

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



FAIRBANKS AREA FORESTRY

**PRELIMINARY BEST INTEREST FINDING AND
DECISION FOR
JENNY M-GRANGE HALL 2026 PROJECT AREA
NC-1850-F, NC-1955-F, NC-2051-F, NC-2058-F, NC-2064-F,
NC-2322-F, NC-2370-F, NC-2548-F, NC-2570-F**

10/8/2026

Abbreviations

ADEC	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
ADF&G	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
ADNR	Alaska Department of Natural Resources
BIF	Best interest finding
DMLW	Division of Mining, Land and Water
DFFP	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
TVSFMP	Tanana Valley State Forest Management Plan

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I. PROPOSED ACTION

DFFP is proposing to offer for sale several green spruce and birch sales from Tanana Valley State Forest lands along the Pheasant Farm/Jenny M and Grange Hall roads south of Chena Hot Springs Road. DFFP intends to sell the timber as commercial offerings through the competitive bid ([AS 38.05.120](#)) program and/or small negotiated sale program ([AS 38.05.115](#)). For this project area, the PBIF and Draft FLUP are being issued for review at the same time. The land covered by this PBIF appeared in the 2024 and/or 2026 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 DFFP's Fairbanks – Delta Area Office filed as NC-1850-F, NC-1955-F, NC-2051-F, NC-2058-F, NC-2064-F, NC-2322-F, NC-2370-F, NC-2548-F, NC-2570-F.

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 timber sales are an allowed 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 Management Plan (TVSFMP) and Eastern Tanana Area Plan (ETAP). The finding also considers the Interagency Wildland Fire

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Management Plan. The Fairbanks North Star Borough Community Wildfire Protection Plan covers this area. The proposed area is within the Fairbanks North Star Borough and this finding considers the Fairbanks North Star Borough Plan.

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, DFFP reviews comments, makes changes as appropriate, and issues a final best interest finding (BIF). DFFP 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 DFFP must adopt a site-specific Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) for the harvest area. DFFP will prepare FLUPs for the harvest areas within the overall project area covered by this best interest finding. FLUPs specify the site, size, timing, and harvest methods for harvest unit 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 DFFP, 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(s), DFFP will offer the timber for sale by auctioning competitive sales 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. DFFP 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 project area is located approximately 23 miles east of Fairbanks between Chena Hot Springs Road mileposts 20-21 and the Chena River along Pheasant Farm / Jenny M Hill Road and Grange Hall Road. The project area is within TVSF Unit 6.

The proposed sales are located within the Fairbanks Meridian at:

- **NC-1850-F / Mullen Floodplain Birch:** a 1-unit, 15-acre birch sale located 4.4 miles down Pheasant Farm Road, south at the fork beyond Jenny M Creek Bridge. The proposed sale is within Township 1 South, Range 3 East, Section 12, and Township 1 South, Range 4 East, Section 7, F.M.
- **NC-1955-F / Chena Bluff Spruce:** a 2-unit, 82-acre winter sawlog sale located 3 miles down Pheasant Farm Road, then north at Jenny M Creek Bridge onto Jenny M Hill Road for 3.3 miles. From here, roughly 1 mile of new all-season road construction, followed by 1.8 miles of winter-only road to reach both units 1 and 2. The proposed sale is within Township 1 South, Range 3 East, Sections 11 & 14, F.M.
- **NC-2051-F / Mullen Floodplain Birch #2:** a 1-unit, 14-acre birch sale located 4.7 miles down Pheasant Farm Road, south at the fork beyond Jenny M Creek Bridge. The proposed sale is within Township 1 South, Range 3 East, Sections 12 & 13, F.M.
- **NC-2058-F / Mullen Floodplain Birch #3:** a 1-unit, 11-acre winter-only birch sale located 2.7 miles down Pheasant Farm Road, followed by 0.2 miles of new winter road construction including an ice crossing of Mullen Slough. The proposed sale is within Township 1 South, Range 4 East, Sections 7 & 8, F.M.
- **NC-2064-F / Grange Hall Winter Spruce:** a 1-unit, 20-acre winter-only spruce sawlog sale located 2.4 miles down Grange Hall Road. The proposed sale is within Township 1 South, Range 4 East, Section 9, F.M.
- **NC-2322-F / Potlatch Creek Mixed:** a 3-unit, 121-acre winter-only mixed sale located 3 miles down Pheasant Farm Road, then north at Jenny M Creek Bridge onto Jenny M Hill Road for 3.3 miles. From here, roughly 1 mile of new all-season road construction, followed by 3.4 miles of winter-only road to reach units 1, 2 and 3. The proposed sale is within Township 1 South, Range 3 East, Section 15, F.M.

- **NC-2370-F / Mullen Island Spruce:** a 1-unit, 24-acre winter-only sawlog sale located 3 miles down Pheasant Farm Road, then south along an existing spur for 1 mile, followed by 0.5 miles of new winter road construction including an ice crossing of the Chena River. The proposed sale is within Township 1 South, Range 4 East, Section 18, F.M.
- **NC-2548-F / Granger than Fiction Mixed:** a 2-unit, 21-acre winter-only mixed sale located 2.6 miles down Grange Hall Road, then 0.3 miles down an existing secondary road, followed by 0.2 miles of new winter road construction. The proposed sale is within Township 1 South, Range 4 East, Section 8, F.M.
- **NC-2570-F / Moose Creek Mixed:** a 1-unit, 80-acre winter-only mixed sale located 3 miles down Pheasant Farm Road, then north at Jenny M Creek Bridge onto Jenny M Hill Road for 3.3 miles. From here, roughly 1 mile of new all-season road construction, followed by 2.7 miles of winter-only road to reach the sale. The proposed sale is within Township 1 South, Range 3 East, Section 16, F.M.

B. Title status

The proposed sale areas covered by this PBIF include land selected and patented by the State (see MH-29 Patent 50-2007-0247 for F001S004E Sections 7, 8, 9), as well as Tentatively Approved land selected but not yet patented by the State (see MH-29 for F001S003E Sections 11, 12, 13, 14; MH-30 for F001S003E Sections 9, 10, 15, 16; GS-1208 for F001S004E Section 18). As the land estate is Tentatively Approved, the State has management authority. There are no known title restrictions on the area.

C. Land use planning, classification, and management intent

The proposed area is within the Tanana Valley State Forest (TVSF) in Management Unit 6. The Unit will be managed for dispersed and developed recreation and commercial and personal use timber production. There are no specific restrictions on timber sales within the TVSF Management Plan.

The sale areas are open with respect to mining.

The Interagency Fire Management Plan includes these lands in the “Full” protection category.

This area falls under the Fairbanks-North Star Borough’s Regional Comprehensive Plan (2005), which supports forest development activities while aiming to minimize land use conflicts.

D. Current access and land use:

Access to the proposed project area is planned via an existing all-season road, Pheasant Farm Road/Jenny M Hill Road, and a winter road, Grange Hall Road, which begin as residential

roads near Chena Hot Springs Road, and have been used to access previous timber sales. Pheasant Farm Road/Jenny M Hill Road and Grange Hall Road will be maintained according to the standards outlined in the DFFP Road Standards document. New winter road construction is proposed in this project area, with multiple road extensions from Jenny M Hill Road to access the ridgeline to the south, a new winter spur to reach south across the Chena River from Pheasant Farm Road mile 3, and a short extension of Grange Hall Road to access a small unit beyond a terminated sale. Winter road construction will be planned to cross the network of winter trails rather than to follow or parallel and potentially widen and damage existing trails. Roads will be maintained according to the standards outlined in the DFFP Road Standards document. Upon completion of associated sales, any roads utilized by logging traffic will be left in a condition equal to or better than they were prior to the sale.

Current land uses include farming, hunting/trapping, dog mushing, and OHV use. A very robust winter trail network intersects the proposed area.

Historically scattered and incidental timber harvest throughout the project area has been noted during field reconnaissance efforts.

E. Background and description of proposal

1. Background: According to the Tanana Valley State Forest Management Plan, Unit 6 shall be “managed for dispersed and developed recreation and commercial and personal-use timber production”. DFFP is offering these sales with the intent to maintain a productive working forest while continuing to provide opportunities for dispersed and developed recreation.
2. Timber volume and sustained yield: The proposed project area should yield an estimated 125 acres of spruce sawlog, 220 acres of mixed, and 40 acres of birch fuelwood, comprising roughly 2,800 MBF (6,800 CCF) of spruce sawlog and 2,000 CCF of birch fuelwood. Final harvest unit boundaries and timber volume estimates will be determined upon completion of sale preparation activities. The Fairbanks Area Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) is calculated at approximately 4,606 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: Cutting units range in size from 9 to 80 acres, with an average of around 30 acres. Units accessed from Jenny M Hill Road are slightly larger (closer to 50 acres) due to the stand sizes being larger, and cost of road construction. The sale areas will be harvested by the clearcut silvicultural system. Patches of nonmerchantable advanced regeneration and significant snags important for wildlife habitat will be preserved as much as possible. Residual trees will be protected from damage during harvest operations although in spruce stands, over-mature birch may be used as bumper trees to protect patches of advanced spruce regeneration. Harvesting will be by the whole tree yarding system. Slash disposal at the landings

will be by burning or by salvage for fuelwood use. Cutting units that are near the Chena River and other FRPA waterbodies will be buffered by 100' at a minimum.

- a. Reforestation and site preparation: The project area will be reforested in compliance with the Forest Resources and Practices regulations (11 AAC 95.375-.390). Natural regeneration will be utilized initially for reforestation, and areas adjacent to the boundary with mature, robust spruce or birch trees will be retained to provide seed to these units. It is expected that the harvest methods (heavy partial cut and clearcut) will open sites and increase light and soil warmth. Reforestation will be assessed within five years post-harvest, and a regeneration survey will be conducted if regeneration appears marginal or patchy. If the survey indicates inadequately stocked areas, then scarification may be performed in non-stocked areas. The goal for regeneration is to achieve a minimum of 450 evenly distributed trees per acre at the end of the regeneration survey period (any commercial tree species).
- b. Access design and construction: Access design, construction, and maintenance will comply with the Forest Resources and Practices regulations (11 AAC 95.285-.355). To reach Pheasant Farm Road area sales, access begins at mile post 20 on Chena Hot Springs Road, where Pheasant Farm Road runs south for approximately 3 miles past a series of private properties before entering the Tanana Valley State Forest, heading toward the Chena River. To reach Grange Hall Road area sales, access begins just west of mile post 21 on Chena Hot Springs Road, where Grange Hall Road runs south for approximately 2.6 miles past a series of private properties before entering the Tanana Valley State Forest, heading toward the Chena River:
 - **NC-1850-F / Mullen Floodplain Birch**: 4.4 miles down Pheasant Farm Road, south at the fork beyond Jenny M Creek Bridge.
 - **NC-1955-F / Chena Bluff Spruce**: 3 miles down Pheasant Farm Road, then north at Jenny M Creek Bridge onto Jenny M Hill Road for 3.3 miles. From here, roughly 1 mile of all-season road construction, followed by 1.8 miles of winter-only road construction to reach both units 1 and 2.
 - **NC-2051-F / Mullen Floodplain Birch #2**: 4.7 miles down Pheasant Farm Road, south at the fork beyond Jenny M Creek Bridge.
 - **NC-2058-F / Mullen Floodplain Birch #3**: 2.7 miles down Pheasant Farm Road, followed by 0.2 miles of winter road construction including an ice crossing of Mullen Slough.
 - **NC-2322-F / Potlatch Creek Mixed**: 3 miles down Pheasant Farm Road, then north at Jenny M Creek Bridge onto Jenny M Hill Road for 3.3 miles. From here, roughly 1 mile of new all-season road construction, followed

by 3.4 miles of winter-only road construction to reach units 1, 2 and 3.
This access route crosses Mental Health Trust lands, pending concurrence.

- **NC-2370-F / Mullen Island Spruce:** 3 miles down Pheasant Farm Road, then south along an existing spur for 1 mile, followed by 0.5 miles of new winter road construction including an ice crossing of the Chena River.
 - **NC-2570-F / Moose Creek Mixed:** 3 miles down Pheasant Farm Road, then north at Jenny M Creek Bridge onto Jenny M Hill Road for 3.3 miles. From here, roughly 1 mile of all-season road construction, followed by 2.7 miles of winter-only road construction to reach the sale. This access route crosses Mental Health Trust lands, pending concurrence.
 - **NC-2064-F / Grange Hall Winter Spruce:** 2.4 miles down Grange Hall Road.
 - **NC-2548-F / Granger than Fiction Mixed:** 2.6 miles down Grange Hall Road, then 0.3 miles down an existing secondary road, followed by 0.2 miles of winter road construction.
- c. Appraisal method: DFFP will appraise the timber value in compliance with 11 AAC 71.092. Results from past auctions will provide a basis for the appraisal. DFFP uses a transaction evidence appraisal system which will be used to determine base stumpage rates.

F. Resources and management

1. Timber.

a. Timber stand composition and structure:

NC-1955-F: This sale contains mature white spruce-dominant stands with an incidental birch component growing on upland sites. The history of firewood harvest in the area is evident, as decomposing, moss-covered stumps proliferate, and spruce stocking is approximately 100 trees per acre with a basal area of 110 square feet per acre. The surrounding understory is characterized by thin moss layers, horsetail, and wild roses, holding pockets of grass within the drainages of the hogback and swale topography.

NC-2064-F, and NC-2370-F: These sales are within floodplain spruce stands growing on the fertile margins of the Chena River. Stocking in these stands range from 100-150 trees per acre and a basal area of 90-160 square feet per acre. These sites contain a mix of moss, horsetail and rose.

NC-2322-F, NC-2548-F, NC-2570-F: These sales are mixed stands with a primary spruce sawlog component, including merchantable component of birch

fuelwood. These mixed stands occupy positions on the toe slopes of the upland as well as on the floodplain.

NC-1850-F, NC-2051-F, NC-2058-F: These sales are mature closed-canopy birch stands with incidental components of white spruce positioned in the floodplain.

- b. Stand silvics: The common merchantable tree species in the Tanana Valley include white spruce, birch, aspen, and balsam poplar. Data and research on the regeneration and growth characteristics of these species are compiled in the Resource Analysis of the Tanana Valley State Forest (TVSF) Management Plan. This analysis also reviews and lists the harvest and reforestation systems available in Interior Alaska. The outcomes of public and agency discussions on harvest and reforestation are included in the TVSF Management Plan. Silvicultural harvest systems that promote even-aged (natural) management are generally preferred. These systems mimic the ecological effects of wildfire and other disturbances, leading to the greatest increase in site productivity. Even-aged management is typically achieved through clear-cuts with reserves, patch cuts, and heavy partial cuts (such as seed tree or shelterwood systems), which open the site to maximum solar exposure. This approach results in the highest production of young hardwoods important for wildlife and spruce understory valuable for future timber. These techniques create young, vigorously growing stands next to older, undisturbed stands, optimizing natural seeding and enhancing the edge effect.
- c. Topography and Soils: The proposed project area 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-1850-F, NC-2051-F, NC-2064-F, NC-2548-F: These sales are situated in the floodplain around 500' on relatively flat ground. Soils in the area are classified as Jarvis-Salchaket complex 0 to 3 percent slopes, which is well drained with horizons dominated by sandy loam and gravelly sand. This soil type exists on floodplains.

NC-1955-F: Unit 1 of this sale is situated on a north-facing slope between 650'-750' spanning from the toe slope to the ridgeline with a general slope of 20%. Unit 2 of this sale is situated on a south-facing slope between 650'-800' spanning from the toe slope to the ridgeline with a general slope of 20%. Soils in the area are classified as Eielson-Piledriver complex and Fairbanks silt loam 12 to 20 percent slopes. Eielson-Piledriver complex is moderately well drained, with horizons dominated by fine sandy loams to gravelly sand. This soil type exists on floodplains. Fairbanks silt loam 12 to 20 percent slopes is well drained, with horizons dominated by silt loam. This soil type exists on hill backslopes.

NC-2058-F, NC-2370-F: These sales are situated in the floodplain around 500' on relatively flat ground. Soils in the area are classified as Jarvis-Stratify complex

0 to 3 percent slopes, which is well drained with horizons dominated by fine sandy loam and gravelly sand. This soil type exists on floodplains.

NC-2570-F: This sale is situated on a west-facing slope between 600'-800' from the toe slope into the upland with a general slope of 15%. Soils in the area are classified as Minto silt loam 3 to 7 percent slopes, which is moderately well drained with horizons dominated by silt loam. This soil type exists on hill toeslopes.

NC-2322-F: This 3-unit sale is situated generally in a northeast-facing bowl between 750'-1000' from the toe slope to the ridgeline with a general slope of 25%. Soils in the area are classified as Fairbanks silt loam 7 to 12 percent slopes and Fairbanks silt loam 12 to 20 percent slopes. Fairbanks silt loam 7 to 12 percent slopes is well drained with horizons dominated by silt loam. This soil type exists on hill backslopes. Fairbanks silt loam 12 to 20 percent slopes is well drained, with horizons dominated by silt loam. This soil type exists on hill backslopes.

2. Agriculture. No known or anticipated future agricultural activity is expected in the proposed area.
3. Wildlife habitat and harvest. Wildlife typical of the Interior are found here, with signs of moose, black bear, and grouse observed during field reconnaissance. Large portions of the proposed area offer excellent habitat for moose, black bears, and furbearing animals. There are no known raptor nests within the proposed area. If an eagle nest tree is discovered in the sale area, it will be marked on the ground, and a 330-foot no-harvest radius will be established to protect the area.

The proposed treatments for these stands are expected to enhance habitat conditions for ruffed grouse, moose, voles, hares, and, ultimately, lynx, marten, and fox. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Wildlife Conservation (ADFG), have historically 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 achieve these objectives, snags will be retained 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 uneven edges along and between timber types where possible, creating a varied edge effect beneficial to many wildlife species.

4. Fish Habitat, water resources, and water quality. The proposed project area 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). Access to the proposed area crosses Jenny M Creek (AWC Code 334-40-11000-2490-33014035-5015), which flows into Mullen Slough (AWC Code 334-40-11000-2490-3301-4035), and ultimately into the Chena River (AWC Code: 334-40-11000-

- 2490-3301), all of which are catalogued as anadromous (salmon-bearing) waters. Jenny M Creek, Mullen Slough and the Chena River are classified as Type III-A streams (non-glacial with resident fish, > 3 ft wide) under the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (FRPA). FRPA allows for sustainable timber harvesting while ensuring the protection of its high-value resident fish habitats. The Chena River system provides critical spawning and rearing habitat for salmon and supports the most heavily used sport fishery in the Tanana Basin. NC-2064-F, NC-2548-F, NC-2370-F and NC-2051-F all sit adjacent to the Chena River and will be buffered at least 100' off the riverbank's edge. NC-2058-F and NC-1850-F sit adjacent to Mullen Slough and will be buffered at least 100' off the slough bank's edge.
5. Recreation, tourism, and scenic resources. The proposed area lies within the Chena River corridor, an area that sees extensive use by a myriad of user groups in all seasons of the year. Sport fishing, guided tours, paddling, rafting, hiking, hunting, trapping, foraging, OHV use and personal use firewood harvesting are common along the Chena River and the surrounding area, with additional winter uses such as snowmachining, dog mushing and skiing, with multiple guiding outfits contributing to the local tourism economy. The Chena River corridor provides for multiple use with a high scenic value that contributes to its popularity as a recreational hub in the Interior. Irregular stand edges and retention of mature forest between the harvest boundaries and the River/CHSR will reduce the visual impact. New winter road construction will cross perpendicular to existing winter trails, and contracts will specify mitigations to accommodate the existing uses in the area.
 6. Cultural Resources. DFFP 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, DFFP will immediately inform SHPO and take action to protect the findings.
 7. Subsurface Resources. All of TVSF Unit 6 is open to mineral entry and is available for leasing. Mineral potential in this Unit has been rated moderate to high. No active mining claims are established within the sale area, but claims do exist near to the northwest and to the northeast. No deleterious effects on subsurface activities are anticipated.

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,

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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.

These sales are 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 mid to upper slope landscape position of these sales 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 DFFP Fairbanks-Delta Area Office **by 4:30 PM AKST Friday, November 6th, 2026** 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. For more information you may contact Andrew Allaby, Fairbanks-Delta Area Resource Forester, at 907-451-2603 or andrew.allaby@alaska.gov. To be eligible to appeal the final decision, a person must have provided written comment **by 4:30 PM AKST Friday, November 6th, 2026**.

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 sales 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 10C.

2. To modify the sales 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 sales of 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 the above green spruce, mixed and birch sales from Tanana Valley State Forest lands along the Pheasant Farm/Jenny M and Grange Hall roads south of Chena Hot Springs Road as proposed in Alternative 1 and described in this PBIF. DFFP 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 to the final finding, a person must be affected by the decision, and must have submitted a comment on 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, 907-451-2603.

X. SIGNATURE

Kevin Breitenbach
Fairbanks-Delta Area Forester
Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection

Date

XI. ATTACHMENTS

Maps of the proposed project area follow.



















