

Reforestation in Southcentral and Interior Alaska

FY2008 Request: \$370,000

Reference No: 45264

AP/AL: Appropriation

Project Type: Renewal and Replacement

Category: Natural Resources

Location: Statewide

Contact: Leta Simons

House District: Statewide (HD 1-40)

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Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2008 - 06/30/2010

Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

This project scarifies and plants trees on high priority timber harvest sites in the Kenai, Mat-Su, Fairbanks, and Delta areas. Prompt reforestation sustains the timber supply that supports DNR's mission to develop, conserve, and enhance forest resources, and ensures compliance with the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act. DNR timber sales supply wood to local, value-added processors, providing jobs, reducing risks from wildland fire, and enhancing moose habitat. Reforestation is an essential part of the program that makes state timber sales feasible and sustainable. This project will do site preparation on 860 acres and plant seedlings on over 1,150 acres.

Funding:	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	Total
Gen Fund	\$370,000						\$370,000
Total:	\$370,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$370,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input 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	
Totals:	0	0

Additional Information / Prior Funding History:

The last CIP funding for reforestation was \$200.0 in FY99 (SLA 98 Ch 139 sect. 131). Reforestation under this CIP project was completed in June, 2004.

Project Description/Justification:

Since the last CIP appropriation for reforestation (FY99), the DNR Division of Forestry (DOF) has sold 498 timber sales totaling 179.5 million board feet of timber on 20,630 acres. Nearly all of this timber was sold to 183 different Alaskan purchasers for local, value-added processing. These sales support jobs in logging, transportation, milling, and planting; provide local wood for lumber, house logs, paneling, flooring, cabinets, fuel, and craft products; enhance habitat for moose and grouse, reduce the risk of damage from wildland fire, and build roads that are used for a variety of commercial and recreational purposes.

The Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (FRPA) requires reforestation of state timber harvest areas. In Southeast Alaska, abundant natural regeneration follows harvesting. In Southcentral and Interior Alaska, adequate reforestation following harvesting typically requires exposed mineral soil and adequate seed sources. The division keeps reforestation costs down by relying on natural regeneration where feasible, reducing planting densities, and requiring operators to provide site preparation and replanting where feasible. However, on a fraction of the harvest land, the state has to supplement these efforts with state-funded scarification and planting. Small timber harvest operators do not have the equipment or experience for successful planting operations. In addition, the timber value of salvage sales following fire or beetle infestations doesn't completely offset the cost of reforestation. On sites accessible only in winter, logging

doesn't expose enough mineral soil to provide good seed beds. In infested areas, bark beetles have killed off the seed source for natural regeneration. Where natural regeneration is insufficient, scarification and planting are needed to ensure that state lands comply with FRPA standards and continue to support sustained yields of wood products. The areas proposed for scarification and planting through this project include both salvage and green timber sale sites, and areas that supplied firewood for personal use.

This project will scarify 860 acres of land, purchase 400,000 seedlings, and plant spruce seedlings on 1,150 acres of land. It will provide continued support to DNR's value-added timber sale program. Based on current sale volumes, future value-added timber sales on this acreage would generate 8.2 million board feet in 25 - 30 timber sales to 10 - 15 Alaskan businesses. There is broad public support for reforestation, and it is part of our mandate for managing state land.

Why is this Project Needed Now?

Reforestation is most cost-effective and successful when it occurs promptly following harvesting. Delays increase competition from grasses, alder, and other shrubs, decrease seedling survival, and increase the cost of effective site preparation. By law, DNR must reforest harvested areas in southcentral and interior Alaska within 7 years of harvest. Without CIP funding to ensure adequate reforestation, DNR will have to pull funds from timber sale preparation to pay for scarification and planting. This will shrink the supply of state timber to local mills, and undercut efforts to expand the local timber industry.

Specific Spending Detail:

<u>LINE ITEM</u>	<u>DOLLAR AMOUNT</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION (text)</u>
Personal Services	\$ 30,000	Prepare and administer seedling procurement and planting contracts; conduct planting inspections and coordinate with planting contractors
Travel	\$ 3,000	Travel associated with contract administration
Services	\$ 330,000	Purchase 355,000 seedlings, contract for site preparation (scarification) on 770 acres, and contract for planting on 1,030 acres
Commodities	\$ 7,000	Purchase supplies, fuel, maps, aerial photos, field equipment

Project Support: Local mills – on average, approximately 26 local businesses buy timber sales from DNR annually; Board of Forestry, Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation, Department of Environmental Conservation, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Alaska Forest Association; Mat-Su, Kenai Peninsula, and Fairbanks North Star Boroughs, Alaska Northern Forest Cooperative, Tanana Valley State Forest Citizens Advisory Committee

Project Opposition: No known opposition.