

Corri A. Feige
Commissioner

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Department of
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Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

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Helge Eng joins DNR as new state forester for Alaska

(Anchorage, AK) – Helge Eng joined the Department of Natural Resources today as director of the Division of Forestry and Alaska state forester, after a 21-year career at California’s forest management and wildfire fighting agency.

At the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Eng had been deputy director for forestry since 2015. He had previously spent two years as assistant deputy director for resource protection, nine years as state forests program manager, and three years as state forest biometrician for the department.

“State foresters in Alaska and California share similar challenges in fighting wildfire to protect lives and property, and similar opportunities in managing vast forest resources to benefit industry, wildlife and recreation,” said Commissioner Corri A. Feige. “We are fortunate to have Helge Eng bring his experience north to Alaska to lead our Division of Forestry in its continued success in achieving these goals on behalf of Alaskans.”

In Alaska, Eng will direct a staff of about 264 employees charged with two major missions. The division’s Fire and Aviation program protects life, property and other values at risk from wildland fire on about 150 million acres of state, municipal and private lands, including federal lands by agreement. The program plays a critical role in emergency management activities, including Incident Management Teams essential to effective, prompt response to disasters of all types in Alaska and other western states.

The division’s Forest Resources Program provides a sustainable wood supply to the forest industry and public, and commercial forestry practice oversight on private, municipal and state land under state law. State timber sales are the primary source of wood for local sawmills and value-added wood product manufacturers in most of Alaska, and an important source of woody biomass, producing heat and electricity for rural Alaskans.

“It has long been a dream to serve as state forester, and the opportunity to take on this role in a state as big, wild and free as Alaska was one I could not pass up,” Eng said. “I

am looking forward to meeting with the many professionals working in the division, and in making many new friends here in Alaska.”

He has served in a variety of membership and leadership roles in forestry, including registered professional forester and member of the Society of American Foresters; member of the California Licensed Foresters Association, chair of the Northern California Society of American Foresters, and state representative on the Society of American Foresters Policy Committee.

Eng earned a Bachelor of Science degree in forest resources management from the University of British Columbia. At Oregon State University, he earned master’s and doctoral degrees in forest management, as well as a Master of Science degree in statistics.

Eng succeeds Chris Maisch, who retired as director and state forester in February after 21 years with the forestry division.

CONTACT: Tim Mowry, (907) 356-5512, tim.mowry@alaska.gov

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Helge Eng, Director of Alaska Division of Forestry