

RESOLUTION 2024-03
BASHER COMMUNITY COUNCIL
Anchorage, Alaska

A Resolution Approving a Shaded Fire Break Project Along Campbell Airstrip Road

WHEREAS the members of the Basher Community Council reside in the Stuckagain neighborhood of the Anchorage hillside and face one of the highest risks of wildfire in the Municipality of Anchorage, which poses grave risks to human life, property, and the safety of firefighters; and

WHEREAS Campbell Airstrip Road is the only egress road out of the Stuckagain neighborhood in the event of a wildfire and will likely remain the only egress because, despite many years of BCC advocacy for a second egress road, there are no realistic prospects of such a road being developed in the foreseeable future; and

WHEREAS maintaining the viability of Campbell Airstrip Road for egress in the event an evacuation of the neighborhood becomes necessary is vital to ensuring the safety of neighborhood residents seeking to escape; and

WHEREAS reducing the combustible fuel along Campbell Airstrip Road (between Fire Station 14 and the Basher Trailhead) will help ensure that the road remains passable during a fire, provide a fire break for deterring the advancement of the fire, provide greater access for fire-fighting equipment to access the fire, and allow greater visibility within the forest for animals (road hazards) and camps (fire sources) close to the road; and

WHEREAS the Anchorage Fire Department and the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department are recommending that a shaded fire break be created for 150 feet on each side of Campbell Airstrip Road by (1) cutting and removing all standing dead and downed trees, (2) removing all spruce under 20 inches diameter at the base, (3) thinning remaining hardwoods to 10-foot spacing at the base, and (4) limbing trees to eight feet and removing low-level fuels below eight feet; and

WHEREAS the funding and resources exist at this time to implement the project, and municipal officials would like to start work as soon as possible to maximize the benefit for next spring's wildfire season, make progress before the snow becomes too deep to work efficiently, and complete as much of the project as possible before May 1, 2025, when work in the park is restricted for ten weeks because of migratory bird activity within the park; and

WHEREAS professional tree service contractors will perform the work according to instructions and best practices from the Anchorage Fire Department, and every effort will be made to preserve the aesthetics of the affected forest and avoid unnecessary disruptions to the natural ground cover, which can lead to the introduction of invasive plant species; and

WHEREAS the potential to create a fire break along Campbell Airstrip Road has been brought to BCC's attention in the past with a generally positive response, and the BCC Fire Resiliency Committee has been working closely with AFD and other hillside resilience efforts to advance the proposal, given the increasing wildfire danger and the importance of ensuring a safe and secure evacuation route should a fire occur; and

WHEREAS the BCC Fire Resiliency Committee and the Land Use and Transportation Committee support the plan to create the proposed fire break along Campbell Airstrip Road and urge BCC members to endorse this resolution of support, which the Anchorage Fire Department and Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department are seeking prior to commencing the project; and

WHEREAS further details of the project's scope, justification, expected impacts, and implementation strategy will be communicated to BCC members through direct emails, messages to the Stuckagain Google Group, and flyers at the mailboxes, and questions about the project can be addressed to the BCC Fire Resiliency Committee (Troy Weiss: troydweiss@gmail.com), Anchorage Fire Department (Jon Glover: Jonathan.Glover@anchorageak.gov) or Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department (Michael Braniff: michael.braniff@anchorageak.gov), and a working group on the project will be established by AFD and other municipal officials that includes representatives of Basher Community Council's Fire Resiliency Committee; and

WHEREAS the Municipality of Anchorage has agreed that the shaded fire break should initially commence towards Basher Trailhead at the parking lot of the Campbell Tract at Mile 1 of Campbell Airstrip Road, not Fire Station 14;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Basher Community Council supports the proposed creation of a 150-foot shaded fire break along each side of Campbell Airstrip Road as described above and endorses the plan to begin work as soon as possible in preparation for the 2025 wildfire season.

ADOPTED unanimously this 28th day of October 2024, with 51 BCC members present and one abstention.

 Recoverable Signature

X *Dirk Sisson*

Dirk Sisson
President

Signed by: trust_f0fde44a-c774-48fe-80cd-23d9297e2fa1