

Corri A. Feige
Commissioner

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Department of
Natural Resources

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: July 9, 2019

Parks, Forestry extend ban on campfires in Interior, Southcentral

(Fairbanks, AK) – No campfires will be allowed on state, private or municipal lands in Southcentral and Interior Alaska starting today, according to state forestry and parks officials who said extreme wildfire danger demands they preempt potential new ignition sources.

The joint orders from directors of the Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry and the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation come as thousands of firefighters from Alaska and the Lower 48 are battling blazes in Southcentral and Interior Alaska that have imperiled buildings, and threatened hundreds of residents with evacuation from their homes.

“Conditions are almost perfect for the smallest spark to quickly become a large, dangerous wildfire,” said Chris Maisch, director of the Alaska Division of Forestry. “There are hundreds of people putting their lives on the line dealing with the fires we have, and we simply can’t risk creating more.”

All campfires in the region, even those in established fire pits or rings in designated state campgrounds, are prohibited until further notice. This includes cooking, warming or signaling fires. The restriction does not apply to charcoal grills, gas grills and backpacking or camp stoves that use fuel or compressed canisters.

Burn suspensions for burn permits will also remain in place, prohibiting open debris burning and the use of burn barrels in Division of Forestry protection areas. The suspensions will stay in place until conditions moderate.

The ban applies to the Municipality of Anchorage, Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Fairbanks North Star Borough, Kenai Peninsula Borough, Denali Borough, Glennallen south to Valdez, and the Tanana Valley, including Delta, Nenana, Northway, Tanacross, Tok and surrounding communities

As of Tuesday, there were 117 active wildfires in Alaska, 24 of which are staffed with more than 2,000 firefighting personnel, most of them from the Lower 48. To date this season, 392 wildfires have burned an estimated 1,026,725 acres in Alaska.

“I can’t emphasize enough that we each have to do our part to keep Alaska campers, residents, firefighters and others safe from wildfire,” said Ricky Gease, director of Alaska State Parks. “We must all be fire smart today, so we can enjoy Alaska’s outdoors well into the future.”

Anyone affected by the burning restriction order may appeal it by July 28, by delivering an appeal to DNR Commissioner Corri A. Feige by mail at 550 W. Seventh Ave., Suite 1400, Anchorage, AK 99501-3561; by fax to 907-269-8918; or by email to dnr.appeals@alaska.gov

For statewide fire information, visit the Alaska Interagency Coordination Center website at: <https://fire.ak.blm.gov/> or the Alaska Wildland Fire Information website at <http://www.akfireinfo.com>

CONTACT: Tim Mowry, Division of Forestry public information officer, (907) 356-5511, tim.mowry@alaska.gov

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