



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

News Release

BLM Alaska Fire Service

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Burning operations planned for military training lands in Interior Alaska to reduce wildfire threat

Personnel could start ignitions as early as May 1

FAIRBANKS, Alaska –The Bureau of Land Management Alaska Fire Service (BLM AFS) and U.S. Army Alaska (USARAK) will soon implement multiple prescribed fires on military training lands in Interior Alaska. Burning could begin as early as May 1, starting with woody debris piles and dead grass within the Donnelly Training Area East located on both sides of the Richardson Highway south of Delta Junction. As conditions allow, prescribed burning in the Donnelly Training Area (DTA) near Delta Junction, the Yukon Training Area (YTA) near Eielson Air Force Base, and on Fort Wainwright (FWA) land near Fairbanks may continue through May 31.

Prescribed burns are fires that are intentionally set under controlled conditions to reduce dry and dead grass and lower the risk of wildfires that could impact nearby communities, resources, facilities, and military training. Removing hazardous fuels during the spring, when conditions are moderated, allows for the greatest degree of control and the lowest risk for negative impacts, such as smoke. The woody debris piles were created by USARAK to reduce wildfire risk within training areas and to make the area more accessible to firefighting forces.

While smoke from prescribed fires may be visible from various points in the surrounding communities, their potential impact on the public is considered at all stages of prescribed fire planning. The BLM AFS and USARAK work closely with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Division of Air Quality and the National Weather Service to mitigate potential impacts. There are also procedures in place to halt ignitions if weather conditions, such as wind direction, become unfavorable.

Guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control and the Alaska Department of Health and Human Services will be followed to reduce the risk of COVID-19 exposure and transmission among our personnel and the communities we work in.

The annual prescribed burning is planned at the following locations:

- DTA: Several locations between 25 miles west and 15 miles south of Delta Junction
- YTA: Several locations between 5 miles north and 20 miles east of Eielson Air Force Base
- FWA: Small Arms Complex, immediately southeast of Fairbanks

The exact timing of later prescribed burning will depend on the snow melting and weather conditions. Subsequent press releases specific to each area will provide more precise estimates of the time frames.

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