

# **State of Alaska FY2011 Governor's Operating Budget**

## **Department of Natural Resources Statewide Fire Suppression Program Results Delivery Unit Budget Summary**

## Statewide Fire Suppression Program Results Delivery Unit

### Contribution to Department's Mission

Ensure wildland fire suppression resources are in a state of readiness to safely manage wildland fires that pose a threat to life, property, and resources on State, private, municipal, and federally contracted lands in Alaska, commensurate with the values at risk.

### Key RDU Challenges

- Hiring and promoting experienced fire managers.

Critical shortages in dispatch, logistics, and experienced professional level fire managers have necessitated national recruitment often without success. Two-thirds of our fire managers, supervisors, and fire personnel in the lead technician class can retire within the next five years. Wages, benefits and retirement plans are not competitive.

- Providing fire suppression for longer and more challenging fire seasons due to climate changes with existing resource and funding commitments.

The initial attack workforce is funded for three to five months from April through August. Fires are now occurring from March and into November. The increased season creates a critical need for extended staffing, increased capacity such as helicopters and aviation support, additional prevention and enforcement activities, and warehouse support.

- Increasing service and supply costs erode program deliverables.

Suppression cost trends are based on the average fire costs over a ten year period, eliminating the high and low years. No increase to fund the suppression costs has been requested since FY04, although the two largest Alaska fire seasons have occurred since that period. 2009 was the ninth largest fire season, testimony of the continuing trend of larger and more intensive seasons. Private sector costs continue to escalate through their suppliers, liability, energy, and increased labor costs.

- Decreasing Federal firefighting capacity.

The Bureau of Land Management, Alaska Fire Service has experienced a significant reduction in their operational capability due to Federal budget reductions. The Division of Forestry relies on this support. There is now reduced ability to use Federal resources to augment State resources.

- All risk management participation for non-fire situations.

Use of the Division of Forestry's highly trained and qualified Incident Command System firefighters for all-risk incident response provides benefits to the State. When combined with the limited staff-months funded, it has an increasingly negative impact on the availability of personnel for the basic wildland fire mission.

### Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2011

Continued federal native allotment protection located within State lands will continue to increase fire fighting costs. Fire fighting experience and qualifications will continue to decrease as vacancies are filled with less experienced firefighters, which increases risk of larger project fires and/or urban interface fires.

### Major RDU Accomplishments in 2009

See specific detail at component level for Fire Suppression Activity and Fire Suppression Preparedness.

**Contact Information**

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**Statewide Fire Suppression Program  
RDU Financial Summary by Component**

*All dollars shown in thousands*

	FY2009 Actuals				FY2010 Management Plan				FY2011 Governor			
	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds
<b>Formula Expenditures</b> None.												
<b>Non-Formula Expenditures</b>												
Fire Suppression Preparedness	14,791.3	191.1	1,310.6	16,293.0	15,141.4	886.1	681.5	16,709.0	15,120.4	1,336.1	681.5	17,138.0
Fire Suppression Activity	17,017.2	12,152.9	312.3	29,482.4	6,712.5	5,460.4	1,500.0	13,672.9	6,712.5	5,460.4	1,500.0	13,672.9
<b>Totals</b>	<b>31,808.5</b>	<b>12,344.0</b>	<b>1,622.9</b>	<b>45,775.4</b>	<b>21,853.9</b>	<b>6,346.5</b>	<b>2,181.5</b>	<b>30,381.9</b>	<b>21,832.9</b>	<b>6,796.5</b>	<b>2,181.5</b>	<b>30,810.9</b>

**Statewide Fire Suppression Program  
Summary of RDU Budget Changes by Component  
From FY2010 Management Plan to FY2011 Governor**

*All dollars shown in thousands*

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
<b>FY2010 Management Plan</b>	<b>21,853.9</b>	<b>6,346.5</b>	<b>2,181.5</b>	<b>30,381.9</b>
<b>Adjustments which will continue current level of service:</b>				
-Fire Suppression Preparedness	-21.0	0.0	0.0	-21.0
<b>Proposed budget increases:</b>				
-Fire Suppression Preparedness	0.0	450.0	0.0	450.0
<b>FY2011 Governor</b>	<b>21,832.9</b>	<b>6,796.5</b>	<b>2,181.5</b>	<b>30,810.9</b>