

**STATE OF ALASKA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**  
**DIVISION OF FORESTRY & FIRE PROTECTION**



**FAIRBANKS-DELTA AREA FORESTRY**  
**PRELIMINARY BEST INTEREST FINDING AND**  
**DECISION FOR**  
**Cummings Road East Timber Sales**  
**NC-1677-D, NC-1869-D, NC-1894-D,**  
**NC-1899-D, NC-1906-D, NC-1914-D**  
**July 2024**

## **Abbreviations**

AAC	Alaska Administrative Code
ADEC	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
ADF&G	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
ADNR	Alaska Department of Natural Resources
AS	Alaska Statute
BIF	Best interest finding
CCF	100 cubic feet (timber volume)
DBH	Diameter at breast height (4.5 feet above ground)
DMLW	Division of Mining, Land and Water
DOF	Division of Forestry & Fire Protection
FLUP	Forest Land Use Plan
FRPA	Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act
FYSTS	Five-Year Schedule of Timber Sales
MBF	Thousand board feet
OHA	Office of History and Archeology
ROW	Right-of-way
TVSF	Tanana Valley State Forest

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## **I. PROPOSED ACTION**

DOF is proposing to offer for sale over the next five years approximately 127 acres of mixed birch and spruce forest from state lands in the Cummings Road East area of near the Alaska Highway. The cumulative volume to be offered for the next 5 years totals at least 1,373 Cords (1,236 CCF) of mixed fuelwood and 431 MBF (1,104 CCF) of spruce sawlogs in at least 6 separate sales. Some of the larger proposed areas may be divided into smaller units, and some small units < 10 acres may be added within the provided legal description should market demand exceed the 6 planned sale areas. DOF would sell the timber as a combination of competitive bid timber sales (AS 38.05.120) and small negotiated timber sales (AS 38.05.115) for commercial use. For this timber sale, the PBIF and Draft FLUP are being issued for review at the same time. The land covered by this PBIF appeared in the 2024 Fairbanks-Delta Five Year Schedule of Timber Sales (FYSTS).

The management objectives for the proposed timber sales are:

- Provide raw material for the forest industry to produce timber products that provide benefits to the state and local economy through employment opportunities.
- Harvest the commercial sawtimber and fuelwood before a significant decrease in vigor occurs and return the site to a young, productive mixed forest.
- Provide firewood for the residential heating needs of interior Alaska communities.
- Promote multiple use management that provides for the production, utilization, and replenishment of timber resources while perpetuating personal, commercial, and other beneficial non-timber uses of forest resources.

## **II. STATUTORY AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY**

The Division is taking this action under the authority of

- AS 38.05.035(e) Best Interest Finding;
- AS 38.05.110-120 and 11 AAC 71, Timber Sale Statutes and Regulations; and
- AS 41.17.010-950 and 11 AAC 95 Forest Resources and Practices Statutes and Regulations.

## **III. ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD**

The Division will maintain an administrative record regarding the decision of whether or not to proceed with the action as proposed. This record will be maintained at the DOF's Fairbanks-Delta Area Office filed as NC-1677-D, NC-1869-D, NC-1894-D, NC-1899-D, NC-1906-D, and NC-1914-D.

## **IV. SCOPE OF DECISION**

This preliminary best interest finding (PBIF) is the first part of step three of a six-step process to design, sell, and administer timber sales. The following list summarizes the overall process:

Step 1: Regional planning. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) develops area plans and state forest management plans to designate appropriate uses for state land, classify the land accordingly, and establish management guidelines for multiple use. These plans determine where

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timber sales are an allowable use, and what other uses must be considered when designing and implementing sales. Subsequent land use decisions must be consistent with the area plans. The area in this PBIF is covered by the Tanana Valley State Forest (TVSF) Management Plan. The finding also considers the Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan, and the 2012 Delta Junction and Greater Delta Area Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

Step 2: Five-year Schedule of Timber Sales (AS 38.05.113). The Fairbanks-Delta Area Office prepares a Five-year Schedule of Timber Sales every other year. The Schedule identifies proposed sales, including their location, volume, and main access routes. The Five-year Schedules are scoping documents that provide an opportunity for public, agency, and industry to identify potential issues and areas of interest for further consideration in the best interest finding and Forest Land Use Plan. A proposed timber sale must appear in at least one of the two Five-year Schedules preceding the sale.

Step 3: Best Interest Finding. A best interest finding is the decision document that:

- Ensures that the best interest of the State will be served by this proposed action,
- Establishes the overall area within which the timber sale may occur,
- Determines the amount of timber that will be offered for sale and the duration of the sale,
- Sets the overall harvest and reforestation strategy for the sale area,
- Determines whether the sale proposal complies with the Constitutional requirement to manage for sustained yield by evaluating the amount of timber in the sale and the annual allowable cut for the affected area,
- Selects the appropriate method of sale (i.e., competitive or negotiated sale), and
- Determines the appraisal method that will be used to determine the sale price.

The Preliminary Best Interest Finding (PBIF) is intended to provide sufficient information for reviewers to ensure that the best interest of the State will be served by the proposed action.

After public and agency review of the PBIF, DOF reviews comments, makes changes as appropriate, and issues a final best interest finding (BIF). DOF must adopt a final BIF before selling timber. An eligible person affected by this decision, and who provided timely written comment or public hearing testimony to the department, may appeal the decision to the DNR Commissioner per AS 44.37.011 and 11 AAC 02.

Step 4: Forest Land Use Plans (AS 38.05.112). Prior to authorizing harvest of timber on any area greater than 10 acres, the DOF must adopt a site-specific Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) for the harvest area. DOF will prepare multiple FLUPs for the harvest areas within the overall sale area covered by this best interest finding if DOF determines they differ in silvicultural characteristics. FLUPs specify the site, size, timing, and harvest methods for harvest units within the sale area. FLUPs also address site-specific requirements for access construction and maintenance, reforestation, and multiple use management. Draft FLUPs will be based on additional field work, agency and community consultation, and site-specific analyses by the DOF, and will be subject to public and agency review.

Step 5: Timber sales and contracts. Following adoption of the final best interest finding, and completion of the FLUP, DOF will offer the timber for sale by auctioning competitive sales

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and/or negotiating some sales with purchasers. The Division will sign a contract with the winning bidder for each sale. The contract will include stipulations to ensure compliance with the best interest finding, FLUP, and statutory requirements.

Step 6: Sale administration. DOF administers timber sales and conducts field inspections to ensure compliance with the final best interest finding, FLUP, timber sale contract, and applicable laws, including the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act and regulations (AS 41.17 and 11 AAC 95), and forest management statutes and regulations in AS 38.05 and 11 AAC 71.

## **V. PROJECT LOCATION, LAND STATUS, AND DESCRIPTION**

### **A. Location**

The proposed sales are located approximately 32 miles southeast of the Delta Area Forestry office in the Cummings Road area north of the Alaska Highway at milepost 1392. The proposed sales are accessed via the Newby Mill Forest Road from the east side of Cummings Road 2.1 miles from the Alaska Highway.

- **NC-1677-D** is within Sections 21, 22, 28, T12S, R15E, Fairbanks Meridian
- **NC-1869-D** is within Section 33, T12S, R15E and Section 3, T13S, R15E, F.M.
- **NC-1894-D** is within Section 28, T12S, R15E, F.M.
- **NC-1899-D** is within Section 28, T12S, R15E, F.M.
- **NC-1906-D** is within Section 28, T12S, R15E, F.M.
- **NC-1914-D** is within Section 28, T12S, R15E, F.M.

The sale areas are shown on the attached map and are within the United States Geological Survey 1:63,360 Quadrangle map titled Mount Hayes D-2.

### **B. Title status**

The proposed sale areas are owned and managed by the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources. The acquisition for the land upon which the sale areas are proposed is based on General Selection 809, the title transferred by Patent 50-2019-0015, except the southern half of NC-1869-D is based on General Selection 811 with the title transferred by Patent 50-93-0125. There are no known title restrictions in these areas.

### **C. Land use planning, classification, and management intent**

The proposed area is legislatively designated as part of Subunit 10C of the Tanana Valley State Forest (AS 41.17.400), and is managed according to the Tanana Valley State Forest Management Plan, 2001 Update. Subunit 10C will be managed “for commercial and personal use timber production while protecting fish and wildlife habitat and recreation use near the Tanana and Volkmar Rivers and other waterbodies.” Subunit 10C will remain open to mineral location and leasing.

The Interagency Fire Management Plan includes these lands in the ‘Full’ protection category.

#### **D. Current access and land use:**

The proposed sales are located east of Cummings Road, which is accessed north of the Alaska Highway at milepost 1392. The proposed sales are accessed via the Newby Mill Forest Road from the east side of Cummings Road 2.1 miles from the Alaska Highway.

Two large parcels of privately owned agricultural land abut the project area. To the north is the 1,672-acre parcel was first conveyed from State to private ownership as ADL 407927 in 1982, and the most recent conveyance appears to be State Patent 20087. To the south the 865-acre parcel was first conveyed from State to private ownership as ADL 407928 in 1982, and the most recent conveyance appears to be Agricultural Land Patent 23731. These areas are used for agriculture and private residences.

Existing land uses within this part of the TVSF consist of motorized recreational access, hunting, trapping, and personal use and commercial timber harvest.

#### **E. Background and description of proposal**

1. Background: The proposed timber sales are within the Legislatively-designated Tanana Valley State Forest. According to the TVSF Management Plan, 2001 Update, Subunit 10C will be managed “for commercial and personal use timber production while protecting fish and wildlife habitat and recreation use near the Tanana and Volkmar Rivers and other water-bodies.” The Division of Forestry is offering these sales with the intent to maintain a productive working forest while continuing to provide opportunities for dispersed recreation and maintaining habitat quality.
2. Timber volume and sustained yield: The proposed project area has an estimated 1,373 Cords (1,236 CCF) of mixed fuelwood and 431 MBF (1,104 CCF) of spruce sawlog on approximately 127 acres to be offered over the next 5 years. Final harvest unit boundaries and timber volume estimates will be determined upon completion of sale preparation activities. The Delta Area Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) is calculated at approximately 3,948 acres of harvest annually. The volumes proposed in these harvests alone, and in combination with timber volumes from other proposed timber sales, will be within the Annual Allowable Cut and comply with sustained yield requirements.
3. Harvest unit design: The 127 acres to be offered is proposed to be split between at least six individual sales which may be divided into multiple cutting units per sale. Cutting units buffer stand type boundaries and existing harvest units to retain an adequate seed source of mature birch or mixed birch and spruce. Cutting units will be designed to incorporate buffers of at least 50 feet from private property boundaries to protect public safety from direct harvest activities.
  - a. Reforestation and site preparation: The sale area will be reforested in compliance with the Forest Resources and Practices regulations (11 AAC 95.375-.390). The preferred reforestation method for rotational harvest is via natural seeding from

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adjacent trees. The harvest unit design described above retains adjacent mature forest to provide an adequate seed source. Mechanical ground scarification may be utilized on those portions of sales where birch is the dominant tree, in order to expose mineral soil microsites for birch seedling establishment and limit competition from grasses. Reforestation will be assessed five years post-harvest with a regeneration survey if the site appears to have marginal seedling establishment. If surveys indicate inadequately stocked areas (less than a minimum of 450 evenly distributed trees per acre of commercial species), additional silvicultural actions may be performed to intervene and improve stocking.

- b. Access design and construction: Access design, construction, and maintenance will comply with the Forest Resources and Practices regulations (11 AAC 95.285-.355).
- Each sale is accessed via Cummings Road, which connects to the Alaska Highway at Mile 1392. Newby Mill Forest Road is an all-season secondary road that intersects Cummings Road on the east side 2.1 miles from the Alaska Highway. Access for each proposed sale:
    - **NC-1677-D** is 2.5 miles east of Cummings Road on Newby Mill Forest Road, then a 0.3 mile spur must be constructed to the sale boundary.
    - **NC-1869-D** is 3.4 miles east of Cummings Road on Newby Mill Forest Road, then 0.8 miles south on an existing spur road.
    - **NC-1894-D** is 3.1 miles east of Cummings Road on Newby Mill Forest Road.
    - **NC-1899-D** is 4.1 miles east of Cummings Road on Newby Mill Forest Road, then a 0.2 mile spur must be constructed to reach the sale boundary. This sale may be limited to winter-only access if a safe and stable access cannot be constructed economically on the toe of the hillslope to the south.
    - **NC-1906-D** is 3.2 miles east of Cummings Road on Newby Mill Forest Road.
    - **NC-1914-D** is 4.1 miles east of Cummings Road on Newby Mill Forest Road, then a 0.5 mile spur must be constructed to reach the sale boundary. This sale may be limited to winter-only access if a safe and stable access cannot be constructed economically on the toe of the hillslope to the south.
  - The existing road will be maintained to the all-season road standards set out in the AFRPA and the DOF Road Standards.
  - Between individual sale harvests any spurs will be inactive and maintained in accordance with 11 AAC 95.315 (f).
  - Generally, DOF applies for public easement rights-of-way for long-term routes, but access spur roads do not qualify.



- c. Appraisal method: DOF will appraise the timber value in compliance with 11 AAC 71.092. Commercial sales will be based on transactional evidence and market demand and DOF will apply a value for those products.

## **F. Resources and management**

### **1. Timber.**

- a. Timber stand composition and structure: NC-1677-D is a mature closed canopy birch sawtimber type. NC-1894-D and NC-1906-D are primarily a mature spruce forest. NC-1869-D, NC-1899-D, and NC-1914-D are all of a mixed spruce-birch timber type, with the spruce component predominant.
- b. Stand silvics: Regeneration of birch occurs principally from seed-fall spread by wind, and secondarily from root-collar sprouting. Data and research on regeneration and growth characteristics of these species are compiled within the Resource Analysis of the Tanana Valley State Forest (TVSF) Management Plan. The harvest and reforestation systems available in Interior Alaska are also reviewed and listed in the Resource Analysis. The results of the public and agency discussions for harvest and reforestation are discussed in the TVSF Management Plan. Silvicultural harvest systems that facilitate even-aged (natural) management are generally preferred. They mimic the ecological impact of wildfire and other disturbances and result in the greatest increase in site productivity. Even-aged management is normally accomplished through clear cuts, patch cuts and heavy partial cuts (such as seed tree or shelterwood systems), which opens up the site to maximum solar gain. This results in the greatest production of both young hardwood that is important to wildlife and the spruce understory valuable years later as timber. Even-aged management techniques are utilized to provide young, vigorously growing stands in juxtaposition to older, undisturbed stands. Such placement of harvest units can optimize natural seeding and the edge effect.

NC-1677-D is planned as a heavy partial cut to remove the dominant birch overstory that, in conjunction with scarification, should provide a high-light and exposed mineral soil environment favorable for birch to seed and establish. All the other sales, which are spruce or mixed timber types (NC-1869-D, NC-1894-D, NC-1899-D, NC-1906-D, NC-1914-D), are clearcuts to remove the dominant birch and spruce overstory that should provide a high-light and exposed mineral soil environment favorable to release advance regeneration of spruce and for birch to seed and establish.

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- c. Topography and Soils: The proposed sales will be designed and managed to prevent significant impairment of the land and water with respect to renewable resources (AS 41.17.060(c)(5)).
- NC-1667-D is situated along a northwest-facing hillside generally from midslope to ridgeline. The proposed area has elevation between 1,250-1,500 feet and slopes 25-35% except flatter near the ridetop. The proposed sale area is underlain by Typic Eutrocryepts with sandy substratum 10-45% slopes, which is rated as well-drained silt loam on top sand, with lithic bedrock 50-60 inches beneath the surface
  - NC-1869-D is situated on top of a bluff complex overlooking the Tanana River 1,500 feet to the east. The elevation varies between 1,300-1,500 feet. The sale area has a northwest aspect with 10-25% slopes, except where the proposed sale boundary incorporates the bluff edge, which has 30-40% slopes and a southeast aspect. The sale area is underlain by Tetlin silt loam 10-50% slopes, which is a poorly drained silt loam with permafrost 2-20 inches below the surface. The southern portions of the sale area on the bluff edge are rated as Typic Eutrocryepts with bedrock substratum, with silt loams up to 38 inches deep on top of very cobbly sandy loam; this steep soil type is considered well-drained.
  - NC-1894 is situated in a flat area around 1,250 elevation. The proposed sale area is underlain by the Jarvis-Chena complex, which consists of a shallow layer of silt loam on top of a cobbly sand alluvium. It is rated as a well drained soil typical of floodplains
  - NC-1899-D is situated on an east-facing hillside with 20-40% slopes. The sale area is underlain by Tetlin silt loam 10-50% slopes, which is a poorly drained silt loam with permafrost 2-20 inches below the surface. The western portions of the sale area near the hilltop are rated as Typic Eutrocryepts with bedrock substratum, with silt loams up to 38 inches deep on top of very cobbly sandy loam; this steep soil type is considered well-drained.
  - NC-1906 is situated in a flat area around 1,250 elevation. The proposed sale area is underlain by the Jarvis-Chena complex, which consists of a shallow layer of silt loam on top of a cobbly sand alluvium. It is rated as a well-drained soil typical of floodplains
  - NC-1914-D incorporates a flat bowl and toe slope of a ridge complex, and varies from 1,250-1,375 feet elevation. Slope is flat over most of the sale to nearly 40% at the highest elevation section, with a mostly east-northeast aspect. The proposed area is underlain by Tetlin silt loam 10-50% slopes, which is a poorly drained silt loam with permafrost 2-20 inches below the surface. The western portions of the sale area on the toe slope are rated as Typic Eutrocryepts with bedrock substratum, with silt loams up to 38 inches deep on top of very cobbly sandy loam; this steep soil type is considered well-drained.

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2. Agriculture. Cummings Road provides access to numerous agricultural parcels sold by the State since the 1980s. The proposed sales are not anticipated to have any impact on current or future agricultural activity in the area, and any effects of any timber sale operations for agricultural uses will be minimal.
3. Wildlife habitat and harvest. According to the TVSF Management Plan, 2001 Update, wildlife habitat resources within Unit 10 are described as follows: “A substantial number of peregrine falcon nests have been identified along the Tanana River, and many eagles and other raptors are known to nest in bottomlands. Large numbers of sandhill cranes, waterfowl, and other birds migrate through the area.” Should an eagle nest tree be discovered in the sale area, the nest tree will be marked on the ground and a 330-foot no-harvest radius will be established to protect the tree. No critical wildlife habitat has been identified for this area (TVSF Management Plan).

Treatments proposed for this stand are projected to enhance habitat conditions for moose, voles, hares, and ultimately, lynx, marten and fox. In the past, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Wildlife Conservation have recommended managing for as much diversity as possible when prescribing harvest unit size, shape and position to mimic the results of wildfire or other stand replacement phases such as insect outbreaks or flood events. To accomplish these objectives snags will be retained wherever feasible to provide late-successional wildlife habitat for hole nesting birds, woodpeckers, small mammals, and other species requiring perching habitat. The units will be laid out with an uneven edge, along and between timber types. This will create varied edge effect that is beneficial to many wildlife species.

4. Fish Habitat, water resources, and water quality. The Tanana River is the nearest catalogued anadromous waterbody, and is categorized under FRPA as a Type III.B. waterbody (glacial, with resident fish). The proposed sale areas are at least 1,500 feet from the active channels of the Tanana River, and there are no known perennial streams impacted by the sale areas or the access roads.

The proposed sales will be designed and managed to protect fish habitat and water quality in compliance with the Forest Resources and Practices Act and regulations (AS 41.17 and 11 AAC 95). DOF will ensure Best Management Practices are being adhered to by requiring a complete logging plan prior to the start of any harvesting, conducting on-site inspections during logging operations and a final inspection prior to terminating the timber sale.

5. Recreation, tourism, and scenic resources. The Cummings Road area is used for recreational activities year-round, primarily by local residents. During the snow-free months OHV riding and hunting are common uses, and the area provides informal boat launch access to the Tanana River. During the winter months trapping, dog mushing, and snowmachining are common. The bluff-adjacent portion of NC-1869-D (~ 5 acres) and most of NC-1899-D may be visible from the Tanana River. NC-1677-D will be partially visible from the private property to the west, though the nearest permanent structure is approximately 1 mile to the west. Viewshed impacts will be

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lessened by screening methods such as irregular boundaries and retention of mature timber along timber sale edges.

6. Cultural Resources. DOF works with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to identify and avoid known cultural, historic, or prehistoric sites in planning the proposed access routes and harvest areas. If additional archaeological sites are identified, proposed harvest areas and road locations will be appropriately adjusted to avoid conflicts. If any historic or archaeological sites are encountered during road construction or harvest activities, DOF will immediately inform SHPO and take action to protect the findings.
7. Subsurface Resources. Generally, State land is open to mineral entry and is available for leasing subject to Mineral Orders. However, the sale area is subject to Mineral Closing Order 271 (MCO 271, initiated 1982). An MCO closes state land to all forms of mineral entry, making it unavailable for staking mining claims, leasehold locations or prospecting site locations (see AS 38.05.195, 38.05.205 and 38.05.245). Nonetheless, the proposed timber sales are not expected to have any deleterious effects on subsurface activities.

#### **G. Costs and benefits**

Local commercial logging operators and their customers will benefit from the inflow of raw timber into the market. In addition to generating royalties to the State's general fund, the proposed sales will create economic benefits for the communities of Fairbanks and Nenana and other locations in Alaska. The local business community will receive direct economic benefit from providing support services for the operators through sales of fuel, food, housing, medical and miscellaneous supplies. Local residents may receive an indirect benefit through any local taxes paid by the operator and employees during the timber harvest operations.

The sales are also expected to benefit the local economy by providing jobs. It will have a positive impact on local employment by generating numerous man-hours of work associated with the harvest and transportation of wood products from this sale. Additionally, the public may benefit from additional access to personal use fuelwood areas, as home heating costs remain high in Interior Alaska.

Minimal negative effects are expected on fish and wildlife habitat or water quality due to the distance of these sales from the Tanana River and the retention of adjacent seed source which may provide additional travel corridors for wildlife.

## **VI. PUBLIC REVIEW**

The public and agencies are invited to comment on this Preliminary Best Interest Finding. Objections or comments pertaining to the proposed action must be received in writing by the DOF Fairbanks-Delta Area Office before **4:30pm AKDT Friday, August 23, 2024**, in order to ensure consideration for review. Comments should be mailed to the State of Alaska, Division of Forestry & Fire Protection, 3700 Airport Way Fairbanks, AK 99709 or by email to [andrew.allaby@alaska.gov](mailto:andrew.allaby@alaska.gov). For more information you may contact Fairbanks-Delta Resource Forester, Andrew Allaby, (907) 451-2603, [andrew.allaby@alaska.gov](mailto:andrew.allaby@alaska.gov). To be eligible to appeal the final decision, a person must have provided written comment by **4:30pm AKDT Friday, August 23, 2024**,

## **VII. PUBLIC NOTICE**

This PBIF will be publicly noticed in compliance with AS 38.05.945. Notice will be posted on the Alaska Online Public Notice System, and both physical and electronic notices will be mailed to previous timber sale bidders as well as any property owners or business interests known to the Division in the proposed sale area. Notice will also be posted on the Division of Forestry public webpage.

## **VIII. ALTERNATIVES AND DISCUSSION**

There are 4 possible alternatives to consider for this project area. A discussion of each of the alternatives follows. All alternatives are consistent with the area plan and applicable statutes and regulations.

### **1. To continue the sale(s) as proposed.**

This alternative meets the objectives of the Five-Year Schedule of Timber Sales and DNR's constitutional mandate, and is consistent with the land classification. It also meets the silvicultural objective of improving forest vigor, provides for a value-added end product and creates additional jobs in Alaska due to the combination logging and trucking. This alternative also complies with the management objectives of the TVSF Management Plan for Subunit 10.

### **2. To modify the sale(s) by making them smaller or larger.**

The proposed sale units are logical settings for typical commercial logging equipment in Interior Alaska. The sizes of these sales are designed to be large enough to be economically viable considering access development and mobilization costs and distance to processing facilities. Sales within this size range are appropriately balanced to maintain other resource values as well as provide economic benefits to the Tanana Valley.

### **3. Defer the sale(s) of this timber to a later date.**

Deferring harvest to a later date would fail to meet many of the objectives of the sale program. One of the main objectives is to make State-owned timber consistently available to the timber industry.

### **4. Do not offer this timber for sale.**

This alternative would result in not meeting any of the objectives outlined for this management action. Utilization of the forest resource would not be achieved. There would be no significant contribution to the State and local economies. This alternative would delay the management objectives planned for the area, deny making a source of raw materials available to the local wood products industry, and would delay the harvest of mature trees, prior to the onset of disease or insect infestation. Decay and senescence of mature birch trees results in the loss of economic value.

## **IX. RECOMMENDATION AND PRELIMINARY DECISION**

After due consideration of all pertinent information and alternatives, the DNR has reached the following Preliminary Decision: To offer for sale over the next five years approximately 127 acres of mature mixed forest as proposed in Alternative One and described in this PBIF. The DOF finds that this preliminary decision satisfies the objectives stated in this document and it is in the best interest of the State to proceed with this action under its authority of AS 38.05.035(e) (Powers and Duties of the Director) & AS 38.05.110-120; 11 AAC 71 (Timber Sale Statutes and Regulations); and AS 41.17.010-.950 and 11 AAC 95 (Forest Resources and Practices Statutes and Regulations).

To be eligible to participate in any appeal or request for reconsideration of the final finding, a person must be affected by the decision, and must have submitted comment to the preliminary finding and decision during the comment period.

If you have any questions, please contact Fairbanks-Delta Area Resource Forester, Andrew Allaby, [andrew.allaby@alaska.gov](mailto:andrew.allaby@alaska.gov), 907-451-2603.

## **X. SIGNATURE**

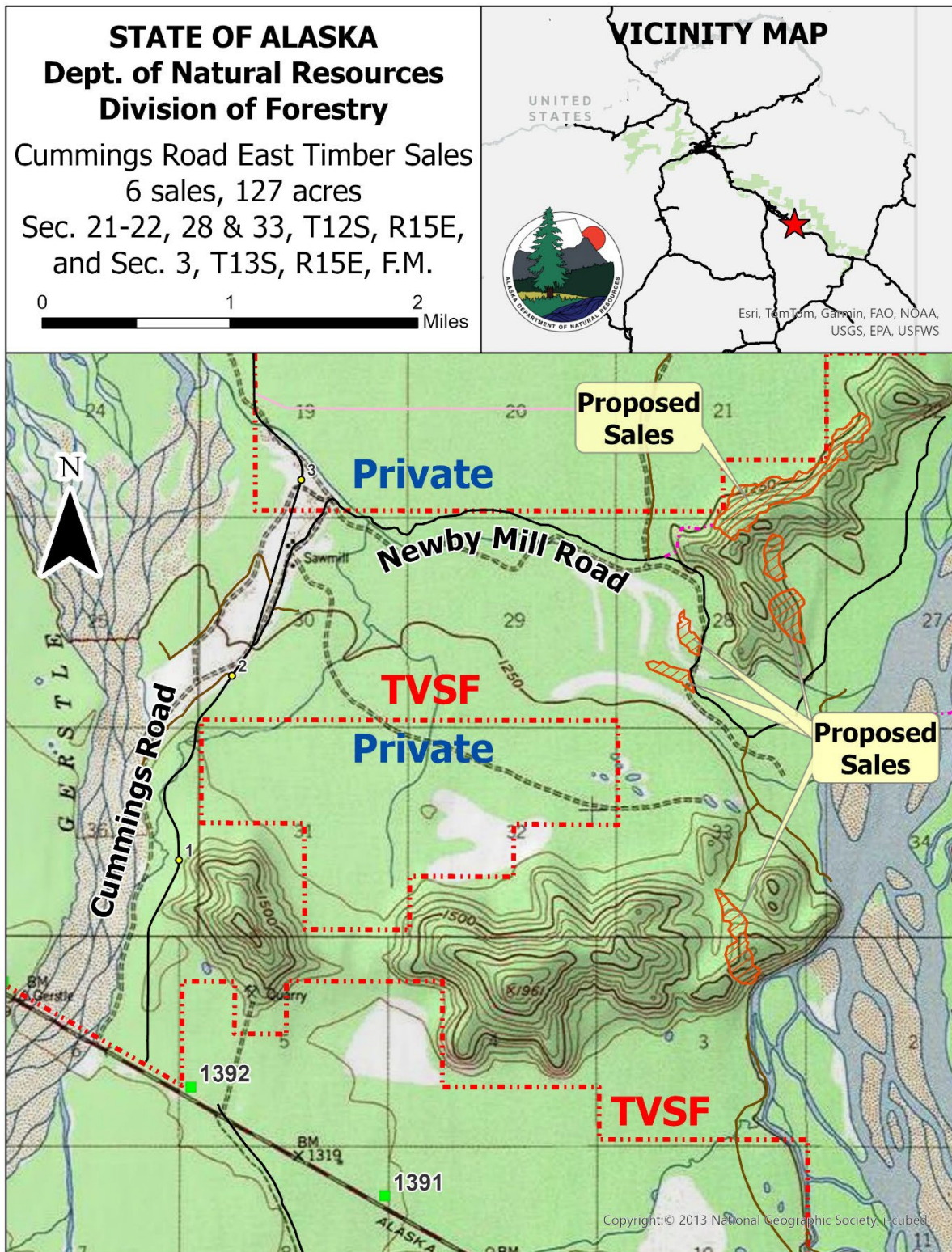
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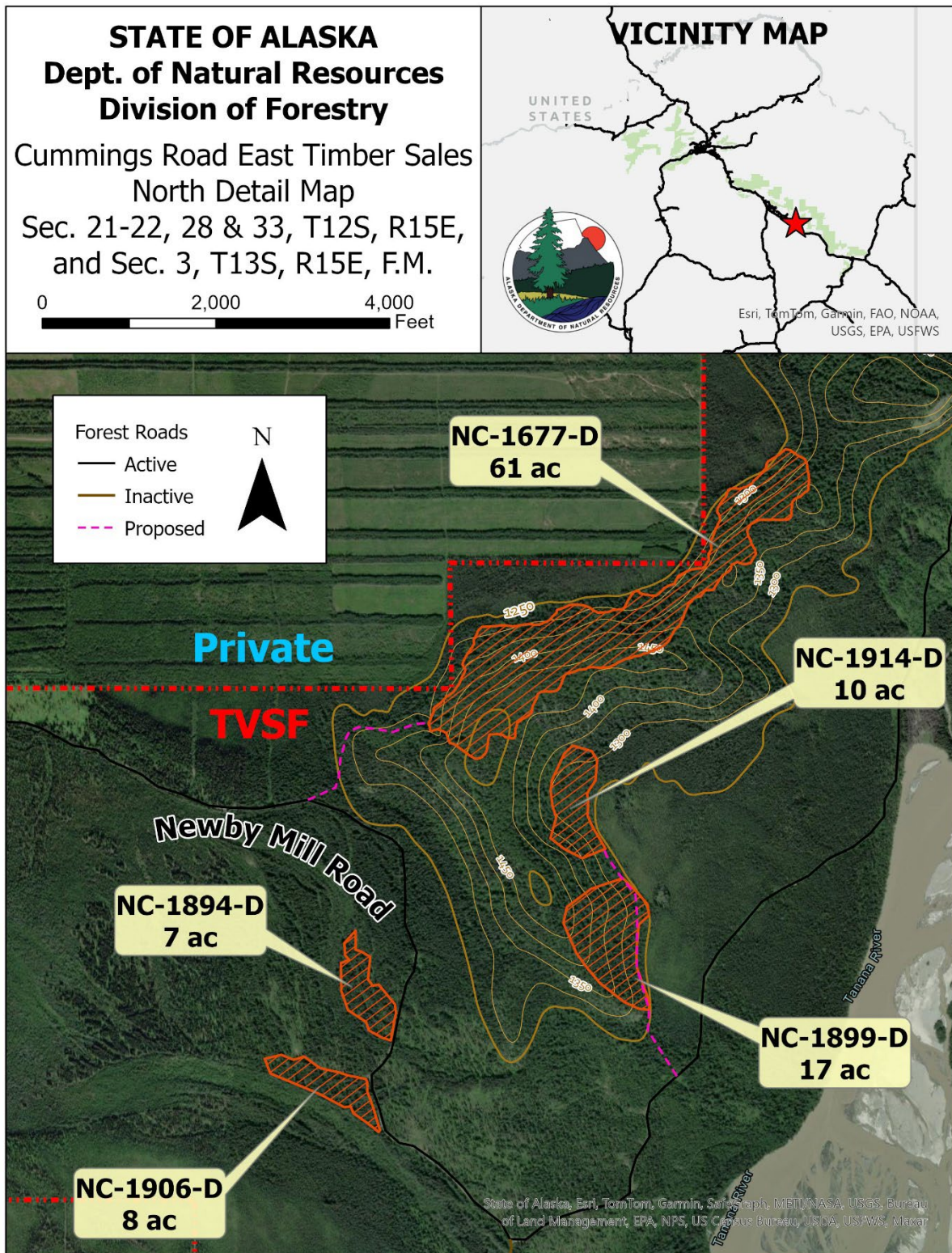
**XI. ATTACHMENTS**

Maps of the proposed project area follow.





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