




SUBJECT: A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY AMENDING THE SCOPE OF WORK AND BUDGET FOR TWO TIMBER RELATED PROJECTS AND EXTENDING THE COMPLETION DATE TO 6/30/2023.

AGENDA OF: February 15, 2022

Assembly Action:
 Approved Under The Consent
 Agenda 2-15-22 

MANAGER RECOMMENDATION: Present to the Assembly for consideration.

APPROVED BY MICHAEL BROWN, BOROUGH MANAGER: 

Route To:	Department/Individual	Initials	Remarks
	Originator	ER	
	Community Development Director	ea	
	Finance Director	CF	
	Borough Attorney		
	Borough Clerk	JMM 2/7/22	

ATTACHMENT (S) : Fiscal Note: YES X NO _____
 Resolution Serial No. 22-018 (2 pp)

SUMMARY STATEMENT: In FY13, ORD 13-026 transferred \$50,000 from the Land & Resource Management Division's operating budget into Project No. 15031, Fund 480, Operable Forest Land Plan - FY13. This money was for the development of an analysis and associated plan to redefine operational timber lands within the Natural Resource Management Units in the Borough. At the time, reducing the volume of commercial forestland by removing timber stands that were deemed too difficult to be successfully harvested was a priority. Since then, the Borough has elected to allow the timber industry to determine what is feasible to harvest. This keeps all Borough commercial forestland available for timber harvest. As of the date of this legislation, none of this funding has been expended.

In FY18, ORD 18-018 appropriated \$100,000 to Project No. 47109, Fund 480, Timber Cruise - FY19, to update the 2006 and 2009

inventory with supplemental timber cruise data sufficient to develop and implement legally defensible timber sales in the Fish Creek and Point MacKenzie Natural Resource Management Units for the next Five-Year Timber Harvest Schedule. Updated timber inventory data is essential to establish fair market value of high dollar timber. As of the date of this legislation, none of this funding has been expended. No large timber sales occurred in these areas, nor are there scheduled timber sales large enough to warrant a timber cruise. There have been no significant forest health changes beyond the spruce bark beetle infestation and the expected aging of the forest. In-house timber plot data collection has been found to provide sufficient information for the small scale, low-value timber harvests required to meet local timber industry demand. While there may come a time in the future when updated timber inventory data is a good investment for the Borough, redirecting timber cruise funding to reduce wildfire hazard and improve public safety on Borough land, near high-use public facilities is a better near-term investment.

Land Management is requesting to re-scope the funds in these two projects. Re-scoping the project funds would allow Borough Saw Crew staff to extend their work season and further reduce fire hazard and improve public safety on Borough-owned land. This funding will allow for Saw Crew employees to complete additional fire hazard reduction work on Borough property.

Temporary, seasonal Saw Crew positions were created in the fall of 2021. The crew is comprised of employees who have backgrounds in wildland firefighting that specialize in hazard tree felling and wildfire fuel reduction. The proposed project re-scope would support changing the seasonal Saw Crew positions to project employees. Project employees are short-term employees with no retirement benefits that work until the project funding is spent.

The Saw Crew has focused on creating fuel breaks around local schools, as well as wildfire fuel reduction in high-use Borough parks. The Mat-Su School District provided a list of prioritized schools for wildfire fuel reduction efforts. So far this winter, the Saw Crew has completed a shaded fuel break around Houston Jr/Sr High School, as well as felling over 300 beetle kill spruce at Cottonwood Elementary. The dead spruce at both schools was bucked to firewood length that was picked up by the public. The slash piles have been burned. There are enough schools and parks identified for fire hazard reduction to keep the crew busy for years.

In-between the work at the schools, the Crew has been working along public trails at the Alcantra Sports Complex, Jim Creek Recreation Area, Lazy Mountain Recreation Area, and recently, cleaning up windfall across trails at Matanuska River Park and Crevasse Moraine

Trail System. Both the School District and the Borough Recreation Services Division staff have commended the Saw Crew for their professionalism and hard work.

Approval of this legislation would allow the Saw Crew to extend their work season, increasing the number of schools and parks where wildfire hazard risk will be reduced. The seasonal Saw Crew positions would be converted to temporary project employees.

Recent federal program changes have substantially increased the amount of grant funding possibilities for wildfire hazard mitigation projects. It is possible that this funding for Saw Crew could be used as match for the Borough to obtain federal grant funding for additional wildfire fuel reduction.

The amount of fuel reduction work necessary to mitigate the high priority bark beetle infestation at Borough public facilities will require years of Saw Crew work. Extending the Saw Crew season through the proposed re-appropriation of timber project funding will accelerate the wildfire hazard reduction work at Borough schools and parks.

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

Staff respectfully recommends adoption of the legislation amending the Scope of Work and Budgets for Project No. 15031, Fund 480, Operable Forest Land Plan - FY13, and Project No. 47109, Fund 480, Timber Cruise - FY19, and to extend the completion date for the project to 6/30/2023.

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
FISCAL NOTE

Agenda Date: FEBRUARY 15, 2022

SUBJECT: A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY AMENDING THE SCOPE OF WORK AND BUDGET FOR TWO TIMBER RELATED PROJECTS AND EXTENDING THE COMPLETION DATE TO 6/30/2023.

ORIGINATOR: Emerson Krueger

FISCAL ACTION (TO BE COMPLETED BY FINANCE)	FISCAL IMPACT <input checked="" type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO
AMOUNT REQUESTED <u>\$150,000</u>	FUNDING SOURCE <u>Miscellaneous Cap. Proj.</u>
FROM ACCOUNT # <u>480.000.000 4XX.XXX</u>	PROJECT <u>15031 (50,000)</u>
TO ACCOUNT : <u>480.000.000 3XX.XXX</u>	PROJECT # <u>47109</u>
VERIFIED BY: <u>Yvonne Wehner</u>	CERTIFIED BY:
DATE: <u>1-31-22</u>	DATE:

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES:

(Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027
Personnel Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land/Structures						
Grants, Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING						

CAPITAL	<u>150.0</u>					
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REVENUE						
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FUNDING:

(Thousands of Dollars)

General Fund						
State/Federal Funds						
Other	<u>150.0</u>					
TOTAL						

POSITIONS:

Full-Time						
Part-Time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

PREPARED BY: _____ PHONE: _____

DEPARTMENT: Cherienne Hemmel DATE: _____

APPROVED BY: _____ DATE: 1/31/22