

### **Sponsored by the Cook Inlet Society of American Foresters**

The 2017 Alaska Aspen Workshop will be held September 12-14, starting in Fairbanks and traveling through Delta and Tok. This Workshop originated from a presentation by Paul Rogers from the Western Aspen Alliance at the 2016 Alaska SAF meeting at Sheep Creek Lodge. Thanks to the interagency group who came together to make this workshop happen!

### **Registration & Lodging**

- Registration covers expenses only for transportation and the dinner at Tanacross on Wednesday night. Other meals and all lodging must be paid by the participants directly. See the program summary below for details.
- For government entities providing payment for employees, the SAF W-9 is available upon request.
- For questions about registration and payment, send a message to Roger Burnside, Cook Inlet Chapter treasurer at [reburnsi@gci.net](mailto:reburnsi@gci.net).
- For questions about the program and logistics, contact Sue Rodman at (907) 317-7236 or [sue.rodman@alaska.gov](mailto:sue.rodman@alaska.gov).

### **Meeting Overview**

The Aspen workshop will begin in Fairbanks with a lecture session at the BLM Northern Field Office on Tuesday, September 12, 2017. After the lunch lecture, we will take a field trip to Nenana Ridge to visit treated sites where aspen regeneration support wildlife habitat. Dinner and lodging on your own.

On Wednesday, September 13, we will meet again at the BLM Fairbanks office at 8:00 am and depart for Delta. We will have pick up lunch in Delta, then visit the Delta Junction Bison Range. Dinner will be in Tanacross (included with registration). We will overnight in Tok. A block of rooms has been reserved at Young's Motel; we encourage doubling up.

After breakfast on Thursday, September 14, we will visit the Tok Forestry Office and field sites. That afternoon, we will drive back to Fairbanks with an expected arrival time of 6:00 pm.

- AKSAF website [www.forestry.org/alaska](http://www.forestry.org/alaska)
- **Registration is due September 6, 2017**
- SAF CFE credits will be available; be sure to sign the CFE sheet to receive credit.



## Program Agenda

### **Tuesday, September 12, 2017**

BLM Northern Field Office, 222 University Avenue, Fairbanks

8:00    *Registration, bring your own coffee*

8:30    *Welcome & Introductions; Review schedule and logistics*

9:00 – 9:45    *Recent Advances in Aspen Sciences, Monitoring, and Management*  
*Paul C. Rogers, Director, Western Aspen Alliance*  
*Wildland Resources and Ecology Center, Utah State University, Logan, Utah*

This presentation is intended for wildlife, forest science, biology, botany, and resource professionals as an introduction to aspen ecology. We will examine recent advances in applied aspen sciences, such as fire ecology, herbivory, climate change, genetics/reproduction, forest classification, monitoring methods, and management techniques. Participants will receive the new Aspen Field Guide (Rogers, BLM, 2017), as well as other resources for keeping up-to-date in the interdisciplinary field of aspen ecology.

9:45 – 10:15    *Emerging Diseases of Alaska's Boreal Forest: Aspen canker and spruce bud blight*  
*Lori Winton, PhD. Forest Pathologist, US Forest Service – State & Private Forestry.*

“The most damaging aspen disease in Alaska is an aggressive ‘running’ canker (localized dead and dying areas); we have not yet identified the causal fungus.” <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/r10/forest-grasslandhealth/?cid=FSEPRD536250&width=full> Although mortality in spruce has not yet been attributed to spruce bud blight in Alaska, this pathogen favors cold temperatures and therefore it is important to monitor its progress. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/r10/forest-grasslandhealth/?cid=FSEPRD535386&width=full>

10:15 – 10:30    *Break*

10:30 – 11:00    *Long-term outbreak of the aspen leaf miner in Alaska: consequences for aspen performance in a changing climate.*  
*Diane Wagner, PhD. Associate Professor, Institute of Arctic Biology and Biology & Wildlife Department, University of Alaska Fairbanks*

Aspen leaf miner damage was observed on ~200,000 acres in 2016 by State & Private Forestry. Leaf miner damage was heavier in the Interior than in southcentral. Statewide, damage from this internal leaf feeder doubled in acreage from that observed in 2015. [https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/fseprd533099.pdf](https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd533099.pdf)

11:00 – 11:30    *Overview of the Bonanza Creek Long-Term Ecological Research Program*  
*Roger Ruess, PhD. Institute of Arctic Biology, University of Alaska Fairbanks*

“The BNZ LTER program is designed to understand the interactive effects of changing climate and disturbance regimes on the Alaska boreal forest, and study associated consequences for regional feedbacks to the climate system, and sustainability of subsistence Alaskan communities.” <https://www.lter.uaf.edu/research>

11:30 – 12:00    *Aspen Growth Rate Collapse and Mortality from High Temperatures, Drought, and Insect Attack*  
*Dr. Glenn Juday, Professor Emeritus of Forest Ecology, University of Alaska Fairbanks*

Annual growth of aspen in Alaska is least in warm, dry summers, and greatest in cool, moist summers - the same climate controls as white spruce. From 1850 to 1990, aspen was subject to periodic outbreaks of defoliating insects, especially large aspen tortrix, lasting 1 to 5 years. Climate conditions since the mid 1970s

have been uniquely unfavorable for aspen growth, and in 1998-2012 severe, sustained defoliation by aspen leaf miner was associated with a growth collapse and mortality. Starting in the 1970s, temperature control of aspen growth has shifted to late winter/early spring, and wet summers since 2014 have improved growing conditions modestly.

12:00 – 12:30 Break

**\*\*\*Lunch Lecture (pay for your own meal: bring bag lunch, or join the group order)**

12:30 – 1:00 *Management of Aspen Communities for Wildlife Habitat Benefits*  
*Tom Paragi, Wildlife Biologist, Alaska Department of Fish & Game*

The speaker is a wildlife biologist with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) who works in the boreal forest of the Tanana Valley. He will describe considerations in managing for wildlife habitat in aspen communities and adapting management practices to environmental dynamics.

1:00 – 6:00pm *Field Trip to Nenana Ridge lead by Tom Paragi*

**\*\*\*Please wear an orange vest, jacket, or hat during all field trips. It is hunting season!**  
**Dress for the weather (including rain pants and jacket) and wear boots.**

Nenana Ridge, about 30 miles west of Fairbanks, is in the Tanana Valley State Forest and part of the broad physiographic zone of the Yukon-Tanana uplands. In the absence of a fiber market, ADF&G and the Alaska Division of Forestry conducted aspen regeneration treatments with fire and felling during 1995-2006, funded in part by the Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS). Current successional trajectories illustrate the effects of site condition and treatment. We will visit 3 sites treated with manual felling and 2 burned sites. (2.5 hours)

### **Wednesday, September 13, 2017**

8:00 Meet at BLM Northern District Office, Leave Fairbanks  
Drive to Delta with possible field visits along the way

**\*\*\*Please wear an orange vest, jacket, or hat during all field trips. It is hunting season!**

10:30 Arrive in Delta (pay for your own meal: sandwiches or other at IGA grocery store)

11:15 Depart Delta for Delta Junction Bison Range – field sites treated for wildlife habitat  
Discussion Leads: Tom Paragi, Wildlife Biologist; Clint Cooper, Manager DJBR; Sue Rodman, Program Coordinator; Cameron Carroll, Small Game Biologist, ADF&G

Arrive 11:45

Mile 1408 Alaska Highway, about 12 miles southeast of Delta Junction, is in the glacial outwash plain of the Alaska Range. In 2008 ADF&G contracted dozer crushing of dormant mid-seral aspen in a large 1987 burn to reintroduce stand age and size diversity for habitat benefits in a highly accessible area. (30 minutes)

Lunch in Panoramic 12:30

The Panoramic Field Complex of the Delta Junction Bison Range is an ADF&G managed area designed to provide forage for bison who would otherwise be attracted to the private agricultural fields north of the Alaska Highway. We will view the western edge of this field where Clint Cooper, DJBR Manager will provide us with insight to how the fields are managed on an annual and seasonal schedule. Aspen wind rows provide for grouse habitat while also 'storing' snow in the spring that supports moisture to the fields as they dry out in April winds. Prescribed burning in some of these panels regenerates aspen, willow and perennial grasses. (30 minutes)

Leave at 1:15, drive to 1402 road – arrive 1:45

Mile 1402 Alaska Highway is the entry to 7 miles of forest road created in 1994 with Ruffed Grouse Society funding. A site was logged of aspen in 1997, and additional sites were shearbladed and windrowed in 2000 and 2002. Aspen size and density is greater in panels cleared of debris than on windrowed panels, and aspen vigor in sheared sites is greater adjacent to robust mature trees than adjacent to dying or dead aspen in conifer-dominated communities. (90 minutes)

4:30 Depart for Tanacross

6:00 Dinner at Tanacross (dinner included with registration)

Grouse ecology and habitat management. Cameron Carroll, Small Game Biologist, ADF&G  
The ecology of ruffed grouse and sharp-tailed grouse is tied closely to their respective habitat needs. Conducting treatments to provide for the mosaic of variable aged aspen stands incorporates guidelines for acreage, edge effect, proximity of habitat needs to brood sites, and treatment methods. (30 minutes)

After dinner, drive to Tok. Lodging at Young's Motel (reserve and pay for your own lodging).  
[www.youngsmotel.com](http://www.youngsmotel.com) (907) 883-4411

#### **Thursday, September 14, 2017**

8:00 Breakfast at Fast Eddies (pay for your own meal, Fast Eddies will pack a lunch for you)

9:30 Tok Forestry Office, Field Sites

Discussion leads: Derek Nellis, Area Forester and Peter Talus, Fire Management Officer, Division of Forestry; Jeff Wells, Assistant Area Biologist, ADF&G; Cameron Carroll, Small Game Biologist, ADF&G

Aspen management for multiple objectives. Aspen may be the next fuel at the Tok school boiler, it is effective in providing cover in a shaded fuel break, and benefits many species for wildlife habitat. What potential does this species have for economic development in the region? We will discuss examples of aspen manufacturing on a small scale from the Midwest and how this might look in Alaska. Aspen can be incorporated in shaded fuel breaks to retain moisture on the ground to mitigate spread of wildland fire. Managing multiple aged stands serves the habitat needs of grouse and moose, along with other birds and small mammals. (60 minutes)

Tok Cut-Off MP 122.5 - Field visit to 1990 Tok River Fire where ADF&G partnered with DOF to roller chop units for moose and grouse habitat enhancement. The aspen regeneration across this area is out of reach for moose to browse on, and it is all of the same age class. Moose need accessible forage that is less than 2 inches in diameter at 3 meters in height. Grouse need variable aged stands to address their needs for food and cover during all life stages. Aspen has been roller chopped in 5-20 acre units since 2015 – with additional sites treated in years prior. Projects have been supported by the Ruffed Grouse Society, and then later by a federal aid award through Pittman Robertson funding. We will visit several sites to compare 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year post-treatment vegetation response. (60 minutes)

2:00 Depart Tok

~6:00 Arrive Fairbanks BLM

**\*\*\*Please wear an orange vest, jacket, or hat during all field trips. It is hunting season!**

### *Objectives of the Alaska Aspen Workshop*

1. Communicate current science about aspen ecology, management, and issues to forest and land managers. Convene various disciplines to engage in the lectures and field sessions to engage in the 'primers' and share expertise in management and ecology (wildlife, water, fire, utility, harvest).
2. Address how the landscape-level perspective through mapping and vegetation sampling & monitoring can unite land managers to accomplish common and complementary objectives.
3. Discuss the current distribution of aspen on the landscape, the potential distribution, and how changes may influence natural resources and biomass values. Consider the effects of climate change, shifts in fire regime, and species migration.

### *Proposed Outcomes of the Aspen Workshop*

- Find innovative ways to cooperate among land owners to accomplish complementary objectives: Enhance wildlife habitat; Plan fuel breaks around homes and communities; Look at opportunities for biomass
- Compare various management techniques and results, apply successful treatment tools in new projects.
- Consider the changes in climate and fire with respect to aspen's future on the landscape.
- Evaluate pathogens and insects that affect aspen. Consider how these problems will affect current and future management.

### *Special Note for Attendees with limited travel authorization*

With travel restrictions being common for some agencies during these austere fiscal times, please consider alternative attendance for this event. If you can make one day, or all days with additional travel from your home unit with an agency vehicle, we still welcome your attendance. The group interactions during this workshop will make the most of our convening together to discuss aspen management and other forestry topics in the field setting.

\*\*\*If this works for you and your agency, no registration fee is required for transportation in the BLM-rented vans. Use the \$0 registration line to indicate your attendance.

If you are able to attend the evening dinner in Tanacross, use the \$30 registration line for that event.

For the Nenana Ridge field trip, we need to minimize vehicles. We can accommodate logistics for agency vehicles in the days prior to the workshop. Field sites in Delta and Tok are not limited for vehicle space.

**2017 Alaska Aspen Workshop  
Fairbanks – Delta – Tok, AK**

**Registration Form**  
*Due September 6, 2017*

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Company/Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime or cell phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

<b><u>Registration:</u></b>	<b><u>Amount</u></b>
<input type="checkbox"/> One-day ___Fairbanks ___Delta ___Tok; agency vehicle	\$0
<input type="checkbox"/> One-day Fairbanks registration (Tuesday, September 12) Includes morning lectures and afternoon field trip	\$20 ____
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Full registration</b> (Tuesday, September 12 - Thursday, September 14) Includes all lectures, transportation, and dinner on Wednesday All other meals and lodging must be paid separately by participant	\$75 ____
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Tanacross dinner only</b> (Wednesday, September 13)	\$30 ____
<b><u>Total Enclosed (Check only)</u></b> _____	\$ _____

**Payment Information:** AK SAF Tax ID # 23-7261430

*Due September 6*

Make checks payable to: **Cook Inlet Chapter SAF**  
**Please mail this registration form with payment to:**

Cook Inlet Chapter SAF  
Attn: Aspen Workshop  
PO Box 240432  
Anchorage, AK 99524-0432

