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Department of  
Natural Resources

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

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## State to Conduct Prescribed Burns at Creamer's Field

**(Fairbanks, AK)** – The Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection (DOF) is partnering with the Alaska Department of Fish & Game to conduct multiple prescribed burns at Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge near Fairbanks starting as early as May 1, weather and fuel conditions permitting.

The prescribed burn will treat approximately 37 acres on the 2,500-acre refuge and occur on the fields off Echo Acres Road/Farmer's Loop Road. Burning the dried grass prior to spring green-up not only enhances waterfowl and wildlife habitat but reduces the potential for wildfires later in the fire season when conditions are hotter and drier.

"These prescribed burns are a valuable tool for habitat management," said **Clint Cooper, Alaska Department of Fish & Game wildlife biologist and manager of the Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge**. "Prescribed fire mimics the results of naturally occurring wildfires in a more controlled setting, enhances soil quality, and promotes native plant diversity. Post-fire conditions benefit many species and create more nesting habitat for migratory birds and increased browse for our resident moose."

Smoke from the fire will likely be visible throughout Fairbanks during the burn, but efforts will be made to minimize public smoke impact. The Echo Acres field will be closed to the public during prescribed burn operations. Signs will be posted in the adjoining parking lot to alert the public of planned prescribed burn activities.

The Creamer's prescribed burn also provides valuable, hands-on training for the DOF's wildland firefighters as they prepare for the upcoming fire season. It takes about 12 people to light and monitor the fire, and fire managers expect the project to take up to two operational periods to complete.

"Burning the grass at Creamer's Field provides our firefighters with an excellent opportunity to put their training to work in advance of the upcoming fire season," said **Fairbanks Area Fire Management Officer Gordon Amundson with the Division of Forestry & Fire Protection**.

Firefighters will not initiate ignitions if the temperature, local winds, relative humidity, and other conditions do not meet the burn plan's prescription parameters. Test burns will be conducted to ensure prescription parameters are met before fully implementing the burn plan.

The Alaska Department of Fish & Game manages the Creamer's Field refuge to provide habitat for migratory waterfowl and for compatible public uses including wildlife viewing, research, nature education, and other forms of nonmotorized recreation.

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