



BRIEFING PAPER:

Southeast Forest Management Program

September 2017

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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DIVISION OF FORESTRY

The Division of Forestry is rebuilding capacity after retirements and significant funding reductions in FY16 and continues to provide timber sales from the Haines and Southeast State Forests to support the forest products industry and communities in the region.

In addition, our partnership with the U.S. Forest Service is starting to produce results and our joint staffs are working diligently to improve the economics and amount of timber volume being offered and sold from the Tongass National Forest. Utilizing the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) the state is preparing, offering and administering a 28 million board foot (MMBF) sale of young growth timber on Kosciusko Island. This work will complement a planned state timber sale that will be offered in the Southeast State Forest (SESF) and will utilize a Log Transfer Facility that was built by the state in 2016 as part of a University Trust Land Office timber sale in the same area. This collaboration between various land managers and sharing of infrastructure are important steps to improving the overall economics of sales and ensuring a consistent supply of timber is made available to the forest products sector.

The Division is also administering a wide range of projects under a Challenge Cost Share Agreement with the Forest Service to complete workforce development, forest inventory of both Old and Young Growth (OG/YG) forests and to design and demonstrate economic timber projects via work with the Alaska Forest Association and the Forest Service. Two workforce development academies have been offered on POW Island where residents have received training in forest inventory and timber management skills and the students have been hired into positions for both public and private companies working in southeast forests.

While these various efforts have made progress, there is still much to be accomplished to stabilize the current industry and to rebuild the timber sale pipeline so that OG and YG timber sales meet the needs of the region. Concurrently, workforce development and training are key ongoing needs for agencies and timber products companies engaged in harvest and milling.

Status of Current DOF Southeast Area Office Projects:

- Staffing Updates - The Southeast office in Ketchikan hired two new field foresters in 2017 to replace staff that retired or departed for private sector work. The Haines forester position received one-time funding for FY18 from the legislature. A long-term solution is still being sought as the Division is committed to retaining a position in Haines.
- The Haines Small Timber Sales Program - A healthy local program generated \$20,000 to \$40,000 in timber receipts per year over the last ten years on the Haines State Forest (HSF) and Mental Health Trust and University of Alaska lands within the HSF. This program helps support five to ten local businesses.
- Baby Brown Timber Sale (HSF) - This 20 MMBF sale located in the HSF was canceled as part of the Commissioner's decision following a Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) appeal

that covered a portion of the project area. A FLUP covering the entire sale area will be completed and the sale will be reoffered in 2017.

- Coffman Cove Timber Sale (SESF) - This 7.5 MMBF sale was sold to Viking Lumber Company in the spring of 2017 and is near completion.
- North Hollis Timber Sale (SESF) - The Division of Forestry (DOF) completed constructing sale access through the Clark Bay subdivision to reach timber lands in 2016 and subsequently completed the sale planning for this 4.5 MMBF sale in the summer of 2017. The timber is scheduled to be sold in the fall of 2017.
- Vallenar Bay Timber Sale and Road (SESF) - The 7.7 mile Vallenar Bay Access Road will be complete in October. The DOF is using the new access to finish timber sale layout in the area and anticipates selling the 13 MMBF sale in early 2018 pending adoption of the FLUP. (Vallenar road project - third bridge construction).



- Edna Bay Parley Timber Sale (SESF) - This 14 MMBF sale is on hold pending the Commissioner's decision on appeal of the Best Interest Finding.
- Forest practices regulatory responsibilities on private and other public lands have increased with recent land conveyances to Sealaska and the Mental Health Trust and are expected to continue an upward trend in activity.
- The DOF will continue to feed its timber sale pipeline, and as the agency works through the current program of offering all excess allowable harvest volume, the Division will return to delivering the annual allowable cut of 11.2 MMBF in a combination of small and medium sized timber sales.

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