DFFP Scoping Discussion: CBEP AC

HSF RMA MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT 2026

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

DIVISION OF FORESTRY & FIRE PROTECTION **14 January 2026**

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Project Background

The Haines State Forest (HSF) Resource Management Area (RMA) planning team has received feedback requesting information about the directives and circumstances leading to the changes the Division of Forestry & Fire Protection (DFFP, the Division) has proposed in this management plan amendment. Since 2014, the Division has received consistent direction across administrations to take actions in support of the statewide timber industry. In the Northern Southeast Area, including the HSF RMA, direction has been focused on contributing to the timber industry by managing the Haines State Forest RMA according to its purpose as described in Alaska Statute (AS 41.15.300) and according to the principles of multiple use that apply to all state-owned lands.

While the timing of this management plan amendment is connected to the passage of legislation requiring carbon offsets to be addressed in state forest management plans, the Division received additional direction late in 2024 to include the long-standing directive to support Alaska's timber industry by updating policy that had previously prohibited timber harvest on Habitat and Recreation classified units of the Haines State Forest RMA. The primary classifications for these lands will remain Habitat or Recreation, respectively, and any forest management activities proposed in those areas in the future would be required to reflect those primary classifications.

The scoping period is intended to provide members of the public and interest groups such as this one with an opportunity to make recommendations on how the directives received by the Division should be implemented. We acknowledge that this change in management approach is a big departure from the way the HSF RMA has been managed for decades and with that in mind, one goal for this meeting is to provide a discussion opportunity that's focused on questions and topics that the Division is able to reflect in the management policy that will be distributed for public review in the next phase of the planning process. Considering this background on the proposed changes to the management framework, the DFFP would like to invite this group to discuss what it would look like to include timber

harvest and other forest management activities in the balanced management of multiple uses allowed on lands with primary classifications of Habitat and Recreation.

Purpose:

1.) To demonstrate consultation with the Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve Advisory Council (CBEP AC) as part of the development of an updated Haines State Forest Resource Management Area Management Plan Draft (mandated by AS 41.15.310).
2.) To follow up on the discussion with the CBEP AC on December 17, 2025 with an opportunity to contribute considerations and recommendations regarding the management of forest resources within the Haines State Forest Resource Management Area, including the CBEP AC in the development of a management plan draft prior to the public review period.

Expected outcome: A summary of recommendations and considerations related to forest management within the HSF RMA boundary from the perspective of the CBEP AC. This discussion is intended to capture the perspective of the CBEP AC on the management of land and resources as well as the individuals, groups, or uses that are represented by the seats on this council.

Topic: Haines State Forest Management Plan amendment. What solutions or concepts can facilitate the co-existence of forestry activities and other uses within the Haines State Forest RMA?

Group Expectations

- The moderator will guide the discussion but refrain from participating.
- Everyone is encouraged to participate. Once you have shared, wait for two others to contribute before weighing in again.
- The discussion stays focused on the issue at hand (forest management policy within Haines State Forest RMA).
- Maintain an atmosphere for discussion and analysis of our options. This is a discussion, not a debate.
- Ask questions to gain understanding/clarity.
- Give constructive feedback. We are here to talk about ideas, not people.
- We will work together toward describing balanced resource management within the Haines State Forest Resource Management Area.

Discussion Questions

Concerns Identified: In our December 17, 2025 discussion, members of this group emphasized the need for a balance of uses in the management of the HSF RMA. Across AC seats, the importance of salmon populations and habitat were clearly emphasized for both commercial and personal uses. AC seats also emphasized the interconnected nature of

various resources and cycles on the landscape (ex. nutrient cycling, forest health, and soil properties). Discussion identified local activities that are dependent on the HSF RMA, including industries such as tourism, commercial fishing, and commercial logging and individual uses like recreation and spiritual significance of the area. The HSF RMA was identified as a source of food for local communities, providing hunting, fishing, and foraging opportunities that contribute to a sense of community health and connection to the area. Other topics mentioned include the eagle population within CBEP, and attention to fish habitat in the design and location of stream crossings.

1. **Management Recommendations:** What does it look like for forest management activities to be conducted in a way that includes meeting the needs described above and the needs of the group represented by your seat?

What would be different under new recommendations? In talking about public recreation property, what would be different?

- No current opportunity to conduct timber harvest in Public Recreation classified lands. New policy would allow Timber harvest as a use in that area

What if the recommendation is that the current management framework should not change?

- You can recommend whatever you feel most strongly should be represented. DFFP welcomes all comments and recommendations. Attempting in this process, to do something new. DFFP is sharing the strategy that current administration has asked DFFP to implement. If you have feedback about how that strategy is implemented, this is your opportunity to contribute to that conversation. If your only comment is "no", that is a viable comment, DFFP wants to create opportunity for other perspectives to contribute to the conversation of DNR strategy to achieve the directive provided from administrative levels.
- This discussion is unique in occurring before public review process. There will still be opportunities to comment directly on the draft policy but this discussion is intended to open up opportunity for members of this group to contribute to development of policy.

With DFFP experience, what is the most compelling reason that the council would support opening recreation classified areas for forest management or not?

- Timber harvest can be conducted in a way that includes recreation use within the State Forest, public perspective appears to believe these uses are mutually exclusive.
- Potential for the greatest return on the resource values for the state becomes more holistic, greater returns to the state with balances of all possible uses across the state forest. (this approach includes economic values and intrinsic values)

Difficult to envision this level of change, perception that Carbon offset uses are "at odds" with Timber industry

- If (CBEP AC) seats can embrace the concept of a working forest across the forest, is there a way you can conceive that it could be successful? "I don't think it's possible" is a reasonable answer. State of Alaska has a small component of resources to manage for the public, and the goal is to make a wide range of uses available to the public on the lands the State is able to manage.

Reference to second paragraph (Project Background, pg. 1 of this document). How would maintaining primary classifications affect the design of timber sales? Would that step be up for public review?

- Yes, at multiple points. Management Plan policy is not the final word on how activities are executed on specific areas. This planning effort develops guiding frameworks that guide managers in future decision making. Any timber harvest would still require Best Interest Finding (BIF) and Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP). Both decision documents provide detailed descriptions of how sales would be designed and implemented, are publicly reviewed, and are guided by the policy described in the Management Plan that DFFP is currently scoping.

Not many people are asking for increased traditional large scale logging in this area. Round log export is a minus for the community. What we lose in habitat we don't make back with revenue. Question whether this change directive was a top down interest in development or a bottom-up directive with local perspective from people imagining creative uses within the community. Still unclear where this idea is coming from. Haines Brough will want more information about what scale of logging would occur on recreation lands and what happens with the logs. Borough benefits from roads, would like to see roads opened up for recreation. Leaving forest intact provides more recreation opportunity. What's the benefit to the community?

2002 plan is the one plan Upper Lynn Canal Fish and Game Advisory Council (ULC AC) is focused on maintaining. If amended plan allows harvest in all classifications, ULC AC is not in support. 2002 plan has facilitated timber harvest in the Chilkat Valley, ULC AC believes the plan is effective as is. Distrust of public process promised for future

decisions. Expectation that public opportunities to comment on individual sales will not be adequate for making the changes that ULC AC might request for timber sale design.

Life-long 78-year resident of this area. Observes emphasis on recreation, personal, cultural uses –these uses were not accessible without timber harvest activity and resulting road access. People forget that if not for the logging industry, we wouldn't have access to these areas. Concern over people feeling ownership of one specific area or site and "to h**l with the rest." History of timber industry in the area, sending railroad ties to Anchorage. Commercial fishing since 1969. The last 20 years fishing has been poorly managed, expressed frustration that AC hasn't intervened. Historic eagle populations ~4000. Questions about timing of concurrent fishery collapses. Frustration that CBEP AC has not taken more actions to address these issues. Local opposition has limited actionable interventions. FRPA and regulations had significant input from Native Communities and protecting fish populations and habitat.

Agreement with above statement. Lifelong resident since age 10. Not here to assign blame. Interest in "fixing problems that have been caused." Damage in terms of fish, forest, and recreation. Belief that tourism is the remedy for maintaining these values. Transition from guiding to chartered sight-seeing due to declines in fish populations. Use of motorized boats and building roads impinge on "wilderness." Roads have not been maintained, and community is paying the price. Holds an assembly seat, serves on community boards to try and contribute to "fixing" the problems. Strongly opposed to round log export. Don't agree with what is proposed for logging in this valley based on experiences here in the past. Destroying other resources for something that takes 500 years to grow back is not effective. Does not provide for the other uses people want to see and use in this area. Questions that "wilderness" exists on this planet at all. When roads are built in an area, "they come." I'm not opposed to logging, but in this volume? Streams polluted with sediment, runoff from highways, need to fix the environment here.

CIA: Looking at map, reminded of CBEP as the heart of this area. Saying "why can't we just leave it as is" is not removing ourselves from the table. Preference to see it continue on. Large-scale timber harvest, even concentrated to a small area, brings council seat to question how things would look in the future (+50 years). Looking at the area this council is tasked to speak on (preserve), request DFFP think about purpose of the preserve in developing policy.

Appears that ppl have in mind that logging has caused fishing industry to plummet. Not necessarily a fact. In 76, fish populations were co-existing with logging. Fisheries collapsed in the 90's. Not likely that fish populations declined in response to logging 20 years after the fact.

Chilkat Ridge: Building a road across Tsirku is something that Tribe (Chilkat Indian Village) has large concerns about. Logging Chilkat Ridge also problematic from the Tribe's perspective. That area borders the preserve as well.

This is an abstract discussion. Would like more information about what scale logging, where do the logs go, how are logs used, etc.

- DFFP intends this discussion to be an opportunity for the Division to ask this group what CBEP AC thinks the answers to those questions should be

Is the state looking for a formal motion?

- Not necessarily. This discussion is DFFP effort at consultation. The Council can approve a motion to submit as a comment on this process.

Want to ensure this is not the last chance of the council to participate in the planning process.

- Correct. The CBEP AC (or any individual) can submit comments for this planning process any time before the end of Public Review Period (start date TBD).

Unfortunate that the state didn't bring the council "multiple choice:" What kinds of timber, areas, or utilization would the DFFP consider on recreation lands or habitat lands. Appreciate that the state feels it's in the state's best interest that we can have carbon offsets and timber harvests.

Consider the financial situation of the State of Alaska: what if the State forest is dissolved? Would the Borough adopt management responsibilities and road maintenance on the existing roads? Concerns about the financial situation.

If we have to, Haines Borough will take over the state forest.

Next Steps
If members of this group would like to share additional information that was not captured by this discussion opportunity, please feel free to share those comments in writing by email to **dnr.dof.haines@alaska.gov** or by mail to:

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ATTN: Forest Planning
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A date has not yet been established for release of the plan draft for public review. At the time the plan draft is available for public review, the Division will accept comments in response to the draft plan and public meetings will be scheduled in the communities of Haines and Klukwan.

In the meantime, more information is available on the project webpage: https://forestry.alaska.gov/HSFamendment/

Please share your comments or questions with the planning team by sending a message to: dnr.dof.haines@alaska.gov