

## Alaska Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry

**Annual Report** 2009

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www.dnr.state.ak.us/forestry

We proudly serve Alaskans through forest management and wildland fire protection.

# ALASKA DIVISION OF FORESTRY

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry:

- Manages a wildland fire program on public, private and municipal land;
- Encourages development of the timber industry and forest products markets;
- Conducts timber sales for commercial use, personal use and fuelwood;
- Protects water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and other forest values through appropriate forest practices and administration of Forest Resources and Practices Act;
- Manages the Haines and Tanana Valley state forests, which cover a total of 2.6 million acres;
- Administer Community Forestry, Conservation Education, Forest Health and Forest Stewardship programs;
- Gives technical assistance to owners and managers of forested land.

The State Forester's Office is located in Anchorage. In addition, the division has two regional offices and nine area offices responsible for program support and field work.

In 2009, the Division had 76 permanent full-time, 190 permanent part-time and seasonal and 12 non-permanent employees.

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McGrath fire with Mt. McKinley and Mt. Foraker in the background. Photo: Jeff Browne.

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# Governor Sean Parnell STATE OF ALASKA

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Dear Alaskans,

A century ago, Alaska's forests provided critical wood fuel to the steamships that plied Alaskan waters, supporting commerce in our growing Territory. Today, timber production is even more important. In Southeast Alaska I have worked hard to support a sustainable, well-managed timber supply from State lands to help sustain the many communities, jobs, and businesses that are impacted by the lack of timber available from federal lands.

A long-term renewable timber base can help provide economic stability to Southeast. Just recently, the Legislature passed a bill I introduced to create a Southeast State Forest. This is a positive step forward to achieving vital economic growth in Southeast Alaska.

Wood biomass is emerging as a renewable energy source to help fight rising fuel costs in Alaska, especially in rural areas. Working together with private and Native landowners to provide an adequate long-term supply of wood fiber, efforts by the State of Alaska – such as the Alaska Energy Authority grants to schools and public facilities – are making a difference. I have personally seen small, local wood pellet manufacturing in the Interior and have noted the positive boost this gives a community. Currently, Tok and Alaska Power and Telephone are planning a demonstration project using wood biomass for heat and power. These projects create jobs, support the forest industry, provide new opportunities to mitigate fire risk near communities, and help manage increasing energy costs in Alaska.

This annual report reflects the Division of Forestry's mission and its efforts in the areas of timber management, biomass, multiple use, education, forest health, wild land fire management, and cooperative projects within Alaska.

The future of our forests depends on a dedicated land base, sustainable forest management, multiple use opportunities, and care for clean water and fish and wildlife habitat. As citizens of this state, we will responsibly manage these resources as they provide our state a renewable resource with opportunities to meet energy needs, provide jobs, and generate economic growth.

Best regards,

Sean Parnell Governor

#### **STATE FORESTER'S COMMENTS**

As this year comes to a close, I find myself reflecting back on the accomplishments and challenges we faced during the ninth largest fire season on record. Over the past six years we have experienced the first (2004), third (2005) and ninth (2009) largest fire seasons on record in terms of acreage burned, a cumulative total of 14.1 million acres! The ten year average of acreage burned has jumped from one million acres a year to over two million acres a year. The overall trend is up and we are experiencing large variations in acres burned in short timescales. For example, during the 2006 to 2008 period, barely one million acres burned with only 103,299 acres burning in 2008.

These dramatic swings in fire season activity are very much tied to weather patterns and related climatic conditions. In much of Interior Alaska the forests have been experiencing a period of drought and general forest health has declined. Insect and disease issues are increasing for many species and invasive species are becoming more of a realistic threat for Alaskan ecosystems. The Division's Forest Health and Protection program is working with interagency partners to employ a strategy of early detection and rapid response to stay ahead of this issue, one which can have severe economic consequences if not adequately addressed. There are many examples of major disturbances to social and economic activities when invasive species become established; two recent Lower 48 examples are the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) and Thousand Canker disease in black walnut. Both these tree species are important hardwood resources for the sawmilling and wood working industries throughout the country and the loss of these species would have many ramifications.

This changing environment is putting pressure on long held silvicultural and fire management policies both at the national

and local jurisdictions. As a Division we are trying to address the need for our organization to evolve to meet ongoing and new demands. Change is often a difficult thing, both in our personal and professional lives. At the individual level it takes acknowledgement, planning, implementation and feedback to effect change. As an organization the same principles apply, they just become more complex in execution. Should the change be from the bottom up, top down or some combination of the two? Is it someone else's job or is it my job to ensure we are efficient and cost effective in delivering services to the public? The answers to these questions are not linear or simple "yes" or "no" responses. It doesn't matter if you're a technical specialist, manager or field level employee, we all have a stake and responsibility to explore these issues and to suggest and demonstrate ways to make changes to the way the Division conducts business. The strategic plan that we completed in 2008 is one way to document our efforts and to set direction for the future, but a plan like this is only as good as the execution. During our management team review and update of the plan in 2009, we did note progress in many areas, but we didn't meet our expectations in others. In retrospect, I think we set a very ambitious agenda with a timeline that was too short for completion of certain actions. The feedback during our review gave us a new perspective and changes were made in the updated plan to reflect these realities.

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of our changing work environment is the opportunities it presents. The forest products industry in our state, particularly in Interior Alaska, is on the cusp of a new era. Several woody biomass space heating projects are moving into the construction phase and a wood pellet mill is under construction in Fairbanks. These developments will change how we practice silviculture and may provided opportunities to combine hazardous fuels mitigation work with our regular timber sale program. There will be many challenges to work out, but this is a great opportunity to assist communities with significant problems they face; the high costs of energy, employment and economic development and wildland fire risk.

I know that one of the most satisfying aspects of my job is the knowledge that we are making a difference for the residents of our state. In every Area Office I visit, I see staff tackling local issues and problems and making meaningful contributions to their communities. As we move forward on all our programmatic fronts, I'm secure in the knowledge that we can and will get the job done! Thanks for all your efforts and dedication, it makes our Division a great place to work.



Photo: Tom Williams, Roll Call, the newspaper on Capitol Hill.

Regards,

Chris Maisch Alaska State Forester

#### Sustaining a Timber Base in Southeast

Timber sale volume from the Tongass National Forest continues to plummet, endangering the remaining mills in Southern Southeast Alaska. The State of Alaska is committed to turning this around, and supporting sustainable jobs, wood products, and biomass energy from Alaskan timber.

The Division of Forestry's role in this effort includes:

- Maximizing timber sales from the state timber base to support the remaining mills. The state has sold the full extent of timber based on our annual allowable harvest. We have been able to accelerate our offerings using a surplus generated over the past ten years to help keep the local mills operational. This timber is the maximum that we can offer within the available timber base; including State land that may only be available short-term as well as land that is included in our newly formed Southern Southeast State Forest (SSESF).
- Directly working with U.S. Forest Service to design and offer more federal timber sales which are economically feasible.
- Working with the Tongass Futures Roundtable in an effort to reduce litigation over federal timber sales, accelerate a shift to second-growth harvesting to increase timber supply, and expand employment in forest restoration projects.

One part of our overall strategy is to help secure a long-term wood supply from state land by establishing a 26,000-acre Southern Southeast State Forest. The state forest will mesh with our other efforts to provide a stable and consistent supply of timber, diversify the wood supply, and allow mills, timber-dependent industries, and communities to invest for the future.

The new SSESF converts some of the General Use lands in the timber base to legislatively-designated state forest land that remains available for long-term forest management. With the land tenure secured by this designation DNR is proceeding with plans to increase pre-commercial thinning on previously harvested state lands. Thinning increases the harvestable timber volume by shortening the time between harvests, and reduces impacts of harvesting on wildlife. On average, pre commercially thinned timber has a total volume of 40-65 MBF/acre at a harvest age of 60 years, compared to unthinned timber with a 100-year rotation age and a volume of only 25-35 MBF/acre at 60 years. Thinning is also providing jobs. Approximately 2,000 acres of young growth timber in the proposed SESF has reached the age for thinning. This year, using Federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding, approximately 1,000 acres of thinning is being planned, providing direct seasonal employment to 10-15 local residents over the next 12 to 24 months. Establishing the SSESF was a necessary first step to initiate this effort.

Wood biomass is an important option for achieving the Governor's "50 by 25" renewable energy goal. For a number of southern southeast communities, the Alaska Energy Authority (AEA) identified wood heat as the most economical alternative energy source. Maintaining the timber harvesting, transportation, and processing capacity in southeast Alaska is key to making wood energy feasible. In turn, investments in wood energy facilities to manufacture wood fuels will help vertically integrate the industry and create a use for lower quality logs and waste material from sawmills. This is a critical missing piece to the current industry profile in Southeast and is a necessary component for the rebuilding of a more robust timber industry, one focused on local needs for energy, employment opportunities, economic growth and a healthy forest ecosystem.



Firefighter training conducted in Bethel for several villages. Photo by Doug Albrecht.

#### 2009 AT A GLANCE

#### **Forest Resources**

In 2009, DOF

- Sold 18.1 million board feet of timber in 91 sales to 58 purchasers statewide.
- Issued 1,847 personal use wood permits, helping to offset high fuel costs in rural areas. This was a more than 26-fold increase in permitting since FY05, and the greatest number of permits issued since 1985.
- Acquired over \$1.4 million in federal stimulus funds for forest health and restoration work on State and Native Corporation lands in southeast Alaska.
- Expanded work with the USFS to design and offer more timber in economically feasible timber sales from the Tongass National Forest.
- Conducted 261 inspections on private, state, and other
  public timber operations, and conducted 9 training sessions
  for timber operators and agency staff. As a result of these
  preventative activities, only one notification of violation was
  issued. This infraction was self reported by the landowner
  after learning of an operator error.
- Provided technical forestry assistance to 144 agencies and organizations through the forest stewardship, community forestry, forest health, and natural resources education programs. The Division assisted municipalities, boroughs, cities, military bases, Native corporations, utility companies, private businesses, media outlets, fire departments, schools and colleges, and state and federal agencies.
- Introduced legislation to establish a new Southeast State
  Forest from state lands presently used for timber harvest.
  The Division of Forestry will be able to manage the State
  Forest for a long-term supply of timber to local processors,
  and retain the land in state ownership for multiple uses.
- Field-surveyed 150 miles of forest roads on three different ownerships in southeast Alaska for compliance with forest practices best management practices and fish passage standards.



Community Forester Stephen Nickel in the field. Photo by Patricia Joyner.

#### Notable trends impacting the Division's Forest Resource Program

- Continued increase in demand for timber sales and personal use permits from State lands driven primarily by increasing use of wood for energy.
- Upon completion of rounds one and two of the Alaska Energy Authority alternative energy grants, over \$9 million of State funds are committed to biomass energy projects in locations where the Division is likely to play a significant role in providing wood fuel to these potential new biomass energy projects.
- Continued reduction in Forest Practices Act workload on private lands with an offsetting increase of activity on State land.
- A continued decline in federal timber sales available to remaining mills in Southeast Alaska in spite of significant efforts by the State administration to overcome obstacles to this critical timber supply situation.
- Anticipated decline in federal funding for cooperative forestry programs and for compliance and monitoring work associated with Forest Practices.

#### Fire Management

- In cooperation with federal agencies and local fire departments, the Division of Forestry provided fire management services on 150 million acres of federal, state, municipal, and privately owned land.
- The number of acres burned was 2,951,593, well above the 10-year average of 1.7 million. The acres burned were also ahead of the 5 year average of 2.4 million.
- Of the 2,951,593 acres burned, 1,124,995 acres were State protected areas. This season was the 9th largest season in Alaska since 1939 for acres burned, and the 22nd largest overall in number of fires.
- In 2009, the total number of fires statewide was 527, well above the 10 year average of 462. Of those 527 fires, 330 were on State protected lands.
- The first large extended reponse fire was the Mile 17 East End Road Fire outside of Homer (burning within several subdivisions) which was assigned to the Alaska Type I Incident Management Team (IMT). This fire burned over 1074 acres within residential areas. In all, 2 residences and 8 out buildings were lost. The state requested Federal Emergency Management Assistance (FEMA) for financial support for the fire as it was determined to meet FEMA's criteria to "threaten such destruction as would constitute a major disaster."

- A dry May (the driest in 80 years) with many lightning fire starts at the end of the month was followed by a normal to wet June which slowed fire activity. A hot and very dry spell began in July and lasted until the first week of August. This allowed fires to continue to spread when a normal July usually sees a moderation of fire activity.
- Extremely dry and warm weather through much of the summer in the eastern Copper River Basin. The Chakina fire, just south of McCarthy on National Park Service Land was one of the largest and longest lasting fires in that Region in many years.
- Red Flag Warnings (measured on factors of wind, humidity, temperatures, and dry thunderstorm forecasts) were in effect for 49 out of the 100 days between April 28th and August 5th. Hot, dry, and windy conditions continued to foster ignitions and fire spread.
- By mid-July, lack of precipitation was evident in the Canadian Forest Fire Danger Rating System (CFFDRS) indices, with the Buildup Index (BUI) exceeding previous records at many monitoring stations in the central interior and even into the upper Kuskokwim Valley (where many large fires were still burning that had started in May.) Even brief periods of precipitation brought little relief because lightning "holdovers "continued. The high indices were reflected in an increase in fire behavior on ongoing fires. Rapid rates of spread were seen on new fires through the second half of July and into August.
- All of the IMT assignments were for Alaska fires. The Alaska Type 2 Teams were assigned to six incidents and the Alaska Type 1 Team was assigned once. In addition, there was a NIMO Team (L-48) on Shanta Creek and a Southwest Type 2 Team (L-48) on Hard Luck.
- Northwest Compact 2009 utilized Canadian resources from the Yukon Territory, the Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia: This included 4 Bird Dogs, 3 Fire Cats, 2 Ducks (CL-215s), 2 Convair 580 Tankers, 1 DC-6 Tanker, 1 Rappel Helicopter (B-212, 2 assignments), and 52 personnel. The State of Alaska assisted Canada with Alaskan overhead and crews with four overhead and two crews (Pioneer Peak and Alaska One) to British Columbia and a lead plane with overhead to Oregon.
- Resources assigned to Alaska from the Lower 48 (as of August 7th), to supplement State and Alaska Fire Service resources, included 411 overhead personnel, 20 aircraft, and 28 Hotshot and Initial Attack Crews. Fire mapping assistance was enhanced by the use of "Firehawk" from the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency.
- Public and media demand for information was high due to the amount of fire activity and smoke in the interior, and the Alaska Interagency Coordination Center activated the

- Joint Information Center (JIC), to coordinate and support information outreach with Information Officers from Forestry, the BLM, Fairbanks North Star Borough, and from the Lower 48.
- The Division administered Volunteer Fire Assistance Grants totaling \$196,096.84 enabling 29 fire departments around the state to train firefighters, purchase equipment and other firefighting supplies.
- Received \$4,751,670 in competitive American Recovery & Reinvestment Act funding for hazardous fuels mitigation work, "Firewise" Education and Community Wildfire Protection Plan development.
- DOF Trained 575 EFF firefighters to be utilized on village EFF crews and mobilized 23 Alaska Type 2 crews with 64 assignments resulting in \$7 million in EFF wages.
- Purchased eight Type 6 fire engines to replace outdated fleet. The engines will be sent to the following Areas: Fairbanks, Kenai, Anchorage-Mat-Su, Tok, Valdez-Copper River, and Delta.
- Converted two excess military vehicles into fire engines for Rural Fire Departments.
- Contracted with an estimated 1,450 Alaskan vendors for services, supplies, and equipment.
- Led and organized the effort in a prescribed fire for University and fire research group on Nenana Ridge.
- Conducted 193 fire prevention presentations to schools, civic groups, youth organizations, home owners, contractors, hunting/fishing groups and others.
- Provided 14 "Fire in Alaska" workshops, training 145
  educators in the communities of Soldotna, Wasilla,
  Fairbanks, Talkeetna, Eagle River, Homer, Palmer, and
  Alaska Pacific University.



Dean Brown, Deputy State Forester at Lynn Wilcock's retirement. Photo by Maggie Rogers.

#### FOREST RESOURCES AND PRACTICES

The Division of Forestry administers the Forest Resources and Practices Act (FRPA) on private, municipal, trust, and state lands. The division reviews notifications of timber harvests, conducts forest inspections, monitors compliance, provides training and public information, and when necessary, takes enforcement action.

The forest practices notification and review process does not require a permit before an activity begins. Rather, timber operators submit a Detailed Plan of Operations (DPO) to the Division of Forestry for review. The division then coordinates review of the plan with the Department of Fish and Game Habitat Division (DFG) and the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). When the review is complete, the operator may begin harvest operations. Timber operators usually submit notifications well in advance of beginning operations, and reviews are completed within 30 days.

At times, areas for which notifications have been submitted are not harvested within the one-year notification period. These areas require a renewal notice the following year before operations begin.

#### **Activity Summary**

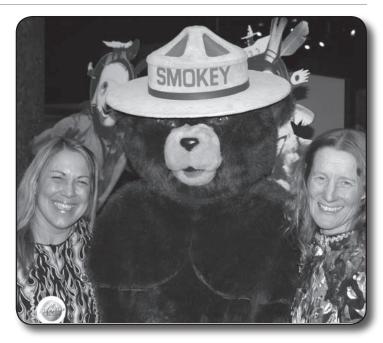
**Notifications and inspections.** The Division of Forestry received and reviewed 46 new DPOs and 43 renewals for private, municipal, and trust lands in 2009 (see Page 8). New DPOs covered 11,504 acres and 33 miles of road. While the number of new DPOs and renewals increased compared to 2008, road

mileage decreased by 20% and the acreage notified was approximately half of 2008 levels. Most of this decline was in Region I due to decreases in harvesting on private land.

Eleven variation requests were received, a decrease from the decade setting high in 2008. Most requests were for harvesting trees within buffers in southern southeast and on Afognak Island – requests totaled 583 trees.

The Division conducted 42 field inspections on private, municipal, and trust land this year, a 43% reduction from 2008, reflecting the reduction in road miles and acres notified. Harvesting on state land continued statewide, and staff conducted 230 forest practices inspections on state land, up 13% from last year. There were no reforestation exemption requests in 2009.

**Enforcement.** One Notice of Violation was issued in 2009 for the cutting of two trees within a mandatory riparian buffer in Region I, in violation of AS 41.17.116. The infraction was reported by the forest landowner. An investigative report was prepared and forwarded to the prosecution coordinator and further enforcement proceedings are in progress.



Judy Reese, Coastal Region FMO, Smokey impersonated by Doug Albrecht, and Sharon Kibourn-Roesch, Kenai Fire Prevention.

**Southeast Road Condition Survey.** The Division continued to work with ADF&G to survey conditions on forest roads on non-federal land in Southeast Alaska. The project focuses on older closed out logging operations. It is designed to evaluate how well the FRPA Best Management Practices have protected fish habitat and water quality and to determine whether there are any existing road-related problems with fish passage or water quality. In 2009, the project field-surveyed 150 miles of road in three different ownerships. Since 2004, 994 miles of road out of a total of 1,731 miles have been surveyed in 21 areas over fourteen different ownerships. In total, only 109 culverts installed in fish-bearing waters have been found and measured, of which 20 received low ratings indicating problems with fish passage.

**Compliance monitoring.** During 2009, DOF conducted compliance monitoring on most FRPA and state timber sale inspections. The number of completed compliance monitoring score sheets continued with the downward trend observed in 2008, primarily due to a decrease in timber harvest on private land. Overall, scores in all three regions were high, and increased slightly from 2008. Statewide, 88% of the 1,864 individual BMPs rated scored >4.0 out of a perfect score of 5.

**Training.** Training for resource agency staff, landowners, and operators is essential to ensure effective implementation of the FRPA. In 2009, the Division provided a total of 9 training sessions, including informal "tailgate" training sessions in the field, and staff training.

2009 FRPA	A ACT	IVITIE	S ON	PRIVA	TE, M	UNICI	PAL A	ND TI	RUST	LAND		1	'	'	
Region # of New Notifications (DPOs)		F	# of Notification Renewals		No	est Aci in New tificati	ons	Road Miles Notified			# of Inspections Conducted - DOF				
	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009
Coastal															
SSE	34	27	32	29	27	35	10263	18988	7752	23	22.9	30	39	42	29
NSE	7	2	8	2	0	2	1039	211	1858		0	0	8	5	3
MatSu/SW	3	I	0	8	I	0	235	160		2	I	0	16	5	0
Kenai/Kodiak	7	12	6	7	6	6	3697	2649	1894	24	16	3	6	Ш	10
Coastal Total	51	42	46	46	34	43	15234	22308	11504	50	40	33	69	63	42
Northern				<u> </u>	<u> </u>					<u> </u>					
Fairbanks	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Delta	0	I	0	0	0	0	0	360	0	0	ı	0	0	2	0
Tok	0	0	0	ı	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Copper River	- 1	0	0	0	ı	0	84	0	0	0	0	0	4	9	0
Northern Total	ı	1	0	ı	ı	0	84	360	0	0	ı	ı	4	11	0
TOTAL	52	43	46	47	35	43	15318	22668	11504	50	41	33	73	74	42
Region		of Variat ests Rec		ı	ariation eviewed			A Notic ation Is		Re	Review forestat xemptio	ion	Compliance with Reforestation Requirements		
	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009
Coastal												,			
SSE	0	26	10	0	538	222	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NSE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MatSu/SW	0	I	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kenai/Kodiak	2	3	I	168	327	361	0	0	- 1	0	0	0	50	0	311
Coastal Total	2	30	Ш	168	872	583	0	0	ı	0	0	0	50	0	311
NI4I															
Northern		Ι	Ι	Ι	Ι ο	Ι		1 ^	Ι	Ι	I 0	I 0		Ι	7
Fairbanks	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Delta	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	0	0	0	71
Tale	0	0	U		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tok	0		<b>O</b>		1 1										
Copper River	0	0	0	0	0	0									
	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	0	<b>0</b>	0	0	0	0	40	0	0	0	78

<sup>\*</sup>Variation trees reviewed covers all trees inspected on site in site-specific variations. This includes trees approved or denied for harvest, plus "other" trees, such as those that are withdrawn from the variation request or that are found to be outside the riparian buffer. It does not include trees harvested in small streamside zones under 11 AAC 95.240.

#### **Forest Products Market Overview**

By Jack Phelps, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development

Alaska's wood products manufacturing industry is varied and relatively small vis a vis the quantity of standing timber within Alaska's borders. Where once a vibrant manufacturing industry existed in the Southeast portion of the state based upon U.S. government timber sales, the majority of forest products jobs in SE is now associated with harvest on Native lands. Logs from these operations are nearly all exported from the state in the round and do not contribute to manufacturing jobs in the region to any significant extent. Moreover, the volume of harvest from Native lands is about one-fourth of what it was 10 years ago and is expected to decline farther as the holdings reach the end of their first rotation. Nonetheless, log export from private lands in SE and Afognak Island contributes to both the local economy and to Alaska's balance of trade. The primary trading partners are China, Japan and South Korea. The percentage of total product shipments going to Japan has continued to decline, while shipments to China have been increasing. China is now Alaska's number one foreign trading partner in forest products.

From the standpoint of economic opportunity, the bright light in the Alaska timber market at present is in the energy sector. Firewood prices remain at historic highs, with truckloads selling for as much as \$1200 in some parts of the state. The manufacture of pelletized fuel wood is an important new industry in the Interior region of the state. The first commercial plant (Alaska Pellets), at Dry Creek near Delta Junction, became operational in late 2008. Widespread interest in developing alternatives to petroleum as an energy source is driving the growing interest in biomass as fuel. The potential market for wood pellets is quite large and will likely be a growing sector for the foreseeable future. In addition to Superior Pellets in Fairbanks, there is ongoing consideration by another company to build a facility in the Glennallen area.

The use of cord wood for fuel is also the subject of growing interest at the community level, to heat schools and other community buildings. Projects in Tok, Kenny Lake, Craig, Tanana and Delta Junction, among others, are moving forward, with some receiving grants from the Alaska Energy Authority. This increased demand for fire wood is a positive development for industry for at least two reasons: it contributes to local employment as small business are created or change focus to address the new demand; and it helps the manufacturers of value added timber products, such as log homes, rough and finished lumber by providing a market for the lower grade timber coming off their timber sales. The net effect is better utilization and improved economies of scale.

A currently untapped (and somewhat speculative) potential for expansion of Alaska's forest products manufacturing sector lies in the emerging economies of the Pacific Rim. Alaska's log exporters, especially those penetrating the northern Chinese markets, have opened a door for opportunities to sell value added products into the Asian market. The demand for sawn products in northeast China is currently outstripping supply and the uncer-

tainty of imports from eastern Russia has accelerated the interest among Chinese buyers in looking elsewhere for the products they need. There is growing interest in white spruce and birch lumber from Alaska, and trade inquiries are coming in weekly. If Alaska wood products manufacturers can establish an entry into this market, the potential for expansion is large. Moreover, with greater throughput volume those same sawmills will have increased opportunities for supplying local markets that have historically been dominated by suppliers from outside the state.

Presently, no Alaska manufacturer is equipped to respond to this demand. There are two reasons for this. First, the industry will need to be assured that a sufficient and sustainable log supply can be secured to enable them to cut for these markets over a long enough period to amortize the investments needed to ramp up their volume. Second, the cost of transporting the product to market will have to be addressed. Presently, for example, there are no established container routes from Alaska, direct to Asia. Transshipment through the Port of Tacoma currently makes shipment of containerized wood products to Asia cost prohibitive.

While the market in Asia is certainly there, it remains to be seen whether this is a true opportunity for Alaska businesses. If Alaska companies continue to show interest in these possibilities, the first question for the State to answer is whether there is sufficient standing inventory that can be made available for harvest. It seems likely that a partnership with private and municipal forest landowners will be necessary. An active effort to identify current hardwood and softwood volumes available in both the Interior and south central Alaska is the first step. To accomplish that, the Division of Forestry has both ongoing and proposed inventory projects affecting the Interior and Coastal Regions.

**Federal funding impacts on technical assistance programs.** In FY09, the Division of Forestry assisted 144 agencies, communities, fire departments, utilities, businesses, educational institutions, and non-profit organizations. The technical assistance services improve forest health, increase public and private benefits from private forest lands, reduce costs of meeting air and water quality standards, and provide affordable recreation opportunities close to people's homes. These programs have the potential to help increase forest management capacity in rural communities to meet growing demand for wood for energy in the face of skyrocketing energy costs.

In Alaska, these programs have been supported almost completely by federal funds. Federal funds for these programs are now declining, due to the increasing cost of fire suppression on federal lands, and national priorities that favor densely populated eastern states and diverge from Alaska's priorities. To continue to qualify for federal funds for cooperative forestry and fire programs, each state must develop a "Statewide Assessment and Response Plan" by June 2010. This congressionally mandated assessment and plan must describe the state's strategy for addressing national forestry themes. Federal funding for these programs totaled \$250,000 million in federal FY09. DOF

is engaged in completing this mandated assessment and strategy with the help of a one time state general fund operating budget increment. The assessment will increase state control over technical assistance program priorities.

The State continues to meet the need for technical assistance to the US Forest Service to re-establish a sufficient and credible timber sale program in SE Alaska. With the Governor's support, an FY08 increment and FY09 capital improvement project provided funding for DOF and ADF&G staff to help the US Forest Service design economically-feasible timber sales to support the southeast timber industry.

Wood energy issues. Rising fossil fuel costs have sharply increased demand for fuelwood statewide. Requests for personal use permits (Figure 1), the number of commercial operators purchasing timber sales for fuelwood (Figure 2), industry interest in wood pellet and chip production, and community proposals for wood-heated facilities are all up. In much of southcentral and interior Alaska, the state is the major forest owner, but state forest land is often inaccessible. The Alaska Energy authority has awarded over \$10 million dollars of renewable energy grants to biomass energy projects, the bulk of which will depend, at least in part, on state resources for fuel wood supply.

# **Landslide Science & Technical Committee.** At the request of the Board of Forestry, DOF convened a Science & Technical Committee to assess the extent of landslide hazards

- associated with forest operations that could affect public safety.
  Review and synthesize existing information on landslide occurrence in Alaskan forests;
- Define key terms; and
- Provide guidance for determining where a public safety risk exists.

After meeting six times in 2009, the Committee provided the Board with an annotated bibliography of references, draft definitions of key terms, and GIS-based scoping maps. The study area covered coastal Alaska from Cordova south. Scoping areas on the maps have steep slopes, commercial forest cover, are open to harvesting, and are within a half-mile of public roads or populated areas. The GIS analysis identified 51,700 acres of scoping areas adjacent to public roads, of which approximately 7,600 acres are also adjacent to populated areas.

The Board of Forestry continues to discuss whether or not to address public safety concerns within the Forest Resources and Practices Act (FRPA). The Board has requested a list of options for addressing public safety issues either through FRPA or other state and local authorities. Addressing public safety under FRPA would require a statutory change to the Act.

### Forest Resources and Fire Management Performance Awards

Annually the Forest Resource Program recognizes outstanding individuals and organizations who have contributed to the management of Alaska's resources in an outstanding manner.

- Alaska Department of Fish and Game Wildlife Conservation Division
- Wally Brockert-Hoff, Procurement Specialist
- Tina Donahue, Fairbanks Area Administrative Assistant – Firewood Permit Program
- Glen Holt, Mat-Su Area Resources Forester
- Al Edgren, Delta Area Forester Biomass Energy Development
- Jeff Hermanns, Tok Area Forester Biomass Energy Development
- Gary Mullen, Valdez-Copper River Area Forester Biomass Energy Development
- Greg Palmieri, Northern Southeast Resources
   Forester Biomass Energy Development
- Stan Vlahovich, Mat-Su Forest Stewardship Forester

#### **Firewood Statistics**

Figure 1.

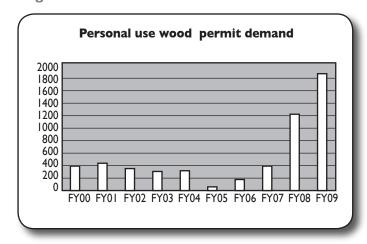
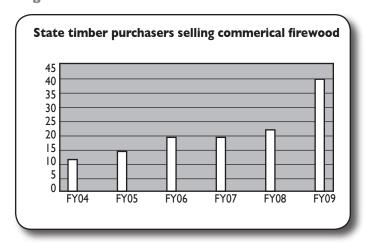


Figure 2.



**Board of Forestry.** The nine-member Board of Forestry advises the state of forest practices and provides a forum for discussion and resolution of forest management issues on state land. The board also reviews all proposed changes to the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act and its regulations. Board members are appointed by the governor for three-year terms and represent a variety of forestry-related interests. All board meetings include an opportunity for public comment.

In 2008, the board held three hearings. Main topics included:

- Forest practices budgets for the three resource agencies,
- FRPA compliance monitoring, road condition surveys, and effectiveness monitoring projects and priorities,
- Tongass issues, including the Tongass Land Management Plan Amendment process adoption and implementation, ANCSA entitlements in Southeast Alaska, and the Tongass Futures Roundtable,
- Tanana Valley State Forest boundary adjustments,
- Current use and potential expansion of wood energy in Alaska,
- Potential markets for ecological services and carbon sequestration from forest lands,
- 2008 Farm Bill and federal redesign of cooperative forestry programs,
- Impacts of climate change on forestry in Alaska,
- Cooperative forestry work with the NRCS in Alaska, and
- Public safety concerns regarding landslides and commercial harvesting.



Board of Forestry on field trip. L to R: Jim Schwarber and Rick Jandreau (DOF), Dr. Michael Newton, Kevin Hanley and Cindy Gilder, DEC, Jeff Foley (Board of Forestry), Paul Maki (DOF), Erin McLarnon (Board of Forestry), Clarence Clark (DOF), Mark Vinsel (Board of Forestry), Marty Freeman (DOF), Kyle Moselle (ADF&G), Chris Maisch (DOF). Photo: Pat Palkovic

#### **Gold Star Award**

In May 2009, the American Forest Foundation awarded the Alaska State Division of Forestry's Education program the Gold Star award.

The Gold Star award recognizes outstanding programs, coordinators, and volunteers from Project Learning Tree states that exemplify quality environmental education. Matt Weaver, Alaska State Forestry's Education coordinator, accepted the award on behalf of the division and its cooperators. In his acceptance remarks, Matt Weaver thanked the American Forest Foundation and credited the many professionals from within the Division, and volunteers from around the state who have provided support for the Division's education programs. "The only long term way to create a more informed citizenry is through education" Weaver stated.

"Alaska faces so many complex environmental decisions. The need for programs that teach people to think critically like Project Learning Tree, Fire in Alaska, and our other education programs grows every single year."



Matt Weaver with Gold Star and Kathy McGlauflin, Forest Foundation.

Timber Volume Offered and Sold in Commercial Sales by Fiscal Year
Timber volume offered for sale (MBF): Includes new offerings, reoffers and sales available over-the-
counter

Fiscal Year	Coastal Region Southeast	Coastal Region Southcentral	Northern Region	State Total	# Sales Offered Statewide
FY 00	11599	9361	14966	35926	88
FY 01	5954	8568	17999	32521	98
FY 02	16655	3749	17756	38160	94
FY 03	9452	12470	15027	36949	105
FY 04	13564	21133	7653	42350	64
FY 05	21318	37929	17460	76706	101
FY 06	17335	37346	29233	83914	93
FY 07	30945	30228	21775	82948	85
FY 08	10567	4316	21990	36873	82
FY 09	5597	1451	26666	33714	104

#### Ten-year record of timber volume sold (MBF)

Fiscal Year	Coastal Region Southeast	Coastal Region Southcentral	Northern Region	State Total	# of Sales Statewide
FY 00	8365	5774	6640	20779	60
FY 01	954	1857	6064	8875	60
FY 02	11340	1333	4207	16880	56
FY 03	4145	9779	4813	18737	68
FY 04	8064	957	2708	11729	50
FY 05	16003	4564	5594	26161	76
FY 06	10777	1703	12478	24959	63
FY 07	24437	30110	6420	60967	65
FY 08	4059	4316	7163	15538	67
FY 09	5597	1451	11036	18084	91

Timber Program Revenue by Fiscal Year (in thousand dollars)							
Fiscal Year	Revenues						
FY 99	339.9						
FY 00	334.3						
FY 01	370.2						
FY 02	454.1						
FY 03	475.9						
FY 04	660.3						
FY 05	834.5						
FY 06	502.5						
FY 07	661.9						
FY 08	1260.5						
FY 09	617.0						
NI / Tr I							

Note: Timber program revenue is primarily from timber sales; approx. 2% of the revenue comes from other sources, including log brands, seedlings, retained damages, and document fees.

Number of Personal Use Permits								
	FY 08	FY 09						
Coastal Region Southeast	I	0						
Coastal Region Southcentral	134	239						
Northern Region	1045	1608						
TOTAL	1180	1847						

State Fiscal Year 2009 runs from July 2008 through June 2009.

Units of Measurement:

Board Foot (bf) = the unt used to measure lumber. One board foot equals one foot square by one inch thick.

MBF = thousand board feet MMBF = million board feet

#### **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

#### **Coastal Region**

The timber industry in the coastal region continues to falter, based primarily on poor lumber markets, long term timber supply concerns, higher logging costs, transportation costs, and fuel costs, which increase the difficulty of competing in national and world markets. The lack of Forest Service timber in the Southeast continues to be a matter of high concern, both for the short term and the long term needs of the local industry. The dead spruce on the Kenai Peninsula continues to deteriorate, with no value for lumber production and reduced viability for chips or pellets.

The demand for State timber continues to be high in the southeast and the Division has worked hard to meet those demands. Conversely, the supply of viable timber from other land owners has decreased the past few years, putting an additional strain on the Division's limited resources. In 2009 the Division continued to supply additional timber volume to the mills in southeast Alaska. This is in response to the Forest Service's lack of maintaining their timber supply from the Tongass National Forest to the local mills. The additional State volume has allowed the few remaining mills to continue operating at this time.

The Veneer mill in Ketchikan has been shut down and the Ketchikan Gateway Borough is reviewing options for the mill and the surrounding property. The lack of a reliable timber supply, high barging and transportation costs, and high operating investments are the major stumbling blocks for this mill to ever operate again.

High fuel prices have increased interest in alternative energy, such as pellet mills, ethanol plants, and co-generation plants. Private sector companies are exploring possibilities of commercial operations on Prince of Wales Island, Haines, and in South Central, thus increasing the potential demand for State timber. Commercial operations such as these are focusing on total fiber supply, rather than log volume and quality. These new industries would be a benefit to the local communities and help build an integrated timber industry.

NPI's large chip operation in the Mat-Su area was halted in 2008, due to high fuel prices, higher shipping costs, and flat market conditions. They purchased two state timber sales of approximately 1600 acres in the Mat-Su valley in 2007, but have turned both sales back to the State. These two large sales are now being re-designed for small timber sales. NPI is now exploring the idea of a pellet mill in the Fairbanks area. There is still a demand for small timber sales on state land for the small saw mill operators in the Mat-Su valley. Due to higher fuel heating costs, there has also been a very large increase in demand for commercial fire wood sales and personal use fire wood in the Mat-Su valley. This high demand has greatly increased the work load for the Mat-Su Area staff, which is being assisted by the Region.

The continued deterioration of the dead spruce on the Kenai Peninsula has limited the amount of usable saw log timber by the local mills. This has forced some of the small mills to move out



Bob Seaton, Procurement Specialist and Maggie Rogers, Public Information Officer.

of the area or cease operations totally. In 2006, Hughes Pellets, a wood pellet manufacturing company, purchased a saw mill site in Stariski and purchased four State timber sales over the counter for a total volume of 33 million board feet. Due to higher logging and manufacturing costs, and market conditions, Hughes Pellets has decided not to operate in Alaska and has turned their sales back to the State. These sales are being re-designed to meet the demand for commercial fire wood sales and for personal use firewood areas.

Local communities throughout the Coastal Region are exploring the feasibility of wood fired furnaces to heat their schools and/or office buildings, to help reduce the high heating costs. The city of Craig has installed a chip furnace to heat their community swimming pool and their school. The City and Bureau of Haines has almost completed their feasibility study, as has Sitka and Talkeetna. The Coastal Region has provided technical assistance to these communities during their studies. If these studies become operational, then there will be a high demand to provide State timber to fuel these burners.

**Timber Sales Mat-Su.** The Mat-Su Area offered five timber sales for auction in 2009 for a total of 419 acres, containing 2,810 cunits of Birch and 370 MBF of White Spruce. Two of the sales were in the Houston Timber Sale Area, one in the Willer-Kash block, one in the Moose Range, and one in the Sunset Bench area. Due to the rising price of fuel oil and natural gas, the firewood market is very strong and of the five sales sold at the end of the year, all were bought primarily for firewood. All five sales were sold at auction in November, bringing the highest prices the Mat-Su Area has ever experienced.

The Area had five continuing active timber sales in 2009, all of them in the Houston Timber Sale Area.

The Mat-Su Borough's timber moratorium continued impacting wood availability, and building starts in the valley continue down this year, so the firewood supply from land clearing on Borough

or private land has not provided much firewood. These factors have increased the demand for commercial fuel wood sales from state land.

The Tin and Copper Timber Sales were closed and neither sale had any harvesting activity. NPI, LLC has paid damages to the state on both sales. The Mat-Su Area is in the process of breaking these old sales down into smaller ones that are better suited to the local logging demand. One timber sale was sold this year which was part of the previous Tin Sale and more sales are slated for next year.

**Timber Sales Kenai Kodiak.** Kenai-Kodiak Area has four timber sales for a total of 3.4 MBF. Two of the sales were for fuelwood, one was sawlogs and one was for both. A contractor and staff additionally planted 22,800 seedlings for approximately 52 acres of harvest land.

The Area has an active role in reforestation compliance under FRPA and saw good progress. Afognak Native Corporation (ANC) scarified and planted approximately 20,000 seedlings on 69 acres. This planting completed the 300 acres of site preparation and planting that ANC started after submitting a notification to DOF in 2008. Afognak Joint Venture (AJV) planted 34,000 seedlings in 16 harvest units for 116 total acres. A field regeneration survey resulted in a variation request and approval from requirements to allow additional time for AJV to plant certain harvest units. To date AJV has completed half of its regeneration requirements and completion is expected by 2012. Leisnoi, Incorporated scarified and planted approximately 57,000 seedlings over 230 acres. Leisnoi and Forestry met in 2006 to determine a course of action for FRPA compliance. Lesnoi will be working to replace approximately 200 acres of seedlings planted in 2007 that were damaged by rabbit browsing.

**Timber Sales Northern Southeast.** Timber operations on the Haines State Forest continue to focus on small timber sales to local sawmills for value added timber processing. Two larger sales have been available for over the counter purchase and have seen some interest expressed but have received no bids to date. An additional large sale is prepared and ready for sale. The division sold twelve small-negotiated sales to local operators for a total volume of 517 MBF and generated \$ 12, 149 for the state. The Division also administered Mental Health Trust sales with whom we have a cooperative agreement. These sales totaled 247 MBF and brought in \$13,599 to the Trust. This volume helped supply three to four local mill owners with material for processing. These mills cut and sell rough-cut green spruce lumber and construct log homes.

Firewood sales on the Haines State Forest continued at a high level this year with some operators entire operations consisting of selling firewood. Personal use harvesting of firewood also continued at a high level with people harvesting dead and downed wood from the forest. The Haines Borough took the next step in the possibility of heating the school and borough offices with a wood heating system by having a feasibility study completed.



Forestry Management Team. Mark Eliot, Dean Brown, Lex McKenzie, Marty Freeman, Chris Maisch and Lynn Wilcock. Mike Curran, not present. Photo by Jim Schwarber.

Two pruning contracts for a total of 27 acres were contracted out in early 2009 and were completed. Two additional units for a total of 31 acres were let in December 2009. Pruning is continuing on these contracts this winter. With the completion of these two contracts approximately 305 acres have been pruned in the Haines State Forest since this program began in 2000. The pruning areas are the second growth stands that have been thinned at least two years previous. A local contractor prunes the branches from the base of the tree to 16 feet up. The larger diameter dominant trees are selected for pruning at a density of about 75 trees per acre. Through pruning we hope to provide clear or knot free lumber over the remainder of the 120-year rotation age, which will provide higher future values.

Pre-commercial thinning continued on the Forest with 15 acres completed in 2009. A total of 1,934 acres have been thinned since the program began in 1993. Thinning, by removing trees competing for sunlight, maintains the tremendous growth these stands are presently producing and will create larger trees in a shorter period. Thinning has the added benefit of maintaining browse species for moose. Additional prescriptions were implemented in 2002 in an attempt to provide release for the dominant trees but also to retain some of the smaller trees to provide for natural pruning of the future crop trees. Several areas are also not being thinned for the purpose of comparison and to provide diversity. The stands where most of the thinning is occurring were harvested in the late 1960s and early 1970s and now average 60 to 65 feet tall with 10 to 13 inch diameters.

**Timber Sales Southern Southeast Area.** In 2009, the Southern Southeast Area sold 5 commercial timber sales for a total of 6,840 MBF of timber to local mills and timber harvesters. Three other sales, for a total of 12 MBF, were sold to individuals for non-commercial harvest. The commercial sales generated \$208,250 in revenue for the state. One commercial sale was sold under AS 38.05.118 (2,185 MBF), another under AS 38.05.120 (4,069 MBF), and another under AS 38.05.123 (151 MBF), the remaining two commercial sales were sold under AS 38.05.115 (435 MBF). Despite weak market conditions, de-

mand for State timber continues. One mid-size mill continues to operate within the area along with numerous small mills.

Prince of Wales Island. Viking Lumber Company completed the Squirrel Sale (3,412 MBF) and Indian Creek #1 (2,239 MBF) Timber Sale early in 2009; they also completed the Jinhi Bay Timber Sale (316 MBF) on Tuxekan Island which was offered in conjunction with the USFS Tuxekan Timber Sale. In June 2009, Viking Lumber Company purchased the South Thorne Bay #2 Timber Sale (2,185 MBF); road construction began in the fall with the first load of logs being hauled to the mill in early 2010. Western Gold Cedar Products company completed the Kasaan #7 (138 MBF) and Kasaan #2 (60 MBF) Timber Sales in 2009 and has purchased the Kasaan Closeout sale (419 MBF). Harvest of the Kasaan Closeout Sale started in November 2009 and will continue into 2010.

In 2009, Thorne Bay Wood Products company completed the Gutchi Creek Timber Sale (166 MBF) and purchased the Acorn Sale (151 MBF) which will be harvested in 2010. The Controlled Kaos #1 sale (16 MBF) was purchased by a local mill operator with the intent to harvest timber of a size that was considered non-merchantable during a prior adjacent timber sale; harvest of this sale is to occur in 2010.

*Gravina Island.* No activity occurred on the Bostwick #1 Timber Sale in 2009. Approximately 1.5 miles of spur road is left to construct for the sale and 1,300 MBF of timber is left to harvest. The purchaser is currently exploring potential markets to determine the feasibility of extending the contract for one year.

Wrangell Island. Silver Bay Logging did not operate the Eastern Passage Timber Sale or their mill in 2009; the mill continues to be for sale. Silver Bay elected not to extend the contract and has turned the sale back to the Division; approximately 3,800 MBF of timber is left to log on the sale and 1.5 miles of road is left to build. The USFS and some community members have expressed interest in having the road completed and left open.

Zarembo Island. The Zarembo Island Timber Sale (4,069 MBF) was purchased by Alcan Forest Products in 2009. This sale is composed of 175 acres of clear cut harvest with additional acreage available for selective harvest. Due to the remote location, operational logistics, and economic conditions, it was decided to offer this sale under the competitive sale process (AS 38.05.120) which has no processing requirements. Interest in this sale and the potential for future AS 38.05.120 sales was expressed by a couple Alaska based timber harvesting companies.

Annual Allowable Cut. In 2009, a forest inventory of the General Use lands was completed to reflect current conditions and changes in land ownership. Information from this inventory was then used to update the Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) to meet the mandate to "manage timber harvesting on a sustained yield basis". Prior to 2009, the AAC for the Southern Southeast Area was 12,818 MBF; based on the current inventory data, the AAC has been adjusted to 8,432 MBF.



IC Trainee Paul Pelligrini taking an overview from the origin of 17 mile fire, Homer KKA 2009. Photo by J. Reese.

Pre-Commercial Thinning. The Southern Southeast Area received a \$660,000 grant through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in October 2009. The funds are designated to be used for pre-commercial thinning on approximately 1,100 acres of State land which was previously harvested and is currently overstocked. Five units have been marked on the ground and initial reconnaissance was completed for units to be laid out in 2010. Contracts are being developed and we expect contractors to be hired and thinning to begin spring 2010.

Mental Health Trust RSA. The Reimbursable Service Agreement (RSA) with the Trust Land Office was renewed for 2009. Under the agreement, Area staff administered two timber sale contracts for the Trust Land Office, developed a pool of potential areas and associated maps for a land exchange with the USFS, and otherwise supported the TLO timber resource program in southern southeast as opportunity arose.

**Beach Log Salvage.** The Southern Southeast Area administers the Beach Log Salvage licensing program. This program provides a vehicle for commercial operators to recover lost sawlogs from the coastal waters of southeast Alaska and requires coordination with the USDA Forest Service and other upper tideland owners. The southeastern waters are divided into 56 salvage areas. In 2009 we renewed two licenses and issued one new license; the areas were located along the coast of Sukkwan Island, Prince of Wales Island, and Kupreanof Island.

**Log Brands.** In 2009, the Southern Southeast Office registered 8 new log brands and renewed 9 log brands. An updated Log Brand Book was published.

#### **Tongass Issues**

**Tongass Economic Timber MOU.** On December 15, 2009, the USFS sold the Diesel Timber Sale (24 mmbf) located on the Thorne Bay Ranger District for \$1.8 million dollars in stumpage. Diesel is the first timber sale to be offered from the Logjam Timber Sale Project; Logjam is the first project that the State of Alaska Division of Forestry worked in collaboration with the USFS on from start to finish.

2009 began with the hiring by ADF&G of Kyle Moselle as a Habitat Biologist to work on Tongass related issues with emphasis on providing early input into the USFS timber sale planning process regarding fisheries and wildlife. The funding for the position comes from DOF via the Tongass CIP.

During the first quarter of 2009 DOF, ADF&G, USFS, the timber industry and conservationist worked together on the development of a unit pool for a USFS 10 year timber sale on Wrangell Island. This was the first coordinated effort to use the unit pool team developed under the timber specific MOU for the implementation of the Tongass Forest Plan. After several months of work the team agreed to disagree about the economic viability, total volume, and the amount of protection needed for resources. DOF in a letter to the Forest Supervisor listed concerns and suggested mitigation measures to address the concerns. The USFS contracted out the NEPA portion of the Wrangell Island 10 year timber sale this fall.

DOF, ADF&G and USFS personnel reviewed the proposed unit pool for the Central Gravina Timber Sale Project and made a written recommendation to the Forest Supervisor not to move forward with the project unless changes were made to the projects unit pool. The Forest Supervisor requested that the district work with the interagency unit pool review team to revise the selections. The review team met with district personnel and was able to develop a group of units that produced a viable timber sale. The district is working on the DEIS (Draft Environmental Impact Statement) for the project at this time.

DOF participates with the USFS, the Alaska Forest Association and its various members in the Gate 3 committee (the name comes from the phase of the USFS planning process that deals with the on ground marking of a timber sale prior to the sale being bid). In June the Gate 3 committee sent the Regional Forester a list of suggestions to improve the economics of USFS timber sales; the list included maximizing unit size, the use of temporary roads vs. permanent roads, reusing rock from existing roads, closer spacing of borrow sources. The Committee has not heard back from the Regional Forester regarding the suggested changes. The Committee did work with the USFS Regional Office to revise the USFS timber sale appraisal system and the export policy for logs harvested from the national forest. The new appraisal process and export policy took effect in November of 2009.

In late June DOF, ADF&G and other members of the State Tongass Team met with USFS Petersburg Ranger District



Central Office administrative support L to R: Beverly Ostoj, Claudia Dwyer, Lex McKenzie and Sue Braund-Clark. Photo by Dean Brown

personnel to work on the comments submitted by the State of Alaska to the DEIS for the Central Kupreanof Timber Harvest project. Central Kupreanof is one of the first 2 projects that the State committed on under the one State one comment concepts since the completion of the Tongass Forest Plan. All issues were addressed and most resolved. ADF&G and the USFS are meeting to discuss and share information on various methods of modeling regarding wildlife populations. The Final EIS for Central Kupreanof was released in the fall of 2009 and then withdrawn without a Record of Decision (ROD) being issued.

In early July, DOF provided comments on the Access Travel Management Plan for Prince of Wales Island. Comments from DOF were centered on the need for access to State lands via the National Forest road system for future timber harvest purposes. Closure plans for access roads have been adjusted to reflect the needs of the State of Alaska.

One of the many projects on the Tongass that received American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding was for road closure and road maintenance work on Revillagigedo Island. The project was funded at \$2.2 million dollars. The USFS engineering department suggested at a Gate 3 Committee meeting that the ARRA funding for road work be used as the core for the development of a stewardship contract for the Ketchikan-Misty Fjords Ranger District (KMRD). The Committee spent several months defining a package of work that included timber harvest, road maintenance, road closure, trail construction, precommercial and commercial thinning of young growth timber stands, stream restoration work; in general all the various aspects of managing the National Forest on the district would be included in an "on-call" contract for a 5-10 year period with the amount of work performed each year based on funding. One of the benefits of stewardship contracting is the ability to keep revenue generated from commercial products on the district to help fund future projects. The KMRD stewardship concept failed due to several reasons; time constrains for committing the ARRA funds, the unwillingness of the Acting District Ranger to commit district resources and funding to such a large project and concerns voiced by industry representatives regarding packaging all of a district's work into one long term contract.

DOF worked with the Sitka Ranger District on another USFS project funded with ARRA money; the proposed stewardship contract project included the thinning of young growth stands for wildlife habitat improvement along Ocean Boulevard near False Island on Chichagof Island. One of the initial concepts involved was the use of timber volume removed from the thinning to provide firewood for the City of Sitka. Inspection of the timber stands proposed for treatment showed that the stands would provide spruce, hemlock and alder sawlogs, house logs as well the firewood component. DOF supplied ideas on harvest methods and equipment, possible markets, cutting specifications and estimated value per mbf (thousand board feet) for the sawlogs. Again, due to time constrains with the ARRA funds this project is moving forward as a service contract and not a stewardship contract. The wood removed from the project will be decked at False Island and sold later as a timber sale. DOF and ADF&G continue to work with the Sitka Ranger District and other partners in hopes of developing a long term stewardship project on the district.

DOF participated in a series of meetings with the USFS Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger Districts, Prince of Wales community members, and conservation groups working on the development of an integrated resource management plan for the Staney Creek watershed on Prince of Wales Island. This series of meetings will develop a list of resources projects and timber harvest opportunities in the area that could be included in a long term stewardship contract to provide year round jobs on Prince of Wales Island. Planning for this project is scheduled for completion by midyear 2010.

During the second half of 2009, DOF worked with the Thorne Bay Ranger District on the development of a unit pool for the Big Thorne timber sale project. The Big Thorne project is proposed as a 10 year timber sale providing between 15 – 20 mmbf on an annual basis. DOF has provided timber harvest systems analysis on proposed units. There are 350 units containing over 12,000 acres included in the project unit pool at this point; work on the project will continue into 2010 with field review to be completed by fall.

Other timber sale projects that DOF monitored during 2009 include Tonka and Central Mitkof, both on the Petersburg Ranger District. A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for Tonka is scheduled for release in March of 2010. The Central Mitkof project is on hold.

In October; Southern Southeast Area, Coastal Region and Economic Timber personnel spent a week on Kosciusko Island working on an alternative route for hauling future timber harvest volumes to the Log Transfer Facility located at Edna Bay. The existing road transects the community of Edna Bay on the west side of the bay and would need substantial work to upgrade the road for log truck traffic including the replacement of two bridges spanning anadromous fish streams. The State of Alaska, University of Alaska, Alaska Mental Health Trust Lands and the USFS all have timber volume that would use the road; the USFS



EFF Village Firefighter Training, Doug Albrecht (right). Photo by Ed Kessler.

is now working on an EIS that includes 6000 acres of young growth timber that would use the proposed road. Discussions are on-going with the USFS regarding possible cost sharing of road construction, a special use permit for construction on USFS land and an agreement for third party use of existing infrastructure.

DOF was involved in the planning of a proposed beach buffer restoration project (Spit Point) on the Ketchikan-Misty Fjords Ranger District, the USFS plans on harvesting a percentage of trees from several 60 year old young growth stands which will open the stands to provide forage for wildlife and the development of a second age class of trees within the stands. The proposed concept includes yarding trees to the tidelands for loading onto a barge and harvest with a cable yarding system that would land the trees on a barge anchored offshore of the uplands. DOF is now working with Mining, Land and Water to develop a General Permit (GP) for short term use of State tidelands for forestry operations. The availability of a GP for projects such as Spit Point will help expedite the permit process for forestry management activities along the shorelines of southeast.

Other work performed under the Tongass Economic Timber project included attending Tongass Futures Roundtable (TFR) meetings as part of the State of Alaska and DOF's involvement with TFR and working on assignments of the Framework, Young Growth and Restoration subcommittees of the Roundtable; participation on the State Tongass Team; work with various communities on Prince of Wales providing forestry related assistance on community development projects and proposals to create new employment opportunities in forestry management.

#### **Northern Region**

Throughout the region the demand for firewood harvest, both for personal use and through the development of commercial timber sales, kept the staff busy at all of the Area Offices. Outreach to the communities has also been ongoing concerning the benefits of burning dry, well-seasoned wood compared to burning freshly harvested green wood. Fairbanks faces scrutiny from the EPA for high levels of particulate matter related to



Jeff Hermanns, Tok Area Forester, receiving the Governor's Denali Award for his work on biomass development.

winter wood burning. The fall of 2009 saw the formation of the "Fairbanks Area Wood Smoke Local Action Coalition". Members come from a number of concerned organizations, including the Northern Alaska Environmental Center, the Interior Wood Burners Association and the Interior Alaska Conservative Coalition. Their proposals offer ideas on how to bring down levels of this particulate pollution, also known as PM 2.5. The federal government has put Fairbanks on notice that PM 2.5 levels must be reduced by 2014.

Representatives of the Division of Forestry participated as exhibitors and attended the fourth Small Log Conference that was held in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho in early spring under the banner of "Living Locally, Surviving Globally." The division has been working cooperatively with the Tanana Chiefs Conference, the Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation, and the Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development to promote the potential of forest industry development in the Alaska interior. The conference addresses trends, markets, products and research focusing on small logs. Traditionally, the international gathering has attracted forest industry people, community development specialists, entrepreneurs, and conservationists. Prior to the conference the two met with representatives of Coeur d'Alene Fiber Fuels, Inc. and also participated in a pre-conference tour of the Avista wood waste energy plant at Kettle Falls and the Vaagen Brothers small log mill at Colville.

Another opportunity for the region comes with the need to maintain a sustainable supply of timber for the established wood industry in the interior. Though small compared to others the forest industry within the region is no less important and is undergoing rapid change to develop production capacity for a growing biomass industry. Superior Pellets, LLC has constructed a wood pellet production facility outside of Fairbanks with an estimated maximum production capacity of 35,000 tons per year.

When in full production the plant will require approximately 70,000 tons of green wood per year.

School districts in Tok and Delta are in the process of engineering wood-chip fired boiler systems to supply heat to the schools in lieu of burning non-renewable fossil fuels. Much of the fuel source for these systems would come from local Hazard Fuel Reduction (HFR) projects in and around the communities, and from wildlife habitat enhancement projects in these areas conducted in concert with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. A request for a similar project for the school in Kenny Lake is undergoing a feasibility study.

In the fall of the year the Citizen's Advisory Committee of the Tanana Valley State Forest met at the Northern Regional Office in Fairbanks. The committee provides recommendations to the Department of Natural Resources for forest management issues on state forested lands within the region. Comprised of twelve members representing a variety of interests, the group reviews and makes comment on Five Year Schedules of Timber Sales (FYSTS) and Forest Land Use Plans (FLUPs), provides a forum for gathering public opinion on the management of state forested lands, reviews issues and activities on DNR-managed forested lands and recommends policies to the Director of the Division of Forestry, and helps to disseminate information about the Tanana Valley State Forest to the public.

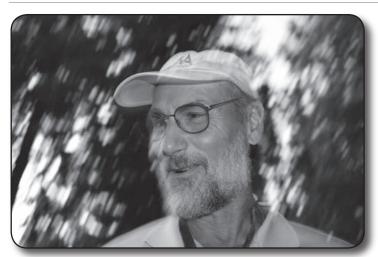
**Timber Sales Delta.** There were 33 active commercial timber sales during 2009. Much of the harvest in 2009 concentrated on salvaging timber burned in 2004. The Delta Area sold 13 new timber sales and 95 firewood permits totaling 2,348 cords for \$18,080.00 in calendar year 2008. The Delta Area planted 205 acres of harvest areas with contract planters during July 2009.

During 2009 additional work was done improving and extending the Quartz Lake Extension Road another half mile and is currently about 5.5 miles in total length. The road accesses the nearest all-season accessible source of firewood and timber for the community. The Delta Area increased the price of public firewood to \$20/cord for areas accessed by the Quartz Lake and Tenderfoot roads, all other areas are \$10/cord.

Local businessman Bob Supermaw sold 120 more pellet stoves in 2009. His customers purchased 1,050 tons of pellets imported from Canada. Logging and Milling Associates from nearby Dry Creek, manufactured and sold approximately 150 tons of pellets in 2009.

Granite Mountain Alaska Lumber has been logging, milling and selling firewood in the Delta Area for 25 years. In 2009 the business made more revenue from firewood than from the sale of other wood products, for the first time.

Area Forester, Al Edgren, has been assisting the Delta public school in planning for the development of a biomass heating system. The construction phase is scheduled to start this year. The



Pete Simpson (retired) and member of the Community Forestry Council. Photo by Jim Schwarber.

Delta Area is preparing future timber sales to meet the projected demand for bio fuel.

**Timber Sales Fairbanks.** For calendar year 2009, the Fairbanks Area sold sixteen (16) timber sales, amounting to nearly 3.938 million board feet of timber, a decrease of 7% from last year. Sixty five (65) active timber sales were under contract and included road construction valued at \$150,000. Commercial firewood sales saw record growth. There was a decrease in personal use sales accounting for 7,315 cords, down 27% from last year.

During 2009, 160,000 seedlings were planted on 376 acres previously harvested. Continued planting is necessary to reduce the 1080 acres of reforestation backlog from prior years that had no planting. Reforestation continues to play a vital role in guaranteeing timber for the future. To meet Forest Resource Practices Act requirements this backlog of unplanted harvest sites must be dealt with in the coming years due to reforestation backlog from the prior years of no planting.



Seedlings planted in a harvest unit with 6 years of growth. Photo by Marc Lee.

Overall market demand was slightly down in the Fairbanks area. The major sawmilling operators reported a slower year in lumber sales due to declining construction in housing and commercial sectors. Demand remained strong for commercial firewood but dropped for personal firewood due to moderation in high oil prices mid year. Fire wood was selling for \$200 to \$325 per cord in 2009, dropping mid year and gaining strength toward the end of the year when oil prices began to rise. Personal use permits decreased from 1,417 permits for 5,668 cords in 2009 to 695 permits for 2,540 cords, a decrease of 123%. The commercial and personal firewood program provides fuelwood to nearly 2,000 households in Fairbanks meeting a critical energy need. The public firewood program was cut in 2004. A greatly reduced public program has been maintained, but the impacts of public unauthorized cutting are increasing.

A new company called Superior Pellet Fuels purchased land in January of 2009 for a mill site. Mill construction and operation began in the summer of 2009. The mill was completed by the end of December with the exception of three phase power. Pellet production is scheduled to begin in March. Superior Pellet Fuels will use sawmill waste from local mills, land clearing waste, fuel treatments, and hardwoods and spruce from the Tanana Valley State Forest to supply the mill. The pellet mill will produce pellets for the local home heating market, as well as for large consumers such as public buildings, schools, and potentially power generation.

**Timber Sales Tok.** The demand for firewood has become the primary reason for harvesting timber. Tok Area continues to work hard to meet the growing market demand for commercial firewood and personal use firewood which is driven by the high cost of fuel oil. This is very important to the residents during these tough economic times. Future access and infrastructure into stands of firewood is a major concern meeting the future demand for firewood.



Same Location, 7 years later. Photo by Marc Lee.



Gateway School District biomass demonstration in Tok. Photo by Jeff Hermanns.

There continues to be a steady market demand for commercial green and fire salvage saw-timber. House logs continue to be the primary market. New markets for cribbing, such as 4x4x8 for use on the North Slope, have become important to the local sawmills. These sawmills continue to be an important local source of employment for the Tok Area economy.

Tok Forestry worked closely with the Gateway School District to secure a grant for the school from the Alaska Energy Authority for \$3.2 million dollars for a woodchip fired boiler. Potential savings will have a large positive impact on the school, possibly enabling them to hire more teachers. The biomass requirement for the school is not significant and can easily be secured each year. Most of the biomass would be from Hazardous Fuel Reduction Projects in the Tok area. An estimated three year supply (80 acres) of hazardous forest fuels was harvested and decked for processing into fuel for the Tok School this year.

A joint demonstration and research project with Tanacross Native Corporation and the Division of Forestry begins this winter. Among the project objectives is salvage harvesting of fire killed firewood from the 1990 Tok River fire for use in the village. The project will demonstrate the improvement in habitat for moose and grouse with the shearing of aspen, promoting new growth. This is also a research project to determine the volume of biomass and timber growth and yield. The biomass harvested will go to the Tok School for use in their biomass boilers.

A project removing Hazardous Fuels from around 30 senior citizen homes making them safe using the Firewise principles was completed this year. These people lacked the physical and financial ability to perform the required work removing hazardous fuels near their homes.

**Timber Sales Valdez/Copper River.** Copper River timber resources continue to be of interest to private industry. Early this spring, to protect potential biomass values from potential wildland fire loss, local native corporations Chitina and Ahtna Inc. moved all of their lands that were previously in Limited wildland fire protection to Full protection. Chitina and Ahtna Corporations, with their vast natural resource holdings, are potential candidates for the emerging biomass energy market.

Fuels for Schools-Biomass. Representatives from the local Copper River Basin school district, along with members of the Alaska Energy Authority, traveled to the lower 48 this spring to visit schools being heated with bio-mass fuels. The Kenny Lake K-12th grade school is one of the schools being considered for an alternative heating system. Interest and commitment from local contractors and agencies has been very positive. Currently the project is in the feasibility and engineering stages.

For the third year in a row demand for commercial firewood sales on State lands has increased. These sales consist primarily of beetle killed firewood and low quality sawlogs. Current pricing for firewood has exceeded the value of sawlogs, making these small sales very attractive to local operators. These sales have helped create new jobs and supply much needed firewood to the local community to off set very high fuel oil prices.

New Forest Land Use Plans were written this year to expand existing woodlots for local firewood harvesting. Demand for personal use firewood cutting areas has set a new precedent over the last year. Portions of larger sales that would have been sold in the past strictly for commercial harvest are now being considered for long term personal use cutting.

Demand for firewood in Coastal areas such as Cordova is exceptionally high. Before the planned spur road into the original wood cutting area could be finished, all available wood had been removed. The participating agencies, consisting of the Department of Transportation, US Forest Service, City of Cordova and the Division of Forestry are working on a five year plan to ensure that local residents will have a managed area to harvest firewood in the future.



Mark Eliot, Northern Region Forester and Jeff Hermanns, Tok Area Forester. Photo by Dean Brown.



Gary Mullen, Copper River Area Forester. Photo by Dean Brown.

There was also a renewed interest in over the counter sawlog sales this year. In the past, accessibility and the cost to develop access discouraged logging, but with the high prices for firewood, normally considered a low-end product, these sales became financially feasible.

Timber Inventory. Despite adverse weather conditions, regional staff personnel completed the much anticipated Copper Basin timber inventory. This inventory will not only include volume estimates for sawlogs and cordwood, but will also include volume estimates for potential biomass fuels. This is the first of its kind in the Copper River Area. These volume estimations will be very instrumental in determining the feasibility for such programs as "Fuels for Schools" and give current, accurate information to other private industries looking to utilize this potential renewable resource.

Forest Practices. Despite all the speculation of potential fiber markets, new notifications for timber harvesting were slow this year. Forest Practice inspections focused primarily on private land where roads had recently seen culvert replacement and the construction of new water bars. State sale inspections ensured that Best Management Practices were being implemented on all Division of Forestry sales.

A road condition survey is being planned for Ahtna and Chitina Inc. lands that were under notification in the early 90's. These sales are located near Chitina within the boundaries of the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve and consist of some 13,000 acres of harvested area.

Firewise and Community Wildfire Protection Plans. Two Community Wildfire Protection Plans were completed this year and three more are in review. The community of McCarthy, along with local residents along the McCarthy road participated in collecting much needed information to complete their CWPP during the Chakina Fire that occurred south of town this summer. "Firewise" became a household word during this summer's Chakina fire that burned 60,000 acres and lasted for over 80 days.

Tanana Valley Forest Inventory Update. The update of the Tanana Valley forest inventory was initiated in part by response to the New Growth Prospectus seeking value added wood processing facilities in Interior Alaska. Several potential businesses interested in the Interior's forest resources had requested improved data availability of forest land volumes and stand locations. Updated inventory timber type polygons and new imagery have been made available on the Division of Forestry's Geographic Information System internet mapping site. The data is timely because Fairbanks is seeing an important development of its forest products industry with the construction of a new wood pellet manufacturing facility. The updated inventory data will assist in developing a wood supply analysis for the plant and is currently being used for planning and reconnaissance of new timber sales in the Tanana Valley State Forest.

During 2009 an additional 172,773 acres of poletimber and sawtimber timber types have been delineated directly into the Geographic Information System utilizing digital stereo viewable photography. To date, a total of 887,111 acres of timber have been classified. During the summer 63 stands were field sampled in the Tok Management Area. The characteristics of these stands were different than the samples from the Kantishna, Delta and Fairbanks Management Areas. Because of these differences this data has been compiled and added into the database as a second volume unit.

The internet mapping site is being updated into a new version of the web software and will include the 172,773 acres of newly classified acreage and Tok volume figures. Query tools have been developed that allow a working circle of area to be identified and volume and acreage by timber type reported. The website site will be robust enough to query up to 5,000 stands at once! The new website is expected to be publicly available in early 2010.

An interim report summarizing 2007 field data was completed in March of 2008. This report reported timber volumes comprising an initial 286,000 acres of poletimber and sawtimber timber types. The final report summarizing all data is in draft form and will be completed during 2010. The drawing of woodland and reproduction timber types will be done by computer aided Ecognition object based image classification software and will be incorporated into the final report document. New sustained yield volumes will be calculated for each management area. Overall objectives of the inventory update are to 1) separate previously typed hardwood stands into birch and aspen stands, 2) accurately locate stand boundaries on geo-referenced imagery, 3) update volume, acreage and growth information and 4) allow volume and acreage information to be queried through a standard web browser.



National Joint Fire Research project at the Nenana Ridge Ruffed Grouse Habitat Enhancement Project. (ADFG MAP)

### Ruffed Grouse Habitat Improvement and the National Joint Fire Science Research Project.

During 2009, The Alaska Division of Forestry (DOF), Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS) continued improving habitat in the Fairbanks Area. A portion of the funds generated from previous RGS banquets at Fairbanks were distributed to DOF/ADFG for the purpose of enhancing grouse habitat conditions. Additional funding appropriated by the Alaska Legislature to the Department of Fish and Game to improve wildlife habitat were also allocated to Division of Forestry to help with the continuing habitat projects. The habitat projects provide a unique opportunity for long-term cooperative management by the state's foresters, wildlife biologists, and the Ruffed Grouse Society.

Fire suppression action taken over the last 50 years has resulted in fewer young, vigorously growing aspen and birch stands. Such stands are critical sources of nutrition and cover for wildlife. In the Nenana Ridge Habitat Project area, foresters and biologists use timber harvest and prescribed burning to enhance habitat for ruffed grouse. In addition to the benefits for ruffed grouse, the project will also be good for snowshoe hares, lynx, moose, goshawks, great horned owls, and several species of migratory songbirds, which use early to mid successional habitats. Over the 40 year cycle of this project, it is predicted that habitat for

100 breeding pairs of ruffed grouse will be created and maintained producing 20,800 ruffed grouse from the 1,300 harvested and treated acres. Many thousands of days of hunter opportunity have been provided.

The integration of habitat improvement projects and a National Joint Fire Research Project into an interagency collaborative effort continued to be the focus in the Nenana Ridge Habitat Project Area. In 2006, ADF&G, the State Division of Forestry, the University of Alaska, and Alaska Fire Service competed for and won National Joint Fire Research funding of \$260,000 to test efficacy of fuel treatment methods in slowing wildfire. The research entails a variety of fuel treatments followed by a large prescribed burn of 240 acres in the Nenana Ridge Habitat Project Area over the fuel treatment areas. In addition to improving habitat for Ruffed Grouse, moose, and many other species of wildlife, the research will provide answers to land managers on the effectiveness and benefits of fuel treatment projects.

Approximately 20 acres of shear blade fuel treatment and 20 acres of hand felled fuel treatment were put in during 2006 and 2007. RGS and ADF&G funds covered a large portion of the cost of the treatments and windrow burning.

In June of 2009, the fire weather conditions fell within the prescribed fire plan burn window. Researchers and specialists were pulled from around the country to prepare instrumentation and equipment for the burn. The prescribed fire was successfully ignited, control and extinguished. At times, flame heights reached over a hundred feet above tree tops. Fire managers from the Division of Forestry and BLM-Alaska Fire Service, as well as researchers and fire specialists from USFS Missoula Fire Lab, USFS Pacific Northwest Experiment Station, and National Geographic participated in the burn. National Geographic developed special fire cameras that were placed in front of the fire and filmed the prescribed burn for a potential National Geographic special.



Fuel treatment and burned units at Nenana Ridge. Photo by Paul Keech, 4/07

Funding for this research project came from Joint Fire Science (JFS) for the research, Alaska Division of Forestry, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Bureau of Land Management, Alaska Fire Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the Ruffed Grouse Society and other participating agencies for the treatment and burning.



SAF-ANFC Joint Symposium Forests Energizing Alaska

– Science Fair Award went to Piper Brase who collected water samples from the Teklanika River near their cabin. Photo by John Fox.

Reforestation in 2009									
Location	Seedlings Planted	Acres Planted	Acres Scarified	Acres Thinned	Acres Pruned	Acres Stocking Survey			
Fairbanks DOF	146,000	374.9				257			
Tok DOF			12						
Haines DOF	9,700	28		15	57				
KetchikanDOF	0					15			
Kenai DOF	23,995	93	8	20		65			
Delta DOF	20,000	205							
STATE LAND	199,695	701	20	35	57	323			
Native Corps.	172,832	643	239	5157	0	0			
TOTAL	372,527	1344	259	5192	57	323			

#### **ALASKA STATE FORESTS**

About two percent of state land in Alaska is in two designated state forests. In 1982, the Alaska Legislature established the 286,208-acre Haines State Forest in southeast Alaska. The following year, the legislature created the 1.78 million-acre Tanana Valley State Forest in the Interior.

In addition to the two designated state forests, much of the state's public domain land is available for multiple use, including forest management. DNR manages the state forests for a sustained yield of many resources. The primary purpose is the production, use and replenishment of timber while perpetuating personal, commercial and other beneficial uses of resources through multiple use management.

State forests provide fish and wildlife habitat, clean water, minerals, and oppportunities for recreation and tourism. The main difference between state forests and other areas set aside by the legislature is that state forests provide timber harvesting for commercial and personal use (AS 41.17.200) while allowing other beneficial uses in the forests.

A DNR management plan guides the use of each state forest. Plan guidelines determine how to manage different uses to complement each other.

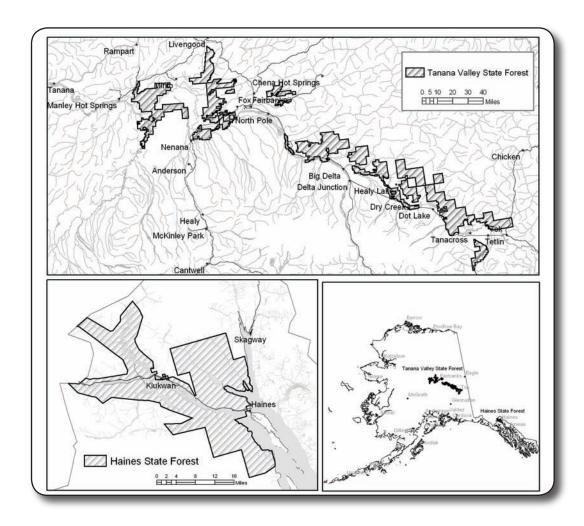
**Haines State Forest.** The Haines State Forest contains 286,208 acres, including the watersheds of some of the major

tributaries to the Chilkat River. Located in a transition zone between the moderate, wet coastal climate and the dry, cold interior, the forest provides suitable conditions for a diversity of vegetation. The rugged topography ranges from sea level to 7,000 feet.

The forest is composed mostly of two forest types – western hemlock, Sitka spruce, and black cottonwood/willow. Lodgepole pine and paper birch occur as minor species throughout the forest. About 15 percent of the state forest (41,652 acres) is dedicated to timber harvest, which has occurred in the forest since the 1960s. The annual allowable harvest is 5.88 million board feet. Although natural regeneration occurs readily, all large commercial sales have been replanted since the 1970s to accelerate reforestation.

The forest surrounds the 45,000-acre Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve, which is managed by the Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation.

A contractor redecked the steel bridge over Nataga Creek and the log stringer bridge over the Little Salmon River was closed following an inspection by the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities. One of the 60-foot modular steel bridges from Icy Bay is scheduled to be installed over the Little Salmon River this spring to replace the closed bridge.



Tanana Valley State Forest. The Tanana Valley State Forest's 1.81 million acres lie almost entirely within the Tanana River Basin, located in the east-central part of Alaska. The forest extends 265 miles, from near the Canadian border to Manley Hot Springs. It varies in elevation from 275 feet along the Tanana River to over 5,000 feet in the Alaska Range. The Tanana River flows for 200 miles through the forest. Almost 90 percent of the state forest (1.59 million acres) is forested, mostly with paper birch, quaking aspen, balsam poplar, black spruce, white spruce, and tamarack. About half of the Tanana Basin's productive forest land (1.1 million acres) is located within the state forest. About 85 percent of the forest is within 20 miles of a state highway.

The forest is open to mining, gravel extraction, oil and gas leasing, and grazing, although very little is done. Timber production is the major commercial activity. The Bonanza Creek Experimental Forest, a 12,400-acre area dedicated to forestry research, is also located within the state forest.

The Tanana Valley State Forest offers many recreational opportunities including hunting, fishing, trapping, camping, hiking, dog mushing, cross-country skiing, wildlife viewing, snow machining, gold panning, boating, and berry-picking.

**Proposed Southeast State Forest.** A bill to establish a new Southeast State Forest from state lands presently used for timber harvest was introduced by the administration to the 26th Alaska legislature in February 2009. With the legislative designation of this State Forest the Division of Forestry will be able to manage the State Forest for a long-term supply of timber to local processors, and retain the land in state ownership for multiple uses.

The proposed Southeast State Forest includes 20 parcels totaling approximately 25,291 acres. Parcels are General Use lands on Prince of Wales, Tuxekan, Kosciusko, Heceta, Revilla, and Gravina islands, and on the mainland at Crittenden Creek. The



Southeast logging transport. Photo by Pat Palkovic.

Division of Forestry worked with the Division of Mining, Land, and Water Management to identify and exclude lands that are priorities for the state land disposal program.

The Southeast State Forest would be managed as part of the State Forest System under AS 41.17.200-.230. Lands in the State Forest would continue to be open for multiple uses, including wildlife habitat and harvest and recreational activities. State Forest lands would be managed consistent with the management intent under the current Prince of Wales Island and Central Southeast area plans. Changes to management intent would require public and interagency review through adoption of a State Forest Management Plan under AS 41.17.230.

In 2009, the bill passed out of the House Resources, and House Finance committees without opposition, and passed the House on a vote of 38 to 0. It also passed out of the Senate Community & Regional Affairs Committee without opposition. At the end of the 2009 session, the bill awaited a hearing before its final committee, the Senate Resources Committee.

#### **Forest Health Protection Program**

2009 Aerial Detection Surveys.

(The following narrative text and tables on forest insect activity are a very brief summary of Alaska's forest health conditions compiled from a statewide aerial pest detection survey and forest health ground assessments conducted by state and federal forest health staff and other forestry agency cooperators. A report, "Forest Health Conditions in Alaska-2009" written by the U.S. Forest Service, State and Private Forestry, Forest Health Protection, Region 10, Alaska and DOF Forest Health Program staff, is currently in draft and will be published in 2010. An electronic version of the full report will be made available at DOF's and R10 FHP's web sites in early 2010.)

DOF's cooperative forest damage survey program with the U.S. Forest Service, FHP staff continues to be a key component in the forest health protection strategy in Alaska, and includes both aerial and ground survey components. Aerial detection surveys in southeast, southcentral, and interior Alaska were prioritized by an informal pre-season survey of state, private, and federal forest users, and cover about 25-35% of the approximately 127 million forested acres in the state in a given year. Aerial detection mapping is an indispensable tool in documenting the location and extent of many active forest insect infestations and some disease damage.

Each year the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service's State & Private Forestry, Forest Health Protection (FHP) program, together with Alaska Department of Natural Resources (AKDNR), conducts annual statewide aerial detection surveys across all land ownerships. Additional information regarding forest health provided by ground surveys and monitoring efforts is also included in this report, complementing the aerial survey findings. Forest Health Protection staff also continually work alongside many agency partners on invasive plant issues, including roadside and high-impact area surveys, public awareness campaigns, and general education efforts.

ı	Table 1. 2009 forest insect and disease activity as detected during aerial surveys in Alaska by land owner-
ı	ship and agent <sup>2</sup> . All values are in acres <sup>3</sup> .

	National Forest	Native	Other Federal	State & Private	Total
Aspen defoliation <sup>3</sup>	0	0	1208	2202	3410
Alder Mortality	0	207	319	791	1317
Aspen Leaf Miner	0	67680	106363	136558	310601
Black-Headed Budworm	535	0	0	593	1128
Cedar decline faders <sup>4</sup>	15626	174	12	485	16297
Cottonwood defoliation <sup>3</sup>	325	2758	5730	2338	11152
Flooding/ high water damage	106	138	802	301	1346
Hemlock sawfly	2539	35	0	981	3555
IPS and SPB	0	4407	739	1451	6596
IPS engraver beetle	0	9226	18865	3581	31673
Landslide/Avalanche	426	0	0	20	447
Porcupine Damage	792	14	0	146	952
Spruce Beetle	210	28502	45855	26075	100642
Spruce/Larch budmoth	694	0	20	12485	13199
Unknown hemlock mortality	1916	0	0	220	2136
Willow defoliation <sup>5</sup>	0	54142	66777	0	120920

- I Ownership derived from 2008 version of Land Status GIS coverage, State of Alaska, DNR/Land records Information Section. State & private lands include: state patented, tentatively approved, or other state acquired lands, and of patented disposed federal lands, municipal, or other private parcels.
- 2 Acre values are only relative to survey transects and do not represent the total possible area affected. Table entries do not include many of the most destructive diseases (e.g., wood decays and dwarf mistletoe) which are not detectable in aerial surveys. Damage acres from animals and abiotic agents are also not shown in this table.
- 3 Significant contributors include leaf miners and leaf rollers for the respective host. Drought stress also directly caused reduced foliation or premature foliage loss.
- 4 Acres represent only spots where current dying cedar "faders" were noticed during 2009 survey year. Cumulative cedar decline affects approximately 600,000 acres mapped over state, federal and private landownership in southeast Alaska over the past decade. 5 Acres recorded from insect defoliators are primarily from leaf miners. The affected acreage is much more extensive than can be mapped from aerial surveys.

In 2009, staff and cooperators identified nearly 660,000 acres of forest damage from insects, disease, declines and selected abiotic agents on approximately 33.6 million acres surveyed. This marks an increase in aerially-observed forest disturbance as compared to last year, but compatible with recent years. Table 1 provides an estimate of forest pest activity acres observed across all land ownerships from the annual aerial survey. Table 2 summarizes pest activity area (in thousands of acres) for each host group and damage type over the prior five years and a 10-year cumulative sum

The 2008 survey year was a relatively cool and wet, while 2009 was closer to normal on average. However, July 2009 was the warmest and driest on record in interior Alaska, and August rainfall was above normal throughout the state. Smoke from wildfires plagued many areas of the state in July and early-August. Nearly three million acres burned in wildfires in 2009;

most in the upper Yukon and Tanana River zones. The aerially-recorded damage numbers generally do not represent the acres affected by pathogens, since many of the most destructive disease agents (i.e. wood decay fungi, root diseases, dwarf mistletoe, canker fungi, etc.) are not visible by aerial survey.

Above normal temperatures and normal or below normal precipitation for May gave leafminers an early jump on the season. In interior Alaska, this was the ninth consecutive year of outbreak of the aspen leaf miner, which normally attacks early in the summer and within a short time infests much of the aspen in that part of the state. While aspen leaf miner populations appear to be trending downwards since 2007, this outbreak has not yet collapsed and may continue chronically for some years to come. Willow leaf blotch miner damage acres increased in 2009, and damaged willows were very visible along road corridors in the Interior. Damage caused by the amber-marked birch leaf miner

Host Group/Damage Type <sup>1</sup>	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	10-Year Cumulative <sup>2</sup>
Alder defoliation <sup>3</sup>	2.8	10.5	17.3	10.6	10.0	0.7	3.4	61.0
Aspen defoliation	351.4	591.5	678.9	509.5	796.0	219.7	310.8	3097.3
Birch defoliation	217.5	163.9	47.5	13.2	1.5	.01	14.3	463.8
Cottonwood defoliation	13.1	16.7	8.0	24.6	11.5	13.2	11.2	121.5
Hemlock defoliation	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.1	3.6	12.0
Hemlock mortality	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	2.0	2.1	4.5
Larch defoliation	0.6	14.2	1.8	2.7	0.1	0.2	0.1	117.2
Larch mortality	22.5	11.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1	39.5
Spruce defoliation	61.5	93.4	31.9	68.I	41.9	6.9	0.8	429.7
Spruce mortality	92.8	145.2	93.8	130.6	183.9	129.1	138.9	1006.4
Spruce/Hemlock defoliation	15.1	1.5	1.4	1.5	10.3	2.8	1.1	82.2
Spruce/Larch defoliation	0.3	0.0	0.3	2.8	0.0	0.0	13.2	16.6
Sub Alpine Fir mortality	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.5	0.1	0.0	0.0	1.7
Willow defoliation	83.9	111.2	44.5	50.7	92.7	76.8	139.7	6.8.6
Total damage acres- thousands	861.7	1160.5	941.5	814.8	1148.1	451.75	639.3	6062.0
Total acres surveyed	25588	36343	39206	32991	38365	36402	33571	
Percent of acres surveyed showing damage	3.4	3.2	2.4	2.5	3.0	1.2	1.9	

I Summaries identify damage, mostly from insect agents. Foliar disease agents contribute to the spruce defoliation and hemlock mortality totals. Damage agents such as fire, wind, flooding, slides and animal damage are not included.

and the birch leaf roller were less obvious this year than in recent years past. Many of the birch trees examined in the Fairbanks area had some level of leaf damage caused by these two insects, but for the most part, the damage was light.

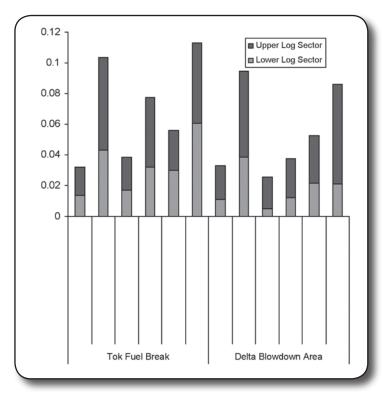
Monitoring of the spruce budworm continued this summer. There were very few reports of budworm larvae this spring and damage to trees was light, indicating that populations have returned to endemic levels. As it has been for at least three years, damage was noticeable along the Dalton Highway near the Yukon River Bridge again in 2009.

FOCUS ON: Northern Spruce Engraver Beetle Management in a Changing Climate – Research and Demonstration Slash Management Projects in Interior Alaska. The northern spruce engraver, Ips perturbatus, is distributed throughout the boreal region of North America, and colonizes white and black spruce throughout Alaska, and Lutz spruce, a natural hybrid of white and Sitka

spruce, on the Kenai Peninsula. This bark beetle is the primary mortality agent of white spruce in recently disturbed areas in interior Alaska. If favorable climatic conditions coincide with large quantities of suitable host material (e.g., slash), northern spruce engraver populations may erupt and result in the mortality of apparently-healthy trees over extensive areas.

Due to the long life cycle of trees, short-term impacts (<50 years) of climate change on forest ecosystems are expected to be manifested through increased frequency and severity of disturbances, such as bark beetle outbreaks (Bentz et al., in review). For example, research conducted by scientists at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, examining extensive first-order weather station data and tree-ring data compiled since the early 1950s, suggests that white spruce in Alaska's boreal forests have already exhibited significant decreases in growth in recent years, likely attributable to climate change. If such trends persist, climatic warming may lead to zero net annual growth and, presumably,

<sup>2</sup> The same stand can have active infestation for several years. The cumulative total is a union of all areas from 1999 through 2009 and does not double count acres.



IPS FIGURE 1. Mean number of northern spruce engraver (Ips perturbatus) emergence holes by log quadrant (aspect) following creation of a fuel break (Tok) and a naturally-disturbed area (Delta), Alaska, 2007.

extensive amounts of tree mortality attributed to northern spruce engraver infestations followed by significant shifts in flora and fauna (Chapin et al. 2006).

In recent years, elevated levels of northern spruce engraver-caused tree mortality have resulted in increased efforts to develop suitable management techniques. Much of this work has concentrated on development of semiochemical (i.e., compounds produced by one organism that produce an effect, usually behavioral, in another) -based tools. Little work, however, has been done to determine the effects of commonly used slash management techniques on northern spruce engraver performance in slash, and on the effectiveness of these techniques for minimizing associated levels of tree mortality in residual stands.

A cooperative research and demonstration project was initiated in early 2009 by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry (AKDNR DOF), in collaboration with the USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Research Station (USDA FS PSW) and the USDA Forest Service Forest Health Protection program (USDA FS FHP), to determine if time of cutting, distribution of slash (i.e., decked v. dispersed), or scoring of bark impacts northern spruce engraver reproductive success and subsequent levels of beetle-caused tree mortality within residual stands. This work is sponsored by a grant from the Special Technology Development Program (STDP, USDA FS). The topic is particularly timely considering the multiple interact-

ing threats that boreal forests of Alaska currently face, many of which have been shown to be exacerbated by climate change.

In support of the current northern spruce engraver slash management research and demonstration project, the AKDNR DOF and USDA FS FHP conducted preliminary work in 2007 to explore more effective means of minimizing northern spruce engraver infestation of white spruce slash that resulted from localized disturbances via wind events (blowdown), thinning and clearing during residential construction, firewood cutting and other small-scale, non-commercial operations. Populations (i.e., exiting adult beetles) were compared among six treatments that simulated small firewood "decks", staggered "decks", scattered slash "decks" and scoring of spruce slash under open (cleared fuel breaks), shaded (e.g., sheltered fuel breaks) and more natural (blowdown) field conditions. In brief, the data suggested a relationship between slash treatment and northern spruce engraver beetle reproductive performance that may be exploited to minimize residual tree mortality in newly disturbed areas. For example, data indicated that decking of white spruce slash, as well as mechanical scoring of slash (by chainsaw), were important (IPS FIGURE 1) and warranted further investigation.

The 2009 northern spruce engraver slash management STDP project was established in three forested blocks in Interior Alaska (near Fairbanks, Delta Junction, and Tok) during August and September (fall treatment). Treatments consist of traditional firewood decks and dispersed bolts, either unscored, or scored on two opposing sides by chainsaw to enhance drying of the inner bark (phloem) (IPS FIGUREs 2 & 3 and IPS FIGURE 3).

The study design is a randomized complete block of eighteen 0.25-acre plots within each of the three Interior Alaska study sites. Additional white spruce trees will be felled and slash decks created in May 2010 (spring treatment) to complete the slash treatment portion of the study. This research and demonstration project will assess effects of the various slash treatments (variables include fall vs. spring cutting, slash arrangement-decked vs. scattered, and scoring of slash) to reduce northern spruce engraver colonization and reproductive success (IPS FIGURE 4). Slash treatment variables in the data collection will include northern spruce engraver attack and exit hole densities, in addition to an assessment of northern spruce engraver-caused mortality of residual leave trees within the 0.25 acre plots (total of 54 plot areas will be assessed). Residual stand infestation from the 2009 and 2010 slash treatments will be assessed in the treatment plots during the 2011 field season. Flight periodicity of northern spruce engraver in interior Alaska will also be assessed during the project.

In addition, in 2009 the effectiveness of verbenone, a common bark beetle anti-aggregant (disruption) compound, and conophthorin, a non-host green leaf volatile compound, was analyzed for protecting white spruce slash from colonization by northern spruce engraver near Tok, Alaska. (i.e. a recently harvested white spruce/quaking aspen stand that is serving as a fire break and logging deck area for biomass that will power a generator at Tok





IPS FIGURES 2 & 3-A deck of downed logs and a mixed spruce stand representive of the study sites. Photos courtesy of Roger Burnside.

School; 63.32 N, 142.98 W; about 1690 feet elevation). The 2009 semiochemical study was a variation of work previously conducted on the Kenai Peninsula in southcentral Alaska which examined the effectiveness of various semiochemicals in protecting individual standing trees from northern spruce engraver attack. On 18-19 May, 20 slash decks consisting of 15, 4.5 foot long bolts with large end diameters of 4.0-8.0 inches, were cut from freshly felled white spruce near the study area. Half of the piles were treated with the two semiochemicals (verbenone and conophthorin). The other piles were left untreated. Attacks and exit holes were recorded on 11-13 July and 26-29 August 2009, respectively.

Northern spruce engraver impacts have increased in recent years. About 1,200 acres were impacted in 2003 compared to 43,000 acres in 2007 primarily in interior Alaska. Aerial surveys suggest about 60,000 acres were impacted in 2008, with a portion of the northern spruce engraver-affected acres also containing spruce beetle (Dendroctonus rufipennis) activity. Northern spruce engraver beetle activity has increased significantly in areas adjacent to those affected by the 2004 and 2005 wildfires in interior Alaska. It is expected such impacts will continue to increase in the future as a result of climate change (Robertson 2000).



IPS FIGURE 4- U.S. Forest Health Protection, Juneau entomologist Mark Schultz scoring logs for the study. Photo courtesy of Roger Burnside.

Little work has been done on determining what factors influence northern spruce engraver colonization of and reproductive performance in logging slash, or to determine net impacts on residual stands. These projects will provide sound data that address these and related concerns, and will facilitate development of slash management guidelines to be used by the AKDNR DOF and USDA FS FHP. To date, the AKDNR DOF and USDA FS FHP are forced to make recommendations based on anecdotal observations or data obtained for other engraver species and forest types in the Lower 48.

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Robertson, I.C. 2000. Reproduction and developmental phenology of Ips perturbatus (Coleoptera: Scolytidae) inhabiting white spruce (Pinaceae). Can. Entomol. 32:529–537.

FOCUS ON: Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) Monitoring Update. The Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR) Pilot Project, started by the U.S. Forest Service, Forest Health Protection in 2001, demonstrated the feasibility of a nationally coordinated survey for non-native bark beetles. Beginning in 2007, this project began national implementation. Based on funding levels, and taxonomic capacity, EDRR monitoring trapping has been supported in about 17 states each year. Funding is provided to the Forest Service Regions, which then fund states to conduct the trapping. From 2007 through 2009, most of the 50 states have participated in the EDRR project. A National EDRR Team sets survey priorities, selects target species, and develops protocols for state participation. EDRR trapping results are assembled in a national database maintained by USFS Forest Health Protection in Washington, D.C.

Case histories of exotic insects already established in North America have demonstrated the importance of earlier detections of non-native species to conduct delimitation, quarantine, and control efforts; also, eradication efforts, where feasible. A key aspect of providing earlier detection of non-native forest insects entering Alaska will be establishment of key cooperator monitoring networks to better assess future risk and pathways for exotic pest introduction.

Since scolytid EDRR monitoring efforts were started by the Alaska Region Forest Health Protection and State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry in 2002, non-native scolytids have not been identified near ports in the key population centers of Alaska (Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau). However, given the extensive area of Alaska's remote forest habitats, expansive coastline, and ever changing patterns of commerce in a changing climate, the State of Alaska, Division of Forestry initiated efforts with R10 Forest Health Protection in 2009 to expand EDRR monitoring off the road network and major port areas to better manage the risk of any unintended exotic beetle species introductions. With assistance from USDA APHIS-PPQ and US Customs and Border Protection (CBP), EDRR monitoring sites were established in Skagway in early July (EDRR FIGURE 1).

No scolytids were trapped in either of two sites in Skagway, likely due to the later establishment of the sites (early July) which missed the flight window for dispersing beetles. Of particular note from the overall 2009 Alaska EDRR results is the low numbers of beetles trapped, which was also seen in the 2008 surveys.

Prescreening of other wood boring insects trapped in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau and Skagway in 2009 indicated only native species were collected. The US CBP "Alcan" border station, at Alaska's eastern border with Canada, will be added as an additional monitoring site in 2010. Potential additional scolytid monitoring sites include Nome (Bering Sea northern passage port), Ketchikan, and the Kenai Peninsula. Additional long-term monitoring sites will be considered based on risk assessments currently in progress with key agency contacts (USDA APHIS-



EDRR FIGURE 1 baited funnel trap, photo courtesy of Mark Schultz, USFS FHP, Juneau.

PPQ, US CBP, and Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Agriculture).

Thirteen non-native insects (primarily beetle species) are considered potential Alaska EDRR targets based on risk assessments of economic damage in the country of origin (lures chosen for the surveys are general attractants for these species):

State and Private Forestry, Forest Health Protection works with several partners, including the University of Alaska Cooperative Extension Service, Alaska Association of Conservation Districts, USDA -PPQ, US CBP, and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (Division of Agriculture and Division of Forestry) to provide an invasives detection network to collect and process specimens and information from citizens, volunteers, and resource professionals. The recently established Alaska Invasive Species Working Group and Alaska Pest Risk Assessment Committee provide forums for interagency and NGO discussion and program coordination.

Insect & Disease Information. For more detailed information on the 2009 Forest Health Conditions report, past Forest Health Conditions reports (in Adobe .pdf format) and forest insect surveys, and links to other forest health web sites, see also the Division of Forestry's Forest Health Program web area: http://forestry.alaska.gov/insects/

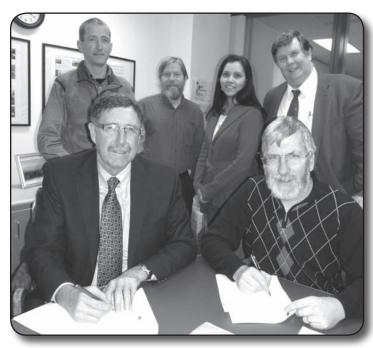
Addresses of federal entomologists and plant pathologists, current forest insect and disease conditions (aerial and ground survey data), lists of forest health research and publications, and a bibliography of Alaska forest health management publications can also be found at the U.S. Forest Service, Alaska Region

Home Page: http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/spf/fhp/ Damage maps and forest damage data will eventually be posted in the state and federal web areas, however, information specific to your area can be obtained by contacting the staff below or requesting information from one of the web areas above. Questions pertaining to overall coordination of DOF's Statewide Forest Health programs and activities on state and private lands should be directed to:

Roger Burnside, Forest Entomologist roger.burnside@alaska.gov State of AK, Dept. of Natural Resources Div. of Forestry, State Office 550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1450 Anchorage, AK 99501-3566 USA (907) 269-8460; fax: 907-269-8931

To request maps or other products from statewide surveys and GIS databases, contact:

Hans Buchholdt, Cartographer/GIS Specialist hans.buchholdt@alaska.gov (907) 269-8463; fax: (907) 269-8931



SeaAlaska Native Corporation Forest Stewardship grant signing. (back)
Rick Rogers, Jeff Graham, Jaeleen Araujo, SeaAlaska attorney, Ron Wolfe and
(front) Rick Harris, Vice-President and Chris Maisch, State Forester. Photo
by Dean Brown.

#### Forest Stewardship Program

The purpose of the Forest Stewardship Program is to provide private landowners with information for making decisions about forest resources. At the request of landowners, Division staff prepares Forest Stewardship plans which include field reconnaissance and the best available forest resources information. Alaska Native Corporations are provided grants for resource professionals to prepare Forest Stewardship plans. Limited financial assistance is available for implementation of projects consistent with Forest Stewardship plans and best management practices. The Forest Stewardship Program is a federally funded program administered by the Division of Forestry.

#### 2009 Highlights

- 2 Alaska Native Corporations completed Forest Stewardship Plans for their land, and 5 Alaska Native Corporations were awarded grants to prepare Forest Stewardship plans.
- Forest Stewardship plans were prepared for and signed by 18 individual Alaska forest landowners.
- Wildfire fuel reduction projects were completed by 67 Alaska homeowners.
- Through funding provided by cost-share programs, 39 acres of private land received forestry treatment including road repair to maintain salmon habitat.
- Monitoring of earlier Forest Stewardship plans was initiated and 80% were judged to be following plans.

Planning by Alaska Native Corporations. Native corporations and reservations are the largest private landowners in Alaska, and providing grants to Alaska Native Corporations for forest planning is an important part of the Forest Stewardship Program. In 2009 Forest Stewardship plans were completed by 2 Alaska Native Corporations, covering 40,867 forested acres. Plans were for Sealaska-Natzuhini & Copper Mt units for 17,883 acres and Kavilco for 22,984 acres. Stand improvement, forest road maintenance, cultural sites, and wildlife habitat were important elements of the plans. Forest Stewardship planning grants were approved for 5 ANCSA corporations covering 1,712,420 acres and obligating \$162,000. Grantees were: Kavilco of Kasaan, Klawock Heeyna of Klawock, NANA of Kotzebue, Shaan Seet of Craig, and Ahtna of Glenallen.

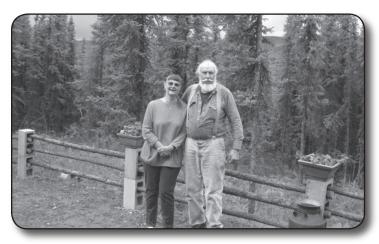
Planning by Individual Landowners. For private lands in individual ownership, 18 Forest Stewardship plans were prepared and signed by landowners covering 654 forested acres. Since the program began in 1992, a total of 757 plans were prepared and signed covering 42,927 forested acres. Participation is greatest on the Kenai Peninsula with the Matanuska-Sustina Borough and Tanana Valley also having many participants. Private landowner assistance on the Kenai Peninsula was aided by funding from the Kenai Peninsula Borough Spruce Beetle Program. The most common management objective is reforesta-

tion after spruce beetle kill. Many participating landowners have strong interest in aesthetics and wildlife. Defensible space from wildfire is a growing concern.

Cost-Share Assistance. The Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP) was established by Congress in 2002 and implementation began in summer of 2003. The program was authorized for 5 years. To date, \$1,253,411 has been paid for cost-share contracts on private forest land. In 2009, 7 FLEP projects were completed covering 39 acres paying \$75,282. Of this, one completed contract was with an Alaska Native Corporation. Completed FLEP practices in FY09 were: 1 forest road repair, 2 regeneration, 3 stand improvement, and 1 wildfire fuel reduction. The acreage of completed practices was: 24 regeneration, 12 stand improvement, 1 fuel reduction, and 2 forest road repairs.

Forest Stewardship Program personnel continued to implement components of the National Fire Plan (NFP). Cost-share funding for practices has come from phase I and II of an Alaska Forest Stewardship NFP grant, Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) fuels reduction grants from the Western States Fire Managers, and the Kenai Peninsula Borough. Accomplishments reported here are home inspections, written defensible space plans, and cost-share grant agreements. Acres treated for fuels reduction are reported elsewhere as NFP accomplishments. In FY09, 32 home inspections, plans, and cost-share agreements were prepared and \$56,059 were obligated. Final inspections were performed for 67 homeowners paying \$105,536 and covering approximately 63 acres.

Forest Stewardship Plan Monitoring. To comply with new federal requirements, monitoring of past Forest Stewardship Plans begun. 46 plans were monitored and 80% of landowners were judged to be following plans adequately. Most had performed one or more recommended management activities on their property. The major limitations were difficulty in acquiring seedlings and lack of cost-share funding. One Alaska Native Corporation, Toghotthele of Nenana, was monitored and found to following the Forest Stewardship Plan.



Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) grant recipients Lola and Bert Berlt of Fairbanks North Star Borough (photo by Jim Smith).

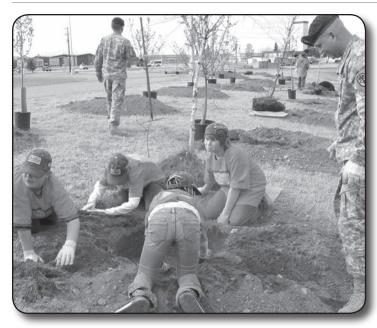


Jake Sprankle, Forester with Tanana Chiefs Conference and Forest Stewardship Committee member, on monitoring visit to second growth plantation on Toghotthele Corporation land near Nenana (photo by Jeff Graham).

**Public Service.** The Forest Stewardship Program personnel provided a variety of public services to local governments, public schools, and community fairs. Services included general education, technical forestry, and tree seedling distribution. Staff gave presentations at Community Wildfire Protection Plan meetings, Firewise workshops, Soil and Water Conservation District meetings, Arbor Day events, and student presentations. The Forest Stewardship Program also provided site visits and referrals for numerous landowners who did not pursue a written plan.

Forest Stewardship program experienced tragedy in 2009 with the deaths of 2 staff employees, Lois Bettini and Stan Vlahovich. The program was benefitted in 2009 with the assistance of 3 temporary employees on the Kenai Peninsula: Roberta Wilfong, Earl Breyfogel, and Ole Andersson. Jim Smith continues to serve as Stewardship Forester for the Tanana Valley and Jeff Graham is the program coordinator stationed in Palmer.

Forest Stewardship Committee. The Division of Forestry receives guidance from the Forest Stewardship Committee. The committee is comprised of representatives from a broad range of Alaska private landowner interests. Areas of discussion include grant and cost-share rates, eligibility criteria, and Forest Stewardship plan requirements. The committee met twice in 2009. Important topics of consideration in 2009 were Forest Legacy Program proposed parcels for forest conservation and upcoming federal requirements for Forest Stewardship plan monitoring and state assessment. Stewardship Committee members are listed on page 59.



Community Forestry grade school children planting. Photo by Patricia Joyner.

#### **Alaska Community Forestry Program**

Trees in communities require extra care to be healthy, beautiful, and safe but they reward this attention by providing economic, environmental, social, and quality-of-life benefits. In order to maximize these benefits, the Division of Forestry participates in a nationwide program to help communities improve the condition of their trees and forests through effective management. Through a partnership with the U.S. Forest Service the division uses federal funds to administer the state's Community Forestry Program. A full-time coordinator and community assistance forester provide technical, educational, and financial assistance to local governments, state and federal agencies, tree care professionals, and volunteer organizations.

The Alaska Community Forest Council helps set priorities for the program and provides expertise and advice to the State Forester and program staff. The 15 members represent the geographic and cultural diversity of the state and a broad spectrum of interests and experiences. Members are also valuable partners in local community forestry efforts. A list of council members is on page 59.

Supporting community forestry is an important and appropriate role for state government because:

- 1. Community forests provide essential benefits we cannot live without.
- 2. A healthy community forest doesn't happen by chance—it is the result of proper planning, management, and community investment.
- 3. Healthy community forests can help solve many community problems.
- 4. Community forests and rural forests are connected; good management of one helps the other.

**Community Assistance.** The division provides information and support to towns throughout the state to help them establish community forest management programs. Staff members also respond to many requests for information related to trees and their care.

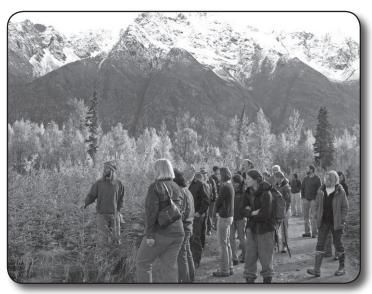
Seven cities were recertified as Tree Cities in 2009: Wasilla, Sitka, Juneau, Anchorage, Fort Wainwright, and Eielson and Elmendorf air force bases. Anchorage received a Growth Award for participating in continuing education, holding a community-wide tree event, and integrated pest management. The Ketchikan Gateway Borough was certified as a Tree City USA for the first time and also organized its first official tree board. The board is comprised of five members from the community and advises the borough on management of its public trees.

Three electric utilities: Chugach, Golden Valley, and Matanuska were recertified as Tree Lines USA.

The University of Alaska Anchorage was certified as the state's first Tree Campus USA in the second year of this national program. UAA met the standards and is planning its Arbor Day celebration and service learning project for 2010. To be certified, a campus must:

- 1) Organize a Campus Tree Advisory Committee with members that represent students, faculty, facility management, and the community.
- 2) Develop a Campus Tree Care Plan
- 3) Maintain a Campus Tree Program with dedicated annual expenditures
- 4) Observe Arbor Day
- 5) Sponsor a service learning project to engage students in a tree-related project

**Education & Training.** In 2009, 892 people (2,574 seathours) attended training provided by the Community Forestry



Community Forestry council members. Photo by Patricia Joyner.



Marty Freeman, Forest Resource Program Manager, presenting the Tree Line USA award to Chugach Electric and the Tree City USA award to the Municipality of Anchorage. Photo by Patricia Joyner.

Program. Most attendees are professionals who design projects, install, maintain, or otherwise manage public trees and forests. The training also helps Alaska's 36 certified arborists meet their requirement for continuing education credits.

Community forestry classes were held in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Sitka, and Ketchikan on the following topics:

- Biology of Trees
- An Introduction to Tree Appraisal
- Trees: Biology, Planting and Pruning
- Pruning Trees and Shrubs
- Tree Risk Assessment Course and Evaluation. Seven participants passed the exam and are now Certified Tree Risk Assessors.

Program staff made presentations for: Anchorage Master Gardeners, Alaska Botanical Garden, Anchorage TREErific, Youth Employment in Parks, King Career Center, Division of Forestry interns, and Tok School. Informational displays were used at other events.

**Community Forestry Organizations.** In 2009, 523 volunteers donated 1,664 hours for community forestry projects in Alaska. Citizen groups around the state organize volunteers, raise funds, and support tree planting and care and education programs.

- Anchorage TREErific continued to maintain trees planted by the group in previous years and sponsored regular educational presentations and field trips.
- Fairbanks Arbor Day Committee sponsored or supported more than 20 Arbor Day tree plantings and celebrations in Fairbanks, Ester, North Pole, Ft. Wainwright and other

- locations in the borough.
- Juneau Urban Forestry Partnership sponsored an Arbor Day event and planted trees at the Evergreen Cemetery, maintained trees planted in the past, produced a newsletter, completed A Guide to Juneau's Native Trees, hosted informational tables at several local events and engaged in other educational activities. JUFP logged 380 volunteer hours in 2009.
- Sitka Tree and Landscape Committee volunteers planted 14 trees at a Middle School and maintained other plantings. The committee sponsored a class on tree biology that included a hands-on planting demonstration. Members continue to support the city's program to manage public trees.

**Growing and Keeping the Green in Alaska.** After years of discussions about the need for more locally produced, high quality trees, shrubs, and perennials the Community Forestry Program, along with a host of partners, held Growing and Keeping the Green in Alaska. The two-day workshop held in Palmer in September drew 70 participants from around the state, representing local nurseries and growers, contractors, government agencies, and nonprofits.

The goal was to help connect cities, contractors, agencies, and landscape architects who often can't find the plants they want in-state with the growers who need a market for their products. Speakers focused on ways for growers to market what they have to the right audience and the type and quality of plants that purchasers are seeking.

The success of the workshop was due to the many partners who contributed. Speakers from the Division of Agriculture, Municipality of Anchorage, Ft. Wainwright, Evergreen Nursery, Country Garden Farms, UAF, and the U.S. Forest Service volunteered their time and helped organize the workshop. The Alaska Community Forest Council provided a speaker and handled registration, and the UAF Cooperative Extension Service provided graphics and publicity. The Plant Materials Center and Alaska Seed 'N' Tree Farms hosted field trips. Due to the interest expressed, presentations, workshops, and field trips are already being planned for 2010.

**Grants.** Grants support local community forest management and education programs. The following grants totaling \$21,950 were matched by \$28,457:

- Ketchikan Gateway Borough: \$23,500 to complete a tree inventory and management plan for trees maintained by the borough. Community Forestry Consultants, Inc., of Spokane, under contract to the state, provided software, completed an inventory, trained borough staff, and held a public class in July. The urban forest management plan will be completed and presented to the borough in March 2010.
- American Society of Landscape Architects: \$4,800 for five members to attend the conference, Linking Landscapes & Communities: a Green Infrastructure Approach.



Delta contract planting crew, Future Forests, at a winter only accessible timber sale near Black Lake. Two ATVs were delivered by helicopter and the crew with seedlings brought in by boat. Photo by Steve Joslin.

Attendees used information from the conference to make a presentation to the Community Forest Council and continue to promote a green infrastructure approach to development.

• Juneau Urban Forestry Partnership. \$850 Grant for travel expenses for two members to attend the class Trees: Biology, Planting and Pruning held in Sitka and to meet with members of the Sitka Tree and Landscape Committee.

**Green Infrastructure Planning Grants.** The Department of Environmental Conservation and Division of Forestry signed an agreement for DEC to pass funds to DOF to administer green infrastructure planning grants. Funding for \$80,000 in grants to local governments was provided by the American Recovery & Reconstruction Act. The deadline for proposals is January 20, 2010 and all projects will be completed by the end of the year.

#### **Arbor Day Foundation Reforestation Grant**

The division received a grant of \$54,400 from the Arbor Day Foundation for purchasing seedlings for the Tanana Valley State Forest. The grant funded the purchase of 160,000 white spruce seedlings for sites that would not achieve adequate natural regeneration for many years due to dense grass or other site conditions.

Seedlings were planted north of Delta Junction and on sites east and west of Fairbanks. Planting in remote areas of Alaska is logistically complex, expensive, and at times dangerous.

Future Forests was the contractor who planted the seedlings on all the sites. The seeds were collected locally and the containerized seedlings were grown at PRT in Canada and returned to Alaska. Planting costs alone exceeded \$90,000 plus additional costs for transportation of planters and equipment.

The Black Lake site is a remote location that is road accessible only during the coldest months by an ice bridge over the Tanana River. Planting involved coordination of a trucking company, ATV's, a helicopter, boats on a dangerous stretch of the Tanana River, trees, planters, and a vehicle that broke down on the way out to the site. However, Future Forests successfully planted 20,120 white spruce on portions of four timber sales, totaling 205 acres between July 23 and 28.

To facilitate the planting, two ATV's were air lifted to the site by helicopter, in coordination with a wildland fire demobilization operation in the vicinity. The seedlings and planters travelled in a 24-foot river boat with a 200 hp motor equipped with a jet unit to allow operation in shallow, fast moving water. The ATV's transported the planters, seedlings, and planting inspector from the river to the planting units. The planters camped out at the site with a satellite phone and radio to communicate in case of an emergency. After the planting was completed the planters and ATV's were transported back by river boat. They also planted portions of three harvested sites along the road.

Planting in the Fairbanks area began the first week of August. Access was not as difficult as near Delta but required driving on narrow dirt roads that had turned to deep and slippery mud due to rain following a very dry period. Planters camped near the planting sites in miserable conditions due to dense smoke from wildfires surrounding Fairbanks. Rain began on the first day of planting, which reduced visibility even further but cleared the air after a few days.

The contractor planted the remaining 139,880 seedlings funded by the grant on 359 acres plus an additional 6,000 seedlings for a total of 375 acres. The planting was completed by the end of August.

#### **Forestry Education**

I have opinions. Strong opinions. I just don't happen to agree with them. (GWB)

With so many emotional, complex environmental issues facing Alaskans, it is easy for many of us to sometimes feel that way. A primary goal of the Division of Forestry's natural resource education program is to ease this conundrum. Teachers, homeschooling parents, and other participants in Project Learning Tree, Fire in Alaska, Exploring Environmental Issues, and Alaska's Boreal Forest learn facts about Alaska's forests—the trees that live here and how they grow, the connections between forests, wildlife, water, air, and people. This knowledge leads to awareness and awareness can lead to action and a participatory citizenry that knows and cares about our vital natural resources.

Another important goal of forestry education is to bring the forest into the classroom, and to take the classrooms into Alaska's great outdoors. Every year since 2001 at least one Alaska teacher has been awarded a Greenworks grant, which

helps make this possible. Greenworks is a service learning program sponsored by the American Forest Foundation that provides funds for students to improve their local environment in some way. Any educator who completes a Division of Forestry course is eligible to apply.

This year, Sheryl Sotelo of McNeil Canyon Elementary in Homer will engage her fifth graders in water quality studies on a local creek to establish baseline data. Equipment, time, and travel will be funded by Greenworks. Wasilla High has already applied for a 2010 grant to involve students in combating invasive species and re-introducing native plants.

2009 was another record breaking year for the Division of Forestry's education programs. There were 29 workshops—the most in any year, with 409 participants—the most ever. Workshops held in Ninilchik, Talkeetna, and Willow for the first time saw strong local participation.

The bulk of 2009's educator participation came in the core education programs, Project Learning Tree and Fire in Alaska. Project Learning Tree is a K-8 program that uses games, simulations, and role playing to teach children about the forest environment and about sustainable living. Fire in Alaska is a K-12 program providing activities and information about fire ecology, fire behavior, and living responsibly in the wildland-urban interface. We were pleased with the high level of interest and growing participation in our newest offerings, Exploring Environmental Issues and Alaska's Boreal Forest. We provided two Environmental Issues classes last year, in Palmer and in Wasilla. Participants worked in groups to identify features of their own community they care about and actively researched neighborhoods looking for positive and negative examples of community character. 2010 Exploring Environmental Issues classes are planned in Anchorage and Seward.

Alaska's Boreal Forest courses were offered at the Eagle River Nature Center and at the Mat Su teacher's academy in June. We are planning to repeat both in June of 2010.



Teeland middle schoolers in Wasilla studying the Boreal Forest. Photo by Rhett Buchanan, Teeland Science Greenworks awardee.

We are also pleased to report that all of the student teachers at UAF, UAA, APU, and KPC received training in Project Learning Tree this year. For the past several years, virtually all of Alaska's new teachers have benefitted from DOF sponsored education classes. In addition, all Anchorage and Eagle River Campfire staff were trained in 2009.

Looking forward, we will be implementing PLT's new early childhood program beginning this February at the early childhood conference in Anchorage. This may in time become an important new audience. We will also continue our popular "Tapping Into Spring" workshop series in April and May with workshops in Anchorage, Mat Su, and Kenai. Students and teachers in this program learn about trees through birch tapping.

While there are funding challenges and the constant struggle to sustain and maintain volunteer networks, the outlook for Forestry education in 2010 is bright indeed.

#### **Society of American Foresters**

The 2009 Awards reminded us once again that many in Forestry assist communities, education and their neighbors beyond their normal jobs. As in past years, SAF Awards include Division of Forestry staff who received the recognition of their peers:

Kathryn S. Pyne – Forester of the Year. K.T. is Forestry's Communications & Technical System Coordinator – or "Commo" expert. She has been an SAF member since 2002 and is currently the Yukon River Chapter Vice Chair/Chair Elect. She has served as secretary, vice-chair, and Chair (2003). She has been in Forest Stewardship, active in Firewise, supported the Tanana Valley State Fair and facilitated Envirothon and Outdoor Days. She has been a dedicated public servant and forestry professional, having worked for BLM and the State. She has an M.S. in Natural Resource Management and B.S. in Biology as well as an Assoc. in Veterinary Technology. Her thesis was on Standardized trampling evaluation – Interior Alaska (motorized/non-motorized).

Jeff Hermanns – Young Forester of the Year. Jeff is the Tok Area Forester and belongs to the Yukon River Chapter of SAF. He has been active in fostering wood energy/biofuels technology and sustainable production systems. His community activity has promoted and supported forestry through education, research, Firewise and CWPPs. His involvement includes fostering ties with U.A.F. researchers with respect to growth & yield studies, planting trials, firebreak design and stand treatments for simulating hardwood regeneration for wildlife and community fire protection.

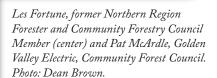
**Allen Menaker** – Northland Wood – Service to Forestry. Allen is the mill operations manager for Northland Wood which is well known in Fairbanks as a sawmill and wood product retailer. His contributions toward education and public outreach, as well as good forestry, was recognized by SAF.

#### **2009 IN PHOTOS**



Lynn Wilcock, Chief of Fire & Aviation and Chris Maisch, State Forester – grillmasters at Marty Freeman's retirement. Photo: Dean Brown.

Marty Welbourn Freeman, Forest Resource Program Manager. Photo: Dean Brown.





Roger Burnside, Forestry entomologist. Photo: Dean Brown.

Steve Patterson, USFS S&PF, and Jeff Graham, Forest Stewardship program manager. Photo: Dean Brown.



Chris Foley, DEC environmental program manager and former Forestry forester. Photo: Dean Brown.

The Thinker! Dick LeFebvre, DNR Deputy Commissioner, at Marty's retirement.

Photo: Dean Brown.

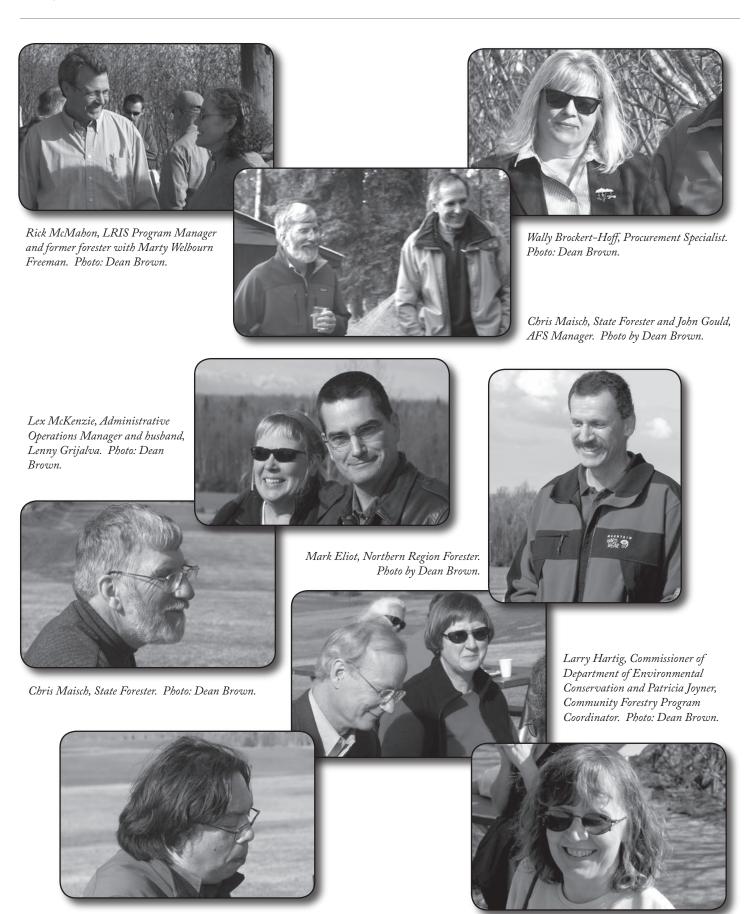


Ken Bullman, Mat-Su Area Forester. Photo: Dean Brown.



Wally Brockert-Hoff and husband Steve. Photo: Dean Brown.

### **2009 IN PHOTOS**



Hans Buccholdt, Forestry GIS specialist. Photo: Dean Brown.

Pat Palkovic, Southeast Area Forester. Photo: Dean Brown.

#### **2009 IN PHOTOS**



Mark Eliot, Northern Region Forester and Beverly Ostoj, Central Office Accounting Clerk. Photo: Dean Brown.



Lynn Wilcock, Chief of Fire & Aviation and Dean Brown, Deputy State Forester. Photo: Jim Schwarber.

Marty Welbourn Freeman, Chris Maisch and Kevin Saxby, Assistant Attorney General. Photo: Dean Brown.



Lynn Wilcock, Chief of Fire & Aviation (retired) and Marsha Henderson, Northern Region FMO. Photo: Dean Brown.

Rick DuPuis (retired), Arlene Weber-Sword, Fire Staff Officer, and Darla Theisen, State Logistics Cordinator. Photo: Dean Brown.



Maggie Rogers, Forestry PIO, Dean Brown, Deputy State Forester, Darla Theisen, State Logistics AICC Coordinator, and Arlene Weber-Sword, Fire Staff Officer. Photo: Jim Schwarber.



Lex McKenzie, Naomi Norbach (McGrath), Candy Simmons (Aviation) and Alma Hibpschman (Coastal Transportation) at Lynn Wilcock's retirement. Photo: Maggie Rogers.



Martin Maricle reading his "ode" to Lynn Wilcock at the retirement. Photo: Dean Brown.

#### WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT

The Division of Forestry, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Forest Service are responsible for wildland fire suppression in Alaska. Each agency protects specific geographic areas under cooperative agreements. The state thus avoids duplication of fire protection resources and efforts, realizes substantial savings, and provides for the most effective fire response.

Alaska is the only state with an interagency fire plan. The plan divides the state into fire protection levels based on major natural fire breaks and the objectives of land managers. Firefighting resources can be allocated to the highest priority areas –those areas where communities and valuable resources are located. It also gives options for lower cost strategies in remote and unpopulated areas.

#### **Fire Protection Levels**

#### **Critical Protection**

Areas where life and property are present receive immediate and aggressive suppression efforts.

#### **Full Protection**

Areas with high value resources where fire may adversely impact resource management objectives also receive immediate suppression efforts.

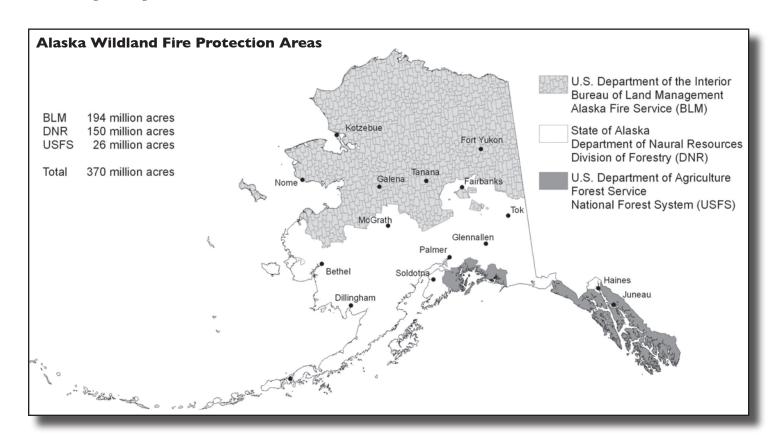
### **Modified Action**

Areas with high value resources where land managers may consider the trade-off of acres burned versus suppression costs. Fires are attacked immediately but land managers guide the suppression effort.

Upper Tanana #5 crew at Tok. Top row, L to R: Alfred Grant, Ryan Joe, Ronald Joe Jr., Renee David, Raymond Sam, Joseph Beaver, Leonard Mark (crew boss), Drew Patrick (crew boss trainee), David Ewan, Tom Joe. Bottom row, L to R: Brian Allen, Billy Sam Jr. (squad boss), Rennard Smith, Jimmy Joe, Virgil John. Photo by Jeff Hermanns.

#### Limited Action

Areas where fire is beneficial or benign, or firefighting costs are greater than fire damage. Fires are monitored but no uppression action is taken except to prevent the fire from burning onto higher value land.



#### **2009 FIRE SEASON**

The 9th largest wildland fire season (by acres) developed slowly until the last week of April when a record breaking warm spell developed across Alaska leading to the driest May in over 80 years. This led to some unusual conditions as flooding along the Yukon River corridor required attention to fast moving human caused fires as breakup exposed dry grass. The first notable fire was the Mile 17 East End Road Fire outside of Homer (burning within several subdivisions) which was assigned to the Alaska Type I Incident Management Team (IMT). This fire burned over 1074 acres within residential areas. In all, 2 residences and 8 out buildings were lost. The state requested Federal Emergency Management Assistance (FEMA) for financial support for the fire as it was determined to meet FEMA's criteria to "threaten such destruction as would constitute a major disaster."

The season quickly progressed into an early lightning season as the Southwest Area reported 36 fires during the last week of May. Several of these fires challenged suppression efforts as the Tonclonuka Creek Fire (164,318 acres) and the Broken Snowshoe (25,339 acres) spread quickly in the early season conditions. Tonclonuka required action by a Type 3 IMT to protect the village of Telida while Broken Snowshoe required a Type 2 IMT for 10 days. Other fires required action due to proximity to villages, allotments, and other values at risk.

In early June the Brock Road Fire (70 acres) occurred. This was a human caused grass fire which quickly spread into the urban interface. Due to the proximity to Alaska Fire Service and Fairbanks Area initial attack was successful. Air Attack, Helitack, retardant tankers, scoopers, Hotshots, smokejumpers, and crews responded immediately. The fire was contained by the 3rd burning period. This was an outstanding catch.

In early July, thunderstorms with associated lightning crossed much of the state. In the Interior, a Type 2 IMT was assigned to manage a "Complex" of fires. This Railbelt Complex consisted of three large fires primarily on state-responsibility land: the Minto Flats South Fire (517,078 acres), the June Creek Fire (164 acres), and the Lunch Lake Fire (12,802 acres). Values at risk included allotments, remote recreational cabins, June Creek state subdivision, and the \$34 Million Doyon Arctic Wolf Drilling Rig and support camp. There were two 14-day IMT assignments to manage the Railbelt Complex. Also requiring considerable resources during the same time period were the Logging Slash Fire (118 acres) in Forestry's Fairbanks Area and the Upper Healy River Fire (61 acres) in the Delta Area. Lightning activity from dry thunderstorms was wide spread beginning in July.

July was hot and dry with Fairbanks recording a July average high temperature of 78.6 F degrees. The Interior witnessed the driest summer month (July) ever with only 0.05 inches precipitation recorded despite the history of the thirty wettest days in the interior normally occurring from mid-July to mid-August. McGrath recorded four record high temperatures. Temperatures in July increased significantly, normally a period that would have

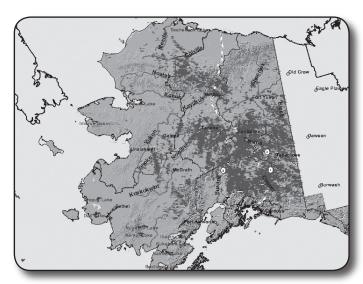
seen a decrease in temperatures.

The Shanta Creek Fire in the Kenai Area was reported in the end of June and began to pick up activity by the end of the first week in July. A National Incident Management Organization (NIMO) was assigned to the fire by the time it had increased to 10,000 acres. They were in place for two weeks providing suppression and management for the fire that eventually ended at 13,221 acres.

The Chakina Fire was another lightning start that was just outside of McCarthy in the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park. By July 5th the fire was 3609 acres and very active. The Valdez Copper River Area oversaw the suppression team managing the structure protection and objectives for the National Park Service. This fire eventually grew to 56,413 acres.

By mid-July, lack of precipitation was evident in the Canadian Forest Fire Danger Rating System (CFFDRS) indices, with the Buildup Index (BUI) exceeding previous records at many monitoring stations in the central interior and even into the upper Kuskokwim Valley (where many large fires were still burning that had started in May.) Even brief periods of precipitation brought little relief because lightning "holdovers "continued. The high indices reflected an increase in fire behavior on ongoing fires. Rapid rates of spread were seen on new fires through the second half of July and into August. Red Flag Warnings (measured on factors of wind, humidity, temperatures, and dry thunderstorm forecasts) were in effect for 49 out of the 100 days between April 28th and August 5th.

Hot, dry, and windy conditions continued to foster ignitions and fire spread. The Rex Creek and the Hard Luck Creek Fires began on August 2 and August 3 respectively. The Rex Creek Fire (101,150 acres), managed by the Railbelt Complex IMT, made a major run in a six hour period, growing from 2,000 acres to 20,000 acres with extreme fire behavior, threatening subdivisions



15,000 lightning strikes in a 5-day period from July 2nd through July 7th.

and requiring evacuations. The Hard Luck Fire (12,834 acres), northwest of Fairbanks exhibited rapid growth rates and extreme fire behavior on the border of the wildland urban interface.

Alaskan fire management moved to Planning Level 5 in the beginning of August (the highest preparedness and planning level). The Multi Agency Coordination Group (MAC Group) was mobilized and identified priorities for resources on a daily basis. The National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) in Boise committed national resources and Lower 48 overhead personnel and crews to Alaska.

Northwest Compact cooperators from Canada and northwest states provided aviation resources, personnel, helicopters, rappel crews, and fixed-wing aircraft. Of critical importance was the assistance from the Northwest Territories as they supplemented our effort with two CL215 water scooping aircraft. Evergreen Corporation sent a 747 "supertanker" which was used on the Minto Flats South Fire, the first drop on a wildland fire by such an aircraft. Alaska's aviation vendors were also utilized in unprecedented numbers during the season, and 25 Alaska Type II firefighting crews (400 individuals) were mobilized.

Alaska was fortunate that the western United State experienced one of the quietest fire seasons of the past dozen years. Competition for firefighting resources from other geographic areas was minimal and Alaska was able to obtain the necessary resources in most cases. Resources assigned to Alaska from the Lower 48 (as of August 7th), to supplement State and Alaska Fire Service resources, included 411 overhead personnel, 20 aircraft, and 28 Hotshot and Initial Attack Crews. Fire mapping assistance was enhanced by the use of "Firehawk" from the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency. Public and media demand for information was high due to the amount of fire activity and smoke in the interior, and the Alaska Interagency Coordination Center activated the Joint Information Center (JIC), to coordinate and support information outreach with Information Officers from Forestry, the BLM, Fairbanks North Star Borough, and from the Lower 48.

Fire Operations Forester Tom Kurth and Wildland Fire Analyst Frank Cole were invited to speak at the 2nd International Symposium on Sentinel Earth in Sapporo, Japan in November. They presented lectures on Wildland Fire Fuels in Alaska and Fire Operations. The Japanese maintain an extensive research program related to disaster management and remote sensing at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

The 2009 fire season was notable for extreme fire behavior. Summer long fires required firefighters to devote substantial and sustained efforts for protection of structures, allotments, resources, and values at risk. In addition, the annual workload for prevention, training, dispatch, the warehouses, and the myriad of support requirements were fulfilled while providing for the 9th largest fire season in Alaska's history.

#### Fire Management Program

The Division of Forestry participated in a research burn with multiple cooperators, including the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the USDI-Bureau of Land Management. The project is designed to evaluate experimental fuel treatments in black spruce dominated forests. Approximately one half of the project area at the Nenana Ridge Ruffed Grouse was burned in June. Additionally, in a study sponsored by the Joint Fire Science Program and led by Scott Rupp of the University of Fairbanks, data will be used to see how consumption and fire behavior changes as a result of fuel treatments.

The Railbelt Complex, burning in the Tanana Flats near Nenana, and the Hard Luck Creek fire, burning near the urban interface just northwest of Fairbanks, turned in to Type II project fires during the 2009 fire season. The Chakina Fire in the Valdez-Copper River Area burning in Limited protection on National Park Service administered lands, consumed over 60,000 acres and burned for almost three months.

#### Kenai-Kodiak Fire Highlights

The Kenai Peninsula has fire risk in both urban interface areas and in the wildland that is an annual challenge due to the extensive spruce bark beetle damaged forests. The loss of the spruce forests to bark beetle infestation that began in the early 1990s has resulted in vast areas of dead trees which provide highly flammable fuels. Many areas are now marginally accessible to ground crews for initial attack due to the wind throw that in some places form criss-crossed tree trunks to depths of several feet above the ground. Aerial attack by tanker or helicopter are increasingly the only effective suppression in such areas. As a major recreational area, the risk to public dispersed throughout the peninsula camping, fishing or hunting is a major concern during fire season.

The 2009 fire season in the Area began April 29 with the Ptarmigan Fire near Moose Pass and culminated with the Skilak River Fire on September 22 for a total of 42 incidents. The Shanta Fire started June 30 on Kenai National Wildlife Refuge and became the largest with 13,221 acres. Support from the Denali Crew, Alaska Fire Service (AFS), USFS and USFWS included smokejumpers, engines, crews and support personnel. For the first time Alaska had a NIMO team ordered for the Shanta Fire which initially provided planning support and transitioned into fire management. An excellent opportunity for shadowing the team to gain insight and experience assisted the Area, particularly regarding the prevention program.

Kenai-Kodiak has one of the most active prevention programs in the state, emphasizing both Firewise principles and enforcement actions to increase public awareness. Active management of the 3479 burn permits on the Kenai resulted in 38 days of suspended burning due to high fire danger. The KKA fire Prevention/Investigation Coordinator investigated 10 fires beyond the preliminary investigation stage. There were 9 Notice of Violation Warnings issued and 10 fire cost recovery bills were issued.



Governor Sarah Palin in Fairbanks. Cameron Winfrey (WFRT), Tom Lesatz (WFRT), Bob Zimmerman (WFRT IV), Paul Keech (Forester II), Sarah Palin, Governor, Tim Fallis (Pilot), Zane Brown (WFRT), Tylan Martin (EFF), Tasha Sullivan (WFRT), Tim Kulinich (Delta crew boss), Todd Palin, First Dude, Robert Schmoll, Fairbanks FMO.

KKA received \$1806.00 in fire cost recovery during 2009 from incidents occurring in previous years. The Area has recovered a total of \$235,264.00 from 2002-2009 in fines and suppression costs. There is an additional \$39,930.00 in cost recovery still pending from previous years.

### **Mat-Su Fire Highlights**

The Mat-Su/Anchorage Area wildland urban interface pressures continue to make prevention a significant activity jointly addressed through State, Borough, and Municipality fire departments and prevention staff. Increased public accessibility to the Mat-Su burn permit program initiated in 2007 continued and is being expanded statewide to enhance education for safe burning for the general public. This "General Permit System" handled over 8,000 calls to the recorded daily message in Mat-Su during the 2009 fire season. Active management of burning is accomplished through permit suspensions when fire indices show that potential weather and fuels conditions exist for problem fires to develop.

Specific burn permit classes were added for contractors and land clearing companies. The 27 attendees received season long burn permits that did not require spot inspections throughout the season. For the third year the success of this commercial program was shown by the fact no warnings or citations had to be issues for noncompliance of escaped fires under this program.

Fire prevention education activities resulted in eight facility tours for elementary school children featuring tours of helicopters, air tankers, fire engines and the dispatch office – escorted by Smokey Bear. Four home and outdoor shows in Anchorage and the valley were staffed and Smokey attended the Governor's picnic. The Wildland Fire and Prevention week proclaimed by the Governor annually features a public Open House at the Palmer facility and included seven fire departments. The State Fair continues to be a focal point for Firewise and safe burning messages.

CWPP plans are expanding, bringing focus to local preparedness responsibilities. The Mat-Su Area and Mat-Su Borough are working with six local communities to develop and implement Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP) and three additional ones are being initiated. Lazy Mountain and Glacier View CWPPs are nearing signature.

Mat-Su Area manages two firefighting crews, the Pioneer Peak IHC and the Gannet Glacier crew. These crews are critical to rapid initial attack in the highly populated areas, particularly early in the season as human caused fires can escalate rapidly prior to green-up. Fuels mitigation work on Borough and Municipal projects keeps them as cohesive crews between fires. The Pioneer Peak IHC spent 123 days on fire assignments beginning in May on the Homer 17 Mile Fire and ending in Canada in late September. They also completed fuels reduction work in Eagle River and Anchorage. The Gannett Glacier crew also responded to the Homer 17 Mile Fire as well as several other fires throughout the state, finishing their season with a Canada assignment. They also completed interagency fuels reduction projects in the Mat-Valley.

#### **Mat-Su Area Interns**

The Mat-Su Student Intern Program had another banner year. Twelve interns were hired through normal funding channels and one intern was hired through the Anchorage Nine Star Youth Employment Program. With a total of thirteen students in the program a lot of work was accomplished for our cooperators this field season. The crew finished most of their assignments ahead of schedule, to the satisfaction of cooperators and reinforcing their good reputation as a hard working crew.

With the help of the Area and the Region, the crew took wildland fire courses S-130/190. Several of the interns participated in an initial attack fire assignment in the Ruth Glacier area. The interns completed a number of projects. They rebuilt the Morgan Horse Trail for the Mat-Su Borough. They re-routed 800 feet of trail out of the headwaters of Wasilla Creek and constructed two large OHV bridges in the same area to help protect Wasilla Creek, an anadromous stream, for the Wasilla Soil and Water Conservation District. They cleared brush on portions of the Williwaw Trail in the Portage area and constructed a gravel and stone platform for the US Forest Service for the public to watch salmon spawning. All platforms and trails on this project were constructed to ADA standards. The crew's final project of the year was working for the Anchorage Fire Department doing forest survey work and collecting data for the city's land use and fire preparedness plans.

# **2009 WILDLAND FIRE STATISTICS**

2009 Wildfires and Acres Burned by Size Class									
	All Fires		State Protection		AFS Protection		USFS Protection		
	# of Fires	# of Acres	# of Fires	# of Acres	# of Fires	# of Acres	# of Fires	# of Acres	
Class A (0.1-0.25 acres)	246	26.5	190	20.4	20	2.4	36	3.7	
Class B (0.25-9.9 acres)	149	298.2	90	146.5	50	133.6	9	18.1	
Class C (10.0-99.9 acres)	46	1540.6	15	552.6	31	988.0	0	0.0	
Class D (100.0-299.9 acres)	12	2224.4	6	1059.0	6	1165.4	0	0.0	
Class E (300.0-999.9 acres)	9	6513.3	4	2496.0	5	4017.3	0	0.0	
Class F (1000.0-4999.9 acres)	18	45172.6	7	15979.0	П	29193.6	0	0.0	
Class G (5000.0+ acres)	47	2895817.3	19	1104741.5	28	1791075.8	0	0.0	
TOTALS	527	2951592.9	331	1124995.0	151	1826576.1	45	21.8	

	All	All Fires		State Protection		AFS Protection		USFS Protection	
	# of Fires	# of Acres	# of Fires	# of Acres	# of Fires	# of Acres	# of Fires	# of Acres	
Campfire	72	3372.6	32	3338.9	5	13.9	35	19.8	
Children	- 11	3.8	10	3.7	I	0.1	0	0.0	
Debris Burning	92	87.9	89	74.5	I	13.2	2	0.2	
Dump Fire	4	5.6	I	0.1	3	5.5	0	0.0	
Equipment	14	12979.1	14	12979.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	
Fireworks	7	15.3	5	14.9	0	0.0	2	0.4	
Incendiary	19	38634.0	4	0.7	15	38633.3	0	0.0	
Land Clear	3	8.1	2	8.0	0	0.0	I	0.1	
Lightning	159	1559498.8	83	1107138.2	73	452359.9	3	0.7	
Misc/Other	27	369.1	20	275.7	7	93.4	0	0.0	
Powerline	20	1077.5	19	1077.3	I	0	0	0.0	
Railroad	1	0.2	I	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	
Smoking	3	0.5	3	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	
Structure Fire	17	6.6	16	5.6	I	1.0	0	0.0	
Undetermined	36	158.5	29	77.4	6	80.6	1	0.5	
Vehicle	3	0.3	2	0.2	0	0.0	I	0.1	
Resource Benefit (Lightning)	39	1335375.0	0	0.0	39	1335375.0	0	0.0	
TOTALS	527	2951592.9	330	1124995.0	152	1826576.1	45	21.8	

2009 Wildfires	s by Area a	and Protec	tion Lev	/el						
C4 - 4	tala has Bas	4 4 ! 1	1							
Statewide Tot	tals by Pro	tection Le	vei						221	F ( 720 0
								uman	331	56720.8
								htning	157	1559497.1
		itical		Full	M-	dified		Lightning	39	1335375.0
		1	#	Acres	#	1	Limited # Acres		#	Total
	243	Acres 1426.4	# 	50498.2	32	Acres 231902.2	#  141	Acres 2685766.1	527	Acres 2951592.9
	243	1420.4	111	30470.2	32	231702.2	171	2003/00.1	327	2731372.7
State Protect	ed Areas									
Area	_	itical		Full	Mo	dified	Li	mited		Total
	#	Acres	#	Acres	#	Acres	#	Acres	#	Acres
Anch/Mat-Su	85	44.3	I	0.1	5	251.3	I	0.1	92	295.8
Copper River	13	5.1	5	9.8	0	0.0	ı	56413.0	19	56427.9
Delta	36	107.6	5	108.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	41	216.2
Fairbanks	38	79.0	19	13303.5	I	3.0	7	636083.0	65	649468.5
Haines	4	2.3	2	0.2	0	0.0	5	13254.1	35	14369.0
Kenai/Kodiak	26	1091.9	4	23.0	0	0.0	5	13254.1	35	14369.0
Southwest	2	21.1	14	27999.9	6	1310.1	20	339814.9	42	369146.0
Tok	16	23.2	4	0.4	0	0.0	10	35045.5	30	35069.1
TOTALS	220	1374.5	54	41445.5	12	1564.4	44	1080610.6	330	1124995.0
				•				•		
LISDA Ferrest S	omico Brot	acted Avec								
USDA Forest So		itical		Full	Mo	dified	1:	mited		Total
Alea	#	Acres	#	Acres	#	Acres	#	Acres	#	Acres
Chugach N.F.	6	1.0	5	0.7	1	0.1	I	5.0	13	6.8
Tongass N.F.	6	5.5	17	7.8	4	0.8	5	0.9	32	15.0
TOTALS	12	6.5	22	8.5	5	0.9	6	5.9	45	21.8
BLM Alaska Fir	e Service P	rotected A	reas							
Zone	Cr	itical	Full		Modified		Limited		Total	
	#	Acres	#	Acres	#	Acres	#	Acres	#	Acres
Galena	6	44.4	7	77.8	7	110.1	31	39309.1	51	39541.4
Military	I	0.1	12	32.0	ı	125381.6	9	38682.4	23	164096.1
Tanana	0	0.0	6	8023	- 1	3225.2	36	796142.5	43	807390.7
Upper Yukon	4	0.9	10	911.4	6	83620.0	15	731015.6	35	815547.9
TOTALS	П	45.4	35	9044.2	15	212336.9	91	1605149.6	152	1826576.1

### Alaska Interagency Type I Team

The Alaska Interagency Type 1 Team was mobilized once in 2009 under the command of Lynn Wilcock. The Mile 17 East End Road Fire was initially reported on May 12th and exhibiting extreme fire behavior. It was located within several subdivisions outside of Homer and threatening numerous structures. Power to the area was shut down and the fire fighting forces were seeing extreme fire behavior and a high resistance to control. That evening and the following day (May 13th) as many as 150 residences in the immediate vicinity were threatened. The fire was moving through several subdivisions. The following morning, a Type 2 Team was ordered to deal with the increasing complexity and considerations for impending loss of structures. Later that evening, the Alaska Type 1 Team was ordered as the level of complexity continued to increase and evacuations and road closures were ordered. Subdivisions in the area were in close proximity to the fire. Also threatened were the nearby communities of Voznesenka, Kachemak-Salo, and Razdolna. Eventually 2 residences and 8 outbuildings were lost. The fire was contained at 1074 acres when favorable weather conditions allowed for quick containment on May 16th.

Activity in the Lower 48 was minimal. Only one Type 1 Team from all the interagency community received an assignment. Lynn Wilcock retired from DOF and the team. AWFCG named Tom Kurth the IC for the team. Tom is the new Chief of Fire & Aviation. The Division continues to provide strong support for the team including Incident Commander; Planning Section Chief Marsha Henderson (Operations Forester); Information Officer Pete Buist (DOF EFF); Logistic Section Chief Jim Odden (DOF EFF); Logistics Section Chief – Trainee Joe Faulise (DOF EFF); numerous Unit Leaders and support positions.

#### **Fire Program Implementation**

### **Statewide Fire Prevention**

Statewide fire prevention started early in 2009, with a cooperative rally to capture promising firewise, fuels and mitigation project proposals for USFS funding approval, through the Americans Resource Recovery Act. This opportunity opened doorways of dialog and stimulated follow through on existing programs in public education, CWPP outreach and on-going fuel reduction efforts in the wildland urban interface and on State protected lands. Internally, the third annual Fire Prevention work shop was held in Soldotna with all DOF Areas well represented and interagency guests attending. A healthy Agenda included the finalization of the statewide Standardized Burn permit for approval: P-101 instruction; identification of targeted program improvements and group goals in Professionalism. This season, three Fire Prevention Officers attended Forensic Arson Investigation and took their skill sets to a new level of efficient court room presentation and successful wildland fire cost recovery.

In many Areas, diversified spring media campaigns were launched in fire prevention and regulation enforcement. These helped to reduce human-caused fires especially in the Mat-Su Valley --while weather induced fire starts elsewhere sent smoky signals skyward, warning of the potentially busy season ahead.

Fire Activity by Actual Landowner							
	# of Fires	# of Acres					
Bureau of Indian Affairs	I	1019.7					
Bureau of Land Management	48	659167.0					
Military	22	38684. I					
National Park Service	21	105859.4					
Native Corporations	54	185522.7					
Private	184	29470.0					
State	128	1357047.9					
US Fish & Wildlife Service	42	574807.7					
USFS	27	14.4					
TOTALS	527	2951592.9					
*These are acres burned by Ownership.							

On the Kenai Peninsula, both the 17 Mile Fire and Shanta Creek wildfires supported keen public response to on-going cooperative Firewise programs; fire response planning; the continuing need to establish fuel breaks as well as reduce widespread hazardous fuel accumulations. With Interagency endorsements, Alaska DOF sponsored its first Fire Prevention Team directly associated with an Incident Management Team. This infusion of much needed, timely technical support actualized widespread benefits both to the public and the cooperative Agencies promoting public safety, homeowner responsibility and community wildland fire protection planning.

Equally so, on the large fire events which followed in Cooper River Area, McGrath, Aniak, Nenana and Fairbanks, DOF capitalized on Prevention Education campaigns and direct public contact to maximize public safety, reduce local property loss/damage and reduce the overall cost of overall cost of the fire suppression effort by educating/encouraging direct homeowner and community responsibility. While 18 lightening caused fires burned in SW Alaska, Regional efforts were launched for fire prevention education in rural Alaska. Phase 1 of this effort was to prepare an educational video capitalizing on basic concepts and available cooperative programs which are already in place elsewhere to help safeguard our residents. With the busy fire season already underway statewide, quality local documentation for the production was easily captured and, with AWFCG approvals, will be finalized for 2010 Interagency distribution. Like many DOF prevention programs, the local and rural fire Departments will be our flow through portal to the public.

Meanwhile, in the Mat-Su new signage was being set up at Sports Fields, Copper River Area cooperatively compiles data for its CWPPs, Tok Area continued its successful Firewise Fire Safe for Seniors Program, Delta Area similar to Tok takes the lead in providing safe community hazard fuel disposal and Fairbanks meets and greets its homeowners with diversified fuel reduction efforts, cooperative Firewise principals and a prolonged fire season which kept residents/recreationalists receptive to their



Governor Sean Parnell, State Forester Chris Maisch, Homeland Security John Madden, and Arturo Frizzera, Wildland Fire Dispatcher in Fairbanks. Photo by Matt Weaver.

personal responsibilities in preventing Wildland fires.

In culminating the season, the State Fair is always a highlight in Palmer and this year local DOF set a record Fair outreach by staffing the on-site Fire Education log cabin for 12 straight days, 12 hours per day. The recently remodeled, cooperative fire education cabin is a shared resource between the Fire Chiefs Association and Division of Forestry. This year the cabin took First Place for Best Handicapped Access. To wrap up Rural Fire Prevention in Alaska for 2009, Smokey Bear made his first educational appearance and impromptu dance debut at the Alaska Native Heritage Center in Anchorage. He was warmly received by all ages at the well attended Intertribal gathering and was openly invited back to join in other future events.

# 2009 National Fire Plan / Wildland Urban Interface Projects

The National Fire Plan was adopted in 2000 to provide grants to states, some on a competitive basis, to reduce the threat of fire in wildland/urban interface areas. Funds are also available for wildfire prevention and education programs, mitigation, capacity building and homeowner and community assistance. The Division of Forestry continues to implement the National Fire Plan by supporting a variety of educational and mitigation projects, such as the projects described below.

Kenai Fall Firewise. The springtime educational program included distribution of Firewise seed packets at the Builders Home Show and other Firewise programs and presentations throughout the Kenai Peninsula that encouraged 'Clean and Clear' properties and preparing homes for fire season. The Fall Firewise advertising campaign encouraged the concept that major land clearing operations should be conducted in the fall during periods of low fire danger. The Slash Pickup project began again in August and continued into October. Thirty-three landowners had slash removed from their property by six participating contractors. The contractors donated \$7,100 in labor, equipment use, and slash disposal. This includes a slash site

donated and piled by State DOT in the Cohoe FireWise USA Community. Many other landowners acted on the Fall Firewise campaign by thinning and burning on their own to remove the hazardous fuels.

Communities assisted by the Slash Pickup Program include: Kalifornski, Kasilof, Cohoe Loop, Ninilchik, Anchor Point, Diamond Ridge, East End Road, and Homer.

Kenai Firewise Educational Teams for Community Wildfire Protection Plans. The Firewise team coordinator worked with the National Fire Prevention and Education Team that was assigned to the Shanta Creek Fire and continued with community follow-up in August. Existing requests for home visits were organized and scheduled. Firewise programs were presented at community events and meetings through the month of September. They established connections with local and statewide agencies for cooperative Firewise efforts. Coordination took place between Alaska Division of Forestry and the Kenai Peninsula Borough's Spruce Bark Beetle Mitigation program for expansion of the Homeowner Firewise Assistance Program. Plans were outlined for complete Firewise Team implementation beginning April 2010 and running through July.

#### **Educational events:**

- · Homer Rotary
- Shanta Creek Fire meetings
- FireWise taglines for Shanta Creek Fire / NIMO Team Media Releases
- FireWise Team Media Release
- Homeowner Association meeting
- Progress Days Parade
- Homer Saturday market
- Kachemak Emergency Services 'Meet & Greet' and Open House
- Interview for Funny River Chamber newsletter
- Kenai Peninsula Fair booth 3 days
- Soldotna Wednesday market
- Lowe's Safety Saturday
- 3,000 educational contacts

Communities Assisted: Nikiski, Kenai, Soldotna, Sterling, Funny River, Kailua, K-Beach Rd, Cohoe Loop, Clam Gulch, Ninilchik, Happy Valley, Anchor Point, Kachemak, Homer, Fritz Creek, and outlying areas.

Partners, Networking Agencies, Cooperators, and other Civic and Public Groups and Organizations: Spruce Bark Beetle Program (SBB), NIMO Team on Shanta Creek Fire, Alaska Division of Forestry, State of Alaska Stewardship program, Kenai Peninsula Borough, Funny River Chamber of Commerce, Homer Rotary, University of Alaska Cooperative Extension Service, National Resource Conservation Service, Kachemak Emergency Services, Central Emergency Services, Chugachmiut Corporation, Kenai Peninsula All Lands All Hands forest planning working group.

Media: Peninsula Clarion, Homer News, Homer Tribune, Seward Phoenix Log, KSRM radio, KBBI/KDLL radio, KPEN/ KWHQ radio:

Education Campaigns: FireWise For All Seasons, Homes Won't Burn if Homes Don't Ignite, Beautify Your Property with Fire-Wise Techniques

Chugach Park Hazardous Fuels Phase II. Cutting, thinning, limbing, piling and burning of the slash was the method used to reduce fuel loading in the valleys of Indian and Bird Creek by a squad from the Pioneer Peak Hot Shot crew during the fall of 2009. All dead surface fuels and ladder fuels within eight feet of the ground were removed. The majority of the work focused on removal of fuels in high traffic areas of the treatment site. Standing dead trees including beetle kill spruce & hemlock were felled and limbed. Logs greater than 9 inches in diameter were bucked into 4 foot sections so that 75% of the bole was in contact with the ground. All remaining material was piled and burned. Stumps were low cut, leaving no more than one foot above the ground level.

The project will be completed spring of 2010. Two kiosks will be built and installed at the trailhead and parking lot of areas where fuels reduction work was completed. The kiosks will provide users of the Park and facilities with Firewise information, project information, and safe burning guidelines.

Initial Attack Fire Fighters. NFP funding continues to enable the Division of Forestry to retain 10 permanent initial attack firefighters in Palmer, Fairbanks, Soldotna, Delta, and Tok. These firefighters improve initial attack capabilities at the state, local government and volunteer fire departments in the urban interface areas. Effective initial attack of a fire reduces overall suppression costs and minimizes threats to private and public property from wildland fire.

**New Projects Awarded National Fire Plan Funding** Tok Hazardous Fuel Reduction. This project will include two of the three highest fuel reduction projects as identified in the Tok Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The third project is currently being completed with Division of Forestry personnel and US Fish & Wildlife Service funding. The highest priority will be fuels reduction around the communications tower which encompassed approximately seven acres. This tower is the primary communications link for the Division of Forestry and the Department of Transportation which are both critical emergency response agencies for this area. The second priority is the development and expansion of evacuation routes (egress/ingress routes) for the community. These routes have been identified in the CWPP and encompass approximately fifty-three acres. Both of these projects will be completed by hand thinning and the trees will be cut and stacked at full length and skidded to a central location in order to be chipped by the Tok Umbrella Corporation's chipper and used for biofuels in the community. There will be very little need for any post-cut pile burning and the maximum amount of vegetation will be used as biofuels.

Firewise Education and Assessments for Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP). Eleven CWPP communities on the Kenai Peninsula have requested assistance with Firewise education and risk assessment. The Firewise Team will provide: 1) individual home site assessments, educational presentations, programs and materials, emergency preparedness information, and professional advice on hazard fuel reduction and wildfire preparedness, 2) identification of fire risks and hazard that threaten the community, and 3) coordination with developers, planning/zoning commissions and landscapers. Twenty four communities will be assisted by this project.

#### Evergreen 747 Supertanker Performs First Operational Drop in U.S. on Railbelt Complex Fire

The one of a kind Evergreen 747-100 "Supertanker" fire retardant aircraft performed the first operational drop actually on a fire in the United States on the Railbelt Complex Fire west of Nenana.

The \$50 million dollar supertanker, a jumbo jet, has 10 times the capacity of the largest firefighting tanker currently in use in Alaska. The former Pan-Am passenger jet had demonstration drops a number of times previously. State Forestry welcomed the opportunity Evergreen offered to show the capabilities of the tanker in wildland fire in Alaska. Firefighters were suitably impressed with the controlled drop capability and the extent of line it can lay down. The actual fire conditions and performance generated considerable internal discussion of potential uses, particularly in areas where wildland fire may rapidly encroach upon urban interface values, such as the Kenai Peninsula.



Photo by DOF PIO Mike McMillan from the Arctic Wolf Gas Drilling Rig from a height of 115 feet.

Project Learning Tree. This project continues the very successful Fire in Alaska (FIA) educators workshop series. In a minimum of ten workshops educators will learn essentials of fire ecology, fire behavior, and conduct two interface home assessments. Attendees integrate FIA into regular curriculum and conduct an individual as well as a neighbor's home assessment. Two workshops will be statewide Fire online workshops, available to rural educators through the internet. FIA graduates will be able to borrow fire trunks available in Homer (NPS), Soldotna (US-FWS), Anchorage, Mat Su, Glennallen (BLM), Tok(USFWS), Delta, Fairbanks as well as statewide traveling Trunks.

Nancy Lake Hazardous Fuels. Work will include providing defensible space around thirteen public use cabins and used as an demonstration of effective Firewise methods. Prescription for these sites will follow Firewise specifications. Each site will include a kiosk providing fire information. Shaded fuel breaks will be constructed along the north and south sides of the 6.3 mile long Park access road. Due to wetlands and potential impact of heavy equipment, thinning, limbing, and removal of all dead and down would be completed by hand crews. Slash will be piled and burned to prevent further beetle infestation. Firewood size stems will be utilized by Alaska State Parks for distribution to Park volunteers. South edge of the campground will have a shaded fuel break constructed. This includes thinning and limbing of live trees and the removal of all dead and down. This prescription would modify a Spruce fuel type (C-2) into a more manageable fuel type. The fuel breaks will protect ninety-nine campsites within the campground. Shaded fuel breaks will be constructed along the 3.2 mile long Redshirt Lake trail. This will entail thinning, limbing, and removal of all dead and down fifty feet on either side of the trail. Unpermitted fire rings at the lake will be removed and rehabed. Safe burning and Firewise literature will be made available at a kiosk at the approved camp area. All work in the Park will not only protect a valuable State resource but demonstrate and promote effective Firewise treatment.

Mat Su Area Firewise & Prevention. The Matanuska-Susitna has the fastest growing population in the State of Alaska. With this growth there is a rapid expansion into the wildland urban interface. This presents a duty and opportunity to educate, coordinate and develop prevention programs. The focus of these programs will be to educate the public on home defensible space, the Firewise message, and homeowner fuel treatments within fire prone communities. The delivery of the wildland fire prevention message will be coordinated by the Division of Forestry in conjunction within the Mat Su Borough Department of Emergency Services. This project will continue to expand the outreach and education of wildfire prevention in the interface with active education to citizens in the Mat Su Borough, community, councils, volunteer fire departments and local volunteers.

Mat Su Hazardous Fuels – Stewardship. A portion of the Big Lake community was severely impacted by the Miller's



McGrath. Mark Cox, LTC Journeyman, Carolyn Nelson, WF Dispatcher, Paul Van Heese, WFRT V, Jeff Browne (WF Dispatcher retired), Al Root, WF Dispatcher. Photo by Naomi Norback.

Reach fire of 1996, which destroyed approximately 400 hundred homes. The Meadow Lakes community is adjacent to Big Lake with similar housing types, housing density and fuel types. A borough-wide Community Wildfire Protection Plan is currently in place. This project is for fuels reduction which will serve as a demonstration for other homeowners in the area to undertake fuels reduction work. A target of 30 homes will be treated for spruce removal or pruning in the 100 foot defensible space zone. Beetle-killed spruce and black spruce beyond the 100 foot zone will also be targeted.

Kenai Defensible Space. Funding will continue defensible space improvements around homes in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) zones of the Kenai Peninsula. The Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) has provided pass through funding to homeowners to cover 75% of cost of improvements. Homeowners must employee a contractor to do work. Landowners are contributing 25% of the cost. This funding will be used to cover personnel costs to inspect properties before and after fuels mitigation work takes place. Approximately 16 homes will be provided inspections and contracts for defensible space improvements. The inspections will use the Firewise teams currently being hired by the KPB.

# **Volunteer Fire Assistance Grants to Rural Communities**

The Volunteer Fire Assistance program provides funds to increase firefighter safety, improve the firefighting capabilities of rural volunteer fire departments, and enhance protection in the wildland urban interface. The funds come through the U. S. Forest Service and are administered by the Division of Forestry.

In 2009, the VFA Program provided \$130,000 for rural fire departments. In addition State Fire Assistance funding brought the total to \$196,096.84. The division received 36 requests for equipment, training and prevention activities and funded 29.

### Federal Excess Personal Property Program

The Federal Excess Personal Property Program provides equipment and supplies for wildland fire suppression in Alaska through a program, sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service. The Division of Forestry acquires excess federal property for its own use as well as for cooperating volunteer and structural fire departments throughout the state. The division tracks over 1000 items of FEPP property including aircraft, vehicles, generators and pumps, and a wide variety of supplies.

The Eagle River Shop completed 2 projects in the 2009 calendar year. V33490 is a type 7 engine that was built up for Crystal Creek VFD in the Copper River Area and TK1, is a 160 gallon slip on tank and pump that was sent to Kachemack Bay Emergency Services (KES) in Homer. The Eagle River Shop has also completed approximately 75% of the work on project V31088, a type 6 engine that will be sent to Woman's Bay VFD on Kodiak, February 24, 2010. These suppression units have been built up from FEPP vehicles.

The new program being administered through the US Forest Service, the Firefighter Property Program (FFP) differs from the FEPP program as it allows title to transfer to the state and its cooperators is in the approval step with the USFS. The Division of Forestry is anxious to get this program off the ground and realize the elevated level of screening authority from the Department of Defense (DoD) as well as the implementation and expansion of the program available today.

Since the inception of the program in 1971 the state has acquired and distributed equipment valued at over \$9 million in Federal Excess Personal Property. The Division processed an extensive equipment excess during 2009 but still maintains an acquisition value of \$3,902,912.53.

#### State Fire Warehouse

The State Fire Warehouse system processed almost 6000 issues for a total of \$ 22,000,000 in 2009. The Warehouse supported 185 in-state incidents.

Even though, statistically, it was only the 9th biggest Fire Season on record, it was 2nd only to 2004 in warehouse support to incidents. The warehouse mobilized 6 Type II Cache Vans, including one to the AFS Crazy Mountain complex in Central.

When the Warehouse was supporting the Yukon River Flood Project in April and May, it looked like the predictions for a cold, wet season were correct. But then the Interior had its driest May in 80 years and the driest and warmest July on record. The State Fire Warehouse system supported large fires on the Kenai, in McGrath, Copper River, and in the Fairbanks area.

While the Division did receive \$2,000,000 worth of supplies from the Boise Interagency Fire Center in support of our fires, for the first time since the 90's we sent neither supplies nor personnel to the Lower 48. All of our resources were needed in-

2009 Grants to Rural Fire Departments						
Fire Department	Awarded					
Atmautiak VFD	\$4,546.93					
Bear Creek Fire Service	\$8,998.20					
Bethel VFD	\$9.813.00					
Butte VFD	\$10,000.00					
Caswell Lakes VFD	\$5,000.00					
Cantwell VFD	\$1,620.00					
Chena Goldstream VFD	\$6,330.00					
CraigVFD	\$2,799.36					
Dillingham VFD	\$5,850.00					
EsterVFD	\$8.995.00					
Gakona VFD	\$10,000.00					
Girdwood VFD	\$9,128.00					
Gustavus VFD	\$7,600.00					
Haines VFD	\$4.056.00					
Nenana VFD	\$6.515.00					
Nikiski VFD	\$4,770.00					
Ninilchick VFD	\$4,770.00					
North Pole VFD	\$4,842.00					
North Tongass VFD	\$5,000.00					
Seldovia VFD	\$1,975.00					
Seward VFD	\$1,375.32					
Steese VFD	\$10,000.00					
Strelna VFD	\$10,000.00					
Sutton VFD	\$5,000.00					
South Tongass VFD	\$5,000.00					
TokVFD	\$10,000.00					
West Lakes VFD	\$10,000.00					
WillowVFD	\$4,542,00					
Valdez VFD	\$5,000.00					
Total	\$196,096.84					

state where we were still supporting 2 Type II teams on August 15th and still processing Refurb from incidents in November.

#### **Aviation Program**

2009 was a busy year for the aviation staff. Training was a high priority with the hiring of Craig Ricks in the Lead Plane/Logistical Pilot trainee position. Our Pilots, Doug Burts, Randy Weber and Bud Roberts continued to do a great, safe and very professional job! Candy Simmons completed her flex training and moved into Administrative Assistant II position-Congratulations Candy!

The Division continued and expanded the ASM/Lead Plane program to include the training of 2 Lead plane pilots. This was accomplished with the two leased Pilatus PC-7 aircraft. A Federal Excess Property Program DHC-2 Beaver, and the leased Commander 500S, provided logistical support and ATGS training. These aircraft totaled 801 flight hours.

This fire season was the second year of a five year contract for two of the Convair 580, type 2 airtankers supplied by Conair of Abbotsford, BC. One was based in Palmer and the other at the Ladd Army Air Base in Fairbanks. With a tremendous amount of help from the Interagency Air Tanker Board, Conair and the Department of Interior, Aviation Management Directorate, the Convair 580 was given interim approval by the Air Tanker Board. This allowed our State contracted airtankers to be used on Federally protected lands. These airtankers flew 217 flight hours and dropped over 350,000 gallons of retardant. Additionally we further refined our very successful color coded tanker alert system with help from the "Google Calendar", making our tanker alert status "visible" to all the fire managers statewide.

Evergreen Helicopters provided three long term contracted type 2 helicopters, located in Palmer, Fairbanks and Delta. Rogers Helicopters provided a type 2 helicopter in Tok, ERA helicopters in Kenai, and Temsco helicopters in McGrath. These rotorcraft provided platforms for both IA Helitack, and logistical support on the many fires that plagued the State. Total flight hours were 770 hours.

The Palmer Warehouse was very busy, supplying 147,479 lbs of cargo that was flown out to our remote fire bases with contractors using DC-3's, DHC Twin Otters, Cessna Caravans and Beechcraft 1900's.

This year was the seventh year that the State of Oregon requested a PC-7 / ASM to aid in their wildland fire suppression effort. The aircraft and crew were ordered through the Northwest Compact and Oregon paid for all expenses and flight hours. With the high fire danger threat, our aircraft and crew were on duty, in Oregon for 51 days.

#### **Fire Training Program**

The division provides training to maintain a qualified and safe workforce, ready to respond to wildland fires and other emergencies as needed. Interagency courses are open to structure fire departments, local government, emergency firefighters, other geographic areas, and Canadian agencies that cooperate with the state.

National Level Training (Lower 48). Participation in Lower 48 training offered by other Geographic Areas, the National Advanced Fire and Resource Institute (NAFRI), National Fire Academy (NFA), Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), and the Hinton, Alberta training center helped the division meet the need for advanced level training to prepare our personnel to serve on Alaska's Incident Management Teams and stay abreast of current technologies and training.

Division personnel received training in Information Officer, Training Specialist, Logistics Section Chief, Incident Business Advisor, and Geospatial Fire Analysis, Interpretation and Application. Attendance at the Advanced Incident Management course (S520) helped Alaska develop individuals to fill the position of Logistics Section Chief on our Interagency Type 1 Incident Management Team.

Additionally, train-the-trainer opportunities for future instructors for the Alaska Engine Academy, Initial Attack Dispatcher and Fire Academies were provided by other Geographic Area Training Centers. A special "thank you" goes out to the California Danny Rhynes, Pacific Northwest and Arizona Training Centers for their willingness to assist Alaska with the training of our future instructors.

Attendance in the Simulation Design and Delivery class trained future instructors in the delivery of simulations and assisted them with the presentation of simulations to local area offices and fire department cooperators in 2009.

Our prevention staff attended sessions of Wildland Fire Case Development and Wildland Fire Origin and Cause Determination. Both courses were offered by FLETC and provided excellent training.

Several employees received training at the Unit Leader level in Incident Communications, Medical Unit Leader, and Time Unit Leader.

Aviation staff attended Helibase Manager and Air Tanker Base Supervisor training.

Dispatchers from State Logistics, Fairbanks, Mat-Su, and Tok Area Forestry attended the Aviation Dispatcher class. This class assisted individuals in meeting the flex plan training requirements. Forestry employees and/or participants sponsored by the division attended the following courses in 2009:

- Arizona Fire Academy
- Engine Academy
- S258 Incident Communications Technician
- S359 Medical Unit Leader
- S360 Time Unit Leader
- S371 Helibase Manager
- E388 Advanced Public Information Officer
- S445 Training Specialist
- S450 Logistics Section Chief
- S481 Incident Business Advisor
- S495 Geospatial Fire Analysis, Interpretation and Application
- S520 Advanced Incident Management
- D312 Aviation Dispatcher
- FI310 Wildland Fire Case Development
- FI210 Wildland Fire Origin and Cause Determination
- Air Tanker Supervision
- Simulation Design and Delivery

**Instate Training.** The division and its cooperators provided 66 fire, incident command system, and recurrency training courses to 843 students for 1,491 hours of training at the statewide level. 111 instructors participated in this training.

Area offices provided additional training in Basic Firefighter, Squad Boss, LCES, Pumps, Saws, 1st Aid, Fireline Safety Refresher and online Emergency Vehicle Driving and Incident Command System training. The division's Safety Officer assists in providing OSHA Safety training, ATV Operator, Defensive Driving, Blood Borne Pathogens, Powered Industrial Trucks, and Hazardous Materials for 1st Responders. The Area Offices provided 99 classes, trained 1,985 students, for 909 hours of training. 162 instructors participated in delivery of Area level training.

Core suppression skill courses such as Extended Attack Incident Commander, Task Force/Strike Team Leader, Crew Representative, Crew Boss, Engine Boss, Pumps, Saws, Engine Academy, Emergency Vehicle Driving, Intermediate Fire Behavior, Advanced Fire Behavior Calculations, CFFDRS, Dozer Boss, Ignition Operations and Fire Operations in the Wildland Urban Interface were offered statewide.

Aviation training in Helicopter Crewmember, Basic Aviation Operations, Aerial Firing, Refresher Air Tactical Group Supervisor training and an in-house Air Tactical Group Supervisor were offered.

Several dispatch courses were offered which included the Resource Ordering Status System (ROSS) and Dispatch Recorder.

Leadership classes were an important part of the Basic Firefighter training (L180 Human Factors in the Wildland Fire Service). Additional leadership classes were given in Fireline Leadership (L380) to meet the training needs of Strike Team Leaders and other Unit Leaders, Organizational Leadership in the Fire

Service (L480) to provide training for incident management team command and general staff positions, , and Followership to Leadership (L280) provided training for future Single Resource Bosses.

The Regional training staff coordinated a Prevention Workshop, several sessions of FI110 Wildland Fire Observations and Origin Scene Protection and P101 Introduction to Wildfire Prevention.

The first ever field deliverable session of S420 Command and General Staff Exercise was offered in Alaska. The division had four (4) students participate in the Information Officer position. Participates came from the Division of Forestry, Anchorage Fire Department, Fairbanks North Star Borough, and from Coastal Region Single Resource EFF.

Other courses were offered in the Incident Command System, Hazardous Materials for Warehouse, Orientation to Incident Management Teams, Prescribed Fire Burn Plan Preparation, Facilitative Instructor, Status Check-In Recorder, Incident Business Management, Applied Incident Business Management, ISuite, and ISuite Cost Modules.

The Alaska Crew Boss Academy was offered in 2009. Statewide, 26 Crew Bosses participated. The division had 14 students participate from the villages of Hooper Bay, Nondalton, Chevak, Scammon Bay, Kalskag, Nikolai, Delta, Tok, and Fairbanks. Experienced Crew Bosses were used as mentors during the academy.

Several courses were offered to meet flex plan training requirements. These included Followership to Leadership, Pumps, Saws, Basic Air Operations, Fireline Leadership, Fire Business Management, Alaska Engine Academy, Dispatch Recorder, ROSS, Helicopter Crewmember, Basic Firefighter training and others.

Interagency Fire Training Courses offered in 2009:

- Plans, Finance and Logistics orientation
- I300 Intermediate ICS
- I400 Advanced ICS
- Warehouse Hazardous Materials Transport
- Powered Industrial Trucks
- S420 Command and General Staff Exercise
- Aerial Firing
- RT378 Refresher Air Tactical Group Supervisor
- S300 Extended Attack Incident Commander
- Prescribed Fire Burn Plan Preparation
- L480 Organizational Leadership in the Fire Service
- Facilitative Instructor
- L380 Fireline Leadership
- S248 Status Check-In Recorder
- S290 Intermediate Fire Behavior
- S232 Dozer Boss
- S260 Incident Business Management
- S261 Applied Incident Business Management

- Crew Representative
- S330 Task Force/Strike Team Leader
- S230 Crew Boss
- S231 Engine Boss
- Alaska Engine Academy
- Emergency Vehicle Driving
- ISuite
- S390 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior Calculations
- CFFDRS
- ROSS
- D110 Dispatch Recorder
- S271 Helicopter Crewmember
- S270 Basic Aviation Operations
- S211 Pumps
- S212 Saws
- S234 Ignition Operations
- S215 Fire Operations in the Wildland Urban Interface
- Alaska Crew Boss Academy
- L280 Followership to Leadership
- Basic Firefighter

**Fire Department and Local Government Training.** Many fire departments and local government personnel attended fire training. Several were certified in ICS positions such as:

- Firefighter I/II
- Crew Boss
- Engine Boss
- Helicopter Boss
- Helicopter Crewmember
- Helicopter Manager
- Helibase Manager Type II
- Initial Attack Incident Commander
- Strike Team Leader Engine
- Task Force Leader
- Information Officer Type 2
- Liaison Officer
- Status Check-In Recorder
- ISuite

Structure fire departments across the state assist the division in fire suppression in populated areas through cooperative agreements. These cooperators are a valuable source of trained, experienced firefighters. The division offers evening and week end courses to meet the training needs of volunteer fire departments. All statewide training is open to fire department participation.

In 2009, fire departments attended the following statewide interagency courses:

- I300 Intermediate ICS
- I400 Advanced ICS
- S290 Intermediate Fire Behavior
- S230/S231 Crew Boss, Engine Boss
- S215 Fire Operations in the Wildland Urban Interface
- S212 Saws
- Fireline Safety Refresher
- Basic Firefighter Training

The division offers training in the Incident Qualification System (IQS) to fire departments.

Training for Chugachmiut Denali and Yukon Crews. The division supports the Chugachmiut crews by issuing red cards, tracking training and experience records, and providing fire training. Chugachmiut crew members attended the following interagency courses:

- S234 Ignition Operations
- S271 Helicopter Crewmember
- S270 Basic Aviation Operations
- S390 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior Calculations
- CFFDRS
- Facilitative Instructor
- L380 Fireline Leadership
- S260 Incident Business Management
- Crew Representative
- S330 Task Force/Strike Team Leader
- S230/S231 Crew and Engine boss



Left to Right: Fred Kutzgar, Lynn Standley-Coe, Tony Doty

I would like to thank Fred, Lynn and Tony for the many years of their support to the Division of Forestry.

I have worked with all of them since the early 80's.

Their dedication to the Alaska Interagency Fire Training Program and assistance to the Division of Forestry State Training Coordinator is commendable. Their excellent team work and "getter done" attitude made the delivery of the fire program training possible.

A sincere thank you for your many years of support to the Division of Forestry.

Cindy

#### **EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION: 15 YEARS OF SERVICE**



#### Lisa Burns

Lisa started her career with the State of Alaska, Department of Public Safety in the spring of 1992 as an Administrative Clerk II, working out of the Palmer Office. She was promoted to an Administrative Clerk III in the fall of 1993, supporting the Fish & Wildlife Troopers working out of Aniak, Bethel, Nome, Kotzebue, and McGrath. In February of 1995, Jim Eleazer convinced her to transfer to the Division of Forestry, Big Lake Area Office. Lisa worked in Big Lake from 1995 to 1999. She then left State service to focus on raising her two young children. In 2001, Lisa was re-hired into the same position she left two years prior, in what is now known as the Mat-Su Area Office. She continues to support the growing Fire Management and Resources Programs for the area, and subsequently her position was upgraded to an Administrative Assistant II. Lisa loves her job and the people she works with and plans on continuing to be a part of the working team at the Mat-Su Area Office.



#### **Becky Metcalfe**

Becky started her career with Division of Forestry in 1989 as an EFF in Copper River. In 1992, she went on to work as a non-perm position in the Southcentral Region logistics office in Anchorage. She accepted a position as a Forest Technician III in Delta in 1993. In 1994 she moved to McGrath where she worked as an initial attack and logistics dispatcher for the division. 1996 brought her back to the Coastal Region logistics office as a Forest Technician IV where she worked until 2001 when she accepted a position with what is now the Division of Homeland Security, first working in the emergency operations center and then in their federal grants unit. Missing working in fire management, in 2005 she returned to the Division of Forestry as the lead dispatcher in Tok. In 2007 she accepted a position as Assistant Manager at the State Logistics Center. She currently works in Mat-Su as the IA coordinator. In addition Becky has taken many fire assignments in the L48 states, which have added to her resume, making her one of Forestry's most knowledgeable and well respected dispatchers. In the off season, Becky enjoys traveling, reading, and just relaxing.

#### **EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION: 15 YEARS OF SERVICE**



#### **Dan Whitlow**

Dan Whitlow has been operating and maintaining heavy equipment professionally since 1985. He started working for the Division of Forestry in 1994 as a seasonal mechanic in the northern regional maintenance shop. In 2008 Dan transferred over to the Fairbanks Area to work as the Resources equipment operator. In an average year Dan will maintain up to 75 miles of logging road to support timber harvest operations in the Fairbanks area. Dan also supports the fire program by operating equipment to aid in suppression or to meet prescribed fire objectives. During big fire years such as in 2009, Dan assisted with contractor equipment inspections, and maintaining fire fighting equipment. Dan's wealth of knowledge in maintaining equipment from as small as a chainsaw to as large as a D-9 dozer has been critical in both the resources and fire programs. During the off season, Dan keeps his skills sharp as an equipment operator for the Fairbanks International Airport.

#### **EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION: 20 YEARS OF SERVICE**



#### Frank Cole

Frank serves as the Wildland Fire Analyst at the Alaska Interagency Coordination Center on Fort Wainwright Army Base located in Fairbanks, Alaska, assessing forest fire danger conditions statewide. He is a lead instructor in the Canadian Fire Danger Rating System and also teaches Intermediate Forest Fire Behavior courses. Frank works closely with the meteorologists and is responsible for generating indices and placing weather stations. Previously in the early 1990's he held the Intelligence Coordinator position for the State of Alaska. Most notably, in 1994, Frank presented a technical paper and poster in Anchorage, Alaska to the Society of American Foresters and Canadian Institute of Forestry convention titled Predicting and Interpreting Fire Intensities in Alaskan Black Spruce Using the Canadian System of Fire Danger Rating, and in 2001Rating Fire Danger in Alaska Ecosystems: CFFDRS Proves an Invaluable Guide to Systematically Evaluating Burning Conditions published in the Alaska Fire Service Fire-Line Newsletter.

Frank has a keen interest in fire, paired with extensive fire experience. He holds an associate of Arts and Sciences degree in Forestry Technology from Shoreline Community College in Seattle, Washington, 1978, and attended Western Washington University in Bellingham completing courses in Botany and Environmental Science, also University of Montana in 1986 studying fire management.

He first accepted work in Washington State in 1973-74 just out of high school as a Forest Fire Fighter clearing fire lines and operating fire engines and apparatus in the Okanogan National Forest. In 1975-76 he joined the US Forest Service near North Bend, Washington flying in Huey helicopters as an elite Helitack—Rappeller deployed into old growth timber areas. Intensive training for 250' rappells was completed at the North Cascades Smokejumper Base in Winthrop, Washington. In 1977 Frank accepted a Fire Specialist position with the Bureau of Land Management spending the fire season in the bush with Indian and Eskimo crews on remote fires requiring expertise in fixed and rotor wing aviation, as well as fire fighting tactics and command supervision. In 1978 Frank accepted a position in Willow, Alaska just north of Anchorage as a Crew Supervisor on fire engines and helicopter missions with the fledgling State of Alaska Division of Forestry. In addition he accomplished forester work, laying out roads and timber sales for harvest.

In 1979 Frank transferred farther north to Fairbanks, Alaska. He was a Helitack foreman fighting fires and ready for the "initial attack". Frank then accepted full-time work for about four years in Forestry timber sales and patrolled firewood areas. In 1983 he transferred to Delta Junction, Alaska as a Fire Crew leader and Helitack Foreman. Completion of Canadian courses in Alberta included Advanced Fire Behaviour, 1994, and most recently the grueling Fire Behavior Specialist in 2006.

Recently (Nov 2009) Frank was an invited guest speaker at the 2nd International Symposium for Advanced Satellite Data and Imagery in Sapporo Japan sponsored by the International Arctic Research Institute. Frank's topic was the Application of the Canadian Forest Fire Danger Rating System to Alaska. Tom Kurth, Chief of Fire and Aviation also was a guest speaker with an overview and management perspective of fire management in Alaska.

#### **EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION: 25 YEARS OF SERVICE**



### Sandy Gabbard

Sandy has worked for the State for 25 years and the Division of Forestry for 22 years. She began work with the State in Juneau as a Clerk II for Division of Motor Vehicles in 1978, eventually moving to Health and Social Services. She moved out of the rain country in 1985 to the frozen northern interior community of Tok. Sandy and her husband Glenn carved a beautiful homestead out or raw forested land and raising her daughter. She started work as the Administrative Clerk II for Forestry in 1988 under Dick Malchow. Sandy has trained up and tried to keep straight, three Area Foresters in her tenure with Forestry. She has worked many different fire assignments from Dispatcher, Crew Admin Rep, equipment and personnel time recorder on fires from Oregon, Montana and all around Alaska and has worked many project fires with Incident Management teams. Sandy has an incredible garden every year and supplies the office with fresh eggs. She continues to look for new and improved way to do things. Sandy has an incredible wealth of experience and knowledge and has a passion for her job and family that makes her such a valuable employee. To the public Sandy Gabbard is Tok Forestry.



## Patricia Joyner

Patricia began state service in 1984 in the Department of Revenue. She joined DNR in 1986 as an Information Officer with the Commissioner's Office, working with all the divisions on media releases, publications, and public information services. Patricia joined the Division of Forestry in 1992 when DOF inaugurated its Community Forestry Program. Patricia has helped shape community forestry in Alaska through her work as the Education and Volunteer Coordinator, and Training Specialist. After a year as acting Program Coordinator, she was named permanently to that position in 2005.

She has worked with cities, military bases, and small towns across the state on training programs, inventories and management plans, Arbor Day celebrations, grant administration, helped organize community forestry organizations and written publications.

Patricia has trained professionals and citizens throughout the state on a variety of arboriculture and urban forestry topics. She also participates on local planning and land use projects as a volunteer and serves on the Anchorage Urban Design Commission. She is a certified arborist through the International Society of Arboriculture.



#### **Roy Josephson**

Roy joined the Division of Forestry in 1984 in Haines as a Forester II. This beginning to his career was a spring board when a mere month later he was made Acting Haines Area Forester and then officially promoted into the position. During his 25 years as Haines Area Forester he has seen a major change in the forest industry.

Roy has developed a solid management program on the Haines State Forest as well as provided for wildland fire protection and suppression. During 2000 Roy was given the expanded role of Northern Southeast (NSE) Area Forester, taking over all NSE forest practices as well as administering the University of Alaska operations at Icy Bay. In the subsequent five years Roy led some notable special projects for the Division. These included revision of the Haines State Forest Plan, the Southeast Road Condition Survey Project, rewriting sections of the resources PPMs, forest health grant projects on the state forest and rewriting the Division's Reforestation Handbook. Roy is very active in the Haines VFD which accompanies him as first responders when there are fires in Haines or Skagway. Roy is widely respected throughout the local community which has been a great asset to the division.

Whenever he finds time Roy enjoys hunting, fishing, pulling shrimp and crab pots and spending time at their Chilkat Lake cabin. Roy is noted for his excellent attitude, practical approach and "can-do" approach to getting a job done. He is an outstanding forester and an outstanding person to work with.

#### **EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION: 25 YEARS OF SERVICE**



#### **Cindy Forrest-Elkins**

Cindy began her career in wildland fire with the U.S. Forest Service as a member of a fire suppression crew in the Kootenai and Willamette National Forests. She worked on Mount Henry as a fire look out during the early part of her career. The Look Out is now listed in the National Historic Lookout Register.

She also spent time working for the Alaska Fire Service as a Fire Suppression Specialist and Aerial Detection Specialist and the National Park Service as a Naturalist/Interpreter and Back Country Ranger. One of her favorite jobs was working as a Back Country Ranger in Yellowstone National Park. Cindy began her career with the Division of Forestry in 1984 as the Southcentral Region Training Coordinator. Cindy become the State Training Coordinator in 1993, following the reorganization of the Division and has done an outstanding job of coordinating and managing the Division's Wildland Fire Training Program. She has worked on and seen the evolution of various programs including the Incident Qualification System (IQS), implementation of position task books, and development of online fire and incident command system courses to name a few. Throughout her career with the Division, she has put a significant effort into providing critically needed wildland fire training to structure fire departments across the state.

Cindy has enjoyed work with other State and Local agencies in fire training and incident command system training. She represents the Division on the AWFCG Training Committee and participates in the National Geographic Area Training Representative working group. During her career she has served on Type II Incident Management Teams in Plans and Public Information. She worked with the T-28's with infra-red sensing and mapping.

She has a B.S. in Biological Sciences/Science Education from Oregon State University.



#### Lex McKenzie

Lex is Forestry's Administrative Operations Manager, where she has guided the division through the administrative challenges of budgeting, human resources, financial management, contracting in a cooperative interagency environment, and the myriad of complex issues that we continue to encounter.

Lex has a long history in DNR where she started working for the State in 1984. After more than ten years with DNR, Lex left an Administrative Assistant position in the Land Records Information Section to tackle new challenges as an Administrative Manager with the Department of Health and Social Services. For DH&SS, Lex worked at the Alaska Psychiatric Institute where she implemented cost center budgeting and financial tracking, and at McLaughlin Youth Center when DH&SS was merging institutions and youth probation to create the Division of Juvenile Justice.

Ten years in the Division of Forestry has brought Lex the recognition and respect that her outstanding abilities have earned. She is the expert that both Juneau and interagency counterparts rely on for fiscal solutions. Lex brought a strong background in facilities management, 24/7 operations, state fiscal management and programs that require flexibility – a definite need in Forestry. She has a strong work ethic and a positive approach and shares her expertise. When not working, Lex and her husband Lenny Grijalva enjoy camping in Alaska, visiting Lower 48 sites they have not seen due to a long tenure in Alaska, and cruising to foreign countries.

#### **EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION: 30 YEARS OF SERVICE**



#### John Gregor

John left the sun and surf of Florida and rode the wave of adventure to Fairbanks. In 1976 he worked the fire season for the BLM-Alaska Fire Service. That fall he accepted a position with the Department of Transportation and worked doing building maintenance throughout the winter at the Peger Road complex in Fairbanks. In May of 1979 he came to the Division of Forestry as a Maintenance Generalist for the Northern Region. In that capacity he performed a myriad of duties that included road maintenance for Fairbanks Area. His duties there consisted of such activities as gravelling the Bonanza Creek Road, installing

culverts throughout the forest road system, and grading and maintaining the forest road network that was yet in its infancy. In the fall of 1980 he was offered the position of Shop Foreman by then Regional Forester Les Fortune. John accepted and has served the region and the division in that capacity since.

Back in the day, John also supplemented the initial attack fire staffing for Fairbanks Area Forestry as fire activity increased throughout the region. In addition to local fire support John went on assignment to the Lower 48. He served as a firefighter on a type II crew that was sent south and as an ENOP, RCDM, and as a HECM in the Northern Rockies and in the Eastern Great Basin on other assignments. He enjoyed the helicopter assignments so much that he went on to take flying lessons and earned his private pilot's license, as is typical of many in Alaska. Serving on one of the earlier Engine Committees John worked with Dave Dehart in configuring the design of the International Engines that was the standard of the division before the newer, more modern S&S-type engines came in to production. In the process, John worked to wean the Northern Region off of its reliance on FEPP vehicles and into more reliable fleet management.

In talking with John, his eyes shine the brightest when he's talking about spending time with his wife, Katie, and their four beautiful children (Charlie, Riley, Annie, and Kelly). Together they enjoy fishing and dip netting, running races, supporting their children in the Korean style of karate, Tang Soo Do, and swimming.



#### **Darren Rathbun**

Darren Rathbun started his career with State in June of 1975. At the age of 16, he began to learn valuable skills that have served the State of Alaska for more than 30 years. In his younger years Darren worked for the Division of Parks as a seasonal employee while he was going to high school and attending the King Career Center. In his senior year Darren had to quit high school so that he could work out a deal with his supervisor to stay employed while he studied for his GED. As a state parks maintenance worker, he is an accomplished heavy equipment operator. Working with engineers he constructed trails and bridges and became an excellent welder and fabricator.

In 1981 Darren became chief of maintenance and was given the responsibility for the maintenance of several public and State Parks office sites. He also organized and supervised trail construction crews and has been one of the primary builders and maintainers of the Anchorage Chugach State Park trail system.

In June 2005 Darren accepted a transfer as a mechanic for Division of Forestry at the Eagle River shop. Darren has become the primary fabricator and equipment operator. In the fall of 2009 Darren became the FEPP Mechanic tasked with building two fire trucks yearly under the Federal Volunteer Fire Dept Grant Program. With this new responsibility Darren has taken on coordinating the statewide maintenance of 14 VFD vehicles. Darren recently completed and delivered a Type 6 engine to Woman's Bay VFD in Kodiak. This vehicle was enthusiastically received and has already called out on several early season grass fires. In the last few years Darren has received ICS training and is currently qualified as Ground Support Unit Leader. He is routinely called upon to work on fires in Alaska and with the AK IMT on lower 48 assignments.

When Darren is not working he enjoys fishing on his boat with friends and family. He enjoys working on his house in Palmer where he raises chickens and rabbits. Darren is also an assistant hunting guide and has guided hunters in some of the most remote places in Alaska.

#### EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION: 30 YEARS OF SERVICE & RETIREMENT



#### Tom Marok

After 31 years in Alaskan Forestry, Tom has retired. As the Kenai-Kodiak FMO Tom provided the experience, decision making, and leadership that set an example for upcoming firefighters and fire managers. Tom's dedication and enthusiasm will be missed at the Kenai Kodiak Area.

Tom Marok began his wildland firefighting career upon completion of the University of Minnesota, Forestry Technician School in 1977. He worked two seasons for the State of Minnesota, DNR, doing wildland firefighting. Tom moved to Alaska in February 1979 and began working for the Division of Forestry on April 23, 1979. He was an engine boss for two seasons and became the Kenai Kodiak Area (KKA) Forest Warden in 1981, a position he held until transferring to the Area Logistics Coordinator in 1990.

During his tenure as Forest Warden, Tom was very active with the fire prevention program. Among his contributions, Tom established a program to teach wildland fire prevention and safety in local elementary school classrooms each spring. He also initiated the fire investigation and enforcement program on the Kenai Peninsula and recorded the Division's first successes in prosecuting violators of the fire protection statutes.

The year of 1991 signaled a change was in the works for wildland firefighting on the Kenai when the Pothole Lake fire burned 7900 acres of mostly beetle killed spruce. This was the largest fire since the 1974 Chikaloon River Fire (3,780 ac). The KKA would be challenged with at least a dozen more large fires and several hundred smaller fires over the next 15 seasons under Tom's leadership. Tom also worked his way through the Expanded Dispatch qualification ranks reaching the level of CORD trainee. During this process, Tom has worked in 7 of the 11 National Geographic Areas. These experiences enabled him to learn many new ideas and procedures which helped to improve the dispatch process at the KKA.

Tom was promoted to the KKA Fire Management Officer position in June of 2007 only to be seriously challenged two weeks later when the most devastating fire in the history of the Kenai, in terms of structure loss, occurred. The Caribou Hills Fire burned more than 56,000 acres and destroyed 94 structures.

Tom has had many highlights through the years, including being chosen by his peers as the KKA Employee of the Year in 1991. His biggest highlight to date occurred when he was given the rivilege of being the co-logistics section chief for the 2006 National Association of State Foresters' National business meeting held in Anchorage. Tom thoroughly enjoyed this challenging, yet very rewarding experience working with, and getting to know much better, many other DOF personnel across the State. When critiquing the convention's outcome, the leadership of the NASF could not find one negative thing to say about how to improve the Alaska team efforts and the experience they were given. That is a great tribute to a great team!

#### **EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION: RETIREMENT**



#### Martha Welbourn Freeman

After 27 years with the Department of Natural Resources, Marty retired as the Forest Resource Program Manager. In 1980 Marty joined DNR Division of Lands as an intern. She went back to graduate school in New York and returned to Alaska to research the impacts of the state's land disposal policy on fire management options. She completed an M.S. in forest soils and a Ph.D. in forest policy and planning at Cornell University and began her career with DNR in land use planning. Marty worked on the Susitna and Tanana Area Plans and was project manager for the Kuskokwim Plan and Susitna Forestry Guidelines. She managed the Division of Land's planning program from 1989 to 1992 and was Chief of the Land Resources Section from 1992 to 1994. That responsibility included management of DNR's surveying, appraisal, land-use planning, and public access programs.

In 1994 Marty was able to again address Forestry issues when she became the Deputy Director of Operations in Forestry. Subsequently during reorganization she became the Forest Resources Program Manager where she has been instrumental in forming policy and direction in forest practices, forest management and cooperative forestry programs. Key projects have included updates of the Forest Resources and Practices Act (FRPA), the Tanana Valley State Forest Management Plan update and defending successfully against spruce bark beetle litigation on the Kenai Peninsula.

Marty was instrumental in a number of important issues: legislation for a value-added timber sale process to encourage local processing, for review and development of riparian Standards in Regions I, II and III, for legislation for insect damaged timber salvage, the "timber bridge" concept to provide state timber to industry impacted by delayed federal timber sales, and identifying and defending timber interest lands in the University Land Settlement. She has guided policy development in forest practices monitoring, development of regulations, interagency coordinating on water resource issues, and integration of cooperative forest and fire management programs. Marty has been noted for her collaborative approach, developing the concept of science and technical committees to develop a sound foundation for statute, regulations and policy.

#### **EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION: RETIREMENT**



#### Lynn Wilcock

Lynn Wilcock Retired. After 31 years with the Department of Natural Resources, and 36 years as a wildland firefighter, Lynn retired at the Chief of Fire and Aviation and as the Alaska Type I Interagency Team Incident Commander.

Lynn started fighting fire for the BLM in 1973 as a crewmember on an engine in Carson City, Nevada. After four years with BLM, he spent one season as an Assistant Crewboss on a USFS Hotshot crew in Utah. He came to Alaska in 1978 as a Fire Suppression Foreman for the Copper River Office, then part of the Division of Land and Water Management, prior to formation of a Division of Forestry. In 1979 Lynn received his Bachelor of Science degree in Range Science from Utah State University.

He was the Regional Logistics Coordinator with the Southern Regional Office in Anchorage from 1984 to 1990. From 1990 to 2003 he served as the Fire Management Officer for the Mat-Su Area in Palmer. As FMO for Mat-Su, he was responsible for managing wildland fire prevention and suppression services on the 12 million acres of state, private and municipal lands in Southcentral Alaska. In 2003 he became State Fire Operations Forester, responsible for the oversight and coordination of statewide fire suppression operations, including coordination with federal wildland fire cooperators.

Since 1980 Lynn has been on Incident Command teams in various capacities. As well as extensive wildland fire suppression assignments, he has served on a number of all-risk incidents – many of which are well known:

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill – 1989 Kenai River floor – 1995 World Trade Center disaster – 2001 Denali Fault Earthquake – 2002

Chosen by the interagency Alaska Wildland Fire Coordinating Group (AWFCG), Lynn was Incident Commander of the Alaska Type I team for five years. He brought the Alaska interagency team to national recognition through his leadership, during which time they responded to not only wildland fires but a number of all-risk incidents. A strong supporter of interagency fire management, Lynn increased the number of trainee assignments for ICS positions on the team and mentored command and general staff candidates. He led the Alaska Type I team on the following assignments from 2004 through 2008:

Hurricane Ivan – Mobile, Alabama 2004
Hurricane Katrina fire plan – Jakcson, Mississippi 2005
Hurricane Katrina – Jackson, Mississippi 2005
Reno preposition – Reno, Nevada 2006
Horse Fire – Alpine, California 2006
Anaheim preposition – Anaheim, California 2006
Cascade Crest Complex – Sisters, Oregon 2006
Jocko Lakes Fire – Seeley Lake, Montana 2007
Lime/Yolla Bolly Complex – Hayfork, California 2008
Siskiuyou/Blue2/Ukonom Complex – Orleans, California 2008

Lynn became Chief of Fire and Aviation for Forestry in 2006 at a time when the interagency wildland fire community was beginning to see change. His extensive experience, particularly with national level fire policies and realities, proved to be of great benefit to the State. As Forestry addressed issues such as a revision of the Interagency Fire Plan, smoke management, longer fire seasons, cabin protection, litigation, and changing roles for federal fire management agencies, Lynn met change constructively. He led Forestry is recognizing the role in life and property protection, resulting in a change in legislation to include that in the statute. His perspective on the balance of acres and responsibility for wildland fire protection responsibilities between the federal government and the state has resulted in closer fire management ties through personnel sharing in Kenai and McGrath, and discussion of consolidation of operational facilities where reasonable.

### **Division of Forestry Directory**

#### State Forester's Office

550 West Seventh Avenue, Suite 1450 Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3566 269-8463 fax: 269-8931

#### **State Forester**

John "Chris" Maisch, 451-2666

# **Deputy State Forester**

Dean Brown, 269-8476

# Admin. Services Manager

Lex McKenzie, 269-8477

#### Chief of Fire and Aviation

Tom Kurth, 451-2675

#### Forest Resources Program Mgr.

Rick Rogers, 269-8473

#### **Forest Planning**

Jim Schwarber, 451-2704

#### **Community Forestry Program**

Patricia Joyner, Coordinator, 269-8465

#### **Conservation Education**

Matt Weaver, 269-8481

# Forest Health & Protection (Insects and Disease)

Roger Burnside (acting), 269-8460

# Forest Stewardship Program (Landowner Assistance)

101 Airport Road Palmer, Alaska 99645 Jeff Graham, 761-6309, fax: 761-6201

#### **State Fire Operations**

P.O. Box 35005

Ft. Wainwright, Alaska 99703 356-5850 fax: 356-5855

Vacant, Operations Forester Logistics: 356-5645

Intelligence: 356-5671 Air Attack: 356-5852

Training, Anchorage: 269-8441

#### **State Fire Support**

3700 Airport Way Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-4699 451-2608, fax: 451-2690 Martin Maricle, State Fire Support Forester

#### **Aviation Program**

101 Airport Road Palmer, Alaska 99645 761-6271 Steve Elwell, Aviation Mgr.

#### **Northern Region**

# Northern Region Office

3700 Airport Way Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-4699 451-2670 fax: 451-2690 Mark Eliot, Regional Forester

#### Fairbanks Area Office

451-2670 fax: 458-6895 Mark Lee, Area Forester Fire line: 451-2626 Fire Ops. Fax: 451-2633

#### Northern Fire Management Office

451-2676 Fax: 451-2690 Vacant, Fire Management Officer Reception: 451-2660 Logistics: 451-2680 Aviation Mgmt.: 451-2691

#### Delta Area Office

P.O. Box 1149 Delta Junction, Alaska 99737 (Mi. 267.5 Richardson Hwy.) 895-4225 fax: 895-2125 Al Edgren, Area Forester Fire Line: 895-4227

#### Tok Area Office

Box 10 (Mile 123.9 Glenn Hwy.) Tok, Alaska 99780 883-5134 fax: 883-5135 Jeff Hermanns, Area Forester Fire line: 883-3473

#### Valdez/Copper River Area Office

P.O. Box 185 Glennallen, Alaska 99588 (Mi. 110 Richardson Hwy.) 822-5534 fax: 822-8600 Gary Mullen, Area Forester

#### **Coastal Region**

### **Coastal Region Office**

2417 Tongass Ave. Ste 213 Ketchikan, Alaska 99801 225-3070 fax: 247-3070 Michael Curran, Regional Forester

#### Coastal Fire Management Office

761-6229 fax: 761-6227 Judith Reese, Fire Mgmt. Officer Reception 761-6289 Logistics: 761-6220 Aviation Mgmt.: 761-6229

#### Mat-Su/Southwest Area Office

761-6301 fax: 761-6319 Ken Bullman, Area Forester Fire line: 761-6311 Burn Permit: 761-6338

#### McGrath Area Office (Seasonal)

Box 130 McGrath, Alaska 99627 524-3010 fax: 524-3932 Vacant, Fire Management Officer Fire line: 524-3366

#### Kenai-Kodiak Area Office

42499 Sterling Highway Soldotna, Alaska 99669 (Mi. 92.5 Sterling Hwy.) 262-4200 fax: 260-4205 Tom Marok, Area Forester (acting) Fire line: 260-3473 Burn Permit: 260-4269

#### Northern Southeast Area Office

P.O. Box 263 (Gateway Building) Haines, Alaska 99827 766-2120 fax: 766-3225 Roy Josephson, Area Forester

#### Southern Southeast Area Office

2417 Tongass Avenue, Suite 213 Ketchikan, Alaska 99801 225-3070 fax: 247-3070 Pat Palkovic, Area Forester

#### 2009 Boards and Commissions

#### Alaska Board of Forestry

Rob Bosworth, Environmental Organization, Juneau Matthew A Cronin, Non-governmental Fish or Wildlife Biologist, Anchorage

Erin McLarnon, Recreational Organization, Willow Chris Maisch, State Forester, chair

John J. DiMarchi, Mining Organization, Fairbanks (through May 2008)

Jeffrey Foley, Mining Organization, Anchorage, (beginning October 2008)

Wayne R. Nicolls, Non-governmental Forester, Juneau Mark Vinsel, Commercial Fishermen's Organization, Juneau Eric Nichols, Forest Industry Trade Association, Ketchikan Ronald R. Wolfe, Alaska Native Corporation, Juneau

#### Forest Stewardship Committee

Ole Andersson, Kenai Watershed Forum, Soldotna
Doug Blossom, American Tree Farm System, Kenai
Clare Doig, Forest Industry Representative, Anchorage
Jim Durst, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Fairbanks
Jeff Graham, Alaska Division of Forestry, Palmer
Mike Green, Landowner representative, Fairbanks
Jimmy LaVoie, USDA Farm Service Agency, Palmer
George Matz, The Audubon Society, Homer
Alan McGuire-Dale, USDA Forest Service, Portland
Dorothy Melambianakis, Kachemak Heritage Land
Trust, Homer
Mitch Michaud, USDA Natural Resources Conservation

Service, Kenai John Mohorcich, Kenai Peninsula Borough, Soldotna Peter Olsen, Forestry Consultant Representative, Kodiak Phil Shephard, Great Land Trust, Anchorage Jake Sprankle, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Fairbanks

# Tanana Valley State Forest Citizen's Advisory Committee

Forest Industry, Al Pagh
Value-Added Processing, Brad Cox
Environmental Interests, Chris Stark
Private Forest User, Dan Rees
Forest Science, Tom Malone
Native Community, Edna Hancock
Recreation, VACANT
Tourism Industry, Doug Bowers
Fish and Wildlife Interests, Paul Karczmarczyk
Mining Industry, VACANT
Regional Representative - Upper Tanana Valley,
Thomas Nerbonne
Regional Representative - Lower Tanana Valley,
Dwight Hales

#### **Alaska Community Forest Council**

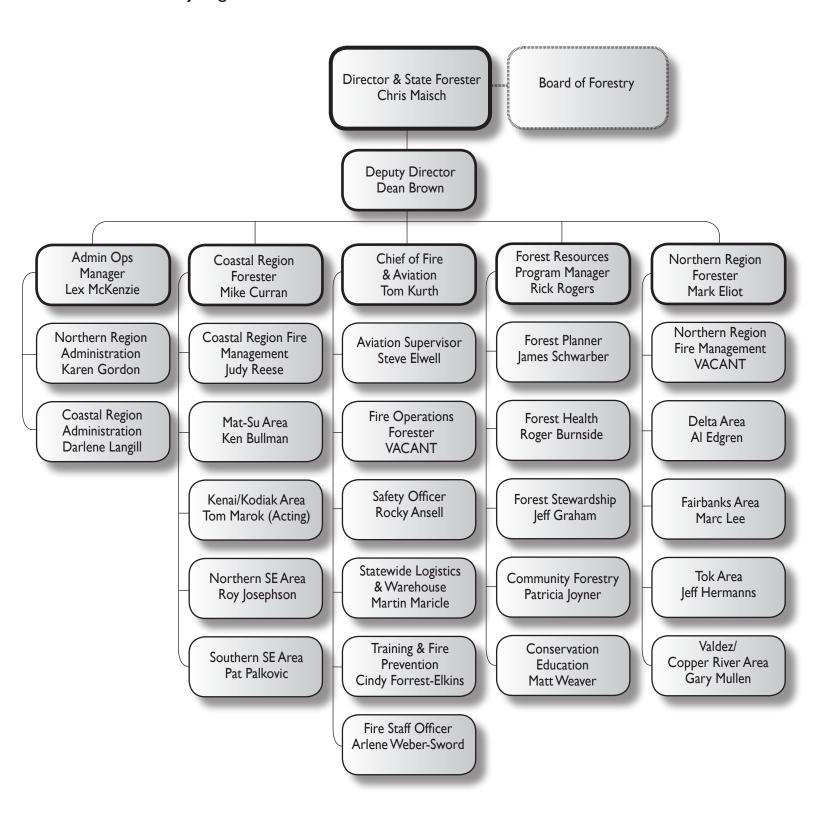
Sharon Ferguson, Anchorage
Lester Fortune, Treasurer, Fairbanks
Mark Gordon, Anchorage
Nickel LaFleur, Vice-Chair, Anchorage
Susan Luescher, Anchorage
Pat McArdle, Chair, Fairbanks
Eugene "Gene" Miller, Juneau
Lisa Moore, Secretary, Sitka
Nancy Moore, Palmer
Daniela Paulova, Anchorage
Michael Rasy, Anchorage
Peter Simpson, Ester
Jim Smith, Fairbanks
Curtis Stigall, Sterling
Scott Stringer, Anchorage

#### Alaska State Foresters

Earl Plaurde
William Sacheck
George Hollett
Theodore Smith
John Sturgeon
George Hollett (acting)
John Galea
Tom Hawkins (acting)
Malcolm "Bob" Dick
Dean Brown (acting)
Thomas Boutin
Dean Brown (acting)
Jeff Jahnke
Dean Brown (acting)
John "Chris" Maisch

October 1959 to June 1968
July 1968 to June 1974
July 1974 to June 1976
July 1976 to April 1982
May 1982 to June 1986
July 1986 to February 1987
March 1987 to May 1988
June 1988 to December 1988
January 1989 to November 1992
December 1992 to February 1993
March 1993 to January 1997
January 1997 to July 1997
July 1997 to July 2005
July 2005 to October 2005
October 2005 to present

### **Division of Forestry Organization**



2009 ACTUALS Note: Doll	ar figures are in thousand	ds (e.g., \$40.5 is \$40	), 500.00)		
FUNDING SOURCES	FOREST MGMT & DEVELOP- MENT	FIRE PREPARED- NESS	FIRE ACTIVITY	NON-EMERGEN- CY MITIGATION	TOTALS
General Funds	\$3054.5	\$14791.3	\$17017.2		\$34863.0
Federal Funds	\$811.7	\$191.1	\$12152.9		\$13155.7
Capital Improvement Recepits (Fed, GF, SDPR)	\$583.8	\$1047.2		\$221.6	\$1852.6
Interagency Receipts	\$446.9	\$263.4	\$142.1		\$852.4
Timber Receipts	\$758.3				\$758.3
Other (SDPR)	\$18.1		\$170.2		\$188.3
TOTALS	\$5673.3	\$16293.0	\$29482.4	\$221.6	\$51670.3
POSITIONS					
Permanent Full-Time	46	32			78
Permanent Part-Time/Seasonal	5	181		5	191
Non-Permanent	12				12
TOTAL POSITIONS	63	213	0	5	281
FOREST MANAGEMENT					
RENEWABLE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT & SALES	COASTAL REGION	NORTHERN REGION	STATEWIDE	TOTALS	
Board of Forestry			\$15.2	\$15.2	
Forest Practices	\$530.I		\$80.0	\$610.1	
Forest Management	\$1025.9	\$1320.3	\$301.8	\$2648.0	
Anchorage School District Interns	\$47.6			\$47.6	
Interagency Receipts	\$107.8	\$17.4	\$321.8	\$446.9	
Stat. Desig. Program Receipts (SDPR)	\$13.2	\$1.7	\$3.2	\$18.1	
Federal Cooperative Forestry Assistance			\$811.6	\$811.6	
Capital Improvement Receipts (Other)	\$100.6	\$180.4	\$302.8	\$583.8	
SUBTOTALS	\$1825.2	\$1519.8	\$2328.4	\$5673.3	
Director's Office			\$491.9	\$491.9	
COMPONENT TOTALS	\$1825.2	\$1519.8	\$2328.4	\$5673.3	
FIRE SUPPRESSION PREP	AREDNESS COMPO		_		
	COASTAL REGION	NORTHERN REGION	STATEWIDE	TOTALS	
Preparedness	\$3789.6	\$3471.1	\$7584.5	\$14791.3	
Interagency Receipts	\$53.I	\$64.6	\$145.7	\$263.4	
Federal Cooperative Forestry Assistance			\$191.1	\$191.1	
Capital Improvement Receipts (Other)	\$386.6	\$241.2	\$419.4	\$1047.2	
COMPONENT TOTALS	\$4229.3	\$3722.9	\$8340.7	\$16293.0	

FUNDING SOURCES	FOREST MGMT & DEVELOP- MENT	FIRE PREPARED- NESS	FIRE ACTIVITY	NON-EMERGEN- CY MITIGATION	TOTALS
General Funds	\$3434.7	\$15141.4	\$6712.5		\$25288.6
Federal Funds	\$1261.2	\$886.1	\$5460.4		\$7607.7
Capital Improvement Recepits (Fed, GF, SDPR)	\$329.5	\$407.1		\$460.5	\$1197.1
Interagency Receipts	\$476.5	\$274.4			\$750.9
Timber Receipts	\$832.2				\$832.2
Other (SDPR)	\$55.0		\$1500.0		\$1555.0
TOTALS	\$6389.1	\$16709.0	\$13672.9	\$460.5	\$37231.5
POSITIONS					
Permanent Full-Time	45	33			78
Permanent Part-Time/Seasonal	5	181		5	191
Non-Permanent	12				12
TOTAL POSITIONS	62	214	0	5	281
FOREST MANAGEMENT 8	LE DEVELOPMENT CO	OMPONENT			
RENEWABLE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT & SALES	COASTAL REGION	NORTHERN REGION	STATEWIDE	TOTALS	
Board of Forestry			\$9.1	\$9.1	
Forest Practices	\$511.7		\$68.3	\$580.0	
Forest Management	\$972.2	\$1424.5	\$389.8	\$2786.5	
Anchorage School District Interns	\$51.1			\$51.1	
Interagency Receipts			\$476.5	\$476.5	
Stat. Desig. Program Receipts (SDPR)			\$55.0	\$55.0	
Federal Cooperative Forestry Assistance			\$1261.2	\$1261.2	
Capital Improvement Receipts (Other)			\$329.5	\$329.5	
SUBTOTALS	\$1535.0	\$1424.5	\$2586.4	\$5548.9	
Director's Office			\$590.2	\$590.2	
Forest Assessment			\$250.0	\$250.0	
COMPONENT TOTALS	\$1535.0	\$1424.5	\$3429.6	\$6389.I	
FIRE SUPPRESSION PREP	AREDNESS COMPO	NENT			
	COASTAL REGION	NORTHERN REGION	STATEWIDE	TOTALS	
Preparedness	\$3728.2	\$3200.I	\$8213.1	\$15141.4	
Interagency Receipts			\$274.4	\$274.4	
Federal Cooperative Forestry Assistance			\$886.1	\$886.1	
Capital Improvement Receipts (Other)			\$407.1	\$407.I	
COMPONENT TOTALS	\$3728.2	\$3200.1	\$9780.7	\$16709.0	

#### **IN MEMORY**



#### Lois Bettini

Lois Bettini was raised in the Palo Alto, California and graduated from San Jose State University with a BS in Biological Science/Entomology. She was near completion of a Masters Degree in Natural Resource Management at the University of Utah. In Alaska Lois began working for the US Forest Service Past Management Program in 1987. From 1990 to 1997 she worked for the Cooperative Extension Service in pest management and was actively involved in public education about spruced bark beetle. For many years, Lois was an active volunteer with the Campbell Creek Science Center and specialized in entomology education. Lois authored more than 100 technical and general interest publications, mostly regarding insects. Lois began as Stewardship Forester with the Division of Forestry in 2007 and excelled in interagency cooperation and public assistance. In addition to natural resource skills, Lois was a cross country ski instructor and marathon runner. Lois passed in September 2009 at age 48.



#### Stan Vlahovich

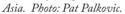
Stan Vlahovich was raised in Anaconda, Montana and graduated from University of Montana with a BS in Forestry. His forestry career began in 1971 as firefighter with the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. He advanced to become Unit Manager at Dillon, similar to an Area Forester in Alaska. Stan completed advanced academic training in forest ecology and silviculture, and hence was a certified silviculturist. Stan moved to Alaska in 2001 with his wife Jeanne, who joined the University of Alaska Anchorage faculty. Stan worked as non-permanent Fire Management Officer in McGrath before becoming Stewardship Forester for Mat-Su and Anchorage in 2002. Stan prepared forest stewardship plans which excelled in forest health, vegetation assessments, and GIS maps. He was active in assisting the Soil and Water Conservation Districts in the Mat-Su Valley. He has been asked to be leader in the conservation district's statewide Envirothon for several years. Stan passed in November 2009 at age 58.



Top: Everygreen 747 Supertanker dropping retardant on Railbelt Complex Fires. Photo: Mike McMillan.

Middle: Community Forestry seedlings.

Bottom: Ship in George Inlet, near Ketchikan, being loaded with logs harvested from private and public lands for markets in Southeast







The mission of the Division of Forestry is to proudly serve Alaskans through forest management and wildland fire protection.