




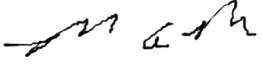

Kenai Peninsula Borough

Planning Department – Land Management Division

MEMORANDUM

TO: Brent Johnson, Assembly President
Members, Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

THRU: Charlie Pierce, Mayor 
Brandi Harbaugh, Finance Direct 
Robert Ruffner, Planning Director 

FROM: Marcus A Mueller, Land Management Officer 
Dakota Truitt, Land Management Agent 

DATE: May 26, 2022

RE: Ordinance 2021-19-55, Appropriating Spruce Bark Beetle Program
Interest Income to Initiate Forest Management Efforts (Mayor)

KPB Land Management has been working to re-establish a Spruce Bark Beetle mitigation effort in light of the outbreak that began in 2016 and has now affected more than 195,000 acres on the Kenai Peninsula.

Ordinance 2022-11, which allows for emergency harvest of dead, dying, and susceptible spruce trees on lands regardless of classification, was approved by unanimous vote on May 17th. This ordinance sets the framework for forest treatments utilizing Forest Management Sale Reports and establishes a public review and approval process.

Land Management is proposing utilizing contracts for forestry consultants to conduct field analysis, create forest management sale reports, assist with public processes, prepare contracting documents, and provide contract administration services. The Land Management Division would act as the project managers for these contracts and will facilitate the internal processes needed to support forest management. Contracts are a forward-thinking solution to increasing capacity that gives the Borough access to developed forestry skillsets within a short time frame, on a project basis, to effectively tackle the emergency Spruce Bark Beetle issues.

Since 1998, Congress has appropriated over \$18 million to the Kenai Peninsula Borough for the Spruce Bark Beetle Mitigation Program. These funds were intended for wildland fire mitigations, hazardous tree removal, and other projects designed to minimize the devastation caused by the Spruce Bark Beetle. The unrestricted interest earnings are accounted for in the Environmental Protection Fund fund balance. Appropriating the remaining fund balance to utilize for wildland fire mitigation and hazard tree removal, aligns with the original purpose

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of the funds for increased forest management in response to Spruce Bark Beetle impacts. The Borough is actively pursuing grants if received, could provide alternative and longer duration project funding.

This Ordinance appropriates Spruce Bark Beetle Interest Income from the Environmental Protection Fund fund balance up to \$243,436 to support the Spruce Bark Beetle Mitigation Program established through KPB Ordinance 2022-11.

Your consideration of this ordinance is appreciated.

**FINANCE DEPARTMENT
FUNDS/ACCOUNT VERIFIED**

Account: 262.27910

Amount: \$ up to \$243,436

By: CJ Date: 5/25/2022