

Alaska's Forests...127 million acres

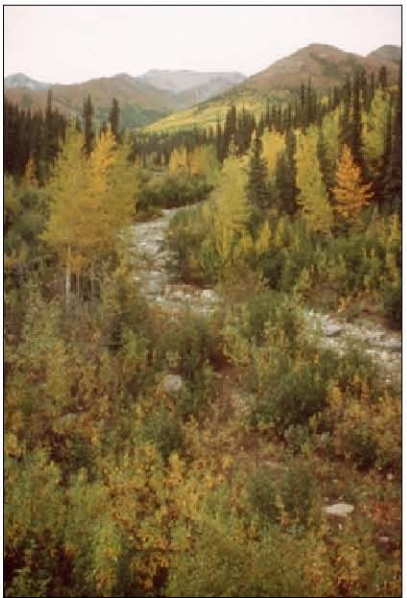
Interior Forest Forest Resources and Practices Act Region III

Interior Alaska is part of a boreal forest ecosystem that stretches around the world at northern latitude. The trees here are small and hardy, able to withstand winter temperatures that annually drop to -40 degrees for weeks. Summers are hot; 90 degree days are common, drying the forests of white & black spruce, paper birch, aspen, and balsam poplar. Lightning-caused fire is the dominant change agent here -- 6.7 million acres burned in 2004; the record since records started to be kept in 1950.



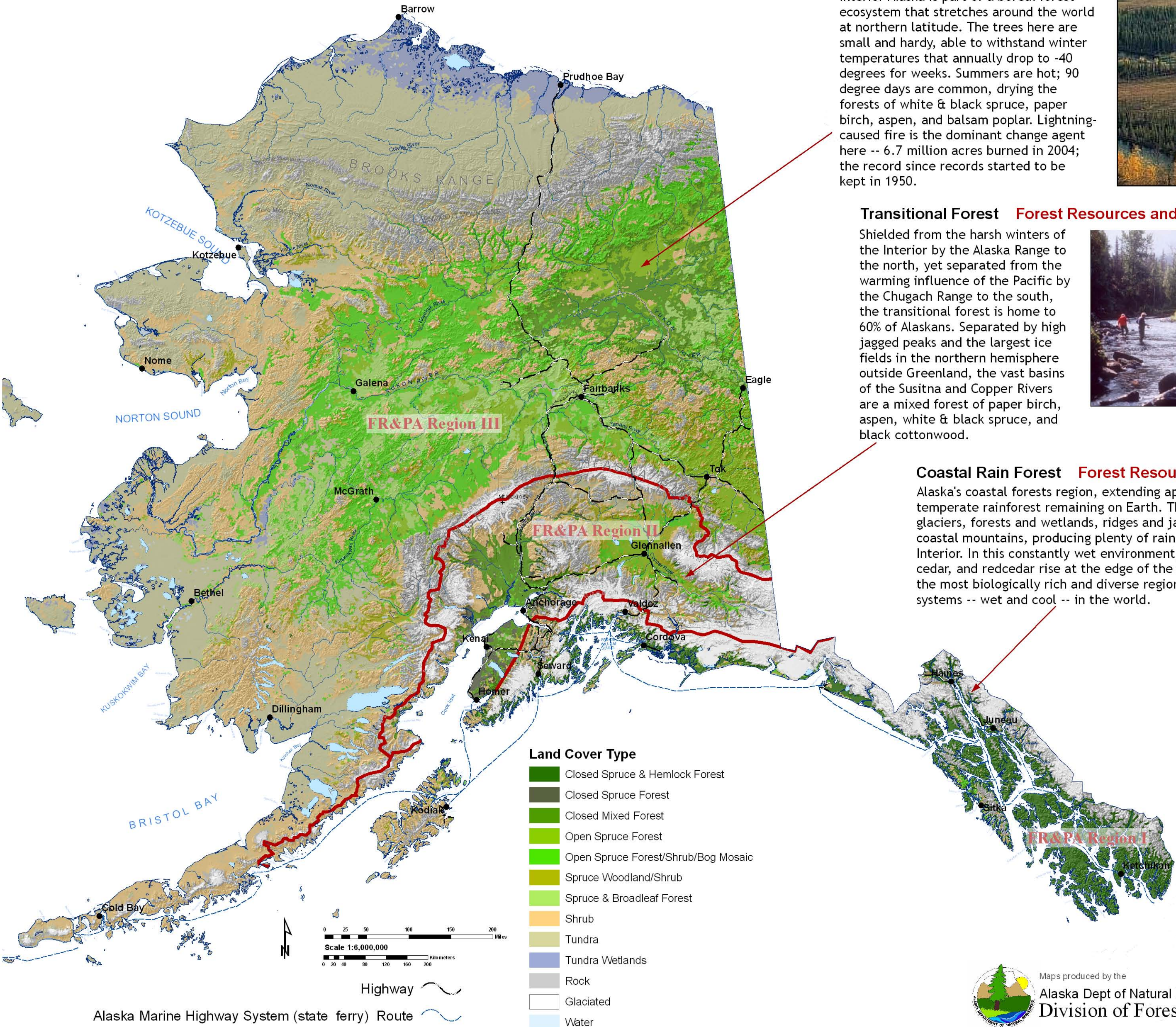
Transitional Forest Forest Resources and Practices Act Region II

Shielded from the harsh winters of the Interior by the Alaska Range to the north, yet separated from the warming influence of the Pacific by the Chugach Range to the south, the transitional forest is home to 60% of Alaskans. Separated by high jagged peaks and the largest ice fields in the northern hemisphere outside Greenland, the vast basins of the Susitna and Copper Rivers are a mixed forest of paper birch, aspen, white & black spruce, and black cottonwood.



Coastal Rain Forest Forest Resources and Practices Act Region I

Alaska's coastal forests region, extending approximately 500 miles, comprises much of the largest temperate rainforest remaining on Earth. The region is a sprawl of islands and bays, fjords and glaciers, forests and wetlands, ridges and jagged peaks. Here warm ocean currents collide with coastal mountains, producing plenty of rain and relatively mild temperatures compared to Alaska's Interior. In this constantly wet environment, great forests of western hemlock, Sitka spruce, yellow-cedar, and redcedar rise at the edge of the sea and the interchange between the two makes for the most biologically rich and diverse region in Alaska, and one of the more rare rainforest systems -- wet and cool -- in the world.



Maps produced by the
Alaska Dept of Natural Resources
Division of Forestry