

2022-2026 Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Forestry Cluster Summary – **DRAFT**

Includes: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats | Targets | Goals | Strategies & Actions | Relevant Plans

Strengths <i>Internal attributes that contribute to success</i>	Weaknesses <i>Internal barriers to success</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 1.81-million-acre Tanana Valley State Forest (TVSF) The 12,400-acre Bonanza Creek Experimental Forest (in TVSF) supports forestry research Forest management partnerships, including the Tanana Valley State Forest Citizens Advisory Committee Roads that can support both logging and recreation access Recreation opportunities in TVSF, including hunting, fishing, trapping, camping, hiking, dog mushing, skiing, snowmachining, boating, and berry-picking Availability of programs available to help communities install biomass; creating a locally-sourced heat source and creating local employment opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conflicts between logging and recreation/trail users, and between different recreation user groups on forestry trails Limited infrastructure (roads, power), including some areas with winter-only access Long rotation of harvestable species (e.g., white spruce requires 125 years to grow from seedling to a tree with harvestable value) High staff turnover and loss of operational knowledge in communities installing biomass
Opportunities <i>External forces that contribute to success</i>	Threats <i>External forces that could be barriers to success</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spruce bark beetle harvest sales U.S. Department of Energy (DO) Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy’s Conversion Research and Development Program is exploring how to improve and scale up biomass technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate change and increased wildfire risks Spruce bark beetle infestations Potential environmental impacts of logging and logging roads

Where We Are	What measurements can we use to track progress? Where do we want to be in 5 years?	2026 Targets
224 (2019)	Employment – Total number of FNSB residents employed full or part time in forestry, fishing, or related activities <i>No change between 2018 and 2019</i>	235 (5% growth)
Need to ID	Biomass Use for Energy Generation – The number of Interior Alaska communities with biomass projects installed to reduce heat – need to identify baseline and target	Need to ID
55,533 acres (2021)	Wildfire – Reduce the total acres of uncontrolled wildfire acres burned on state lands in the Fairbanks region of the Alaska Division of Forestry <i>2021 number comes from a combined 48 fires; the 10-year average is 23,945 acres burned annually; excludes fires on federal agency lands (including TVSF), private lands.</i>	10,000 acres

Other Potential Indicators (need baselines and targets): Number of Interior Alaska wood products businesses; total board feet of locally harvested lumber; percentage of Interior Alaska forests that are classified as healthy

Sources: Employment numbers from the Bureau of Economic Analysis; wildfire acres burned from Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry Annual Fire Statistics, Alaska Interagency Coordination Center Predictive Service/Intelligence Reports.

Forestry Cluster Summary Draft for Interior Alaska Economic Summit Review, February 2022

Forestry Goals – long term improvements and changes we want to see in five years or more



1. Interior Alaska forests are healthy, vibrant, and sustainably managed to support a productive balance of commercial, recreational, and personal activities.

Strategies & Actions – the activities we will implement over the next 5 years to accomplish goals & targets and who will lead them	Lead
<p>1. Collaborative Management – Forestry stakeholders collaborate on management decisions. <i>(Goal 1)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ensure that forest management activities are not excluded from the array of permitted uses within FNSB boundaries, including state forests. b. Encourage collaboration between user groups, including involving recreation user groups when planning logging access roads. c. Support continuation of existing partnerships including the Tanana Valley State Forest Citizens Advisory Committee. d. Update and implement the Tanana Valley State Forest Management Plan. 	
<p>2. Biomass – Manage local forests to maximize productivity of local biomass for heating and construction materials and to reduce threats from wildfires. <i>(Goal 1)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Encourage Interior Alaska communities to explore wood-fired heat by conducting pre-feasibility studies, with support from the Alaska Wood Energy Development Task Group. b. Support communities with wood-fired heating systems with ongoing training and professional development for operators. c. Proactively identify areas with high wildfire risk and support strategic fuel removal. Including beetle kill. 	
<p>3. Local Products – Develop and promote local wood products (e.g., furniture manufacturing and forest products). <i>(Goal 1)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Create an updated version of the 2007 publication, “New Growth: Prospectus for Forest Products Industry of Interior Alaska,” a document summarizing the region’s timber potential and sale details for potential investors. b. Create a Buy Local wood program. 	

Other Relevant Resources

- **Map of the Tanana Valley State Forest.** Alaska Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry. December 2021. [View here.](#)
- **2020 Forest Action Plan.** Alaska Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry. December 2020. [View here.](#)
- **New Growth Prospectus for the Forest Products Industry of Interior Alaska.** State of Alaska. March 2007. [View here.](#)
- **Tanana Valley State Forest Management Plan Revision.** Alaska Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry. Current plan updated in 2001; update in progress. [View here.](#)
- **Alaska Timber Jobs Task Force Report (2012) and Status Update (2018).** Alaska Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry. [View here.](#)



Interior Alaska Economic Summit, February 22-23, 2022

Forestry Breakout: Discussion Summary (02-22-22)

To view results from the other sessions, visit <https://fnsbcds.com/> (results will be posted by March 11th)

This document compiles feedback and notes from the breakout session. The other tools that were used to guide the discussion include:

- An economic cluster/influencer one-pager that identified a preliminary SWOT analysis, goals, strategies, actions, and measures of success
- A worksheet identifying a proposed economic vision statement and guiding questions for each of the activities. The guiding questions have been copied into this document for reference. The feedback on the economic vision statement was compiled separately and will be released by March 11th.

Participants *(alphabetical by first name, based on sign in sheet)*

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RSVPs: 16 participants

Feedback on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

Guiding Questions:

1. What did we get right?
2. What's missing?
3. What would you change?
4. What's the most important item in each quadrant?

Discussion Notes:

Color Key: **Blue** = proposed revision | **red** = proposed deletion | **green** = proposed addition

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add: language for economic opportunities • Add: Include traditional knowledge in forestry • Add: Highlight public involvement • Add: Fungal pharmacological diversity • Add: Greatest recreation opportunities • Add: White spruce makes high-quality paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add: Lack saw mill operators • Add: Need cheaper energy to produce lumber locally • Add: Soil is getting thinner • Add: We import most lumber from Seattle • Revise: Replace “trails” with “roads in first bullet • Delete: Limited infrastructure is not a weakness
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add: Proactive management to combat landscape-level change • Add: Need more job opportunities • Add: Food forest • Add: Community saw mill • Add: Connect people that want to build homes to saw mills • Add: Education/training programs for saw mill operators • Add: Use local lumber locally • Add: Directory of saw mills for the community • Add: Incentivize the banks to loan to locally built homes • Revise: Change “spruce bark beetle” to “salvage timber from disturbances” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add: Can't create own home and gain land • Add: Invasive species aside from spruce beetle • Add: Lack of sustainable logging practices that preserve old growth • Add: Include impacts on animals and insects • Delete: Remove perception of “impacts of logging and logging roads”

Goals, Strategies, Actions Discussion Questions

Guiding Questions:

1. What did we get right?
2. What would you change?
3. What's missing?
4. Who will lead each of the strategies? What do you see as you/your organization's role?
5. Which of the strategies is most important for us to focus on over the next year?

Discussion Notes:

- Goals
 - Add: Preserving and protecting natural beauty for future generations

- Strategy 1: Collaborative Management
 - Add: Support communication with the public.
 - Add: Stand up a citizen advisory committee
 - Add: Create new management tools for collective management
 - Add: Coordinate management of fire risk
 - Add: Add traditional ecological knowledge education opportunities
 - Add: Need to keep unburned mass down
 - Add: Educate tourists on leaving the land better than you found it
 - Add: Add preservation
 - Delete: The Tanana Valley State Forest Management Plan is already being updated
- Strategy 2: Biomass
 - Add: Increase forestry education in Tok and Galena
 - Add: Increase biomass education and awareness
 - Add: Identify areas of maximum benefit and least impact
 - Add: Update the FNSB Community Wildlife Protection Program
 - Add: Self-reporting of wood usage
 - Add: Number of homes that use fire food and biomass as primary heat source
 - Add: Look at wood cutting permit sales
 - Revise: Thinning doesn't work
- Strategy 3: Local Products
 - Add: Develop a grading system administrated by Cold Climate Housing Research
 - Add: Implement a subsidy for buying local wood
 - Add: Increase food forests and commercial research
 - Add: Access to roads lowers energy costs
 - Add: Create housing kits for a cheap housing option using local wood
 - Add: Develop a mushroom forest
 - Add: Develop a Made in Alaska stamp
 - Add: Add education
- Other (could go in other chapters)
 - Add: fourth strategy: Cultural Uses of Forest
 - Add: Develop a regional fire risk rating system to put individual years into perspective
 - Revise: Need to stress that we will preserve the natural beauty of our forests.

Measures of Success Discussion Questions

Guiding Questions:

1. What did we get right?
2. What's missing?
3. What would you change?
4. Which of these indicators will be the most effective at measuring our success?

Discussion Notes:

- Employment is a good measure.
- Add: Measure number of timbersales, acres of timber harvested and miles of road installed.
- Add: Measure number of acres replanted.
- Add: Use volume of boards as a metric
- Add: Use soil measurements/thickness as a measure of success
- Add: Measure the diversity of species
- Delete: Don't use burned acres as a measure