

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^a 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.^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, 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.

^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 continues 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 Berkhahn, 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

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, municipal, and trust land.

Area	DPO	Renewals	Change in Operations	Variation Requests	Variation Inspections	Other FRPA Inspections	FHPs Issued	AWC Updates
Southern Southeast	Big Salt – Sealaska land	Tolstoi Bay – Sealaska land	Crackerjack Creek- Hyak Mining land	Election Creek – Sealaska land (4)	Election Creek – Sealaska Lands (4)	Cleveland Peninsula – Sealaska land	Election Creek – Sealaska land (2)	
	Cleveland Peninsula – Sealaska land (6)	Crackerjack Creek – Hyak Mining land	Election Creek – Sealaska land (3)			Control Lake - MHT land	Big Salt - Sealaska land (5)	
	Edna Bay – (UA) land (2)	Ham Cove- Sealaska land (3)	Edna Bay – AMHT land			Election Creek - Sealaska land		
	Tolstoi Bay – Sealaska land	Control Lake – AMHT land	Cleveland Peninsula – Sealaska land					
	Election Creek – Sealaska land (5)	Cleveland Peninsula- Sealaska land (5)						
Crackerjack Creek – Hyak Mining land	Port St. Nicholas – Shaan Seet land							
Northern Southeast		(Mental Health Trust – Haines)		Election Creek - Sealaska land	Election Creek - Sealaska land			2
Kenai	Hillside 2 - CIRI land					Post-timber salvage site inspection - KPB land		
	Precision - AMHT land							
	Four Mile Sale - Kenai Peninsula Borough land							
Anchorage	Endurance Timber Sale - Leisnoi Inc land		Koncor Inc - Natives of Kodiak Island land	Koniag North Units - ANC land (2)	Koniag North Units - ANC land (2)	Endurance Timber Sale - Leisnoi Inc land (5)	Endurance Timber Sale - Leisnoi land (4)	54
	Koniag Timber Sale - Koniag Inc land (2)		Endurance Timber Sale - Leisnoi Inc land (2)	Endurance Timber Sale - Leisnoi Inc land (2)	Leisnoi Inc land (2)	Koniag Inc Timber Sale - Koniag Inc Lands (5)	Koniag North - ANC	
	Koncor Inc. - Natives of Kodiak land		Koniag North Units - ANC land			Koncor - Natives of Kodiak Units KK-KON-015-01 and Ouzinkie Native Corp. KK-KON-014-01 (5)	Koncor Inc - Natives of Kodiak	

Table 1.–Continued.

Fairbanks	FAS-15-03-01 UA-01-F Standard East - UA land	NRO 2015-02 SEGA 2015/16 - Gana-A 'Yoo land
	FAS-04-01 UA-02-F Teklanika River - UA land FAS-15-05-01 UA-03-F Cache Creek - UA land NRO 2015-01 Johnson Rd #3 - FNSB land NRO 2015-02 SEGA 2015/16 - Gana-A 'Yoo 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		Southern Southeast State Forest	Southern Southeast State Forest						
Kenai	Mile 127 and Garden		Kenai Area						
Fairbanks	Anderson West			NC-1403-F Anderson Spruce #1	~50 on state land not in TVSF and not classified Forestry*	2 on state land not in TVSF and not classified Forestry**	NC-1344-F Nenana Spruce #3	NC-1196-F Black Lake #3 (2)	
	Little Ag Spruce			NC-1289-F Little Ag Spruce			NC-1404-F Iowa Cr Spruce #3	NC-1595-F Salcha Flood Salvage	
	Mosquito Saddle			NC-1546-F Mosquito Saddle				NC-1404-F Iowa Cr Spruce #3	
	Nenana Ridge Pocket			NC-1256-F Pocket Spruce					
	Salcha Flood Salvage			NC-1595-F Salcha Flood Salvage					
	Section House			NC-1400-F Section House Spruce NC-1591-F Long-Term Value-Added Negotiated TS Units 1, 2, 5, and 6					

*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	Saddle Lakes FEIS - KMRD	Kosciusko TS - TBRD	Prince of Wales Island Bridges (10) - TBRD
	Kosciusko Island TS - TBRD	Big Thorne TS - TBRD	Prince of Wales Island Culverts (12) - TBRD
	Big Thorne TS - TBRD		Prince of Wales Island Restorations (5) - TBRD
			Prince of Wales Island Stream Crossing - TBRD
			Shrimp Bay Bridge - KMRD
Northern Southeast	Boom Chain TS - HRD	Tonka TS - PRD	Chichagof Island Bridges (3) - SRD
	Mitkof Island Small Sales EA - PRD		Kuiu Island Culvert - PRD
			Tonka Road Bridge - PRD
			Kuiu Island Bridges - PRD

Email Cc:

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