

## **Minutes: Board of Forestry Meeting**

**Palmer Forestry Office**, 101 Airport Road, Palmer

**Wednesday, August 28, 2019** (fieldtrip Tuesday, August 27, 2019)

### **Teleconference sites:**

Anchorage – 550 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 1450;

Fairbanks – 3700 Airport Way, large conference room;

Juneau – 400 Willoughby Ave., 4<sup>th</sup> floor conference room A

**Call to Order and Roll Call.** Chris Maisch, State Forester, called the meeting to order in Palmer at 8:04am. Teleconference sites were connected in Anchorage, Juneau, and Fairbanks. Present: Chris Stark, Chris Beck, Nathan Lojewski, Will Putman, Eric Nichols, Denise Herzog, and Mark Vinsel. Bill Morris was absent as his house was in danger of flooding from the Tanana River. A quorum was established. Nathan Lojewski introduced himself. He is a forester with Chugachmiut.

Also present in Palmer: Wyn Menefee (MHT), Jusdi Doucet (MHT), Cynthia Wardlow (ADFG), Gino DelFrate (ADFG), Paul Slenkamp (MHT), Todd Rinaldi (ADFG), Susie Hayes, Alison Arians (DOF)

Also present telephonically:

- **Anchorage teleconference:**
- **Fairbanks teleconference:** Glenn Holt (UAF CES), Nancy Sonafrank (DEC), Jessie Young-Robertson (UAF), Todd Nichols (ADFG), Will Whitewaters, Jeremy Douse (DNR DOF)
- **Juneau teleconference:** Kate Kanouse (ADFG), Greg Albrecht (ADFG), Gretchen Pikul (DEC), Robert Venables (SE Conference), Buck Lindekugel (SEACC), Joel Nudelman (DNR DOF), Ron Wolfe, Denise Elston (DEC), Tom Lenhart (LAW), Dana Herndon (Office of Senators Murkowski & Sullivan)
- **Other call-in locations:** Cynthia Sever (USFS Petersburg), Ben Mulligan (ADFG), Jerry Kilanowski (UA), Joe Viechnichi (KFSK)

**Public Meeting Notice.** The meeting was noticed by issuing public service announcements and press releases (handout in packet), emailing announcements to interested parties, and posting a notice on the state's Online Public Notice System and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) website.

**Approval of agenda.** The agenda was approved.

**Approval of Minutes.** By unanimous consent, the Board reviewed and approved the April 3, 2019 minutes with corrections: spelling mistake on Denise's last name (it's spelled Herzog, not Hertzog), and make sure to identify which Chris it is each time. Vinsel made a motion to approve, Herzog seconded. Unanimous approval.

## **Announcements**

- Will Putman: Tanana Chiefs Conference is hosting the National Indian Timber Symposium next summer, during the first week of June. Will be working on planning that meeting over the winter. 70 member tribes. Meeting is generally attended by about 350 people from around the country.
- Chris Maisch: Young Growth Symposium will be in Ketchikan in October, in conjunction with SAF meeting in October. Key topics: presentation of the YG forest inventory going on with USFS and State, how quickly will the transition occur, data points from when Tongass group met.

## **Funding, legislation, and regulations**

### **Agency budgets and legislation**

**Chris Maisch, DOF:** dealing with 50% travel reduction to state GF funds, but fire program was not affected, which was good news. For a lot of our federal work in the Tongass, we are still able to travel since they are all federal funds. Timber sale receipts funding was affected by reverse sweep language—standard items authorized. Senate passed it, House did not. For a little while, it looked like all the agencies were going to lose the ability to use our timber sale receipts from it, including forest management folks, but that didn't happen. That would have been a real problem to use all our cash flow within a year.

Herzog: If you don't have a reverse sweep, it goes back into GF?

Maisch: Yes. Some lawsuits are going on now. Good news: for most or all of the accounts, the reverse sweep language was replaced in the Governor's budget. DOF was reinstated.

FY 20 budget: static. Didn't take any additional cuts other than the travel. We've all contributed to the budget reduction effort.

Fire season budget. Calendar year splits 2 fiscal years. Last half of fiscal season occurs in the first 3 months, which is a terrible thing to do in the fire program. We have to deal with it every year, and it's a really challenging thing for our budget folks, right in the middle of fire season.

Activity code: what we use when we're fighting fire. Used to be \$5.8 million, last year increased by \$8 to \$13 million. That account should be funded at 10 year average, but it's not. Administrations have been resistant to increasing it. We supplement that with disaster declarations. Supplemental request for state owned land, paid for out of GF funds. Federal lands that we project, spend GF funds and then bill federal government. Feds are doing the same thing for our state lands. At the end we settle up.

Herzog: What happens if it's a mixed land package?

Maisch: Complicated—boils down to different protection types. If you initial attack it, the acres will eventually be split by ownership. It can get more complicated.

Herzog: What about protection without getting burned?

Maisch: We can do a non-standard response than initial attack. Might put in point protection and the fire doesn't get there. You still do that as a cost of the fire. In Limited, if you want fire to be used as managed fire, and you don't attack it, and it burns onto another landowner's land, you're responsible for the whole bill. It's your decision to let it burn. Makes people look carefully at putting designations on the landscape.

Putman: What about Native allotments in Limited areas?

Maisch: It's been a problem. Also private land, which state manages, is a problem. But private lands are more flexible. We are also paying for Native allotment protection—we find it an unfunded mandate from our partners. We haven't been able to get resolution to this issue.

For FY 19, our best estimates have us at \$15 for GF. Federal is at \$34.8 million. It takes about 2 years to balance the books from federal and state. Lots of resources coming from Lower 48 goes through coordination center—billed and then reimbursed. This year we've used resources from all 49 other states. Clearinghouse for just one bill. FY20 fire seasons: \$13 million gone in first 6 days of the year. We burn through \$2.5 to \$3 million per day. Had to ask for supplemental and declaration authority right away. We are going month by month, which is different than we've done before. \$47.9 for FY20. Federal \$34.8 million. Requests to supplement that because of late season activity. Not estimated in August costs. More than we thought. 1600 firefighters back on the fire line. Asking for about \$17.9 in FG and \$11 in federal authority. Estimates, and will likely change significantly. Working aggressively to try and refine these. Very expensive year. Record before was \$110 million, maybe 2015—fiscal year. Complex budget, interacts with preparedness budget, forest management and development budget.

Vinsel: Yesterday on our tour, you mentioned a couple places where there have been salvage timber sales on spruce beetle areas. The sales were returned. When someone returns a sale, do you keep the money?

Maisch: When someone buys a sale, they pay a bid deposit and a bond. If they start operating, payments are based on 1/3 each time. We usually retain bid deposit and payments already paid—but that is negotiable. We would look to see if there was any damage, and if so, we might need to keep part of the bond. Might return part or all of it. The reason they were returning sales is that they were getting private people asking them to harvest trees off their lands for money. They were getting paid to log other places, so it didn't make sense for them to pay us to harvest trees off state land.

Beck: When there are big fires, we just spend it, and then figure out how to pay it?

Maisch: State has always honored our supplements. Cost containment is a big issue—we are always looking for ways to be efficient. We find ways to change. Last year we were able to take our air tankers off because it was a slow season. State of Oregon took our air tankers before the end of our contract. Those bills are carefully audited. When we are spending this much money, people pay attention. Sometimes they find things we should do more efficiently.

Putman: We are picking around the periphery of this fire funding; I appreciate the complexity and uncertainty of running a suppression inventory.

Maisch: There are a lot of people working really hard to provide the best numbers we can.

Stark: Why do they always pick on travel?

Maisch: Seems like the easy place to go. Sometimes there is a perception that a lot of travel is not necessary to the core mission, and they want us to focus on core mission work, only things directly related. Out of state travel has to be approved at a very high level. Even in-state travel we have to produce a travel plan. We have some blanket exemptions, but generally travel is heavily scrutinized. Boards and Commissions were one of the things we were looking at. We are down to just one face to face per year, based on fiscal constraints.

Beck: Looking at the amount of spending for fighting fires, and risks changing over time, and overlapping seasons here and in Lower 48. Is the discussion to let fires burn happening?

Maisch: The policy discussion is to prepared better in advance. Fuel mitigation work: Shovel Creek Fire relied on a fuel break. Team burned out from that and protected a neighborhood. Fuel break played a

very important role. On federal lands, we need more hazard fuel reduction work, restoration work to try and return forests to a more normal state, to produce ground fires instead of catastrophic fires. USFS has gotten their budget straightened out. We've never had the budget here—our administration has provided what we need to do our job, but not to maintain fuel breaks. We are pitching that we need to do work ahead of time. The state doesn't now provide funding ahead of time—we only get federal funds for that, and we compete with all the other western states for that funding. We need funds for maintenance of the fuels work.

Putman: We understand it, but a hard sell to get people to think in the long term—money you WILL spend to maybe save money later.

Maisch: Probability polygons—use the 80% polygon to calculate where you should invest in fuel breaks. Funny River was \$320 million of values protected—trying to tell the story of what is protected if you didn't have the fuel break. Have tried to change the discussion.

Lojewski: ADFG mentioned Pittman-Robertson funding. Chugachmiut put in money for Sterling fuel break—maybe if the state was willing to partner with habitat improvement projects, you could get 4x the amount.

Maisch: In Delta we've done some prescribed fire. Now we just have to contribute match as operator time, equipment use. Timely topic when the state's being challenged.

Stark: Could we get a look at some of your values at risk information?

\*\*Maisch: We'll be running one for Fairbanks—use the Borough assessment tax base as a layer. It's simple to come up with the map. We'll get you a copy of that.

### **Nancy Sonafrank, DEC: DOW.**

Program manager, speaking for Amber LeBlanc. DEC now searching to fill the director position. DEC Division of Water budget for FY20 eliminated the Ocean Rangers program and included a 50% reduction to travel across all fund sources. Division travel will be prioritized for inspections and fieldwork. WQSAR funded \$380.1k in ACWA grants that include 3 urban forestry projects. Other than that, not a lot of budget cuts.

Lojewski: What urban forestry projects are you doing?

Sonafrank: Urban forestry projects: restoration. We wanted to do one in Anchorage, but couldn't.

Maisch: We can get some detailed sheets to you.

\*\*Sonafrank will send details on those projects. [Project descriptions at end of minutes.]

Maisch: What about participating in FRPA inspections or monitoring?

Sonafrank: We don't have a forestry position now. My staff is pretty loaded. We continue to participate and offer consulting. We did lose that position and plan reviews, but there might be an opportunity to ride along for familiarity for monitoring. That would be on an occasional basis.

Maisch: If DNR or ADFG requested you to come?

Sonafrank: Yes.

Maisch: Are you doing plan reviews for DPO?

Sonafrank: No. I don't have the staff.

Maisch: DEC has always been a key part of the triad for review.

Sonafrank: If there are occasions where water quality expertise is needed, let us know.

Stark: I heard you say you had the expertise but not the money to designate that person.

Sonafrank: We do—those positions are stretched pretty thin with regional work. When we lost the forestry person, Kevin Hanley, for non-point source, that position moved into compliance. And we had budget positions lost. That position wasn't replaced. We don't have a staff person to devote to those inspections.

Maisch: The board knows that we have highlighted the situation to the legislature. We'll discuss it again.

**Ben Mulligan, ADF&G:** Deputy commissioner. Overview, overall, we experienced some cuts in various places, but we've managed to get some back. Non-general fund travel got cut to our receipt authority, but at the end, at least ADFG managed to get that all back. We also got Pittman Robertson funding authority back. Overall, Comm fish took the hit at the end—projects that we lost there. We will reprioritize. Habitat lost the Director position. Doug Vincent-Lang came in, looked at the budget, offered that up as a reduction. Earlier this spring I took over Habitat, and Commissioner looks over subsistence. We are in transition and getting used to the dynamic, and hoping that this will help. For a few years, our admin support was in admin services amongst small divisions. We got 2 positions back this spring to have our admin housed in Habitat again, so now we have an admin officer and one more. In the process of reclassification, getting her settled in. We didn't lose anything else as far as Habitat. Non-GF travel authority. Not having to do any rearranging. We will continue the duties that we've been doing.

Stark: Do any of those projects that you lost have anything to do with habitat?

Mulligan: No, just comm fish division.

Stark: Fish monitoring?

Mulligan: Enumeration projects, yes.

Beck: Can you elaborate on the P-R funds, what almost happened, and what will happen for the coming year? Legislature made these more open to 3<sup>rd</sup> party groups.

Mulligan: Will refer you to Eddie Grasser (FW) to discuss partnering with 3<sup>rd</sup> parties for projects. We're working on developing a web page to have people submit ideas to ADFG. Should be done in a month or two, ready for the next cycle. Eddie will have more details.

Maisch: Express appreciation to your department and commissioner to work on closure for hunting at Deshka, heavily used area for moose hunting, both for public safety and risk. Writing a press release with each other was interesting. Good collaboration.

Mulligan: Yes—good to work together on this.

**Fire prevention regulations update, Alison Arians for Dan Govoni, DOF.**

Dan Govoni and Stephanie Bishop are both on the McKinley Fire right now, and their full presentation will be postponed until our next meeting this winter. Arians explained that they are working on a "Take Time to Learn Before You Burn" campaign to educate the public.

**Effectiveness monitoring research priorities update, Alison Arians, DOF.** Arians has scheduled the Effectiveness Monitoring Research Priorities meeting for September 25, and participants will include DOF, USFS, USFWS, ADFG, DEC. [Because of conflicts of some of the members, meeting is now being rescheduled to late October.]

Stark: interested in attending.

### **Forest Management**

**Roadless Rule, Tom Lenhart, LAW.** Chris Maisch handed out Washington Post article: “Trump pushes to allow new logging in Alaska’s Tongass National Forest.” Not much to say about it. As counsel, not appropriate to discuss meetings. I wasn’t there to hear what Trump and Secretary of Agriculture discussed. The Alaska administration is supportive. Usual update: Very little news. Mitigation: 2001 Roadless rule remains pending in DC courts. We were scheduled to go to argument in October, but waiting for outcome of current rulemaking. As for that, it has fallen behind schedule. The DEIS process is behind. I’ll defer to Chris Maisch about the Post article.

Maisch: When is the next status update due?

Lenhart: Late September—around the 25<sup>th</sup>.

Maisch: State is advocating for the case to continue.

Lenhart: We are considering filing a motion to lift the abeyance.

Maisch: I did have to forgo a meeting this morning on this—I know the cooperating agencies, from Kyle Moselle. As the petitioner, we are a cooperating agency with 7 other tribal entities in SE Alaska. Status update meeting will be today or tomorrow. USFS can’t speak to Washington Post article either. They will hopefully be getting their DEIS out soon, with preferred alternatives. 45 day comment period, or maybe 60 days. State will again offer our comments to whatever that DEIS looks like. We have been very focused on fire since the end of June. Not a lot of action other than at the high level policy.

Nichols: I read this last night—the Dept of Ag would give a full exemption as one of the preferred alternative? Not sure how this was leaked.

Maisch: We do not know what the preferred alternative would be. Usually in a rule-making there is usually just one. They could choose a range; it’s their decision as an agency. We can only offer counsel through this process. Through all different administrations, 5 of them, Republicans, Democrats and Independents, all supported an exemption from Roadless. Consistent message from all our elected officials.

Vinsel: History of this was done as an executive order. Could the president do an executive order?

Lenhart: I’m sure we’d be in court within days, and the federal government would be. Very quickly subject to challenge.

Maisch: Previous changes have been in court and have dragged on for 10 years. Whatever happens with this will probably be challenged. If district court would lift the stop on the case, it would be more permanent.

Lenhart: Even a complete victory in the DC circuit court could be changed. Nothing’s permanent.

Maisch: We could argue with TTRA and ANILCA that this sets Alaska apart.

Lenhart: If we could go forward and challenge the case, it would be more clear. If we win on some of the arguments regarding the original 2001 rulemaking, it might take that rulemaking nationwide. There are some that are just based on Alaska. If the court rules in our favor on one or more of those arguments, it becomes more difficult for a new administration to produce a new rule that affects Alaska, because of ANILCA. The court case could provide more relief than the current rule-making, which is why we continue to try to get the abeyance lifted. We could make an argument after the rule-making is done.

Stark: I thought the Timber Task Force came up with 3 alternatives?

Maisch: Yes, they did that to advise the state of Alaska, with a range of recommendations. Didn't come to agreement on that, and it's not a binding agreement.

Stark: It's all win or all lose, from State's perspective? Are we not talking about middle ground?

Maisch: The State's position has always been for complete exemption. We have taken the recommendations under consideration. Our position is complete exemption.

Nichols: We have been trying to analyze what that means for timber. What does that mean for land base available? As of now, they can release anything they want, but doesn't change the 2016 plan underneath all that.

Maisch: Timber harvest would require a plan amendment or revision. It will be a long administrative process to implement whatever the rule direction provides. Stand by, should be a draft EIS out soon. Then we'll comment accordingly. Biggest thing the group worked on—road characteristics in Alaska are very different than 48 other states. Archipelago of SE Alaska: characteristics of those roads was very solid part of the recommendation. Other part was up-front exemptions for communities.

Stark: Some of those recommendations were compromises; why argue for everything?

Maisch: Feel strongly that Roadless needs to be overturned. We'll see where it goes. Not our purview, but it's a huge impact on the industry, and how forest management occurs. Stay tuned.

Lenhart: ANILCA and TTRA has been argued in court, but in a different context. We have lost there, but not in appellate court for this decision.

**Spruce beetle strategy update, Alison Arians, DOF.** The **Mat-Su Spruce Beetle Task Force** has been meeting regularly and exchanging information about strategies, including wood disposal lots, contract work, firewood cutting permits, chainsaw classes, outreach to community councils and other community groups for FireWise work and defensible space, stewardship program funding, social media about when it's safe to cut beetle-killed trees, USFS funding. Good cooperation among the participants.

Mat-Su Area Forester Stephen Nickel has been heading up the group, which includes all-hands group of landowners, managers, and community groups. Held a press conference over the summer.

Funding for spruce beetle mitigation:

- USFS \$150,000 for DOF's fire crews. Not much has been spent on that so far, because of the fire season, but after the fire season is over, crews will work on that funding in affected areas in State Parks and ADFG access sites over the winter.
- USFS \$2 million for DPOR spruce beetle mitigation in Byers Lake, South Rolly Campgrounds which have been closed because of risk of trees falling on people, structures, vehicles. Contract in place with Mark Stahl, Denali Northwest/Denali Log & Lumber to cut dead trees in and around Byers Lake and South Rolly Campground. They have been using a harvester to cut trees at Byers Lake for the last 3 weeks; making good progress, and monitored by DOF and DPOR with daily reports.

Deshka Fire is right up against South Rolly Lake, so not sure what will happen there. Keeping the contractor away from South Rolly Lake because of the fires now.

Stephen is coordinating who will work on what projects: contractors and fire crews through the winter.

Ed Soto has held weekly and now bi-weekly meetings with cooperators to get a handle on the grant funding, including DPOR Mat-Su, DOF Resources & Stewardship in Mat-Su and Kenai/Kodiak, DOF Fire program, ADFG Access, and USFS. Things are proceeding.

Lojewski: All Hands in Kenai—lots of coordination between local. In the Mat-Su, are agencies coordinating other than State?

Arians: Yes. Borough, local communities, NPS, BLM, community organizations, Native corporations.

**Yellow cedar listing update, Alison Arians, DOF.** Talked with Moira Ingle, ADFG, and she said that Erin Knoll at USFWS reported that the decision timeframe for the yellow-cedar listing is that a decision is expected sometime in September. Arians will let the BOF know as soon as she hears anything new.

**Salvage harvest potential of beetle-killed spruce. Chris Maisch, DOF:** Have been working with Borough and a number of partners to encourage use of the beetle-killed timber in the Mat-Su. Have had a lot of companies come take a look, but no one has found it viable economically. About a month ago, a presentation was made at Mat-Su Assembly meeting, maybe it's online? A company was here, but a lot of details still need to be worked out. We are ready to help any company do their due diligence—transportation, inventory, etc., to do their analysis. Potential product use could be chips or fuel pellets. Asian markets are not a big user of these, but that could grow. This wood is already starting to deteriorate, so soon it won't be good for anything but low quality chips.

We received a \$2 million grant from USFS to help us address spruce beetle problem, most of that in State Parks. Denali Log and Lumber is working on that, which is the best way to work on it in the campgrounds, with hand crews in the campgrounds immediately around the sites. \$2 million is a very small amount of money for the beetle kill that is out there. Commerce is working on additional marketing materials. We have produced a prospectus. \*\*Share this with the BOF. Lists everything all in one place.

Nichols: How are you handling the birch? Koreans interested in hardwoods?

Maisch: Yes, they are interested in both. Under .117 salvage we need to include birch. I assume they are looking at both. Otherwise harvest is not viable.

Beck: Revenue?

Maisch: We would sell that at base rates, or even lower; at the minimum that covers our costs, but we could go lower to help with public risk of fires, etc. One initiative for doing a very large offering, long-term, in the Valley might generate interest.

Todd Rinaldi: What was the strategy to do work in summer on DPOR? Why not in the winter, when campers aren't there?

Maisch: We are doing work now because DPOR only identified the problem in the spring as needing to close the campgrounds. There are large dead spruce intermixed in the campground, and hazard trees could come down at any time. Those needed to be mitigated before the campgrounds could be opened. Over the winter they also had a lot of snow, which would make hand-felling dangerous. Stuart Leidner, DPOR Mat-Su Superintendent, says DPOR is losing \$150,000 a summer with these closures. This is not a decision they took lightly, but there was an incident that a new RV was sliced in half by a tree, so they



closed the campgrounds. We did mitigate some areas quickly—100 units at South Rolly. We have a commercial operator in there now while hand crews are working on fires. Light touch, not tearing it up.

Putman: This decision was driven by date or timing of closure. Closed over the winter.

Maisch: Couldn't work on it in the winter—too much snow. Didn't have money yet for commercial equipment. It was a good decision based on the situation. Areas will be opened up as treated. Rolly was closed for fire safety.

Putman: Salvage--has there been a lot of discussion of issues of the roading?

Maisch: Yes. Ice bridges are no longer as reliable. Lots of challenges with access piece. Areas closer to the Port might be best; Borough has a large sale offered with Ag sale out by Port McKenzie. Local spruce strategy group underway to assess areas of highest risk. Big wind event—12 initial attack fires. Probably more we could be doing on ROW maintenance and safety.

**Southeast timber: tariffs and sales. Chris Maisch, DOF:** \*\*Will get the DOF summary matrix to Ariens and print out at lunch. Will ask Eric Nichols to talk about tariffs.

Nichols: Look at Market share. Alaska Market share, shipping logs into China, we only have 1%. We don't have control. China is a critical market for us because they take a lot of second growth and lower grade timber. In the trade war, Trump has put tariffs on all Chinese goods. China retaliated by putting 20% tariffs on spruce and 5% on hemlock. Delivered value. 20% of freight and loading costs that we have no control over. Lower grade heavy spruce stands are very difficult to handle. Problem—won't go away quickly, and is embedded between two countries. China is actively looking for non-USA sources of wood. Trump has said we shouldn't do business with China. General feeling is that Trump is a bully, and they are concerned about what will happen with the next election cycle. Have had a lot of trade talk lately. Trump upped the tariffs some more, there is usually a retaliatory increase in response. Why spruce such a high tariff, when hemlock lower? Word out of Beijing was that spruce could be supplied by other places. Hemlock more reasonable because only can get it from Alaska. Tongass—what happens there will affect it. Eric Nichols is getting pressure to find new markets. China is a huge market and growing so fast. It's easy for us to get to Asia—shipping advantage. But farther south we don't have the advantage—that's closer to New Zealand. Slow process to open up new markets. Whatever happens in China will have some lasting impacts.

Maisch: Any of the log producers in SE are affected the same way. Sealaska, MHT, GNA, our state sales. To help address this issue, there are a couple of things that AFA has been doing—working on getting some trade relief like farmers get from USDA. Now this relief isn't available, but political forces are advocating for this type of program. We have reviewed our appraisals and have recently adjusted our GNA sales to minimum bid to alleviate some of the tariff effects, so we can hope that it will be operable. Kosciusko sale under GNA—both USFS and state hoping to make that operable. Alcan timber is the purchaser of that sale. We'll see how that moves forward. Currently China is the only market for Young Growth. Very challenging situation for all parties involved. Continue to try and be flexible. Moving ahead with state sales that are a combination of OG and YG. Gravina sale had more OG, which had some domestic market sales, which would give us some time. Parley sale is moving ahead—has a OG component. The matrix will give you an idea of what's going on there. Number of other sales, including a 10-year sale for Viking that will provide them about 50 million BF of timber, getting difficult-to-access areas. Some will be planned by AFA, some by timber purchaser layout, some by State. Regular

inspections in SE by our staff, continuing to make that a good program for water quality and fish habitat. If you have specific questions on the matrix, I can answer them later.

Putman: Quick question for Eric Nichols: percentage of Alaska in US export to China?

Nichols: We must be about 15-20%. Biggest competitor is Weyerhaeuser. Not a lot of sympathizing with Weyerhaeuser for relief.

Maisch: There have been several stories in the press about industry in SE, Wisconsin. Creating real problems in pockets.

Wyn Menefee: On trade relief: Does that take a congressional action? Or could that be at a policy level?

Nichols: Meeting with Murkowski: takes congressional action. Farm relief has already all been used.

Maisch: Political side of this issue—we've written a couple of briefing papers.

**Mental Health Trust exchange update & forestry activity, Paul Slenkamp, MHT:** Wyn Menefee and Jusdi Doucet here. We appreciate BOF's help. It's critical for BOF to support our land exchange and other projects. MHT has a statewide resource. We try to use it wherever we can. 5<sup>th</sup> stewardship plan at Tyonek finished this year. Looking at potentially doing some more in Railbelt area. We have 117,000 acres adjacent to TVSF, always looking to DOF where we can combine work with them. Quite a few timber sales now.

- Kenai Fuel Reduction with contractor. Mitigating about 900 acres, and we're about 2 years into that project. Feller-buncher removing spruce, and it has gone well.
- We also run some small sales in Haines and Gustavus for small operators. Timber and firewood.
- Some of our main timber sales are at Icy Bay, and we are in the second year of operation. 25 million feet of harvest, 15 million this year. Sealaska is the purchaser, and Fairchild Trucking is the contractor. Very logistically challenging place to operate. Has gone well so far. The timber markets are very challenging with the tariffs and other concerns.
- Currently we have a Yakataga sale, will be 2 million foot selective harvest. Comments due Sept 13. Yakatat Kwan has a small operation, has just barely started it. Native timber, also talking with USFS to get additional timber to the market.
- Kasaan timber sales—5 million feet sold to Alcan forest products; we have just extended that.
- Will start a small 13 acre sale in Hollis. New project to construct road with timber receipts. First time to work with MLW. Rerouted right of way through state subdivision. Situation we've tried to work on for several years.
- Naukati exchange timber sale with Viking Lumber. Phase one portion of 2017, still trying to complete. That timber sale was one of the major components of keeping Viking Lumber in fiber. Working on it about 3-4 months. We were supposed to have the full phase 2 acreage completed in May, but we're at a standstill again with the appraisal process with the federal government. This timber is becoming more and more critical to the remaining industry to keep them operating. USFS has started their own timber cruises to get us a couple more thousand acres before this fall. Hope to complete the land exchange soon; it has been a challenge. In July I met with USFS and congressional reps.

Maisch: Just to be clear: it's the USFS procurement process that is the issue. Not the MHT or state.

Slenkamp: We have worked closely with them and provided every resource. Extremely frustrating, and trying to remain optimistic. Committed to getting this done.

Questions:

Vinsel: Comment. While your co-workers are here, I'd like to express appreciation for Paul's continued presence at BOF meetings. I've heard concerns from fisherman in Petersburg, and his continued work on the land exchange. It's really really valuable for him to be here. I'd like to thank you for letting him do this.

**10:00 Public Comment:**

Juneau: 2

Anchorage:

Fairbanks:

Online: 1 in Haines

**Haines: Jessica Plachta Lynn Canal Conservation.**

Lots of fires happening worldwide. LCC doesn't support changes to FLUP statues or export sales. These changes would increase state forestry activities, and we would like to continue the current statues. Supports carbon credits projects. Alaska State Forests belong to us all.

**Ron Wolfe:** Haunting from the past. I want to encourage the work of the BOF in these challenging times. Guiding principles in this work: no big hit, go where the trust leads you, that was captured in the green book—FRPA. I encourage you to rely on those principles as you work through these issues. I'm glad to hear Paul Slenkamp to report to the BOF. Congratulate you on your land exchange. Offer quick support.

Maisch: Ron is long-term member of BOF representing Sealaska. Appreciate those words.

**Robert Venable, Southeast Conference:** Very involved with forestry issues, which are broader than just timber harvest. Looking to integrated resources plans. Making great strides on these timber sales for energy sources. Model for use across the state. Long-term forest plan, committed to staying. SE Conf coming up next month, invite all those to join. Look to be a resource to the board on the future.

Maisch: Thank you for those comments.

**Proposed rule changes to USFS NEPA processes. Alison Arians, DOF:** DOF was the only DNR agency to submit a letter in support of the USFS proposed changes in NEPA regulations, which are designed to increase efficiency in environmental analysis. DOF's comment welcomed the proposed revisions to the NEPA, seeing them as necessary changes given the current fiscal and fire climate.

DOF's letter supports expanding the type of work that can be eligible for Categorical Exclusion (CE). This change would not only save time and funding, but would also allow for more forestry projects that benefit national forests and nearby communities (for example, mechanical forest thinning and salvage operations). The Division also supports the addition of a "Determination of NEPA Adequacy" to identify where an existing NEPA assessment can be used for a newly proposed, similar project. We also

agree with the proposed defining of “Condition Based Management,” so pre-determined activities can easily be used to address certain conditions. DOF also supported giving local officials more discretion for additional public engagement beyond what is required by the Council on Environmental Quality.

Maisch: This is a big factor to see projects get done. Fuel treatments, for example. Tracking mechanisms.

Arians: comment period ended on Monday.

## **Research**

### **Windthrow prediction/reduction, Greg Albrecht, ADFG:**

Review:

- Effort to assess whether blowdown can be predicted by applying Rollerson’s (2009) Wind Exposure Index (WEI) and fetch distance created by clearcuts on Southeast, AK Landscape
- ArcMap tool under development for quick assessment (Jason Graham ADF&G, Anchorage)
- Previous work by Kramer (2001) involved more complex model
- Martin and Shelly (2017) found blowdown correlated with storm wind exposure using WEI.

USFS monitoring data

- Harvest during 2000-2006
- 98 buffers on class I-III streams
- Prince of Wales Island only

Showed preliminary data & analysis

Potential actions for discussion:

- No action
- Use the simple Rollerson WEI with fetch during DPO review
- Fine tune using local conditions and indicators (known wind patterns, past blowdown from field, aerial, and LIDAR observations)
- Agree on workable BMPs for the site to mitigate high and very high risk categories
- Record in monitoring list
- Evaluate in the future

Questions:

Vinsel: In your research, (also including Eric Nichols), if you had a buffer that was partial, if you open it up like a venetian blind, would that be more windfirm?

Albrecht: That’s called feathering. Old Growth with variations sometimes ends up thinned out.

Literature points to having some success, but maybe not with huge wind events. It’s probably all going to go down. Big blowdown events, if you want to keep those trees, need to add a few tree-length buffers to that. Feathering is an option to consider. If that has a positive effects, that information is in there, whether someone has gone through the photos what was the prescription from the USFS, what was taken out. e have that information, but I haven’t looked over that.

Vinsel: Are we experiencing higher extreme wind events in SE and other parts of Alaska? Is that part of climate change? It’s more common to have extreme wind events.

Albrecht: Don’t know that I can comment on that. Would defer to a specialist.

Vinsel: We haven’t had Taku winds, but other wind events have been in unusual times.

Albrecht: Yes, we haven't had the usual Taku winds from Glacial outflow—it's been an interesting change.

Stark: When you say blowdown, that's just inside buffer zone?

Albrecht: Right. In 66' reserve around riparian zones.

Stark: Is tree height considered?

Albrecht: In other work, tree height and rooting depth both correlate with blowdown. The spreadsheet that I got didn't have tree height. Prator work did include it. This could be brought into analysis later. I'm more focusing on prevailing winds.

Stark: Windspeed?

Albrecht: Haven't seen any windspeed data. Only a handful of stations monitoring in the area. Not really accurate for specific data on buffers.

Stark: Great job, I look forward to seeing more.

Glenn Holt: Have you looked at buffers on state land vs. USFS buffers and how these affect deer habitat? Buffers help the deer in deep snow years.

Albrecht: I don't know that there's any analysis done comparing the two buffers. Thinned buffers? Concerned with fish habitat, mostly, not deer.

Ron Wolfe: Comment for Greg Albrecht. Reaching back to FRPA development: one of the questions we posed—one of the goals was to maintain a supply of large woody debris from wind events. Question: how much LWD does a stream need? Relationship between LWD and pool development. That issue, combined with information you're generating on windthrow would be helpful for future management. Some different things might be proposed about how much LWD should go into the stream.

Albrecht: Previous presentation involved how much a stream needs, and not all streams are equal. Complex picture.

Maisch: Good topic.

## **Possibilities for Alaska timber lands to support Trails/Recreation, Chris Beck, Agnew::Beck, LLC:**

“Working Landscapes”

Integrating Outdoor Recreation with Resource Development

1. Context: Quick Review of Statewide Trails Initiative
2. One Element of Initiative: Working Landscapes
3. *Discussion*: Relevance and Possible Application in Alaska on forest-designated lands

Alaska has barely tapped our state's remarkable outdoor resources.

Because of this chronic under-investment, we are missing our chance to build a stronger, more durable AK economy.

*What Kinds of Users?* “Big Tent” –Non Denominational

What New Policies & Investments are Needed?

- Support for “working landscapes”

ECONOMIC BENEFITS: The outdoor recreation industry is the sleeping giant of the US economy\*”

One More Day: “OMD”

Average length of stay for visitors to New Zealand –19 days

...for out of state visitors to Alaska –9.1 days

What if smart AK outdoor recreation investments lead to “OMD”?

- Total 2017 out-of-state visitor spending –\$2.5 billion
- \$2.5 billion divided by 9.1 days = \$275 million/day
- Say we can only convince half... adds an extra \$137 million in spending in Alaska

#### TRAIL INITIATIVE STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Greatest “bang for the buck” recreational spending
  - Feature trails & “missing middle” opportunities
  - Marketing and information
  - Destination towns
- Sustain and grow funding; build a potent coalition to:
  - Successfully push for growing agency recreational funding
  - Maximize use of existing state/federal funding programs
  - Find solutions to the “Alaska Disconnect\*”
- Improved public land management
  - Working landscape partnerships
  - Regulatory reform, e.g., better ways to reserve trails
  - Better public lands and resource stewardship

#### Discussion

- Broadly: could we do more to align forestry and outdoor recreation interests in Alaska?
- Strategies and management: issues and options?
  - Specific promising locations and/or trails projects
  - Securing ongoing harvest opportunities while promoting trails and recreation
  - Options to integrate trails into timber harvest plans
  - Meeting multiple user needs (hunting, hiking, biking, snowmachines, events...)
  - Funding options –Pittman Robertson, others?
- Next steps: how best to apply “working landscapes” concepts: Locations, partners, policies, actions...?

We’re leaving money on the table by not taking advantage of recreation activities.

Todd Rinaldi: Packraft and fat bikes both originated here. Emerging recreation.

Beck: Alaska disconnect: no taxes. When we grow, we have more demand for services, but we don’t have any support for that. Not matching growth in revenue.

Paul Slenkamp: Remote lodges and Alaska destination has declined?

Beck: Biggest growing section is that is heavily marketed: cruise industry. Now in Anchorage, a bunch of new small businesses are growing—hiking, biking. High-end fishing lodges having trouble with less fish available. Right now, most of jobs in Alaska are low paid and highly concentrated in 100 days of the summer. Independent travel sector is underdeveloped.

Have talked with Jeremy Douse, Area Forester in Fairbanks, about possibilities of a trails pilot project, and he recommended the Rosie Creek Area. Douse will speak to the advantages:

Jeremy Douse: Rosie Creek is in the Tanana Valley State Forest around Fairbanks. Rosie Creek came to mind because there’s already a lot of recreation there on the road system from previous timber harvest. We don’t have anything immediately on the timber sale schedule, and don’t have anything in the near future. Things going on there include endurance ski race, winter fat bikers, snowmachiners, mountain

bikers, runners, bird and moose hunters. In the future, we will have timber management objectives. This concept would be good to advertise that it's a working forest and will remain so. Potential area that's close enough to town that it would be used.

#### Discussion:

Gino DelFrate: I support this in general. In Homer, I was involved with Homer Demonstration Forest, with trails. Trails volunteers that build and maintain their trails can get very protective of their trails. Government Peak Trails, dog mushing trails. How do you get past the culture of ownership? Has to be built into the plan. Multiple use.

Beck: Valid concern. Global grumpy selfish-meter—quivers when it goes over Alaska. But it worked so well in Bend and NZ shows that it can work. It would be nice to know how the history worked—how did the communication work so that not one group exerted primacy. Good communication—You're coming to an active timber harvest area. Being resolute, and also benefit the bikers. For myself, enjoyed the slow and gradual forest road up the hill, then blazing down single track.

Maisch: When we tried to do woody biomass in Alaska, it took a few Alaskan examples of what you're trying to do that people could look at it, and then it spread throughout the state. I'm excited about this in Rosie Creek—a demonstration for others.

Wyn Menefee: When you're talking about these trails, who builds them and who maintains them? I see how this benefits the companies, etc., but there is liability and cost to landowners. State being driven to diversify economy. MHT has to make money from projects.

Beck: There is an Alaska disconnect. In NZ, there is a \$12 national budget for trail building and maintenance. Part of what allows that is that there is a tax structure when things grow. That's coming from taxes. Here, we have a lack of linkage. Trails built by regional non-profits in Oregon. They are active in marketing statewide. End up creating a lot of interest in the areas, creating business success which creates volunteers, with gov't.

Wyn Menefee: For the public—great idea. Growing the economy, great. Landowner has to make money: feedback from the landowner.

Beck: Some places there is a fee at the bottom of the hill.

Lojewski: You could charge people to use the trail or for use of the cabin. NZ: landowner not making money off recreation.

Putman: Rotorua—INTENSIVE forest management. Forest operations on public land but privatized the economy.

Beck: These aren't comparable to MHT areas. Ski areas are now making more \$\$ in the summer than in the winter—biking is a big part of that. Work in progress—would like to think about it together.

Lodging and bike rental and place to buy beer. \$5 for a map.

Maisch: Public land provides infrastructure.

Rinaldi: Tropical NZ: not a seasonal area. Bed tax in Alaska?

Beck: Individual communities. Some of that is used for marketing. In Anchorage it goes exclusively to marketing, but legislation says it can go to infrastructure. We don't have statewide taxes that would go here. Recreation and trails—build up infrastructure.

Maisch: Bed tax gets divided up into charities. A biking organization could apply against them?

Herzog: Mining industry gets a lot of trail ownership issues. Paying for trail development—needs to be a collaborative arrangement. Standard Creek also has a lot of trail use. Problems?

Maisch: Mushers were upset with timber harvest road on top of trails. We mitigated it by dealing with berms across mushing trails, moving some roads.

Putman: That was a good solution and worked well. In Two Rivers, I have a map of GPS of winter trails. All those trails are informal—some are RS 2477 trails. Most are on public land, general state land. Some areas of private land. ATVs and snowmachines, skiers, mushers are mainly keeping the trails open. Informal network that has organically created and maintained, with lots of opportunity for conflict that hasn't happened. A pot on simmer. Little hints of problems but not any big problems. Little mom and pop dog tours along the road opening up—that's beginning. I'd like to see something formalized and get it ironed out.

Maisch: Every part of Fairbanks has the same type of trails system.

Beck: Broad thought about how to take advantage of that. Look at all those and figure out what small subset you want to promote to visitors, and which you want to keep for the locals. If there were a lot of ways to grow the economy, this wouldn't be necessary. Outdoor rec could be a strong contributor to future economy. Accept that there has to be a tourism zoning process. Pick certain places where there is already development happening.

Herzog: Don't we already have some in Steese White Mountains?

Beck: I'm talking with Deb Hickok next week—she said she used to hike a lot before she came to Alaska. Not good signage.

Putman: There are lots of signed trails in the Kenai.

Beck: Highlight in our book is Seward to Anchorage. In Fairbanks: winter huts, sorting out those details. USFS can't process commercial use permits. USFS is very difficult. What are next steps?

Maisch: Rosie Creek great. Do something out there. Make it more formal. I can see DPOR in the same frame. Support timber industry—use rustic 3-sided cabin kits from local mills. We harvested there, and then it burned. Could start generating economic activity and some revenue—we want it to focus on active management.

Rinaldi: Unwanted activity—like in the Moose Range—there are some practices out there that aren't sustainable. I could see something like this redirecting trail activity more sustainable. Some enhancements moving forward. Could curtail the impacts, and make some positive impacts.

Beck: Chickaloon community struggling with this now.

Rinaldi: Sutton adjacent—this would attract different types of users.

Beck: Not simple, but good to hear your questions. In general, not sure that Alaskans see that cutting trees as a positive. If the recreation folks are walking into the public land management saying “let's cut trees and do some recreation, that will help with jobs, roads, trails.

Paul Keech: This Rosie Creek block adjoins subdivisions, and can be accessed from those subdivisions, with no trail signs. We have had conflict there—complaints from bikers and hikers about firewood cutters. Need to educate people who come from the back side.

Beck: Get the Borough and others to support the sign making.

Maisch: I have a sign shop—when they aren't working on fire signs.

Lojewski: Could carve off a little of timber receipts for trail making—could really help the partnership.

Susie Hayes: already have good partnership with DPOR and MSB, continue to work in this area on trails. We have a growing population that enjoys a little more comfort in this area.

## **12:00 LUNCH**

**1:03 started again.**

## **Board Business**

**FLUP and BIF appeals and a potential statute change, Chris Maisch, DOF:**



BIF: That document determines whether and how an action will be taken. Most rely on other documents: area plans—highest level planning document; specific state forests or state parks. Some areas don't have any plans. FLUPs are required for state timber sales. When we're getting close to the timber sale, and we have staff available, we do more planning. FLUPs are like the DPO (Detailed Plan of Operations), but open to public process. FLUP is an appealable document—but it gives people 2 bites at the apple. Looking at making the BIF the only appealable step. We often publish them at the same time, so in the past it looked like one public comment period because it was concurrent. Now, with 10-year sales, can't do all the FLUPs at once. In the past, we've put lots of money into planning a long-term sale and then weren't able to sell it.

Would still do FLUP planning, but make it like a DPO. Would keep the terminology the same. The public would be more educated over time.

Lojewski: Is there enough information in the BIF that they could file a complaint?

Maisch: For State Forests, there is an area plan, then state forest plan, then FYSTS (not appealable). BIFs are fairly detailed. I think the public concerned would have enough information to appeal to the commissioner.

Beck: What about when people didn't appeal the BIF, but then people didn't know the details in the FLUP, then came back to say "I didn't know what would happen."

Maisch: Access is laid out in the BIF, which is often the issue. The FLUP would have more step-down detail with units laid out. If you participate in the planning processes, then you know that the State Forests have plans. We don't have a lot of experience with separate BIF & FLUP. Agencies are also welcome to comment on BIF and FLUP, like for DPOs. We can work with trail users to make trails and roads compatible after timber harvest. Not sure if we call it a public DPO, or what we should call it.

Herzog: Don't call it a DPO—confusing to public.

Stark: What do you do with a FLUP when something shows up?

Maisch: Could still change it at the agency review level. Not closed to comment, just closed to appeal.

Stark: You could comment on it, but can't really do anything about it if you disagree with. Why then are we even giving it to the public?

Maisch: They can still offer comment.

Stark: If there's something that shows up, no recourse. DOF and ADFG didn't always work with the public.

Maisch: Someone will have to figure out what the issues are.

Herzog: Needs to be transparent.

Maisch: Agree. We want to hear comments at the FYSTS level, not at the FLUP level—that's the last minutes.

Stark: Going to really change the public's attitude.

Nichols: You can always take it to court.

Maisch: We don't have a long history of appeals. Did see an uptick in SE activity when we had bigger and longer-term projects.

Putman: Problem is for longer-term projects—BIF separate from later FLUPs.

Maisch: Need to educate the public as best we can. Need to be more efficient.

Vinsel: Is there a process by which a BIF could be amended?

Maisch: BIFs can get stale, so you could go in and refresh it. Not sure about statute for that—but you could amend it if you need to. *[Note: Ariens spoke with Joe Joyner, DNR DMLW for an explanation. Though there is not a time limit in statute for BIFs going stale, a BIF can be stale if it was written and approved when the public notice statutes (AS 38.05.035) were different than today's. For example, in the 1980s, it was only required to check a box to agree with the statement, "We have considered X." It would be good to redo the BIF if we were working with one that was that old, to include cumulative effects and other items now required by law in BIFs. As for amending a BIF, we can amend a BIF if we increase the amount of timber we are selling, or change the area that we are selling it, but the amendment need only address the additional area or amount.]*

Vinsel: A lot could change over 10 years of the project.

Maisch: If we found something or conditions changed, we could address that in the contract or in the FLUP. For example, SHPO site. Short answer: Yes. A little bit will depend on the managers. How we engage with the public.

Stark: Are you concerned about BIFs being more appealed? Because you don't have the definition that they are looking for? Would the BIFs have to be more detailed?

Maisch: It's like the USFS and NEPA processes. The processes have become far more detailed and then unwieldy because they are trying to avoid litigation. I don't want to become like that. Need to be aware of it.

Slenkamp: Once you start getting into things like global warming, problem. A lot of creeping.

Herzog: A lot of subjective creep.

Maisch: Depends on the staff you have working on it. Now we have fewer experienced people.

Vinsel: Long-term concern that so much of the history of our practices related to fish protections and Doug Martin's great work ignores temperature. I see it on the ground. Things that might be changing on a long term basis—these policies need to be able to accommodate that.

Maisch: Contractually we could adjust the timber harvest, and then offset the cost to the buyer—adjust the bid price, etc. If FRPA changed, we could amend the contract. Conditions at the time, when the contract was written, etc. I will talk to our contract people about how to add this in there.

Beck: To people who don't like timber harvest, they might not like this. Consciously figure it out the best way possible that minimizes the appearance of cutting out the public process.

Maisch: Yes, it is a change. Transparency in the process—have their voice heard.

Nichols: Most of the appeals are trying to stop the harvest. Not because they have discovered a fish creek. Tends to be for an area—not for the specifics. It's usually a higher-level objection.

Vinsel: I think in Kodiak fieldtrip, people that ended up being affected weren't opposed in the general area, but then when the timber sale came right up to their house, then they were upset. Not to mention problems with regeneration, which couldn't be anticipated.

Maisch: Always unknowns in the future. These decisions will be made legislatively. You are the first stop to hearing details. As we continue, we will flesh this out, we'll keep you appraised. First year of the 2-year session.

Stark: Is it possible to make an appeal on a BIF about the whole, and limit people to specific appeals on FLUP language? Instead of shifting the process, shift the scope of the appeal?

Paul Slenkamp: You can work with people who really want to work with you.

Maisch: Will bring that up with Law. Trying to limit the scope of what someone can and can't appeal gets tricky.

Lojewski: Current structure says you can appeal on both?

Maisch: Yes. Some parts of the state don't have any plans on them—like in Galena, this would be the only plan that gets done. Maybe there would be a hybrid where the BIF would be appealable. This situation is under Title 38. In Fairbanks, under .123 sale, value-added authority for 2 10-year sales, and FLUPs done in 5-year increments. Didn't want to be in a position where someone has a 25-year contract and every 5 years someone is trying to shut them down. We are trying to work on something very long for spruce beetle salvage—even if it might not work because of the rotting trees. Mixed stand forest.

Beck: Will you ask for an opinion from the BOF?

Maisch: This is in your purview—you can weigh in. But this is an administrative call—we don't need permission from the BOF.

Beck: conceivably at the next meeting?

Maisch: Or if it's important enough, could have a quick call. In some cases, the board has testified in front of the legislature. I don't remember any times we haven't achieved consensus. In times like that, the issue has sailed through the legislature. Have had board members testify at resource hearings—could be called upon to testify. Have been asked not to travel to Juneau for testifying.

### **Negotiated Sales**

Not completely clear right now—this would be addressed in the BIF whether there was domestic markets. State would default to supporting domestic markets if possible. The reason we have this authority was to deal with the situation that you make more money in the export market than selling it domestically. Although the way the tariffs are going, that might change. SE timber OG is a niche market. A lot of this would be focused at young growth overseas.

Nichols: Also could be for spruce beetle in the Mat-Su.

Maisch: Giving us more flexibility. Could maybe use it now under this, but someone could challenge us in court. If some of these changes came into play, we would need to update regulations. These could be bundled as one package, or separate. Could be Governor's bill, could be friendly legislator bill. Not sure what's going to happen with this, but we are following agency processes.

### **Strategic Plan for BOF, Board:**

Maisch: Trying to model it after the DOF plan that is short and succinct, then update it over time.

Maisch asked Chris Beck to lead a discussion, and reference the material in the board packet as a starting point.

Chris Beck: Start the discussion. Not an appealing task for many. The process can be long and laborious and produces something too restrictive, or alternatively it's mealy and too generalized. So our purpose here: can we pause and think how can we get the most value from the BOF? Part of this questioning may come from my recent arrival on the board. For many years as FRPA was drafted, tested, refined, the BOF had specific important responsibilities. These meetings now are interesting and valuable, but are we getting the most value from this board? Are there things we could do that would have greater impact? If the Governor or public asked: what did you do this year? How would we answer that?

A strategic plan doesn't have to be a straightjacket. If wildland fire, for example, takes over, we set other things aside.

Maisch: Agree with what you've just said. Board formed because of the reasons you described. Conflict between users, and something needed to be done around water quality and fish habitat, and resulted in FRPA.

1. That is still our core mission—overseeing that. I'm concerned about the DEC piece, as is the BOF. They are concerned but don't have the resources. Effectiveness Monitoring and Implementation Monitoring. We have been lax on the Effectiveness Monitoring, but Arians has meeting planned. Maybe some innovating things we need to be doing about that.
2. BOF is my sounding board—like what we just did for the statute change with “public DPO.” I won't use that terminology.
3. Emerging issues. You often know more than we do, for example, carbon markets. We need to understand how it works, what are the pros and cons. We need to be on top of this.

Putman: FRPA—what about research?

Maisch: If there is a research problem that we need to get a handle on, we address it. For example, stream temperature.

Arians: will have Effectiveness Monitoring meeting this fall.

Vinsel: Important function of the BOF is to have a statewide perspective. A person who regularly attends our meetings in Juneau asked “why is there a meeting in Mat-Su?” No idea about other regions of Alaska. Research. Perspectives are important. Try to do this for the people of the state. Takes awareness of different trends in world markets, in our own areas. Big picture. Important part. Reiterate from Parnell's administrative—one area where we may need to look—temperature and upstream of anadromous reaches. That issue is subsumed by legislation and ballot initiative. Now it's back to the time when it's appropriate to look at it. Not sure whether it's time for a task force, but it looks to become an issue.

Maisch: Yes; that's why we have different forest regions. Habitat varies in different areas. First step is literature review. Take that body of research and look at it—is it saying something different now than 10 years ago? If so, maybe time to look at changing FRPA. History of using S&TC to do these processes which then would require changing FRPA.

Nichols: It's a changing Board. It's hard to put things into perspective—fish or carbon—when you don't see how small the industry is. You need a “state of the industry” for each area. Hard to have a perspective unless you know how many acres cut per year. Average person, and some in this room, do not have a good knowledge of how much is being harvested from one end of the state to the other. In 5 years, this might be moot. Supply and timber base continue to shrink; we'll lose the timber base unless we get a USFS plan amendment, etc. If we are going to do a strategic plan, and diving into this, a lot of that has slipped. We need to try to educate ourselves.

\*\*Maisch: Doing a state of industry by region is a good idea. Could work with Commerce on this, new group developing new industry. Would be a good starting point for them—unique problems in each of the 3 regions.

Beck: That issue is a top priority on the draft list in the packet: how to educate the public. Industry in trouble—that's an example of one of the things to focus on.

Nichols: Hard to get information to the public about how much can actually get harvested.

Putman: Harder language on that front. Industry in crisis in at least part of the state.

Maisch: Another role the BOF plays: a trusted source for information. Board includes a broad enough perspective to not controlled by any one point of view. Briefs coming from the Board are trusted. Should we be involved in social media? In the fire world, that's how most of our information gets out.

\*\*Send the board a link to Kael's information online for fire videos, etc. [<https://akfireinfo.com/>] More social media presence would be a good thing. Statewide PIO Tim Mowry put things online. Should be part of our package.

Beck: Social media campaign—that is on the list.

Nichols: We can do a lot with trails. As we put roads to bed, we put waterbars in for hunters. But that has to be the landowners' choice.

Paul Slenkamp: In the landowners group in SE, it's in our own best interest to preserve the value of our asset by preserving the industry that utilizes our product.

Maisch: Or you have a standing asset that is losing value, like in the Mat-Su.

Herzog: Can we legitimately promote the industry?

Maisch: We can't be a champion for industry, but we can provide facts.

Nichols: We don't need to take one side or the other. Just provide facts. General public doesn't understand what's going on.

Maisch: One thing to consider would be issue briefs from the board. For example, on federal timber supply, Roadless issue, Fisheries. Social media and a one pager. Oregon: their boards are way more active.

Beck: At each meeting, we tend to walk up to the edge sharing views with the public, and of making a difference, but then we don't take that further step. Maybe we should be thinking about topics where we'd like to expand public understanding. We have a lot of knowledge, and we could magnify it. I am pleased to be part of the Board, but would like to have more impact.

Vinsel: Legislature is a good target. There is a high turnover, and many of them are oblivious about the industry.

Maisch: Often we get the same questions, time over time, from different administrations. Maybe when the new administration comes in, BOF could contribute a packet.

Nichols: Also for the budget. We need DEC contributing again.

Putman: Concise briefing document in front of each legislator, especially on the resources committee.

Maisch: Would be good to have more of a role, and to move that cycle forward.

Beck: To Denise Herzog's question, there are a decreasing number of voices that are balanced, well-reasoned. Legislators and public are trying to sort their way through difficult issues. There is an appetite for well-reasoned information.

Maisch: We have a name for ourselves with consensus recommendations.

Beck: Building on that credibility, we can provide more. Trails, fires, temperature changes in rivers...

Maisch: Trails—I have always thought: why don't we have a map?

Beck: We could bring in the right couple of partners to help carry the load on trails.

Maisch: I think we can find the money for that.

Lojewski: Board is funded by state \$\$\$. Are there any restrictions? As individuals, we can lobby, but not as a board. If we're going to do social media pieces about supporting forest industry, is this a problem?

Maisch: Would be good for the BOF to be more present. No one came to the reception last night—depends on the topic and the issues at stake. In Tok, people came. Sometimes there has been a full house. People are listening to the state. There was a reporter on the line today.

Beck: Conclusion: I think I'm hearing thinking about some topics where it would be beneficial to share information with the public. State of the industry by region. Trails. Timber industry. Responding to a changing environment—temperature, carbon credits. We could provide facts and information influencing decisions.

Stark: I'm a little wary of advocacy rather than education. I try not to advocate. It's not that easy. If you were to write a social media piece that the BOF is trying to promote the industry. Can advise on that. Educate. When you put something out on social media, you're advocating.

Nichols: Stick with the facts.

Herzog: Agreed. Keep our credibility that way.

Beck: We have to be credible and objective.

Lojewski: No one will see it anyway if you don't post every day.

Maisch: Would be on DOF page.

Beck: Would need to figure out the best platform for communication – that's an important and separate task. For example – a key topic came out yesterday regarding the fire situation. If the Alaskan and lower 48 seasons begin to overlap, we would really be in trouble. This is one of several key issues that need to be addressed. Facts that need to be shared, with implications for policy.

Stark: Not a no-go, just be careful.

Lojewski: The importance of forest industry to land managers. Where will you get a feller-buncher when you need it if you don't have any timber harvest? Who will deal with spruce beetle kill?

Maisch: Looking at the chart from the fieldtrip. Put it on BOF page, board met, toured the fire, here are the takeaways from this meeting. This would be of great interest to all. We have set new records in this fire season. Where that fire line is—point out that no state money is going to prevention, and that we are competing with 15 states for federal funding. If you have a good fuel break, it can save communities. Suggest action, just carefully. Focus on fire for this meeting. Arians will draft something and circulate it, can put it on our website. What's in the news? Rainforest burning, but there's no information about the Arctic burning.

*[Arians will draft text for a pilot report/update about fire fieldtrip and circulate to the Board for review, and ask for interested Board members to work on:]*

- *Future topics*
- *Define format for information pieces and how we will disseminate them*
- *Set priorities and a schedule for pieces for legislators at beginning of 2020 session.*

*Arians will produce initial materials, then Board reviews, refines, approves for distribution.]*

## **Wrap-up**

### **Winter teleconference meeting date and Board comments, Board:**

Tuesday, Dec 3

Vinsel: Thanks to Representative Jackson and Senator Wilson's staff for being here. Impressed by Incident Command. Thank the staff for accommodating us. Pleased with cooperation with DPOR,

ADFG and DNR to fight fire, remove problem timber, and protect hunters and firefighters. Want to reiterate importance of all 3 agencies involved in compliance.

Beck: Renewed my faith in human race with all the cooperation. Exciting. Appreciate interest in trails project. Also glad that Board is willing to work on being more effective.

Herzog: Thanks to Alison Arians and staff for fieldtrip yesterday. Need DEC there for FRPA. We have primacy, rather than federal agency.

Stark: Thanks Paul Keech for good driver, good information. Chris Maisch for leading, Alison Arians for organizing.

Nichols: How do we get homes Firewise—which homes burned, which didn't. Risk of trying not to lose is also a risk.

Putman: Appreciate meeting, trip, organization by Alison Arians. Fire stuff was great. In recent years, have been in awe of ability of suppression to mobilize massive amounts of manpower. My life has been consumed by managing fire crew issues—I'll go back to work on that. Workforce development needs work. Every agency is wrestling with this. Bulleted issues.

Lojewski: Thanks for organizing this so I could just show up. Good to see fire and has been a concern—workforce in Alaska on fire. Used to be 60 crews, now only 12.

Chris Maisch: Thanks everyone. 2:49.

## **Adjourned at 2:49**

### **Handouts:**

- Agendas for fieldtrip and business meeting
- Public notice, PSA
- Draft minutes from April 3, 2019 Board meeting
- Updated contact list
- Briefing papers:
  - Forest Land Use Plans & Appeals
  - Negotiated Sales for Out-of-State Markets
- Draft BOF Strategic Plan
- DOF Strategic Plan for 2018-2019
- Effectiveness Monitoring Research Priorities suggested topics
- Spruce beetle briefing

## **Appendix A: DEC DOW's Urban Forestry Projects:**

### **Controlling Urban Runoff to Cottonwood Creek, Phase 2**

Sustainable Design Group, \$58,381 (\$38,922 match)

Applicant Contact: Luanne Urfer, (907) 745-3500

This project addresses an ACWA Restoration priority. Cottonwood Creek is an impaired water with bacteria pollution. The bacteria is transported to the creek in stormwater runoff. This project continues restoration work started in 2018 by completing a stormwater remediation project on Fern Street outside of Wasilla. The selected site currently drains polluted stormwater directly into the creek especially during spring break up. This project will use green infrastructure techniques to slow the stormwater runoff down and let it soak into specially designed treatment works to remove pollutants. The project also includes a feasibility and cost analysis to restore another area of the creek that drains the Wasilla urban commercial district to Cottonwood Creek. A final project report will be posted on DEC's website.

### **Low-Impact Development Planning for the City of Homer**

City of Homer, \$59,785 (\$40,097 match)

Applicant Contact: Carey Meyer, (907) 235-3145

This project addresses an ACWA Stewardship priority to highlight and protect healthy waters. The project will assist the City of Homer to begin a stormwater master plan, by implementing a stewardship planning and pollution prevention project. The need for pollution prevention planning has been recognized by the City Council due to development pressures and community growth. This project will identify and map all drainage basins in city limits, estimate stormwater runoff volumes, identify and compare traditional and green infrastructure opportunities for treatment of stormwater runoff for each drainage basin, construct a green infrastructure demonstration project at the new police department, and provide public education and outreach surrounding the police department project.

### **Scaling Green Infrastructure in Fairbanks**

Tanana Valley Watershed Association, \$68,600 (\$47,500 match)

Applicant Contact: Jewelz Barker, (907) 322-2633

This project addresses an ACWA Restoration priority. The Tanana Valley Watershed Association will construct a small, medium and large scale green infrastructure project in the Chena watershed (Fairbanks area). The small scale projects will be in coordination with the City of Fairbanks through a mini-grants program targeted at local homeowners. The medium scale project will complete on-going fixes to drainage at the Carlson Center to supplement a rain garden that was funded with ACWA. The large scale project will add green infrastructure elements to a stormwater retention facility in downtown Fairbanks. All projects will be designed to reduce stormwater pollution and treat runoff at the source.



## Appendix B: DNR Division of Forestry Timber Sale Matrix

### Large Project Field Work Summary Table

#### Unsold Southeast Alaska Timber-related Projects [rev 8/13/2019]

Abbreviations:

P= Preliminary, F= Final , FLUP= Forest Land Use Plan, BIF= Best Interest Finding, OG= old growth, YG= young growth

Project	Summary	Current Status (Remaining tasks)	Estimated Volume MMBF YG/OG
<b>Edna Bay Parley Timber Sale</b> (SSE-1342-K)	YG/OG. Field work supporting the FLUP of the OG timber was completed in July of 2019. The draft FLUP is prepared and will be publicly noticed on 8/17/2019. The OG has been cruised. YG layout supporting the FLUP has been put on hold pending market improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt FLUP.</li> <li>• Advertise the sale.</li> </ul>	9/5
<b>Bayview</b> (SSE-1369-K) <b>(previously North Thorne Bay 4)</b>	OG. The project scope was reevaluated for improved operability and economic return. Project planning shifted to developing a timber sale on land managed for future settlement and the adjacent State Forest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PBIF issued on 7/27/2019.</li> <li>• DOF documenting proposed units and road locations for issuance of a FLUP.</li> <li>• Cruise.</li> </ul>	0/12
<b>Heceta East</b> (SSE-1357-K)	YG/OG mix timber type. Field work done in Fall 2016/ Spring 2017. The eastern unit is accessed from the federal land and road system. The western unit has been reconfigured to avoid cultural, fish and karst resources on State land through access from federal land and road system. USFS Geologist has been on site to both the eastern and western unit. Combined BIF/ FLUP issuance pending USFS NEPA review for permits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEPA review.</li> <li>• Flag field road location for the western unit pending USFS permit (one day).</li> <li>• Western unit line refresh and modification for new access (one day).</li> <li>• Issue BIF, FLUP</li> <li>• Update cruise.</li> </ul>	Mixed type 3.5+
<b>Sumez Island</b>	OG. The DOF contracted the layout and cruising of all conventionally operable timber to forestry contractor Terra Verde. State field work complete.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submittal and NEPA review required for USFS access.</li> <li>• State Agency review.</li> <li>• BIF and FLUP</li> </ul>	0/3.1

<b>Whale Pass</b>	OG. The DOF contracted the reconnaissance of all conventionally operable timber to forestry contractor Terra Verde.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BIF.</li> <li>• Sale layout of road and unit line.</li> <li>• FLUP.</li> <li>• Timber cruise.</li> </ul>	0/8
<b>El Capitan</b>	OG/YG. ADFG did initial delineation of anadromous habitat on State Forest land. The DOF and AFA foresters have collaboratively conducted reconnaissance of all operable timber. Action pending AFA report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADFG classification of streams on Settlement classified lands.</li> <li>• Agency review.</li> <li>• Sale layout of road and unit line.</li> <li>• BIF, FLUP.</li> <li>• Timber cruise.</li> </ul>	undefined/10 to 20
<b>Baby Brown Timber Sale (NSE-1549)</b>	OG. FBIF issued March 12, 2015. FLUP was adopted on February 15, 2018. Sale offering was delayed in 2018 at the request of UA. Waiting on the market for appropriate conditions to reoffer the sale. Sale was modified to include volume from Glacier Side 2.	The DOF is considering cruising the sale to improve representation and marketability.	20/0
<b>Chilkat Lake</b>	OG. Objective of this project is to provide access to a major block of the Haines State Forest and University land to the southeast of Haines. Conceptual access though the management block has been identified and partially field verified in 2018. LiDAR procured in the fall of 2018. LiDAR analyzed and the road mainline control points were field verified in July of 2019.	<p>DOF summarizing information gathered to date to move the project towards a budget level planning phase for the road construction.</p> <p>Conduct a concept level feasibility analysis (professional engineering) to define the rough order of magnitude costs for the major drainage crossings.</p>	undefined