

2018 Annual Report to the Board of Forestry



Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Division of Habitat
April 2019

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2018 OVERVIEW

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Division of Habitat submits our 2018 annual report to the Board of Forestry. This report summarizes our January 1 – December 31, 2018 forestry related activities and informs the Board of Forestry of Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (FRPA) effectiveness 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 public lands, FRPA^a requires the maintenance of important fish and wildlife habitats. The state forester recognizes the expertise of ADF&G regarding 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, municipal, and trust land.

Southeast Region

Craig staff reviewed and commented on 14 detailed plans of operation (DPOs) for commercial timber harvest, reviewed seven changes in operations, processed 13 renewals, and conducted seven FRPA inspections.

Douglas staff commented on one DPO for Mental Health Trust in Gustavus, nine DPOs for timber operations in Icy Bay; issued 16 Fish Habitat permits to Mental Health Trust and Sealaska Timber for bridges, culverts, and stream crossings in Icy Bay and surveyed 114 drainages on private timber lands in Southern Southeast and 10 drainages on University of Alaska land in Haines where future harvest may occur.

Southcentral Region

Anchorage staff reviewed and commented on two DPOs for commercial timber harvest, conducted three FRPA inspections, and issued two fish habitat permits.

Soldotna staff reviewed and commented on one DPO.

Palmer staff conducted two FRPA inspections and provided comments on one DPO for commercial timber harvest on Mat-Su Borough land.

Interior Region

One DPO was reviewed for the interior region.

^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 and commented on the 5-year Schedule of Timber Sales (FYSTS), the Draft Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) for the Vallenar Bay Timber Sale, and conducted one FRPA site visit. Staff issued a Fish Habitat permit for structure removal on 2.5 miles of road closure in the Pat Creek watershed on Wrangell Island in the SE State Forest.

Douglas staff surveyed 57 drainages on State land in Southern Southeast where future harvest may occur.

Southcentral Region

Palmer staff permitted the removal of a culvert for the close-out of a commercial timber harvest on state land.

Soldotna and Anchorage staff reported no activity.

Interior Region

Fairbanks staff reviewed and commented on three best interest findings, three FLUPs, one FYSTS, four personal use firewood permits, and issued two fish habitat permits for winter equipment crossings.

FEDERAL LAND

Table 3 contains activities on federal land.

Southeast Region

Craig staff issued 11 general concurrences for culvert installations and 3 concurrences for bridge installations on Prince of Wales Island; conducted two inspections of restoration projects in the Stoney Creek watershed; and provided comments on the proposed Prince of Wales Landscape Level Analysis and the Vallenar Second-Growth Project.

Douglas staff issued a general concurrence for stream restoration projects using only hand tools in areas affected by forestry activities; and provided comments on the proposed Central Tongass Landscape Level Analysis.

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.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

ANADROMOUS WATERS CATALOG

Douglas staff continued field work on a three-year grant from the Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund to document anadromous water bodies on private and state timber lands in Southeast Alaska. Staff surveyed 181 drainages and submitted 94 updates to the Anadromous Waters Catalog (AWC) on Southern Southeast timber lands. Palmer staff submitted one update to the AWC. Anchorage staff worked on a one year grant from the Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund to document anadromous water bodies on Afognak Native Corp lands in the Kodiak Archipelago. Staff surveyed 20 watersheds on Afognak Island, Whale Island, and Kodiak Island, and submitted 35 updates to the AWC.

TONGASS COMPLIANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS MONITORING

In a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Division of Habitat and USFS Alaska Region, USFS Agreement No. 14-MU-11100100-015, ADF&G agrees to participate annually in BMP monitoring field visits.

TONGASS FISH PASSAGE

ADF&G continues to work with the USFS to evaluate fish passage across the forest and prioritize fish passage restoration projects.

BUDGET AND PERSONNEL

BUDGET

ADF&G funding for FRPA activities conducted during calendar year 2018 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 Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund provided partial funding to identify and nominate freshwater anadromous fish habitat to the AWC in areas where we anticipate timber harvest.

PERSONNEL

New Hires

Ron Benkert, Southcentral Regional Supervisor, Anchorage
Jesse Lindgren, Habitat Biologist I, Douglas
Chad Bear, Habitat Biologist I, Fairbanks
Ben Landes, Seasonal Fish and Wildlife Technician, Douglas
Jonathan Kirsch, Mat-Su Area Manager, Palmer
Sarah Wilber, Habitat Biologist III, Palmer
Scott Graziano, Habitat Biologist II, Anchorage

Resignations

Jackie Timothy, Southeast Regional Supervisor, Douglas
Johnny Zutz, Habitat Biologist II, Douglas
Ron Benkert, Area Manager, Palmer
Jonathan Kirsch, Habitat Biologist III, Palmer
Sarah Wilber, Habitat Biologist II, Palmer
Jim Durst, Habitat Biologist III, Fairbanks

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 2018

WORKLOAD PRIORITIES

FRPA participation remains a Division of Habitat workload priority 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. Division of Habitat staff continues to work with the Divisions of Sport Fish, Commercial Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation, and the Division of Forestry, to identify fish bearing waters and important wildlife habitat on timberlands, participate in forestry reviews, and conduct forestry related fieldwork.

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

If requested, the Division of Habitat will participate in (or lead) Division of Forestry-sponsored training for agency staff and operators to describe fish habitat permitting under the Anadromous Fish and Fishway Acts and strategies to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts to important fish and wildlife resources and habitats.

Fairbanks staff continues to assist Division of Wildlife Conservation staff with updating important habitat components, concerns, and harvest techniques for loggers and personal use firewood harvesters for consistency with our comments to DOF and provide information to the public for practices of “good stewardship” when harvesting forest resources.

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

Area	DPO	Renewals	Change in Operations	Variation Requests	Variation Inspections	Other FRPA Inspections	FHPs Issued	AWC Updates
Southern Southeast	Keete Inlet (1) – STC	Keete Inlet (1) – STC	Keete Inlet (4) – STC					
	Polk Inlet (2) – STC	McKenzie Inlet (1) – STC	Polk Inlet (1) -- STC					
	Tuxekan (5) – STC	Edna Bay (1) – STC	Straw Island (1) -- Alcan					
	McKenzie Inlet (6) – STC	Tuxekan Island (1) – STC	Tuxekan (1) – STC					
Northern Southeast	Icy Bay (9) – STC						Icy Bay – TLO & STC (16)	53
Soldotna	Greer Road - KPB							
Palmer	Mat-Su Borough					Chijuk Timber Sale		1
Anchorage	Koncor Timber Sale – Land (K-KON-018-01) and KK-KON-018-03)					Koniag – Koniag Inc. (5) Koncor Natives of Kodiak and Ozinkie Native Corp and Koniag lands (3)	Koncor (2)	35
Fairbanks	Gana-A`Yoo, Limited					SEGA 2018-19 Winter Timber Harvest, Sustainable Energy for Galens, AK, Inc.		

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			Southern Southeast				Gravina Island (3)		
Northern Southeast									41
Soldotna									
Palmer								Culvert Removal	
Anchorage									
Fairbanks	Caribou-Glacier			NC-1374-D				Tanana River Ice Crossing	
	Rowland #1			NC-1512-D				Moon Lake Ice Crossing	
	Standard Creek 6-Mile			NC-1614-F					

Table 3.–Activities on federal land.

Area	NEPA	Field Visits	Concurrences
Southern Southeast	Prince of Wales LLA -- TRD Vallenar Young Growth -- KMRD	Restoration Inspection (2) – TRD	Bridges (3) -- TRD General Concurrences for Culverts (11) – TRD
Northern Southeast			General Concurrence for Restoration (1)

Email Cc:

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