

John Boyle
Commissioner

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Department of
Natural Resources

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: May 9, 2025

Controlled Burning to Occur on Anchorage Hillside *No need to call 911*

(Anchorage, AK) – Controlled burning is scheduled to take place next week (as soon as Monday) in the Municipality of Anchorage between Hilltop Ski Area and the Prospect Heights Trailhead. Once the piles of brush and debris are ignited, smoke will be highly visible throughout Anchorage. Residents are encouraged not to report the burn to 911 or other dispatch centers.

As part of the East-West Connector fuels project, firefighters from the Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection (DOF) will carefully ignite a series of debris piles that were created during wildfire risk reduction work in the Anchorage Hillside area. Fire personnel will be onsite and camping at the project area providing 24-hour oversight during the burning operations. Smoke dispersal, weather and fire danger will dictate the start date and duration of the burning.

Over the next two weeks, DOF's Gannett Glacier Type 2 IA Fire Crew and Pioneer Peak Interagency Hotshot Crew will conduct the burning operations across a 1.25 mile long, 200-foot-wide area that encompasses 35 acres. Water tenders from the Anchorage Fire Department will provide support by filling portable water tanks. Pumps and fire hoses will be in place for firefighters to spray water to keep the piles from spreading through the vegetation.

"The fuels that were cut during the fire prevention project have to be removed," **explained DOF Fuels Specialist/Project Manager Ethan DeBauche**. "Burning in place is the most efficient and cost-effective method of hazardous fuels disposal. Once the piles are burned, the fuel break will be complete. This kind of burning – especially in a city – depends on various factors including smoke dispersal, fire danger and resource availability."

Trail closures are in effect for the Hilltop Singletrack Trail System. All trails south of Upper Gasline from Hilltop Ski Area to Prospect Heights Ski Area will be closed during the project.

For more information or to schedule media access to the site, contact DOF Public Information Officer Jacob Welsh 541-977-2756, Jacob_Welsh@firenet.gov.

For Anchorage Fire Department questions, contact AFD Public Information Officer Megan A. Peters 907-227-9473, Megan.A.Peters@anchorageak.gov.

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