



News Release

BLM Alaska Fire Service
P.O. Box 35005 1541 Gaffney Road, Fairbanks AK 99703-0005
Tel: 907-356-5600; www.akfireinfo.com
Contact: Beth Ipsen, eipsen@blm.gov; 907-356-5510

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North Star Fire Crew to Burn Woody Debris Piles Near Eielson AFB

FAIRBANKS – Starting as early as Monday, the BLM Alaska Fire Service (BLM AFS) North Star Fire Crew will burn piles of woody debris created to reduce the risk of wildfire on military training lands near Eielson Air Force Base (EAFB). This effort is a collaboration between the BLM AFS and the U.S. Army Alaska (USARAK). As conditions allow, the burning could continue through August.

The woody debris piles were created by BLM AFS hand crews over the past couple of years as part of hazardous fuels reduction projects in the Yukon Training Area conducted to reduce the risk of wildfire close to communities. Salvageable firewood was made available for permit holders to harvest.

If conditions allow, the North Star Crew, which is BLM AFS's training crew, will burn the piles in the Husky Drop Zone, located 5 miles north of EAFB, and the Infantry Platoon Battle Course 2 miles east of the base. The goal is to burn as many as 100 piles, of which were covered in plastic to protect them from the abundance of precipitation that has fallen in the area this summer. Because of moist weather pattern and the moderated fire conditions, BLM AFS is seizing the opportunity to burn the piles now when smoke disbursement is most favorable.

The piles will be ignited when weather conditions will minimize the impact of smoke on populated areas in accordance with open burn approvals issued by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC). Under normal circumstances, these piles would be ignited during the fall. The BLM AFS and USARAK are working with the ADEC and the National Weather Service to forecast and monitor smoke conditions to ensure compliance with all local, state and federal regulations governing air quality.

For more information about the prescribed fires or BLM AFS Public Information Specialist Beth Ipsen at eipsen@blm.gov or (907)356-5510.

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