

## 27. Timber Resources: Tongass Timber Reform Act (TTRA)

**Goals:** Provide for the continuation of timber uses and resources by the timber industry and Alaska residents. Manage the timber resources for timber production of saw timber and wood products from suitable forest lands made available for timber harvest on an even-flow, long-term, sustained-yield basis and in an economically efficient manner.

**Objectives:** Pre-commercially thin previously harvested suitable forestland. Evaluate non-clearcutting silvicultural systems. Seek to provide an economic timber supply sufficient to meet the annual market demand<sup>1</sup> for Tongass National Forest timber and the market demand for the planning cycle, up to a ceiling of the Forest Plan's allowable sale quantity, which is 2.67 billion board feet in the first decade. Manage young-growth to improve habitat for wildlife and commercial timber products. Review standards and guidelines for applicability to young-growth stands. Provide 2 to 3 years supply of volume under contract to local mills and then establish shelf volume<sup>2</sup> to maintain flexibility and stability in the sale program. Review the timber sale program and work with the state and other partners to implement changes that will keep an "economic timber" perspective throughout the process and monitor the implementation of these reforms to ensure they are consistently employed across the Forest.

### **Timber Resources Question: *Is the timber demand being met within limits of the adaptive management strategy and TTRA?***

The evaluation criteria and sampling/reporting period are outlined below. No data relative to this question was reported.

#### **Evaluation Criteria**

The adaptive management strategy (see Forest Plan ROD, pages 64 through 66) will be implemented in three phases based on the annual timber harvest. Phase 1 restricts the timber program to a portion of the suitable land base that excludes moderate and higher value roadless areas. Should the level of harvest reach 100 MMBF for two consecutive fiscal years, the Tongass could then plan for timber projects in the Phase 2 portion of the approved suitable land base. However, personal use of timber, micro sales, salvage sales, small commercial timber sales generally less than 1 MMBF, young-growth management projects, and the roads associated with these activities, would be allowed in development land use designations outside of the Phase 1 portion of the ASQ land base within Phase 2 lands. Should the harvest reach 150 MMBF for two consecutive fiscal years, the Tongass could then plan for timber projects in Phase 3 areas, which includes the entire suitable land base.

In addition, the Tongass National Forest, specifically, is directed under the Tongass Timber Reform Act (TTRA) to seek to provide a supply of timber that meets market demand annually and for the planning cycle. The annual demand calculation is an analysis of the timber industry in Southeast Alaska, where some of the variables include installed mill capacity and utilization, projected harvest level, and timber volume under contract. The demand calculation is not based on actual timber harvest. The demand analysis is done for four different scenarios – limited lumber, expanded lumber, medium integrated and high Integrated – as explained in the 2008 Forest Plan Amendment FEIS, Appendix G.

#### **Sampling/Reporting Period**

<sup>1</sup> The annual market demand forecast is a methodology used to set the short-term goals for the Tongass Timber Program – volume the Forest plans to offer in the current year, pending sufficient funding and sufficient National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)-cleared volume. NEPA-cleared volume is defined as NEPA documents with a signed decision.

<sup>2</sup> Shelf volume is volume that has been NEPA-cleared and is available for offer.

Reports containing data about the amount of timber harvested is calculated monthly and annually; these reports are posted on the Alaska Regional Office website:

[http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r10/landmanagement/resourcemanagement/?cid=fsbdev2\\_038785](http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r10/landmanagement/resourcemanagement/?cid=fsbdev2_038785).

- Reports are listed below the “Official Reports” subheading – as links by year and month within the current calendar year – under “Timber Volume Under Contract.” The demand calculation is done annually:

## Monitoring Results

In FY2014, all timber harvest offered and harvested was from Phase 1 lands. In FY2014, the annual demand calculation was 127 MMBF using the expanded lumber scenario. In FY2014, the Tongass offered 120 MMBF, sold 100 MMBF and had 449 MMBF in no-bid timber sales. Timber harvest for FY2014 was 39 MMBF.

## Evaluation of Results

Since the amount of harvest is less than 100 MMBF, it indicates that the Tongass timber harvest planning efforts should continue in Phase 1 areas on the Forest with the exception of small sale opportunities. At the end of FY2014, there was 152.8 MMBF under contract. Approximately 3.8 MMBF under contract in the Juneau Access Road volume and Upper Carroll II timber sale is technically not available for harvest due to litigation on the Access Road and timber sale contract termination negotiations on Upper Carroll II. The corrected volume under contract for the end of FY2014 was approximately 119 MMBF. Since the demand calculation estimates that there should be an estimated 127 MMBF under contract, the objectives of TTRA are not being met and efforts to establish shelf volume should continue.



*Timber Resources Photo 1. Front loader working at a log transfer facility, Tuxekan Island, Alaska*