

2023 Annual Report to the Board of Forestry



Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Habitat Section
February 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	I
LIST OF TABLES.....	I
2023 OVERVIEW	2
Private and Municipal Land.....	2
Southeast Region	2
Interior Region.....	3
State Land.....	3
Southeast Region	3
Southcentral Region.....	3
Interior Region.....	3
Federal Land.....	3
Southeast Region	3
Southcentral Region.....	4
Interior Region.....	4
FOREST PRACTICES IMPLEMENTATION	4
Compliance and Effectiveness Monitoring.....	4
SPECIAL PROJECTS	4
Anadromous Waters Catalog.....	4
Tongass Compliance and Effectiveness Monitoring	4
Tongass Fish Passage	4
BUDGET AND PERSONNEL	4
Budget	4
Personnel	5
New Hires	5
Resignations.....	5
STATEMENT OF FRPA EFFECTIVENESS	5
CALENDAR YEAR 2024.....	5
Workload Priorities.....	5
Outreach and Education.....	5

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
Table 1.–FRPA activities on private and other public (non-DNR) lands.	7
Table 2.–FRPA activities on state land.....	8
Table 3.–Activities on federal land.....	9

2023 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, 2023, 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 six detailed plans of operation (DPOs) for commercial timber harvest and road construction, reviewed four change in operations, processed 29 renewals, conducted two FRPA inspections, and issued one Title 16 permit for bridge removal from a cataloged stream.

Douglas staff processed two renewals for timber harvest and conducted one FRPA inspection on Yak-Tat-Kwaan land. ADF&G Habitat staff surveyed 47 streams for anadromous fish presence on Huna Totem, Kake Tribal, and Sealaska lands which resulted in 26 updates to the Anadromous Waters Catalog.

Southcentral Region

Anchorage staff reviewed and commented on seven DPOs for commercial timber harvest on Afognak Native Corporation lands, and one DPO for reforestation on Leisnoi, Inc. lands. Two emergency Fish Habitat permits were issued to Afognak Native Corporation, one for a beaver dam removal and one for a bridge repair. No FRPA inspections were completed due to unfavorable weather conditions that prevented flights to Afognak Island.

Soldotna staff reviewed and commented on two DPOs for timber salvage, one on KPB lands and one on private land (owned by Chevron, operator Evergreen Alaska, Inc). No Fish Habitat Permits were required.

Palmer staff reviewed three DPOs 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.

Fairbanks staff reviewed one annual DPO amendment on Gana-A 'Yoo land to support Sustainable Energy program in Galena (SEGA).

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 and a Title 16 permitted bridge installation in the Bayview Timber Sale. Staff also reviewed and commented on the Whale Pass and El Capitan Timber Sale Best Interest Findings (BIF), the Preliminary BIF and Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) for the Kosciusko East Timber Sale, and provided information for the Kaikli Cove BIF and FLUP.

Douglas staff surveyed two streams for anadromous fish on Haines State Forest Land where future harvest may occur; anadromous fish were not found.

Southcentral Region

Soldotna had no activity to report.

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. Palmer staff surveyed one stream for fish presence on State land near Point MacKenzi where future harvest may occur. Palmer staff also reviewed and commented on the Willer Kash BIF

Interior Region

Fairbanks staff reviewed and commented on one timber harvest variation, eight FLUPs and seven corresponding BIFs, one logging road extension easement, two fuel break projects, one new personal firewood site, 14 personal use firewood permits, and conducted a pre-harvest site visit to identify wildlife habitat features and sampled for fish presence in an adjacent slough. Staff issued the third amendment for the statewide wildland fire suppression fish habitat permit, amended the permit stipulation summary and habitat protection guideline, and issued three Title 16 Fish Habitat Permits for winter logging road stream crossings.

FEDERAL LAND

Table 3 contains activities on federal land.

Southeast Region

Craig staff reviewed 11 fish passage projects under the General Concurrence and issued individual concurrences for six fish passage and restoration projects on Prince of Wales Island (POW). Individual concurrences were issued for stream restoration at Margaret, Hamlin, Sprout, and Ward Creeks near Ketchikan. Staff provided comments on the proposed Prince of Wales Landscape Level Analysis 2023 out-year plan.

Douglas staff issued one Fish Habitat Concurrence for culvert replacement on a forest road, reviewed three fish passage projects under the General Concurrence and surveyed 183 streams on USFS timber lands.

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 as well as participated in the DOF effectiveness monitoring meeting.

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 a Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund grant. 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 2023 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

Beth Evers, Habitat Biologist II, Palmer

Nick Jensen, Habitat Biologist II, Douglas

Claire Delbecq, Habitat Biologist II, Douglas

Kaitlynn Cafferty, Habitat Biologist III, Soldotna

Crystal Moenaert, Habitat Biologist III, Palmer

Resignations

Evan Fritz, Habitat Biologist II, Douglas

Tony Munter, Habitat Biologist IV, Soldotna

George Hoden, Habitat Biologist III, Palmer

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 2024

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 (4) - Viking	Shelter Cove (11) - Alcan	Shelter Cove (2) - Alcan	0	0	Viking (2)	2	0
	George Inlet (1) - Alcan	Naukati (15) - Viking	Revilla (1) - Alcan					
	Shelter Cove (1) - Alcan	Vallenar (3) - University	Edna Bay (1) – U of A					
Northern Southeast		Stump Company (1) NSE 18-01(01)				Yak Tat Kwann (1)		26
		Chase Logging (1) NSE 12-02(03)						
Anchorage	Afognak Native Corp-ANC Land (7) Leisnoi Inc. (1)	ANC (3)	ANC-Paramanof Lake (1)				2	
Soldotna	Evergreen Alaska, Inc. Salvage Harvest (KK-PRI-23-04) KPB Salvage Harvest							
Palmer	Alsop A&B Commercial Timber Harvest (MSS-22-01) Mule Creek Salvage Timber Sale Point MacKenzie Road Salvage Timber Harvest (23-03)							
Fairbanks	Gana-A'Yoo Limited	SEGA Continued Winter Harvest						

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			Whale Pass			2		
	El Capitain			El Capitain					
	Kosciusko East			Kosciusko East					
	Kaikli Cove			Kaikli Cove					
				Parlay #2					
Northern Southeast									
Anchorage									
Soldotna									
Palmer	Willer Kash SC-2023-014								
Fairbanks	Two Rivers Jct.			Two Rivers Jct.	14			4	
	Nenana Ridge 11 Mile			Nenana Ridge 11 Mile					
	Halfway Spruce			Halfway Spruce					
	Berg Birch 2-3			Berg Birch 2-3					
	Left Fork Crk.			Left Fork Crk.					
	Cummings Rd. Ext.			Cummings Rd. Ext.					
				Keystone Bluff Birch					
	Sawmill Crk.			Sawmill Crk.					

Table 3.—Activities on federal land.

Area	NEPA	Field Visits	Concurrences
Southern Southeast		Restoration Inspection (1) - TRD	Bridges (4) - TRD
		Bridge/Culvert Inspections (6) - TRD	Culverts (9) – TRD
			Culverts (2) – TRD
			Restoration (3) – TRD
			Restoration (4) – KMRD
Northern Southeast			Culverts (3) – HRD
			Bridges (1) – HRD

TRD= Thorne Bay Ranger District
 KMRD=Ketchikan Misty Fjords Ranger District
 HRD=Hoonah Ranger District

Email Cc:

Shannon Miller, ADNR DOF, Anchorage
Brock Tabor, ADEC, Juneau
Al Ott, ADF&G Habitat, Fairbanks
Audra Brase, ADF&G Habitat, Fairbanks
Ron Benkert, AD&G Habitat, Anchorage
Ben Mulligan, ADF&G Habitat, Anchorage
Kaitlynn Cafferty, ADF&G Habitat, Soldotna
Kate Kanouse, ADF&G Habitat, Douglas
Greg Albrecht, ADF&G Habitat, Douglas
Mark Minnillo, ADF&G Habitat, Craig
Sarah Myers, ADF&G Habitat, Palmer
Johathan Kirsch, ADF&G Habitat, Pipeline Office
Patricia Palkovic, ADNR DOF, Juneau
Trevor Fulton, ADNR DOF, Anchorage
Todd Nichols, ADF&G Habitat, Fairbanks
Scott Graziano, ADF&G Habitat, Anchorage
Crystal Moenaert, ADF&G Habitat, Palmer