

**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-33-2

PROJECT NR: 25.0

WORK LOCATION: Region III

PERIOD: 1 July 2003 – 30 June 2004

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 were not documented in this project.

Project Personnel Conducted Activities

- Plan landscape-scale prescribed fires.
Accomplishments: Continued to work on the draft Wolf Lake Prescribed burn plan, incorporating new information and cleaning up the format.
- Plan postlogging prescribed fires to maintain or improve wildlife habitat, forest health and diversity in managed forests.
Accomplishments: Assisted the DOF by drafting the Request for Quotes and Service Agreement needed for a post-logging scarification project on Nenana Ridge, and worked with Fairbanks Area Forestry fire personnel to begin preparing a prescribed burn plan for the Standard Creek Timber Harvest Area.
- Provide technical review of timber harvest plans and other planning documents affecting wildlife values.
Accomplishments: Continued to review and comment on DOF's 5-year Schedule of Timber Sales and Forest Land Use Plans for the Fairbanks, Delta, and Tok areas. Continued to work with fire managers at DOF in Fairbanks and natural resources staff at Clear Air Force Site near Anderson to promote options for using shearblading and prescribed fire to maintain aspen clones as wildlife habitat and fuel breaks. Helped Clear staff mark treatment boundaries and produce GIS maps needed to solicit bids for the work.. Visited the proposed site for a fuel break in the Little Chena River drainage northeast of Fairbanks with DOF fire staff in March.
- 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.

Accomplishments: Continued to obtain current literature on forestry practices and habitat management techniques. Scanned abstracts for some citations with the help of administrative staff. Put citations into a ProCite® database for future reference. Contacted university researchers and agency managers.

- Participate in interagency or public meetings, workshops, and seminars related to study objectives.

Accomplishments: Presented ideas within the Alaska Wildland Fire Coordination Group for creating prescribed fire capabilities so habitat enhancement projects would not have to rely entirely on resources from suppression organizations. Prepared a poster and handouts on aspen treatment projects and monitoring of game bird populations for the annual banquet of the Interior Alaska Chapter of RGS in February 2004. Served as ADF&G representative on the Forest Stewardship Committee that meets semi-annually to advise the DOF on awarding of USDA funds for forest management on private lands. Visited demonstrations of roller crushing as a fuel treatment in Delta (January 2003) and near Fairbanks (March 2003) with DOF fire staff.

- Develop constructive working relationships with people that may potentially affect DWC's ability to meet study objectives.

Accomplishments: Continued to develop constructive working relationships with public and private groups and individuals.

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

Accomplishments: Worked with the Nome Area Biologist and Assistant Area Biologist (Unit 22) in late March to train them on sampling moose browse along drainages near the road system.

- Through on-the-job and formal training, develop the ability to produce data files and media products from a geographic information system (GIS) for internal use, sharing with cooperators, and public information.

Accomplishments: Used GIS to prepare maps for field work, presentations, and reports.

- Through on-the-job training and other means, develop the ability to initiate or coordinate contracting and other administrative tasks necessary to support the study.

Accomplishments: Tracked personnel time and operating costs by activity. Prepared Reimbursable Services Agreements, Requests for Quotations, Service Agreements, and Land Use Permit Applications when necessary to implement project activities.

- 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.

Accomplishments: Wrote an FY03 performance report; wrote an FY05 work plan and a budget request. Continued to work with the Education Associate for Region III to put prescribed fire information on the ADF&G website. Produced and distributed CDs containing ADF&G produced presentations, posters, and brochures on the importance of fire in the boreal forest of interior Alaska.

- Participate in professional and public forums relating to project activities.
Accomplishments: Made several presentations concerning project activities at professional and public forums.

Project Personnel Coordinated Activities

- Implement landscape-scale prescribed fires.
Accomplishments: DOF fire managers were unable to implement the planned prescribed burns on the western Tanana Flats and the Robertson River drainage. Implementation remains a priority for summer 2005. Tanana Chiefs Conference personnel completed review of the draft Wolf Lake Prescribed burn plan and forwarded draft to DOF for further review.
- Implement postlogging prescribed fires to maintain or improve wildlife habitat, forest health and diversity in managed forests, and gain proficiency in safely, cost-effectively conducting postlogging burns.
Accomplishments: Did not complete the post-logging broadcast burn of logging slash scheduled for summer 2004 at one of the research plots in planned timber sale NC-837-T because timber on the site has not yet been harvested. DOF now anticipates putting the sale out for bid in autumn 2004. Did not complete the burn plan for the post-logging broadcast burn of logging slash scheduled for summer 2004 in the Standard Creek Timber Harvest Area.
- Mechanically scarify logged timber sale units to enhance establishment of shrub and hardwood tree seedlings.
Accomplishments: Conducted post-logging scarification with a dozer blade and a disk trencher in October 2003 on a 12-acre timber sale on Nenana Ridge to prepare seed beds for both hardwood and coniferous trees; heavy grass growth in these units impeded reforestation efforts. (treatments will be evaluated under study 5.0.)
- Fell, shearblade, or burn mature standing aspen on 5–25 acre units to stimulate root suckering and subsequent establishment of young aspen stands within older aspen forest to benefit ruffed grouse, moose, and other wildlife species and evaluate the cost efficacies of the different techniques.
Accomplishments: Burning was precluded by unfavorable fire weather during the short burn window before leaf emergence in all of the 3 units planned for spring 2004 (units 20.0–26.3 acres each, totaling 72.4 acres).
- Mechanically treat or prescribed burn spruce dominated stands on public lands adjacent to developed areas to increase opportunities for management of wildland fires and, locally, to stimulate development of deciduous shrubs and trees in place of the more fire prone spruce.
Accomplishments: Fairbanks Area Forestry received a federal grant to prepare a fuel break near developed areas in the Little Chena River drainage. However no treatment occurred during the report period. Wildlife will benefit directly from improved habitat within the 100–300 yard wide fuel break and indirectly if the presence of the fuel break

provides more options for wildland fires on public lands upriver from the developed areas.

- Construct pioneer access roads to project sites to facilitate implementation of selected treatments and subsequent monitoring, and provide for public use of the treated areas.
Accomplishments: Constructed no additional access roads during this report period.
- Install signs at project sites to inform the public about the habitat enhancement activities.
Accomplishments: Installed no signs during this report period.
- Mechanically treat willow stands with a dozer or hydroax to stimulate crown sprouting for the benefit of moose and other wildlife species.
Accomplishments: Treated no willow stands during this report period.
- Provide prescribed fire opportunities for fire fighting staff at DNR/DOF and BLM/AFS to develop expertise in planning and implementing prescribed burning, meeting specific management objectives, and reducing prescribed burning costs.
Accomplishments: Provided no prescribed fire opportunities during this report period.
- Coordinate other ADF&G/DWC staff involvement in, interagency training opportunities related to prescribed burning and fire effects monitoring or other silvicultural practices that affect wildlife habitat.
Accomplishments: Facilitated no training during this report period.

Project Costs (in thousands of dollars)

- Total costs: \$48.9
- Federal Share: \$36.7 (75%)
- State Share: \$12.2 (25%)

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