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Department of  
Natural Resources

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

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## State Forestry & Fire Department Collaborate to Reduce Wildfire Risk

**(Anchorage, AK)** – The Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection (DOF) is working with the Anchorage Fire Department (AFD) Wildfire Division to implement a shaded “fuel break” in the Anchorage Hillside area extending from Hilltop Ski Area Road to Prospect Drive. Known as the East-West Connector, this project is scheduled to begin May 5 and represents a renewed effort to reduce wildfire risk through coordinated mitigation work across the Municipality of Anchorage.

“The collaboration between the State of Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection and the Anchorage Fire Department on the East-West Connector shaded fuel break represents exactly the kind of partnership our community needs,” said **AFD Wildfire Division Chief Jon Glover**.

“This project is more than a line on a map, it’s a commitment to proactive wildfire mitigation and public safety. It demonstrates our unified dedication to protecting lives, property, and critical values within our unique wildland urban interface that defines Anchorage. Together, we’re building resilience and delivering long-term value to the residents we serve.”

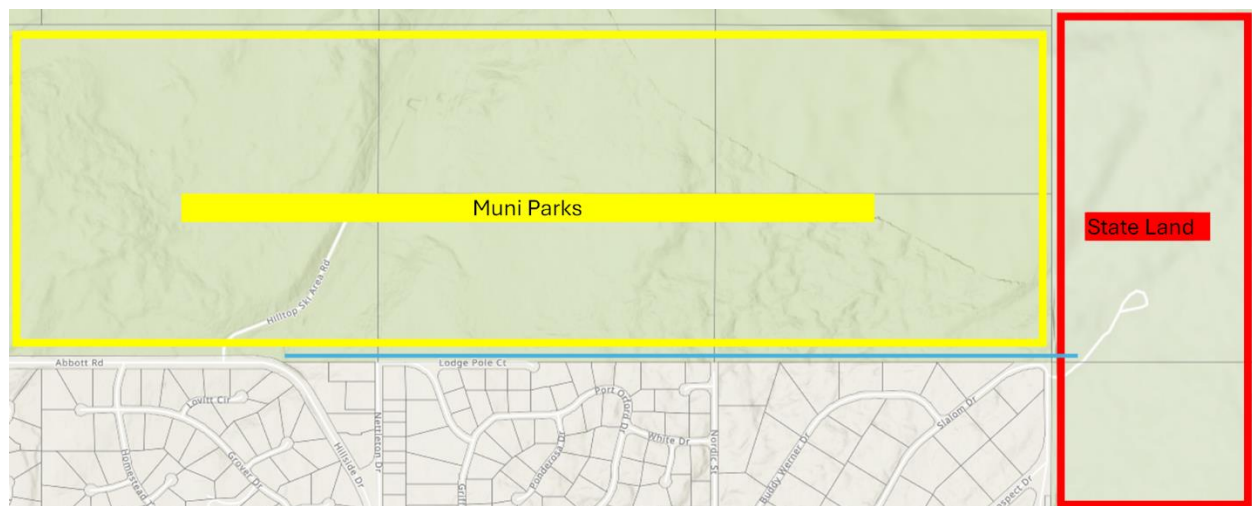
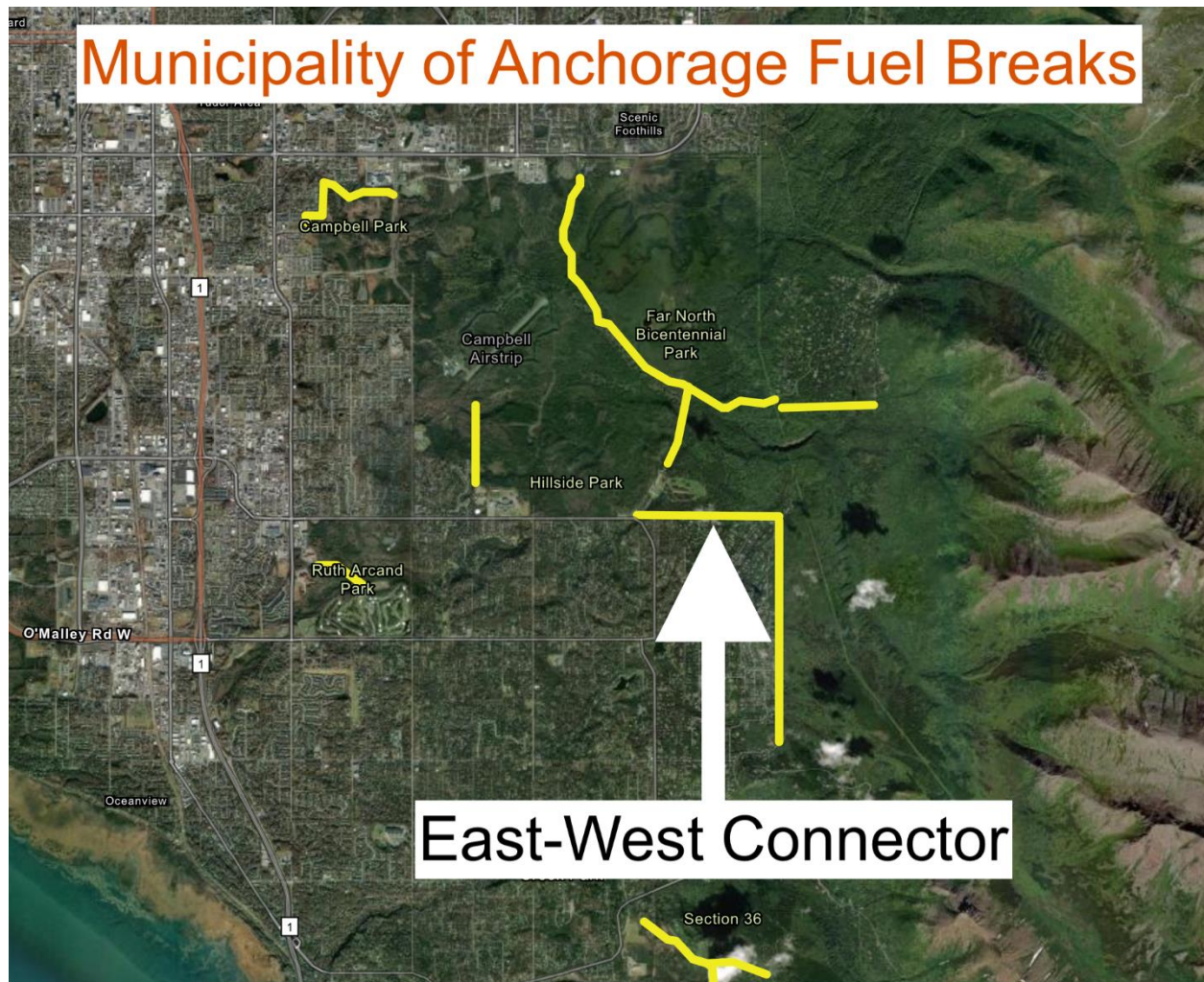
With the majority of Anchorage residential properties located within the wildland urban interface, shaded fuel breaks help to protect life, property and infrastructure against the threat of wildfires. Fuel breaks are created by cutting and removing vegetation along strategically selected tracts of land adjacent to communities and infrastructure. Firefighters will utilize chainsaws and other tools to thin fuels and remove dense understory vegetation across a 200-foot-wide corridor.

“When planning a project like this, we start by identifying locations that are at an increased risk of potentially destructive wildfires based on factors like terrain, vegetation, fire history, firefighter access, public evacuation routes, and more,” explained **DOF Fuels Specialist Ethan DeBauche**. “For this project, our skilled DOF handcrew Gannett Glacier will thin the most fire-prone fuels while strategically leaving trees and brush species that are less susceptible to wildfire. The result is a natural-looking environment that still feels like the Hillside residents know and love, but with critical mitigation work completed. With a 50-foot setback from private property, neighboring homes will maintain their scenic views while gaining added protection.”

Trail closures will be in place for the Queen Bee and Janices Jive single track multi-use trails for the duration of the project. The closures protect the public from the hazards of fuels mitigation work. Special considerations will be taken to minimize environmental impacts on the trails and land to retain the scenic characteristics for trail users. The fuel break will also serve to enhance habitat values by retaining a diverse mix of tree and shrub species and age classes.

For more information or to schedule media access to the site: DOF Public Information Officer Jacob Welsh 541-977-2756, [Jacob\\_Welsh@firenet.gov](mailto:Jacob_Welsh@firenet.gov).

For Anchorage Fire Department questions: Megan A. Peters 907-227-9473, [Megan.A.Peters@anchorageak.gov](mailto:Megan.A.Peters@anchorageak.gov).



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