

State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources



Public Information Center
550 W. 7th Ave., Ste 1260
Anchorage, AK 99501

Phone: 907.269.8400
Fax: 907.269.8901
TTY: 907.269.8411

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State forestry firefighting crews head south to Lower 48

(Fairbanks, AK) – With rain dampening wildfire activity in much of the state, the Alaska Division of Forestry has begun sending personnel to the Lower 48 to assist with firefighting efforts in several western states.

Approximately 150 Alaska firefighters from the Division of Forestry have been sent south or will be leaving in the next two days to take assignments on wildfires burning in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. That number includes four 20-person initial attack crews and a 20-person Type 2 training crew. The Division of Forestry also sent one of the two contracted air retardant tankers to British Columbia to aid in fire suppression in that province.

While the Division of Forestry has released several crews and support personnel for fire assignments in the Lower 48, the state is retaining adequate resources to respond to any wildfires that may arise in Alaska.

This year's fire season in Alaska has been a relatively quiet one. As of Tuesday morning, 290 fires had burned an estimated 339,404 acres this season in Alaska, well below the annual average of approximately 500 fires and 1.2 million acres burned. Most of the fires currently burning in the state are in remote areas in northeast Alaska where conditions remain dry.

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