

# FORESTRY

## 2021 SUMMARY

State of Alaska

Department of  
Natural Resources

Division of Forestry

## FOREST RESOURCES

Domestic and export markets recovered from last year's volatile demands and prices by mid-year. Significant activity occurred on the 15 million board foot (MMBF) Bayview Timber Sale on Prince of Wales Island that Viking Lumber purchased from the state in 2021. The timber will be domestically processed. Alcan Timber of Ketchikan operated on old growth timber in the 16 MMBF mixed age Vallenar Good Neighbor Authority Sale. Vallenar timber was shipped to round log markets in the Lower 48, Japan, and China.



DOF sold the 23 MMBF Baby Brown Glacier Side Sale in Haines to NWFP but logistical constraints precluded operations in 2021. Local small mill use of timber from the Haines State Forest remained strong. DOF repaired damage on the Sunshine and Kelsall forest roads caused by fall flooding in 2020 to maintain access for commercial operators and the public.

A shut-down of timber production on the Tongass National Forest and Sealaska lands shifted focus for regional timber to state sources such as DOF-managed lands and newly acquired federal exchange parcels managed by the Alaska Mental Health Trust.

Timber harvest remained active in the Interior. Aurora Energy Solutions, Northland Wood, Logging and Milling Associates, and Young's Timber, Inc. continue to drive demand for timber sales in the Tanana Valley State Forest.

DOF and the US Forest Service partnered to complete the sixth year of the Interior Forest Inventory & Analysis Program. Crews completed the southwest unit and will move to more remote units in 2022. DOF revived the UAF Cooperative Alaska Forest Inventory, and Levels of Growing Stock projects, some of the longest running inventories in interior Alaska.

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### FIREWOOD PERMITS ISSUED & CORDS SOLD

	Permits	Cords
FY 17	780	3336
FY 18	740	3093
FY 19	619	2296
FY 20	574	2279
FY 21	653	2872

### TIMBER SALE REVENUE (IN THOUSAND DOLLARS)

FY 12	555.3
FY 13	682.3
FY 14	354.0
FY 15	1,917.0
FY 16	212.8
FY 17	688.5
FY 18	477.4
FY 19	464.3
FY 20	91.7
FY 21	265.4

### TIMBER VOLUME SOLD – MBF (MBF = 1,000 BOARD FEET)

	Coastal Southeast	Coastal Southcentral	Northern Region	State Total	Sales Sold Statewide
FY 12	8,556	1,260	7,739	17,555	50
FY 13	4,976	1,918	2,662	9,556	50
FY 14	8,512	379	19,621	28,512	58
FY 15	6,171	438	14,305	20,914	39
FY 16	401	50	7,864	8,315	34
FY 17	8,196	378	2,749	11,323	38
FY 18	5,269	206	2,477	7,952	22
FY 19	13,673	152	2,165	15,990	31
FY 20	262	250	1,809	2,321	31
FY 21	39,071	150	3,124	42,345	30

### 2021 FOREST RESOURCES & PRACTICES ACT ACTIVITIES ON PRIVATE, MUNICIPAL AND TRUST LAND

#### NEW NOTIFICATIONS Detailed Plans of Operation

	2018	2019	2020	2021
SSE	14	24	33	13
NSE	10	13	5	5
Mat-Su/SW	1	0	0	2
Kenai-Kodiak	3	5	3	3
COASTAL	28	42	41	23
Fairbanks	1	1	1	1
Delta	0	0	0	0
Tok	0	0	0	0
Copper River	0	0	0	0
NORTHERN	1	1	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>24</b>

#### HARVEST ACREAGE IN NEW NOTIFICATIONS

	2018	2019	2020	2021
SSE	2,479	4,376	7,843	1,860
NSE	863	961	1,242	683
Mat-Su/SW	1,646	0	0	148
Kenai-Kodiak	1,460	841	1,085	1,479
COASTAL	6,448	6,178	10,170	4,170
Fairbanks	29	29	45	38
Delta	0	0	0	0
Tok	0	0	0	0
Copper River	0	0	0	0
NORTHERN	29	29	45	38
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,477</b>	<b>6,207</b>	<b>10,215</b>	<b>4,208</b>

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



# WILDLAND FIRE & FUELS REDUCTION

2021 was a moderate fire season, but a total of 389 fires burned an estimated 254,500 acres statewide. Many of these fires were located near population centers that required aggressive initial attack. 252 human-caused fires burned 9,893 acres, and 126 lightning-caused fires burned 244,593 acres. The cause was undetermined for 11 fires that burned 14 acres.

In Division of Forestry protection areas, 248 fires burned 95,805 acres. Most of the acres, 50,964, burned in the Munson Creek Fire near Fairbanks. Approximately 90% of these acres burned in a Limited Fire Management Area containing few high-value resources and monitoring was the preferred management action.

DOF supported the Lower 48 in their second extreme fire season in as many years, sending 350 firefighting personnel to 15 states. Alaska Incident Management Teams were deployed four times – once in Alaska, once in Oregon, and twice in California. Two five-engine strike teams were sent to Washington and Oregon for more than two months. Firefighting resources are exchanged among states and the federal government using reciprocal agreements, allowing the state to request Lower 48 resources when needed.

Alaska is experiencing more intense, longer fire seasons, while our forests are vulnerable to insect attack and disease. Currently, about 80% of Alaska’s population resides in communities at risk from wildland fire, and more Alaskans are moving into fire prone areas. DOF is adapting to these changes with an aggressive hazardous fuels reduction program. Firebreaks around communities reduce risk and are a cost-effective and efficient way to moderate wildland fire.

In 2021, DOF implemented 16 hazardous fuels projects, protecting 17 communities across Alaska. DOF is building capacity to engage the private sector in fuels reduction work, as well as involving local governments, helping them execute community-driven fuel breaks and wildland fire protection plans. DOF’s fuels program will continue to expand, with five additional projects planned for 2022, and 15 more projects proposed for 2023 – 2025.

In addition to building new fuels projects, maintenance was undertaken on existing firebreaks. Fairbanks Area staff and a local contractor are working on the Old Murphy Dome fuel break to protect homes and property north of Fairbanks with an estimated economic value of \$30 million. Previous successes in protecting communities with fuels breaks include those on the 2014 Funny River Fire, which protected values estimated at \$1.7 billion, and on the 2019 Shovel Creek Fire, which saved \$51 million of homes and property.



WILDFIRES BY CAUSE		
CAUSE	FIRES	ACRES
Campfire	21	2,189.6
Debris Burning	12	3,603.2
Equipment	26	5.1
Firearms/Explosives	34	552.5
Fireworks	5	2.9
Incendiary	2	2.9
Lightning	127	244,595.3
Miscellaneous	121	175.4
Powerline	14	1.4
Smoking	2	0.6
Undetermined*	25	3,375.2

\*Investigated but cause undetermined

FIRE ACTIVITY BY PROTECTING AGENCY		
Agency	FIRES	ACRES
AFS	121	158,688
State	248	95,805
USFS	20	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>254,500</b>

10 LARGEST FIRE SEASONS ON RECORD		
Year	FIRES	ACRES
2004	701	6,590,140
2015	768	5,111,452
1957	391	5,049,661
1939	200	5,000,000
2005	624	4,649,597
1940	130	4,500,000
1969	685	4,231,820
1941	138	3,654,774
1990	750	3,189,079
2009	516	2,934,608

# COMMUNITY & LANDOWNER ASSISTANCE

The Forest Stewardship, Forest Health, and Community Forestry programs provide technical and financial assistance to diverse landowners and managers. The U.S. Forest Service funds these programs, contributing over \$1 million annually to the state economy. They assist Alaska Native corporations, other private landowners, businesses, and local governments, who contribute matching funds.

## Forest Stewardship Program

- Awarded grants to two Alaska Native corporations to develop Forest Stewardship Plans covering 51,000 acres.
- 34 landowners completed plans totaling 478 acres, and 32 used federal cost-share funds for wildfire fuel reduction projects. Landowner goals include reforestation, spruce beetle mitigation, and wildfire defensible space.
- Developed an interactive, online self-study guide to expand forest stewardship education to landowners across the state.
- Project Learning Tree, a national program to train K-12 educators in an outdoor education and forestry curriculum, held three, 3-day, Alaska-specific education courses at Denali National Park for 18 educators.

## Forest Health Program

- DOF and the USFS mapped 1.2 million acres of forest damage on the 15.7 million acres surveyed. The top three damage agents, based on acres of damage, were western blackheaded budworm, spruce beetle, and hemlock sawfly-caused topkill.
- Spruce beetle activity was observed on 193,500 acres, a 39% increase over 2019, however down from 590,000 acres in 2018. DOF continues research on ways to protect trees from bark beetles.
- Continued to inspect properties and award funds to land owners for bark beetle prevention, suppression, and restoration using Western Bark Beetle Initiative cost-share funds.
- Provided forest health information and/or assistance to over 400 individuals.

## Community Forestry Program

- Awarded grants to control invasive *Prunus* species to agencies statewide.
- Awarded grants to 16 homeowners to replace invasive tree species and inspected 60 other properties for grants.
- Installed interpretive panels, “Fish Need a Forest: Restoring Campbell Creek Using Green Infrastructure.”
- Volunteers donated 642 hours to community forestry projects.