



MEDIA RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tongass National Forest Inventory Advances Shift to Young-growth Harvest

JUNEAU, AK Nov. 5, 2020 — An inventory of young-growth timber in the Tongass National Forest recently produced through a partnership of state, federal and private-sector interests will help continue the long-term shift to young-growth harvest.

After a five-year collaboration, the Alaska region of the USDA Forest Service and the State of Alaska Division of Forestry issued their “Young-Growth Inventory,” which includes information for every young-growth timber stand in the national forest, plus management tools including estimates of when each stand may be economically logged.

The report also includes new forest planning tools that will improve Tongass managers’ ability to develop and plan future young-growth forest restoration projects, pre-commercial tree-thinning projects, and timber sales to meet forest management objectives, said federal and state forestry officials.

“Sound forest management policies depend on accurate, up-to-date data that will inform solid decisions to help achieve an economically and environmentally sustainable Southeast Alaska timber industry based on the use of young-growth stands,” said Chris Maish, director of the state Division of Forestry.

The project received administrative support and technical oversight from a multi-agency steering committee that included leadership and professional resource staff from two branches of the U.S. Forest Service, the state forestry division, and with support from private consultants and non-governmental organizations.

“Our partnership with the Alaska Division of Forestry has allowed us to collect more data than we could ever obtain on our own,” said Regional Forester, Dave Schmid. “We are set up to advance our forest planning efforts using this data and new analysis tools. The Tongass Young-Growth Inventory is a momentous step forward that will support continued partnership and collaboration for years to come.”

The inventory report includes maps and data documenting the location and extent of each young-growth stand in the Tongass, as well as abundant information on its condition, accessibility, suitability for harvest, and other data that can guide long-term logging and management planning and decisions.

The staff of the Tongass National Forest will spend the next year analyzing data and considering how best to move forward with the transition to young-growth timber harvest.

More information on the Tongass Young-Growth Inventory is available at the following three websites:
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/resources/tongass/landmanagement/resourcemanagement>,
or <http://forestry.alaska.gov/whatsnew>,
or <http://forestry.alaska.gov/statefederalpartnerships>

###

Alaska Division of Forestry

Alaska Division of Forestry's mission is to develop, conserve, and enhance Alaska's forests to provide a sustainable supply of forest resources for Alaskans.

USDA Forest Service – Alaska Region

The USDA Forest Service's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands for the benefit of present and future generations.

Contact:**Chris Maisch**

Director, Division of Forestry
Alaska Department of Natural Resources
chris.maisch@alaska.gov
(907) 590-3190

Erica Keene

Public Affairs Specialist
Forest Service - Alaska Region
erica.keene@usda.gov
(907) 586-8892