

**FEDERAL AID
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

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

HABITAT MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT

STATE: Alaska

GRANT AND SEGMENT NR: W-33-4

PROJECT NR: 25.0

WORK LOCATION: Region III

PERIOD: 1 July 2005–30 June 2006

PROJECT TITLE: Alaska Wildlife Habitat Enhancement

Project Activities and Accomplishments

Activities are divided between those that were conducted directly by project personnel and those that were coordinated by project personnel. Most of the operating costs for implementing the activities coordinated by project personnel were funded from other sources and are not documented in this project.

Project Personnel Conducted Activities

1. Plan postlogging prescribed fires to maintain or improve wildlife habitat, forest health, and diversity in managed forests.

Completed the annual update of the prescribed burn plan for the Nenana Ridge Ruffed Grouse Project Area (Nenana Ridge) in conjunction with Fairbanks Area Forestry fire personnel.

2. Provide technical review of timber harvest plans and other planning documents affecting wildlife values.

Reviewed the Fairbanks 5-Year Timber Harvest Schedule, 3 Forest Land Use Plans (FLUPs) for the Delta Area Forestry office, and one FLUP and a Detailed Plan of Operations for the Tok Area Forestry office.

3. 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.
 - Continued to obtain and review current literature on forestry practices and habitat management techniques.
 - Maintained the ProCite® database of abstracts.
 - Contacted university researchers and agency managers.

4. Participate in interagency or public meetings, workshops, and seminars related to study objectives.
 - Served as ADF&G representative on the Forest Stewardship Committee that meets semi-annually to advise the Alaska Department of Natural Resources—Division of Forestry (DOF) on awarding of U.S. Department of Agriculture funds for forest management on private lands.
 - Began preparations for the national meeting of The Wildlife Society scheduled for September 2006 in Anchorage.
 - Attended the 27–29 September 2005 workshop of the Alaska Northern Forest Cooperative at Tok on “Biomass and Small Tree Utilization, Wood Energy and Business Opportunities for Interior Alaska.”
 - Attended the annual Ruffed Grouse Society fundraising banquet to provide a brief overview of DWC ruffed grouse activities and run a video display of shearblading at Delta Junction and the 6 May 2005 prescribed burn at Nenana Ridge.
 - Assisted Assistant Area Biologist Tom Seaton with ruffed grouse drumming counts.

5. Participate in interagency training opportunities related to prescribed burning and fire effects monitoring or other silvicultural practices that affect wildlife habitat.

Gave 3 talks on wildlife management in the boreal forest to 350 tribal foresters during a field trip to Nenana in June 2006 as part of the national meeting of the Intertribal Timber Council.

6. Produce data files and media products from a geographic information system (GIS) for internal use, sharing with cooperators, and public information.
 - Completed a 3-day class in use of ArcGIS.
 - Used GIS to analyze habitat distribution and to prepare maps for fieldwork, presentations, reports and funding requests.

7. Initiate or coordinate contracting and other administrative tasks necessary to support the project.
 - Helped University of Alaska Fairbanks Assistant Professor Scot Rupp prepare a study plan and funding request to submit to the federal Joint Fire Science Program for a 3-year research project at Nenana Ridge entitled *Quantifying the Effects of Fuels Reduction Treatments on Fire Behavior and Post-fire Vegetation Dynamics*, which will have short- and long-term management implications for wildlife.
 - Prepared and submitted a request to the Ruffed Grouse Society for funding to assist with preparation and implementation of prescribed burns for the above-mentioned project at Nenana Ridge during summers 2006–2008.
 - Awarded a \$14,400 contract to a local operator to shearblade four 5-acre units and 2.1 miles of fire line at Nenana Ridge for the first 2 prescribed burns planned for the above-mentioned project. (Shearblading was completed in April 2006).

- Prepared and submitted open burning applications to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation for prescribed burning planned for Nenana Ridge and the Tanana Flats during summer 2006.
 - Tracked and coordinated expenditures by DOF against the 2 Reimbursable Services Agreements with DWC for habitat enhancement activities and coordinated with DWC administrative managers to amend the agreements.
8. 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.
- Prepared and distributed a news release prior to ignition of the 11 May 2006 prescribed burn at Nenana Ridge and was interviewed by local media.
 - Produced and distributed an edited video of the 11 May 2006 prescribed burn at Nenana Ridge.
 - Produced an edited video of the shearblading at Delta Junction and the 6 May 2005 prescribed burn at Nenana Ridge for display at the February 2006 Ruffed Grouse Banquet.
 - Submitted an FY05 performance report and FY07 work plan to Federal Aid, and submitted an FY07 budget request

Project Personnel Coordinated Activities

1. Implement Western Tanana Flats Prescribed Burn Plan by coordinating a burn of Unit #4.

Unable to implement the prescribed burn planned for the western Tanana Flats due to weather.

2. Coordinate a broadcast burn of logging slash on an approximately 50-acre site in the Standard Creek timber harvest area to improve wildlife habitat and forest health and diversity in managed forests; and to gain proficiency in safely and cost-effectively conducting postlogging burns. No historic structures occur in the unit.

Did not attempt the postlogging broadcast burn of logging slash in the Standard Creek Timber Harvest Area because of a change in priorities.

3. Burn mature standing aspen on two 20–25-acre units on Nenana Ridge to stimulate root suckering and subsequent establishment of young aspen stands within older aspen forest. The activity will benefit ruffed grouse, moose, and other wildlife species and help us to evaluate the cost of different enhancement techniques. No historic structures occur in the units.

Ignited 1 of 2 parcels (approximately 20 acres) prepared for prescribed burning at Nenana Ridge on 11 May 2006.

4. Coordinate other ADF&G/DWC staff involvement in interagency training opportunities related to prescribed burning, fire effects monitoring, or other silvicultural practices that affect wildlife habitat.

Unable to coordinate staff involvement because of other priorities.

Total Regional Segment Period Project Costs (in thousands): \$59.3

Submitted by: Roy A. Nowlin, Management Coordinator