

2022 Annual Report to the Board of Forestry



Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Habitat Section
February 2023

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2022 OVERVIEW

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Habitat Section submits our 2022 annual report to the Board of Forestry. This report summarizes our January 1 – December 31, 2022, forestry-related activities and informs the Board of Forestry of Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (FRPA) effectiveness protecting the resources and habitats for which ADF&G has responsibility.

Alaska Statutes require ADF&G to manage, protect, maintain, improve, and extend the fish, game, and aquatic plant resources of the state in the interest of the economy and general well-being of the State (AS 16.05.020), to ensure the proper protection of anadromous fish habitat (AS 16.05.871), and to provide fish passage (AS 16.05.841).

On public lands, FRPA^a requires the maintenance of important fish and wildlife habitats. The state forester recognizes the expertise of ADF&G regarding fish and wildlife habitat on all lands with fish habitat as the primary value in riparian areas.^b ADF&G helps identify and protect important wildlife habitats on private lands and provides technical expertise for voluntary management techniques that minimize adverse effects on wildlife habitat.^c

PRIVATE AND OTHER PUBLIC (NON-DNR) LANDS

Table 1 contains FRPA activity on private and other public lands.

Southeast Region

Craig staff reviewed and commented on 12 detailed plans of operation (DPOs) for commercial timber harvest and road construction, reviewed one change in operations, processed five renewals, and conducted two FRPA inspections.

Douglas staff commented on one DPO for timber harvest and road construction on Yak-Tat Kwaan Land, reviewed one change in operations, processed three renewals, and conducted four FRPA inspections. Douglas staff issued one notice of violation to Yak Timber for installation of an unpermitted culvert, one fish habitat permit for remedial work to backwater the culvert, one fish habitat permit for a new culvert, and one fish habitat permit to use heavy equipment to remove logging slash from an anadromous stream on Yak Tat Kwaan land. ADF&G Habitat staff surveyed 261 streams for anadromous fish presence on Yak-Tat Kwaan, Huna Totem, and Sealaska lands.

Southcentral Region

Anchorage staff reviewed and commented on five DPOs for commercial timber harvest on Afognak Native Corporation lands, and one DPO for reforestation on Leisnoi, Inc. lands. No Fish Habitat permits were required. No FRPA inspections were completed due to Covid-19 travel restrictions.

Soldotna staff reviewed one DPO for timber salvage on KPB lands.

Palmer staff reviewed one DPO for commercial timber harvest in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough; no fish habitat permits were required.

^a AS 41.17.060 (c)(7)

^b AS 41.17.098 (d)

^c AS 41.17.910 (b) and (c).

PRIVATE AND OTHER PUBLIC (NON-DNR) LANDS CONT.

Interior Region

Staff reviewed one DPO and one renewal.

STATE LAND

Table 2 contains FRPA activities on State land.

Southeast Region

Craig staff conducted two inspections of, and issued a Title 16 permit for, a bridge installation in the Bayview Timber Sale. Craig staff also conducted an inspection of debris removal from the upper portion of cataloged stream 102-70-10740 in the Bayview Timber Sale. Staff also reviewed the Whale Pass and El Capitan Timber Sale Best Interest Findings.

Douglas staff surveyed two streams for anadromous fish on State land in Southern Southeast where future harvest may occur. Staff also processed one renewal for timber harvest on state land in Haines and reviewed and commented on the Preliminary Best Interest Finding for the Ski Hill Timber sale in Haines. Staff also reviewed and commented on the Haines State Forest 5-year Forest Management Schedule (FMS).

Southcentral Region

Soldotna reviewed the Mat-SU and Kenai/Kodiak Area 5-year schedule of timber sales.

Palmer staff provided comments for the five-year schedule of timber sales on state land, no Fish Habitat permits have been issued at this time.

Interior Region

Fairbanks staff reviewed and commented on one timber harvest variance, five FLUPs and five Best Interest Findings, eleven personal use firewood permits, conducted a preharvest site visit to identify wildlife habitat features for retention, and issued one fish habitat permit amendment for an active wildland fire suppression operation.

FEDERAL LAND

Table 3 contains activities on federal land.

Southeast Region

Craig staff reviewed nine projects under the general concurrence and issued two individual concurrences for culvert installations on Prince of Wales Island (POW). Fish habitat concurrence was issued for stream restoration at Margaret Creek near Ketchikan, and 12-Mile Creek and Shaheen Creek on Prince of Wales Island. Staff provided comments on the proposed Prince of Wales Landscape Level Analysis 2023 out-year plan.

Southcentral Region

No activity reported.

Interior Region

No activity reported.

FOREST PRACTICES IMPLEMENTATION

COMPLIANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS MONITORING

Habitat staff participated with the Division of Forestry monitoring FRPA compliance and effectiveness.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

ANADROMOUS WATERS CATALOG

Douglas staff continued field work to catalog anadromous streams on Yak Tat Kwaan Land, the Hoonah road system, and Tongass National Forest Land throughout Southeast Alaska under two Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund grant projects, one of which has been completed. Surveys targeted timber lands and relict logging road systems.

TONGASS COMPLIANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS MONITORING

In a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Habitat Section and USFS Alaska Region, USFS Agreement No. 194-MU-11100100-108, ADF&G agrees to participate annually in BMP monitoring field visits.

TONGASS FISH PASSAGE

ADF&G continues to work with the USFS to evaluate fish passage across the forest and prioritize fish passage restoration projects.

BUDGET AND PERSONNEL

BUDGET

ADF&G funding for FRPA activities conducted during calendar year 2022 came from state general funds. The Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund provided funding to identify and nominate freshwater anadromous fish habitat to the AWC in areas where we anticipate timber harvest.

PERSONNEL

New Hires

George Hoden, Habitat Biologist III, Palmer

Erika King, Habitat Biologist II, Douglas

Flynn Casey, Habitat Biologist I, Douglas

Resignations

Bill Kane, Habitat Biologist III, Douglas

Kelsey Dean, Habitat Biologist I, Douglas

STATEMENT OF FRPA EFFECTIVENESS

ADF&G considers FRPA and its regulations effective for maintaining fish habitat within the classified surface water types during forestry related activities. The Habitat Section works cooperatively with the Division of Forestry, the Department of Environmental Conservation, landowners and operators to implement FRPA to protect important fish habitat, water quality, and important wildlife habitat from the effects of timber harvest activities.

ADF&G worked cooperatively with DOF staff to draft suggested regulatory revisions of 11 AAC 95.220-.290 and 11 AAC 95.265. The goals of the revisions are to clarify stream survey requirements and responsibilities of the landowner prior to and during the DPO review process, and to update antiquated map requirements for DPO submission.

CALENDAR YEAR 2023

WORKLOAD PRIORITIES

FRPA participation remains a Habitat Section workload priority in addition to anadromous waters cataloging, fish habitat and special area permitting, special area planning, large projects of importance to the State, and research to aid in permitting decisions. Habitat Section staff continue to work with the Divisions of Sport Fish, Commercial Fisheries, and Wildlife Conservation, and the Division of Forestry, to identify fish bearing waters and important wildlife habitat on timberlands, participate in forestry reviews, and conduct forestry related fieldwork. Habitat staff will continue AKSSF-funded stream surveys on private lands held by native corporations where logging has or could potentially occur.

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

If requested, the Habitat Section will participate in Division of Forestry-sponsored training for agency staff and operators to describe fish habitat permitting under the Anadromous Fish and Fishway Acts and strategies to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts to important fish and wildlife resources and habitats.

Table 1.–FRPA activities on private and other public (non-DNR) lands.

Area	DPO	Renewals	Change in Operations	Variation Requests	Variation Inspections	Other FRPA Inspections	FHPs Issued	AWC Updates
Southern Southeast	Naukati (6) - Viking	Vallenar Bay (1) - Alcan	Naukati (1) - Viking	0	0	Viking (2)	3	0
	Cleva Bay (1) - Alcan	Naukati (1) - Viking						
	Coon Cove (4) - Alcan	Shelter Cove (2) - Alcan						
	George Inlet (1) - Alcan	Polk/McKenzie (1) - STC						
Northern Southeast	Yak-Tat Kwaan (1)	Yak-Tat Kwann (1)				Yak Tat Kwann (4)	Yak Tat Kwaan (3)	76
		Chase Logging (1)						
Anchorage	Afognak Native Corp-ANC Land (5)					Afognak Native Corp-ANC Land (4)		
	Leisnoi Inc. (1)							
Fairbanks	Gana-A'Yoo, Limited	SEGA Continued Winter Harvest						
Palmer	Alsom A Commercial Timber Harvest (MSS-22-01)							

Table 2.–FRPA activities on state land.

Area	BIFS	SFMP	FYSTS	FLUP	Personal Use Firewood	House Log Sales	FRPA Inspections	FHPs Issued	AWC Updates
Southern Southeast	Whale Pass						2		
	El Capitan								
Northern Southeast	Ski Hill (1)	Haines State Forest (FMS)							2
Soldotna			Kenai Area						
Palmer	Willow (SC-3154M)								
Anchorage									
Fairbanks	(NC-1740-D, NC-1828-F, 100Mile Fire Salvage, KeystoneBluffBirch, PaghRdSpruce)		Northern Region	(NC-1740/41-D, NC-1827/28-F, 100Mile Fire Salvage)	11		1		

Table 3.—Activities on federal land.

Area	NEPA	Field Visits	Concurrences
Southern Southeast		Restoration Inspection (1) - TRD	Bridges (3) - TRD
		Bridge/Culvert Inspections (6) - TRD	Culverts (8) - TRD
			Restoration (3) - TRD
			Equipment Crossings (3) - TRD
Northern Southeast			

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