

Federal and Local Government Funded Forest Resource and Fire Program Projects

FY2014 Request: \$1,500,000
Reference No: 37769

AP/AL: Appropriation

Project Type: Life / Health / Safety

Category: Natural Resources

Location: Statewide

House District: Statewide (HD 1-40)

Impact House District: Statewide (HD 1-40)

Contact: Jean Davis

Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2013 - 06/30/2016

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Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

This project provides receipt authority for one-time federally funded projects. These projects include competitive grant awards for hazardous fuels reduction, firewise education, prevention and education, community wildfire protection planning, special forest disease surveys and forest restoration projects, biomass inventories, targeted community forestry projects, and agreements for field projects including fuels mitigation. This project meets the mission of continued protection, development, and management of the state's natural resources by enlisting cooperation at the local level throughout Alaska.

Funding:	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	Total
Fed Rcpts	\$1,500,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$6,500,000
Total:	\$1,500,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$6,500,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	0
Totals:	0	0

Prior Funding History / Additional Information:

- Sec1 Ch17 SLA2012 P124 L17 SB 160 \$1,000,000
- Sec1 Ch5 SLA2011 P91 L21 SB 46 \$1,800,000
- Sec7 Ch43 SLA2010 P3 L22 SB 230 \$1,800,000
- Sec1 Ch15 SLA2009 P17 L25 SB 75 \$3,500,000
- Sec13 Ch29 SLA2008 P153 L6 SB 221 \$3,000,000

Project Description/Justification:

WHAT IS THE ISSUE OR PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED?

Targeted federal funds continue to diminish. However, when funds are available and Alaska is successful through nationwide grant competition, there are still some opportunities, in concert with federal and local governments, to improve and enhance the forests of Alaska. The threat of catastrophic wildland fires in the urban interface areas is increasing as the citizens of Alaska continue to move into the forested areas of the state. Much of the mature Alaskan forests are affected by disease pathogens, and trees within communities require attention to maintain healthy forests.

WHAT IS THE SCOPE OF WORK TO BE PERFORMED?

Specific projects, for which the state must compete for funding, will support wildfire mitigation work such as thinning of hazardous fuels, creating fire breaks, Firewise education, prevention and community wildfire protection planning throughout the state as well as providing a source of wood fuel from biomass resulting from hazard fuel mitigation. Funding improves forest health and creates jobs for vendors, contractors and local governments; supporting local communities and economies.

Forest health projects identify invasive insect species, target high risk sites and monitoring, develop Geographic Information Systems (GIS) database of location and species, and share project information with organizations and the public. Forest restoration projects include thinning and planting on state forest lands to mitigate damaging effects of forest pests on high value young growth timber stands. Forest stewardship targets forest landowners including native corporations, providing technical assistance in their planning efforts to sustain their healthy forest lands.

As funding becomes available, wood energy facilities (such as the one being constructed in Fort Yukon and other remote communities) are an ideal opportunity for Alaska to start moving away from non-renewable resource dependency, and diversifying into alternative energy sources. Providing technical forestry training to local village personnel will have the long term outcome of sustainable rural wood to energy systems and rural community development. Community forestry efforts support enhanced community environments, healthy trees in urban settings, green infrastructure, and natural resource inventories at a local level.

WHAT RESULTS WILL BE ACHIEVED AND/OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED?

When Alaska is successful through nationwide grant competition, results may include reducing the vulnerability of homes to wildland fires, developing healthier forests, and supporting the public in sustaining their healthy forest lands.

WHY IS THIS PROJECT NEEDED NOW – WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF REMAINING STATUS QUO?

This project will provide the authority to collect revenues from non- general fund (GF) sources to meet increasing public need for services in forest resources (i.e., forest health), address increasing risks to public health and safety (via wildland/urban interface education, prevention and fuels mitigation), and invest federal funding into local communities and economies. Benefits are local security from fire losses, strengthening of local communities, improving conditions for residential expansion and business opportunities and enhancing local community green infrastructure (trees).

Without this project, there will be missed opportunities for use of non-GF funding to support projects that are beneficial to local landowners, communities, and the State of Alaska.

WHAT ALTERNATIVES WERE CONSIDERED TO SOLVE THE ISSUE OR PROBLEM, AND WHY WERE THEY NOT SELECTED?

One alternative considered was the use of GF sources to fund these projects. This is not a reasonable approach to projects where state, local, and federal agencies have mutual interest. Redirecting operating funds to these projects would limit availability of funds to accomplish activities presently identified for the operating budget.

SPECIFIC SPENDING DETAIL:

<u>LINE ITEM</u>	<u>DOLLAR AMOUNT</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
Personal Services	\$ 600,000	Site layout, inventory, project management, administrative support, reporting, fuels mitigation by non perms and extended seasonal employees
Travel	\$ 55,000	Travel to unit locations, site inspections, travel for public education and workshops, project administration
Services	\$ 545,000	Contractual Services for vendors for hazard fuel mitigation, public service announcements and education, equipment rentals
Commodities	\$ 50,000	Office supplies, mapping supplies, vehicle costs, protective field gear, brush cutters, oil, chainsaws, chaps, traps, flagging, educational materials
Capital Outlay	\$ 0	
Grants	\$ 250,000	Pass through grants to local volunteer fire departments, communities and native corporations.
PROJECT TOTAL	\$1,500,000	