

2013 Annual Report

Submitted by: Jessica Guritz, 2013 Yukon River Chapter Chair

The year of 2013 saw some very strange weather in Interior Alaska! We had the third coldest April on record, a very cold May (with the ground still frozen on Arbor Day!), the second warmest summer on record, and the third warmest October in 109 years. On November 13/14, a strong storm brought warm temperatures, wind, and rain to Fairbanks- turning our roads into ice rinks and causing widespread power outages and other damages. Several other rain storms occurred throughout winter 2013. The Yukon River Chapter of SAF did its best to work around this by rescheduling many events and waiting until fall to plant Arbor Day trees.

In recent years, the Yukon River Chapter has continued to meet regularly and has also expanded by offering more outreach and educational events. We have also maintained an active voice for forestry in Alaska by writing letters of support and informing our legislators about forestry topics pertinent to SAF.

2013 Chapter Activities

Arbor Day

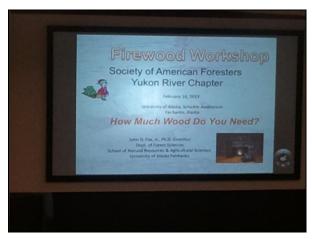
This spring in Fairbanks was unusually cold- and the soil was still frozen for Arbor Day!!! The Yukon River Chapter decided it would be best to teach classroom lessons about Arbor Day during the spring and then do tree plantings in fall to make up for the lack of spring plantings! With a little flexibility from chapter members and teachers, this worked out well.

Firewood Workshop

This was the third year we hosted a Firewood Workshop in Fairbanks. It was held at the UAF Schaible Auditorium and featured speakers from UAF, local agencies, and local businesses. Attendees were informed about where to get firewood and permits, how to safely harvest it, how many cords of firewood they might need, the proper way to season it, stove and chimney maintenance, and the FNSB air quality programs.









Forest Sports Festival

The 16th annual Farthest North Forest Sports Festival had a record number of participants and attendees during 2013. Several members of the Yukon River Chapter of SAF are key organizers and volunteers for this event.





2013 Bull and Belle of the Woods

Log rolling competition

Legislative Breakfast

The Yukon River Chapter prepared a flyer for the legislative breakfast in Juneau (see below). Our chapter also supported this event financially.

Yukon River Chapter

Yukon River Chapter is all of Alaska north of the Alaska Range that includes boreal forests of white spruce, Alaska birch, aspen, black spruce, and tamarack. The chapter is centered around Fairbanks, AK and has active members from the University of Alaska, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Alaska Division of Forestry, Fort Wainwright, Fairbanks Soil and Water, Bureau of Land Management.

Chapter activities include: Monthly Meetings Technical Presentations Tanana Valley State Fair Booth Arbor Day Plantings Firewood Workshop Hosting Alaska State Meeting (2012)

Facto

- Fairbanks is the home of University of Alaska Fairbanks Natural Resource Management –Forestry program.
- The Tanana Valley State Forest encompasses 1.78 million acres and lies within the Tanana River Basin.







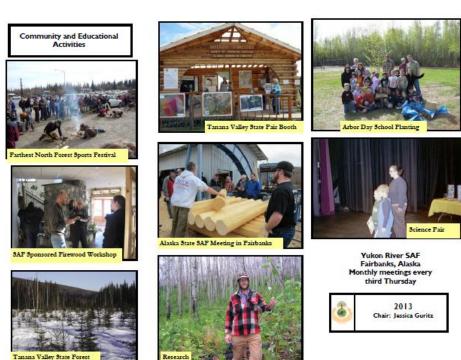




2013
Jessica Guritz Chapter Chair
Jim Schwarber Vice Chair
Dan Rees Secretary
Chris Maisch Treasurer



12/13/12



Alaskans, Creating Conversations and Connections with Alaskans about Natural Resources

Susitna State Forest Support



February 22, 2013

Resolution:

The Yukon River Chapter of the Alaska Society of American Foresters supports the establishment of a Susitna Valley State Forest through HB79 and SB 28.

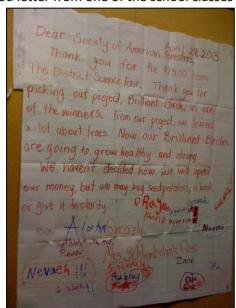
The Yukon River Chapter of the Alaska Society of American Foresters is confident that the establishment of the Susitna Valley State Forest will convey many benefits for generations to come. In Interior Alaska, the Tanana Valley State Forest offers watershed protection, numerous recreational opportunities, a source for local firewood and timber, and other benefits. By designating this land as a State Forest, these benefits will be protected in the future. With continued development in south-central Alaska, it is important to protect large tracts of forested land for responsible management and public use.

Jessica Guritz

Chair, Yukon River Chapter SAF

Science Fair

Chapter members judged the local science fairs and awarded prizes for the best forestry projects. Below is a thank you letter from one of the school classes who won a prize.



Student Sponsorship for SAF

The Yukon River Chapter sponsored UAF forestry student Andrew Allaby to attend the Alaska SAF conference in Anchorage. He was reimbursed for the majority of his expenses, including airfare and hotel room for the conference.

Several UAF students were also offered free membership for their first year as a member of SAF.



One of the field tours at the Alaska SAF Conference

Tanana Valley State Fair

The Yukon River Chapter partnered with the Alaska Department of Natural Resources to man a booth at the Tanana Valley State Fair. Free tree seedlings were given away and a cord of firewood was given away to the winning ticket; donations were accepted as a fundraiser for our chapter activities.













UAF Forestry Program Restructuring

One of our chapter members, Jeremy Douse, drafted a letter of support for forestry education in Alaska. This letter was approved by our chapter and sent on to the Alaska Society of American Foresters and the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Our chapter supports the continuation of a forestry degree program for UAF, which was in danger of being lost due to program and department restructuring.

Dear, (Mr Gamble, Mr Rogers, Dr Sparrow, Dr Yarie, Board of Regents, Board of Advisors)

The Society of American Foresters (SAF) represents the forestry profession in the United States. Its core values are that forests are fundamental for human welfare, can be sustained through meeting environmental and economic needs and that Foresters serve society through providing sound knowledge and professional management of forested landscapes. In Alaska, the members of SAF represents the forest products industry, forestry consultants, municipal, state and federal government, tribal forestry, and academia.

Alaska SAF has concerns over the state of forestry education in Alaska. In recent years there has been a major reduction in the focus of applied forestry research and education at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks (UAF). Student enrollment in Forestry has been difficult to monitor and as professors retire they are not replaced with new talent. In addition, successful research programs that originated in the School of Natural Resource and Agricultural Sciences (SNRAS) have been detached taking resources, personnel and money away from the school. SAF recognizes that universities need to be remunerative; however, we feel that there are missed opportunities that could promote a stronger forestry program.

Alaska's economy relies on the development of its natural resources. With the existence of the traditional timber markets and potential new biomass markets there is always going to be a need for forest managers who understand Alaska's forest resource. Alaska SAF feels that there is an opportunity for UAF to more fully develop an applied forestry curriculum that focuses on the needs of Alaskans, relevant markets, forest resource use and sustainability.

UAF is uniquely situated to house such an applied forestry program. It has relevant existing research programs that focus on the development, utilization and sustainability of Alaska's forest resource. UAF is the only program nationwide that can utilize the boreal forest as an example on a daily basis. In addition the University has been granted 50,000 acres of land within close proximity to the Fairbanks campus where many forestry research projects exist. This land grant represents a significant site for development of state-of –the-art management practices that can be applied to a large portion of Alaska. There are also collaborative research and education efforts between SNRAS and the Alaskan Coastal Rainforest Center. These programs strive to serve Alaskans by utilizing and studying forest resources to meet their goals.

It is important to note that there is a national upward trend in forestry students. Because of national trends and Alaska's unique forest resource, UAF has the opportunity to be a leading national program. We feel that promoting the forestry program would piqué interest in young Alaskans to pursue a career in forestry and forest products while not having to leave Alaska to do so. In addition, UAF could become a research hub where people pursuing advanced degrees would want to study.

Alaska SAF feels that UAF could be a leader in forestry education if it further promotes and develops the forestry program. We feel the first step in accomplishing this is to fill the vacant forestry positions within the forest science department. A second objective should be to develop the curriculum from an applied management perspective. Finally, the university should actively recruit prospective forestry students from around the state and country.

Alaska SAF thanks you for taking the time to hear our concerns over forestry education in Alaska and we hope you will consider further promotion and development of the forestry program at UAF.

Sincerely,

Alaska Society of American Foresters

Northern Alaska Forestry Topics Presentations

The Yukon River Chapter of SAF sponsors technical sessions where our members can learn about current forestry topics, exchange ideas, and meet in a casual setting. The SAF national office approved the following presentations for a 1 hour CFE credit per meeting.





Superior Pellets presentation and discussion for the Northern Alaska Forestry Series

Date	Presenter Name, Title, Employer	Presentation Title	Presentation Description	Length of Time
02/16/2013	Multiple presenters	Firewood Workshop	Presentations included: (1) Cords of firewood needed to heat your home; (2) Firewood seasoning/drying; (3) How to fall a tree and basic chainsaw maintenance; (4) Wood stove & chimney maintenance; and (5) FNSB Air Quality Program.	3.5hrs
03/20/2013	Chris Maisch State Forester & Director, Division of Forestry	Susitna State Forest HB 79/SB 28	HB 79/SB 28 would create a State Forest in the Susitna Valley of Alaska and would expand the DNR's authority to offer negotiated timber sales statewide. This presentation will include what stage of the process the bill is currently in, what obstacles they have come across, the need for a State Forest in south central Alaska, etc.	1hour
04/17/2013	Mary Lynch BLM-Alaska Fire Service Randi Jandt Alaska Fire Science Consortium	Wildfire Strategy in Alaska and the Alaska Fire Science Consorium	Mary will present on the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy and how Alaska is the model for policy makers in the lower 48 states. Randi will describe what the Alaska Fire Consortium is and also present information regarding recent science on boreal forest and fire topics.	1hour
08/23/2013	Birger Solberg, Professor at Norwegian University of Life Sciences	Forest Policy Issues in Scandinavia- with Focus on Climate Change	Professor Solberg talked about forest management practices, economics, politics, and adaptation to climate change within the Scandinavian region	1 hour
10/30/2013	Cassie Pinkel and Chad Schumacher, Superior Pellets	Current activities and outlook for Superior Pellets	Updates on current wood supply, quality control, new products, interaction with wood suppliers, product demand, and other information related to Superior Pellets' operations.	1 hour

11/20/2013	Jan Dawe, One Tree, UAF	2013 Forestry Education in Fairbanks	Update on OneTree activities, partnerships with the schools, and other educational events and projects.	1 hour
12/11/2013	John Manthei, Fairbanks Folk School	2013 Folk School activities in Fairbanks	John talked about the different Folk School classes, workshops, and events, as well as their moving into a new building to house the school.	1 hour

Table 1- The 2013 schedule of presentations for the Northern Alaska Forestry Topics Series