

## Department of Natural Resources

### Mission

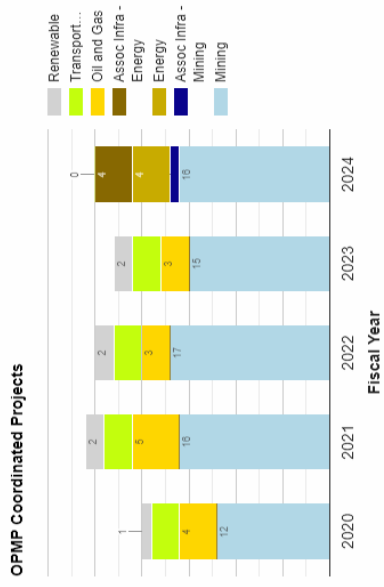
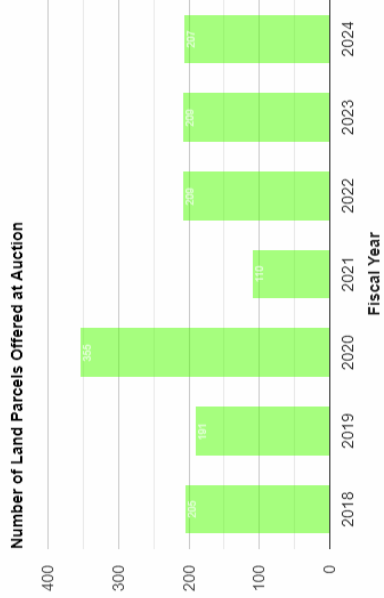
Develop, conserve and maximize the use of Alaska's natural resources consistent with the public interest. Alaska Constitution Article 8; Alaska Statute (AS) 03, AS 27, AS 38, AS 40, AS 41, AS 43.90, AS 14.30.740

| Core Services<br>(in priority order) |                                                                                                                                                                                                     | UGF      | DGF      | Other    | Fed      | Total     | PFT   | PPT   | NP   | % GF  |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-------|-------|------|-------|
| 1                                    | Foster responsible commercial development and use of state land and natural resources, consistent with the public interest, for long-term wealth and employment.                                    | 24,551.0 | 20,706.2 | 26,696.4 | 6,099.8  | 78,053.4  | 346.5 | 14.5  | 12.9 | 39.0% |
| 2                                    | Mitigate threat to the public from natural hazards by providing comprehensive fire protection services on state, private and municipal lands, and through identifying significant geologic hazards. | 28,464.3 | 767.3    | 2,665.8  | 2,090.6  | 33,988.0  | 94.2  | 184.8 | 2.6  | 25.2% |
| 3                                    | Provide access to state lands for public and private use, settlement, and recreation.                                                                                                               | 5,920.7  | 22,185.0 | 6,486.5  | 2,527.8  | 37,120.1  | 216.2 | 4.2   | 52.3 | 24.2% |
| 4                                    | Ensure sufficient data acquisition and assessment of land and resources to foster responsible resource and community development and public safety.                                                 | 8,552.9  | 4,770.2  | 6,331.5  | 4,583.2  | 24,237.8  | 110.1 | 11.5  | 4.2  | 11.5% |
| FY2025 Management Plan               |                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 67,488.9 | 48,428.7 | 42,180.3 | 15,301.4 | 173,399.3 | 767.0 | 215.0 | 72.0 |       |

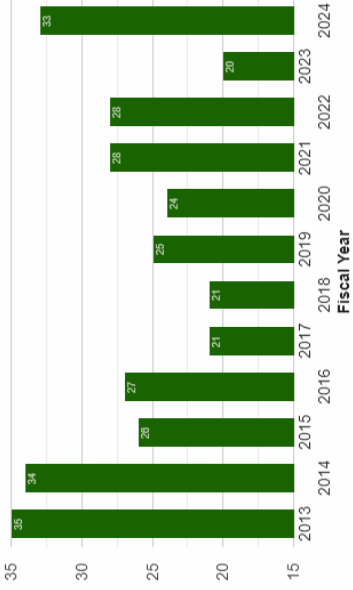
### Measures by Core Service

(Additional performance information is available on the web at <https://omb.alaska.gov/results>.)

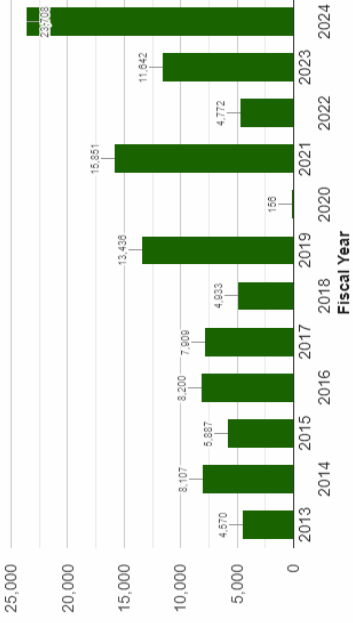
#### 1. Foster responsible commercial development and use of state land and natural resources, consistent with the public interest, for long-term wealth and employment.



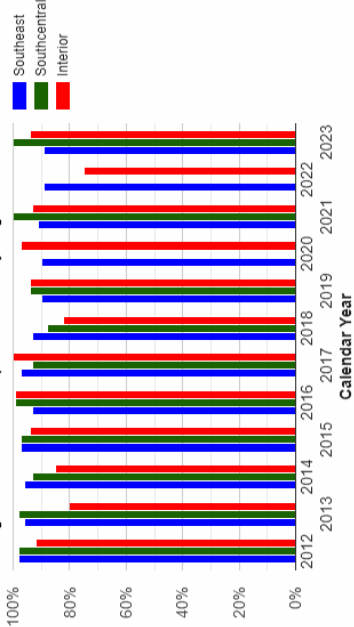
Alaskan Firms Purchasing State Timber Sales



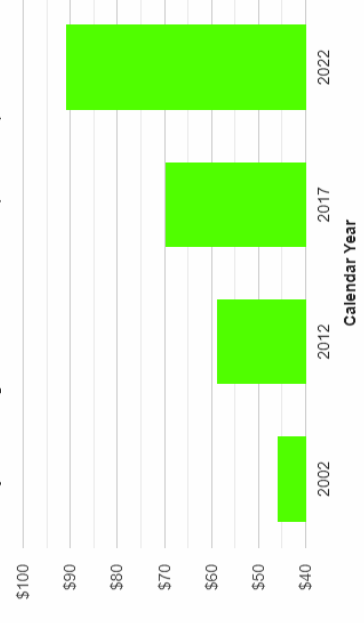
Southern Southeast Alaska Timber Sale Program: Displayed as Thousand Board Feet Sold per Fiscal Year



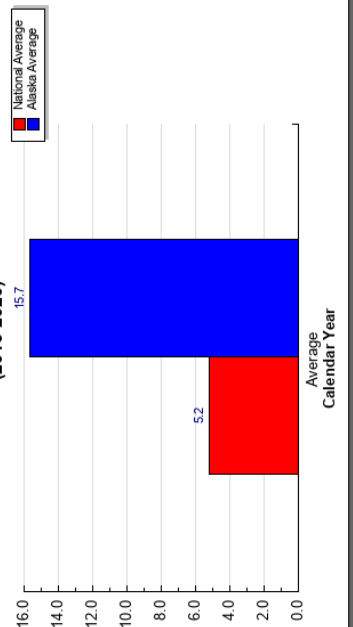
Forest Resources & Practices Act Program: Rating of Best Management Practices Implementation by Region



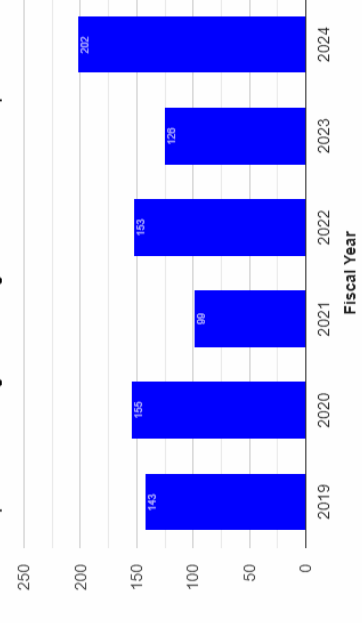
Monetary Value of Agriculture Products Sold (in millions)



Adult Life Jacket Wear Rate Percentages Powerboats National vs. Alaska (2015-2020)

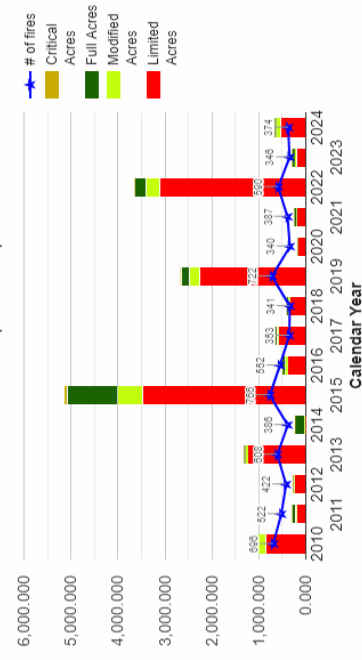


Compliance & Oversight Monitoring Actions of AS 38.35 Pipelines

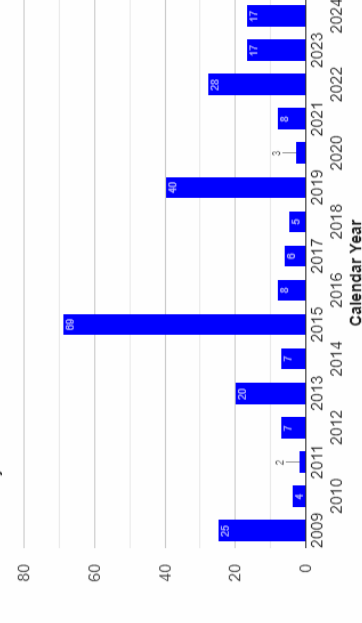


2. Mitigate threat to the public from natural hazards by providing comprehensive fire protection services on state, private and municipal lands, and through identifying significant geologic hazards.

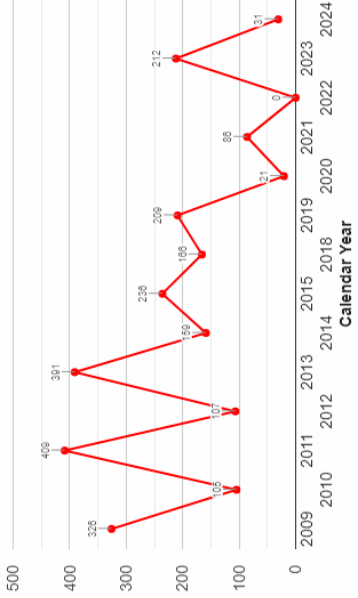
Fire Starts and Acres Burned (thousands) - Statewide



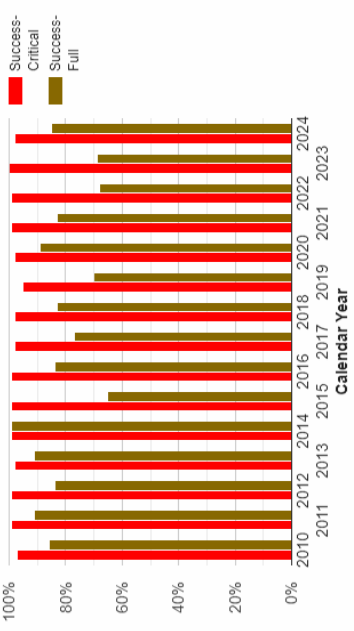
Air Quality Advisories Issued Due to Wildland Fire Smoke



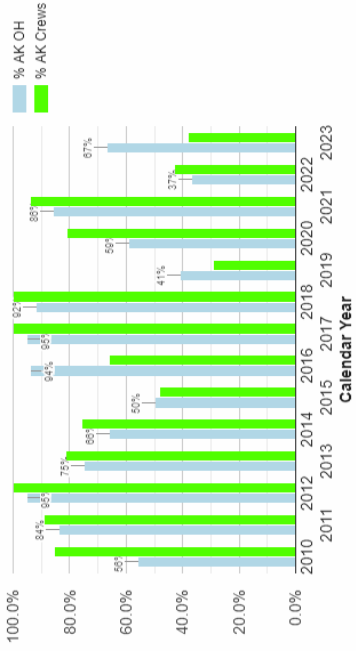
Firefighter Safety: Total Days Lost



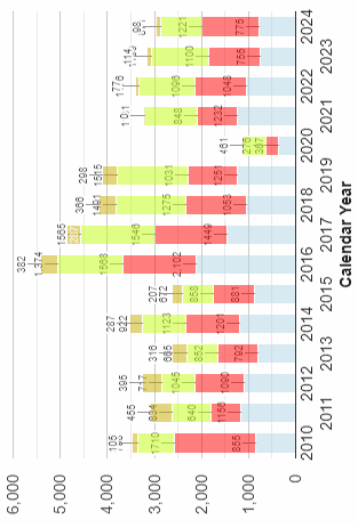
Percentage of Fires Successfully Contained at Less Than 10 Acres



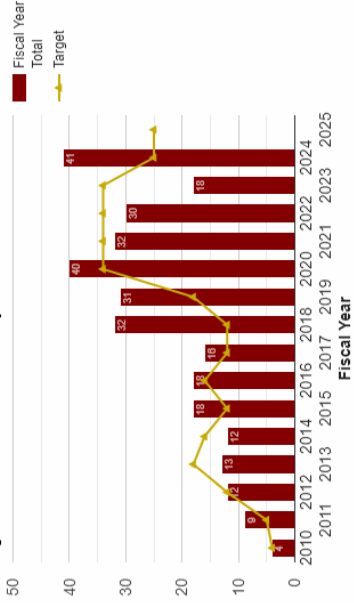
Percent of Alaskan Crews & Individuals Assigned to Alaska Fires / Total Needed



Wildland Fire Training Classes Delivered to Alaskans

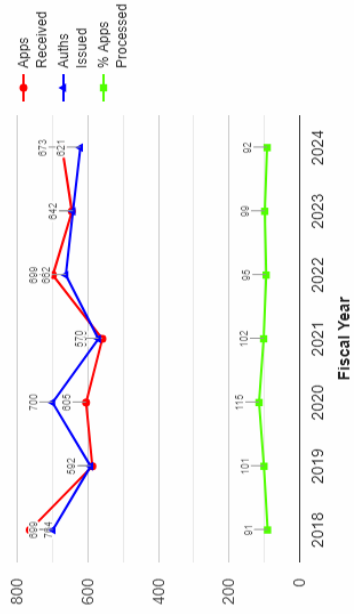


Published New Reports on Geologic Hazards that Pose Significant Risks to Public Safety

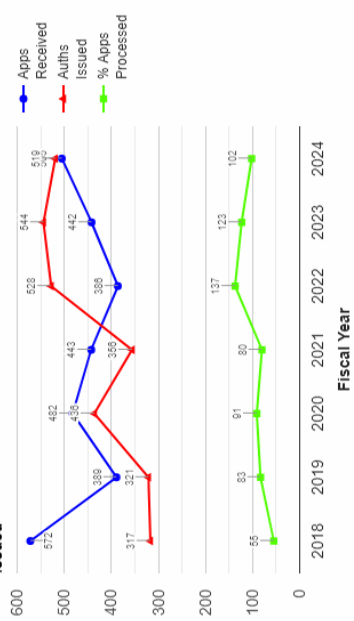


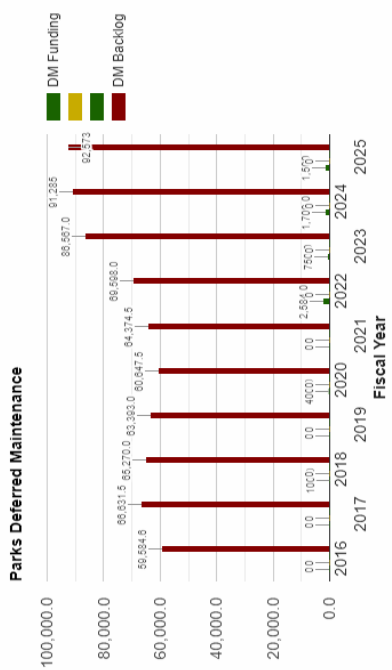
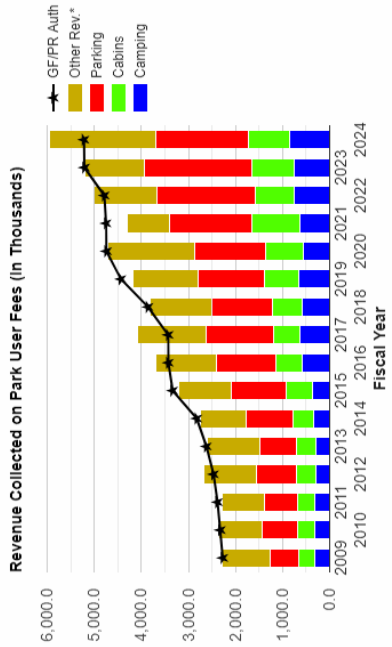
3. Provide access to state lands for public and private use, settlement, and recreation.

Land Use Applications Received vs. Authorizations Issued

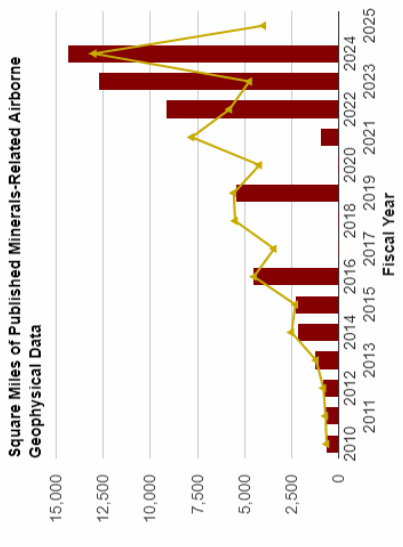
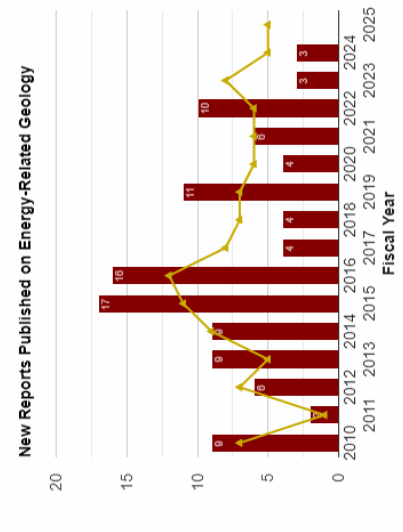


Applications Received/Completed and Authorizations Issued





4. Ensure sufficient data acquisition and assessment of land and resources to foster responsible resource and community development and public safety.



Major Department Accomplishments in 2024

Foster responsible commercial development and use of State land and natural resources, consistent with the public interest, for long-term wealth and employment:

The Commissioner's Office was instrumental in assisting divisions with the accomplishments detailed in the individual component narratives and in implementing the Governor's policies through department and division programs. The Commissioner's Office continued to press statehood defense issues while working with federal agencies and remained active in promoting Alaska's resources to global investors. This includes developing regulations and policy for the recently enacted carbon management framework, continuing to refocus time management and wildfire response capabilities, and engaging with the expanding suite of companies and projects looking at next generation resource use and development in Alaska. The office focused on backlogged appeals inherited from previous administrations, removing roadblocks, and improving the appeals process.

The Division of Oil & Gas (DOG) held five area-wide lease sales resulting in more than \$5.4 million in bonus bids and more than 159,972 acres leased. They authorized three new lease plans of operations, one new unit plan of operations, two new easements, two easement amendments, three lease development plan amendments, one surface lease renewal, five miscellaneous land use permits, 119 tundra travel requests, 48 general permits, and 67 plans of operations amendments for activities on the North Slope and in Cook Inlet. The DOG collected \$22.5 million, including interest, from audits. Additionally, they verified and receipted \$1.7 billion in royalties, net profit share lease revenues, rents, bonus bids, unit actions, and federal payments.

The DOG initiated analysis and evaluation of an application for a new geothermal prospecting permit on Augustine Island.

of the annual land sale auction, year-round Over the Counter (OTC) sales, and the Remote Recreation Cabin Sites (RRCS) program's staking authorizations that made it to the purchase stage.

The DMLW completed 72 coal mine inspections during fiscal year (FY) 2024 under the Coal Regulatory program. Fifteen large mine inspections were conducted during the year.

The Division of Forest Management and Development (DFMD) sold 33.6 million board feet in 45 new timber sales to 38 firms in FY2024. There are currently 38 firms with active timber sale contracts throughout Alaska. Additionally, the DFMD sold approximately 1,656 cords of personal use firewood via 425 permits, issued mostly online.

**Mitigate threats to the public from natural hazards by providing comprehensive fire protection services on State, private, and municipal lands, and through identifying significant geologic hazards:**

The Division of Forestry and Fire Protection's (DOF) year-round preparedness activities are crucial in allowing the DOF to meet its mission of protecting life, property, and investments within Alaska from the threat of wildland fire. Fire preparedness starts each fall with after-action reviews of the fire season to identify successes and challenges, things that could have been done better, and culminating with work groups tasked with solving identified issues. Off-season work consists of cooperator outreach, training development and implementation, equipment refurbishment, aircraft and equipment vendor contract renewal, policy and procedural updates, fire planning, and recruitment. The DOF is building a hazardous fuels removal program across the state, which provides work for fire personnel during periods of slow fire activity in the summer, allowing them to be ready to respond to incidents. During fire season, preparedness activities ensure necessary firefighting and support resources are available to respond to new fire starts, based on expected fire danger.

With the current trends of increasing fire season duration and severity, rising number of values to be protected, and issues with recruitment and retention of firefighters, the DOF has been experiencing challenges in meeting its goal of being able to handle a moderate fire load without having to order non-Alaskan firefighting resources. Last year, the DOF completed its reorganization to better handle these challenges with an increased focus on fire management, robust administrative structure that can better handle financial demands of complex fire seasons, and consolidated dispatch centers for maximum efficiency. The DOF is now focusing on a 10-year strategic plan that includes modernization of fire facilities, an emphasis on the DOF's hazardous fuels removal program, and the reclassification of fire management, dispatch, and firefighter positions to alleviate recruitment and retention issues.

**Provide access to State lands for public and private use, settlement, and recreation:**

The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR) awarded 11 construction-related contracts with a combined value of \$5.8 million for park maintenance and improvement projects.

The DPOR staff recruited and directed 315 park volunteers who helped maintain park facilities, provided information and assistance to park visitors, and led interpretive and educational programs.

**Ensure sufficient data acquisition and assessment of land and resources to foster responsible resource and community development and public safety:**

The Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys' (DGGS) Mineral Resources Section completed critical-minerals-focused surveys through the Earth Mapping Resources Initiative (Earth MRI), a federal-State partnership. The DGGS' geophysical contractors completed fixed-wing (45,980 line-miles) and helicopter-based ('15,845 line-miles) magnetic + radiometric surveying in the northeastern Kuskokwim Mineral Belt, as well as 4,970 line-miles of electromagnetic surveying there and on the Seward Peninsula. Additionally, the DGGS' Mineral Resources geologic mapping team completed a seven-week helicopter-supported field program in the Chena Hot Springs area, plus additional road-accessible traverses and sampling. The team covered about 3,860 square miles during the summer.

In FY2024, the Geologic Hazards Section received a very high number of requests for hazard-related information and hazard risk assessments relating to recent landslides, bluff stability, coastal and outburst flooding, storm forecasting, data required for Local Hazard Mitigation Plans, and radon information. The section responded to fatal landslides in Wrangell and Ketchikan and helped monitor the landslide that caused a tsunami in Pedersen Lagoon. The section

also provided outreach support relating to the Suicide Basin outburst floods affecting Juneau and continues to monitor the Barry Arm landslide in a cross-agency collaboration.

The DGGs's Volcanology Section, as part of the Alaska Volcano Observatory (AVO), responded to eruptions at Kanaga, Great Sitkin, Atka volcanic complex, and Shishaldin, as well as unrest at five other Alaska volcanoes. The AVO web team based at the DGGs also rolled out a new website for the AVO, including dynamic timelines and features accessible by all screen sizes, from cell phones to desktops.

## **Key Department Challenges**

Maintaining core service functions with adequate staffing and continuing to provide revenue generation, public safety, and services for Alaskans.

Absorbing the increasing contractual costs from leases, cores services, mainframe costs, and essential contracts into existing budget appropriations.

Keeping pace with growth in resource sector activities and major project developments (mining, oil & gas, aquatic farming, etc.) with difficult headwinds in the recruitment and retention of staff.

**Foster responsible commercial development and use of State land and natural resources, consistent with the public interest, for long-term wealth and employment:**

Improving investment climate, increasing exploration company and investor activity, conservation of resources, while balancing recruiting, training, and retaining qualified staff, low oil prices, and declining production.

Despite challenges hiring staff, the Office of Project Management and Permitting (OPMP) has defined and advanced existing Programs (Mining, Energy, and Federal), taken on and is building new Programs (Carbon Offset, Broadband, and Grants), and anticipates additional new programs. The OPMP is advancing these opportunities through prioritization, optimization of staff time and resources and budget, and empowering staff in professional development.

The DFMD continued to provide support for statewide wood biomass projects by completing technical reviews of wood supply, forestry harvest operations, and ensuring long-term sustainability of biomass supply. The DFMD continued to pursue new technologies to protect trees from spruce beetle attack and survey the extent, provide outreach, and address other aspects of the ongoing spruce beetle outbreak in Southcentral using 100 percent federal funding.

**Mitigate threats to the public from natural hazards by providing comprehensive fire protection services on State, private and municipal lands, and through identifying significant geologic hazards:**

Within the Division of Forestry and Fire Protection (DOF), the Incident Strategic Alignment Process (ISAP) is a new tool used to consider exposure and risk to personnel when developing strategies for fire management, and hazard mitigation processes are standard for incident management teams.

The Medical Program plays a vital role in the DOF's mission to deliver high-quality medical care in remote, resource-limited environments during wildfire suppression and related operations throughout Alaska. Fireline Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics are deployed to wildfire incidents and operational activities, providing essential emergency medical care during active fire suppression efforts and fuels mitigation projects across the state.

In response to national changes within the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the DOF took proactive measures to develop and implement a more robust emergency medical program, ensuring mission safety and success.

Rapidly increasing demands for digital information, while improving the quality, completeness, and usability of statewide geological and geophysical data continue to challenge the DGGs's ability to keep up with requests. Public demands for geologic hazards information and increases in the frequency of hazardous events continue to challenge the DGGs's ability to respond in a timely manner.

**Provide access to State lands for public and private use, settlement, and recreation:**

Outdoor activities that rely on park infrastructure are growing in popularity and have been increasing park visitation. This trend creates challenges for park staff to keep up with user needs, both from an on-ground and administrative standpoint.

The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR) has taken on management of several areas in the Northern Region (Delta units) due to the inability of concessionaires to make a profit managing the facility. It is the DPOR's goal to provide access to all State park land and developed facilities.

Defending State ownership interests through navigability and RS 2477, Quiet Title Action (QTA) lawsuits will continue to be of critical importance. The DMLW was actively involved in federal and State court litigation on thirteen rivers and lakes. The DMLW provided notice pursuant to the Federal QTA of its intention to sue the federal government on the Kobuk River, Sarkar Lake, and other waters.

The DMLW received a disclaimer for approximately 90 percent of the submerged lands sought in the federal court litigation involving the North Fork and Middle Fork of the Fortymile River, leaving only a small remaining segment of the North Fork in dispute.

The DMLW undertook additional state navigability determinations for numerous State waters—including, but not limited to, determinations for all navigable waters located within National Park Service (NPS) areas, United States Forest Service (USFS) areas, and several United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) areas (over two thousand rivers and lakes), which are included in a public interactive map on the State website.

**Ensure sufficient data acquisition and assessment of land and resources to foster responsible resource and community development and public safety:**

Through continued federal funding of the Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) program in interior Alaska, the DOF has successfully maintained operations for five years and has negotiated a second Joint Venture Agreement. The DOF has met the challenge of completing its “ramp up phase” and now operates the program semi-autonomously from direct USFS involvement. The FIA provides a comprehensive permanent sample plot grid to assess timber and wood product resources, vegetation structure, carbon and biomass accounting, and disturbance and change over time.

The DGGs Alaska Geospatial Office (AGO) administers the State Open Data Geoportal and the Alaska Geospatial Council. The data and maps coordinated by the AGO are critical to local, State, and federal government operations, private investments, rural communities, and academic institutions. These data lay the foundation for economic development and public safety.

**Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2026**

The Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys (DGGs) will enhance the return on investment into the State's archive of geologic materials by training staff to utilize a hyperspectral scanner and implementing new services, agreements, and collecting new revenue at the Geologic Materials Center. The DGGs will continue efforts to stand up a program to collect baseline data on Alaska's geothermal energy potential and enhance coordination with other State agencies to deliver geothermal data.

The Division of Oil & Gas will drive operations toward a more business-like and business-oriented approach aiming to timely meet producer and operator needs. The development of a small, unmanned aircraft system (drone) program for field inspections will continue with a focus on safety and efficiency.

As one of the Governor's priorities, to increase active management of our forest resources, the Division of Forestry and Fire Protection (DOF) will focus on improving access to those resources, as well as on the staffing needed to execute management activities on forested lands including forest health and wildfire mitigation issues.

The DOF will continue to prepare and offer an accelerated program of timber sales to help bridge the gap in federal timber sale volume in southern southeast Alaska consistent with the rolling 10-year average of sustained yield for

the southeast State forest and other State lands. The DOF will also continue efforts in public education outreach regarding the division's fire prevention program, with the goal to reduce human caused fires.

Agricultural Development's (AG Dev) funding received from the United States Department of Agriculture for the 2023 Micro-Grants for Food Security Program (MGFSP) is \$1.576 million higher than previous years, which will significantly increase the amount of subawards the division is able to grant, having a high impact on increasing food security in Alaska.

The AG Dev will continue management of known invasive elodea infestations with fresh waters, to include surveying high priority waterbodies and monitoring those where eradication has been completed to continue to protect the State's natural resources and public safety. The division will also continue to provide Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practice (GHP) audits to allow Alaskan agricultural producers to move products into existing and future commercial markets.

The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR) will review any new investments in the division's infrastructure with the idea of sustainability and revenue-producing potential in mind. Investments in public use cabins, electronic fee stations, and similar infrastructure will increase revenue and fill a demonstrated public demand.

The DPOR will work to grow strategic partnerships and attract private sector funding. Specifically, the DPOR will work to consolidate and streamline "friends" groups in different regions, and work with the non-profit sector to set up potential private sector funding sources and endowments that can support park activities and upkeep into the future.

| Contact Information                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
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