



National Forests in Hokkaido



Did you know?

National forests belong to everyone.

The Hokkaido Regional Forest Office is responsible to take care of these precious forests.

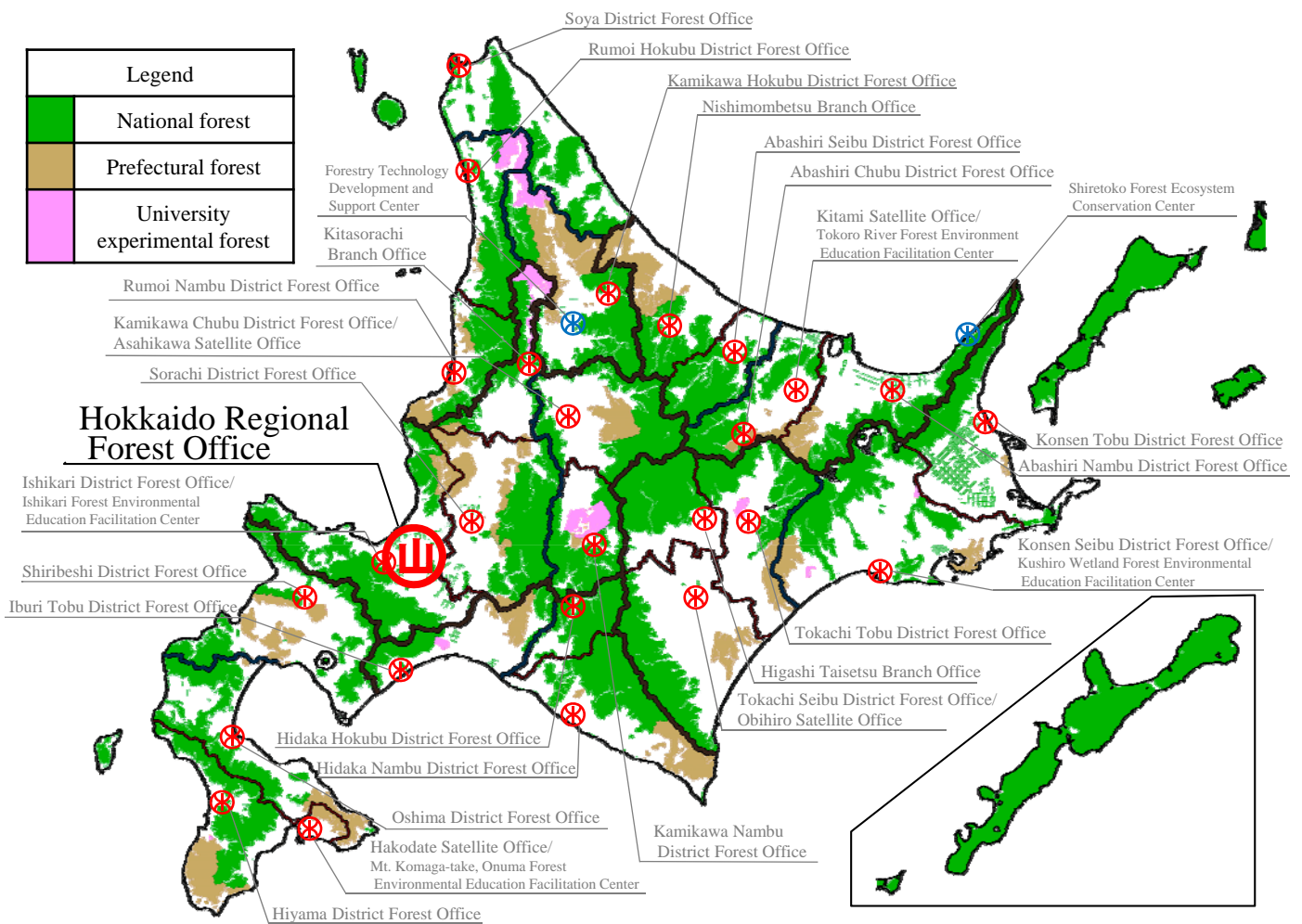


Hokkaido Regional Forest Office

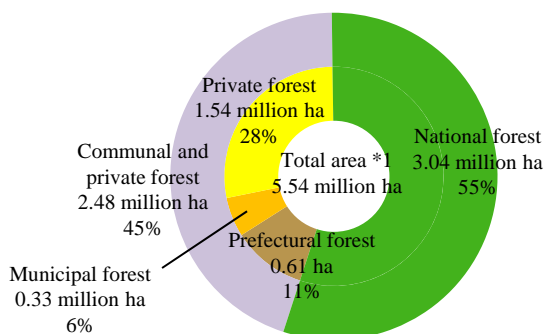
Outline of National Forests in Hokkaido

Hokkaido is one of Japan's leading forestlands, with forests accounting for 22% of the total forestlands of Japan. Hokkaido's National forests account for over 50% of the total forestlands of Hokkaido, which include Mt. Daisetsu, the Hidaka Mountains and other major mountain ranges, creating one of the richest ecosystems in Hokkaido. Hokkaido's National forests are comprised of coniferous trees (Sakhalin fir and Sakhalin spruce) and broad-leaved trees (Japanese oak, birch and Painted maple), providing seasonally changing views.

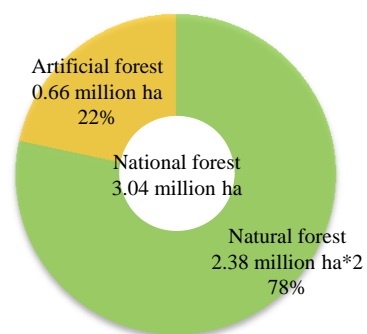
Forests have various functions such as providing timbers, conserving national land and water resources, absorbing and storing carbon dioxide (a cause of global warming) and providing habitats for wildlife and recreational areas for people. Forests represent valuable assets for us human beings.



Forest area by ownership in Hokkaido



National forest area by forest type in Hokkaido



*1 The area of the northern territories is not included in forest area.
 *2 Natural forest area includes non-forested area.

Fulfillment of Multiple Functional Roles of Forests

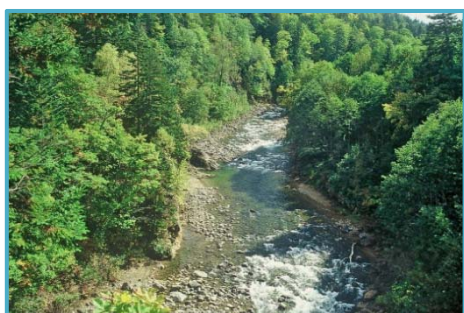
Classification of National Forests

Forests have multiple functional roles, including landslide prevention, prevention of global warming, watershed conservation, biodiversity conservation and timber production.

The Hokkaido Regional Forest Office classifies National forests into four of five types depending on their main functions to conduct appropriate managements.

Water resource conservation type

Focus on the functions of storing water resources and supplying high-quality water.

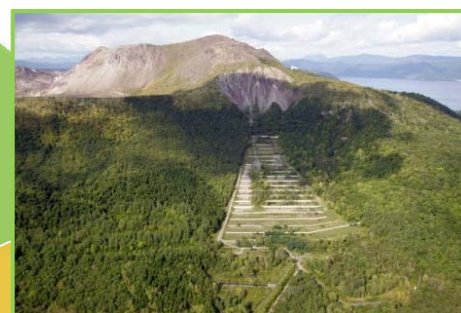


Jozankei (Sapporo)
[Ishikari District Forest Office]

Water resource conservation type
1.65 million ha
53.7%

Landslide prevention type

Focus on the function of mitigating landslides and other disasters



Disaster control facilities of Mt. Usu (Date)
[Shiribeshi District Forest Office]

Landslide prevention type
0.56 million ha
18.3%

National forest area
3.07 million ha
*Non-forested area is included

Nature conservation type
0.63 million ha
20.6%

Recreational use type

Focus on the function of promoting recreation and other forms of interaction with forests.



Poroto Recreation Forest (Shiraoi)
[Iburi Tobu District Forest Office]

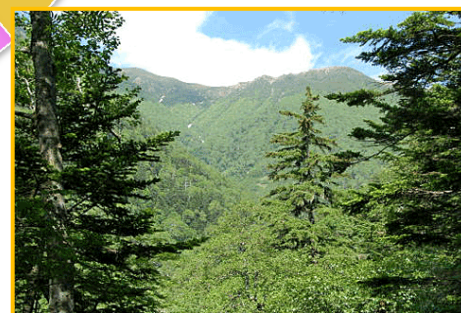
Recreational use type
0.23 million ha
7.4%

Comfortable environment type (Hokkaido has no forests of this type)

Focus on the functions of purifying air and reducing noise.

Nature conservation type

Focus on the function of nature conservation, including the conservation of forest ecosystems and wildlife preservation.



Mt. Poroshiri-dake (Biratori)
[Hidaka Hokubu District Forest Office]

Managements to Fulfill Multiple Functional Roles

In order to maintain the multiple functional roles of forests, forests need to be properly managed and conserved through thinning and replanting.

The Hokkaido Regional Forest Office performs thinning and other conservation works for proper management of the four forest types. Based on these operations, it systematically produces timber and secures a stable supply of domestic timber to expand wood demand.



Forest after row-thinning (National forest in Tsurui)
[Konsen Seibu District Forest Office]



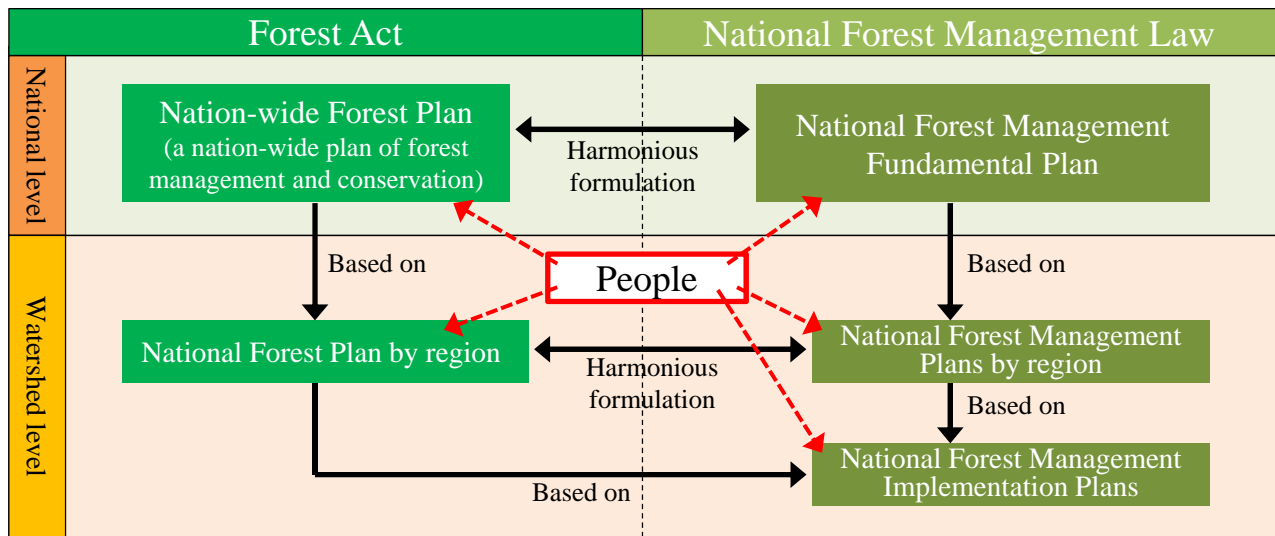
Post-thinning material (National forest in Engaru)
[Abashiri Seibu District Forest Office]

Appropriate Management Based on Planning System

National Forest Planning System

In line with the Forest Act, the Nation-wide Forest Plan, and the National Forest Management Fundamental Plan, the Hokkaido Regional Forest Office formulates National Forest Plans by region, National Forest Management Plans by region and National Forest Management Implementation Plans for 13 watershed zones in Hokkaido.

The Hokkaido Regional Forest Office listens to the views from local residents, reexamines its plans in light of those views, and revise/improve them as necessary.



Discussions with local residents
(Engaru)
[Abashiri Seibu District Forest Office,
Nishimombetsu Branch Office]



Field study for formulation of
National Forest Plan by region
(National forest in Eniwa)
[Ishikari District Forest Office]

Creation of Diverse Healthy Forests

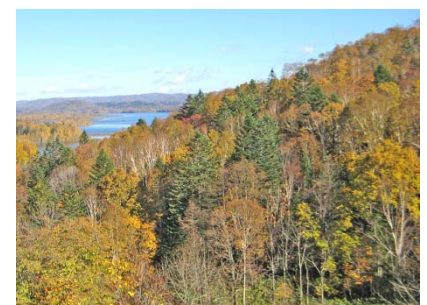
The Hokkaido Regional Forest Office works on the creation of a range of forests, such as multi-storied types with various trees in terms of age, species and height, and mixed forests of coniferous and broad-leaved trees.



Sakhalin fir single forest
(National forest in Yubari)
[Sorachi District Forest Office]



Sakhalin spruce multi-storied forest
(National forest in Kushiro)
[Konsen Seibu District Forest Office]



Mixed forests of coniferous and broad-leaved trees
(National forest in Horokanai)
[Kitasorachi Branch Office]

Realization of Safe Living

Conservation Forests

Under the Forest Law, forests providing particularly important public benefits, including securing water resources and preventing disasters, are designated as “conservation forests.” In the “conservation forests,” general forest management is allowed with specific limitations for each type of conservation forest.

The Hokkaido Regional Forest Office has designated 93% of National forests in the prefecture as “conservation forests,” and has created a safe environment for local people by improving the forests and establishing disaster control facilities.

Headwater conservation forest

This forest has the function of storing rain water and alleviating damage from floods and drought.



Chuwa Reservoir (Wassamu)
[Kamikawa Hokubu District Forest Office]

Windbreak forest

This forest has the function of protecting fields and houses against strong winds.



National forest in Bekkai
[Konsen Seibu District Forest Office]

Types of Conservation Forests (as of April 1, 2013)

Category	Area (ha)
Headwater conservation forest	2,238,950
Soil run-off prevention forest	521,184
Landslide prevention forest	11,641
Shifting-sand prevention forest	794
Windbreak forest	17,940
Tidal wave and salty-wind prevention forest	1,546
Drought prevention forest	28,002
Fog inflow prevention forest	8,718
Snow avalanche prevention forest	86
Rock fall prevention forest	179
Fish-breeding forest	3,873
Navigation landmark forest	16
Public health forest	119,431
Scenic site conservation forest	3,984

(Some forests have received multiple designations)

Forest Conservation Project

The Hokkaido Regional Forest Office implements “forest conservation projects” in areas that have been affected by disasters caused by earthquake or heavy rainstorm. The early restoration and appropriate maintenance of forests help fulfill the landslide prevention function of forests, and ensure the safety in the areas.

[Before the project]



[After the project]



Nokanan Forest Conservation Project (National forest in Ashibetsu)
[Sorachi District Forest Office]

Conservation of Forest Ecosystems

Forest Reserves

Forest reserve system was established as an original protection system by Forestry Agency in 1915, to conserve primeval forest ecosystems, wildlife and genetic resources.

In Hokkaido, particularly important National forests such as the Shiretoko World Natural Heritage Site and habitats of endangered species are designated as “Forest Reserves” and appropriately maintained and protected by the Hokkaido Regional Forest Office.



Asahikawa Sakhalin Spruce No.24 Forest Reserve for Forest Tree Genetic Resources (Hiroo)
[Tokachi Seibu District Forest Office]



Mt.Rausu-dake in Shiretoko Forest Ecosystem Reserve (Shari, Rausu)
[Abashiri Nambu District Forest Office
Konsen Tobu District Forest Office]



Shiretoko Sumire (*Viola kitamiana*), regarded as an indigenous species of Shiretoko



Rebun Atsumoriso (Rebun Lady's Slipper) (left) and Hotei Atsumoriso (Hotei Lady's Slipper) (right), both of which are designated as an endangered species by the Act on Conservation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora



Yupari Kozakura (*Primula yuparensis*), an indigenous species of Mt. Yubari-dake



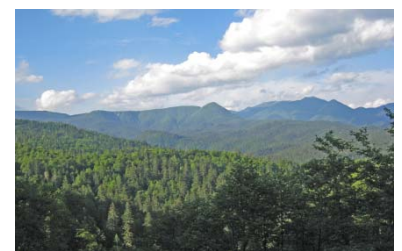
Wakamatsu Forest Reserve for the Conservation of Plant Community (Sakhalin fir, broad-leaved tree) (Setana)
[Oshima District Forest Office]



Habitat of Sakai Tsutsuji (*Rhododendron parvifolium*), designated as a Natural treasure



Blakiston's fish owl, designated as an endangered species by the Act on Conservation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora



Headwater of the Tokachi River Forest Reserve for Biologic Genetic Resources (Shintoku)
[Higashi Taisetsu Branch Office]

Status of Forest Reserves

(as of April 1, 2013)

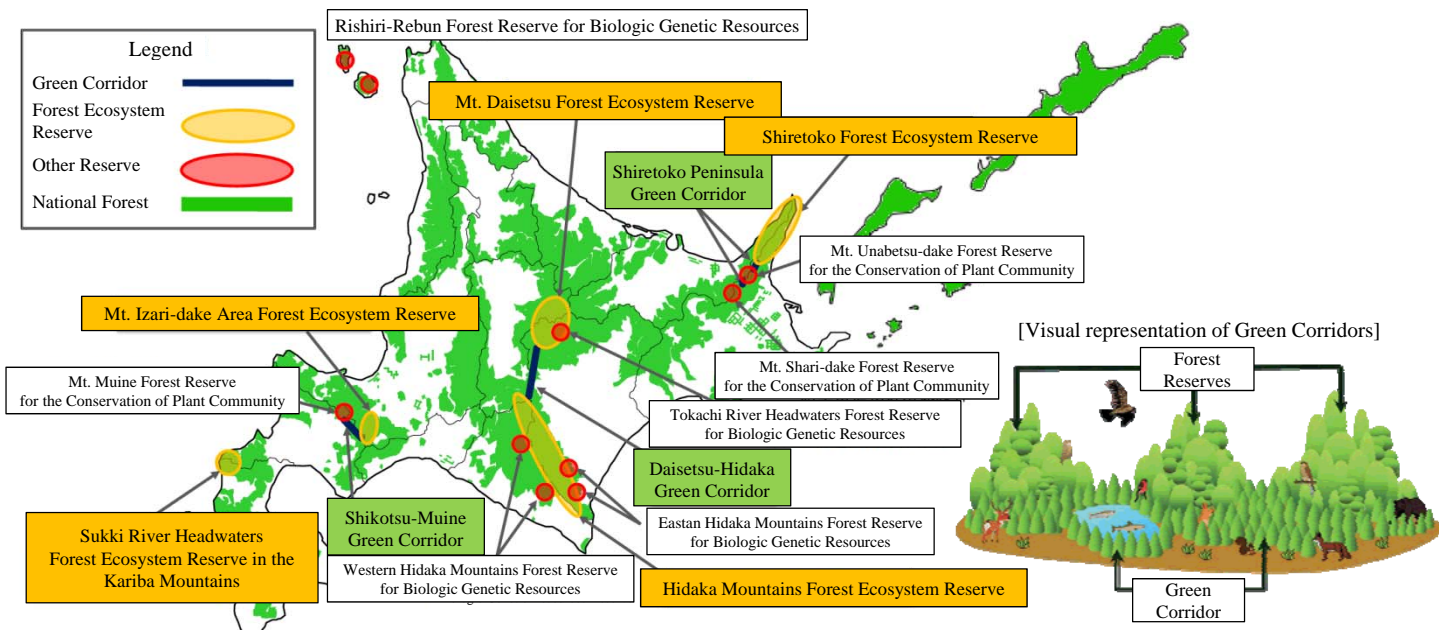
Category of Forest Reserves	Examples	Number	Area (hectare)
Forest Ecosystem Reserve	Shiretoko, Sukki River Headwaters in the Kariba Mountains, Mt. Daisetsu, Hidaka Mountains, Mt. Izari-dake Area	5	275,635
Forest Reserve for Biologic Genetic Resources	Rishiri-Rebun, Tokachi River Headwaters, Western Hidaka Mountains, Eastern Hidaka Mountains	4	45,791
Forest Reserve for Forest Tree Genetic Resources	Hokkaido Sakhalin Fir No.19, Asahikawa Sakhalin Spruce No.2, Kitami White Oak No.27, Obihiro White Sakhalin Spruce No.11, Hakodate Beech No.4, etc.	138	2,641
Forest Reserve for the Conservation of Plant Community	Mt. Yubari-dake Alpine Flora Reserve, Mt. Daisetsu Primeval Forest Reserve, Rebun Lady's Slippers Community Reserve, Sakai tsutsuji (<i>Rhododendron parvifolium</i>) Reserve, Utasai Plant Community Reserve, etc.	57	25,329
Specific Animal Habitat Reserve	Blakiston's Fish Owl Habitat Reserve, Bekanbeushi Japanese Crane Habitat Reserve, Uenae Steller's Sea Eagle and White-tailed Eagle Habitat Reserve, Lake Kutcharo Reserve, etc.	16	12,412
Specific Geography and Geology Reserve	Oshunkoshun Basalt Columnar Joint Reserve, Shirataki Rhyolite Granule Reserve, etc.	4	14
Forest Reserve for Local Community	Wild Bird Rainbow Forest	1	17
Total		225	361,839



Green Corridors

Hokkaido's National forests provide the habitat for the Black Woodpecker, which is designated as a natural treasure and an endangered species in the Red Data Book. The forests also serve as the habitat for Blakiston's fish owls and Mountain hawk eagles, both of which are designated as an endangered species by the Act on Conservation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

To form habitat networks and provide migration pathways for such wildlife, the Hokkaido Regional Forest Office designate National forests, which connect Forest Reserves, as "Green Corridors," and managed to expand habitats for wildlife and secure genetic diversity.



Green Corridors (as of April 1, 2013)

Name	Connected forest reserves	Area (hectare)	Length (km)
Shiretoko Peninsula	Shiretoko Forest Ecosystem Reserve	12,397	36
	Mt. Unabetsu-dake Forest Reserve for the Conservation of Plant Community		
	Mt. Shari-dake Forest Reserve for the Conservation of Plant Community		
Daisetsu-Hidaka	Mt. Daisetsu Forest Ecosystem Reserve Hidaka Mountains Forest Ecosystem Reserve	17,368	57
Shikotsu-Muine	Mt. Izari-dake Area Forest Ecosystem Reserve Suchiku River Headwaters Forest Ecosystem Reserve in the Kariba Mountains	7,051	30
Total		36,816	123



A feeding tree (Sakhalin fir) for the Black Woodpecker. The holes they make in the trees are used by many other animals. (Sapporo) [Ishikari District Forest Office]

Conservation Management of Forest Ecosystems by "Green Support Staff"

The Hokkaido Regional Forest Office deploys "Green Support Staff: GSS" in popular National forest areas such as the Shiretoko World Natural Heritage Site and the Mt. Daisetsu to patrol the areas at risk for environmental destruction, collect garbage, and maintain hiking trails and signs.



Mt. Tokachi-dake Green Support Staff (Biei, Kamifurano) [Kamikawa Nambu District Forest Office]



Nature Restoration Activities

The four Forest Environmental Education Facilitation Centers in Hokkaido conduct various activities such as reforestation programs and forest environmental education in cooperation with NPOs that are engaged in the nature restoration and the conservation of biodiversity.

Ishikari Forest Environmental Education Facilitation Center



Area
Around Sapporo

Nature restoration is conducted in Nopporo Prefectural Nature Park toward the untouched primary forest 100 ago.



“Forestry School”
Nopporo Prefectural Natural Park
(Ebetsu, Kitahiroshima)

Tokoro River Forest Environmental Education Facilitation Center



Area
Tokoro River Basin

Nature restoration is conducted in the Okhotsk Forest, which is located in the middle basin of the Tokoro River, in collaboration with local parties.



“Children Expedition”
Okhotsk Forest
(Kitami, Abashiri)

Kushiro Wetland Forest Environmental Education Facilitation Center



Area
Upper reach of Kushiro Wetland

Afforestation is promoted in open or sparse National forest areas in the upper reaches of the Kushiro Wetland.



“Raibetsu Acorn Crub”
Raibetsu area
(Shibecha)

Mt. Komaga-take, Onuma Forest Environmental Education Facilitation Center



Area
Hakodate Mt. Komaga-take Onuma

Nature restoration is conducted around Onuma by local tree species to restore the vegetation.



“Tree Doctor” Certification Meeting
Onuma
(Nanae)

Promotion of the Conservation and Appropriate Usage of Forest Ecosystems in Shiretoko

Shiretoko Forest Ecosystem Conservation Center

The Shiretoko Forest Ecosystem Conservation Center conducts monitoring surveys, conservation of the ecosystems and implements restoration projects to promote the conservation and appropriate usage of precious forest ecosystems in the Shiretoko area including the Shiretoko World Natural Heritage Site.



Shiretoko mountain range

National Forests as “Forests for People”

The Hokkaido Regional Forest Office is designating National forests with spectacular landscape suitable for recreational activities (e. g., camping, skiing and hiking) as “Recreational Forests” for public enjoyment.

The Hokkaido Regional Forest Office also provides access to the National forests for the activities of various organizations, such as “Forests for Students,” and “Forests for Voluntary Groups,” to satisfy the various expectations of people in society.

Recreational Forests (as of April 1, 2013)

Classification	Major sites	Number	Area (hectare)
Recreation Forests	Shikaribetsu (Shikaoui, Kamishihoro, Shihoro), Poroto (Shiraoi), Niseko-Shinsen Marsh (Kyowa, Kutchan)	21	25.4 thousand
Nature Study Forests	Mt. Kunimi (Otofuke, Memuro), Hidaka Natural Forest (Hidaka)	26	9.4 thousand
Scenic Forests	Kanokozawa (Oketo), Lake Chobushi (Nemuro), Bihoro Pass (Bihoro)	130	121.3 thousand
Sightseeing Forests	Sounkyo (Kamikawa), Poropinai (Chitose)	19	7.4 thousand
Field Sports Areas	Sapporo Kokusai Skiing Resort (Sapporo, Otaru), Furano Snow Resort (Furano), Lake Akan (Kushiro)	38	12.6 thousand
Forests for Woodland Sports	Shiretoko (Shari), Mt. Tengu-dake (Engaru)	14	4.7 thousand
Total		248	180.9 thousand

[Recreation Forest]



Mt. Esan (Hakodate)
[Hiyama District Forest Office]

[Field Sports Area]



Sapporo Kokusai Skiing Resort (Sapporo)
[Ishikari District Forest Office]

Agreements of “Forests for People”

(as of March 31, 2013)

Name	Outline	Number
Forests for Students	These are National forests where students can engage in hands-on and learning activities based on arrangements between District Forest Offices and schools, local governments, NPOs, etc.	32
Forests for Voluntary Groups	These are National forests for voluntary afforestation and activities such as forest environmental education and nature observation class based on arrangements between District Forest Offices and local governments, forest volunteer groups, etc.	27
Forests for Corporations	These are National forests for tree-planting, treatments and other forest development activities promoting the fulfillment of corporate social responsibility (CSR) based on arrangements between District Forest Offices and companies, NPOs and other private organizations.	38
Forests for Diverse Activities	These are National forests for activities relating to forest patrol, cutting the grass on walkways, beautification activities and other forest conservation work based on arrangements between District Forest Offices and private organizations.	10
Model Projects	These are National forests in which a wide range of organizations such as local residents and related NPOs cooperatively participate in the management of National forests based on arrangements with District Forest Offices.	14
Forests for Wood Culture	These are National forests for forest management and conservation activities to grow long, large-diameter woods necessary for the repair or restoration of historical wooden buildings, as well as wood materials for handicrafts and traditional festivals requiring the use of specific trees.	2



Forest environmental education in a “Forest for Students”
(Kamikawa)
[Kamikawa Chubu District Forest Office]



Tree planting in a “Forest for Voluntary Groups”
(Rumoi)
[Rumoi Numbu District Forest Office]

Contribution to Regional Development by Wood Supply

Stable Wood Supply and Promotion of Wood Use

The Hokkaido Regional Forest Office contributes to development of regional industries and the welfare of rural communities by systematically and dependably supplying wood from thinning and other forest managements.

So far, most of “unused thinned wood,” a by-product of timber production, has been left in the forest. The Hokkaido Regional Forest Office promotes utilization of this “unused thinned wood” to energy production using woody biomass.



Row-thinning using high-performance forestry machinery
(National forest in Ashoro)
[Tokachi Tobu District Forest Office]



Loading of “unused thinned wood”
(National forest in Sapporo)
[Ishikari District Forest Office]

Wood Production Using Low Cost Forest Practice System

To build an efficient low cost forest practice system using high performance forestry machinery, the Hokkaido Regional Forest Office promotes the development of the forestry road system based on a combination of three types of forest road: the “forest road” for general vehicles, the “forestry exclusive road” for trucks with ten ton loads, and the “forestry operation road” for forestry machinery.



Construction of a “forestry operation road” for forestry machinery such as forwarders
(National forest in Shibetsu-shi)
[Kamikawa Hokubu District Forest Office]



“Forestry exclusive road” for 10-t trucks
(National forest in Otaru)
[Ishikari District Forest Office]

Forestry Technology Development and Support Center

The Forestry Technology Development and Support Center makes efforts to develop methods for regenerating natural forests and Japanese larch trees, and thinning artificial Sakhalin fir forests using high-performance forestry machinery. It also focuses on energy-saving afforestation using container seedlings and low-cost forestry road system construction technology. Other activities include the diffusion of these technologies by hosting visitors and trainees.



Development of efficient regeneration technology to support tree growth in areas covered by bamboo bush.



Development of a natural regeneration method to reduce the costs of re-afforestation after logging in artificial Japanese larch forests.



Development of a method to construct forestry road system that supports an effective forest practice system.

Contribution to Forest and Forestry Revitalization

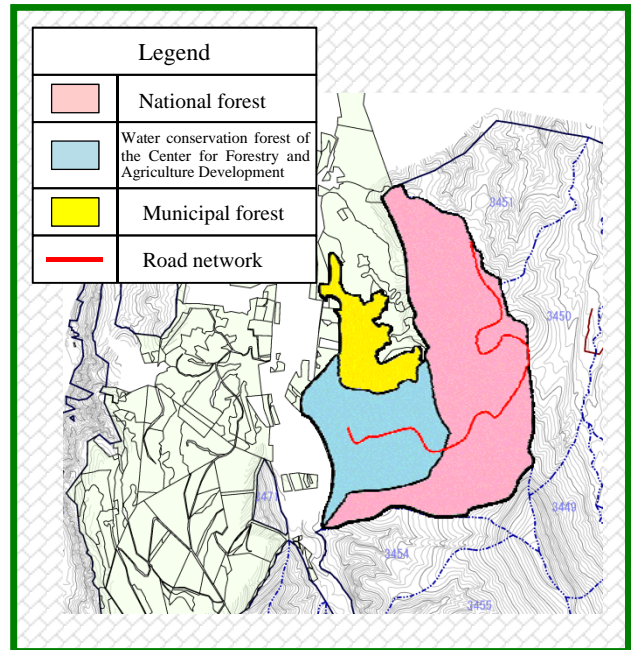
Cooperation with the Communal and Private Forests

The Hokkaido Regional Forest Office has exchanged “Memorandum on Forest and Forestry in Hokkaido” with the Hokkaido Government to promote cooperative management of communal, private and National forests.

The Hokkaido Regional Forest Office has been promoting active forest management, the coordinated shipment of timber and the development of the forest road system in cooperation with the communal and private forest sector through the designation of “cooperative forest management areas.”



“Hokkaido Afforestation Festa” held in cooperation with the Hokkaido Government (Dominno-mori in Tobetsu)



Yobetsu Cooperative Forest Management Area (Shakotan) [Ishikari District Forest Office]

Technological Development and Diffusion

To improve the efficiency of forest planting and management, The Hokkaido Regional Forest Office works on the development and diffusion of new technologies such as low cost afforestation by using seedlings growing in containers and efficient forest survey by using aerial laser measurement.

[Diffusion of low cost afforestation using container seedlings]

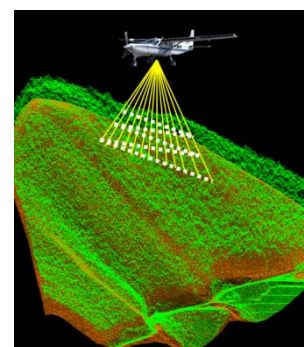
[Development of aerial laser measurement technology]



Container seedlings (Kitami) [Abashiri Chubu District Forest Office]



Field study of container seedlings (National forest in Shimokawa) [Kamikawa Hokubu District Forest Office]





Wildlife Control in Collaboration with Local Municipalities

As for damages caused by forest wildlife, the browsing damages by Ezo Deer have become serious in recent years.

The Hokkaido Regional Forest Office makes various efforts to reduce the damages and harmful effects by the Ezo Deer, including a survey of the effects on forest ecosystems, snow removal on forest roads to support efficient capture by hunters, and collaborative capturing with local municipalities.



Bark damage by Ezo Deer
(National forest in Shari)
[Abashiri Nambu District Forest Office]



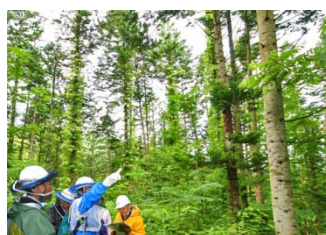
Snow removal for efficient capture
(National forest in Kushiro)
[Konsen Seibu District Forest Office]

Human Resource Development

It is now very important to nurture people who can protect and grow forests.

The Hokkaido Regional Forest Office trains its employees as technical experts to support local government and local forest management.

The Hokkaido Regional Forest Office also offers training fields to support human resource development for communal and private forests.

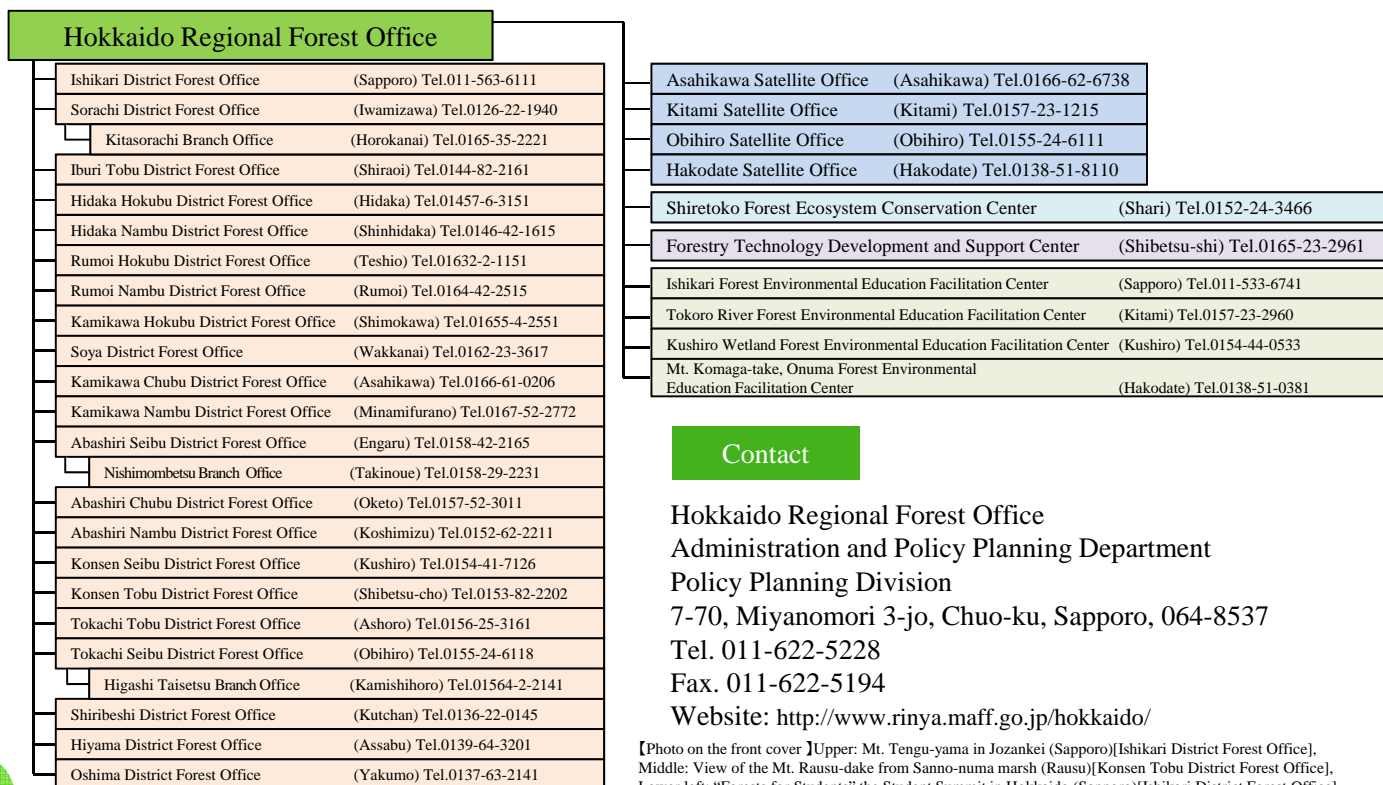


Training for "Apprentice Foresters"
(National forest in Otaru)
[Ishikari District Forest Office]



Training for technicians of
"Forestry Exclusive Roads"
(National Forest in Otaru)
[Ishikari District Forest Office]

Organization of the Hokkaido Regional Forest Office



Contact

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[Photo on the front cover]Upper: Mt. Tengu-yama in Jozankei (Sapporo)[Ishikari District Forest Office], Middle: View of the Mt. Rausu-dake from Sanno-numa marsh (Rausu)[Konsen Tobu District Forest Office], Lower left: "Forests for Students" the Student Summit in Hokkaido (Sapporo)[Ishikari District Forest Office], Lower middle: Row-thinning using high-performance forestry machinery (Bekkai)[Konsen Tobu District Forest Office], Lower right: Disaster control facilities of Mt. Yotei [Shiribeshi District Forest Office]