

DELTA AREA FORESTRY

FIVE-YEAR SCHEDULE OF TIMBER SALES  
FISCAL YEARS 2008 TO 2012

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT REPORT

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FIVE-YEAR SCHEDULE OF TIMBER SALES

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This Five-Year Schedule of Timber Sales provides information about timber sales and associated road construction and reforestation activities in the Delta Management Area.

The forest management activities identified in this Five-Year Schedule of Timber Sales are consistent with the Tanana Basin Area Plan (TBAP) and the Tanana Valley State Forest Plan (TVSF). The TBAP and TVSF plans cover approximately 2.6 million acres of State lands in the Delta Area.

**HARVEST SCHEDULE SUMMARY**

The following tables identify the timber sales that are proposed during the next five years. The amount to be offered is dependent upon funding. The FY 09 sales that would require additional funding are identified separately. The funding levels are not predicted for FY 10-12. Additional information about the allowable harvest is in the schedule.

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>No. of Sales</u>	W. Spruce	White Spruce	Birch and Aspen Cubic Feet Volume	Total Acres to Be Harvested
		Cubic Foot Sawlog and Fiber Volume	Sawlog Volume In MBF		
08	6	1,436,000	4,786	40,000	705
09	1	600,000	2,000	75,000	250
**	7	1,040,000	3,466	975,000	1,070
10	8	1,160,000	3,866	150,000	670
11	8	1,840,000	6,133	1,715,000	2,050
12	<u>9</u>	<u>2,170,000</u>	<u>7,233</u>	<u>220,000</u>	<u>1,120</u>
TOTAL	39	8,246,000	27,484	3,175,000	5,865

\*\* Sale Proposals are dependent upon funding and market.

**TRANSPORTATION SCHEDULE SUMMARY**

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>All Season Road</u>		<u>Winter Road</u>	
	Construction	Maintenance	Construction	Maintenance
2008	5.5 Miles	23 miles	0.3 miles	3 miles

In addition to timber harvesting, the Delta Area is planning to construct a total of 5.8 miles of all-season and winter roads during the first year of the schedule. An average of 7 miles of construction per year is anticipated during the next 4 years. New areas of construction are anticipated near the Gerstle River, north side of Shaw Creek, near Black Lake, north of Quartz lake in the Indian Creek and Rapid Creek drainages, on the west side of the Delta River, on the west side of Delta Creek and on the north side of Caribou Creek. A Transportation Schedule is not included for years 2009 thru 2012 because it has proven to be too variable to estimate construction for more than one year.

## REFORESTATION SCHEDULE SUMMARY

Fiscal Year	Scarification	Plant	Cost	No. of Seedlings
2008	135 acres	0	\$12,800	0

The majority of the harvested areas are reforested naturally. Careful logging practices protect seedling, sapling, pole timber, and seed trees. Spruce seedlings are planted to augment the natural regeneration on specific sites when necessary. No planting is scheduled for FY 2008 because recent harvesting occurred on sites that are anticipated to reforest naturally from the surrounding forest.

Scarification is not a standard practice but it is employed where deemed necessary to ensure reforestation. Sale areas are examined frequently after harvest to evaluate reforestation success. Areas needing additional stocking are planted during the 6<sup>th</sup> year after harvesting has been completed. Due to the variability of the reforestation needs, the reforestation schedule is projected for only the first year.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This Five-Year Schedule of Timber Sales provides information to the public concerning development and use of the state's forest resources for the period July 2008 – June 2012. The Five-Year Schedule of Timber Sales (FYSTS) meets the Forest Resources and Practices Act requirements and acts as a basis for budgeting.

A Five-Year Schedule of Timber Sales provides a basis for DNR to decide where to pursue timber sale planning. It provides the public, timber industry, and local governments with an overview of proposed timber activities on state lands throughout the Delta Area for the next five years. Listing a proposed sale does not mean a decision has been made to go forward with the sale. The Schedule solicits input on whether or not to proceed with sale planning, and on concerns to be addressed in sale design.

It is the policy of the Department of Natural Resources that: 1) All sales, including salvage sales and sales less than 160 acres, will be included in the two Five-Year Schedules preceding the sale whenever possible. 2) All sales, including salvage sales and sales less than 160 acres, will appear on at least the Five-Year Schedule preceding the sale unless waiting for the Schedule will: a) cause substantial losses of economic value on salvage sales under AS 38.05.117, or, b) for sales less than 160 acres, preclude a local economic enterprise or forest management project that is in the State's best interest.

After adopting the Schedule, the Division of Forestry (DOF) will do more detailed fieldwork to assess and design proposed sales. Before any commercial timber sale of ten acres or larger is offered, DOF must make a finding that the sale is in the State's best interest and prepare a detailed Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP). The FLUP describes the location, estimated timber volume, harvest methods, reforestation plan, access, and multiple use considerations for each sale. Based on fieldwork, agency comments and public input, DOF may make changes to individual sales previously listed in the schedule. Any changes from the Schedule's description will be incorporated into the FLUP. DOF reviews each FLUP with the public and other agencies before adopting it. The FLUP, not the Five-Year Schedule, is the final document that decides whether or not DOF will offer a timber sale. All best interest findings, and Forest Land Use Plans will be completed separately on a sale-by-sale basis. If a sale has been through the Schedule and FLUP processes, and was offered as scheduled but not purchased, or was sold as scheduled and returned to the State uncompleted, it can be re-offered within two years of the scheduled sale year without being included in the schedule again.

## **ALLOWABLE HARVEST**

The estimated biologic sustained yield harvest potential for the Delta Area was developed by summarizing the lands that can grow commercial quality forests. Land classifications, which designated forestry or timber management as a primary or secondary use, were included in the evaluation. Other forested State lands, which allow timber harvest on a case-by-case basis, were not included in the evaluation. Approximately 655,000 acres of forested State lands in the Delta Area are excluded from the evaluation because of their classification or poor quality.

The report, “Tanana Valley Allowable Cut Determination”, January 30, 2001, indicates about 480,667 acres are capable of producing a commercial quality forest on lands with a primary or secondary forestry classification in the Delta Area. The rotation lengths vary for each species and the site quality. Generally rotation lengths averaged at 70 years for deciduous trees and 110 years for white spruce. An additional 10 years was added to provide a spruce reforestation period, raising the rotation to 120 years for white spruce.

The report calculated the sustained yield over a 10-year period. Based on the report, the Delta Area can be expected to support a sustained yield of 4,873,600 cubic feet of white spruce and 5,412,700 cubic feet of hardwoods on roughly 5,092 acres per year.

The majority of all commercial forest land in Delta is comprised of deciduous species. These birch, aspen, and poplar stands are naturally converting to white spruce. If this trend continues, the Delta Area is expected to have more white spruce available for harvest in future years than exists presently because of natural stand conversions.

The report reduced the biological sustained yield to accommodate various harvest constraints in the TVSF plan. The report establishes the Delta Management Area allowable cut.

Several large fires have occurred in the Delta Area since the report, burning an estimated 46,000 acres of commercial forest. Initial analysis indicates that the poorer quality commercial stands had the preponderance of burned acreage. A new forest inventory is currently in progress. An adjustment of the allowable cut will occur at some point in the future. Proposed harvest levels in this Schedule are well within possible changes to the allowable cut.

The land base in the Delta Management Area is categorized by ownership as follows:

<u>ACRES</u>	
463,000	Tanana Valley State Forest Lands
1,237,000	Other Forested State Lands
948,000	Other Non-Forested State Lands
650,000	Military Lands
469,000	BLM Lands
230,000	Native Corporation Lands
130,000	All Private Lands (includes farms, residential lots, homesteads, native allotments, etc.)
<hr/>	
4,127,000	TOTAL LAND BASE

## **HARVEST PLAN**

This five-year harvest plan proposes an average annual harvest of 1,649,200 cubic feet of white spruce and 635,000 cubic feet of hardwoods. This harvest level is 36.9% of the 2001 estimated sustained yield of white spruce and 11.2% of the estimated sustained yield for hardwoods in the Delta Area.

The Schedule lists 6 to 9 commercial sales that could be offered annually in years 1-5. The Schedule proposes a total five-year harvest of 8,246,000 cubic feet of white spruce, however, it should be noted that the actual amount of volume offered is dependent upon the funding level and market demand. The summary identifies the sales and volumes that would require additional funding to be developed and offered in FY 09. The funding level is not predicted for FY 2010-2012.

The majority of the proposed sales contain white spruce 90 to 220 years old. Spruce stands in the Delta Area are often uneven-aged because of the slow succession from deciduous birch, aspen and poplar and eventually to white spruce. Except for fire sales, harvests are generally selective or partial cuts, usually having 20 or more trees/acre after sale completion.

## **AGRICULTURE LANDS**

Merchantable timber on vacant agriculture tracts may be sold through a negotiated sale process in year one of the plan. No sales are currently planned on agriculture tracts for FY 08 but this could change with ownership status. Timber sale and harvest operations are contingent upon approval by the Division of Agriculture. The farm conservation plan requirements will need to be met. Timber volumes to be sold from agriculture tracts are not part of the timber base for State lands in the Tanana Basin Area Plan (TBAP) or the Tanana Valley State Forest (TVSF).

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Timber sale access development will continue to pioneer roads into the surrounding forests of the Delta Area. Road construction and maintenance is usually completed by the purchasers of timber sale contracts. Some construction and maintenance has been completed by CIP funding.

The plan anticipates new road construction to access timber sales at Fowlers' Farm, Shaw Creek Flats, Quartz Lake Bowl, Indian Creek, Rapid Creek, Bison Range, Gerstle Drainage, Black Lake, Little Gerstle River as well as the west side of the Delta River and along the Tanana River. DOF will address each access development in the Forest Land Use Plans of proposed timber sales submitted for agency and public review. Access development will be in accordance with the Forest Practices Act regulations.

## **REFORESTATION**

Reforestation is completed through sale design which promotes natural seeding through seed trees, protection of existing saplings and pole timber during harvest operations, sale scarification where appropriate, direct spot seeding, and planting of seedlings.

Sales areas, almost without exception, reforest to a mixed stand of white spruce, birch, aspen and poplar. Overstocking is as much of a concern as under-stocking. Reforestation progress is monitored year by year to ensure adequate stocking. All harvest areas rely on natural seeding to some degree. Reforestation efforts have been successful in the Delta Area. Native species will be used for all plantings.

Current practices require the timber sale purchaser to complete scarification, when necessary. The State provides the tree seedlings and completes planting through a tree-planting contractor.

## **CONVERSION FACTOR**

One cubic foot averages approximately 3.33 board feet (300 cubic feet equals about 1000 board feet) in the Delta Area.

## **COMMENTS**

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