



DIRECTOR'S ORDER

**EMERGENCY CLOSURE AT CHENA RIVER SHOOTING
RANGE to INCENDIARY DEVICES**

Order Number 336

Approved: *Ricky Gease*
Ricky Gease, Director

Date: 6.10.22

Proposed Action

The Department of Natural Resources has responded to a series of wildfires at the Chena River Shooting Range in recent years, including one that happened on June 8, 2022. The fires have been attributed to the use of incendiary ammunition such as tracers and flares, as well as exploding targets designed to detonate when struck by a bullet. As a result, the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation proposes a closure to the use of any incendiary ammunition or similar device on the range during periods where fire danger is extreme, and when the Department of Natural Resources has suspended or closed burning activities in the Tanana Valley.

Authority

This action is being adjudicated pursuant to:

- AS 11 AAC 12.335 (Closures and use management)

Location

The Chena River Shooting Range is located at mile 36.5 of Chena Hot Springs Road within the Chena River State Recreation Area.

Closure

DPOR manages the Chena River State Recreation Area under AS 41.21.475.

Pursuant to 11 AAC 12.335(a)(2), the Director may authorize a closure and limit public use of activity at the Chena River Shooting Range for public health and safety. This includes barring the use of incendiary devices such in the Chena River Shooting Range. In accordance with 11 AAC 12.335 (c), DPOR issues this written decision and provides the following in support of closing the Chena River Shooting Range to the use of incendiary ammunition or devices:

- (1) Due to the extreme hazardous fire conditions in the area that would promote aggressive fire behavior and growth.
- (2) Due to the semi-remote nature of the location that increases response time for firefighters in the event of a human caused wildfire event.
- (3) Due to the potential for a large-scale event that would threaten park infrastructure, private inholdings, and the safety of the public.

Determination

DPOR finds that the above justifies this closure to the use of incendiary devices within the Chena River Shooting Range for public health and safety under its authority of 11 AAC 12.335. As a result, the range will be closed to incendiary devices immediately. Once the fire danger in the area is reduced, this Director's Order will be rescinded.

Under AAC 12.335 CLOSURE AND USE MANAGEMENT, section (e), no person may violate these use restrictions. Therefore, use of incendiary devices in Chena River State Recreation Shooting Range during this closure for any activity is prohibited.

Appeals

All appeals must be in accordance with 11 AAC 02. To be eligible to appeal a person must be affected by this decision. Any appeal must be received within 20 calendar days after the date of "issuance" of this decision, as defined in 11 AAC 02(c) and (d). If no appeal is filed within the 20 days of "issuance" this decision goes into effect as a final order and decision 31 days after "issuance". An eligible person must first appeal this decision in accordance with 11 AAC 02 before appealing this decision to Superior Court. A copy of 11 AAC 02 may be obtained from any regional information office of the Department of Natural Resources.

Appeals should be directed to:

Commissioner
Department of Natural Resources
550 W. 7th Avenue, Suite 1400
Anchorage, AK 99501