

Federal and Local Government Funded Forest Resource and Fire Program Projects **FY2015 Request: \$1,800,000**
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: 07/01/2014 - 06/30/2019 **Contact Phone:** (907)465-2422

Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

This project allows for one- time federal and local government funded projects. These projects include competitive grant awards for hazardous fuels reduction, Firewise and prevention education, special forest disease surveys, forest restoration projects, biomass inventories, targeted community forestry, forest stewardship plans, and agreements for one-time local government funded field projects, including fuel 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:	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	Total
Fed Rcpts	\$1,400,000	\$1,400,000	\$1,400,000	\$1,400,000	\$1,400,000	\$1,400,000	\$8,400,000
Stat Desig	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$2,400,000
Total:	\$1,800,000	\$1,800,000	\$1,800,000	\$1,800,000	\$1,800,000	\$1,800,000	\$10,800,000

<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 Ch16 SLA2013 P71 L29 SB 18 \$1,500,000
 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 decrease. However, when funds are available and Alaska is successful through west coast and nationwide grant competition, there are still opportunities to partner with federal and local governments to improve and enhance the forests of Alaska. The threat of catastrophic wildland fires in the urban interface is increasing as Alaskans 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 the project 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, and prevention throughout the state as well as providing a source of wood fuel from biomass resulting from hazard fuel mitigation. Projects improve 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 System (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 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.

- Volunteer Fire Departments are provided with pass through funding to purchase approved firefighting equipment and supplies such as pumps, hose, and personal protective equipment (PPE) to increase capacity.
- Community Wildfire Protection Plan development and updating.
- Hazardous fuels as identified in local government Community Wildfire Protection Plans throughout the state will be thinned thereby reducing risk and loss from wildland fire. Hazardous fuel reduction work will provide biomass to communities as an alternate fuel source.
- Homeowners will receive risk assessments on their property and be offered land-owner cost share grants for removal of hazardous fuels.
- Communities in the wildland urban interface will be educated in Firewise Principles and fire prevention.
- Community Forestry educational workshops and tree planting in urban areas; green infrastructure enhancement.
- Development of Forest Stewardship plans for native corporation lands to sustain healthy forests.
- Technical Forestry training to local village personnel.
- Identification, surveying and mitigation of invasive insect species.

How does this project contribute to the division and/or department mission?

This funding supports the department's mission to responsibly develop Alaska's resources by

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making them available for maximum use and by delivering federally and local funded forest management, development and wildfire programs. As described in AS 41.17.030, the Division of Forestry, through the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), has statutory management authority for state forests. This funding enables the division to meet specific program deliverables with federal and local support, including but not limited to the responsibilities of providing wildland fire protection services on state, private and municipal lands as mandated in AS 41.15.010 – 170. This funding will also enable the division to meet key DNR indicators to provide stable or increasing economic benefit from the use of trees and forests on state land.

Why is this project needed now – What is the impact of remaining status quo?

This funding 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).

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	\$ 845,000	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.
Grants	\$ 250,000	Pass through grants to local volunteer fire departments, communities and native corporations.
Project Total	\$1,800,000	