

2016 Annual Report to the Board of Forestry



Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Division of Habitat
March 2017

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2016 OVERVIEW

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Division of Habitat submits our 2016 annual report to the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR). This report summarizes our January 1 – December 31, 2016 forestry related activities and informs the Board of Forestry of the effectiveness of the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (FRPA) at protecting the resources and habitats for which ADF&G has responsibility.

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^a requires that 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.^b 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.^c

PRIVATE AND MUNICIPAL LAND

Table 1 contains FRPA activity on private and municipal land.

Southeast Region

Craig staff reviewed and commented on 17 detailed plans of operation (DPOs) for commercial timber harvest, reviewed three requests for variations and nine changes in operations, processed five renewals, conducted 10 FRPA inspections, and issued five fish habitat permits for timber operations.

Douglas staff conducted two FRPA inspections in northern and southern southeast. Staff surveyed 118 drainages, and submitted 36 Anadromous Waters Catalog (AWC) updates on privately held timber lands on Prince of Wales Island.

Southcentral Region

Anchorage staff reviewed and commented on five DPOs for commercial timber harvest, one request for variations, three changes in operations, conducted 11 FRPA inspections, issued 13 fish habitat permits and submitted 55 AWC updates in timber sale areas.

Kenai Peninsula staff reviewed and commented on two DPO's on municipal and private lands.

Palmer staff reported no activity.

Interior Region

Fairbanks staff reviewed and commented on two DPOs: one for sawtimber harvest on Toghothlele Corporation lands and the other for a second year of winter hardwood harvest on Gana-A 'Yoo land for the Sustainable Energy for Galena Alaska (SEGA) chip biomass central heating project.

^a AS 41.17.060 (c)(7)

^b AS 41.17.098 (d)

^c AS 41.17.910 (b) and (c).

STATE LAND

Table 2 contains FRPA activities on State land.

Southeast Region

Craig staff reviewed one preliminary best interest finding for the North Hollis Timber Sale and conducted one inspection.

Douglas staff reviewed and commented on one Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) for the Baby Brown Timber Sale, surveyed 32 drainages, and submitted 18 AWC updates on State Forest lands.

Southcentral Region

Kenai, Anchorage, and Palmer Staff reported no activity.

Interior Region

Fairbanks staff reviewed and commented on one forest land use plan and issued three fish habitat permits for winter ice bridges in the Tok/Copper River Area. For the Fairbanks/Delta Area, Fairbanks staff reviewed and commented on a five-year schedule of timber harvests, five best interest findings, three forest land use plans, and a site-specific classification of state land near Galena. Personal use firewood and house log harvest reviews (DMLW-coordinated activities outside FRPA), decreased by more than half from 2015 levels.

FEDERAL LAND

Table 3 contains activities on federal land.

Southeast Region

Craig staff issued three USFS concurrences for timber and restoration related activity on Prince of Wales Island, participated in a BMP monitoring trip of the boat ramp and water supply at the El Capitan cave, and conducted site visits of four proposed FS timber related projects.

Douglas staff reviewed and commented on four NEPA documents, issued 10 concurrences for timber and restoration related activity, and participated in a two day BMP monitoring trip to the Big Timber Sale.

Southcentral Region

No activity reported.

Interior Region

No activity reported.

FOREST PRACTICES IMPLEMENTATION

COMPLIANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS MONITORING

Habitat staff participated with the Division of Forestry monitoring FRPA compliance and effectiveness.

ROAD CONDITION SURVEYS

Anchorage staff surveyed crossing structures on forest roads with Division of Forestry staff funded in part by the AKSSF resulting in one update to the AWC.

REGION II & III REFORESTATION SCIENCE & TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Fairbanks staff and Division of Forestry staff co-chaired the Region II & III Reforestation Implementation Group, holding four group meetings in 2016, presenting consensus-based results to the Board at their August 11 and December 13, 2016 meetings, and assisting with preparation of draft regulations to implement the Board-endorsed recommendations.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

ANADROMOUS WATERS CATALOG

Douglas staff began field work on a three year grant from the AKSSF to document anadromous water bodies on private and state timber lands in southeast. Staff surveyed 148 drainages and submitted 54 updates to the AWC on Prince of Wales Island timber lands.

Anchorage staff documented anadromous water bodies on Kodiak and Afognak Islands on private land. The work, partially funded by the AKSF, resulted in 55 additions and 13 corrections to the AWC in 2016 (Frost 2017).

TONGASS FOREST PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Southeast Region staff submitted comments on the Proposed Forest Plan Amendment and Tongass-wide Monitoring Plan.

TONGASS COMPLIANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS MONITORING

Southeast Region staff participated in an annual effectiveness monitoring trip to the Big Thorne Timber Sale on Prince of Wales Island.

TONGASS FISH PASSAGE

The USFS and ADF&G continue to work together to evaluate fish passage across the Tongass National Forest and prioritize fish passage restoration projects. The Douglas Regional office reissued a general concurrence to the US Forest Service for maintenance and replacement of culverts and bridges with stream simulation design structures. This authorization eliminates the need for individual permit review while providing an incentive to use fish friendly 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

None

New Hires

Evan Fritz, Habitat Biologist I, Juneau

Connor Fish, Seasonal Fish and Wildlife Technician, Juneau

Luke Byker, Habitat Biologist I, Soldotna

PCN Transfer

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 important fish habitat, water quality, and important wildlife habitat from the effects of timber harvest activities.

CALENDAR YEAR 2017

WORKLOAD PRIORITIES

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

Habitat staff will continue to work with other ADF&G divisions and the Division of Forestry to identify fish-bearing waters potentially affected by FRPA-related activities, and facilitate FRPA-directed efforts regarding important wildlife habitat.

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

If requested, the Division of Habitat will participate in Division of Forestry sponsored training for agency staff and operators to describe fish habitat permitting under the Anadromous Fish and Fishway Acts, including strategies to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts to fish and fish habitat.

REFERENCE

Frost, W.D. 2015. Fish presence surveys in proposed timber harvest areas, Afognak and Kodiak Islands, 2012-2014. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Draft Technical Report, Anchorage.

Table 1.–FRPA activities on private and municipal land.

Area	DPO	Renewals	Change in Operations	Variation Requests	Variation Inspections	Other FRPA Inspections	FHPs Issued	AWC Updates
Southern Southeast	Blank Inlet – KTN Borough		Crackerjack Creek- Hyak Mining land	Election Creek – Sealaska land	Election Creek – Sealaska Lands	Election Creek - Sealaska land	Election Creek – Sealaska land (2)	
	Cleveland Peninsula – Sealaska lands (4)	Crackerjack Creek – Hyak Mining land	Election Creek – Sealaska land (3)	Polk Inlet - Sealaska	Polk Inlet - Sealaska		Polk Inlet – Sealaska (3)	
	Polk Inlet – Sealaska (4)		Edna Bay – AMHT land					
	Keete Inlet – Sealaska		Cleveland Peninsula – Sealaska land					
	Election Creek – Sealaska land (3)	Cleveland Peninsula- Sealaska land (3)	Polk Inlet - Sealaska					
	Gravina Island – KTN Borough							
	Copper Mountain – Sealaksa							
Nutkwa - Sealaska								
Northern Southeast						Polk Inlet – Sealaska Land		2
						Haines Highway – MHT Land		
Kenai	M.H.1 – AMHT Land							
	Fritz Creek – Kenai Peninsula Borough Land							
Anchorage	Endurance Timber Sale - Lesnoi Inc land		Koncor Inc – Ouzinkie Natives Corp (1)land	Kodiak Island Borough Fire Salvage KIB land	Kodiak Island Borough FireSalvage KIB land	Endurance Timber Sale - Lesnoi Inc land (5)	KIB (1)	54
	Koniag Timber Sale - Koniag Inc land (2)		Endurance Timber Sale - Leisnoi Inc land (1)			Koniag Inc Timber Sale - Koniag Inc Lands (5)	Koniag North – ANC (5)	

Table 1 Continued.

Anchorage	Koncor Inc. - Natives of Kodiak land Kodiak Island Borough (KIB) Fire Salvage KIB land	Koniag North Units - ANC land	Koncor - Natives of Kodiak and Ozinkie Native Corp. KIB (5)	Koncor Inc (6)
Fairbanks	FAS-16-02-01 SEGA 2016-2017 Winter Harvest Gana-A 'Yoo land NRO 2016-01 Toghotthele Gate #4 Spruce- Toghotthele Corp. land			

Table 2.—FRPA activities on State land.

Area	BIFS	SFMP	FYSTS	FLUP	Personal Use Firewood	House Log Sales	FRPA Inspections	FHPs Issued	AWC Updates
Southern Southeast	Vallenar Bay						Gravina Island	Gravina Island (4)	
Northern Southeast				Baby Brown Timber Sale					1
Kenai	Mile 127 and Garden		Kenai Area						
Fairbanks	Healy Lake Fire Salvage		Fairbanks/Delta Area	NC-1139-T Porcupine Ridge North Salvage	12 on state land not in TVSF and not classified Forestry*	1 on state land not in TVSF and not classified Forestry**	Cache Creek Road	Tanana R Ice xing	
	Dark Side Birch			NC-1544-F Dark Side Birch				Tok R ice xings (2)	
	Hastings Salvage #1			NC-1551-F Hastings Salvage #1					

Table 2 Continued

Fairbanks	Skinny's Spruce	NC-1578-F Skinny's Spruce	-
	Serpentine Island Area Timber Sales and Site Specific Classification		

*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.

Area	NEPA	Field Visits	Concurrences
Southern Southeast			Prince of Wales Island Dock - TBRD Prince of Wales Island Culvert1) - TBRD Prince of Wales Island Beaver Dam Removal - TBRD
Northern Southeast	-Forest Plan Amendment - Tongass -Monitoring Plan – Tongass Wrangell Island TS – WRD Saginaw Creek Restoration - PRD	-Thorn TS - TBRD	-Bridges (2) - PRD -Island Bridges (3) - PRD -Kruzof Island Restoration (3) - SRD -Forest-wide General Concurrence

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