



United States  
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Agriculture



Forest Service  
Alaska Region  
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# 2002 Accomplishments—Overview

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## State and Private Forestry Alaska Region



### Inside:

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## ***Message from New Director, Andy Mason***

We in State and Private Forestry (S&PF), Alaska Region, are pleased to share with you this overview of our 2002 accomplishments. Through the primary programs of Fire, Cooperative Forestry, and Forest Health Protection, the 22 employees in S&PF deliver a wide range of technical and financial assistance that ultimately benefits many “bottom line” customers—forest landowners and managers, communities, and citizens. The delivery of this important assistance would not be possible without our State of Alaska partners (e.g., Division of Forestry, Department of Community and Economic

Development, Alaska Cooperative Extension) and many other partner organizations.

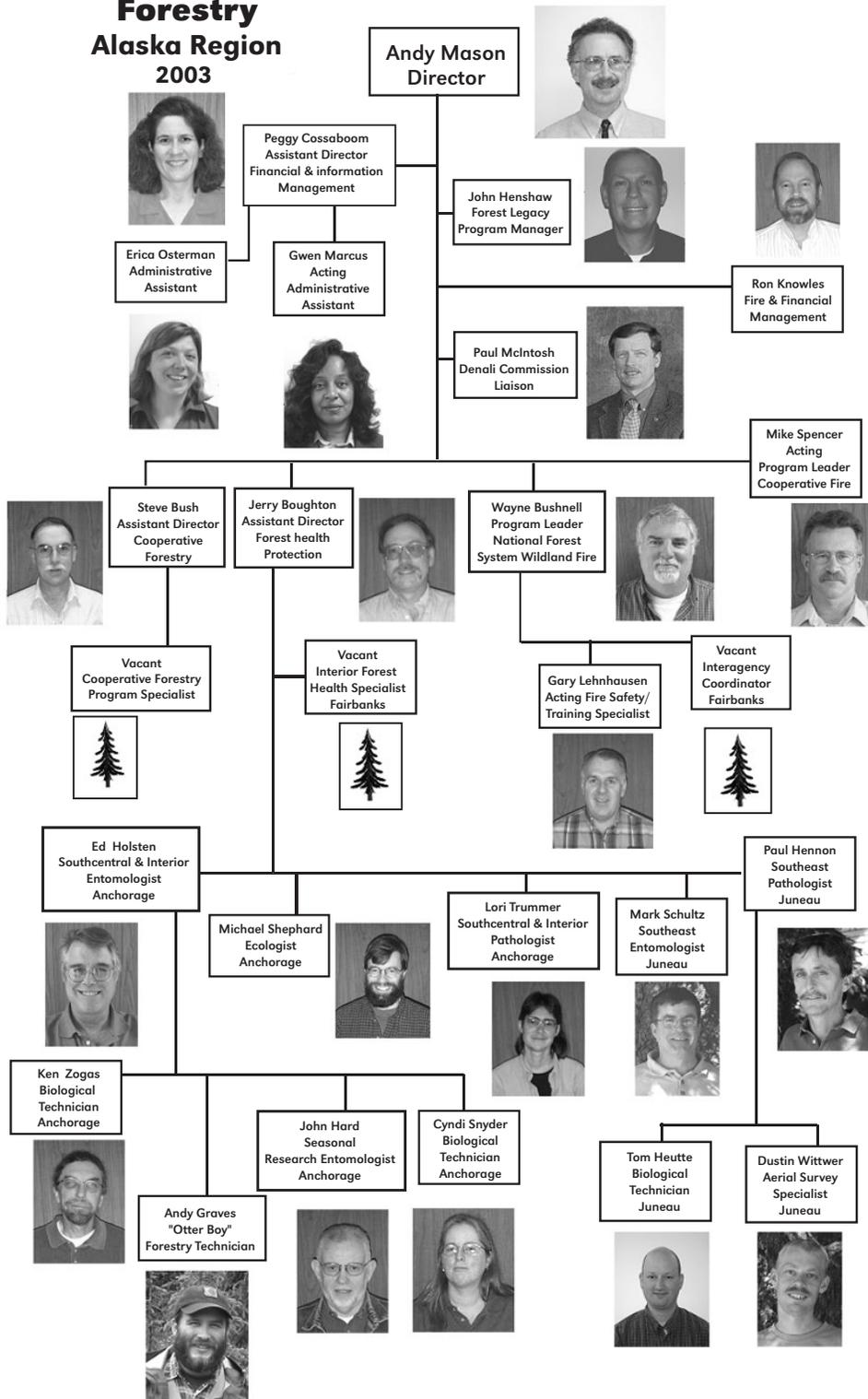
A relatively new Forest Service partner is the Denali Commission—an innovative federal-state partnership designed to provide critical utilities, infrastructure, and economic support throughout Alaska, with a focus on economically distressed rural communities. Through its Rural Community Assistance program the Alaska Region has a very similar mission, with a more specific focus on the southeast and southcentral communities that are closest to the Tongass and Chugach National Forests. For the past two years, Paul McIntosh has served as the full-time Forest Service liaison to the Commission and managed its Economic Development Program, which benefits rural communities throughout Alaska. I am pleased to announce that we are extending Paul’s liaison position for two more years. We look forward to many more positive outcomes for communities as a result of this continuing partnership. Please also look for a new section in this report that discusses the Denali Commission and highlights some of its accomplishments.

We in the Forest Service recognize the tremendous impacts that were felt by most of our cooperators when Fiscal Year 2002 S&PF grant funds were suddenly transferred to help pay fire fighting costs during the very severe 2002 fire season. These funds were returned in Fiscal Year 2003, and we are working with our partners to get them distributed.

On a personal note, I want to say how honored I am to have been chosen as the new Director of State and Private Forestry for the Alaska Region. I have some very big shoes to fill by following Acting Deputy Regional Forester Larry Yarger and of course long-time Deputy Regional Forester Paul Forward. I also appreciate very much the leadership that Acting S&PF Director Jerry Boughton has provided during these past few months. In early June, my wife Debbie and I moved from Fort Collins, Colorado, to our new home in Anchorage. We are excited about all the new opportunities in Alaska and look forward to becoming active members of the community.

All of us in State and Private Forestry look forward to working with you in 2003! We hope this report will help you identify new opportunities for us to cooperate with you in ways that will benefit the outstanding natural resources and communities of Alaska.

**State & Private  
Forestry  
Alaska Region  
2003**



# Forest Health Protection Programs

The 14 federal and 2 state employees of this program provide essential insect, disease, and forest health expertise in Alaska. The main program goal of helping Alaska land managers identify, monitor, and address forest health and pest management issues is accomplished through an array of partnerships, contracts, and agreements (over 15 such partnerships in 2002). Staff is located in two field offices (Juneau and Anchorage), and a third field office is being established in Fairbanks. The program is closely coordinated with the Alaska Division of Forestry. A few 2002 highlights of this active program include:

## Insect and Disease Aerial Detection Surveys

25 million acres of federal and nonfederal forested lands in southeast, southcentral, and interior Alaska were surveyed for insects and diseases. Surveyors utilized an electronic sketch mapping system which has increased mapping efficiency and accuracy. Survey results are published in an annual Alaska Insect and Disease Conditions report that is available to the public.



## Hazard Trees

A hazard tree management web site tailored to Alaskan forests was developed and is available at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/spf/fhp/hazard/>. It provides: 1) a systematic approach to visually inspect potential hazard trees; 2) a quantitative means to prioritize problem trees; 3) a range of suggested alternative remedial actions; and 4) provides profiles for the major Alaskan tree species with regard to tree failure.

## Invasive Plants

Invasive species management on state, federal, and private lands is a new emphasis area. Through interagency cooperation, an invasive plant database and GIS layer were developed. Inventory projects were conducted to determine the extent of current infestations including Japanese knotweed and garlic mustard. An eradication project of garlic mustard in Juneau is planned for 2003. A new Alaska invasive website is available: <http://www.cnipm.org/index.html>. These are but a few of the many activities of this program. A more complete description of the programs, staffing, partnerships, information available, and accomplishments can be found on our **website:** <http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/spf/fhp/>.



Garlic mustard.

Japanese knotweed.

*For more information please contact:*

*Jerry Boughton, Assistant Director, Forest Health Protection, [jboughton@fs.fed.us](mailto:jboughton@fs.fed.us), (907) 743-9461.*

# Fire Programs

**2002 Fire Season**—This was a very active fire season in Alaska which started in early May and finished up in September. Of the approximately 6 million acres burned in the US, 2.2 million of it occurred in Interior Alaska. The Forest Service in Alaska contributed approximately 150 people to support fire suppression throughout the United States.



**Cooperative Fire Protection**—State Fire Assistance money provided the State of Alaska the opportunity to increase initial attack capability across its protection areas. The majority of the funding went for training State and Volunteer Fire Department personnel.

A total of \$160,000 was allocated to assist local volunteer fire departments through Volunteer Fire Assistance grants. Ninety-five percent of the money went to purchase fire equipment and the rest went toward training. A total of 39 requests were funded.

**Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP)**—Dozens of excess military vehicles were screened at nearby military bases, refurbished, and converted to wildland fire use by State Forestry. In 2002, the State and Rural Fire Departments utilized excess property items valued at approximately \$6,400,000.

**Fire Prevention/Firewise**—As a member of the Alaska Wildfire Coordinating Group (AWFCG), the Forest Service is actively involved in statewide Alaska Firewise programs. The Firewise program helps teach local communities and homeowners how to protect their homes and businesses from wildfire. The Fire Prevention and Education Committee utilized this campaign on a statewide level for the 2002 season and will follow up in 2003 with a Firewise Conference in Fairbanks.

**Interagency Efforts**—Through participation on the Alaska Wildland Fire Coordinating Group (AWFCG) and the various working committees, numerous interagency projects have been developed and are being implemented statewide. This includes a statewide interagency process for distribution of grants to volunteer fire departments and an interagency fuels steering committee to coordinate efforts.

**Hazardous Fuels Treatment**—The Chugach National Forest continued to work on high priority fuels projects by mechanically treating 234 acres in the Moose Pass Cooperative Fuels Treatment area. In addition, a grant to the State allowed for the treatment of 200 acres on the Moose Pass project.

*For more information please contact:*

*Wayne Bushnell, Program Ldr. For. Nat. Forest System Wildland Fire, wbushnell@fs.fed.us, (907) 743-9459.*

*Michael Spencer, Acting Progr. Ldr. For. Cooperative Fire Protection, mjspencer@fs.fed.us, (907) 743-9440.*

## Volunteer Fire Assistance Grants

Department Name	Award
Anderson	\$5,000
Bethel FD	\$4,950
Big Lake	\$5,000
Chena	\$5,000
Chugiak	\$5,000
Alakanuk	\$2,600
Houston	\$5,000
Kenai	\$1,650
Kupreanof	\$5,000
City of Palmer	\$5,000
Coffman Cove	\$1,250
Cooper Landing	\$5,000
Craig	\$2,250
Delta	\$2,875
Deltana	\$5,000
Dillingham	\$5,000
Eastland	\$4,300
Ester	\$3,000
Homer	\$5,000
Katchemak Bay	\$5,000
Kake	\$2,500
Klawock	\$2,500
Lowell Point	\$5,000
McGrath	\$5,000
Meadow Lakes	\$5,000
Naukati	\$1,250
Ninilchik	\$500
North Pole	\$4,173
North Star	\$5,000
Sand Point	\$3,750
Seldovia	\$5,000
Seward	\$1,250
South Tongass	\$4,619
Steese	\$1,600
Sutton	\$5,000
Unalaska	\$5,000
Valdez	\$5,000
Whittier	\$5,000
Willow	\$5,000
Womens Bay	\$4,575
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$160,000</b>

# Cooperative Forestry Programs

Cooperative Forestry provides technical and financial assistance to help rural and urban citizens, including private landowners, care for forests and sustain their communities where they live, work, and play. Through partnerships with State forestry organizations and many others, federal funding is leveraged to help produce a variety of forest-based goods and services to meet domestic and international needs.

The 35 million acres of private forest land in Alaska account for about 10 percent of the State's land mass, and one-quarter of the State's forests. Management practices on these lands impact the social, economic, and natural environment for everyone.

**Economic Action Programs** help rural communities and businesses dependent on forest-based resources become sustainable and self sufficient.

- ❖ Rural Community Assistance Programs: help rural communities build skills, networks, and strategies to address social, environmental, and economic changes. In 2002, 18 communities were assisted.
- ❖ Forest Products Conservation and Recycling Programs: help communities and businesses find new markets and expanded business opportunities based on forest resources. In 2002, 14 businesses were assisted including dry kiln facilities.

**Landowner Assistance Programs** help private landowners protect, improve, restore, and sustain forests.

- ❖ Forest Legacy Program: protects private forest lands from being converted to nonforest uses. Three properties (total 442 acres) were scheduled for acquisition in 2003.
- ❖ Forest Stewardship Program: helps private forest landowners develop plans for the sustainable management of their forests.
- ❖ Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP): provides financial assistance to private landowners to carry out their stewardship plans. This is a new program for 2003.

**Urban and Community Forest Programs** help people in urban areas and community settings sustain shade trees, forest lands and open spaces.

- ❖ With the active involvement of volunteers, the program helps State forest agencies, local and tribal governments, and the private sector improve natural resource management of trees and forests in urban areas and community settings. The active involvement of volunteers is encouraged and facilitated. Scientific information about protecting, managing, and maintaining community forest resources is developed and distributed through this program. In 2002, 17 communities were involved.

*For more information please contact:  
Steve Bush, Assistant Director, Cooperative Forestry,  
sbush@fs.fed.us, (907) 743-9451.*



*New dry kiln facility near Big Lake, Alaska.*



*Arbor Day, Wasilla, Alaska.*

# Denali Commission

The Denali Commission is a model of intergovernmental cooperation and coordination. Forest Service liaison Paul McIntosh serves as one of eight program manager positions on the Commission that are entirely staffed by employees from federal, state and private agencies/organizations. They deliver an impressive set of public infrastructure, training, economic development and other programs primarily through partnerships with other agencies and organizations. In addition, a total of 19 federal and state entities, including the Forest Service, signed a memorandum of understanding, committing them to work together and share information to benefit rural communities.

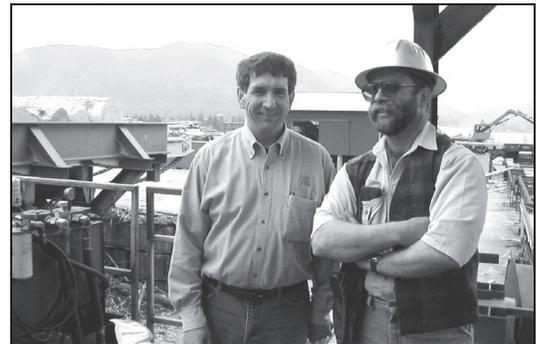
## Commission Programs Managed by Forest Service liaison.

Program & Projects Managed	Program Management Partner
Mini-Grant Program (28 projects)	Alaska Dept. of Community & Economic Development
Community Priorities Program (9 projects)	Alaska Dept. of Community & Economic Development
Alaska Growth Capital Program (16 business loans)	Alaska Growth Capital, Inc.
Initiative for Accelerated Infrastructure Development Program (23 community profile maps)	Alaska Dept. of Community & Economic Development
Airport Assistance Program (2 projects)	

**Other Denali Commission Program Support:** In the last four years the Commission has made one or more grants in 16 communities in the Tongass National Forest, and 11 communities in the Chugach National Forest, supporting energy, health care, training and infrastructure projects.

The Forest Service liaison also provided consultation and technical assistance directly to 13 communities in the Tongass National Forest and three communities in the Chugach National Forest. Website: [www.denali.gov](http://www.denali.gov).

*For more information please contact:  
Paul McIntosh, Forest Service Liaison to the Denali Commission, [pmcintosh@denali.gov](mailto:pmcintosh@denali.gov), (907) 271-1640.*



*Alaska Growth Capital financed a loan to Steve Seley (right), President, Pacific Log and Lumber in 2002. Dean Stewart (left) USDA Rural Development, set up the loan guarantee.*



*Inside mill with owner Steve Seley, President, Pacific Log and Lumber in 2002.*



*Haines Public Library opened January 28, 2003.*

# Russian Far East Program

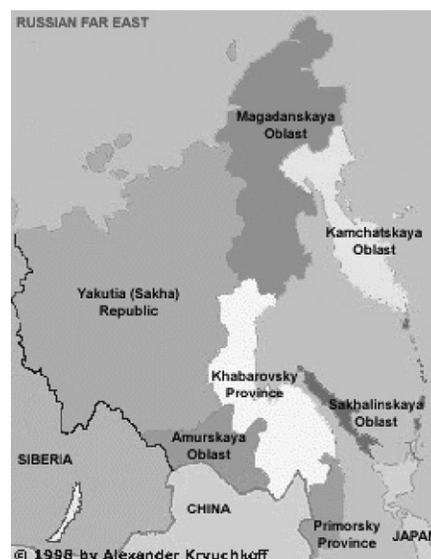
The Forest Service's work continues in the Russian Far East, through our agreement with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). In 2001, the Federal Forest Service of Russia was disbanded and revitalized as the Russian State Forest Service.

**Fire Coordination**—For the past nine years, various delegations of Russian Specialists and Managers have traveled to the U.S. to view U.S. Wildland firefighting programs. Many of these individuals have returned home greatly impressed by our system of Interagency Fire Coordination Centers. In 2002, Mr. Vladimir Kolomytsev, Chief Forester for the Khabarovsk State Forest Service announced that a pilot center for fire coordination and fire training would be developed in Khabarovsk, Russia. In October 2002, a delegation of three fire specialists traveled to Khabarovsk to assist our partners in development of the organizational structure and operating procedures for a Fire Center. The delegation prepared several operating plans as samples for use by the Russian specialists.

The delegation was invited back to Khabarovsk for the grand opening of the Fire Center in April of 2003. Work will continue to further refine this project.

**Reforestation**—In previous years, the Alaska Region has served as the primary coordinator of a reforestation/regeneration project in the Russian Far East. With the retirement of Paul Forward, the lead for this project has been shifted to the Washington Office.

*For more information please contact:  
Wayne Bushnell, Program Leader for National Forest System  
Wildland Fire, [wbushnell@fs.fed.us](mailto:wbushnell@fs.fed.us) (907) 743-9459.*



*Vladimir Kolomytsev and Wayne Bushnell sign a protocol on continuing work on the Russian Far East Fire Center.*



*Tree planting in Russian Far East.*

# Transitions



**Paul Forward** retired in May, 2002 after serving as Deputy Regional Forester for State and Private Forestry since 1990. Paul and his wife Donna have stayed in Alaska and reside in Eagle River. We hear his favorite past time is fishing...

**Alan Vandiver**, transferred to become District Ranger on the Klamath National Forest in Happy Camp, California. Alan was the Alaska Cooperative Forestry Specialist since 2001. His optimism and enthusiasm will be missed.

**Erika Reed** transferred to become the Land Law Examiner for the Bureau of Land Management in Anchorage. She was the Administrative Assistant for State and Private Forestry since 1998. Her witty humor and expertise are greatly missed.

**Kathy Mathews** transferred to Boise Idaho to coordinate the aerial detection programs for the Northern and Intermountain Regions. Kathy had worked in the Anchorage Forest Health Protection (FHP) field unit for a number of years.

**Cynthia Snyder** was hired to fill the vacancy created by Kathy's transfer. Cyndi has several years previous forest health experience with the Northern Region Forest Health Protection program in Missoula Montana. She will be conducting aerial surveys and other forest health work for the Anchorage FHP field unit.

**Tom Huette** is a new Biological Technician with the Juneau FHP field unit. Tom will support our increased emphasis on invasive plants in southeast Alaska. Tom just celebrated the birth of his first child.

**Kevin Johnsen** recently left the Anchorage FHP field unit and returned to the Midwest. He digitalized all our post aerial surveys (since 1950s) and provided other computer and information management support.

## We've Moved

State and Private Forestry has moved! We jumped from the fifth floor of the Calais II building to the second floor this past February, our new address:

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