

HOUSE BILL NO. 104

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES CRONK, Rauscher, McCabe, McKay, Sumner, Tomaszewski, C.Johnson,
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Introduced: 3/8/23
Referred: Resources

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to expedited timber sales."**

2 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

3 * **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section
4 to read:

5 LEGISLATIVE PURPOSE. The purpose of this Act is to reduce the risk and cost of
6 fires, minimize the loss of harvestable timber caused by fire, insect infestation, and disease
7 epidemics, and support an increase in value-added producers and facilities.

8 * **Sec. 2.** AS 38.05.110(c) is amended to read:

9 (c) If a sale of timber may be offered under multiple provisions of
10 AS 38.05.110 - 38.05.124 [AS 38.05.110 - 38.05.123], the commissioner shall
11 determine the applicable provisions under which to offer the timber.

12 * **Sec. 3.** AS 38.05 is amended by adding a new section to article 4 to read:

13 **Sec. 38.05.124. Expedited timber sales.** (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of
14 AS 38.05.112 - 38.05.117 and 38.05.120, upon finding that a sale is in the best interest
15 of the state, the commissioner may expedite the sale of timber in areas subject to high

1 annual fire danger or insect or disease epidemics.

2 (b) A timber sale contract entered into under this section shall provide for a
3 harvest in an amount to be determined by the commissioner. In determining a harvest
4 amount, the commissioner shall take into consideration the needs of existing
5 competing commercial harvesters. The harvest must be consistent with sustained yield
6 principles and, if requested, may be negotiated for a term of not less than seven years.

7 (c) Initial stumpage rates for a contract under this section must be determined
8 by negotiation and based on current market conditions and the need to reduce annual
9 fire risks or manage levels of insect or disease epidemics.

10 (d) In making the best interest finding required by AS 38.05.035(e) and this
11 section, before offering an expedited timber sale, the commissioner shall find that the
12 timber has been burned by fire, infected by insects or disease, or is in an area with a
13 high annual threat of fire or of insect or disease epidemics and, as a result, the timber

14 (1) creates, or will create, a public safety issue;

15 (2) results in, or may result in, the destruction of habitat or decrease in
16 wildlife populations;

17 (3) affects, or may affect, soil stability;

18 (4) negatively affects businesses that depend on a steady, long-term
19 supply of timber; and

20 (5) eliminates, or may eliminate, other commercially viable or better
21 uses for the timber, such as the likelihood of commercial success of locally
22 manufactured high value-added wood products.

23 (e) An expedited timber sale under this section does not affect other timber
24 harvest programs under AS 38.05.110 - 38.05.120.

25 (f) In this section, "expedited timber sale" means a sale that shortens the time
26 frame for each step of the timber sale process and concentrates personnel actions to
27 maximize the amount of qualifying burnt, infected, diseased, or threatened timber
28 available for harvest.