ALASKA

State & Private Forestry Fact Sheet

Investment in State's Cooperative Programs:

Programs	FY 2003 Final SPF	FY 2003 Final NFP	FY 2004 Estimate SPF	FY 2004 Estimate NFP
Coop Forest Health Management	106,000.00	219,400.00	142,000.00	60,000.00
State Fire Assistance	640,000.00	1,112,000.00	640,000.00	607,000.00
Volunteer Fire Assistance	110,000.00	281,000.00	111,000.00	279,000.00
Forest Stewardship Program	475,000.00	0.00	485,000.00	0.00
Stewardship Incentives	0.00	0.00		0.00
Forest Legacy Program	517,000.00	0.00	469,000.00	0.00
Urban and Community Forestry	233,000.00	0.00	222,000.00	0.00
Economic Action Programs	320,000.00	208,000.00	345,000.00	0.00
PNW Assistance Program	0.00	0.00		0.00
Forest Resource Information and Analysis	0.00	0.00		0.00
Forest Land Enhancement Program	818,640.00	0.00		0.00
	3,219,640.00	**1,820,400.00**	**2,414,000.00**	**946,000.00**

State and Private Forestry Cooperative programs provide technical, educational and financial assistance to landowners, resource managers and communities with a primary goal of maintaining and improving the health, sustainability, and productivity of Alaska's urban and rural forests and related economies. These programs are delivered to our customers through a partnership between the State of Alaska, the USDA Forest Service and in cooperation with many other private and government entities. These programs:

- **Increase cost effectiveness** through the use of partnerships in delivery,
- **Increase values** through sustained productivity of forests, and
- **Are voluntary** and use non-regulatory approaches.

KEY ISSUES:

Key issues that Alaska's State and Private Forestry partners will address together in the next few years include:

- Hazardous fuels in wildland/urban interface (WUI) areas threatened by wildland fire that need treatment to reduce the potential loss of life and property.
- Spruce bark beetle impacted lands outside the WUI that need restoration treatments to re-establish forest cover and improve long term health and productivity.
- The increasing threat to Alaska's forests posed by non-native invasive insects, pathogens, and plants.
- Rural communities that need assistance in building skills, networks and strategies to address social, environmental and economic changes.

Forest Facts and 2003 Accomplishments

SELECTED FACTS		FY 2003 ACCOMPLISHMENTS	
Population	627,000	Stewardship Plans Prepared (current year)	33
Acres of Forest Land	129,000,000	Acres Under Stewardship Plans (current year)	74,348
Acres of NonIndustrial Private Forest Land	35,875,000	Acres Under Stewardship Plans (all years)	3,265,663
Number of NIPF Landowners	17,000	Multi-resource practices implemented on NIPF - Acres	0
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	105,000,000	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted SPF NFP	39 27 12
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	900,000	State Fire – Communities Assisted SPF NFP	22 18 4
Number of Rural Fire Departments	256	Coop Forest Health – Acres Protected SPF NFP	 300 0
Number of Cities and Towns	227	Coop Forest Health – Acres Surveyed SPF NFP	 2,400,000 1,200,000
Forest Based Employment	1900	Forest Legacy Project Acquisition - Acres	239
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	5	Urban Forestry-Participating communities	17
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	7,378,500	Urban Forestry-Technical Assist to Communities	310
		Urban Forestry –Volunteer Assistance Generated-Days	129
		EAP-Communites working under broad-based local strategic plans	75

Program Highlights:

Urban and Community Forestry: The Alaska Division of Forestry delivers this program in partnership with State and Private Forestry. The purpose of the program is to help communities throughout Alaska sustain their shade trees, forest lands, and open spaces. The Division of Forestry has 16 participating communities in the program. Five more communities are actively pursuing community forestry development. Statewide, approximately 68 trees were planted. The Alaska Community Tree Steward Course was held in Anchorage this year with 16 participants. The program staff co-sponsored a forest health/insect and disease workshop which served as a certified arborists training course. Pruning presentations occurred in four communities. The program received and distributed seedlings through a National Tree Trust Community Tree Planting Grant. Alaska's two Millenium Groves, planted in 2002 with a Millenium Green grant, were actively maintained. The program partnered with Conoco-Phillips Petroleum Company to sponsor the annual Anchorage Tree Adoption Program with the distribution of 1000 trees. Staff coordinated an invasive weed pull day. Arbor Day events were sponsored at all four military bases in the State.

Cooperative Fire Protection: Since approximately 40% of Alaska's fire protection on forested lands is provided by the Alaska Division of Forestry, an extensive, fully-coordinated rural fire response system is necessary. In order to meet this need, State and Private Forestry provides assistance to the State through three specific program components:

1. State Fire Assistance (SFA)

2. Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA)

3. Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP)

The objectives of the three program components of the Cooperative Fire Program are as follows:

State Fire Assistance. Protects natural resources from fire on state and private lands. This is done through various fire prevention efforts and by providing suppression assistance to the State's rural fire departments to maintain

initial attack capability to keep fire outbreaks small. The Federal funds are cost-shared with state and local funds and help augment State protection needs.

Volunteer Fire Assistance. The Alaska Division of Forestry delivers the Volunteer Fire Assistance program through 50-50 cost-sharing grants. The purpose of this program is to provide financial, technical, and other assistance to State Foresters and other appropriate officials to organize, train, and equip fire departments in rural Alaskan communities. In 2003 a total of 50 applications were approved and $224,500 was awarded. A total of $192,000 was used to purchase equipment and $15,000 was used to train firefighters. An additional $27,500 was provided to administer the program by the State of Alaska.

Federal Excess Personal Property. The Forest Service is responsible to assure federal excess personal property is acquired, used, managed, and disposed of in accordance with federal laws and regulations. The Forest Service loans its federal excess property to State forestry agencies and their cooperators for wildland and rural community fire protection. The Alaska Division of Forestry avoided a major reduction in fire suppression rolling stock levels by supplementing their fleet with excess federal vehicles. The State of Alaska has, on loan from the Forest Service, over $5.5 million in federal excess equipment.

Additional fire assistance has been made available to the State of Alaska through funding provided by the National Fire Plan (NFP). The Forest Service is in the third year of successful implementation of National Fire Plan activities. The NFP was developed in August 2000, following a landmark wildland fire season, with the intent of actively responding to severe wildland fires and their impacts to communities while assuring sufficient firefighting capacity for the future. The NFP addresses five key points: Firefighting, Rehabilitation, Hazardous Fuels Reduction, Community Assistance, and Accountability.

Landowner Assistance: In Alaska, the nation-wide **Forest Stewardship and Forest Land Enhancement Programs** are delivered by the Alaska Division of Forestry. The success in landowner assistance of previous years continued. During 2003, two Alaska Native Corportations completed Forest Stewardship Plans covering 97,474 total acres of which 78,274 acres are forested. One Forest Stewardship planning grant was awarded to an Alaska Native Corporation. Forest Stewardship plans were prepared for and signed by 31 individual Alaska landowners. Statewide, 455 individual ownerships now have Forest Stewardship Plans covering 33,046 acres. 2003 is the first year of implementation of the Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP). FLEP helps Non-Industrial Private Forest landowners finance a wide range of on-the-ground management practices that improve forest and watershed health and produce public benefits. Twenty FLEP projects were approved, covering 203 acres. In high risk wildfire communities, 54 home assessments were conducted through the National Fire Plan and cost share grants were used for reduction of hazardous fuels. Wildlife Urban Interface (WUI) grants were used for 40 projects in 3 communities with 13 acres treated this year. A total of 103 state assists to landowners were reported through FLEP, WUI grants, and National Fire Plan home assessments.

Forest Legacy Program: Forest Legacy is a new program in Alaska that allows for purchase (Fee Simple or Conservation Easments) of private forest land, from willing sellers, that is threatened with conversion to non-forest uses. The program is implemented through a partnership between State and Private Forestry and Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation and in cooperation with Non-Government and Not-for-Profit Organizations. In December 2003 we closed on purchase of the Colorado Creek property near Fairbanks, the first Forest Legacy project in Alaska. This project protected public access to a 239-acre parcel which was already subdivided and listed for sale by its owner, and is located inside the Chena River State Recreation Area (SRA). The Conservation Fund brokered the sale between the owner and the USDA Forest Service and held the property until the State met its 25 percent match as required for a Forest Legacy purchase.

In addition to the property in Chena River SRA, the FY 2003 program has two properties nearing completion for protection of critical fish habitat in the Wood-Tikchik State Park area near Dillingham. The State should close on both of these properties by the end of FY 2004. The President's budget for FY 2005 includes one million dollars for continuation of Alaska's Forest Legacy.

Forest Health Protection (FHP): Through this program a wide range of forest health related technical and financial assistance is provided to forest landowners and resource managers. FHP staff provide the primary forest entomology and forest pathology expertise in the State and conduct activities such as integrated pest management technology development, annual insect and disease surveys, forest health monitoring, and pest suppression actions on forest insect, disease, and invasive plant problems.

Through the Forest Health Monitoring Data Clearinghouse web site and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources and Forest Service FHP web sites, GIS mapping information, annual Insect and Disease survey information, pest leaflets, and other pertinent forest health reference information is available to resource managers and the public. Through a successful partnership with Alaska Cooperative Extension forest health information continues to be provided to the public resulting annually in over 8,000 public contacts and more than 30 public workshops.

In 2003-2004 the State Division of Forestry and the Forest Service established a jointly staffed forest health unit in Fairbanks. The new unit will provide forest health expertise and program delivery to forest managers in interior Alaska as well as enhanced cooperative forest health efforts with the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Technology development efforts include assessing remote sensing techniques for estimating the potential useable volume of cedar on the over 500,000 acres of mapped yellow-cedar decline areas of southeast Alaska.

A biological control action is underway to stem the introduction of the Birch Leaf Miner (first exotic insect to attack native Alaska trees). This effort requires a high level of cooperation between several federal, State and Canadian personnel. The first release of the bio-control agent (parasitic wasp) is scheduled in 2004.

Cooperation with the Kenai Peninsula Borough continues to provide extremely useful mapping and GIS information that is helping us address the drastic forest change and resulting resource impacts from this unprecedented spruce bark beetle epidemic. Several restoration actions are underway including reforestation and watershed assessment projects.

FHP funding and technical assistance is providing focus in Alaska for coordinated interagency inventory and control actions on non-native invasive weeds. This expanding FHP program emphasis area requires a high level of coordination with federal and State agencies, several State departments as well as with several non-governmental organizations.

Economic Action Programs:

Rural Community Assistance Programs – To be more efficient and provide better service to communities, the Forest Service initiated a partnership with the Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) in 1994 to deliver this grant program. That has simplified the application process for communities and allowed both agencies to accomplish more in partnership than they would have been able to accomplish alone. Contributions for the grants in 2003 came from the Denali Commission ($250,000) and the Forest Service Rural Development program ($320,000 – a combination of FY 2003 and FY 2002 fire transferrred dollars). In 2003, 76 communities applied for grants and 17 were selected. **Forest Products Conservation and Recycling –** Dan Parrent, the wood products specialist continues to assist new and existing wood products companies statewide. This position is supported through a partnership with the Juneau Economic Development Council, State of Alaska and State and Private Forestry. Mr. Parrent is available to provide market research information, technical assistance, and information on appropriate processing equipment. In 2003, Mr. Parrent answered 117 requests for wood technology information and conducted 29 site visits. Monitoring of the Kiln Drying Facilities Grant Program continued with the eleven successful applicants. Grant recipients have made substantial progress in implementing the program. **Wood in Transportation –** An Alaska Wood in Transportation (WIT) working group was formed with the goals of institutionalizing the use of local wood and to improving the utilization of Alaska wood species for transportation structures. The program has the potential for significant economic impact on the rural forest-based communities statewide.

State of Alaska

Jeff Jahnke, State Forester
Alaska Division of Forestry
550 West Seventh Avenue, Suite #1450
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3566
Phone: 907-269-8474 Fax: 907-269-8931
Email: jeff_jahnke@dnr.state.ak.us

Andy Mason, Director
State and Private Forestry
3301 C Street Suite 202
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
Phone: 907-743-9455 Fax: 907-743-9479
Email: amason@fs.fed.us

United States Department of Agriculture