

**FEDERAL AID
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
PO Box 25526
Juneau, AK 99802-5526

**FIRE MANAGEMENT PLANNING FOR WILDLIFE HABITAT
PERFORMANCE REPORT**

STATE: Alaska

GRANT AND SEGMENT NR: W-33-4

PROJECT NR: 24.0

WORK LOCATION: Statewide

PERIOD: 1 July 2005–30 June 2006

PROJECT TITLE: Fire Management Planning for Wildlife Habitat

Project Activities and Accomplishments

Activity 1: Represent the department on the Alaska Wildland Fire Coordinating Group (AWFCG) and related committees and task groups.

- Represented the department at quarterly meetings and monthly teleconferences of the AWFCG and meetings of the Fuels and Prescribed Fire Committee, and assumed chairmanship of the AWFCG in January 2006 for the ensuing year.
- Represented the department at meetings of the Fire Research and Applications Committee and the Fire Effects Task Group.
- Represented the department at meetings of the Fire Prevention, Education and Awareness Committee.

Activity 2: Participate in the 2 annual fall fire reviews sponsored by the AWFCG and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry (DOF), respectively.

Attended the Interagency Fall Fire Review and the DOF Fall Fire Review.

Activity 3: Annually evaluate and comment on the selection of fire management options (Critical, Full, Modified, and Limited) under the Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Plan and recommend changes.

Discussed possible changes to the selected fire management options for Walrus Islands and McNeil River State Game Sanctuaries with DWC staff and the DOF McGrath District Fire Management Officer.

Activity 4: Develop and promote department policies and positions relative to fire management.

- Continued to advocate for active management of wildland fires to meet land, resource and protection objectives and avoid future catastrophic fires in developed areas where initial attack is highly effective at excluding fire.

- Sought changes in federal policy to allow active management of wildland fires (intentional manipulation of fire behavior to achieve desired results in contrast to passive “fire use,” which only allows for natural fire spread).
- Sought changes in the Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan (AIWFMP) to encourage active management of fire starts in the Full and Modified Management Option areas.

Activity 5: Review and comment on state and federal fire-related policies and procedures.

- Continued to seek changes in Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation permitting requirements and fees for prescribed burning.
- Commented on shortcomings of the federal “fire use” policy and the confusion caused by the misleading terminology and encouraged further policy change to allow active management of wildland fire to meet program objectives.

Activity 6: Meet with federal, state, and local level administrators to discuss fire-related policies, procedures or issues.

- Discussed state and federal fire policies during the Interagency Fall Fire Review and the DOF Fall Fire Review.
- Attended a Wildland Fire Use Workshop at the Bureau of Land Management—Alaska Fire Service on March 15, 2006.
- Met periodically with the human–fire interactions group at the University of Alaska Fairbanks to discuss fire-related policies, procedures, or issues relative to various research projects currently underway.

Activity 7: Facilitate department staff involvement in fire-related issues.

- Provided fire information and maps to Region III DWC staff during the fire season and attempted to help area biologists interact more effectively with fire managers.
- Prepared and posted large fire boundary maps in the Region III office lobby for viewing by visiting public.

Activity 8: Identify and review appropriate literature to maintain expertise on fire management issues.

- Continued to read research papers and other literature on fire-related issues.
- Provided review comments on a study proposal by S. F. Trainor, A. L. Lovecraft, M. Kwart and T. Hollingsworth entitled, *Public Perception of Fire: Developing Communication Strategies for Urban and Rural Alaska*.

Activity 9: Prepare news releases, guest editorials, brochures and other written media on fire-related issues.

- Prepared and distributed a video of the May 6, 2005, prescribed burn at the Nenana Ridge Ruffed Grouse Project (Nenana Ridge) to local TV stations prior to the planned ignition of a similar burn during May 2006.
- Worked with Mike Taras, DWC Wildlife Education Specialist, and Matt Weaver, DOF Education Coordinator, on a new state brochure entitled, *Why are you letting it burn?*

Activity 10: Interact with broadcast media on fire-related issues.

- Conducted interviews with local media prior to and after the May 11, 2006, prescribed burn at Nenana Ridge.
- Worked with Cathie Harms, DWC Information Officer, and Robert Schmoll, DOF Fire Management Officer, to prepare background information on fire effects for a local TV station.

Activity 11: Prepare an annual budget, work plan, and documents needed to satisfy Federal Aid and other reporting requirements.

Submitted an FY05 performance report and FY07 work plan to Federal Aid and submitted an FY07 budget request.

Total Project Costs (in thousands) \$32.5

Submitted by: Roy A. Nowlin, Management Coordinator