a USFS challenge cost-share agreement.

The future industry report suggests, based on interviews of current mill owners, that the timber industry in Southeast will cease to exist without old growth timber sales.

well as GIS support and timber type data from the Tanana Valley forest inventory. The cost-effective use of advanced remote sensing technologies can be used for resource management (biomass/timber inventory, habitat assessments) and multiple science objectives (e.g., biodiversity, climate studies).

Beach Log Salvage

The Southern Southeast Area administers the Beach Log Salvage licensing program. This program provides a vehicle for commercial operators to recover lost saw-logs from the coastal waters of southeast Alaska and requires coordination with the USDA Forest Service and other upper tideland owners. The southeastern waters are divided into 56 salvage areas. In 2014, the DOF renewed three long-held licenses near the communities of Craig, Hydaburg and Thorne Bay. Four new licenses were issued; three that cover east Behm Canal from Bell Island to Point Alava and one for the Duke/Mary Island Area. The four new licenses are individuals looking to market “reclaimed” lumber that is popular for furniture and other uses.

Land Use Planning

Southeast State Forest Management Plan

The Board of Forestry and several state agencies reviewed the Agency Review Draft of the Southeast State Forest Management Plan in 2014. The Division of Forestry is improving the draft forest plan based upon the extensive comments received during the agency review step, and is preparing to release the Public Review Draft of the plan for review and comment in early 2015. Community meetings will be held in southern southeast Alaska to share information with and encourage comments on the draft plan by area residents.

Susitna Matanuska Area Plan

The Commissioner of DNR adopted the Susitna Matanuska Area Plan in 2011. The plan designates about 700,000 acres of state land for Forestry and recommends consideration of legislative designation of a Susitna State Forest for the forest classified lands. This area plan calls for the development of a separate Forest Resources Management Plan for the forested lands, to be developed jointly by the Division of Forestry and the Division of Mining, Land and Water. Planning for the Forest Resources Management Plan will begin in 2015.

Tanana Basin Area Plan

The Division of Mining, Land and Water began revising the Tanana Basin Area Plan (TBAP) several years ago. DMLW divided the 14.5 million acre TBAP area into two smaller planning units - the Eastern Tanana Area Plan and the Yukon Tanana Area Plan.

- Yukon Tanana Area Plan: The Commissioner of DNR adopted the Yukon Tanana Area Plan on January 3, 2014. This area plan identifies Forestry classified lands that are considered appropriate for inclusion within the Tanana Valley State Forest.
- Eastern Tanana Area Plan: The public comment period for the Draft Eastern Tanana Area Plan ended on November 14, 2014. The Division of Mining, Land and Water is developing an Issue Response Summary and preparing a Final Plan that will be presented to the Commissioner of DNR for adoption. The ETAP, like the YTAP, identifies Forestry classified lands that are considered appropriate for inclusion within the Tanana Valley State Forest.

Special Projects

Alaska Timber Jobs Task Force Recommendations

In 2014, DNR actions to implement Task Force recommendations included:

- Continuing work on state forest road and bridge design, construction, and maintenance statewide through the DOF roads office.
- Working with the Governor’s Office, the National Association of State Foresters (NASF), and others to seek changes to management of the Tongass National Forest and other federal forest lands. Alaska State Forester Chris Maisch was president of the NASF during the first half of this year.
- Participating on The Working Forest Group to apply working forest concepts to Alaska’s state and federal forest. The effort emphasizes a “triple bottom line” that addresses economic, community, and environmental vitality.
- Participating in Tongass Advisory Committee to advise the US Forest Service on amending the Tongass Plan. The State submitted an alternative for the plan update.
- Continuing participation in the State Tongass Team to facilitate federal timber sales.

Regulatory Changes

In April 2014, DOF and the ADF&G Habitat Division convened a Science & Technical Committee to review and recommend revisions to the FRPA reforestation standards in southcentral and interior Alaska (Regions II and III). The Committee’s first task is to compile and synthesize relevant

published research and agency reports. The Committee hosted two webinars with presentations on reforestation results and factors that influence regeneration, and compiled a draft annotated bibliography with over 300 relevant references. The bibliography shows that more research has occurred in Region III than Region II, and there is more information about regeneration of white spruce than hardwoods. In 2015, the Committee will complete summaries synthesizing the key information in each section of the bibliography, review the existing standards, and recommend changes to the Board. The bibliography, including section summaries, will be complete in January.

Considerations emerging from the Committee work:

- A need to ensure that standards have flexibility to adapt to changing climates and to reflect the variability between and within regions.
- A need to have a reasonable time frame to achieve regeneration standards after harvest while recognizing that natural regeneration infill continues for a couple of decades post-harvest.
- Recognition of regeneration challenges under specific site conditions such as e.g., root-rot fungus or grass competition. Grass competition is an expanding issue. It has delayed regeneration following spruce bark beetle infestation on the Kenai and hardwood harvests in the interior. Climate modeling suggests that grass challenges will increase as fire regimes change, particularly with cool spring fires in southcentral and more frequent fires in the interior.

To ensure that landowners, organizations, and local governments are kept up-to-date on the process, all meeting minutes are provided to the mail list of 350 individuals, organizations, local governments, agencies, and landowners. Webinar presentations, the draft bibliography and a cross-reference index are all posted on the DOF website.

The co-chairs also maintain a “technical experts” list of 50 scientists and land managers who were invited to review and contribute to the bibliography, and to attend the webinars. If the Committee’s recommendations are endorsed by the Board, the agencies will convene a stakeholder group (Implementation Group) to review the recommendations and determine how to implement them on the ground in a practical manner.

Cooperative Management and State and Private Forestry Program Review, USFS and Division of Forestry. Back row: Valerie Sanches, Adam Dixon, Deborah Flowers, John Lundquist, Patricia Joyner, Karlyn Herrera, Janet Fitzpatrick, Carolyn Barkley (WA DNR), Gary Lenhousen, Steve Patterson, Norm Miller (ODF), Brad Siemens, Samantha Carroll (OPMP), Arlene Weber-Sword, Dean Brown, Arron Schoolcraft (FS Aviation), Jason Moan, Dan Parrent; Front row: Penny Russell, Steve Schmidt, Jeff Graham, Peg Polichio (R10 Deputy Regional Forester), Beth Pendleton (Region 10 Forester), LuAnn Grover, Kathy Sheehan, Roger Burnside, Jim Eleazor; (front) Chris Maisch (State Forester).

Photo by Steve Neel.



Alaska State Forests

About two percent of state land in Alaska is in three designated state forests. In 1982, the Alaska Legislature established the 286,208-acre Haines State Forest in south-east Alaska. The following year, the legislature created the 1.78 million-acre Tanana Valley State Forest in the Interior. Legislative action in 2010 and 2011 established the 48,472 acre Southeast State Forest. In addition to the three designated state forests, much of the state's public domain land is available for multiple use, including forest management. DNR manages the state forests for a sustained yield of many resources.

The primary purpose for state forests is the production, use and replenishment of timber while perpetuating personal, commercial and other beneficial uses of resources through multiple use management. State forests provide fish and wildlife habitat, clean water, minerals, and opportunities for recreation and tourism. The main difference between state forests and other areas set aside by the legislature is that state forests provide timber harvesting for commercial and personal use (AS 41.17.200) while allowing other beneficial uses in the forests. A DNR management plan guides the use of each state forest. Plan guidelines determine how to manage different uses to complement each other while minimizing the possibility of conflict.

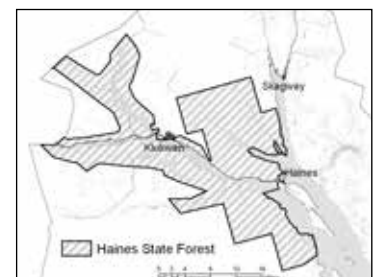
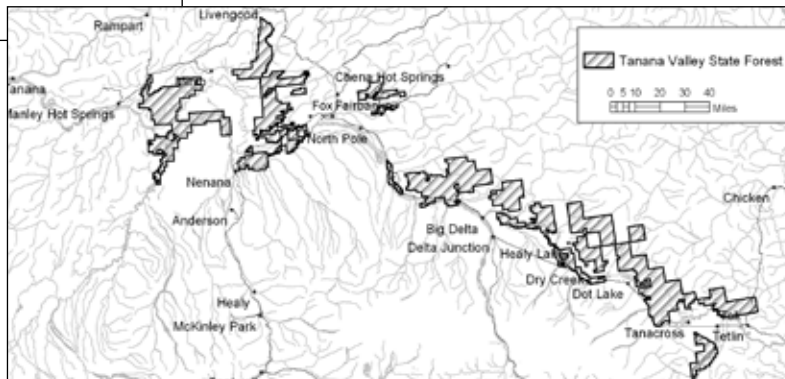
Haines State Forest

The abutments on the Porcupine Creek Bridge were rebuilt and an 80-foot modular steel bridge was installed replacing a 60-foot bridge. This gives the stream an additional 20 feet of clearance. The 80-foot bridge was transported from Icy Bay to Haines when the road system there was closed out. The removed 60-foot bridge is being stored for use somewhere else on the forest.

Tanana Valley State Forest

The Tanana Valley State Forest's 1.8 million acres lie almost entirely within the Tanana River Basin located in the east-central part of the Alaskan interior. The forest extends 265 miles, from near the Canadian border to Manley Hot Springs. It varies in elevation from 275 feet along the Tanana River to over 5,000 feet in the Alaska Range. The Tanana River flows for 200 miles through the forest. Almost 90 per cent of the state forest (1.59 million acres) is forested, mostly with paper birch, quaking aspen, balsam poplar, black spruce, white spruce, and tamarack. About half of the Tanana Basin's productive forest land (1.1 million acres) is located within the state forest. About 85 percent of the forest is within 20 miles of a state highway. A Citizens' Advisory Committee, authorized in the Tanana Valley State Forest Management Plan, serves in an advisory capacity and provides recommendations to the Division of Forestry on forest management issues on these lands and is a conduit of information between the agency and the public.

The forest is open to mining, gravel extraction, oil and gas leasing, and grazing, although very little is done. Timber production is the major commercial activity. The Bonanza Creek Experimental Forest, a 12,400-acre area dedicated to forestry research, is also located within the state forest. The Tanana Valley State Forest offers many recreational opportunities, including hunting, fishing, trapping, camping, hiking, dog mushing, cross-country skiing, wildlife viewing, snow machining, gold panning, boating, and berry picking.

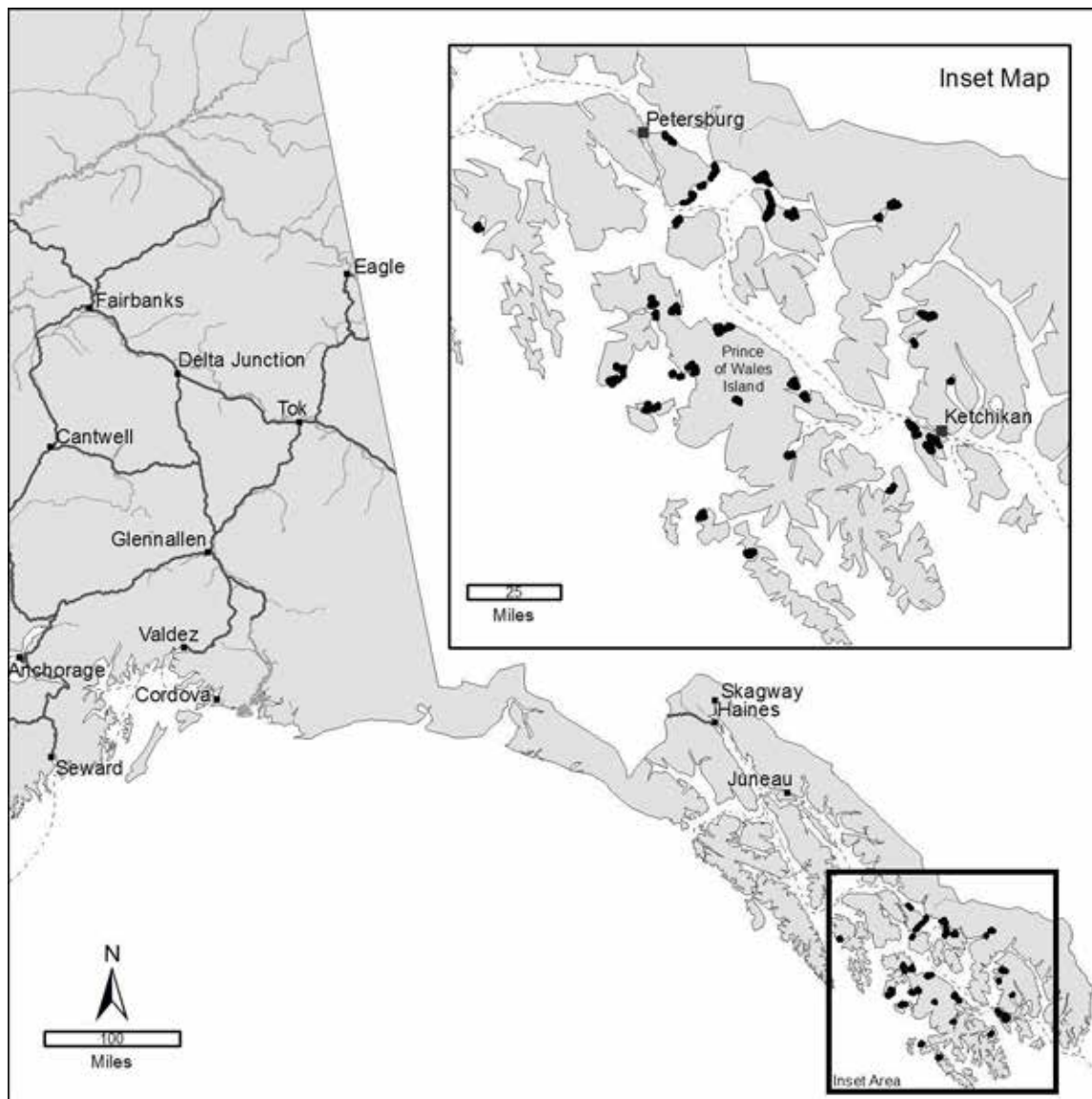


Southeast State Forest

In 2010, the Legislature created the Southeast State Forest in southern southeast Alaska. This was the State's third state forest and included 25,291 acres of land in 20 parcels on the mainland and the islands of Prince of Wales, Gravina, Hecata, Kosciusko, Revillagigedo, and Tuxekan. In 2011, the Legislature added an additional 23,181 acres to the State Forest. The additional parcels are located on Prince of Wales, Kosciusko, Tuxekan, Suemez, Dall, Revillagigedo, Mitkof, Kuiu, Zarembo, and Wrangell Islands. The lands were previously designated as General Use, which allowed for forestry activities but were susceptible to change of management intent or transfer to other ownership, both of which inhibited long term forest management. By inclusion into the Southeast State Forest, the lands can now be actively managed for long term forest productivity. The Division is in the process of preparing a Forest Management Plan, until that plan is adopted the applicable area plan guidelines will be followed.

About two percent of state land in Alaska is in three designated state forests.

In addition to the three designated state forests, much of the state's public domain land is available for multiple use, including forest management. DNR manages the state forests for a sustained yield of many resources.



Forest Health Protection Program

DOF's cooperative forest health survey program with the U.S. Forest Service – Forest Health Protection (USFS-FHP) staff continues to be a key component in the forest health protection strategy in Alaska, and includes both aerial and ground survey components. Aerial detection surveys in the state take place across all ownerships and cover about 25-35% of the approximately 127 million forested acres in the state in a given year. Aerial detection mapping is an indispensable tool in documenting the location and extent of many active forest insect infestations and some disease damage. The damage numbers recorded from the annual aerial detection surveys offer only a snapshot of statewide conditions and generally do not represent the acres affected by pathogens, many of which are not visible by aerial survey.

Though DOF forest health personnel are involved in all facets of forest health in the state, focus is directed towards forest insects and aerial detection surveys. As such, forest insect updates and aerial detection survey data are highlighted in this report. Additional forest insect information as well as detailed information pertaining to surveys and monitoring efforts for tree diseases and invasive plants is included in the annual Forest Health Conditions in Alaska report published by the U.S. Forest Service, Forest Health Protection staff in collaboration with the Division of Forestry and other key cooperators. Alaska's Forest Health Protection staff also continually work alongside many agency partners on invasive plant issues, including roadside and high-impact area surveys, public awareness campaigns, and general education efforts.

Surveys Overview

In 2014, Forest Health Protection staff with both the DOF and the U.S. Forest Service – FHP Program collectively mapped about 1.3 million acres of forest damage on the 32.2 million acres surveyed (Table 1). The acreage of damage observed is 45% higher than in 2013 and includes damage from insects, diseases, declines, and abiotic agents. Much of the increase can be attributed to birch with thin crowns being observed across much of Southcentral and Interior Alaska. These birch were initially thought to have been impacted by birch leafroller, but ground checks in a subset of these areas revealed little evidence of leafrollers or other significant insect or disease pests. Many of the birch in these stands exhibited heavy catkin production and more focused monitoring is being planned for 2015.



Hans Rinke, Kenai-Kodiak Area Forester, assisting habitat biologist, Patty Berkhan. Photo by Joel Nudelman.

The following narrative text and table were excerpted (or summarized, where noted) from the report "Forest Health Conditions in Alaska 2014" which will be published in early 2015.

Insect Updates

In 2014, more than 380,000 acres of external feeding damage and 146,000 acres of internal feeding damage on hardwood trees was mapped during aerial detection survey. Birch and alder trees were impacted by defoliators throughout the state. Leaf roller activity was reported throughout the state; especially on birch in Port Alsworth, Tanalian Falls, Fairbanks, and on Sitka alder along Perseverance Trail in Juneau.

There was a 125% increase in the amount of large aspen tortrix damage mapped in 2014, most of which was observed in areas around the upper Kuskokwim, the upper Kobuk and the Koyukuk Rivers. Aspen leaf miner activity also increased slightly from 2013, with damage especially heavy south of Fairbanks along the Tanana River.

Conifer defoliation was mapped on 68,000 acres during the 2014 aerial survey. Hemlock sawfly activity was down by more than half compared to 2013. Western black-headed budworm activity was also down throughout the state; the large outbreak recorded in 2013 around Wood-Tikchik Lakes was undetectable in 2014. A large infestation of the spruce bud moth was noted during a site visit to Yakutat. Bud moths have repeatedly caused damage in this area; however, the impacts are typically aesthetic.

More detailed information on the major insect pests/pest groups was summarized from federal and state staff contributions to the report "Forest Health Conditions in Alaska 2014" and is presented below. The insect activity noted below was primarily documented during the annual aerial detection surveys, with some ground survey data included as well.

Bark Beetles

- Spruce beetle: Spruce beetle continues to be the leading mortality-causing pest of spruce in Southcentral, Southwest, and Southeast Alaska. Spruce beetle activity was observed on about 14,800 acres in 2014. This is a roughly 45% decrease from 2013. Observed spruce beetle-caused mortality continues to be among the lowest recorded acreages since the early 1970's when the systematic aerial surveys began.

Areas of increasing activity: West side of Cook Inlet, Skwentna/Puntilla Lake (slight increase)

Areas of decreasing activity: Katmai National Park, Lake Clark National Park, Chitina River area not far from McCarthy, Kupreanof Island, Haines area

- Northern spruce engraver (NSE): NSE activity was mapped on about 7,350 acres in 2014. These numbers represent a slight decrease over the 8,050 acres mapped in 2012. In 2014, surveyors observed about 425 acres of primarily low intensity damage scattered along the Tanana River Valley between Delta Junction and Tok, the area impacted by the 2012 windstorm event.

Areas of large outbreaks: Near Lone Mountain and the Middle Fork of the Kuskokwim River, two areas along the Kantishna River, and near Beaver Creek

Areas of small outbreaks: Along the Tanana, Yukon, and Kobuk Rivers

Areas of declined activity: Koyukuk River near Roundabout Mountain southwest of Huslia

- Western balsam bark beetle: Western balsam bark beetle damage was mapped on 186 acres in 2014. Damage from this beetle was last observed during surveys in 2011. Even small damage acreages from this pest can be of interest due to the limited natural range in Alaska for this beetle's primary host tree, subalpine fir.

Areas of activity: Along the Skagway River and White Pass Fork northeast of Skagway

Defoliating Insects

The following are the top three defoliating pests or pest groups observed, in terms of acres affected in 2014:

- Willow defoliation: Willow defoliation caused by external leaf-feeding insects was observed on about 125,350 acres in 2014, a substantial increase over that observed in 2013. Several species of geometrid moths commonly defoliate willows and various other hardwoods and likely played a roll in this observed defoliation.
- Aspen leaf miner: In general, aspen leaf miner activity has been steadily decreasing since 2007, however, the roughly 123,700 acres mapped in 2014 is slightly higher than the damage mapped in 2013. This common pest is found primarily in Interior Alaska and attacks aspen, but can also be found on other poplar species.
- Birch leaf rollers: Birch leaf rollers were mapped on about 121,150 acres of birch in 2014, which is over 200,000 acres less than was observed in 2013. Birch leaf rollers have been a recurring issue in Southcentral and Interior Alaska, though this year the bulk of the damage was observed in Southwestern Alaska.



Forest Health Program Manager Jason Moan in front of insect traps at the Alaska Botanical Garden describing the state's insect trapping program. Photo by Stephen Nickel

Questions pertaining to overall coordination of DOF's Statewide Forest Health programs and activities on state and private lands should first be directed to:

State of Alaska

**Dept. of Natural Resources
Div. of Forestry, State Office
550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1450
Anchorage, AK 99501-3566
tel: (907) 269-8463
fax: (907) 269-8931**

2014 FOREST INSECT AND DISEASE ACTIVITYForest insect and disease activity detected during aerial surveys in Alaska in 2014 by land ownership¹ and agent.All values are in acres².

Agent	TOTAL ACRES	National	Native	Other Federal	State & Private
FOREST DISEASES					
ALDER DIEBACK	125,358	712	8,665	59,189	56,792
DOTHISTROMA NEEDLE BLIGHT	4,155		166	2,033	1,955
WILLOW DIEBACK	3,391		88	413	2,891
SPRUCE BROOM RUST	801		517	279	5
DEFOLIATORS, MINERS, AND APHIDS					
WILLOW DEFOLIATION	126,104	178	50,592	62,124	13,211
ASPEN LEAF MINER	123,676		47,440	51,686	24,551
LARGE ASPEN TORTRIX	7,984		3,197	2,507	2,280
ASPEN DEFOLIATION	6,933	32	2,664	1,897	2,340
BIRCH LEAF ROLLER	121,148		36,798	48,056	36,294
BIRCH DEFOLIATION	18,486	70	8,506	6,841	3,070
BIRCH LEAF MINER	2,407				2,407
BIRCH APHID	1,483			1,286	197
DWARF BIRCH DEFOLIATION ³	3,866			3,866	
SPRUCE DEFOLIATION	58,898	12,693	109	46,061	35
COTTONWOOD DEFOLIATION	52,922	7,515	10,972	22,577	11,858
COTTONWOOD LEAF BEETLE	448		355	79	15
ALDER DEFOLIATION	50,642	1,210	13,094	26,174	10,164
ALDER LEAF ROLLER	818	356	9		453
HARDWOOD DEFOLIATION	42,052	15	11,623	23,593	6,821
WILLOW LEAF BLOTCH MINER	19,970		14,172	5,010	787
CONIFER DEFOLIATION	4,051	2,487	546	84	933
SPRUCE NEEDLE APHID	425	72		141	212
BLACK-HEADED BUDWORM	98	98			
HEMLOCK SAWFLY	3,946	3,579	122		245
BARK BEETLES					
SPRUCE BEETLE	14,795	212	115	9,284	5,183
NORTHERN SPRUCE ENGRAVER	7,340		1,265	3,802	2,273
WESTERN BALSAM BARK BEETLE	186				186
ABIOTIC AND ANIMAL MORTALITY					
BIRCH CROWN THINNING	439,342	1,304	13,730	90,024	334,285
CEDAR DECLINE ⁴	19,907	18,810	331	51	715
FLOODING/HIGH-WATER	12,877	1,319	4,632	2,551	4,375
PORCUPINE DAMAGE	1,815	1,606	48	55	105
WINDTHROW/BLOWDOWN	367	240		20	106
LANDSLIDE/AVALANCHE	313	241	5	57	9

1 Ownership derived from the 2008 version of Land Status GIS coverage, State of Alaska, DNR/Land records Information Section. State & private lands include: state patented, tentatively approved, or other state-acquired lands, and patented disposed federal lands, municipal lands, or other private parcels.

2 Acre values are only relative to survey transects and do not represent the total possible area affected. Table entries do not include many of the most destructive diseases (e.g., wood decays and dwarf mistletoe), which are not readily detectable in aerial surveys.

3 Defoliation of birch trees and dwarf birch has been reported separately. "Dwarf birch defoliation" primarily represents defoliation of dwarf birch, but also includes defoliation of Labrador tea, small willows, Spiraea and other woody shrubs, and is attributable to several external leaf-feeding insects. In contrast, birch tree defoliation is caused by a combination of internal and external leaf-feeding insects.

4 Acres represent only areas with actively dying yellow-cedars. More than 400,000 acres of cedar decline have been mapped over the years in Southeast Alaska.



*Governor's Denali Peak Performance Award.
Tom Lesatz, Amy Chisholm, Jim Odden, Ed
Fogels (Deputy Commissioner), Tom Kurth,
Glenn Farnsworth.*



*Governor Sean Parnell and First Lady Sandy
Parnell with Ed Soto, Forestry Engineering
Assistant and Lieutenant Colonel in the
Alaska National Guard who was Master of
Ceremonies at a community support event for
service members and their families.*

Forest Stewardship Program

The purpose of the Forest Stewardship Program is to provide private landowners with information for making decisions about forest resources. At the request of landowners, Division staff prepares Forest Stewardship plans which include field reconnaissance and the best available forest resources information. Alaska Native Corporations are provided grants for resource professionals to prepare Forest Stewardship plans. Limited financial assistance is available for implementation of projects consistent with Forest Stewardship plans and best management practices. The Forest Stewardship Program is a federally funded program administered by the Division of Forestry.

Highlights

- Two Alaska Native Corporation were awarded grants to begin Forest Stewardship plans, and three Alaska Native Corporations completed Forest Stewardship plans for their land.
- Forest Stewardship plans were prepared for and signed by 32 individual Alaska forest landowners.
- Wildfire fuel reduction projects were completed by 37 Alaska homeowners.
- A final report for harvesting impacts on riparian forests was submitted under a US Forest Service competitive grant.
- 4 forest technician training sessions have been completed in Fort Yukon under a US Forest Service competitive grant.
- A second year of trials of planting poplar cuttings for biomass reforestation has completed under an Alaska Energy Authority competitive grant.

Planning by Alaska Native Corporations

Native corporations and reservations are the largest private landowners in Alaska, and providing grants to Alaska Native Corporations for forest planning is an important part of the Forest Stewardship Program. In FY14, Forest Stewardship planning grants were awarded to 2 ANCSA Corporations: Port Graham Corporation and Long Island Trust covering 130,360 total acres. Three Forest Stewardship Plans were completed by ANCSA Corporations: The Kuskokwim Corporation, MTNT Limited, and Toghothle Corporation for a total 1,060,462 forested acres. Biomass energy development was objectives of these plans. Six additional ANCSA Corporation plans are in progress. Wood energy, stand improvement, forest road maintenance, cultural sites, and wildlife habitat were important elements of the plans. Since the program began in 1992, a total of 50 Forest Stewardship plans were prepared and signed by ANCSA Corporations.

Since 1992, ANCSA Corporations have prepared and signed 50 Stewardship Plans.

892 Individual Landowners have adopted Stewardship Plans since 1992.

Planning by Individual Landowners

For private lands in individual ownership, plans were prepared and signed by 32 landowners covering 431 forested acres. Since the program began in 1992, a total of 862 plans have been prepared and signed covering 45,639 forested acres. Participation is greatest on the Kenai Peninsula with the Matanuska-Sustina Borough and Tanana Valley also having many participants. Private landowner assistance on the Kenai Peninsula has been aided by funding from the Kenai Peninsula Borough Spruce Beetle Program. Many participating landowners have strong interest in aesthetics and wildlife. Defensible space from wildfire is a growing concern.

Cost-Share Assistance

Forest Stewardship Program personnel continued to implement components of the National Fire Plan (NFP). Cost-share funding for practices has come Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) fuels reduction grants from the Western States Fire Managers, and also the Kenai Peninsula Borough. Accomplishments reported here are home inspections, written defensible space plans, and cost-share grant agreements. Acres treated for fuels reduction are reported elsewhere as NFP accomplishments. In 2014, Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) pass-through grants for fuels reduction were approved to begin for 56 landowners. Final inspections were performed for 37 landowners paying \$60,929. WUI grants are an important outreach method for Forest Stewardship.

Forest Stewardship Plan monitoring

To comply with federal requirements, monitoring of past Forest Stewardship Plans was continued. In 2014, monitoring of past Forest Stewardship Plans was conducted. 24 plans were monitored and 71% judged to be adequately following plan. For aggregate forested acreage, 98% percent was adequately following plan. Most had performed one or more recommended management activities on their property. One Alaska Native Corporation plan, Gwitchyaa Zhee, was monitored and found to following the Forest Stewardship Plan. For Gwitchyaa Zhee planning items completed included a business plan, a forest harvest plan, biomass inventory, purchase of harvesting equipment, training Fort Yukon residents in forestry and forest equipment, and harvest of 16 acres.

Competitive Grant Projects

In 2011, the Forest Stewardship program received two competitive grants from the US Forest Service. The grant titled Riparian Management Evaluation in Coastal Working Forests has Sealaska Corporation as principle partner and Dr. Doug Martin as principle investigator. The project was began in 1992 and evaluates salmon stream conditions before and after timber harvest with stream buffers as required by the Forest Resources and Practices Act. A presentation on this project was given to the Board of Forestry. A final report has been submitted.

The grant titled Program Development for Training Rural Forest Technicians will help train personnel in rural communities that work to supply biomass to wood energy systems. The initial target community is Fort Yukon but other communities are also sought. The training program is needed as the wood energy facility nears operation. By 2014 four training session were organized by the Council of Athabascan Governments and held in Fort Yukon.

Regeneration, Nurseries, and Genetic Resources

Regeneration, Nurseries, and Genetic Resources (RNGR) federal funding has enabled progress in reforestation. Efforts continued to develop low cost regeneration methods for wood energy biomass. RNGR funds enabled successfully obtaining additional grant funds from Alaska Energy Authority to develop poplar cuttings of biomass reforestation. For a second year poplar cuttings were collected and planted on field site in Mat-Su and Delta. Poplar cuttings were also obtained from Alberta. Results show poplar cuttings may have potential for rural communities but additional work on genetic selection would be beneficial.

Additional Accomplishments

Stewardship staff also participated in a variety of public information events offering forestry and landowner assistance information. Events included tree sales, Firewise public meetings, Arbor Day events, Student presentations, and fairs. Noteworthy efforts on the Kenai Peninsula were to develop and hang posters for outreach to local elders, disabled citizens, and Alaska natives for participation in cooperative land stewardship & defensible space programs. In the Fairbanks area Stewardship staff prepared a successful proposal for new WUI funding.

Forest Stewardship Staff

Stewardship professional forester staffing had additions in 2014. Jeff Graham continued as the Stewardship program coordinator. Jim Smith continued in Fairbanks. Judy Reese continued for the Kenai Peninsula. Steve Nickel continued in Mat-Su. Discussions continued with Cooperative Extension about partnering in private land forestry assistance.

Forest Stewardship Committee

The Division of Forestry receives guidance from the Forest Stewardship Committee. The committee is comprised of representatives from a broad range of Alaska private landowner interests. Areas of discussion include grant and cost-share rates, eligibility criteria, and Forest Stewardship plan requirements. The committee met twice in 2014. Important topics of consideration in 2014 were wood energy development and forest planning on private lands including reforestation.

2014 FOREST STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Val Barber

University of Alaska, Palmer

Daniel Consenstein

USDA Farm Service Agency, Palmer

Tom Dearlove

Kenai Peninsula Borough, Soldotna

Clare Doig

Consultant and Forest Industry Representative, Anchorage

Jim Durst

Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Fairbanks

Jeff Graham

Alaska Division of Forestry, Palmer

Mike Green

Landowner Representative, Fairbanks

Jeff Hetrick

Landowner Representative, Moose Pass

George Matz

Kachemak Conservation Society, Homer

Dan Parrent

USDA Forest Service, Anchorage

Will Putman

Tanana Chiefs Conference, Fairbanks

Dorothy Melambianakis

Kachemak Heritage Land Trust, Homer

Mitch Michaud

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Kenai

Phil Shephard

Great Land Trust, Anchorage

Alaska Community Forestry Program

Trees growing in communities require care to be healthy, beautiful and safe but they reward this attention with economic, environmental and social benefits. The Division of Forestry helps communities maximize these benefits through effective management.

The program manager and community assistance forester offer technical and educational assistance to local governments, agencies, tree care and landscape professionals and nonprofit organizations. A partnership with the U.S. Forest Service provides federal funds to administer the state's program.

The Alaska Community Forest Council helps set priorities for the program and provides expertise and advice to the division. The 15 members represent the diversity of the state and a broad spectrum of interests and experiences. Members are also valuable partners and leaders in local community forestry efforts.

Supporting community forestry is an important and appropriate role for state government because:

- Community forests provide essential benefits we cannot live without.
- A healthy community forest doesn't happen by chance; it is the result of proper planning, management, and community investment.
- Healthy community forests can help solve community problems.
- Community forests and rural forests are connected; good management of one helps the other.

Community Assistance

In 2014 the Community Forestry staff provided technical assistance and/or training to local governments, organizations, businesses and individuals in 19 communities:



Patricia Joyner, Urban and Community Forestry Coordinator, at top of the Olympic Ski Jump in Oslo, Norway. Photo by Larry Hartig.



A City of Valdez official speaks at the city's first Arbor Day celebration and tree planting held in June. Following the ceremony, participants received a seedling were invited to a class on tree planting and care.

Photo by Stephen Nickel

Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla, Willow, Trapper Creek, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Seward, Kenai, Soldotna, Sterling, Kodiak, Valdez, Fairbanks, North Pole, Salcha, Tok, Juneau, Sitka, and Ketchikan.

Staff served on the Green Infrastructure Groups in Fairbanks and Anchorage, the UAA Tree Campus USA Committee, and the Anchorage Weed Management Association.

Ketchikan: The Community Assistance Forester spent a week in Ketchikan assisting Parks and Public Works staff and a Tree Board/Community Forest Council member to update the tree inventory and plan for implementation of the management plan. He visited several sites to assess tree health and to identify maintenance needs and hazardous trees for removal. He also gave a presentation to the public on pruning, planting and tree care and to Ketchikan Public Utility workers on pruning and identifying and mitigating possible tree risks.

The state awarded a \$2,500 grant to the borough to remove 11 large, hazardous trees in public areas. The Borough matched the grant with \$12,199 to complete the removal of all trees identified as hazardous.

Soldotna: A \$3,000 grant to the City of Soldotna helped meet a management plan goal to diversify tree species. The city purchased 13 trees and 9 shrubs of species not common in Soldotna and, with technical assistance from CF staff, planted them at Soldotna Creek Park in May. The city and a local family provided a match of \$8,230.

Wasilla: A \$3,000 grant to the City of Wasilla funded the purchase of trees for IdidaPark. This helped the city increase species diversity, abate stormwater runoff, and provide education for middle school students who planted the trees. We also provided refresher training for three city employees on collecting and recording tree inventory data.

Fairbanks: The Community Forestry Program secured a two-year grant from the Forest Service for \$135,000. The grant will fund work beginning in 2015 to use green infrastructure to help restore the Chena River watershed in Fairbanks.

The state bought four trees and planted these plus eight donated trees along the Chena River by the Carlson Center to demonstrate the ability of trees to reduce and treat stormwater runoff. The trees complement a rain garden installed at the same time.

Valdez: The Community Assistance Forester spent two days in Valdez supporting the city's first Arbor Day event. They transplanted a native tree due to the difficulty in getting a tree from a nursery. A city planner/Community Forest Council member helped organize activities for children and distribution of information on trees followed by a presentation on tree planting and care. The forester also assisted Parks staff in assessing public trees and offered advice on tree planting and care. The city has already begun plans for an Arbor Day event in 2015.

Education

The Community Forestry Program provided 998 seat hours of training for 340 people in 2014. Training included the following:

- A 2½-day International Society of Arboriculture Tree Risk Assessment Qualifications Course attended by 10 professionals from six communities
- A class on managing landscape trees in partnership with the Cooperative Extension Service provided basic training on tree planting and care and pest and disease management for landscape maintenance workers. It was held in an Anchorage classroom with participation online from workers in three other cities.
- A class at the University of Alaska Anchorage for the landscape staff.
- Class and demonstration for the public on using an air spade for soil exploration and remediation and tree transplanting at the University of Alaska Anchorage
- A class on trees and shrubs for the Anchorage Master Gardener course
- Two boreal forest walks for the Native Plant Society at Alaska Botanical Garden in Anchorage
- A pruning class for the University of Alaska Fairbanks grounds crew
- A science class presentation on tree benefits and forest management at Polaris K-12 School in Anchorage.

Arbor Day

The CF Program distributed a calendar of Arbor Day activities statewide and participated in a number of celebrations. The state and Alaska Community Forest Council purchased a total of 520 seedlings that were used in Arbor Day and other events in Anchorage, Ketchikan, Valdez, and Juneau.



2014 ALASKA COMMUNITY FOREST COUNCIL

Maria D'Agostino, chair
Anchorage

Laura Charlton, vice chair
Ketchikan

Sandra Garley, Palmer

Gino Graziano, Anchorage

Brent Hove, secretary, Anchorage

Jud Kirkness, Sitka

Hans Klausner, treasurer
Kodiak

Pat Leary, Anchorage

Nathan Lojewski, Anchorage

Kenneth Marsh, Trapper Creek

Nan Mundy, Juneau

Dan Rees, Fairbanks

Isobel Roy, Anchorage

Patrick Ryan, Anchorage

*Alaska Community Forest Council members at the Alaska Botanical Garden. ABG employee Patrick Ryan describes trial plots where new plants will be evaluated for performance in Anchorage.
Photo by Stephen Nickel*



Lisa Moore (center) is recognized by Patricia Joyner and Stephen Nickel for 10 years of service on the Alaska Community Forest Council including two terms as chair. Although retired from the council she remains an active and enthusiastic member of the Sitka Tree and Landscape Committee. Photo by Hans Klausner

At the Tok School celebration first and second graders planted 50 birch seedlings in pots and third and fourth graders planted 50 birch on the school grounds where spruce have been removed to reduce wildfire danger. An inspection of seedlings planted over the past seven years showed a high rate of survival.

Community Forestry Organizations

In 2014, volunteers donated 726 hours for community forestry projects in Alaska. Citizen groups around the state organized volunteers, raised funds, supported tree planting and care, and offered educational programs. Chugach Electric Association donated \$1,000 to the Community Forest Council for public education.



Community Assistance Forester Stephen Nickel points out a tree defect during a class for Ketchikan Public Utility employees in March. Photo by Laura Charlton

The most active organizations are:

- Alaska Community Forest Council
- Fairbanks Arbor Day Committee
- Juneau Urban Forestry Partnership
- Sitka Tree and Landscape Committee

Tree Cities USA: City of Wasilla, Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Eielson Air Force Base, Fort Wainwright, City & Borough of Sitka, Municipality of Anchorage, and City & Borough of Juneau

Tree Lines USA: Chugach Electric Association, Golden Valley Electric Association, and Matanuska Electric Association.

Tree Campuses USA: University of Alaska Anchorage and University of Alaska Fairbanks.



Alaska Community Forest Council members at the Alaska Botanical Garden in May. Patricia Joyner (CF Program manager), Jason Moan (Forest Health Program Manager), Gino Graziano (Anchorage), Pat Leary (Anchorage), Stephen Nickel (Community Assistance Forester), Laura Charlton (Ketchikan), Dan Rees (Fairbanks), Nan Mundy (Juneau), Ken Marsh (Trapper Creek), Lisa Moore (Sitka), Hans Klausner (Kodiak). Photo by Patrick Ryan



Jason Moan, Forest Health Coordinator



David Parsley, Northern Region Warehouse Manager

Jeff Hermanns, Tok Area Forester

Beth Cendor, Copper River Area Admin Assistant

Karlyn Hererra, Admin Operations Manager

Photos by Dean Brown

AWFCG at Campbell Creek Fish Hatchery. (l to r back): Mike Burley (AVCP), John See (Anchorage Fire Dept.), Sue Rodman (ADF&G), Nathan Lejewski (Chugachmuit), Will Putman (Tanana Chiefs), Karin Landsberg (DEC), Radonna Turner (DOF), Dan Warthin (NPS), Ray Hart (BIA); (front) Kent Slaughter (AFS), Dean Brown (DOF), Doug Alexander (USFWS)



*Gordon Amundson, Fairbanks Area
AFMO*

Barb Kraemer, SLC Coordinator

*Mike Goyette, Fire Prevention,
Fairbanks Area*

Al Edgren, Delta Area Forester

Ed Sandford, Fairbanks FMO

Chris Maisch, State Forester

Doug Albrecht, Fire Prevention Coord.

Randy Weber, Pilot

Barb Kraemer, SLC Coord.

Mike Butteri, AFS Tanana

Photos by Dean Brown





Gary Mullen, Delta Area Forester

Ann Nelson, Assistant Attorney General

Dawn Sloan, Accounting Technician Coastal Region

Phil Blydenburg, Mat-Su Suppression Foreman

John Winters, Kenai-Kodiak Area Resource Forester; Steve Edwards, Aircraft Maintenance Inspector

Howie Kent, Kenai-Kodiak Area FMO

Keri Groenwald, Palmer Warehouse

Jack Hoch, Statewide Warehouse Manager

Mary Geiser, Kenai-Kodiak Area Admin Assistant

Photos by Dean Brown

Diane Campbell, Kenai-Kodiak Logistics

Rick Jandreau, Mat-Su Area Forester

Hans Rinke, Kenai-Kodiak Area Forester

Al Edgren, Delta Area Forester

Carrie Hale, Statewide Fire Training

Tim Mawry, Forestry Public Information Officer

Martin Maricle, Statewide Fire Support Forester

Bill Hutto, Kenai-Kodiak Area Suppression Foreman

Tim Dabney, Northern Regional Forester

Jerri Webster, Palmer Warehouse Manager

Photos by Dean Brown





Chris Maisch and Doug Hanson doing inventory work by riverboat out of Galena.

Will Putman, Tanana Chiefs AWFCG

Mike Roos, McGrath FMO

Mike Curran, Coastal Regional Forester

Nathan Lojewski, Chugachmiut AWFCG

Norm McDonald, Mat-Su FMO

Radonna Turner, Coastal Region and AWFCG Recorder

Incident Commander Tom Kurth

Dean Brown, Deputy Director in Auckland, New Zealand. Photo by friendly Kiwi.

Photos by Dean Brown

ALASKAN WOLF PUPS TO MAKE PUBLIC DEBUT AT THE MINNESOTA ZOO

Orphaned in wildfire, wolf pups find permanent home at Zoo Fire crew supervisor involve in rescue to reunite with wolves during debut



Thursday, September 18, 2014

Apple Valley, MINN – September 16, 2014: Five wolf pups, orphaned during Alaska's Funny River Fire in May, have found permanent homes at the Minnesota Zoo and will make their public debut on Thursday, September 18 at 9 a.m.

Earlier this spring, Alaskan firefighters rescued the wolf pups from a den near the fire, which devastated over 200,000 acres on the Kenai Peninsula and left the litter of then two-week-old wolf pups without a mother. Firefighters spotted the abandoned den, kept a close watch on the area in hopes the mother would return, and intervened after two days of non-parental care.

Once rescued, the pups – named “Gannett,” “Hooper,” “Huslia,” “Stebbius” and “X-Ray” (after the firefighters’ hometowns and the fire crew) – were brought to the Alaska Zoo where they were treated for porcupine quill injuries and bottle-fed every three hours. Because the Alaska Zoo already had a permanent wolf pack on display without room for the new pups, the Alaska Fish and Game Department worked quickly to find a new home for them. Although they received many requests, the Department chose the Minnesota Zoo as the pups’ new home, based on an excellent history of collaboration that includes placement of three brown bears, which also came to the Minnesota Zoo as orphaned cubs from Alaska.

When the wolf pups were eight-weeks-old, they were transported to the Minnesota Zoo thanks to one of the Zoo’s partners, Delta Airlines. Since that time, Zoo staff has been busy hand-raising the pups and providing the nutrition and medical care necessary to ensure they grow into healthy adults. After spending mandatory time in a quarantine area, the new pack is moving to their new home – the wolf exhibit on the Medtronic Minnesota Trail.

Said Minnesota Zoo Collection Manager Tony Fisher: “We are very grateful to the Alaska Zoo for giving these pups such excellent care when they were first rescued, and to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for entrusting us with their permanent care. It is rewarding for us to once again be able to provide a home for orphaned Alaskan animals.”

As the wolves move to their permanent public exhibit, the Zoo will welcome Josh Leutzinger, crew supervisor for the Gannett Glacier Fire Crew and coordinator of the rescue effort, to Minnesota for a reunion with the pups. The Alaska-based fire crew has kept tabs on the wolves since their rescue and Leutzinger will represent them and their efforts throughout the day on Thursday, thanks to our partners at Delta Air Lines. Leutzinger has been working on fire crews for 14 years and is an Alaska native, currently residing in Eagle River, AK. Gannett Glacier Crew is a Type II Initial Attack Fire Crew, a group that works in remote and challenging terrain, and fights fires in the wildland-urban interface across the country.

The Minnesota Zoo is located in Apple Valley, just minutes south of Mall of America. Open year round, the Zoo is one of the State’s premier cultural attractions serving 1.2 million visitors annually. With a mission to connect people, animals and the natural world, the Zoo is a member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA). Learn more at mnzoo.org or by calling 952.431.9500.



Photo: USFW

WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT

2014 Fire Season

After getting off to a fast and furious start, fire activity in the 49th state dropped dramatically as a result of what was one of the wettest summers on record in many locations around Alaska. The wet conditions from mid-June through August translated to one of the lowest fire seasons on record in terms of acreage burned.

There were a total of 393 wildfires that burned 233,529.5 acres in Alaska in 2014, the fifth-lowest acreage total in the last 20 years. That compares to a 10-year average of approximately 500 fires per year and 1 million acres burned.

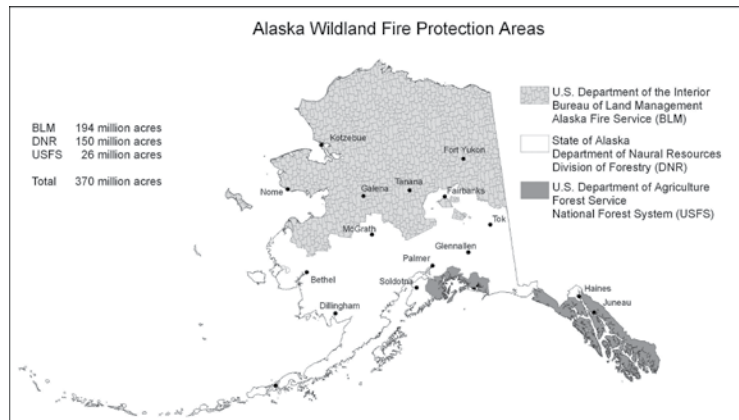
Early on, it looked like it was going to be a busy season for firefighters in the Last Frontier. An early spring resulted in earlier-than-normal snow melt around much of the state in May, stalled greenup and consequently cured fine fuels, providing a bigger window for human-caused fires. That was the case in the Coastal Region on May 19 when two human-caused blazes ignited within hours of each other and threatened several local communities. The Tyonek and Funny River fires challenged the state's firefighting resources at a time when many crews were still in training and aircraft were still on order.

The Tyonek Fire, located on the west side of Cook Inlet between the villages of Tyonek and Beluga, was the first major fire of the season. Smokejumpers from the Bureau of Land Management and hotshot crews from the BLM and state were quickly dispatched to the fire, as were two retardant tankers to provide aerial attack. Despite the quick initial response, the fire grew to approximately 1,800 acres in three days and an evacuation order for the village of Tyonek was issued. Firefighters were forced to conduct burnout operations to protect the Beluga Power Plant, which was located about 5 miles from the fire. The power plant provides power for much of Anchorage and the Chugach Electric Association was prepared to bypass the facility should the fire reach or damage it but that didn't happen.

A Type 3 Interagency Incident Management Team from Washington state was brought in to assume command of the Tyonek Fire on May 24 and nearly 300 firefighters were battling the fire at its peak. The efforts of firefighters and an aggressive aerial attack with air tankers and helicopters were bolstered with the arrival of much-needed precipitation on May 26. The rain helped firefighters bring the fire under control and it was declared fully contained on May 28 at 1,906 acres.

While firefighters were able to corral the Tyonek Fire thanks to an aggressive and persistent initial attack, that wasn't the case on the Funny River Fire, which developed into the summer's biggest, most-frightening fire in Alaska.

The Funny River Fire was reported within a few hours after the Tyonek Fire was reported. The fire was located 3 miles south of the Soldotna Airport near a horse trail along Funny River Road in the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. Despite an initial ground attack by the Chena Hotshot Crew and engine crews from the Division of Forestry, as well as water drops from helicopters, firefighters were not able to contain the fire and it grew exponen-



Social media provides non-traditional ways for the Division of Forestry (DOF) to share information and visuals and engage with an online community of public and media.

DOF Pages

Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/AK.Forestry>

Twitter:

http://twitter.com/ak_forestry

Youtube:

<http://www.youtube.com/alaskadnrdo>

Additional VOST Information:

<http://vosg.us/>

For more information, contact

tim.mowry@alaska.gov,
(907)-356-5511

tially over the next few days. By May 20, it was estimated at 7,000 acres and was 10 miles long and a mile wide.

A Type 2 Incident Management Team was brought in to take command of the fire on May 21. By that time, the fire had grown to 20,000 acres and crews were battling to prevent the fire from crossing Funny River Road and reaching the Sterling Highway. The Funny River Fire continued to grow, reaching approximately 45,000 acres on May 22.

By May 23, the fire had reached almost 100,000 acres and more than 400 personnel were assigned to it. Despite their efforts, the fire continued to grow and prompted an evacuation order for residents along Funny River Road on May 25. The fire crossed the Kenai River that same afternoon just east of the Kenai Keys subdivision but quick action by local residents and firefighters helped extinguish several spot fires and prevent the fire from spreading across the river.

A shaded fuel break constructed and maintained by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service along Funny River Road proved to be instrumental in helping firefighters get control of the fire. The fuel break helped to reduce the buildup of beetle-killed spruce along the road. Not only did the fuel break help stop the advance of the fire, it provided firefighters a stage to conduct burnout operations to rob the fire of fuel.

Two Air National Guard Black Hawk helicopters arrived on May 25 to assist firefighters with water drops. By that time, the fire was estimated at 158,585 acres with 30 percent containment. On the same day, Governor Sean Parnell, State Forester Chris Maisch and State Fire Program Manager Tom Kurth toured the fire.

Rain began falling on the night of May 26 and helped slow fire activity. The cooler, damper weather allowed the more than 700 firefighters assigned to the fire to switch from a defensive to an offensive attack for the first time since the fire started. Crews were able to reinforce containment lines on the west and north sides of the fire and the evacuation order along Funny River Road was canceled.

Firefighters continued to take advantage of cooler, wetter conditions over the next few days as fire activity slowed. By May 29, the fire was 46 percent contained and was estimated at almost 193,000 acres. Fire activity continued to slow as a result of wet weather and crews began focusing on mop up operations starting on May 31.

A community appreciation barbeque was held June 1 and approximately 1,500 local residents turned out to thank firefighters. A prevention team was brought in to provide area residents and agencies information on how to reduce the risk of future wildland-urban interface fires. The



*Jim Schwarber, Forest Planner, on Funny River Fire Staff ride.
Photo Dean Brown.*

prevention team held workshops in the communities of Sterling, Funny River and Kasilof to talk about and illustrate FireWise principles. Over the course of a week, the team had over 1,200 contacts with local residents.

Management of the fire was turned over to a Type 3 Incident Management Team on June 6. By June 11, the fire was 60 percent contained and the number of personnel assigned to the fire had dropped below 50. The fire was fully contained a few days later and work began on repairing approximately 20 miles of fire lines that were constructed to protect the communities of Sterling, Soldotna and Kasilof.

When the smoke had cleared, the Funny River Fire had burned an estimated total of 196,610 acres but firefighters succeeded in their mission to protect life and property. There were no major injuries reported from the fire and only five structures were confirmed lost as a result of the fire. The burned structures included four recreational cabins with limited access and one outbuilding (the main structure was saved).

The Funny River Fire also resulted in a wildlife success story of sorts when firefighters discovered and rescued a litter of five wolf pups in a den that had apparently been abandoned by the parent wolves. The media immediately latched onto the story, complete with cute pictures of the days-old wolf pups. The orphaned pups were initially transported to the Alaska Zoo for care before eventually being adopted by and transported to the Minnesota Zoo, where they were unveiled to the public in September after a three-month quarantine period. Josh Leutizinger, crew chief for the Gannett Glacier Type 21A crew, attended the public unveiling in Minnesota as a VIP.

Besides the Funny River Fire, the only other fire of note in Alaska last summer was the 23,270-acre 100 Mile Creek Fire near Delta Junction in late May and early June. That fire started on May 13 as a spot fire from a prescribed burn on military land. A Type 3 Incident Management Team was initially assigned to the fire but Alaska's Type 1 Incident Management Team assumed control of the fire on June 10 and remained on site until demobilizing on June 20 after the fire received approximately 2 inches of rain. At its peak, nearly 300 personnel were assigned to the 100 Mile Creek Fire.

The rain that soaked the 100 Mile Creek Fire was the beginning of what proved to be almost two months of precipitation that dumped almost 12 inches of rain on the Interior.

Even though the rain didn't begin falling until mid-June, the month of June was the wettest June on record in the Interior. A total of 3.56 inches of rain was recorded at the Fairbanks International Airport, almost all of which fell in the last two weeks.

The rain continued in July, with 3.36 inches of rain recorded at the Fairbanks International Airport on the first two days of the month. Another 1.13 inches fell on July 7, pushing the total rainfall for the first week of July to 4.49 inches. By the end of the month, a total of 5.78 inches of rain had fallen at the Fairbanks airport, making July 2014 the second-wettest July on record in the Interior.

Any thought of fire season returning to Alaska in August was washed away in the first five days of the month when 1.72 inches of rain fell at the Fairbanks airport. At that point, the ground was so saturated there was virtually no chance a fire would start. A shower on August 28 pushed the rainfall total for the month of August to 2.29 inches, giving Fairbanks a total precipitation total of 11.63 inches for the months of June, July and August. That broke the previous record of 11.59 inches in 1930 and made the summer of 2014 the wettest on record in Fairbanks.

The Funny River and 100 Mile Creek fires accounted for 94 percent of the total acreage burned in Alaska in 2014. It's a rare year when more acreage burns in Southcentral than Interior Alaska but that's the kind of summer it was. The excessive rain kept the number of remote lightning-caused fires in the Interior to a minimum, resulting in an almost non-existent fire season in the Interior from mid-June on. For the season, only 54 fires were started as a result of lightning strikes.

Of the 393 fires reported during the summer of 2014, all but 19 fires were kept below 100 acres and 349 of the reported fires were held to under 10 acres. Only two fires – the Funny River Fire and 100 Mile Creek Fire – exceeded 5,000 acres. As usual, the majority of fires – 304 – occurred on lands under state protection.

While it turned out to be a slow fire season in Alaska because of all the rain, that wasn't the case in the Lower 48 and Alaska resources were once again sought to help the fire-fighting effort Outside. The first Alaska firefighting personnel traveled to the Lower 48 in mid-July, beginning what was a steady stream of Alaska personnel heading south. All totaled, Alaska sent nearly 700 firefighting personnel to help battle fires in California, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Utah and Washington.

2014 EFF PAYROLL

Chevak	\$127,483
Copper River	\$201,983
Delta	\$299,710
Fairbanks	\$927,246
Homer	\$ 16,871
Hooper Bay	\$ 88,361
Lower Kalskag	\$ 20,814
Upper Kalskag	\$ 4,739
McGrath	\$ 99,105
Nikolai	\$ 69,688
Nondalton	\$ 70,623
Palmer	\$893,777
Shageluk	\$ 3,429
Tok	\$294,323
Kenai	\$275,590
TOTAL	\$3,393,741

2014 WILDFIRES BY CAUSE

	ALL FIRES		STATE PROTECTION		AFS PROTECTION		USFS PROTECTION	
	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres
Arson	3	0.3	-	-	-	-	3	0.3
Campfire	68	436.4	57	32.6	1	402.8	10	1.0
Children	7	1.7	6	1.4	1	0.3	-	-
Debris Burning	96	111.9	94	36.8	2	75.1	-	-
Equipment	19	8.0	18	7.4	-	-	1	0.6
Fireworks	1	0.1	-	-	1	0.1	-	-
Incendiary	20	19.6	9	1.7	10	17.7	1	0.2
Land Clearing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lightning	50	10,549.1	15	3,286.0	35	7,263.1	-	-
Misc/Other	91	25,977.6	78	1,973.4	7	24,003.5	6	0.7
Natural Out	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Powerline	1	1.0	-	-	1	1.0	-	-
Railroad	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Smoking	1	0.1	1	0.1	-	-	-	-
Structure Fire	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trash Burn	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Under Investigation	2	196,610.2	2	196,610.2	-	-	-	-
Undetermined	22	48.4	21	48.0	-	0.3	1	0.1
Unknown	7	84.8	-	-	3	81.5	4	3.3
Vehicle	1	0.1	-	-	-	-	1	0.1
TOTALS	389	233,849.3	301	201,997.6	61	31,845.4	27	6.3

10 LARGEST FIRE SEASONS ON RECORD

YEAR	FIRES	ACRES
2004	701	6,590,140
1957	391	5,049,661
1939	200	5,000,000
2005	624	4,649,597
1940	130	4,500,000
1969	685	4,231,820
1941	138	3,654,774
1990	750	3,189,079
2009	516	2,934,608
1977	681	2,295,808

ACRES BURNED BY LANDOWNERSHIP

LANDOWNER	FIRES	ACRES
Bureau of Indian Affairs	4	585.4
Bureau of Land Management	15	3,960.2
Borough	55	1,468.2
Department of Defense	15	16,515.4
Native Claims Act Lands	42	4,052.0
National Park Service	2	752.2
Private	155	447.2
State	71	8,410.5
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	22	197,657.2
U.S. Forest Service	9	1.0
TOTALS*	390	233,849.3

*Number of fires reflects land ownership at origin. These are acre totals burned by landowner. Data compiled from fire perimeters.

2014 ALASKA WILDFIRES BY AREA AND PROTECTION LEVEL

State Wide Totals by Protection Level

Cause	Fires	Acres
Human	335	223,225.7
Lightning	54	10,623.6
TOTALS	389	233,849.3

CRITICAL		FULL		MODIFIED		LIMITED		TOTALS	
Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres
245	587.4	81	63,459.5	19	16,980.0	44	152,822.4	389	233,849.3

STATE PROTECTED AREAS

Area	CRITICAL		FULL		MODIFIED		LIMITED		TOTALS	
	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres
Anch/Mat-Su	57	50.0	11	1,914.0	0	-	1	0.7	69	1,964.7
Copper River	3	0.3	5	5.3	0	-	1	0.1	9	5.7
Delta	14	8.5	3	3.1	0	-	0	-	17	11.6
Fairbanks	47	95.7	11	25.0	0	-	1	5.0	59	125.7
Haines	2	1.6	0	-	0	-	0	-	2	1.6
Kenai/Kodiak	95	414.6	9	51,419.3	0	-	1	144,808.4	105	196,642.3
Southwest	1	0.1	6	30.2	0	-	5	3,207.3	12	3,237.6
Tok	17	2.4	9	3.5	0	-	2	2.5	28	8.4
TOTALS	236	573.2	54	53,400.4	0	-	11	148,024.0	301	201,997.6

USDA FOREST SERVICE- PROTECTED AREAS

Area	CRITICAL		FULL		MODIFIED		LIMITED		TOTALS	
	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres
Chugach N.F.	3	0.8	6	0.7	0	-	0	9	1.5	
Tongass N.F.	3	0.3	9	1.0	3	3.2	3	0.3	18	4.8
TOTALS	6	1.1	15	1.7	3	3.2	3	0.3	27	6.3

BLM ALASKA FIRE SERVICE -PROTECTED AREAS

Area	CRITICAL		FULL		MODIFIED		LIMITED		TOTALS	
	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres
Galena	1	0.1	7	3,047.4	12	975.3	15	3,469.4	35	7,492.2
Military	1	1.0	4	7,009.9	6	15,926.7	1	403.1	12	23,340.70
Tanana	1	12.0	1	0.1	0	-	7	72.1	9	84.20
Upper Yukon	0	-	0	-	3	74.8	2	853.5	5	928.30
TOTALS	3	13.1	12	10,057.4	21	16,976.8	25	4,798.1	61	31,845.4

*Data current as of November 12, 2014

Advanced Wildland Firefighter Program

The 2014 Advanced Wildland Firefighter Program provided a two (2) week Advanced Wildland Firefighter Academy training session and twenty-two (22) short term non-perm positions for Division of Forestry Area Offices. Additionally, Alaska Interagency Fire Training provided opportunities for participation for many locally hired EFF/ADs.

In 2014, Division of Forestry hosted Alaska's Advanced Wildland Firefighter Academy in partnership with University of Alaska Fairbanks, Interior-Aleutians Campus. The Academy was held at the Lost Lake Boys Scout camp located 58 miles south of Fairbanks.

The Advanced Academy included (7) NWCG courses:

- S-131 Firefighter Type 1 (Squad Boss)
- S-133 Look Up, Look Down, Look Around
- S-211 Portable Pumps and Water Use
- S-212 Wildland Fire Chain Saws
- S-270 Basic Air Operations
- S-271 Helicopter Crewmember
- L-280 Followership to Leadership

University courses consisted of 3 Wildland Fire Science courses worth 8 college credits:

- Fire 152 (Wildland Firefighter 2)–2 Credits
- Fire 153 (Wildland Firefighter 3)–3 Credits
- Fire 158 (Basic Wildland Fire Aviation)–3 Credits

An additional 3 credits were granted with proper documentation for the red card class (S-130, S-190, ICS-100, L-180):

- Fire 151(Wildland Firefighter I).

Students received an Occupational Endorsement in Wildland Fire Science, which is directly applicable towards a future Associated Degree in Wildland Fire Control.

NWCG position certifications were given in:

- Firefighter Type I-trainee
- Helicopter Crewmember-trainee
- Faller A-trainee

Student Overview

- 24 students graduated (all participants successfully completed the academy)
- Students came from: FAS- 6, TCC-1, TAS-3, CRS-3, MSS-1, KKS-2, SWS-4, GAD-3, UAF-1
- Last minute cancellations were successfully filled from a student waitlist
- Students reported it to be an incredible learning experience that they would recommend to others.

Student Placement

Of the 24 graduates, all students were placed in job opportunities. All students worked within their respective areas as emergency hire (EFF) initial attack resources. Students were employed by IA Type 2 Crews and Type 2 Crews:

- 1-White Mountain-IA Type 2 Crew
- 2-TCC-IA Type 2 Crew
- 3-Chevak-Type 2 Crew
- 1-Hooper Bay-Type 2 Crew
- 3-Copper River-Type 2 Crew
- 2- Copper River-IA Type 2 Crew
- 2-Kenai/Kodiak Area Forestry-short term non-perms

Student Training Opportunities

Task Books Issued (53):

- 13-Helicopter Crewmember
- 4-Engine Operators
- 8-Firefighter Type 1
- 22-Faller A
- 3-Faller B
- 3-Incident Commander Type 5

Task Books Completed (24):

- 21-Faller A
- 3- FFT1

Experience:

- 15 IA assignments
- 16 AK fire assignments
- 22 L-48 fire assignments

Academy Staffing by DOF

DOF provided 3 coaches and AFS provided 1 coach (DOF: Doug Albrecht-SCS; Wade Johnson-TAS; Brian Homan-TAS; AFS: Ty Miller). Coaches provided coverage for the 2 week session (2 coaches were present on a daily basis). DOF provided several instructors to supplement UAF instructor staffing as well as statewide training coordinators.

Facilities

The 400 acre camp provided a “practical, real world experience” with the facilities giving adequate structure for classroom sessions and the vast acreage allowed for the saw class, pump practice from the lake, an obstacle course already in place, and perhaps most importantly it provided an environment that allowed the students to get a taste of living in a “fire camp” environment. The camp setting allowed for good focus with few distractions for the students.

2014 Academy Funded Positions

Alaska Division of Forestry funded 22 short term non-perm positions for 10 weeks. Positions were divided up among the areas, with the larger offices receiving 4 positions and the more rural offices receiving 2 positions. Positions were filled as Wildland Fire & Resource Technician I, Wildland Fire Dispatcher I and Administrative Assistant I as needed for each area.

Short term non-perms were utilized by 7 Area Offices:

- FAS- (4) WFD1, ADMN1, (2) WFRT1
- DAS- (2) WFD1
- TAS- (2) WFRT1
- CRS- (2) WFD1
- MSS- (4) ADMIN1, (3) WFRT1
- KKS- (4) WFRT1
- SWS-(4) ADMIN1, WFD1, (2) WFRT1

Of the 22 positions, 5 were previous Advanced Academy Graduates. The job placement pipeline was successful with 3 student graduates going on to be hired as Permanent Seasonal Employees with their Area Offices.

Fire Training Program

The division provides training to maintain a qualified and safe workforce, ready to respond to wildland fires and other emergencies as needed. Interagency courses are open to structure fire departments, local government, other state agencies, emergency firefighters, other geographic areas, and Canadian fire agencies.

National Level Training (Lower 48)

Participation in Lower 48 training offered by other Geographic Areas, the National Advanced Fire and Resource Institute (NAFRI), and the National Fire Academy (NFA), helped the division meet the need for advanced level training to prepare our personnel to serve on Alaska's Incident Management Teams, train future instructors, support the fire medic program and provide Alaskans with professional career opportunities. Forestry employees and/or participants sponsored by the Division attended the following Lower 48 courses in 2014:

- Task Force Strike Team Leader
- D510 Supervisory Dispatcher
- Mixmaster
- Air Tanker Base Manager
- Ramp Manager
- Medical Unit Leader
- Simulation Development & Delivery
- Public Information Officer
- Backyards and Beyond
- ASM/Lead Plane Refresher

In 2014, Division of Forestry hosted Alaska's Advanced Wildland Firefighter Academy in partnership with University of Alaska Fairbanks, Interior-Aleutians Campus. Students received an Occupational Endorsement in Wildland Fire Science, which is directly applicable towards a future Associated Degree in Wildland Fire Control.

ALASKA ADVANCED WILDLAND FIREFIGHTER ACADEMY May 11- 27,2014

Aliaby, Andrew	Fairbanks
Bowman, Kegan	Valdez-Copper River
Bukowski, Chester	Southwest
Cooper, Tucker	Fairbanks
Dale, Ashley	Valdez-Copper River
David, Kenneth	Tok
Demoski, Melvin	Galena
Ewan, David	Tok
Friday Jr., Peter	Southwest
Garrett, Christian	Tanana Chiefs Crew
Hardesty, Jeremiah	UAF I IAC
Henry, Jonas	Fairbanks
Jordan, Michael	Tok
Kendall, Ronald	Fairbanks
Kriska, Patricia	Galena
Lapp Jr., Thomas	Southwest
Lopez, Christopher	Fairbanks
Michael, Lucas	Kenai-Kodiak
Morse, Collin	Kenai-Kodiak
Muta, Isaako	Mat-Su
Semaken, Curtis	Southwest
Stickman, Kristin	Galena
Varra, Joshua	Valdez-Copper River
Varonin, Ivan	Fairbanks

Instate Training

The majority of training in-state is provided through close cooperation of the Division of Forestry, the Alaska Fire Service, US Forest Service, Fire Departments, Local governments, and Forestry Area Offices. Training was presented to meet national standards in Incident Command System, Suppression, Aviation, Dispatch, Logistics, Leadership, Prevention and Wildland Fire Investigation positions. This training is the backbone for developing qualified, experienced personnel to fight fires both in and out of Alaska. Training was provided to Fire Departments/Local government, Division of Forestry personnel, Federal Cooperators, Emergency Firefighter, Division of Homeland Security, Alaska Railroad and Military students.

Many courses were offered to meet flex plan and wildland fire qualification training requirements. These included Dispatch, Suppression, Leadership, ROSS, Alaska Engine Academy, and Incident Command System courses.

The IC Type 3 and Type 4 simulations coupled with IFM for dispatchers was presented in Palmer and serves as an early season preparation and practice for the coming fire season. Fire Line Leadership trained future leaders of strike teams/task forces; Helicopter Manager Refresher classes kept critical aviation qualifications current. Aerial Supervision training prepared future Air Tactical Group Supervisor's to take on the role of leading air tankers into fire areas; other key suppression courses in Wildland Fire Behavior Calculations, Heavy Equipment Boss, Helicopter Manager, and Division Group Supervisor were delivered. Methods of Instruction training prepared students to take on Lead Instructor roles. Remote Automated Weather System Maintenance training ensured accurate and historical weather data would be available for current use. Prescribed Fire Plan Preparation, Prevention Workshop, and Hazardous Materials Transportation for Warehouse classes were delivered.

Several Academies were presented in Alaska in 2014. Interagency cooperation and support from Lower 48 subject matter expert instructors made delivery of courses possible. The Academies consisted of Dispatch, Finance, Incident Command System and the Alaska Engine Academy. The Division of Forestry's continued partnership with the University of Alaska-Fairbanks made the delivery of the two (2) week Advanced Wildland Firefighter Academy possible.

Structural fire departments across the state assist the division in fire suppression in populated areas through cooperative agreements. These cooperators are a valuable source of trained, experienced firefighters. The division offers evening and weekend courses to meet the training needs of volunteer fire departments.

Forestry also supports native Corporation crews through agreements with the Tanana Chiefs Conference and Chugachmiut Corporation. Support to the crews consists of providing training, issuing red cards, tracking training and experience records, and assisting with mobilization. Administrators from TCC and Chugachmiut attended IQS training.

Implementation of Phase I of the National Fire Training Curriculum, NWCG transition to the FEMA NIMS Training Program was completed on a national basis. This included NWCG adoption of 12 FEMA courses:

- IS100-Introduction to ICS
- IS200-ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
- ICS300-Intermediate ICS
- ICS400-Advanced ICS
- E/L964-Situation Unit Leader
- E/L965 Resources Unit Leader/Demobilization Unit Leader
- E/L970 Supply Unit Leader
- E/L975 Finance/Administration Unit Leader
- E/L950 Incident Commander
- E/L952 Public Information Officer
- E/L973 Finance/Administration Section Chief
- E/L967 Logistics Section Chief.

Additional information is available at:

http://training.nwcg.gov/sect_transition_information.html

The increase in online training offered additional Fire Suppression, ICS and Aviation courses to students.

Additional information may be found at:

<http://training.nwcg.gov/online.html> –Online NWCG courses

<http://training.fema.gov/is/> - FEMA Independent Study (IS) courses

<https://www.iat.gov/> - Interagency Aviation courses

Division of Forestry Area Offices delivered many Basic Firefighter courses, fireline safety refreshers, fitness testing, Pumps, Saws, Initial Attack IC, Squad Boss, and Fellowship to Leadership courses. Local fire departments participate in this training.

National Fire Plan/Wildland Urban Interface Projects Update

Initial Attack Fire Fighters

National Fire Plan funding continues to enable the Division of Forestry to retain 10 permanent seasonal initial attack firefighters in Palmer, Fairbanks, Soldotna, Delta, and Tok. These firefighters improve initial attack capabilities at the state, local government and volunteer fire departments in the urban interface areas. Effective initial attack of a fire reduces overall suppression costs and minimizes threats to private and public property from wildland fire.

Eastern Copper River (McCarthy) Hazardous Fuels Mitigation

Forestry presented the land owner cost share program and thinning project proposal to the McCarthy Area Council meeting and updates were given at the community meetings in July, August and September of 2014. Forty-six structures were assessed in six subdivisions and 36 were finalized for a grand total of 100 initial assessments, 95 of which are encumbered and 50 of which are finalized. The program will continue to be implemented in 2015. Hazardous fuels thinning took place along Kennicott Road. In 2015 Nizina Road and Silver Mine Road thinning will be completed, the local CWPP updated and Forestry will assist with the local Firewise Day.

Glennallen Hazardous Fuels Reduction

Outreach and advertisement for the land-owner cost share hazard fuel program continued and to date 55 assessments have been completed and 20 finalized. Thinning took place on the remaining 50 feet south side of a shaded fuel break along the east/west easement line west of Pilcho Drive, mitigating 10 acres of hazard fuel. A woody debris disposal site for landowners utilizing the cost share program continues to be available. In 2015 the land-owner cost share grant program for hazard fuel reduction will continue as well as Firewise educational outreach efforts. Coordination with local VFDs will take place and the Community Wildfire Protection Plan will be updated.

McGrath City Fuel Breaks

In May, 2014, the Gannet Glacier Type II IA Crew started constructing the McGrath City Fuel Breaks by cutting, moving, and piling black spruce. They were called back to their home unit for fires and then the Midnight Sun IHC worked the project for several days. The Midnight Sun IHC responded to the Tyonek Fire and then three Southwest Area Type II Crews – Chevak I, Chevak II, and Kalskag II, were mobilized and staged in McGrath.

The National Fire Plan was adopted in 2000 to provide grants to states, some on a competitive basis, to reduce the threat of fire in wildland/urban interface areas. Funds are also available for wildfire prevention and education programs, mitigation, capacity building and homeowner and community assistance. Funding comes to the Division of Forestry from the USDA Forest Service.



Smokey and his friend Pam Keane, HR Manager for DNR, in Chitina on the Fourth of July.

These crews worked the project for several days before being released to their homes when fire danger abated. Fire danger remained fairly low for the rest of the season and McGrath regular and non-permanent Wildland Fire and Resource Technicians worked to complete the project. Cutting the fuel break and piling the trees, or bucking them up for firewood for the local population, was completed by the beginning of August. A period of wet weather allowed us to burn all the black spruce piles with excellent consumption. These piles represented 90% of the existing piles with the remaining 10% being hardwoods and brush which required more curing.

In totality, 14.5 acres of mainly black spruce was cleared, piled and burned in 2014. Phase I of the McGrath City Fuels Breaks is now completed with the exception of approximately thirty 10' x 10' hardwood and brush piles that will be burned in the spring of 2015.

Fairbanks Slash Burning

Treatment units were periodically inspected to monitor public use, road/trail conditions, and fuel moistures and determine which units to prioritize for burning. Units were shear bladed in 2010 and 2011, allowing the slash to cure for 3 years. The Fairbanks North Star Borough and the AK DNR-Division of Mining, Land, & Water allowed local residents to gather firewood. Slash piles that lack sufficient material to burn will be allowed to decompose naturally. The smaller piles reflect the original black spruce stand structure characterized by low stem density and very small size (diameter and height).

Project information, Firewise literature, and agency burn permits were available at several public events, including a public meeting February 18 hosted by the Steese Volunteer Fire Department, the Fairbanks Home Show hosted by the Interior Alaska Building Association, and the Tanana Valley State Fair.

An application for Open Burning was submitted to the AK Dept. of Environmental Conservation in June. Supporting documentation was prepared by DOF staff, including fuel loading and smoke emissions estimates, maps, and emergency contacts/sensitive features. Above average rainfall during June, July, and August (>11 inches in three months) resulted in saturated slash piles and poor burning conditions. Piles were burned on approximately 6 acres (300 hand piles) during the fall of 2014. Fine fuel loading was reduced by >80%, with a reduction of large woody debris (1-6 inches diameter) by approximately 50%.

Fire In Alaska Workshops

During these workshops educators learn and practice key concepts of fire ecology, fire behavior, risk factors and participate in two home assessments. The Fire in Alaska workshops blend US Fish and Wildlife Service curricula (Role of Fire) with US Forest Service curriculum (Fireworks) with Division of Forestry adaptations. The workshops are sponsored by the Division of Forestry; but hosted by individual school districts at central locations where educators gather. Each teacher then returns to his or her home site and teaches the curriculum to their students. Updates were made in 2014 to the Fire in Alaska workshop series to reflect changes in the scientific knowledge base and current environmental conditions; requiring extensive research and revising of presentations and handouts. The workshop is now called "Fire in a changing Climate Workshop for Educators". Outreach and marketing for the 2015 season was extensive with workshops planned for Anchorage, Soldotna and Wasilla and more to come. Three workshops were held in 2014 in the communities of Delta Junction, Fairbanks and Lake Minchumina. A total of 30 educators and students attended the workshops. Over 1,100 educators have completed the course in Alaska.

Eklutna Lakes Fuels Reduction

Scope of work will include a shaded fuel break along both sides of the 8 mile Eklutna Trail (193 acres). Fuel types and heavy public use make the area prone to fire starts. This will provide protection to the Eklutna watershed and its tributaries as well as safe access and egress from the remote camp sites. During the 2014 field season the Pioneer Peak Interagency Hotshot Crew, Gannet Glacier Type II Initial Attack Crew and Mat-Su Wildland Fire and Resource Technicians worked cutting, thinning, limbing and piling target fuel. Chipping was implemented for the disposal of the fuels and chipped material was distributed back into the treatment area. Firewood sized logs were salvaged and stacked at trails edge and made available to the public. A total of 43.2 acres were treated. Work will continue during the 2015 field season.

Mat-Su Hazard Fuel Mitigation - Butte Recreational Trails & West Lakes

Work includes a total of 110 acres of shaded fuel breaks on 2 sites and the installation of Firewise Educational kiosks. The Pioneer Peak Interagency Hotshot Crew and Gannet Glacier Type II Initial Attack Crew cut and piled hazard fuels 100 feet off the trail. A total of 8.2 acres were treated and 353 hand piles were burned. Useable firewood was made free and available to the public. Treatment will recommence in 2015.

Fairbanks North Star Borough Fuels Reduction Phase III

The Fairbanks North Star Borough Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project Phase III reduces hazardous fuels on 80+ acres and provides prevention education to approximately 5,000 residents living in Wildland Urban Interface areas in the Gilmore, Goldstream and Nordale subdivisions. In 2014 the Steese Volunteer Fire Department hosted a public meeting where proposed fuel treatments were presented, Firewise recommendations made for the community, safe burn practices were highlighted, burn barrel guidelines were presented and use of the burn permit system reinforced. Based on comments received from the meeting and phone conversations, the public unanimously supported the fuels reduction project. Fifteen acres of hazard fuels were treated in 2014. Fuel wood was left on site for public disposal. Slash piles will be allowed to cure for two seasons prior to burning. Work will continue during the 2015 field season.

West Kenai Hazard Fuels Mitigation

This project removes 200 acres of hazardous fuels as determined by Community Wildfire Protection Plans. All fuel removal will be completed by hand including hauling slash from the site and chipping or burning in place if suitable conditions exist. Hand treatments are the preferred method of treatment; mechanical equipment would be limited by slope stability, access and the proximity to surface waters.

During the 2014 field season, personnel completed 75 acres of hand treatment. This included felling and bucking standing dead trees then scattering slash, or processing the slash with a chipper. Corridors that facilitated public access had slash chipped within 50 feet to reduce accumulations, and associated wildfire risk. Additionally, live trees within these corridors were thinned to a crown spacing of ten feet and ladder fuels were removed. Approximately 75 cords of firewood was produced with much of it being quickly removed by the public for immediate use. Providing access to firewood opened an avenue for education related to the overall scope of the project and homeowner responsibility regarding Firewise concepts. It's estimated over 50 personal contacts were made by agency staff. Additionally, informational signs were posted at key locations in an effort to reach a broader public. Administrative duties related to keeping the City of Kenai apprised of the project objectives, desired outcomes, and avenues for future partnership occurred throughout the field season. Remaining field work will be completed in the fall of 2015.

Tok Escape and Safety Zones

The Tanana Chiefs Type II I A crew sponsored by Tok Forestry finished work for the year with the Tok Escape and Safe Passage WUI hazardous fuels reduction projects. The fire crew spends 8 hours a day with saws in hand felling and bunching trees near main roads in Tok. This work is intended to reduce the fuel near the road to lessen the danger of wildfire entrapping the public escaping a wildfire or the firefighters responding the forest fires in the urban interface. The project is in partnership with the Gateway school district and the Tok School to provide fuel for the biomass plant.

While firefighters were able to corral the Tyonek Fire thanks to an aggressive and persistent initial attack, that wasn't the case on the Funny River Fire, which developed into the summer's biggest, most-frightening fire in Alaska.

The summer of 2014 was the wettest on record in Fairbanks.

The Funny River and 100 Mile Creek fires burned 94% of the total acreage for 2014.



*Left, road corridor prior to thinning in West Kenai.
Right, road corridor post thinning.
Photos by Bill Hutto.*

***New Projects Awarded National Fire Plan Funding in
CY 2014- \$600,000***

Olness East and Cripple Creek Subdivision Hazard Fuels Removal - \$300,000

Shaded fuel breaks on up to 80 acres and totaling 6.6 miles will be built for protecting suburban property located in very high risk 'zones of concern' for wildland fires adjacent to subdivisions in Fox (Olness East subdivision - 40 acres) and Ester (Cripple Creek subdivision- 40 acres) within the Fairbanks North Star Borough. These neighborhoods are both located within very high wildland fire risk 'zones of concern' developed from modeling of the Fairbanks North Star Borough's CWPP. The project will mitigate the threat of wildland fire by removing or reducing the black spruce and other fire prone woody fuels adjacent to these targeted neighborhoods. These same areas will be targeted for the distribution of Firewise educational materials reaching 1,000 local residents. Two community workshops will be held at each project site to inform the public about the project and Firewise treatments home owners can implement. Home owners will also be informed of any land owner cost share fuels mitigation programs available through the Division of Forestry.

The Olness East and the Cripple Creek Subdivision projects involve building shaded fuel break through highly flammable black spruce stands. Construction of shaded fuel breaks by a seasonal Forestry crew will entail removal of black spruce, ladder fuels, brush and hazard trees. Leave trees will be left every 20-30 feet; prioritizing birch, aspen, and white spruce as leave trees. Slash will be piled and burned in the fall. Fuel wood (greater than four inch dbh) will be set aside for public use. Fuel breaks will be constructed in a manner to maintain aesthetic values while providing a practical example of Firewise principles in action and will greatly reduce the risk to these subdivisions from wildland fire. These fuels reduction projects will be done in conjunction with other proposed Firewise outreach programs for residents of this and surrounding areas at risk. Firewise educational materials will be distributed over the life of the project to the residents of the subdivisions.

Other venues for outreach include the Tanana Valley State Fair, annual Fairbanks Home Show, Pioneer Park events, public service announcements and postings on Forestry's Facebook page. These efforts are essential for the success of the required multi-level approach for successfully reducing wildland fire risk.

Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) & Homeowner - \$300,000

This project will provide 50/50 cost-share assistance to mitigate hazardous fuels on private parcels in priority zones of concern, with a target of 100 ownerships or 250 acres in the communities of Fairbanks, Ester, North Pole and Fox.

The grant will pay up to \$2,500 per homeowner, which is one-half the cost a typical Fairbanks landowner would pay to clear trees within 100 feet of their home. A fire safe home requires more than just the removal of spruce trees from around the home. A Firewise assessment adapted for Interior Alaska will be used to identify all the concerns facing the homeowner and give an overall fire risk rating for the home. Individual homeowners living in the identified Zones of Concern as identified in the FNSB CWPP maps will be contacted via mail and/or through community meetings and presentations. Presentations will be coordinated with road service meetings and hazardous fuels public meetings, as well as local subdivision meetings to ensure local attendance. Firewise material will be provided through mailings and at presentations and meetings. Per request, individual Firewise home evaluations will be conducted. The homeowner along with the Stewardship Forester will walk the property reviewing the 6 Firewise elements (landscaping, construction, water supply, access / signs, home planning & evacuation planning). The owner will receive both an on spot oral review as well as a comprehensive site specific Wildland Urban Interface Stewardship Plan. During the site visit, the Stewardship Forester along with the owner will identify potential hazardous fuels (including black / white spruce) located within the "ignition zone". Reducing the wildland fire risk within the "ignition zone" will help the owner reduce the vulnerability of the home to wildland fire. The spruce within this zone will be identified for removal and disposal. A WUI cost share fuels reduction grant will be developed, signed and approved with matching share from the property owners coming from hard or soft dollars. Homeowners will either complete the hazardous fuels removal themselves or hire local businesses.

The homeowner is given a year in which to complete the project (with allowable extensions for up to one year). Upon finishing the project, the Stewardship Forester along with the homeowner will review the project for satisfactory completion and request for payment will be forwarded. The owner will be advised that future re-evaluations may be requested for up to 10 years.

2014 Volunteer Fire Assistance Grants to Rural Fire Departments

The Volunteer Fire Assistance program provides funds to increase firefighter safety, improve the firefighting capabilities of rural volunteer fire departments, and enhance protection in the wildland urban interface. The funds come through the U. S. Forest Service and are administered by the Division of Forestry.

In 2014, the VFA Grant Program provided \$294,937.50 to rural fire departments. The division received requests from 35 Volunteer Fire Departments for equipment, training and prevention activities and funded 34 departments.

Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) and Firefighter Property (FFP) Program: The highlight for 2014 is that the FEPP inventory was completed. Also, FEPP program review was conducted by Melissa Frey the U.S. Forest Service program manager, who was accompanied by the Property Management Office from Juneau, Darlene Rilatos. The State FEPP/FFP managers hosted the Forest Service personnel and field visits were made to the Eagle River Fire Center, the Palmer hangar, and the Valdez/Copper River Area. The field trip was made in the FEPP Beaver and the tour included conducting inspections of FEPP property in the McCarthy and Strelina areas. The visit program review was productive and the Division was given several recommendations to improve the program.

Aviation Program

2014 was a busy year for the aviation staff. This marked our twelfth Accident/Incident free year of operation! Congratulations to all in the Aviation Program who helped attain this level of safety. Safety is always our top priority and Training for our fire mission is at the top of the list. Recurrent training was accomplished at the SimCom Professional Training Center for Pilots: Doug Burts, Randy Weber and Aviation Supervisor, Steve Elwell. All did a great, safe and very professional job! Candy Simmons continues to be the glue that holds our administrative requirements together. Steve Edwards and Wes Walker, as always, do the best of maintenance, thanks for the excellent and professional job!

The Aviation Section acquired a second replacement aircraft to complete the transition from the single engine PC-7 aircraft to the Turbo Twin Commander 840 and 1000. This will give the Division greater versatility, speed and training opportunities than we had with the PC-7's. The Division continued the ASM/Lead Plane Bird Dog program to include the continued training of 2 pilots. This was accomplished with the newly acquired Twin Commander 1000 and the previously acquired Twin Commander 840 aircraft. A USFS Federal Excess Property Program DHC-2 "Beaver", and the Division owned Commander 500S, provided logistical support and ATGS training, aerial firing and FLIR mapping missions. Joe Wilson, Aircraft Pilot II, came on board this year and did a great job with these logistical aircraft. The four Division aircraft totaled 582 flight hours.

This fire season was the second year of a five year contract for 2 of the Convair 580, type 2 airtankers supplied by Conair of Abbotsford, BC. One was based in Palmer and the other at the Ladd Army Air Base in Fairbanks. With a tremendous amount of help from the Interagency Air Tanker Board, Conair and the Department of Interior, Aviation Management Directorate, the Convair 580 was given full approval by the Air Tanker Board. This allowed our State contracted airtankers to be used on federally protected lands. These airtankers flew 117 flight hours and dropped over 299,971 gallons of retardant in Alaska.

The Division released these airtankers in late July, and as part of our contract, both airtankers and additional Convair 580 was ordered by the US Forest Service for duty in the lower 48. Through contract extensions, they remained on duty until the end of September.

2014 VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSISTANCE GRANTS

<u>Fire Dept.</u>	<u>Amount Awarded</u>
Anchor Point	\$9,999.60
Bear Creek	\$9,993.00
Butte	\$10,000.00
Chena Goldstream	\$8,642.04
Coffman Cove	\$9,595.00
Cooper Landing	\$10,000.00
Egegik	\$9,575.60
Ester	\$9,000.00
Fort Yukon	\$5,303.96
Gakona	\$10,000.00
Girdwood	\$3,778.57
Gustavus	\$9,600.00
Haines	\$9,750.00
Hollis	\$8,047.55
Houston	\$9,639.00
Kennicott-McCarthy	\$10,000.00
Klawock	\$9,950.00
Lake Louise	\$6,816.00
Mountain Village	\$10,000.00
Niskiski	\$9,925.00
Palmer Fire & Rescue	\$10,000.00
Port Alsworth	\$7,041.60
Rural Deltana	\$10,000.00
Salcha	\$9,978.00
Seldovia	\$3,696.00
Seward	\$9,455.00
Steese	\$10,000.00
Strelina	\$10,000.00
Sutton	\$10,000.00
Thorne Bay	\$3,731.58
Tok	\$8,800.00
Tri Valley	\$7,420.00
Valdez	\$10,000.00

GRANT TOTAL \$294,937.50

Erickson Helicopters provided two long term contracted type 2 helicopters, located in Palmer, Fairbanks. Rogers Helicopters provided three type 2 helicopters, one in Soldotna and one in McGrath, and one in Delta. Temsco helicopters provided our contract helicopter in Tok. These rotorcraft provided platforms for both IA Helitack, and logistical support. Total flight time was 300 hours on these aircraft.

The Northwest Compact was put into use with great effect again this year. During our Funny River and Tyonek fires, a Convair Tanker Group supplied by British Columbia and a 4 skimmer (215T) group from Alberta were requested and put to valuable use. Again this year the 1000 Commander was ordered by the US Forest Service for Lead Plane/ASM duty in the Western US till mid-September.

State Logistics Center

The State Logistics Center started the season providing on site training to the Areas in OLAS, the on-line equipment rental system in conjunction with Transportation providing training in equipment inspections and equipment packets. The advent of the Funny River Fire in the Kenai Kodiak Area changed the focus from training to providing logistical support for the fire. With the Tyonek Fire in the Mat-Su Area at the same time resources were in high demand and short supply, making filling orders challenging.

The Funny River Fire kept State Logistics busy processing orders, mobilizing resources, supporting resources, and demobilizing resources. This is accomplished through coordination with the Area, the Incident Management Team, the Mobilization Center set up in Anchorage, the Buying Team, the Warehouses, Transportation, Cooperators, Vendors, the Alaska Interagency Coordination Center for Federal in state resources and resources outside of Alaska, and the many other people that work behind the scenes providing support for the fire fighters. This same network was also being utilized to support the Tyonek Fire. This was our first opportunity to utilize our expansion room instead of transitioning to the UAF location. The cost savings and safety aspect of developing the capability to expand in place have been well worth the efforts. Having 23 permanent computer stations allows us the capability of supporting multiple large incidents from our current location and quickly paid off.

The remainder of the season the State Logistics Center dispatchers were busy sending resources to Canada and the lower 48 in support of their very active fire season. This support extended all the way into December.



Mary Gaiser, Kenai-Kodiak Admin and Mike Curran, Coastal Region Forester with Funny River Fire start visible behind them.

The Dispatch Center was also utilized in the winter months to provide the Northern Region building occupants a place to work while they were displaced from their own division areas during a carpet renovation project. The continuity of operations provided was very beneficial to all involved.

The State Logistics Center had one dispatcher retire at the end of the fire season and we are welcoming a new dispatcher for the upcoming season. We continue to evolve to serve the Areas needs and provide support every way we can.

State Fire Warehouse System

The State Fire Warehouse System processed over 3000 issues for a total of \$ 14,500,000 in 2014 and supported 118 in-state Incidents. It was an early fire season with most of the supply movement occurring from early May to the middle of June. Total Warehouse activity was well above the 5 year average. The Division borrowed \$ 500,000 worth of supplies from our Federal cooperators at the Alaska Fire Service. We also brought \$ 1,500,000 in supplies and equipment up from the National Fire Cache system in the lower 48. In return we provided \$ 800,000 in support to Lower 48 caches during their busy fire season.

There was substantial movement in personnel in the Fairbanks Warehouse. John Jodwalis Retired and Haakon Dulian took a Mechanic position at the Fairbanks shop. They were replaced by Brandon Siphon and Rob Schneider. Both are first time State employees who have worked as EFF for several years. They bring enthusiasm and a new perspective to the workforce.

**EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:
CINDY FORREST-ELKINS, 30 YEARS**



Cindy began her career in wildland fire with the U.S. Forest Service as a member of a fire suppression crew in the Kootenai and Willamette National Forests. She worked on Mount Henry as a fire look out during the early part of her career. The Look Out is now listed in the National Historic Lookout Register. She also spent time working for the Alaska Fire Service as a Fire Suppression Specialist and Aerial Detection Specialist and the National Park Service as a Naturalist/Interpreter and Back Country Ranger. One of her favorite jobs was working as a Back Country Ranger in Yellowstone National Park.

Cindy began her career with the Division of Forestry in 1984 as the Southcentral Region Training Coordinator. Cindy became the State Training Coordinator in 1993, following the reorganization of the Division and has done an outstanding job of coordinating and managing the Division's Wildland Fire Training Program. She has worked on and seen the evolution of various programs including the Incident Qualification System (IQS), implementation of position task books, and development of online fire and incident command system courses to name a few.

Throughout her career with the Division, she has put a significant effort into providing critically needed wildland fire training to structure fire departments across the state. Cindy has enjoyed work with other State and Local agencies in fire training and incident command system training. She represents the Division on the AWFCG Training Committee and participates in the National Geographic Area Training Representative working group. During her career she has served on Type II Incident Management Teams in Plans and Public Information. She worked with the T-28's with infra-red sensing and mapping.

She has a B.S. in Biological Sciences/Science Education from Oregon State University.

**EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:
ROY JOSEPHSON, 30 YEARS**



Roy joined the Division of Forestry in 1984 in Haines as a Forester II. This beginning to his career was a spring board when a mere month later he was made Acting Haines Area Forester and then officially promoted into the position. During his 30 years as Haines Area Forester he has seen a major change in the forest industry.

Roy has developed a solid management program on the Haines State Forest as well as provided for wildland fire protection and suppression. During 2000 Roy was given the expanded role of Northern Southeast (NSE) Area Forester, taking over all NSE forest practices as well as administering the University of Alaska operations at Icy Bay. In the subsequent five years Roy led some notable special projects for the Division. These included revision of the Haines State Forest Plan, the Southeast Road Condition Survey Project, rewriting sections of the resources PPMs, forest health grant projects on the state forest and rewriting the Division's Reforestation Handbook.

Roy is active in the Haines VFD, which accompanies him as first responders when there are fires in Haines or Skagway. Roy is widely respected throughout the local community, which has been a great asset to the division. Roy is an avid hunter and enjoys spending time with his wife, Brenda playing bridge, fishing, pulling shrimp and crab pots and spending time at their Chilkat Lake cabin. Roy is noted for his excellent attitude and practical "can-do" approach to getting a job done. He is an outstanding forester and an outstanding person to work with.

**EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:
PATRICIA JOYNER, 30 YEARS**



Patricia began state service in 1984 in the Department of Revenue. She joined DNR in 1986 as an Information Officer with the Commissioner's Office, working with all the divisions on publications and public information services. Patricia joined the Division of Forestry in 1992 when DOF launched the Community Forestry Program, although she had assisted with the Community Forestry and bark beetle programs while in the Commissioner's Office.

Patricia helped shape community forestry in Alaska through her work as the Education and Volunteer Coordinator in the early years of the program. After a year as acting Program Coordinator, she was named permanently to that position in 2005.

Patricia works with cities, small towns, institutions, and many partners across the state to support sound management of urban forest ecosystems. She offers training and technical assistance, helps cities complete tree inventories and management plans, celebrates Arbor Day and plants trees, administers grants, and supports citizen groups. She also writes publications, maintains the website and contributes to the division's Facebook page. Patricia has trained professionals and citizens throughout the state on a variety of arboriculture and urban forestry topics.

Patricia has degrees in English and Education and has been an International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist since 1997 and earned the ISA Tree Risk Assessor Qualification in 2014.

Her favorite parts of the job are the variety of activities and people she works with across the state. She finds the opportunity to get out into communities, walk in the woods, learn something new every day, and help people make their communities better places to live keeps life on the job challenging, rewarding, and fun (most of the time).

**EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:
TOM KURTH, 30 YEARS**



Tom Kurth joined the Division of Forestry in 1979 as a Forest Technician working primarily in the aviation section as a retardant and detection specialist. The division was just beginning to build a fire suppression program and the Delta Barley Project fires provided plenty of opportunity for experience. Tom worked as a fire crew member, heli-tack and engine foreman, suppression foreman, and Fire Control Officer for the Fairbanks Area until 1992.

During his tenure, a prescribed fire program for habitat improvement was initiated in conjunction with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game which is still maintained. He was instrumental in the engine replacement program that has successfully upgraded and maintained urban interface response capability. Tom concurrently earned his A.A.S. degree in Fire Science and B.S. Degree in Natural Resources from the University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Tom became the Fire Management Officer for the Northern Region and the Incident Commander for the Alaska Type 2 team, as well Operations and Plans functions for the Alaska Type I team by 2004. As part of the Type I team, he responded to fires, hurricanes (Ivan, Katrina & Rita), earthquakes and all-risk incidents. As a leader during the 2004 fire season, the largest Alaska has ever experienced, Tom not only had direct fire responses but was part of the after action evaluations. He participated in a series of public meetings and consolidated the responses regarding public input and perceptions of fire management that have resulted in major improvements in public communications, evacuation policy and public fire preparedness.

He has been actively involved in the Interior Fire Chiefs (past president) and the State Fire Chiefs Association. He was a support firefighter and lead medic for the Chena Goldstream Fire Department.

Tom is the Alaska Type I team Incident Commander and the IC for one of the two Type II teams. As Chief of Fire and Aviation for the division, his responsibilities are broad, encompassing program management with the legislative and budget components, national participation in fire issues involving NASF and the Western State Fire Managers, negotiations with Alaska Fire Service (BLM), USFS and other federal agencies regarding suppression agreements, and disaster response support both in and out of state.

On a personal note, Tom has been an active member of the Ski Patrol for Moose Mountain for many years. That training helped him save the life of a child whom he resuscitated from drowning at Alyeska. He was recognized by the Interior Fire Chiefs and the media for his quick response and heroism.

Aside from a desire to return to his sailing days, he was a youth hockey coach and has also become a hockey buff, attending his daughter's college games in Minnesota whenever possible. He is also an adjunct faculty member for the University of Alaska's Fire Science program.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION: **PAUL KEACH, 25 YEARS**



Paul was introduced to Forestry in 1990 in Tok while operating a river boat for the Tok River Fire. He spent the summer hauling people and supplies to numerous drop points and spike camps on the Tanana River and Tetlin creek. This provided ample opportunity to socialize with the fire fighters and observe some pretty spectacular fire behavior. There were two things Paul learned that summer, wildland fire is both exciting and lucrative. This spark of opportunity led Paul to spend the next 5 years fighting fires in the summer and attending UAF in the winter. In the spring of 1991 Paul received his red card firefighting certification at the Tok Area Office annual training and was hired on as an Initial Attack Emergency Fire Fighter that summer. The following spring Paul was offered a position on the Copper River #1 crew which was in the process of transitioning into the Tazlina Hotshots IHC. So, Paul spent the next five years fighting fires throughout Alaska, the lower 48, and Canada on the Tazlina Hotshots, and in the spring of 1995 he graduated from UAF in with a B.S. in Natural Resources Management/Forestry.

As a result of a high school hockey injury Paul had surgery on an old wrist injury and would be in a cast for half the summer of 1997, which meant that the hotshot crew was not an option. So, in the spring of 1997 Paul started as a Forest Technician III as the Tok Area Initial attack dispatcher, he worked in that position for 3 seasons, doing fire dispatch in the summer and cruising and laying out timber sale in the spring and fall. Late in the spring of 1999 Paul transferred to the Fairbanks Area office as a Forest Tech III on the initial attack crew. Paul would also extend his season by cruising timber and laying out sales for the Fairbanks Area in the spring and fall. Paul remained there until the creation of the Fairbanks Area AFMO position which he filled in 2004. He remained in that position for 3 years before starting as a Forester II in 2006 working on State wide Inventory projects. He worked in that position until the fall of 2014 when applied for and received the Northern region resource forester position (large project team leader).

**EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:
LISA (BURNS) VIETMEIER, 20 YEARS**

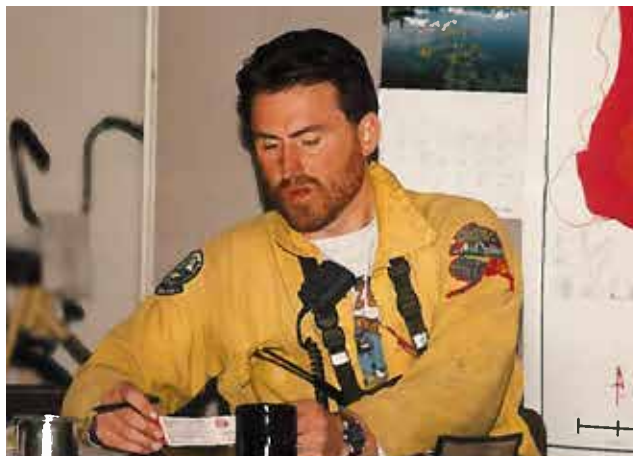


Lisa started her career with the State of Alaska, Department of Public Safety in the spring of 1992 as an Administrative Clerk II, working out of the Palmer Post. She was promoted to an Administrative Clerk III in the fall of 1993, supporting the Fish and Wildlife Troopers out of Aniak, Bethel, Nome, Kotzebue, and McGrath. In February of 1995, Jim Eleazer convinced her to transfer to the Division of Forestry, Big Lake Area Office. Lisa worked in Big Lake from 1995 until 1999; she then left State service for a couple of years to focus on raising her two young children.

In 2001 Lisa returned to Forestry and was rehired into the same position she left two years prior, in what is now known as the Mat-Su Area Office in Palmer. Her position was reclassified to an Administrative Assistant in 2008, where she continues to support the growing Fire Management and Resources Program for the Anchorage/Mat-Su area. Lisa loves her job and the people she works with, and she looks forward to continue being a part of the positive and productive team in the Mat-Su Area Office.

During her free time, Lisa enjoys hiking, mountain biking, and working out. She also treasures the precious time she has with her 18 year old daughter, whom will be heading off to college in the fall as well as with her 16 year old son, who continues to keep her very busy with his high school sports.

**EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:
TOM DEAN, 15 YEARS**



Once upon a time there was a young man named Tom Dean who went forth into the world bright eyed and altruistic – humming a tune of his own composition. Thus began a career that somehow included fire fighting but never overshadowed his beginning as a musical artist and piano composer. Tom went to the Los Angeles Film School, studied piano in Portland and Seattle, and studied Audio Engineering and Music theory at Eastern Washington University. He also pursued a more traditional education and received a degree in Finance from Gonzaga University. Then he did internships with investment firms, deciding that was not the direction he wanted, and returning to musical instrument data interface at Shoreline University in Seattle, Washington. He studied at Fastback Studios in Seattle and most recently has been immersed in Blues Guitar lessons on Maui, Hawaii.

As a firefighter, Tom started in 1974 as an engine crew-member for the State of Washington. He worked for them seasonally, and was successively engine foreman, assistant helicopter foreman, helicopter foreman and Assistant Supervisor a I.R. Crew. A solid grounding for his move to Alaska! Tom started with the Alaska Fire Service in 1985 as a Fire Suppression Specialist and subsequently was Squad Boss and then Crew Supervisor of the Northstar Hotshot Crew, ending as IA Dispatcher at AICC.

Joining Forestry in 1991, Tom has worked seasonally in Fairbanks, Mat/Su and McGrath. His expertise has broadened through IA, Operations, Retardant Base, Air Attack tech, Aviation Manager Tech, Acting FMO, and to his current position as Aviation Manager in McGrath. With the combination of a new direction in music and Hawaii, it may be hard to keep him returning to his regular job in Alaska.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION: CHRIS MAISCH, 15 YEARS



Chris began his forestry career in 1979/80 when he went to work as a forest technician for the University of Michigan on the Huron and Ottawa National Forest spruce budworm research program. He attended Northern Michigan University and the University of Michigan, where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Forestry in 1982.

In 1981 and again in 1982 Chris traveled to Alaska and worked as a forest technician at the Institute of Northern Forestry in forest genetics and silviculture. In the spring of 1983 he accepted a position with the Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc. (TCC) as inventory forester. From 1983 to 1985 he helped establish the inventory program, implementing inventory projects on over 600,000 acres of native land in Interior Alaska. In 1986 he was promoted to Director of the TCC Forestry Program, where he provided professional and technical expertise to 32 villages and village corporations under ANCSA in the Doyon Region. Under his leadership the forestry staff completed eleven inventory projects and utilized a geographic information system to automate the vegetation type mapping program.

In 1990 Chris took a one-year leave of absence from TCC and went to work for Menasha Corporation Land and Timber Division. Menasha established an office in Fairbanks to conduct a feasibility study concerning forest development opportunities for softwood and hardwood chip production and hire Chris to direct and complete the study. Upon completion of the project he formed his own company, Tree Line Consulting, where he worked until he returned to TCC as program director in 1991.

Chris joined the Division as Northern Regional Forester in 1999. His tenure as Regional Forester saw the largest fire season on record in 2004 when 6.2 million acres burned. The record year made Alaska fire management national

news and Chris represented the Division and State with the media, public, State legislators and members of Congress.

In October 2005, Chris was appointed State Forester by the Governor. In that role, he has led the Alaska Board of Forestry and the Governor's Timber Jobs Task Force and represented the State in efforts to expand active forestry in the Tongass National Forest. Under his leadership, the Division was successful in establishing the Southeast State Forest and expanding the Tanana Valley State Forest.

Chris has also been a national leader in forestry, bringing the NASF national meeting to Alaska, serving as President of the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) and twice representing the United States internationally in Rome.

Chris is a member of the Ski Patrol, is a sailing enthusiast (without a boat), and tries hard to get some time in dip-netting, rafting, and hiking at least once each summer – far less than he'd like! He is the only Alaskan State Forester to obtain and maintain an arduous Red Card rating. His family is very important to him - skiing, hiking and rafting with his daughter and son and traveling with his wife Mary.

**EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:
PAT PALKOVIC, 15 YEARS**



Pat came to the Division by a circular route. She started her Alaska forestry career working for the U.S. Forest Service, Ketchikan District timber sale layout crew while the 50-year contracts were still in effect. She moved north to work on the Sitka District layout crew and then took a couple years to work for the PNW Forestry Sciences Laboratory in Juneau while doing research on old partial cuts for her master's studies. After that Pat went back to timber sale layout on the Craig District for one last stop with the Forest Service prior to being hired by the Division in October of 1999.

She was originally hired as the Resource/Forest Practices Forester for the Southern Southeast Area in Ketchikan, but her duties quickly changed to primarily Forest Practices. During the time Pat was the SSE Forest Practices Forester, she processed over 800 notifications and conducted over 450 field inspections. Besides handling the day to day forest practices activity, she was involved with a number of Science & Technical Committees, Watershed Councils, and other forest practices related groups.

Just to keep things interesting, Pat also spent some time on fire assignments as a Dispatch Recorder then a Support Dispatcher. One of her more interesting assignments was working at NICC putting together the National Situation Report.

In February of 2009, Pat became the Acting Area Forester for the Southern Southeast Area. She held this position in addition to her forest practices duties until October of 2009 when she was hired as the Southern Southeast Area Forester. During her time as Area Forester, Pat facilitated the pre-commercial thinning of over 1,800 acres in addition to the sale of over 42,000 mbf of timber generating more than \$3.5 million in stumpage revenue for the State.

**EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:
MIKE ROOS, 15 YEARS**



Mike started at Delta Area Forestry in April of 1980, the year after the State of Alaska assumed fire management responsibilities there from the Bureau of Land Management. Fire aviation was always at the forefront of Mike's professional interests and he qualified as a helicopter manager, helibase manager, and incident commander. He was the first DOF employee to be accepted by the Alaska Smokejumpers and successfully complete training. Mike came back to DOF in 1990 as Delta Area's aviation specialist managing the Type II Helicopter contract, helibase, and fixed-wing retardant site. He went on to qualify as an air tactical group supervisor (ATGS), eventually becoming a charter member of the Alaska Aerial Supervision Module (ASM) program.

Mike moved into dispatch at Delta Area to cover a gap in initial attack dispatch capability and soon was promoted to area logistics coordinator, eventually moving south as the Coastal Region logistics coordinator. He left the DOF to join an effort at the Alaska Division of Emergency Services (ADES) to develop a 24/7 State Emergency Coordination Center. During this time the 9/11 attack occurred and was followed by a national anthrax scare. Mike came back to DOF as the first person to hold the Palmer based air attack position and developed the agreement and operations plan for DOF use of Alaska Army National Guard helicopters for fire suppression and support missions. He then drew on his operations, aviation and logistics background to take on the role of Fire Management Officer for DOF's remote 88 million acre Southwest Area based in McGrath. It is from this position that he retired from state service on July 1st, 2015.

Started as a Tech I with the DOF in April 1980:
Forest Tech I DAF 1980-1981 2 SEASONS
Engine and Helitack Crewmember
Forest Tech II DAF 1983-1985 4 SEASONS
Engine and Helitack Crewmember

Smokejumper, Alaska Fire Service (1986-1990) 4 SEASONS

Fire line explosives (FLE) blaster, paracargo specialist , and operations specialist (box boy)

Forest Tech III DAF (1990 -1993) 4 SEASONS

Area Aviation Specialist 2 SEASONS

Initial Attack dispatcher 2 SEASONS

Forest Tech- IV DAF 1995- 1999 5 SEASONS

Area Logistics Coordinator 1999 -2001

Forester I -Palmer 1999-2001 3 SEASONS

Coastal Region Logistics Coordinator

Emergency Management Specialist Alaska Division of Emergency Services (ADES)

State Emergency Coordination Center (2001)

9/11 and the subsequent Anthrax dilemma.

Forester I Air Attack Coordinator –Palmer 2002

(first in the position)

Advocated for the creation of this position and was the first to hold it. Created the Alaska Army National Guard Military Helicopter Operations Plan and Agreement for use of AKNG Blackhawks for fire suppression and support. Developed and delivered the first (and only to date) Military Helicopter Manager class. Charter member of Alaska Aerial Supervision Module (ASM) Program.

Forester II –McGrath District FMO 2003-2006

Initiated the first Advanced Fire Fighter Academy in the DOF which was financed exclusively through agreements with Alaska Native Regional Non-Profit and Village Corporations. Developed the Yukon Crew with Chugachmiut and BIA.

Initiated and coordinated an interagency effort to change protection levels (Full and Modified to Limited) on 12 million acres of land in Southwest District.

Assistant Fire Management Officer, Alaska Fire Service Military Zone 2006

Alaska Fire Service, Branch Chief, Fire Management Resources 2006 -2013

AFS Duty Office

Fire Specialist Section (FSS)

Crew Section:

Midnight Sun IHC

Chena IHC

Denali IHC

North Star Developmental Crew

Fire Management Officer/Area Manager Southwest Area 2013-2015

2014 ACTUALS

NOTE: Dollar figures are in thousands (e.g., \$40.5 is \$40,500.00)

FUNDING SOURCES	FOREST MGMT & DEVELOPMENT	FIRE PREPAREDNESS	FIRE ACTIVITY	TOTALS
General Funds	\$3,819.7	\$16,892.9	\$49,085.2	\$69,797.8
Federal Funds	\$884.9	\$1,276.5	\$24,735.4	\$26,896.8
Capital Improvement				
Receipts (Fed, GF, & SDPR)	\$200.4	\$595.2		\$795.6
Interagency Receipts	\$806.8	\$869.0		\$1,675.8
Timber Receipts	\$419.0			\$419.0
Other (SDPR)	\$23.8		\$106.5	\$130.3
TOTALS	\$6,154.6*	\$19,633.6	\$73,927.1	\$99,715.3
POSITIONS				
Permanent Full-Time	40	35		75
Permanent Part-Time /Seasonal	4	183		187
Interns	15	2		17

FOREST MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT

RENEWABLE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT & SALES	COASTAL REGION	NORTHERN REGION	STATEWIDE	TOTALS
Board of Forestry			\$22.7	\$22.7
Forest Practices	\$570.7		\$63.0	\$633.7
Forest Management	\$1,180.6	\$775.7	\$1,070.1	\$3,026.4
Anchorage School District Interns	\$52.9			\$52.9
Interagency Receipts	\$58.6	\$25.6	\$684.3	\$768.5
Stat. Desig. Program Receipts (SDPR)	\$13.7		\$10.0	\$23.7
Federal Cooperative Forestry Assistance			\$884.9	\$884.9
Capital Improvement Receipts (Other)	\$59.4	\$3.2	\$137.8	\$200.4
Subtotals	\$1,935.9	\$804.5	\$2,872.8	\$5,613.2
Director's Office			\$503.1	\$503.1
COMPONENT TOTALS	\$1,935.9	\$804.5	\$3,375.9	\$6,116.3*

FIRE SUPPRESSION PREPAREDNESS COMPONENT

	COASTAL REGION	NORTHERN REGION	STATEWIDE	TOTALS
Preparedness	\$4,606.4	\$3,094.7	\$9,191.8	\$16,892.9
Interagency Receipts	\$58.0	\$53.2	\$757.8	\$869.0
Federal Cooperative				
Initial Attack	\$284.9	\$111.5	\$880.1	\$1,276.5
Capital Improvement Receipts (Other)		\$225.0	\$370.2	\$595.2
COMPONENT TOTALS	\$4,949.3	\$3,484.4	\$11,199.9	\$19,633.6

*Revenue from DGGS (\$38.1) and OPMP (.2) were reported in DOF budget in error. Actual DOF costs are identified for Interagency Receipts.

2015 BUDGET

NOTE: Dollar figures are in thousands (e.g., \$40.5 is \$40,500.00)

FUNDING SOURCES	FOREST MGMT & DEVELOPMENT	FIRE PREPAREDNESS	FIRE ACTIVITY	TOTALS
General Funds	\$3,704.2	\$16,992.5	\$6,663.3	\$27,360.0
Federal Funds	\$1,222.6	\$1,467.7	\$11,960.4	\$14,650.7
Capital Improvement				
Receipts (Fed, GF, & SDPR)	\$271.7	\$841.2		\$1,112.9
Interagency Receipts	\$492.4	\$395.5		\$887.9
Timber Receipts	\$848.8			\$848.8
Other (SDPR)	\$55.0		\$1,500.0	\$1,555.0
TOTALS	\$6,594.7	\$19,696.9	\$20,123.7	\$46,415.3
POSITIONS				
Permanent Full-Time	39	32		71
Permanent Part-Time /Seasonal	4	182		186
Non-Permanent	13	2		15

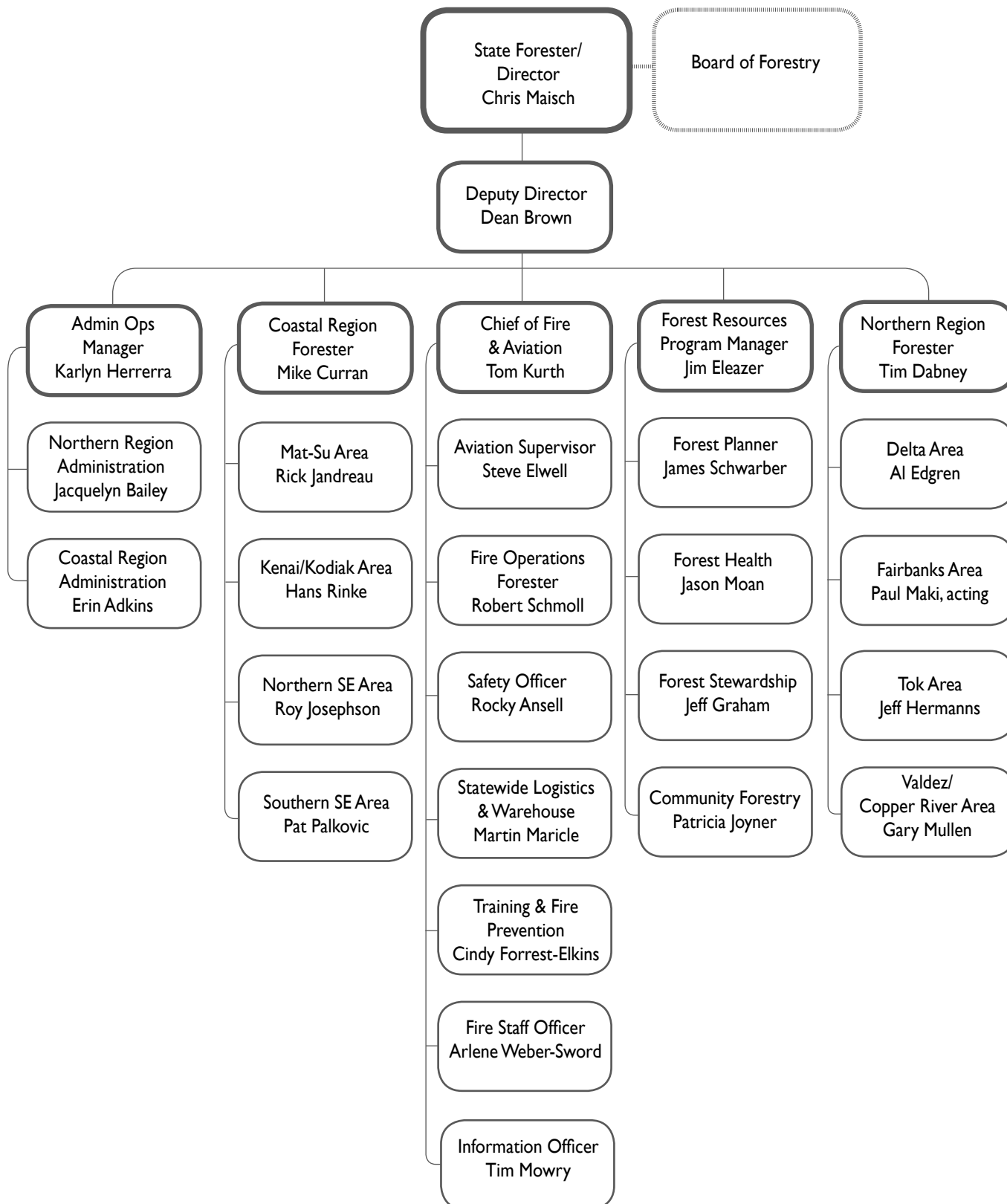
FOREST MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT

RENEWABLE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT & SALES	COASTAL REGION	NORTHERN REGION	STATEWIDE	TOTALS
Board of Forestry			\$16.2	\$16.2
Forest Practices	\$531.7		\$69.9	\$601.6
Forest Management	\$1,416.8	\$743.1	\$1,153.9	\$3,313.8
Anchorage School District Interns	\$53.4			\$53.4
Interagency Receipts			\$492.4	\$492.4
Stat. Desig. Program Receipts (SDPR)			\$55.0	\$55.0
Federal Cooperative Forestry Assistance			\$1,222.6	\$1,222.6
Capital Improvement Receipts (Other)			\$271.7	\$271.7
Subtotals	\$2,001.9	\$743.1	\$3,281.7	\$6,026.7
Director's Office			\$568.0	\$568.0
COMPONENT TOTALS	\$2,001.9	\$743.1	\$3,849.7	\$6,594.7

FIRE SUPPRESSION PREPAREDNESS COMPONENT

	COASTAL REGION	NORTHERN REGION	STATEWIDE	TOTALS
Preparedness	\$4,376.6	\$3,029.3	\$9,586.6	\$16,992.5
Interagency Receipts			\$395.5	\$395.5
Federal Cooperative Forestry Assistance			\$1,467.7	\$1,467.7
Capital Improvement Receipts (Other)			\$841.2	\$841.2
COMPONENT TOTALS	\$4,376.6	\$3,029.3	\$12,291.0	\$19,696.9

DIVISION OF FORESTRY ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



DIVISION OF FORESTRY DIRECTORY

State Forester's Office

550 West Seventh Avenue, Suite 1450
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3566
269-8463 fax: 269-8931

State Forester

John "Chris" Maisch, 451-2666

Deputy State Forester

Dean Brown, 269-8476

Admin. Services Manager

Karlyn Herrera, 269-8477

Chief of Fire and Aviation

Tom Kurth, 451-2675

Forest Resources Program Mgr.

Jim Eleazer, 269-8473

Forest Planning

Jim Schwarber, 451-2704

Community Forestry Program

Patricia Joyner, 269-8465

Forest Health & Protection

(Insects and Disease)

Jason Moan, 269-8460

Forest Stewardship Program

(Landowner Assistance)

101 Airport Road

Palmer, Alaska 99645

Jeff Graham, 761-6309 fax: 761-6201

State Fire Operations

P.O. Box 35005

Ft. Wainwright, Alaska 99703

356-5850 fax: 356-5855

Robert Schmoll, Operations Forester

AICC Logistics: 356-5645

Intelligence: 356-5674

Training, Anchorage: 269-8441

AICC Coordinator: 356-5682

Planner: 356-5858

Fire Behavior: 356-5847

State Fire Support

3700 Airport Way

Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-4699

451-2608 fax: 451-2690

Martin Maricle, State Fire Support

Forester

State Logistics: 451-2680

State Fire Warehouse: 451-2640

Aviation Program

101 Airport Road

Palmer, Alaska 99645

761-6271 Fax: 761-6273

Steve Elwell, Aviation Manager

Northern Aviation Mgmt.: 451-2691

Coastal Aviation Mgmt.: 761-6229

NORTHERN REGION

Northern Region Office

3700 Airport Way

Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-4699

451-2660 fax: 451-2690

Tim Dabney, Regional Forester

Fairbanks Area Office

451-2600 fax: 458-6895

Paul Maki, Area Forester acting

Fire line: 451-2626

Fire Ops. Fax: 451-2633

Logistics: 451-2627

Dispatch: 451-2623

Delta Area Office

P.O. Box 1149

Delta Junction, Alaska 99737

(Mi. 267.5 Richardson Hwy.)

895-4225 fax: 895-2125

Al Edgren, Area Forester

Fire line: 895-4227

Tok Area Office

Box 10 (Mile 123.9 Tok Cutoff)

Tok, Alaska 99780

883-1400 fax: 883-5135

Jeff Hermanns, Area Forester

Fire line: 883-3473

Valdez/Copper River Area Office

P.O. Box 185

Glennallen, Alaska 99588

(Mi. 110 Richardson Hwy.)

822-5534 fax: 822-8600

Gary Mullen, Area Forester

COASTAL REGION

Coastal Region Office

2417 Tongass Ave. Ste 213

Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

225-3070 fax: 247-3070

Michael Curran, Regional Forester

Coastal Region Office, Palmer Branch

101 Airport Road

Palmer, Alaska 99645

Reception 761-6200

Mat-Su/Southwest Area Office

761-6301 Fax 761-6319

Rick Jandreau, Area Forester

Dispatch: 761-6220

Fire line: 761-6311

Burn Permit: 761-6338

Southwest Area Office (Seasonal)

Box 130

McGrath, Alaska 99627

524-3010 fax: 524-3932

Fire Management Officer: Mike Roos

Fire line: 524-3366

Kenai-Kodiak Area Office

42499 Sterling Highway

Soldotna, Alaska 99669

(Mi. 92.5 Sterling Hwy.)

260-4200 fax: 260-4205

Hans Rinke, Area Forester

Fire line: 260-3473

Burn Permit: 260-4269

Dispatch: 260-4232

Northern Southeast Area Office

P.O. Box 263 (Gateway Building)

Haines, Alaska 99827

766-2120 fax: 766-3225

Roy Josephson, Area Forester

Southern Southeast Area Office

2417 Tongass Avenue, Suite 213

Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

225-3070 fax: 247-3070

Pat Palkovic, Area Forester



Top: Funny River Fire, north shore of Tustumena Lake. Photo by Clinton Northway, TCC

Middle: Unknown photographer – Funny River Fire

Bottom: Funny River Fuel Break. Photo by Dean Brown, Funny River Staff Ride



Alaska Department of
**NATURAL
RESOURCES**



The mission of the Division of Forestry is to proudly serve Alaskans through forest management and wildland fire protection.