2015 Annual Report to the Board of Forestry

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Division of Habitat
February 2016
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2015 OVERVIEW

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Division of Habitat submits our annual report to the Alaska Board of Forestry (Board). This report summarizes our January 1 – December 31, 2015 forestry related activities and informs the Board of the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act’s (FRPA) effectiveness at protecting the resources and habitats for which ADF&G is responsible.

Alaska Statutes require ADF&G to manage, protect, maintain, improve, and extend the fish, game, and aquatic plant resources of the state in the interest of the economy and general well-being of the state (AS 16.05.020), to ensure the proper protection of anadromous fish habitat (AS 16.05.871), and to provide fish passage (AS 16.05.841).

On state and municipal lands, FRPA requires allowance be made for important fish and wildlife habitats. The state forester recognizes the expertise of ADF&G with regard to fish and wildlife habitat on all lands with fish habitat as the primary value in riparian areas. ADF&G helps identify and protect important wildlife habitats on private lands, and provides technical expertise for voluntary management techniques that minimize adverse effects on wildlife habitat.

PRIVATE, MUNICIPAL, AND TRUST LAND

Table 1 contains FRPA activity on private and municipal land.

Southeast Region

Craig staff reviewed and commented on sixteen detailed plans of operation (DPOs) for commercial timber harvest, reviewed four requests for variations and six changes in operations, processed twelve renewals, conducted seven FRPA inspections, and issued seven fish habitat permits for timber operations.

Douglas staff reviewed one request for variation, conducted one field inspection, and submitted two updates to the Anadromous Waters Catalog (AWC). At the request of Sealaska Timber Corporation, Douglas staff is working with Wildlife Conservation staff to compile wildlife information for lands recently acquired by Sealaska. This information will be used by Sealaska to develop a forest stewardship plan.

Southcentral Region

Anchorage staff reviewed and commented on four DPOs for commercial timber harvest, five requests for variations, four changes in operations, conducted 15 FRPA inspections, and issued six fish habitat permits.

Kenai Peninsula staff reviewed and commented on three DPO’s for commercial harvest and conducted one FRPA inspection.

Palmer staff reviewed and commented on one DPO for commercial harvest.

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a AS 41.17.060 (c)(7)
b AS 41.17.098 (d)
c AS 41.17.910 (b) and (c).
**Interior Region**

Fairbanks staff reviewed and commented on one DPO for commercial fuelwood harvest on Fairbanks North Star Borough land, three DPOs for commercial fuelwood harvest on University land, and on one DPO and Change in Operations for the first year of hardwood harvest on Gana-A ‘Yoo land for the Sustainable Energy for Galena Alaska’s chip biomass central heating project.

**STATE LAND**

Table 2 contains FRPA activities on state land.

**Southeast Region**

Craig staff reviewed one preliminary best interest finding for the Vallenar Bay timber sale and conducted one inspection.

Douglas and Craig staff reviewed the forest management plan and five year schedule of timber sales for the Southern Southeast State Forest and submitted one update to the AWC on timber lands.

**Southcentral Region**

Kenai Peninsula staff reviewed and commented on one best interest finding and the five year forest management schedule for the Kenai area.

Anchorage and Palmer staff reported no activity.

**Interior Region**

Fairbanks staff reviewed and commented on six best interest findings and seven forest land use plans, participated in two inspections, and issued four fish habitat permits for winter ice bridges for timber harvest access. Personal use firewood harvest continuous to increase in volume in the region, including areas outside of woodlots developed by Division of Forestry area offices. Fairbanks staff reviewed about 50 requests from the Alaska Department of Natural Resources Division of Mining, Land and Water for personal use firewood sales, and two requests for house log sales, outside the Tanana Valley State Forest or other forestry designated state lands.

**FEDERAL LAND**

Table 3 contains activities on federal land.

**Southeast Region**

Craig staff reviewed and commented on three National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents, issued 29 US Forest Service (USFS) concurrences for timber and restoration related activity, and conducted site visits on the North Thorne Timber Sale and Kosciusko Vegetation Management Projects.

Douglas staff reviewed and commented on two NEPA documents and issued 6 concurrences for timber and restoration projects.

**Southcentral Region**

No activity reported.
Interior Region
No activity reported.

FOREST PRACTICES IMPLEMENTATION

ROAD CONDITION SURVEYS
Anchorage staff surveyed crossing structures on Tyonek forest roads with Division of Forestry staff, resulting in one update to the AWC. Palmer staff assisted with a road condition survey on the Zero Lake and Willer Cash forest road systems. Douglas staff surveyed crossing structures on forest roads in the Haines State Forest.

REGION II & III REFORESTATION SCIENCE & TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
Fairbanks and Division of Forestry staff co-chaired the Region II & III Reforestation Science and Technical Committee, holding seven committee meetings in 2015 and presenting consensus-based results to the Board at their November 12, 2015 meeting. The Board accepted the committee’s recommendations, and directed the co-chairs to convene an implementation group to develop appropriate recommendations for changes to statute or regulation, or development of best management practices, guidelines, or training materials.

SPECIAL PROJECTS 2015

ANADROMOUS WATERS CATALOG
Anchorage staff documented anadromous water bodies on Afognak Island on private land. The work, partially funded by the Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund (AKSSF), resulted in 54 additions and 12 corrections to the AWC (Frost 2015).

TONGASS COMPLIANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS MONITORING
Douglas staff participated in an annual effectiveness monitoring trip to the Tonka Timber Sale on Mitkof Island.

TONGASS FISH PASSAGE
The USFS and southeast region staff continue to work together to evaluate fish passage across the Tongass National Forest and prioritize fish passage restoration projects. Douglas staff issued a concurrence for blasting a fish pass at Davidson Creek on the Juneau Ranger District and was onsite to monitor during implementation. Douglas staff also issued a general concurrence to the USFS for maintenance and replacement of culverts and bridges with stream simulation design structures.

BUDGET AND PERSONNEL

BUDGET
ADF&G funding for FRPA activities conducted during calendar year 2015 came from state general funds. The Division of Forestry provided partial funding for our work on the Region II and III Reforestation Science and Technical Committee. The AKSSF provided partial funding to identify and nominate freshwater anadromous fish habitat to the Anadromous Waters Catalog in areas where we anticipate timber harvest.
PERSONNEL

Resignations
Bill Morris, Fish and Game Coordinator, Fairbanks
Laura Jacobs, Habitat Biologist III, Fairbanks
Brad Wendling, Habitat Biologist III, Fairbanks
Samantha Lannet, Administrative Assistant III, Fairbanks
Patti Berkahn, Habitat Biologist III, Kenai
Matthew Kern, Habitat Biologist II, Juneau
Tess Quinn, Fish & Wildlife Technician IV, Juneau
Gordon Willson-Naranjo, Habitat Biologist II, Juneau

New Hires
David Rogers, Director, Juneau
Audra Brase, Fish and Game Coordinator, Fairbanks
Bonnie Templin, Fish and Game Program Technician, Kenai

STATEMENT OF FRPA EFFECTIVENESS

ADF&G considers FRPA and its regulations effective for maintaining fish habitat within the classified surface water types during forestry related activities. The Division of Habitat works cooperatively with the Division of Forestry, the Department of Environmental Conservation, landowners and operators to implement FRPA to protect fish habitat, water quality, and important wildlife habitat from the adverse effects of timber harvest activities.

CALENDAR YEAR 2016

WORKLOAD PRIORITIES

Participating in FRPA remains a Division of Habitat workload priority, in addition to anadromous waters cataloging, fish habitat permitting, special area planning and permitting, monitoring large projects of importance to the state, and conducting research to aid in permitting decisions.

ANADROMOUS WATERS CATALOG

Douglas staff received a three year grant from the AKSSF, and will be documenting anadromous water bodies on southeast private and state timber lands to protect the primary value in riparian areas.

TONGASS FOREST PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Douglas staff submitted comments on the Proposed Forest Plan Amendment that were incorporated into the state’s consolidated comment letter to the USFS.

TONGASS FISH PASSAGE

Douglas staff is re-issuing a general concurrence to the USFS for maintenance and replacement of culverts and bridges with stream simulation design structures.
**Budget**

Though FRPA remains a Habitat Division workload priority, additional decreases in our FY17 budget may limit our ability to participate in the program.

**REFERENCE**

Table 1.—FRPA activities on private, municipal, and trust land.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>DPO</th>
<th>Renewals</th>
<th>Change in Operations</th>
<th>Variation Requests</th>
<th>Variation Inspections</th>
<th>Other FRPA Inspections</th>
<th>FHPs Issued</th>
<th>AWC Updates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>Big Salt – Sealaska land</td>
<td>Tolstoi Bay – Sealaska land</td>
<td>Crackerjack Creek – Hyak Mining land</td>
<td>Election Creek –</td>
<td>Election Creek –</td>
<td>Cleveland Peninsula –</td>
<td>Election Creek –</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>Cleveland Peninsula – Sealaska land (6)</td>
<td>Crackerjack Creek – Hyak Mining land</td>
<td>Election Creek – Sealaska land (3)</td>
<td>Sealaska land (4)</td>
<td>Sealaska Lands (4)</td>
<td>Control Lake – MHT land</td>
<td>Sealaska land</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edna Bay – (UA) land (2)</td>
<td>Ham Cove – Sealaska land (3)</td>
<td>Edna Bay – AMHT land</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tolstoi Bay – Sealaska land</td>
<td>Control Lake – AMHT land</td>
<td>Cleveland Peninsula – Sealaska land</td>
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<td>Election Creek – Sealaska land (5)</td>
<td>Cleveland Peninsula – Sealaska land</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crackerjack Creek – Hyak Mining land</td>
<td>Port St. Nicholas – Shaan Seet land</td>
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<td>Northern</td>
<td>(Mental Health Trust – Haines)</td>
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<td>Southeast</td>
<td>Hillside 2 - CIRI land</td>
<td>Election Creek - Sealaska land</td>
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<td>Kenai</td>
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<td>Post-timber salvage site inspection - KPB land</td>
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<td>Anchorage</td>
<td>Endurance Timber Sale - Leisnoi Inc land</td>
<td>Koncor Inc - Natives of Kodiak Island land</td>
<td>Koniai North Units - ANC land (2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Koniag Timber Sale - Koniag Inc land (2)</td>
<td>Endurance Timber Sale - Leisnoi Inc land (2)</td>
<td>Koniag North Units - ANC land (2)</td>
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<td>Koncor Inc. - Natives of Kodiak land</td>
<td>Koniag North Units - ANC land</td>
<td>Koniag North Units - ANC land (2)</td>
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<td>Leisnoi Inc land (2)</td>
<td>Koniag Inc Timber Sale - Koniag Inc Lands (5)</td>
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<td>Koniag - Natives of Kodiak Units KK-KON-015-01 and Ouzinkie Native Corp. KK-KON-014-01 (5)</td>
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<td>Koncor Inc - Natives of Kodiak</td>
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Table 1.—Continued.

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<tr>
<th>Fairbanks</th>
<th>FAS-15-03-01 UA-01-F</th>
<th>Standard East - UA land</th>
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<td>FAS-04-01 UA-02-F</td>
<td>Teklanika River - UA land</td>
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<td>FAS-15-05-01 UA-03-F</td>
<td>Cache Creek - UA land</td>
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<td>NRO 2015-01 Johnson Rd #3 - FNSB land</td>
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<td>NRO 2015-02 SEGA</td>
<td>2015/16 - Gana-A 'Yoo land</td>
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Table 2.—FRPA activities on state land.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>BIFS</th>
<th>SFMP</th>
<th>FYSTS</th>
<th>FLUP</th>
<th>Personal Use Firewood</th>
<th>House Log Sales</th>
<th>FRPA Inspections</th>
<th>FHPs Issued</th>
<th>AWC Updates</th>
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<td>Southern</td>
<td>Vallenar Bay</td>
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<td>Gravina Island</td>
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<td>Kenai</td>
<td>Mile 127 and Garden</td>
<td>Kenai Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fairbanks</td>
<td>Anderson West</td>
<td>NC-1403-F Anderson Spruce #1</td>
<td>~50 on state land not in TVSF and not classified Forestry*</td>
<td>2 on state land not in TVSF and not classified Forestry**</td>
<td>NC-1344-F Nenana Spruce #3</td>
<td>NC-1196-F Black Lake #3 (2)</td>
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<td>Little Ag</td>
<td>NC-1289-F Little Ag Spruce</td>
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<td>Spruce</td>
<td>NC-1546-F Mosquito Saddle</td>
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<td>Nenana Ridge</td>
<td>NC-1256-F Pocket Spruce</td>
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<td>Salcha Flood</td>
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<td>NC-1400-F Section House Spruce</td>
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<td>Section House</td>
<td>NC-1591-F Long-Term Value-Added Negotiated TS Units 1, 2, 5, and 6</td>
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*Considered out-of-area and handled by DMLW; does not include woodlots that are developed and permitted by DOF on forest lands.

**Considered out-of-area and handled by DMLW; does not include woodlots that are developed and permitted by DOF on forest lands. Usually overlaps with personal use firewood harvest.
Table 3.—Activities on federal land.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>NEPA</th>
<th>Field Visits</th>
<th>Concurrences</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Southern Southeast</strong></td>
<td>Saddle Lakes FEIS - KMRD</td>
<td>Kosciusko TS - TBRD</td>
<td>Prince of Wales Island Bridges (10) - TBRD</td>
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<td>Kosciusko Island TS - TBRD</td>
<td>Big Thorne TS - TBRD</td>
<td>Prince of Wales Island Culverts (12) - TBRD</td>
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<td>Big Thorne TS - TBRD</td>
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<td>Prince of Wales Island Restorations (5) - TBRD</td>
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<td>Prince of Wales Island Stream Crossing - TBRD</td>
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<td>Shrimp Bay Bridge - KMRD</td>
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<td><strong>Northern Southeast</strong></td>
<td>Boom Chain TS - HRD</td>
<td>Tonka TS - PRD</td>
<td>Chichagof Island Bridges (3) - SRD</td>
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<td>Mitkof Island Small Sales EA - PRD</td>
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<td>Kuiu Island Culvert - PRD</td>
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<td>Tonka Road Bridge - PRD</td>
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<td>Kuiu Island Bridges - PRD</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Email Cc:

- Marty Welbourn Freeman, ADNR DOF, Anchorage
- Jim Eleazer, ADNR DOF, Anchorage
- Kevin Hanley, ADEC, Juneau
- David Rogers, ADF&G Habitat, Juneau
- Al Ott, ADF&G Habitat, Fairbanks
- Audra Brase, ADF&G Habitat, Fairbanks
- Jim Durst, ADF&G Habitat, Fairbanks
- Mike Bethe, ADF&G Habitat, Palmer
- Mike Daigneault, ADF&G Habitat, Anchorage
- Will Frost, ADF&G Habitat, Anchorage
- Ginny Litchfield, ADF&G Habitat, Soldotna
- Jackie Timothy, ADF&G Habitat, Douglas
- Greg Albrecht, ADF&G Habitat, Douglas
- Mark Minnillo, ADF&G Habitat, Craig