**Public Scoping Meeting-20241211\_183335-Meeting Recording**

0:02  
Comment A transcription of this will also be recorded.

0:09  
All right, So gonna do some introductions and some housekeeping and then we'll turn it over to Steven Nickel to give a short talk and then I'll come back and talk about the process that we're gonna be going through here.

0:24  
So I'm I'm Trevor Dobel Carlson.

0:26  
I'm the forest planner for the Alaska Division of Forestry and Fire Protection.

0:30  
And thank you all for coming tonight both in person and online.

0:34  
And it's weird.

0:35  
The camera is to my back.

0:37  
So I appreciate everyone coming.

0:38  
A little odd to have front and back behind me, but hopefully you can hear us.

0:42  
OK.

0:44  
And thank you for for coming virtually and in person.

0:48  
Steve, you want to have a good intro?

0:50  
Yes.

0:50  
So my name's Steve Nickel.

0:51  
I'm Area Forester here from the Matsu SW Davis with Alaska Division Forestry and Fire Protection.

0:58  
Been in this position since about 2018-2019.

1:02  
So looking forward to engaging with everybody.

1:05  
And I really appreciate y'all taking the time out of your precious evenings to come and yeah, in person or remotely and participate in this process.

1:13  
So thanks a lot.

1:13  
Appreciate it.

1:15  
I'm going to call out a couple other members of the DOF planning team.

1:20  
Lane, you want to give an intro?

1:23  
Yeah, specifically for a little bit longer and then let's see who else we have there.

1:43  
I call on Steve Connolly, give a quick intro.

1:48  
You're online.

1:50  
OK.

1:50  
And then just a good reminder that the mic is here.

1:53  
So any, any time we get public comments tonight, we'll have to have people come up for the mic.

2:00  
Thanks for that reminder.

2:04  
He says he's got microphone problems.

2:07  
OK, well, we have Steve Connolly, the Coastal Region Forester joining us virtually.

2:12  
Steve, boy, it the audio is pretty bad.

2:18  
Let's see.

2:19  
What what can we do?

2:20  
Well, if we're talking, we should just hold this microphone, OK?

2:25  
It's not getting any better.

2:31  
Is that volume increasing for folks?

2:35  
Say something.

2:36  
I can hear you, but I could.

2:40  
What if I go?

2:40  
What if I go back over here?

2:41  
Can you hear me now?

2:43  
I can hear you now.

2:44  
How about the rest of you guys?

2:49  
Hello.

2:49  
Back here.

2:51  
It starts to get garbled a little for me anyway.

2:54  
OK, Well, right about here.

2:56  
Yeah.

2:57  
We'll, we'll stay up here for for our part.

2:59  
And then if anybody, anybody in the room wants to speak, just have to come up.

3:04  
So I think I'm going to go ahead and share screen just for a moment.

3:14  
Hopefully you can see all that.

3:19  
So welcome to the kickoff introductory scoping meeting for the Valley Forest management plan.

3:27  
We are going to be talking about the, the, the general planning process, what, what, what you can expect from us.

3:35  
And then the most important thing we're gonna talk about tonight is how we want feedback.

3:39  
I mean, this is the, the beginning of the scoping.

3:42  
And the point of this is to get public feedback on, on how we are gonna develop our management plan.

3:48  
So I'm gonna come, that was very brief screen share.

3:51  
I'm gonna come back to that after Nicole gives a overview of the existing guidelines and then talks about forest management.

4:03  
Yeah.

4:03  
So yeah, we get a little bit of history of the system.

4:05  
The forestry guidelines originally developed back in 1991 to help to guide, guide our forest management here in the matsu Valley.

4:13  
It was an inclusive and a collaborative and reagency approach that was used to develop the guidelines and that would provide the guidance for forest management here for the last several decades.

4:26  
The original plan was a viable or was designed to be viable for 10 years or at least come up with a review and revision in 10 years.

4:33  
That time came and passed.

4:34  
But back in 19, sorry 2009, we engaged in a process to begin the revision of the Susitna Valley guidelines.

4:44  
We have formed a citizen advisory committee, area agency planning team.

4:48  
We had several meetings back in 2009.

4:54  
The borough also helped host some some meetings open houses helping with the process, it was never completed.

5:04  
In 1990, the 91 SFG, Susitna forestry guideline.

5:07  
Sorry, we're maybe kind of documented.

5:10  
Does not apply to Matsu borough timber.

5:12  
Say you know, Steve there you're a little garbled.

5:19  
If you went a little slower, maybe it wouldn't be garbled so much.

5:25  
I I can try that.

5:26  
Sorry, John.

5:26  
OK.

5:27  
Yeah.

5:28  
Sorry to be a complainer, but I'm, I'm missing things you say.

5:33  
This is your meeting.

5:34  
This is for you.

5:35  
So we want you to get the best out of it.

5:36  
So let us know what we're doing.

5:38  
How OK now.

5:44  
OK.

5:46  
So, yes, recent trends and demand in the Matsu, has shifted since the adoption of the Susitna forestry guidelines.

5:52  
And the response, there's a portion has begun under the direction of Commissioner Boyle to update the Susitna forestry guidelines.

6:02  
And part of the reason why we're doing this is because over the years a lot of the easier timber to be had has been cut and all the Timbers and Timbers are moving away from the easy, the easy to access Rd.

6:14  
systems.

6:17  
Number of the operators in the Matsu Valley have dwindled over the years.

6:21  
Those that remain active have diversified and made investments in equipment and technology that can help make their efficiency a little bit more operations a little bit more efficient to recognizing that's solved over the years.

6:39  
While these investments can make the operations more efficient, the flip side is that the guidelines that were developed 33 years ago don't necessarily reflect where we are right now with the industry.

6:48  
So we want to make sure that we're, we have a management plan that meets the current and anticipated.

6:56  
So the reason why we have you, we're having these meetings, the reason why why you are here is this is your forest.

7:04  
You live working play in this forest and you know, well, you're all very intimately familiar with it.

7:10  
You have a lot of valuable information that we, we want to know as we develop this plan, best advocates for your relations with the forest, how you use it and where you use it and the concerns that you have over the land.

7:26  
So we all have been lucky enough to be stewards of this forest.  
7:31  
While the time when we're here, we want you to help to develop a comprehensive plan that incorporates local knowledge needs.

7:37  
Our multi use sustainable yield mandate encourages recreation, provides habitat values, incorporates the latest science and technology, but that also meets our current industry current.

7:55  
We also want to make sure that it's flexible enough to adapt as the technology comes online and we grow and evolve as the forest evolves as well.

8:06  
So this is where you come in.

8:07  
You're all the stewards of this forest.

8:09  
You have history of it, history with the land and we want to hear your story through this process.

8:14  
We would like to hear your knowledge, share your ideas, participate in the focus groups, comment on the public draft documents as they be be are are available to review.

8:28  
Just please stay engaged.

8:30  
So I guess a couple of the things that I would like to address here too from the Forester standpoint here in the Matsu, some of the challenges I see with the current Susitna forestry guidelines is the harvest restrictions.

8:44  
The harvest size units restricted to 50 acres this present some economic challenges for our loggers.

8:51  
We want to take a good look at either increasing or removing the limits or at least see what makes the most sense for individual harvest unit sizes.

9:01  
The prescriptive language consists in the forestry guidelines tends to be limiting, especially when it comes to some of our silvercultural prescriptions.

9:08  
A lot of that stuff is developed in our forest land use plans and are all available for public comments and public reviews reviews.

9:15  
So a lot of that can be developed in that process along the water body and wetland setbacks tend to be redundant with the Forest Practices Act along those setbacks are are in those documents.

9:29  
So a little bit of redundancy is just in the forestry guidelines there.

9:36  
Division of Parks and Recreation has been is listed as one of the main consultants in it's just in the forestry guidelines.

9:42  
And I think that's a legacy of a time when Parks had a little bit more all went in.

9:47  
Some of those things they can still, they can still be engaged in the public review process for any of the the documents that come out for schedules for some of these plans or best interest fundings.

10:01  
The phasing restrictions, the contingencies that come with some of the phases, the 1-2 and three phases in there can be a little bit, can be a little restrictive and kind of and can hamper some of the ways we would like to evaluate down, down the road of, of managing the forest.

10:19  
So we would like to take a look at those phasing restrictions.

10:23  
I'd also like to take a look at some of the road buffers along Willer-Cache Rd.

10:28  
There's a pretty significant Rd.

10:29  
buffer of 500 feet on either side of that road.

10:32  
So we'd like to take a look at that.

10:35  
There's some pretty prescriptive language in the harvest systems in there.

10:38  
We'd like to, you know, have a little more flexibility to try some different things down the road.

10:44  
And those are kind of the main things that we would like to kind of take a look at.

10:49  
A couple other ones in there.

10:52  
There's some references to visual quality throughout the Susitna, forestry guidelines.

10:59  
It's pretty subjective.

11:02  
So we would like to take a look good look at whether that needs to be in there or not.

11:08  
And I think that's kind of the main stuff that I like to chat about here now.

11:13  
Happy to chat as we've gone through on the evening, but I think that's what I've got for the time to be and turn back over to Trevor.

11:19  
All right, all right, So please let me know if you can't hear me.

11:30  
I'm gonna try to keep the microphone right right here and I will return to the slideshow.

11:40  
But first, tonight is is less of us just giving you info and more of us telling you how we hope to get your feedback.

11:48  
So I'm gonna have like 5 minutes or less of a slideshow.

11:54  
I'm gonna pull up the website that hopefully some of you have looked at already, and then the rest of the evening will be for discussion.

12:03  
I'm just gonna quickly finish this.

12:08  
So just the, some of the, the high-level principles that we hope to, to utilize to manage the state, the, the state land here in this area.

12:21  
And if you're in the room, we have maps printed out.

12:23  
If you're not, if you're online, our website has some, some maps of the project area.

12:29  
So you know, we, we operate under the principles of multiple use, sustained yield.

12:34  
We're gonna include habitat management and recreation planning on on seeking more feedback from timber users and recreation users of the forest.

12:46  
You know, focusing on multiple use and sustained yield is is really a, a key principle of what we do with our with our forest classified land.

12:56  
And we're gonna continue that as we update the plan.

12:59  
We're gonna incorporate any new Silvicultural prescriptions or inventory data that we may have, but we're gonna continue to operate under multiple use sustained yield.

13:16  
We're going to very likely model it after other forest management plans that we have gonna be broken into chapters.

13:24  
It may end up looking somewhat like the Susitna forestry guidelines where we, we have various chapters describing the relation of the of the management plan to other area plans and then talk about the land base, talk about management units policies.

13:42  
But we haven't started yet.

13:44  
I mean, we're, we're not gonna start writing a draft until we get funded scoping information on this project.

13:53  
So, you know, some of you have have worked with our, you know, maybe been on, on planning teams or the citizens advisory committee for previous times when we've worked to revise the guidelines.

14:07  
You know, a forest management plan is really broad scale, really long term document.

14:12  
It's helpful to, to, to plan.

14:15  
So we like to, we like to think, you know, if a forest or 10 years from now needs to know how to issue a permit to, to do a certain management activity, what would we need to put in this plan now to help them at, you know, 10 years, 10 years down the road?

14:32  
And anybody who's familiar with our, you know, five year schedule of timber sales or forest land use plans, those are decision documents.

14:40  
And a forest management plan is not a decision document, not prescriptive.

14:44  
It's not specific to any project objective.

14:49  
There's really just a, a, a, a set of competencies that us as foresters and land managers can use to, to guide our decisions as we figure out how we want to manage this forest classified land.

15:03  
So we're at the very beginning of this, We're in the scoping.

15:07  
We, we plan on having a long scoping.

15:10  
It's just the beginning.

15:11  
We haven't started a draft.

15:13  
We haven't made any decisions yet.

15:15  
This is the, the, the, the part where we want your feedback on, on everything on, on how you use the forest, how you know, you know, management opinions, things like that.

15:27  
Over the next four to six months, the planning team will likely start working on the draft, but all of that will be informed by, for feedback, by the scoping, by the comments that we get.

15:41  
And then once we have a draft, then the official public review period will start and then we'll collect official public comments, response to the to the comments and then implement the plan.

15:53  
And that could be maybe the end of 2025, maybe early 2026.

15:59  
Is our timeline for that

16:03  
So I don't have any dates on this because we haven't solidified the timeline, because we don't wanna rush the scope period.

16:10  
We wanna make sure that we get all the, all the info, all the feedback we can, we can possibly get.

16:15  
This is the first of the public meetings.

16:17  
I didn't wanna schedule more before Christmas or, you know, right around New Year's.

16:22  
We're gonna have one in Talkeetna, I think, and then probably other other locations as well.

16:26  
This is just the first of however many we need to have to, to capture every everybody who might be wanted interested in commenting.

16:36  
And again, after that, we'll do the draft and agency review, public review, comments, issue response summary.

16:44  
That's 12 months down the road, very likely.

16:50  
So if you are joining this meeting, you heard about it.

16:55  
But if you want to be added to an e-mail list to get specific updates, the e-mail address is on the screen and anybody in the chat who dropped their e-mail address will be added.

17:07  
But as with any of our public meetings, we'll do an online public notice.

17:10  
We'll do Facebook, we'll try to do press releases.

17:13  
We just want to get the word out there that we're doing this and that we want feedback.

17:18  
Now I'm going to switch to, well, I'll leave that up for a moment if you want to capture that, that e-mail address, but I will also put it back up after I, I walk through the website.

17:33  
I'll give you a moment to copy that down.

17:37  
OK, Can I ask a question?

17:44  
Please do, can you hear me?

17:49  
Yes, we can hear you OK.

17:51  
This and I worked on the original SIT forestry document.

18:00  
So you you don't have a date for the end of the scoping.

18:05  
As of yet.

18:06  
You think it's more it'll be like two months like the end of January or the beginning of February because I need to plan my schedule.

18:15  
It'll be at least three months.

18:16  
It could be four or five.

18:18  
I mean, it's gonna be a long scoping.

18:21  
We're not gonna rush to rush through this.

18:27  
Awesome.

18:28  
So I, I would anticipate at least three, probably 4, maybe five months.

18:37  
Are you gonna have any citizens advisory committees?

18:41  
We may, we've we've talked about that.

18:43  
And yes, we may, we may create one.

18:46  
I think it's a good idea and that we've gotten to go ahead to do it.

18:51  
We just have to.

18:52  
That's our next step, probably after the new year.

18:57  
Thank you.

18:58  
OK.

19:03  
All right.

19:03  
The next thing I want to show is the website, and this is the first way that we are gonna be collecting feedback.

19:13  
Hopefully.

19:14  
If you made it to this meeting, you clicked on the link on the website.

19:18  
If you've had a chance to look through the website yet, we've got it broken down into 5 or 6 expandable sections.

19:26  
Project overview with the map of the forest classified lands that we're going to be working on.

19:33  
It just talks about the area collapse it some of the goals of the new forestry guidelines.

19:43  
Those aren't inclusive.

19:45  
They may not represent all the goals, but it was a a starting point.

19:52  
I'm just gonna do a quick overview.

19:54  
You can peruse this at your at your leisure.

19:57  
I'm getting to the the part where we really want you to participate here.

20:02  
If you want to review the 1991 plan, it's it's linked here.

20:08  
And the planning process that we're gonna follow is also here.

20:11  
So we're, we've just started the process of identifying the issues and that's what we'll continue to do through the scoping.

20:21  
This is just a very general overview.

20:24  
We're announcing our intentions, we're preparing the draft plan.

20:27  
It's it's pretty much the timeline that I walked through on, on the slide.

20:30  
And then here is where we're really excited to start collecting feedback.

20:39  
So how you can participate?

20:41  
We have two surveys up right now, just gonna open one, and these will be open indefinitely.

20:49  
We may have a deadline of, you know, sometime in the summer of taking them down, but we're gonna be collecting feedback starting now.

20:56  
Any time people wanna fill out the survey.

20:59  
And I don't think it's the type of survey where you can click save and come back to it.

21:03  
I would recommend sitting down 10 or 15 minutes to work through it, read through it, answer the questions.

21:10  
But we've got one for for forest management and one for recreation and subsistence.

21:17  
And my goal is to add more.

21:19  
If we come up with more scope and questions, more things we wanna talk about, we'll add more.

21:24  
But we're gonna start with those two right now.

21:27  
And I believe that those are anonymous, right?

21:30  
There's no, there's no name associated with them.

21:33  
We have no way of knowing who submitted those.

21:37  
The next step, and this is optional, it's the interactive map.

21:43  
So probably the first time you pull it up, you'll have this little box where you agree to the terms and conditions, click OK, and then you scroll into the to the work area, the forest classified land in the valley.

22:01  
And there's a tutorial linked that'll help walk you through this.

22:05  
But you can basically find us a point of interest that is meaningful to you.

22:12  
You can click, Oh, there we go.

22:17  
You can add, maybe I should have looked at this tutorial.

22:20  
There we go.

22:21  
Click on the map to add a point, categorize it, recreation, forestry, subsistence, and then type your information.

22:31  
And these are public like anything you put in here can be publicly, publicly viewed.

22:37  
So just be aware of that.

22:40  
But this is a good way to capture additional information about how you use, how you use or how you value a particular part of the forest or a particular area.

22:53  
So that is the beginning of how we are going to be collecting information from anybody.

23:02  
2 surveys linked here and the interactive map.

23:08  
We will be hosting additional meetings.

23:11  
Like I said, this time of year, I didn't want to schedule anything else but New Year's.

23:16  
We're going to be up at Talkeetna some point in January or February and we'll be keeping people aware via online public notice, Facebook and the e-mail list that we're building.

23:30  
If we add a survey or if we add any additional material on the website and if we develop, develop a citizens advisory committee.

23:41  
So that is pretty much all I, I wanted to show you.

23:48  
We've got a few frequently asked questions that we've put together.

23:53  
We included stuff about carbon just because some of our other forest management plans have some carbon.

23:57  
I don't know if that's gonna be a a topic in this management plan or not, but we will load more frequently asked questions as they come up and then you can contact us.

24:14  
We'll add our e-mail contacts here and then we'll add the planning team e-mail as well.

24:22  
That is viewed by multiple people.

24:26  
So really the most of what I wanted to to show you tonight was this website because this is how we will be initially collecting feedback.

24:37  
Once we get to the public comment period, we can do the, you know, the written public comment and the e-mail, then the hard copy public comment.

24:43  
This is your chance to tell us how you, how you use the forest.

24:49  
With that, I'm going to stop.

24:53  
That is the end of I think what we had prepared to talk about.

24:58  
Have until 8 now to talk about this and answer your questions.

25:03  
And yeah, I was gonna say for those of you who called in on Teams, you can do what John did and use the raise hand feature and we will respond to that or put it in the chat.

25:14  
So John, you have a question.

25:16  
Well, the first thing, what is your name?

25:19  
And the reason why I want to ask is I could hear you and understand the words.

25:23  
Steve.

25:24  
I couldn't couldn't get very well.

25:27  
So I want you to talk all the time.

25:30  
My name is Trevor.

25:31  
And.

25:32  
OK, Trevor.

25:33  
OK.

25:34  
The the way the room is set up, my back is through the camera.

25:37  
I apologize.

25:38  
OK, I have the microphone right here, so that's probably why you could hear me.

25:45  
Well, OK, great.

25:46  
Well, that's that's good information.

25:48  
OK.

25:50  
I was on the the Citizens Advisory Committee back in 2008 and 2009.

26:00  
I think Jim Schwarber was heading it up and all of a sudden and we got a public, we were almost at a public review draft stage and somebody pulled the plug and the whole thing ended.

26:19  
But there was 1st, I guess you, you guys know why the Susitna forestry guidelines came about when there was a a big outcry at, at the state's plans to harvest timber and everything came to a halt.

26:42  
Cause the, the, the push back was pretty in intense.

26:49  
And out of that came this susitna forestry guidelines that were at the time acceptable to all, all parties.

27:00  
Maybe the state acquiesced, I don't know, but I unfortunately didn't hear what Steve was saying about change conditions.

27:11  
So, so I, I, maybe I could get that at some point.

27:22  
But what I, what I saw last time are, are you guys gonna pick up where Schwarber left off 'cause they were at least Chapter 1 was at the public review draft stage and he set out a internal draft in track changes from This Is it in the forestry guidelines so we could see what the changes were.

27:49  
And I wrote a letter back objecting to some of it and and I never heard again.

28:00  
I think that was the the end of it.

28:02  
So are you gonna take those drafts and and build on this or how's this gonna really relate to what Jim and the 2008, 2009 work that was done?

28:17  
I think so.

28:20  
That's why.

28:23  
Yeah.

28:23  
I think we'll take a look.

28:25  
Sorry, sorry, that was my question.

28:27  
I don't know, but go ahead.

28:31  
Sorry to I didn't mean to talk over you there.

28:34  
I'll just say that I think we'll we'll take a look at the draft.

28:37  
If it's representative of a format and of up to date, you know, modern recommendations, I think we wouldn't mind incorporating some of it.

28:49  
But this is all coming from the direction of the commissioner and the governor to replace the, the, the original guidelines.

28:57  
But we would have to make sure that that met their intent.

28:59  
Like this isn't just us as here saying, hey, we wanna change this.

29:05  
We're, we're getting this directed from the governor basically.

29:08  
But we would review what was previously done.

29:11  
But yeah, we'll make sure that any content we write is reflective of conditions as of now.

29:20  
Yeah, while incorporating anything that was usable from that from that update.

29:28  
OK, could you guys?

29:32  
Yeah, well, I'm, I'm, I'm a big fan of this is in the forestry guidelines.

29:38  
I think that it's very, very important to understand the the many, many uses and values of the forest and make sure that those other values and uses other than forest forest harvesting is is treated on an equal footing with forest harvesting.

30:11  
So I'm a little skeptical of the word multiple use and I don't know exactly why I'm trying to refresh my memory going going back 15 years or whatever it is.

30:26  
And, and I wonder if you guys could define multiple use and operations plan versus a management plan and what you're looking at here.

30:39  
Are you looking at an operations plan?

30:43  
I know you said management plan, but but I don't know if it's a true management plan or leaning toward too much towards just operations.

30:58  
And if you could also define working forest, could one of you guys do that for me so I can understand this better?

31:07  
I will attempt to and then I might call Steve back over to sit right next to the microphone.

31:14  
So try to capture all of your questions.

31:23  
Yeah, multiple.

31:24  
Well, all right, the extent I think he answered the one about the other draft the the what what Jim and the committee were were doing 15 years ago.

31:35  
You're going to yeah, you you explained that, but just the terms to to maybe define and explain multiple use operations plan versus management plan and working forest.

31:54  
OK.

31:54  
So I think our intent is to have it be a management plan.

31:59  
I think the operations part of that would be in the forest land use plan or the, the five year schedule, the documents that Steve Nickel would put together for public review, I think those would be considered an operations plan.

32:14  
I think we we try to keep our management plans higher level than that.

32:20  
So they're not prescriptive, but they give us enough information so that someone 10 years down the road can figure out how to write that operations plan and how to write that five year schedule of timber sales.

32:35  
And then, you know, the for the, for the multiple use, I mean, I could put the, the, the quote from the statute back up.

32:44  
I, I buzzed through that really quickly on, on the PowerPoint and I think we could add that as a ask question on the website.

32:58  
OK, where are we?

33:03  
Bear with me, go.

33:06  
OK, We'll, we'll put this up on the website as well.

33:11  
And then for, for working forest, I mean the working forest, we can, we can come up with a better definition on it and put it.

33:21  
So I, I went through through those, those little bullet points and drop down menus last night and, but I didn't see this there.

33:33  
No, this is in the slideshow.

33:35  
This isn't in the PowerPoint that I just shared.

33:37  
We will add it though.

33:39  
OK, OK, great.

33:41  
So I don't have to write anything down.

33:43  
OK.

33:44  
Can you make a note of that?

33:45  
I don't or Steven?

33:49  
So we'll, we'll make a note of things that we need to add to the, the frequently asked questions.

33:55  
OK Online.

33:57  
OK, put that in and then we'll we'll define a working force also.

34:02  
Yeah.

34:04  
So is there a way to to comment without?

34:09  
I mean, I don't mind doing surveys, but I want to go a little deeper than the surveys.

34:17  
Yeah, I expect you'd accept written comments and all that.

34:24  
We'll, we'll definitely take written comments when we have a draft.

34:28  
Sure.

34:29  
And we can figure out a way to take written comments now you can always send them to that e-mail address.

34:35  
It's it's what what's the e-mail address?

34:37  
I don't I don't see that We'll put that up also.

34:41  
But it it's here, let me run on the website also DNR. DOF.

34:51  
It's on the website.

34:53  
Matsuplanning.

34:55  
OK, I don't think it is right now, but three people have access to that.

35:00  
So if you send a question or a comment to that, at least three people will immediately see that.

35:07  
OK, DNRDO Matsu plan.

35:13  
OK, All right.

35:14  
I I I wrote that down.

35:27  
OK, I'll, I'll switch gears here.

35:29  
Someone else has their hand up.

35:31  
We can jump to someone else.

35:33  
What?

35:33  
We can always come back, John, to follow up.

35:35  
No, that's fine.

35:36  
That's fine.

35:36  
I'll I'll put my hand down, but we've got almost an hour left.

35:41  
We should have plenty of time.

35:43  
You're just labeled as meeting guests.

35:45  
Whoever has your hand up, you can go ahead and and speak.

35:48  
Yes, this is Becky Long.

35:50  
I don't know why it doesn't register my name.

35:53  
I just, I have two questions.

35:57  
Is the geographic scope of this plan the same as the sitting of forest guidelines?

36:05  
And then my second question is, are any of the timber in in the this, this the geographic scope, a potential for DNRs program for the carbon sequestration credit program under AS3895 four 99?

36:26  
I mean, I think that's what you need to put in the management plan if any of the land is going to be considered for part of that program.

36:37  
I know there's Matsu lands that are, but nobody has really explained where they are.

36:45  
The answer to the first question is yes.

36:47  
Geographically it will be the same, I think, Yeah, the classified land, yeah, for all the forest classified lands in the valley.

36:56  
So the same as in the in the guidelines.

36:59  
And the second question, I, I believe that All state lands are eligible for the carbon offset program.

37:06  
And yes, that will be a, a, a, a very short section in the plan just stating that, just stating the, the statute and the regulations that says all forest classified lands are, are eligible.

37:21  
We don't, we don't provide too much detail because we know there, there aren't any projects yet and you know, we just can't provide any detail about, about them.

37:36  
But won't that have to do with your, you know, how many acres you can cut a year and stuff?

37:43  
I mean, won't that impact some of your statistics for the future, you know, in, in terms of short and long rotation and stuff like that?

37:56  
It yes, it'll, it will affect some of that.

38:00  
And in, in future meetings, since this is an important issue, I'm going to have our, our carbon offset program manager present who can answer your questions far better than I can.

38:13  
But I think we'll, for now, I'll just have to say we'll try to expand on that on the website because I'm not a carbon offset expert at all.

38:24  
But that is a question that has come up in other forest management plans.

38:29  
So we'll do a better job of, of addressing that on the website.

38:35  
Sorry, I wasn't able to, to answer that better tonight.

38:38  
It's a very complicated, no, no subject.

38:43  
I mean, I understand it's a new thing and, and I get it.

38:47  
It's, it's, it's, it's just evolving right now.

38:50  
And so I get it.

38:51  
But I, I think we're going to have to take into consideration in the future in terms of the, you know, the yields and all that stuff.

39:00  
Thank you for taking my questions.

39:03  
I'm done.

39:03  
Oh, you're welcome.

39:07  
See, John, with your hand up.

39:08  
I don't see anything else yet, so go for it.

39:11  
I don't want to raise my hand too many times, but I'm wondering, Steve, if you could, if you had anything in writing that describe what's changed since this is in the forestry guidelines and and since the Jim Schwarber effort and somehow make them available to me.

39:35  
Because I really didn't get what you said.

39:37  
It was too garbled for me.

39:40  
John.

39:40  
I apologize for that.

39:42  
I can see what I can do about that.

39:43  
I can go over it again really quick.

39:45  
Can you hear me now?

39:46  
Is this OK?

39:47  
You better.

39:49  
Yeah.

39:49  
Right.

39:50  
Right.

39:50  
Then It's it's not bad, but it.

39:52  
But it seems like once once the speed goes up the garbling and I I lose it.

40:02  
So I don't know if everybody else it's just me or, or what, but but I can go.

40:10  
I want to be when when I make comments and look at this stuff, I want to be relevant and I and it'd be real helpful to know what's changed.

40:20  
Yeah.

40:21  
So John, I'll try and go slow.

40:23  
I apologize.

40:23  
I tend to be a fast speaker and I apologize for that.

40:28  
So the harvest size is one of the things we wanted to take a look at.

40:32  
Individual unit harvest sizes were limited, limited to 50 acres.

40:37  
That was one thing we wanted to take a look at.

40:39  
Consider increasing that, whatever that makes sense.

40:44  
What is it now?

40:47  
It's between individual harvest units are between 5 and 50 acres.

40:51  
And if they go bigger, they have to have islands inside of them to keep them down to 50 acres size.

40:57  
So 50 acres is Max.

41:00  
OK.

41:04  
OK.

41:05  
All right.

41:06  
Second one, there's a lot of prescriptive language in the Susitna forestry guidelines.

41:14  
And for our management plan, we want to take a little bit of a higher level for that.

41:21  
So trying to, I mean trying to just take a look at some of the prescriptive language that's in there.

41:30  
OK, water body setbacks, wetlands, water body setbacks, that's the third one.

41:39  
That's the third one.

41:42  
Those are covered in forest practices.

41:44  
So a little bit of redundancy there.

41:47  
OK, You say water body setbacks are also that would be lakes and streams.

41:54  
How about wetlands?

41:56  
Yep, wetlands, water bodies, lakes, streams, water stream, you know all that.

42:01  
All of that is covered in forest practices.

42:08  
OK, All right.

42:11  
Is it is it different between to Susitna forestry guidelines and forest practices?

42:16  
Is it's a little more it goes into a little bit more detail into the streams, whether they're classifieds the the different streams as either with their characteristic, their source it FERPA goes into far more detail than just Forestry guidelines does.

42:46  
OK, so there's some greater setbacks than what are in to Susitna forestry guidelines.

42:56  
OK, so a lot of that is, is is covered in in forest practices.

43:02  
OK, so you're right, you're good.

43:06  
Yeah, I'm ready, I'm ready for number 4.

43:09  
All right.

43:10  
So the next one was taking state Parks out as a major, as the major consultant on on our processes.

43:21  
I think that's changed quite a bit.

43:23  
And they can still be involved in the process through the public and agency review process.

43:31  
So they would not be omitted.

43:33  
They would still be, you know, eligible to comment.

43:35  
But I think that's probably an artifact of a time when parks had a little bit more horsepower, I guess, for lack of a better expression.

43:46  
Yeah, I think you're right about that.

43:50  
OK #5 the phasing restrictions, the phases, the what?

43:56  
Wait, wait, wait, what?

43:57  
What restrictions?

43:59  
The phases.

43:59  
So Susanna Forestry guidelines breaks up the area into three different phases, and there are contingencies for moving into additional phase in the phase two and phase three.

44:13  
And we would like to take a look at that as well.

44:22  
OK, I can I can learn about that by reading the refreshing my memory on this in the Susitna forestry guidelines.

44:33  
The road buffers along Willer Cache Rd.

44:37  
We'd like to take a look at that as well.

44:39  
There's a 500 foot buffer on either side of that road.

44:45  
OK.

44:51  
The harvest the harvesting system language insisted in the forestry guidelines is is pretty prescriptive and it kind of limits us in some ways.

45:02  
So we would like to take a look at some other options for expanding, you know, harvesting systems here on the matsu.

45:12  
What do you mean by harvesting systems?

45:14  
Oh, it's, it's pretty much I'm thinking like sea tree harvest versus clear cut, that kind of stuff, Shelterwood, those kinds of harvesting systems.

45:28  
That's the there's, I think trying to remember exactly what's in there, but it basically pigeon holes us into like one or two harvest.

45:47  
There's a lot of references to visual quality.

45:51  
This is in the forestry guidelines, and we'd like to take a look at that as well.

45:54  
It's pretty hard to quantify term.

45:57  
Yeah, well, you know it when you see it usually.

46:00  
Yep, exactly.

46:03  
And that, of course, is something in the northern valley that we're concerned about maybe more than other places.

46:11  
So that's why I wanted to take a look at it and see what makes the most sense.

46:20  
There's a couple other things I was thinking in there I might have.

46:24  
Let's see what else we have.

46:27  
I think one of the things that I might have skipped over before was looking at our sustained yield calculations.

46:34  
It's currently based off of A 5 year average.

46:39  
It might be looking at and we'd like to look at maybe increasing that to a like a 10 year average to allow some flexibility in what we can offer with fluctuating demand.

46:52  
So averaging that out over a long time, we something we like to look at, OK.

47:06  
Looking at the rotation length as well, and there's some pretty prescriptive language in the rotation length.

47:11  
We'd like to look at that section of that part.

47:15  
That's interesting.

47:16  
That's something that you could talk about for a long time is yeah, it, it's So what right now?

47:23  
What is it 80 for Birch?

47:28  
There's short rotations and long rotations.

47:30  
So that there is in in the forestry guidelines, there is language about managing a certain percentage on short rotations and a certain percentage on long rotations.

47:42  
And the intent was to provide a mix of habitats for the wildlife and a lot of that can be done and is being done just in variability of harvests.

47:56  
So that's why one of the reasons why we would like to take a look at that and see if that's still valid.

48:02  
OK.

48:03  
You know, that raises the question of what I read somewhere on the on the website that the the forests all around here seem to be about the same age.

48:18  
And are you, am I correct that that it said that that some like chronic something happened?

48:28  
Yeah, I think you're right.

48:29  
It seems like everything seems to be about that age.

48:31  
I've heard stories I've heard tell about the railroad causing large fires back in the day and that was the the main driver of the current forest we have now.

48:47  
So that's that's what I've heard from from folks over the years.

48:53  
OK.

48:55  
And then last one in there, I think I had was just looking at making sure that fish and game is not just represented by habitat.

49:08  
I think I skipped over this one too, but we want to make sure the Wildlife Conservation division is involved in the process as well.

49:14  
So it was very prescriptive just for habitat section, but we want to make sure that we're getting everybody else from fishing game involved as well.

49:24  
And that is the list.

49:28  
OK, Can you, I'll ask one more thing and I'm not going to bother anybody anymore tonight.

49:38  
What's the difference between the habitat division and the conservation division?

49:45  
Habitat folks typically stick with, and hopefully I've got this right.

49:48  
The habitat folks are really along the lines of, you know, the habitat, the, the fish, the water quality, the wildlife habitat, prescriptions, things like that.

49:59  
I think the conservation side of things, I, I think that they're probably a little bit more on the, the broader scale of things.

50:06  
I may have that wrong trying to dig into that a little bit more.

50:10  
But I just want to make sure that we're not just limiting ourselves to, you know, some of the want to make sure that we're getting the best information out of our sister agencies when we're putting these things out for public comments and stuff like that.

50:27  
So, OK, all right.

50:30  
OK, I'll, I'll put my hand.

50:32  
Thanks a lot, you guys.

50:35  
Absolutely.

50:36  
Yes.

50:37  
Sorry, John.

50:37  
I went through it fast in the first time.

50:39  
Yeah, well, that's OK.

50:41  
It really helped for me to to see this because I'm I'm, I missed 95% of you.

50:48  
So anyway, I appreciate you going over it again.

50:53  
All right, someone else has their hand up.

50:56  
Go ahead foragers.

51:01  
Hi, thank you so much for hosting this this evening I'm Bella Swiss Susitna River Coalition and look forward to you all or some of you coming up to Talkeetna to have us look at some of these maps and meet in person.

51:18  
A question I had is I think earlier it was said that this the plan was being revisited as a priority of the governor.

51:32  
And so I was wondering if like anybody had been recently appointed to this group or if this group has been working with any kind of consulting firm where this management project might be aligning with some other agencies or government priorities for development in the Susitna?

51:59  
Not to my knowledge at all, no.

52:07  
OK.

52:08  
And so Steve, the list that you shared of the, you know, 10 or so priorities, is that something you generated?

52:18  
Those are some of the challenges that I see as the forester here trying to produce timber for our industry.

52:28  
So there's some of the challenges I hear from, from my folks that I work with and just things that I've seen over the years from previous Foresters as well.

52:39  
I see.

52:40  
And so when when I look at some of the, the documents available online, which are, which are really great.

52:48  
I really appreciate it.

52:49  
For me so far a good format to look at.

52:54  
But it does kind of and the project overview say that kind of the emphasis of revisiting the forestry plan is really through an economic benefit lens and this idea of generating revenue.

53:09  
And so I was wondering is it was the was, whose intent was, was that and and it's were you kind of tasked to look at the forestry plan through that lens or is that something you noticed?

53:22  
That's the commissioner's goal.

53:25  
That was the commissioner of of DNR directed us to to begin this.

53:29  
That was his his goal for this project.

53:36  
Great.

53:37  
It's really helpful to to understand intent and how the community can help understand, understand the intent and participate with the intent in mind.

53:49  
Let's see.

53:53  
And then can you just tell me a little bit about how state state parks used to interact in the construction of this plan and what their role would be moving forward if the structure was changed?

54:10  
That's a really good question.

54:12  
That was well before my time here as a Forester.

54:18  
I think they probably had a little bit more like more, more people, more staff, more involvement.

54:27  
Yeah, maybe from the design and construction, the plan, maybe they did some of the more the planning side of things for the house for, you know, for DNR.

54:34  
At that point.

54:35  
I'm, I'm kind of grasping at straws for this one.

54:41  
So I'm not 100% sure what their original involvement was, but I know through this process and you know, going through some of the, the, you know, the, the timber sale planning process in the Matsu, I don't hear much from them these days.

54:59  
Many of the public documents we're working through the public process every once in a while we do.

55:04  
But I think it's just a a change is the evolution of the, the, the state parks has has grown or changed over the years.

55:16  
And I will add that it's not just gonna be us writing this.

55:19  
We have a planning team with park.

55:21  
I think parks is on.

55:22  
If not, I have to reach back out Fish and Game.

55:25  
We've got multiple other agencies working with us on this.

55:31  
Well, thank you all so much.

55:33  
I'll continue to do my homework and I appreciate the opportunity to ask you questions tonight.

55:40  
Thank you.

55:42  
All right.

55:43  
Meeting guests.

55:46  
OK, it's me again, Becky, Becky Wong.

55:50  
So have OK.

55:52  
Are you going to put on the website the planning team from the different agencies?

55:56  
And have you guys had any interagency meetings like have you had any yet or are you going to have some soon?

56:06  
We have had no interagency meetings yet.

56:08  
This is the first meeting to, to start the scoping project process.

56:13  
That was the most important thing to to start hearing from people before we had a, a planning meeting.

56:19  
And I'll double check.

56:22  
I don't see any reason why we couldn't have our planning team agencies represented on the website.

56:28  
I don't see any reason why not.

56:29  
I'll, I'll make a note of that.

56:34  
Right.

56:35  
I, I, I think that's what that's to be a great idea who they are.

56:40  
And I'm glad that you guys did have a planning team.

56:43  
Maybe I did not look very deeply, but all I saw was just three division of forestry people.

56:50  
So yeah, I'd be interested in the others involvement.

56:53  
Thank you.

57:07  
Got any other questions out there, Margaret?

57:12  
Did you have your you had your hand up?

57:14  
Is that Margaret?

57:17  
I don't know.

57:20  
Anyway, yeah, we have.

57:21  
We have plenty of time left.

57:23  
Yeah, if nobody wants to say anything, I have another question, but let's wait for others.

57:53  
I think go for it if you have a have a question, yeah, might as well have questions instead of silence.

57:59  
You know, the, the forest, at least in the, the forest that I've been familiar with, hasn't really been very marketable and it's been known to, I don't know if would the, if this really is a state sale or a Burrow sale, but timber was offered and, and nobody's interested.

58:25  
Does that happen?

58:26  
And is one of the goals of this to change that?

58:34  
We are trying to make it more enticing for our logging industry, trying to, you know, help, You know, I see as it's widely been publicized, the governor is really interested in trying to grow our timber industry here in Alaska.

58:49  
And that's part of the reason why we're looking at this is Susitna guidelines, the direction of the governor and the commissioner.

58:59  
And I think, you know, if we can come together and develop something that meets our current, you know, our current and anticipated needs that'll be a be that should be helpful.

59:17  
And and maybe hopefully you know again growing the timber industry here for but to, to speak to your point, yeah, you know, we have had some timber sales auctions here in the past that have not sold.

59:36  
We have had some sitting available over the counter.

59:41  
But then again we have had some success in selling some some timber here too.

59:45  
The borough has also had pretty decent success with their timber sales here in the last three, three years or so as well.

59:53  
So they've been doing better than we have been in terms of selling, being able to sell timber.

1:00:04  
And what's the use?

1:00:05  
Is it chips or pellets or biomass or what?

1:00:09  
What?

1:00:10  
But we've lost our house logs now.

1:00:13  
Yeah.

1:00:15  
So firewood, you know, there's, you know, saw log, there's some saw logs.

1:00:22  
There's, you know, it's definitely a different, it's different than it was back in the 90s when this, you know, the original plan was developed.

1:00:32  
You know, we've had the spruce beetle come through and kill half of our out of our tree species, half the commercial tree species, you know, half the the one of the two major commercial products here in the Matsu.

1:00:47  
So we need to adapt to that for one.

1:00:49  
But we also said there's just, there's the industry has changed and we want to make sure that we're we're meeting the current, current, current needs and future needs.

1:01:05  
Is there any use for those spruce that have been beetle killed?

1:01:13  
Some, yes, depending upon how much decay is in those things and how long they've been dead.

1:01:18  
But the longer that they stand on the stump and dry, the more they're going to end up on the ground.

1:01:24  
So, yeah, there's some use, but there's also, it's deteriorating as it is.

1:01:30  
Yeah.

1:01:30  
Leaving.

1:01:31  
Leaving mostly.

1:01:32  
Birch.

1:01:35  
Yeah.

1:01:38  
OK.

1:01:39  
Well, that, that's that's all I have for now.

1:01:41  
I only if you can come over to the Jon.

1:01:57  
Can you hear my voice?

1:02:01  
Yeah, I can.

1:02:02  
Yes, I can.

1:02:03  
All right.

1:02:06  
You asked questions about what we're doing with, like, the Matsu Borough timber, what we're currently doing with it, that we do harvest.

1:02:14  
This year we'll reach about 250 acres that we've harvest of Matsu Borough timber.

1:02:21  
We use it for export places like Glenallen, Fairbanks, Seward and we haul back spruce laws that are not of the beetle kill nature.

1:02:33  
The next timber that we will export out of the Matsu Borough will be Birch and we'll go towards Sterling and we will be moving back.

1:02:43  
US Forest Service would about 800 quarters of beetle kill spruce that I will process for homes next summer.

1:02:52  
So that is what we do with the logs for a marketable value.

1:02:56  
We don't tip them.

1:02:58  
We make firewood and we process for like the great Alaska Bull Company and the moving factory and I also stopped for our builder supply the kiln dried products and with spruce birch kiln dried and then I sell kiln dried.

1:03:19  
Yeah.

1:03:20  
So so you're saying that some of the spruce is is sufficient quality to to cut into two by fours.

1:03:36  
I don't make 2 by fours.

1:03:37  
Last homes I built for the state parks or cabin kids were all beautiful and you can use them.

1:03:43  
See, I've done a little bit with, with logs and it seems like they used to be, they could stand for years and years and years and beside you could build a cabin out of them.

1:03:59  
Now you can't.

1:04:01  
They're they're, they're they've got fungus or they're rotting or something and they they break.

1:04:10  
Well, all beetle kill spruces that we've harvested in the Matsu Valley is going to a lady that stocks all the air B and Bs with bundle wood.

1:04:19  
That's what we're currently doing with the, we're right now at about 150 acres that we've harvested this year.

1:04:27  
OK, All beetle kill spruce we've harvested in the Matsu has went to a lady that makes bundle wood for air B and BS.

1:04:38  
OK, OK, OK.

1:04:42  
And what what's your name?

1:04:45  
My name is Andrew.

1:04:47  
Andrew.

1:04:47  
Hi, Andrew.

1:04:48  
I thought that'd be helpful.

1:05:00  
I appreciate that, Andrew.

1:05:02  
Like tomorrow I'll be going to grand.

1:05:05  
I'll believe her.

1:05:06  
Yeah, I'll sit down.

1:05:10  
OK.

1:05:10  
Must be that.

1:05:12  
Yeah, I think it's that Andrew.

1:05:16  
Yeah, no, it, it just went garment.

1:05:22  
But but are so you guys just explained what, what some of the wood is being used for?

1:05:28  
Is that not enough for the commissioner and the governor?

1:05:33  
They they what, What are they envisioning just a whole lot more or what?

1:05:45  
Well, I don't, I can't really speak for what their thought process is, but well, part of the challenges I think we're seeing is 1 is down in the Southeast.

1:05:57  
There's some challenges with meeting timber demand down there.

1:06:03  
There's been some effort to bridge some of the gap between some of the the anticipated gaps in what's available in Southeast.

1:06:16  
So they're looking at other areas to help supply some timber.

1:06:19  
I think that's part of it.

1:06:21  
I think, you know, and we just have not been very successful in the matsu here in the last, I don't know, eight years, 5 7 8 years here getting some timber drought.

1:06:35  
So there's and then there's it's a pretty complex issue.

1:06:40  
Pretty complex, right, Right.

1:06:45  
So is it too simplistic to say that most of the wood is staying in the state of Alaska or is that too simplistic?

1:06:55  
Yeah, most everything is staying in state, at least from at least from the Matsu in the South Central.

1:07:03  
I can't speak for Southeast.

1:07:04  
Southeast is a different story, but right.

1:07:10  
Right.

1:07:11  
Yeah.

1:07:12  
Well, I find that highly interesting.

1:07:14  
Where's the birch?

1:07:16  
Where'd he say this?

1:07:17  
With the birch.

1:07:18  
birch and stuff.

1:07:26  
That microphone.

1:07:28  
Yeah.

1:07:30  
You know, it's, it's worth mentioning that the mission of our department is to, to develop and conserve and maximize the use of all of the natural resources.

1:07:43  
And part of the goal of that is to, is to help local businesses that might, that might, you know, participate in the temporary industry, you know, local loggers and, and Millers and all saw mills and all that.

1:07:57  
So this is part of the part of the reasoning behind that we're trying to trying to fulfill the multiple use mandate that we have.

1:08:05  
And that's how we're having fish n game and parks and all the other members of the planning team, as well as trying to just make all the natural resources in the area more approachable for everybody who who uses them.

1:08:22  
Yeah.

1:08:23  
Where does the multiple use mandate come from?

1:08:28  
It's in our statutes.

1:08:30  
It's in.

1:08:32  
I'll put that up on the on the website.

1:08:34  
I don't have it right in front of me.

1:08:36  
Thanks.

1:08:37  
Got that.

1:08:37  
Noted.

1:08:38  
To to tackle over the next few days.

1:08:41  
OK.

1:08:54  
And then while we have time.

1:08:56  
Oh, go for it.

1:08:58  
melis.

1:08:59  
Is that is that your name?

1:09:00  
Go for it.

1:09:01  
Yeah.

1:09:01  
Hi.

1:09:02  
Thanks for having me again.

1:09:04  
Andrew.

1:09:04  
It's great to hear your voice.

1:09:05  
I didn't realize you're in the room.

1:09:06  
We can't, we can't really see faces at all.

1:09:10  
I, you know, I, I've met with Andrew a few times and he was lucky.

1:09:15  
I was lucky enough to get a tour of his mill.

1:09:17  
And I'm just curious because I considered him, you know, somebody with a lot of local expertise and these kind of timber sales and purposes and he's a driver in the local economy.

1:09:29  
I was wondering if I could ask you, Andrew, a question like in the existing state, in the existing guidelines, are there things that really hinder you or that you would like to see change?

1:09:43  
Yes, the matsu Steven is limited on what he can sell for timber in the amount of acreage size.

1:09:56  
And at the time when this forest land plan was made, it was made well, I believe.

1:10:05  
But with the changing aspect of our forest, with our extreme mortality that we have in our forest, it has brought down the economic value to such a low amount that now we need to be able to harvest around a minimum of 100 acres.

1:10:22  
Now our forest, it is good for it.

1:10:26  
And this is what the foresters comment on is, is it better to let it continue the way it is or is it better to harvest some of it to start the regeneration process so that we don't have a one age forest?

1:10:45  
And with the cost constraints in our small state that is big, you can't pay loggers to manage the forest like we are paid to do in the Chugach National Forest.

1:11:01  
You know, Steven doesn't have the capacity financially to pay us to do the kind of management like we do in the Chugach, which they're doing often because of the one age forest.

1:11:15  
And if Steven is able to provide us more in the hundred 240 acre range, like we currently harvest at the Matsu Borough, essentially Steven is then able to acquire pretty much free Fire Protection or limited cost Fire Protection.

1:11:34  
And that is why the Borough Forester, it's easier for him change forestry, you know, plans.

1:11:42  
He changed his three years ago.

1:11:45  
Before that there was 0 harvest soul at the Matsu Borough.

1:11:50  
The same challenge that Steven has, Emerson, the Borough Forester has changed the forest management plan.

1:11:57  
It's easy to do there and now we are harvesting and we are able to have a small industry that is supplied by that and it is growing.

1:12:10  
You know, it's not enormous, but it is good to see it grow, you know.

1:12:14  
And and it does make jobs, you know, I mean, if you go into Talkeetna, there's products that are made by local manufacturing that my sawmill produced in kiln dry method.

1:12:26  
If it wasn't for the Matsu Borough being able to sell us timber in this model, those products would not be there.

1:12:33  
I'm the last kiln dry operation.

1:12:35  
I know what that's running in the Matson Borough.

1:12:38  
And you know, Steven needs these changes to this forest plan so that he can manage the forest within his limitations.

1:12:49  
Does that describe it right, Steven?

1:12:52  
You did a good job there, Andrew.

1:12:53  
Yeah, yeah.

1:12:54  
It's not that they that Stevens wanting to go after the forest and cut, cut, cut, or that the governor's wanting to do that, but the current plan with what has happened to our forest with mortality, if we don't do something different, we're going to continue to go backwards and have a higher liability of forest fire, danger and these things going on.

1:13:18  
I mean, I'm not a professional forester.

1:13:20  
The foresters can explain that to you better, but in my understanding of the train of thought that made the Burrough forest, there's decisions of to change the forest use plan.

1:13:34  
That area, that's what it was based on.

1:13:36  
Also some of the economic viability of it.

1:13:40  
When we had zero harvest happening, there was a lot of people that suffered for firewood.

1:13:45  
They could not get it.

1:13:46  
I know Steven got the phone calls.

1:13:48  
Where can I get firewood?

1:13:49  
Where can I get firewood now?

1:13:51  
Today that the matsu borough was able to sell us timber in this 140 acre range, which makes it viable for us to go harvest, to move our equipment in and work.

1:14:04  
And now I supply 14 nonprofits in Matsu Valley.

1:14:08  
You know, there is not a person in the Matsu Valley today that does not have access to firewood, even if they're elderly or disabled.

1:14:18  
Like Steven knows that if there is a problem with someone, you can hand them my phone number and they come to my mill and they leave with firewood.

1:14:25  
You know, there was a drastic problem with Matthew Borough residents not being able to access firewood even though it's dead all around us.

1:14:35  
You can't take a person that's 55 or 60 and expect them to wade through 4 feet of snow to go get a tree to supply themselves.

1:14:43  
They must have a logger that supplies this firewood product they depend on.

1:14:51  
Maybe you could explain that more, Steven, the actual challenges that you've seen?

1:14:57  
Yeah, I think, you know, as it is, we already have some limitations with where we are allowed to harvest and sell timber from where that's forest classified lands.

1:15:07  
And the challenge that we have is our forest classified lands where we can manage from has extremely limited Rd.

1:15:15  
access.

1:15:18  
Andrew mentioned the Burrough’s timber sale program.

1:15:21  
They, they typically have easier accessible closer timber than we do, which is a big financial benefit for the person who's going to cut those things, you know, the logger who's going out to cut and process those things.

1:15:38  
And they did.

1:15:40  
I mean, as Andrew mentioned, this isn't a fortunate.

1:15:43  
Guidelines was great back in 1991, but the reality is industry has evolved and we need to keep up with how it's evolved.

1:15:54  
The forest has changed a little bit as well.

1:15:57  
And that's that's another reason why we want to take a look at this and not only make it reflect now, but, you know, anticipated changes in the industry has we've become more mechanized, We become more, you know, those kinds of things.

1:16:12  
There's going to be, you know, increasing demand as the population grows in the matsu.

1:16:18  
There's going to be more people in needing firewood.

1:16:22  
So, you know, kind of looking forward, that's kind of the the direction we want to go with this is, is, you know, we meet the demand 20 years from now in case this plan is around for 30 years, right?

1:16:36  
That's that's kind of the thing we want to, all the things we want to capture here.

1:16:42  
There's a couple of questions in the chat that I want to address.

1:16:47  
Knowing that our time is growing short, I want to address the chat.

1:16:51  
So let's see, does the DNR have programs to help homeowners make their properties defensible and from fire?

1:16:58  
Yes, we have a couple different programs for that.

1:17:01  
The forest stewardship program and some of sometimes the fire prevention staff in the matsu.

1:17:07  
 can do that as well.

1:17:09  
I can add info to that because I think it's a really valuable part of what DOF can offer to homeowners.

1:17:17  
We do occasionally have grant programs, but we always have free advice for how to do that.

1:17:25  
And then this one.

1:17:26  
Does the DNR plan on managing the forest to encourage black spruce growth?

1:17:35  
I don't think.

1:17:35  
I don't think black spruce is a priority.

1:17:37  
White spruce and paper Birch are the two priority species that naturally come back after a harvest.

1:17:43  
If done silvicultural correctly.

1:17:47  
I think white white spruce and paper Birch would be the two primary species.

1:17:55  
You just want to make sure we get everything in the chat.

1:17:58  
The, the, the transcript of this or at least the video recording of this meeting and the slides will be online in a week.

1:18:09  
The project area, I think we covered that, but that is the, the area covered in the 1991 guidelines and it's, it's available in the map online.

1:18:21  
You can see the project area.

1:18:22  
I think that's all the questions in the chat.

1:18:28  
But if I didn't address any, please feel free to bring them back to the front or, or send me an e-mail.

1:18:33  
We'll, we'll answer them.

1:18:34  
We can talk more about the defensible space around homeowners.

1:18:38  
We do that pretty frequently.

1:18:42  
So yeah.

1:18:44  
Any other questions in chat or online or in the room?

1:18:47  
We've got about 8 minutes left.

1:18:48  
Yeah.

1:18:54  
If nobody else does.

1:18:55  
I have one that maybe can't be answered now, but I want to raise it if if we have time and please go for it.

1:19:04  
We got that has to do with regeneration.

1:19:09  
Years ago, I, I had a conversation with Rick Jandro, who's I guess he's retired now and complaining about the lack of effective forest regeneration.

1:19:22  
And he says, OK, you show me one that's not working and I'll show you one that is.

1:19:28  
So we spent spent a half a day or a day showing each other what works and what doesn't.

1:19:39  
And I'm just wondering how is the forest regeneration?

1:19:44  
If the if the forest is having really a lot of trouble, how's it going to regenerate?

1:19:53  
You do scarification probably, but all I see is grasses growing up.

1:20:01  
So I'm wondering if Steve or Andrew could talk about that a little bit.

1:20:07  
Yeah, John.

1:20:08  
So scarification is one of the methods that we we use to for regeneration.

1:20:19  
And then you know, we do have, you know, mandatory reforestation requirements in forest practices act within a certain time frame.

1:20:31  
And then if the scarification isn't working, we can go in and plant species afterwards.

1:20:41  
So it's either going to be a combination of scarification, scarification and planting or just plain planting.

1:20:49  
Currently we are, we have most of our contracts that we have had in the past had relied on scarification to do it.

1:20:57  
And if it's been done right in the right time, it usually it, it can work.

1:21:02  
If it's not done right, it like you said there's grass, there's grass that just comes in and it's hard to to regenerate.

1:21:09  
So that is one of those one of those situations where we might need to go back in there and go back and break up some of that grass and maybe replant or something like that.

1:21:20  
So very site specific in terms of what, what needs to be done.

1:21:26  
And and that grass, if that grass is present in a stand beforehand, that's a clue to us that we, I know we're going to have some challenges with regeneration.

1:21:36  
So there's grass before there any harvesting or any manipulations being being done.

1:21:42  
We know that there's probably going to be some challenges.

1:22:07  
All right, we've got 5 more minutes.

1:22:11  
Be here till the end.

1:22:13  
More questions.

1:22:13  
Now's your how's your time?

1:22:19  
I'm responding to some of the chat questions now.

1:22:21  
And if I don't hit any of the answers that that you're looking for, just catch me with an e-mail doing our best to to answer everything tonight.

1:22:30  
But there are some questions we just won't be able to fully answer verbally tonight.

1:23:06  
And for anybody who is in the room or online, just out of curiosity, how many of you heard about this through the online public notice?

1:23:15  
You can raise your hand or just rate, you know, click raise hand or however you want to let us know.

1:23:22  
Well, the the online public notice system that you signed up for to get a public notice versus our Facebook post.

1:23:30  
OK, I'm just kind of curious.

1:23:32  
I see a hand raised online.

1:23:35  
So I'm, I'm just curious to see how people heard about this.

1:23:41  
OK, I heard about it by word of mouth.

1:23:44  
OK.

1:23:45  
So we just want to make sure that we're doing a, a good job or a better job perhaps of, of getting the word out.

1:23:49  
So we do the online public notice.

1:23:52  
We'll do Facebook.

1:23:56  
We're going to try to figure out other ways to do it, like maybe it's a newspaper advertisement, word of mouth, anything like that.

1:24:02  
What works best for me is an e-mail.

1:24:04  
I get a lot of emails from the state on on like regulatory issues and and that works.

1:24:11  
I usually don't go to the online notices OK, but e-mail works for me anyway.

1:24:33  
On your e-mail box, that's why I heard, I can hear you're you're you're breaking up quite a bit on that re digitized it.

1:24:43  
Yeah, we didn't catch that.

1:24:47  
OK, just saying that I heard about it through the online public notice.

1:24:53  
I get it every day in my e-mail box.

1:24:56  
OK, so sounds like a variety of different methods.

1:25:00  
We'll continue using the online public notice, use Facebook, anybody who is here tonight, your e-mail address will put e-mail list and then just word of mouth, tell people about it.

1:25:13  
That would be appreciated.

1:25:21  
Thank you so much, everyone.

1:25:23  
Have a good evening.

1:25:23  
I really appreciate it.

1:25:25  
Yeah, Yeah.

1:25:26  
Thank you for your time.

1:25:28  
Yeah, you can go ahead and and wrap this up.

1:25:31  
We've got one more minute left anyway.

1:25:32  
So thank you very much for coming and look for us in Talkeetna in the New year and then other communities and the ones to come.

1:25:40  
OK.

1:25:41  
Well, thanks again for holding this meeting.

1:25:44  
Thanks for coming.

1:25:45  
Thanks for everybody coming and participating.

1:25:47  
Appreciate it.

1:25:59  
OK.