

**FEDERAL AID
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

**WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT
PERFORMANCE REPORT**

STATE: Alaska

GRANT AND SEGMENT NO. W-33-12

WORK LOCATION: Region III

PROJECT NO. 25.0

PERIOD: 1 July 2013 – 30 June 2014

PROJECT TITLE: Alaska Wildlife Habitat Enhancement

Project Activities and Accomplishments

ACTIVITY 1: Initiate or coordinate contracting and other administrative tasks necessary to prescribe burn Unit #4 of the Western Tanana Flats Prescribed Burn Plan and oversee the burn operation.

Accomplishments: The funding for this project was a Capital Improvements Project (CIP) from the Alaska Legislature for landscape scale fire that expired in FY12 and was not renewed.

ACTIVITY 2: Plan one or more landscape-scale prescribed fires in GMU 20A.

Accomplishments: The GMU 20A foothills burn was terminated as an objective of Federal Aid research project 5.20 in FY11. In addition, large fire CIP funding has expired (see Activity 1).

ACTIVITY 3: Participate in meetings, workshop or seminar related to study objectives or training opportunities related to prescribed burning, fire effects monitoring, or other silvicultural practices that affect wildlife habitat.

Accomplishments: Tom Paragi attended monthly meetings (Sept-May) of the Citizen Advisory Committee of the Tanana Valley State Forest in Fairbanks to provide a wildlife habitat context during discussions of proposed timber sales. He attended the Alaska Board of Forestry meeting in Fairbanks to remain apprised of biomass energy developments statewide and represent wildlife interests. He also participated in a teleconference to rank research proposals by the Fire Research committee of the Alaska Wildlife Fire Coordinating Group. Finally, he gave an oral presentation “Design of best management practices for wildlife habitat in Alaska Boreal forest” at the Alaska Chapter of The Wildlife Society in Anchorage and an invited talk “Increased logging for wood energy in Alaska boreal forest: Implications for moose and reforestation” at the 48th North American Moose Conference and Workshop in Girdwood.

ACTIVITY 4: Periodically visit the areas in the 1987 Granite Creek burn near Delta Junction that were mechanically treated during March 2008 to evaluate the effectiveness of the dozer work and document vegetative growth.

Accomplishments: No plot visits were required in this reporting period.

ACTIVITY 5: Re-sample permanent vegetation plots in postlogging treatments, prescribed burns or mechanically treated areas.

Accomplishments: No plot visits were required in this reporting period.

ACTIVITY 6: Use digital imaging, geographical positioning system (GPS) data, and a geographic information system (GIS) to document and analyze project accomplishments, and enhance public information capabilities. Prepare and distribute videos of management activities as appropriate. Maintain GIS license and update other software.

Accomplishments: Fire activity and perimeters are now mapped in an interactive graphics display in near real time on the Alaska Fire Service website, so no maps were requested by staff. The 2013 update to the spatial database on fire history since 1940 was downloaded from the Alaska Fire Service website for analysis and planning, and the GIS license was renewed.

Paragi reviewed the Project Statement, which originated in early 1990s primarily to enable habitat enhancement using prescribed fire and mechanical treatments where wildland fire is suppressed near communities. He discussed changes in the management situation (recent large fires, increased logging for wood energy, public opposition to smoke from fires) with regional supervisory staff in the context of continued limited road and trail access for hunting and wildlife viewing on state lands. He then worked with Kalin Seaton (wildlife biologist) and Matthew Warren (GIS specialist) to revise Project Statement 25.0 for Fiscal Years 2015-2019 to focus on documenting new forest disturbances near the road system for potential to enhance access in areas likely to exhibit increases in wildlife abundance and harvest opportunity.

ACTIVITY 7: Provide technical review of timber harvest plans and other planning documents affecting wildlife values.

Accomplishments: Paragi provided comments on proposed timber sales at the request of Habitat Division.

ACTIVITY 8: Conduct literature reviews in forestry and wildlife media to define methods of vegetation manipulation potentially suited for use in the boreal forest of interior Alaska.

Accomplishments: Paragi continued periodic literature downloads on fire and forest ecology and management pertinent to Alaska ecosystems. In light of recent proposals for wood energy, he also continued worked with Division of Forestry staff and University of Alaska-Fairbanks researchers to plan the scope of a literature review on Best Management Practices regarding silviculture and wildlife habitat pertinent to boreal forest. In this capacity he began serving on a technical group convened under the Alaska Board of Forestry for reforestation standards (particularly wildlife effects, such as herbivory) and worked with Drs. Scott Brainerd (research coordinator) and Julie Hagelin (wildlife biologist) to develop a research project statement for FY15-17 on wildlife-forestry relationships in the Tanana Valley.

ACTIVITY 9: Write annual survey and inventory reports; use newspaper, television, radio, and internet media for information exchange and public notice; and provide public involvement as necessary.

Accomplishments: Paragi drafted the Federal Aid performance report and reviewed program needs for FY15 budget preparation.

Submitted by: Doreen I. Parker-McNeill, Region III Management Coordinator

Date: August 20, 2014