

State of Alaska FY2012 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 lands negotiated through agreement, commensurate with the values at risk.

Key RDU Challenges

- Retaining and recruiting experienced fire managers and training new personnel.

Critical shortages in firefighters, 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 are eligible to retire within the next five years. Wages, benefits and retirement plans are not competitive with federal and private sector workforce negatively affecting recruitment efforts. Inexperienced workforce can result in more costly suppression and jeopardize safety. Training fire fighters, crews, and support personnel to meet national standards remains a challenge.

- Providing fire preparedness and suppression response for longer and more challenging fire seasons.

Significant wildland fires have occurred beginning in March extending October and the amount of acreage burned over the last ten years has doubled. The fire season of 2010 had nine holdover fires that persisted through the previous winter. These fires required immediate initial oversight and long term management through much of the second season. Early season preparation is essential for training and prevention activities. The longer season creates a critical need for extended staffing and increased resource capacity such as helicopters and aviation support.

- 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. The trend is for a 12% Federal budget reduction annually for the next three years.

- Expanding wildland urban interface.

The population of Alaska continues to increase at about 2% annually and with that has been increased exposure to the threat of wildland fire. Development in the interface, recreational cabins, and overall expansion provides fire fighters with an ever changing environment. Tracking and maintaining an inventory of values at risk requires integration of numerous databases.

- Maintaining fire fighting capacity with increasing service and supply costs.

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. Private sector costs, such as aircraft contracts, equipment rentals, and services continue to escalate as liability, energy, and labor costs continue to rise.

Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2012

- Initial attack success will be maintained and not reduced for FY2012 due to the June 30 end of the fiscal year unless the challenges of the decreasing federal firefighting support and/or an early, intense fire season occurs. In these cases, the program will be challenged to meet the service expectations.

- Current training deliverables will be maintained. However, an increase in native crew qualifications and job opportunities cannot be met without requisite financial support.

Major RDU Accomplishments in 2010

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

	FY2010 Actuals				FY2011 Management Plan				FY2012 Governor			
	UGF+DGF Funds	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	UGF+DGF Funds	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	UGF+DGF Funds	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds
Formula Expenditures None.												
Non-Formula Expenditures												
Fire Suppression Preparedness	15,450.2	1,363.9	175.7	16,989.8	15,445.9	692.5	1,359.3	17,497.7	15,719.1	713.3	1,360.6	17,793.0
Fire Suppression Activity	66,693.1	726.0	14,157.9	81,577.0	6,663.3	1,500.0	5,460.4	13,623.7	6,663.3	1,500.0	5,460.4	13,623.7
Totals	82,143.3	2,089.9	14,333.6	98,566.8	22,109.2	2,192.5	6,819.7	31,121.4	22,382.4	2,213.3	6,821.0	31,416.7

**Statewide Fire Suppression Program
Summary of RDU Budget Changes by Component
From FY2011 Management Plan to FY2012 Governor**

All dollars shown in thousands

	<u>Unrestricted Gen (UGF)</u>	<u>Designated Gen (DGF)</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
FY2011 Management Plan	22,109.2	0.0	2,192.5	6,819.7	31,121.4
Adjustments which will continue current level of service:					
-Fire Suppression Preparedness	273.2	0.0	20.8	1.3	295.3
-Fire Suppression Activity	0.0	0.0	0.0	-2,000.0	-2,000.0
Proposed budget increases:					
-Fire Suppression Activity	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,000.0	2,000.0
FY2012 Governor	22,382.4	0.0	2,213.3	6,821.0	31,416.7