

State of Alaska
Department of Natural Resources
Division of Forestry & Fire Protection



Copper River/ Tok Area
Glennallen Office
Draft Forest Land Use Plan
Tolsona Benches #1
NC-2403-C, ADL #422665

9/28/2025

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
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

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I. Introduction

Project File Number: Tolsona Benches #1

Division of Forestry & Fire Protection Office: Copper River/Tok Area, Glennallen Office
Area Forester: Kato Howard Resource Forester: Dub Evans
Forest Practices Geographic Region (AS 41.17.950): Region II, Southcentral Alaska

This Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) covers proposed forest operations on approximately 92 acres of land in the Copper River Area. It is intended to provide the best available information regarding the proposed harvest of timber, and management of other non-timber uses in compliance with AS 38.05.112 and AS 41.17.060 and must be adopted by the DNR before the proposed activity can occur.

☐ This Forest Land Use Plan is for timber sale(s) which have been determined to be in the best interest of the state pursuant to AS 38.05.035 (e) and AS 38.05.945; This FLUP does not determine whether to access and sell timber within the timber sale area, nor the method of sale. Those decisions have been made previously in the Best Interest Finding and are not appealable under this FLUP.

☐ This Draft Forest Land Use Plan is for timber sale(s) for which a Preliminary Best Interest Finding is currently out for review. A final best interest finding must be completed prior to adoption of a FLUP pursuant to AS 38.05.035 (e) and AS 38.05.945;

☒ This Forest Land Use Plan is for timber to be harvested that does not require a final finding pursuant to AS 38.05.035 (e) and notification under AS 38.05.945.

A draft of this plan was distributed to the Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) and the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) for their review and comments relevant to the consistency of this proposed project with the statutes governing forest land use plans (AS 38.05.112) and the requirements of the Alaska Forest Resources & Practices Act (AS 41.17) and its Regulations (11 AAC 95).

The public and agencies are invited to comment on specific requirements for harvest, access, and reforestation operations in this draft FLUP. The decision on whether to offer timber for sale is made through the best interest finding process and is not subject to review under the FLUP. Objections or comments pertaining to the draft FLUP must be received in writing by the DOF Copper River Area Office by **11/8/2025 at 11:59** to ensure consideration for review. Comments should be mailed to the State of Alaska, Division of Forestry & Fire Protection, PO Box 185, Glennallen, AK 99588 or by email to dub.evans@alaska.gov. For more information you may contact the Resource Forester, Dub Evans, 907-822-8676. To be eligible to participate in any appeal or request for reconsideration of the final decision, a person must be affected by the decision and must have submitted comments to the preliminary decision during the comment period.

After public and agency review of the draft FLUP, the DOF will review comments, make changes as appropriate, and adopt the FLUP. An eligible person affected by this decision, and who

provided timely written comment may appeal the decision to the DNR Commissioner per AS 44.37.011 and 11 AAC 02.

☒ Other Documents are referenced in this FLUP. This timber sale is designed to be consistent with the management intent of the following documents:

<i>Copper River Basin Area Plan, 1986</i>

The administrative record for this sale is maintained at the Division of Forestry & Fire Protection Copper River Office filed as NC-2403-C.

A. Legal description

The proposed sale is located approximately 22 miles west of Glennallen on the north side of the Glenn Highway at approximately MP 167. It is further described as the SE ¼ Section 21 T4N R5W and the NE1/4 Section 28 T4N R5W CRM.

See also map in Appendix A.

B. Operational Period

3 years from time of sale.

C. Timber Disposal

- ☒ Timber will be sold and will have a contract administrated by the State.
- ☐ Timber will be available to the public; permits obtained by the public will be issued by the State.
- ☐ Other

D. Objectives and Summary

Salvage beetle-killed and at-risk white spruce before further degradation to prevent loss of merchantable timber value.

Provide reasonably priced sawlogs and fuelwood to local residents and operators in the Copper River Basin, supporting community heating needs and small-scale sawmilling.

Facilitate timely utilization under AS 38.05.115 (negotiated salvage authority), consistent with the Governor's directive to make timber available at affordable rates.

Ensure operations comply with the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (AS 41.17) and Best Management Practices to protect soil, water, and regeneration potential.

Promote natural regeneration of white spruce and birch through slash scattering and harvest design, maintaining the long-term productivity of the site.

Support the local economy by creating opportunities for operators to harvest and process timber within the region.

II. Affected Landowners/Jurisdictions

Land ownership is all State of Alaska. The entirety of the proposed logging units lies within the Copper River Basin Area Plan Subunits 5H and 3D, both of which have a secondary classification of Forestry.

A. State

Activity on ownership:	Access Easement	Harvest	Written Representative Approval
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Proposed CRB State Forest	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other state land managed by DNR	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> University of Alaska	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Trust	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> School Trust	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B. Other Land Ownership

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Land Owner: *No other landowners*

Land Owner Representative: *No other landowners*

III. Harvest Methods, Silvicultural Actions, and Management of Non-timber Resources

Forest operations will be designed to:

- Protect fish habitat and water quality in compliance with the best management practices in 11 AAC 95.260-.370,
- Manage for the other land uses and activities identified in AS 41.17.060 and the Best Interest Finding for this timber sale, and
- Ensure prompt reforestation and maintenance of site productivity in compliance with AS 41.17.060(c) and 11 AAC 95 .375-.390.

Harvest and Silvicultural Methods:

- ☒ The silvicultural actions are described in this document, and no prescription was written or is necessary.
- ☐ A silvicultural prescription has been written and is attached to this document in Appendix B.

A. Timber Stand Description and History

The Tolsona Benches sale area consists of approximately 93 acres of white spruce forest, mapped as two units (84 acres and 9 acres) on the north side of the Glenn Highway at MP 164. The original 2010 cruise estimated 317 MBF of beetle-killed spruce and 328 MBF of live spruce, for a total of 645 MBF. After accounting for 6.25% previously harvested volume and applying a 20% reduction for additional mortality and rot, the current estimated volume is approximately 483 MBF, consisting of 246 MBF of sawlogs and 238 MBF of fuelwood.

The stand is characterized by extensive spruce beetle mortality and advanced decay in many overstory trees, with limited residual live spruce scattered throughout. Some non-spruce hardwoods occur but represent a minor component.

History and Use:

This area was first identified as a potential sale area in the 2002–2006 Five-Year Schedule of Timber Sales and was developed into a Forest Land Use Plan in 2010. At that time, a small portion of the timber was harvested; operations ceased after equipment became stuck, leaving the majority of the unit uncut. The area has since experienced additional mortality and deterioration due to ongoing beetle infestation and natural decay.

The broader Tolsona Bench area has historically been used for personal-use firewood harvest, small sawlog operations, and local access to forest products, reflecting the importance of these stands to Copper River Basin residents.

Silvicultural Treatment:

The proposed harvest will be conducted as a salvage cut under winter-only conditions. All merchantable beetle-killed and live spruce will be harvested using ground-based equipment. Slash will be scattered across the unit to protect soil and create microsites that promote spruce regeneration. Residual live spruce and scattered hardwoods will be retained as seed sources and to provide stand diversity. Reforestation is expected to occur naturally within seven years, meeting Region II FRPA standards (11 AAC 95.375–385).

B. Timber Harvest Activities

Timber Harvest Activities are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Timber Harvest Activities

Unit ID	Acres	Topography	Silvicultural Action	Logging Method
TB-1A	83	Gently rolling upland bench, moderate slopes	Salvage harvest of beetle-killed and live spruce; scatter slash for natural regeneration	Ground-based logging, winter-only skidding
TB-1B	9	Level to gently sloping bench	Salvage harvest of beetle-killed and live spruce; scatter slash for natural regeneration	Ground-based logging, winter-only skidding

C. Site Preparation

In the Copper River Basin, white spruce stands typically regenerate naturally following disturbance such as logging, fire, or blowdown, provided adequate seed sources and favorable microsites are present. The intended regeneration approach for this sale is natural regeneration of white spruce, supported by slash scattering to create microsites that retain moisture and protect seedlings. Evidence of this being a viable regeneration strategy is visible in the 5-acre area that was logged in 2011, where natural regeneration is occurring. No artificial planting or scarification is proposed currently.

☐ Site preparation will be implemented and described in Table 2:

Table 2. Site Preparation

Unit ID	Acres	Site Preparation Method	Date of Completion
TB-1A&B	83 & 9	None	NA

D. Slash Abatement

- ☐ Potential for insect infestations caused by slash accumulations exists. Slash abatement for controlling infestations will be implemented as required by 11 AAC 95.370.
- ☒ Lop and scatter slash; accumulations will be kept to less than 2 feet in height.
- ☐ Slash will be disposed of by the operator ☐ Slash will be disposed of by the State
- ☐ Other - method of slash disposal: ☐ removal off site ☐ crushing or grinding ☐ burning
- ☐ Burn permits necessary from DOF and DEC to be acquired.
- ☐ The operator will contact the DOF local area office prior to ignition of debris.

E. Soil Stability / Erosion / Mass Wasting

- ☒ Maximum percent side slopes are $\leq 50\%$
- ☐ Maximum percent side slopes are $> 50\%$

Percentage of sale area with slopes $> 50\%$: 0%

Maximum percent slopes: 12%

- ☒ There are no indicators of unstable areas.
- ☐ Indicators of unstable areas were identified and will be mitigated by actions indicated below.

F. Timber Harvest—Surface Water Protection

- ☒ There are no streams or lakes abutting or within a harvest unit.
- ☐ Known surface waters and protection measures are described in Table 3 below. *Locations are included in the operational map in the Appendices.*

Table 3. Protection for Known Surface Waters

Unit	Waterbody Name	AS 41.17.950 Classification	ADF&G AWC #	Required Riparian Protection	Site-specific actions to minimize impacts on riparian area
TB-1A&B	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Surface waters listed above were reviewed by the Department of Fish and Game:

- ☐ During the timber sale planning process
- ☐ During the agency review conducted for the Best Interest Finding for this sale
- ☐ During the drafting of this Forest Land Use Plan
- ☐ Stream Crossings (Title 16) Permits are needed per ADF&G Division of Habitat

Surface waters listed above were reviewed by the Department of Environmental Conservation:

- ☐ During the timber sale planning process
- ☐ During the agency review conducted for the Best Interest Finding for this sale
- ☐ During the drafting of this Forest Land Use Plan

Non-classified surface waters were subject to applicable BMPs in 11 AAC 95.

Notes: *N/A*

G. Wildlife Habitat

- ☐ Wildlife species and allowances for their important habitats were addressed in writing by the Department of Fish & Game during the Best Interest Finding review.
- ☐ Wildlife species and allowances for their important habitats were addressed in writing by the Department of Fish & Game during the drafting of this Forest Land Use Plan.

Silvicultural practices to be applied to minimize impacts to wildlife habitat or wildlife management:

- ☐ Timber retention - concentrations of timber surrounding harvest units or interspersed within harvest units to provide cover.
- ☐ Snag Retention- snags or isolated trees left for cavity nesting species.
- ☐ Large Woody Debris – concentrations of downed timber or logging debris interspersed within harvest units to provide cover left on site.
- ☐ Other actions

Notes: *N/A*

H. Cultural and Historical Resource Protection

- ☐ This project was reviewed by the State Historic and Preservation Office (SHPO).
- ☒ No artifacts have been reported within the project area(s).
- ☐ Known or likely sites have been identified, and a mitigation plan is in place.

I. Other Resources Affected by Timber Harvest and Management

- ☐ There are other resources and areas of concern besides surface water, fish habitat, and wildlife habitat that may be affected. Mitigations actions were addressed in the Best Interest Finding.
- ☒ There are no affected resources or areas of concern other than surface water, fish habitat, and wildlife habitat, which are addressed in this Forest Land Use Plan.

J. Reforestation

Reforestation is expected to occur through natural regeneration of white spruce within seven years, consistent with Region II requirements under 11 AAC 95.375–385. Seed from adjacent and residual spruce, combined with slash-scattered microsites and frozen-ground harvest methods, will support germination and seedling survival. Artificial planting is not proposed at this time.

Notes: *If natural regeneration does not meet standards within 7 years, a plan will be developed to replant areas that are inadequately stocked.*

Harvest type as it relates to reforestation requirement:

- ☐ Clearcut
- ☐ Region I: Partial Harvest leaving more than 50% live basal area (11 AAC 95.375(b)(3))
- ☒ Region II or III: Partial Harvest relying on residual trees to result in a stocking level that meets standards of 11 AAC 95.375(b)(4).

Season of harvest:

- ☒ Winter harvest only
- ☐ Non-winter harvest only
- ☐ All-season harvest

Regeneration type:

- ☒ Natural regeneration

List species: White Spruce (*picea glauca*).

- ☐ Coppice

List species: N/A

- ☐ Artificial regeneration
- ☐ Seeding: Species and source of seed (general vicinity location of seed source)

☐ Planting: Species: _____ Date of proposed planting: _____

Source of seedlings (location of seed source): _____

See Appendix B for further reforestation details.

IV. Roads and Crossing Structures

A. Road Design, Construction, and Maintenance

Roads will be designed, constructed, and maintained to prevent significant adverse impacts on water quality and fish habitat (AS 41.17.060(b)(5)), and site productivity (AS 41.17.060(c)(5)). Roads will comply with the best management practices in the Forest Resources and Practices Regulations (11 AAC 95.285 – 95.335).

There is currently a winter logging road that exists, from the Glenn Highway to the unit. This winter logging road is 5,105 feet long and will need one minor fix from where a piece of machinery was stuck several years ago, this repair will be the responsibility of the purchaser. The cost of this fix will be factored into the negotiated sale price.

**Note: Roads must be less than 20% grade per 8 AAC 61.1060 Additional Logging Standards.*

Notes: The access onto the Glenn Highway was designed when this logging unit was first sold in 2011. It doesn't appear that any kind of improvement was necessary at that time and isn't anticipated for this current sale. If, however, it becomes necessary, consultation with DOT will occur.

B. Soil Erosion / Mass Wasting

Maximum percent side slopes: 12%

☒ Maximum percent side slopes are $\leq 50\%$

☐ Maximum percent side slopes are $> 50\%$

☐ There are no indicators of unstable areas where roads will be constructed

☐ Indicators of unstable areas were identified and will be mitigated by actions indicated below:

Table 6. Road Erosion Control Risk and Mitigation

Road ID	Segment	Mile/ Station or Point Label	Identified Erosion Risk	Risk Level	Mitigation
NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

General Timber Sale Erosion Control:

- ☐ Grass seeding ☐ Erosion control mats ☐ Wattle ☐ Waterbars
☐ Other: _____ ☐ Not applicable

C. Crossing Structures

- Are you removing or replacing drainage structures? ☐ YES ☒ NO
☒ No crossing structures are needed within the project area.
☐ Crossing structures will be placed in access roads as described in the table below:

D. Road Closure

Roads constructed for the timber sale that are left open will be subject to maintenance standards under 11 AAC 95. 315. Otherwise, roads constructed for the timber sale will be closed, subject to standards under 11 AAC 95.320.

Table 8. Road Closures

Road ID	Segment	Unit	Closure Type All Season/Winter	Estimated Closure Date	Projected Road Use after Timber Harvest
NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

E. Material Extraction

- ☒ There will be no material extraction sites in the project area.
☐ Material extraction and associated overburden disposal will be located outside of riparian areas and muskegs. Material extraction and disposal will be located as shown on the operation map, in a manner that prevents runoff from entering surface waters.
☐ Other:

F. Other Resources Affected by Roads or Material Extraction

List resources other than water, habitat or cultural resources potentially impacted by road construction, and indicate how impacts will be mitigated. Other affected resources could be, but are not limited to mining claims, scenic areas, recreational trails, etc.

Table 9. Other Affected Resources

Impacted Resource	Reviewing Agency	Impact / Mitigation Actions
NA	NA	NA

If you have any questions, please contact Dub Evans of the Copper River Area Office at (907) 822-8676 or e-mail dub.evans@alaska.gov.

V. Appendices

Appendix A: Timber Sale Map

Appendix A: Timber Sale Map

