

# Alaska SAF Annual Meeting was a Virtual Success

By Ed Morgan, 2021 Alaska SAF Chair

The members of the Alaska Society of American Foresters chose to hold our annual meeting virtually this year, as many other states have done in light of the pandemic. We decided on a five-day meeting format the week of April 12, with each of the five Alaska chapters hosting the meeting from 12:00-1:30 p.m. (ADT) each day. The “*Virtual Traverse of Forestry in Alaska*” began on Monday with our southernmost group, Dixon Entrance chapter, and proceeded north through Sitka chapter, Juneau chapter, Cook Inlet chapter, with the journey concluded at the Yukon River chapter on Friday.

With twelve invited speakers, meeting participants were presented a wide variety of Alaskan forestry topics.

- Forest inventory of young-growth forests and forest management planning on the Tongass National Forest
- Status of the timber industry in Alaska and outlook for the future
- History and Controversy of the establishment of Dawn Redwood trees in southeast Alaska

- Soil-plant interactions, hydrology, and soil development of Alaska coastal forests

- Engaging Southeast Alaska youth in natural resource management

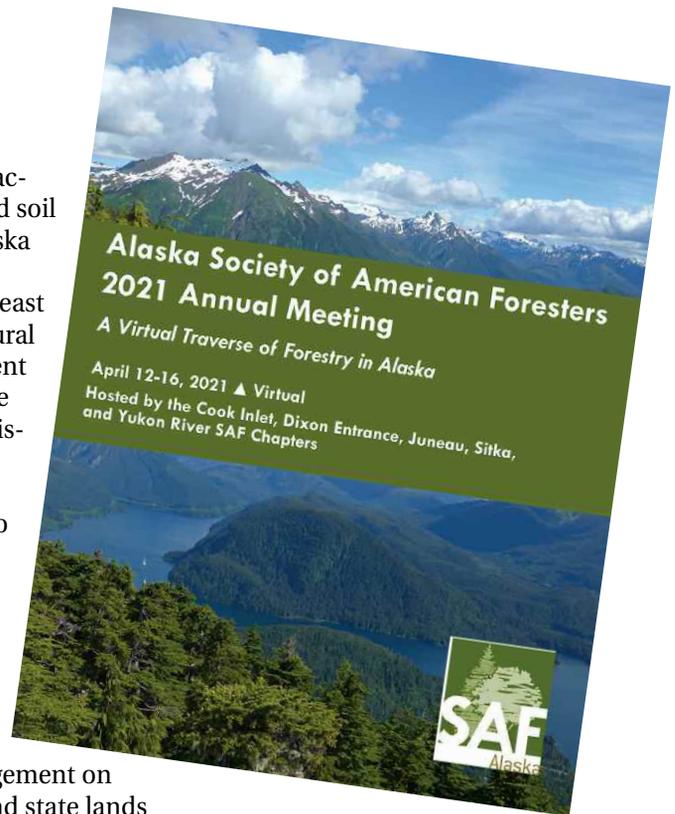
- Highlights of the annual insect and disease surveys in Alaska—logistical modifications due to the pandemic

- Developing a multispectral UAV tool for early detection of spruce bark beetle in Alaska

- Interior Alaska wildfire fuels management on tribal, municipal, and state lands

- Impacts of fuel reduction treatments on fire behavior and ecosystem processes in Alaskan black spruce forests

An added highlight to the meeting was both SAF President Gene Kodama and SAF CEO Terry Baker addressing the participants on the first two days of the meeting. Their presentations generated lots of good questions and discussion and Alaska SAF members



got to know our national leadership better. SAF Vice President Chris Maisch, a Fairbanks resident, and Chris Schnepf, District 1 Representative on the SAF Board of Directors, also attended the meeting.

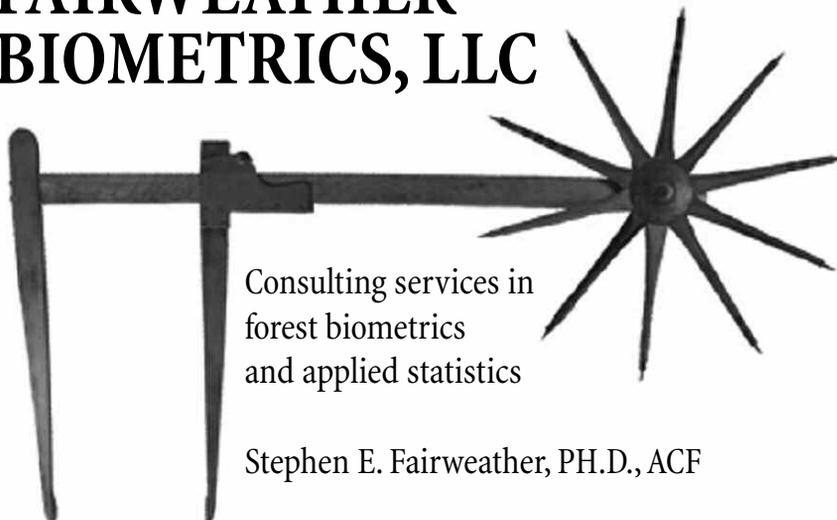
Kudos go to the chapter chairs who lined up the speakers and hosted their respective chapter meeting days. The virtual Zoom meeting was carried out without a hitch. Overall, the annual meeting met the four goals of any successful meeting: It was organized, educational, productive, and fun!

A special thanks goes to Andrea Watts and Melinda Olson at the SAF Northwest Office for preparing the program materials, handling registration, and providing organizational expertise, which all contributed to the success of the meeting.

If you'd like to watch the presentations, the annual meeting videos will be posted online within a month.

At next year's annual meeting in Fairbanks, we hope and plan to meet in person, and with the lessons learned this year, there will most likely be a virtual component to the meeting for those who cannot be there in person. See you next year! *WF*

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