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Department of
Natural Resources

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: August 21, 2019

Emergency burn closure ordered for Kenai Peninsula, Mat-Su

(Anchorage, AK) – Due to extreme wildfire danger and current wildfire activity in Southcentral Alaska, as well as limited resources available to respond to new starts, the Alaska Division of Forestry is instituting an emergency burn closure on state, private, borough and municipal lands within the Kenai Peninsula and Matanuska-Susitna boroughs effective 8 a.m. today.

All burning, including campfires and the use of charcoal grills, is prohibited, including campfires in established fire pits or rings in designated campgrounds. Devices that can be turned on and off -- such as gas and pellet grills and backpacking or camp stoves that use fuel or compressed fuel canisters -- are still allowed, though users are urged to be cautious with them as well.

This burn closure is in addition to fire restrictions imposed by the Kenai Peninsula and Mat-Su borough governments, and will remain in place until conditions moderate. Visit the Kenai Peninsula Fires interactive map viewer to view closure areas at www.kpboem.com, or see attached map, "Current Alaska Burn Closure Areas Starting 8/21/19."

Persistent warm, dry conditions over the past three weeks have produced extremely high fire danger in Southcentral Alaska and resulted in several new wildfires that are straining local initial attack resources, including the Deshka Landing and McKinley fires in the Mat-Su and Caribou Lake and North Fork fires on the Kenai Peninsula. The Swan Lake Fire, which has been burning for 2 and a half months on the Kenai Peninsula, has also seen a dramatic increase in activity in recent days.

Alaska's fire managers ask residents and visitors alike on the Kenai Peninsula and in the Mat-Su to adhere to the burn closure to help prevent any additional human-caused wildfires that would stress firefighting resources.

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CURRENT ALASKA BURN CLOSURE AREAS BEGINNING 8/21/2019

