



BRIEFING PAPER: HB 98

Forest Land Use Plans; Negotiated Timber Sales

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DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

DIVISION OF FORESTRY

Issue 1: Negotiated Timber Sales

- Alaska timber market's demand for export increases need for more flexible, long-term negotiated sales.
 - Current law allows large, long-term negotiated sales only if timber is for in-state, local manufacturing.

Action needed: Eliminate local manufacture restriction.

Issue 2: Forest Land Use Plans

- Four steps required before a timber sale; allows public comment and agency review:
 - Area & state forest plans provide the land-use designations allowing harvest
 - Five-Year Schedule of Timber Sales provides overview of future harvests
 - Best Interest Finding (BIF) documents decision to sell timber; covers all harvest units
 - Forest Land Use Plans (FLUPs) detail site-specific, on-the-ground implementation of BIF
- BIF: “Should we sell this timber?” FLUPs: “How will the timber be harvested?”
 - Public has opportunity for input and comment on BIF and FLUPs on each timber sale
 - FLUPs must comply with protections afforded by Forest Resources and Practices Act
- For short-term sales, DOF may prepare BIFs and FLUPs simultaneously.
- For long-term sales, DOF prepares FLUPs for most accessible units first, then for other units as harvest proceeds, allowing safe, efficient, timely, economical access.
- Both BIFs and FLUPs can now be appealed, opening door to repeated harvest interruptions that deprive purchasers of a stable, predictable timber supply and make Alaskan timber less attractive.

Action needed: Prevent redundant appeals at FLUP stage; refocus appeals at earlier BIF stage

Why is HB 98 important?

HB 98 streamlines timber sale process

- Makes forestry planning more efficient
- Retains public & agency participation, including public right to appeal BIF

HB 98 supports timber industry and jobs with additional incentives and more predictability

- Provides predictable, consistent, dependable timber supply
- Forestalls appeal interruptions once BIF is final

HB 98 increases timber sale flexibility to meet evolving market demands

- Supports export markets (round-log sales may be negotiated)
- Protects local markets (sales can still be negotiated for local manufacturers)

HB 98 eliminates multiple, redundant appeals for the same timber sale

HB 98 modernizes statutes by consolidating and simplifying confusing negotiated sales law

HB 98 has a "zero" fiscal note, and reduces DOF operational costs

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