



**File Code:** 1580; 6400  
**Date:** April 14, 2020

Dear Valued Partner of the Alaska Region;

As you are likely aware, the State of Alaska has, to date, issued twelve (12) Health Mandates related to the outbreak of COVID-19 (<https://gov.alaska.gov/home/covid19-healthmandates/>). The State's mandates and alerts include mandatory requirements or restrictions for travel, self-quarantine, gathering and social distancing. Additionally, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Federal Government and local municipalities may have implemented additional recommendations, restrictions or requirements related to travel or business operations.

To address the continuity of operations I have set up an Incident Management Team (IMT) with my leadership team across the Alaska Region and they are currently assessing field season and ongoing activities that your organization may be involved in. They are actively working through risk assessments to help guide our response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The work that we do together is very important, and I hope to continue operations this year however, in the event the pandemic will not allow certain activities to continue safely, Program Managers will be in touch with each of you as soon as practicable, to identify our path forward.

Program Managers are already working to proactively identify agreements that were slated for expiration as of September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and will seek the needed extensions to secure the funding and work for an additional year, if necessary. I have authorized expanded telework approval until further notice so that employees within the Region will be available via phone and/or email through variety of technology. I want to assure you that we are here and look forward to checking in with you and will keep you apprised of any new guidance issued. I believe this is one way that we can position ourselves for success as we look ahead.

I welcome any input that your organization would like to share regarding field season and ongoing operations. A log of concerns and creative operational solutions will be kept and elevated to our Alaska Incident Management Team, Program Managers, and the Grants Management Specialists.

Your work and dedication to the Forest Service's mission is important. Thank you for remaining patient, flexible, proactive, and understanding while we navigate these uncertain times together. It is my goal to maintain timely, transparent, and open lines of communication with each of you.



Dear Valued Partner of the Alaska Region

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To provide input please feel free to contact Bobbie Jo Skibo, Regional Partnership Coordinator, [bobbiejo.skibo@usda.gov](mailto:bobbiejo.skibo@usda.gov), 907-441-1539.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID  
Regional Forester

cc: Scott Langston, Laurie Moore, Bobbie Jo Skibo, Darrin Kelly, Pamela Ward