



State Of Alaska

Press Release

For Immediate Release: July 1, 2026

Alphabet Hills Prescribed Fire Planned for Summer 2026

(Glenallen, Alaska) — The Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Alaska Division of Forestry and Fire Protection (DFFP), the US Wildland Fire Service (USWFS), and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) are advising the public of a planned prescribed fire operation in the Alphabet Hills area, located north of Lake Louise and south of the Denali Highway. The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) will assist with air quality and smoke monitoring throughout the project.

Ignition activities are expected to begin in mid to late July 2026, depending on weather conditions, fuel moisture, and operational readiness. The prescribed burn will be conducted in a remote area using aerial ignition techniques applied by highly trained fire personnel from aircraft.

This project represents a robust interagency effort, leveraging the shared expertise, resources and coordination of Alaska's state and federal land management agencies. Fire is a natural, healthy component of the Alaskan landscape, and managing it safely requires the highest level of professionalism.

Alaska's wildland fire managers operate under strict, science-based parameters to plan and execute these burns. Operations will only proceed when weather, fuel moisture, and smoke dispersion conditions align with established prescribed burn criteria. Members of the public traveling in the region may observe smoke from the project area during active operations and for several weeks following ignition. Smoke production will be closely monitored in coordination with ADEC to minimize impacts to nearby communities, transportation corridors, and recreation areas.

The primary purpose of the Alphabet Hills Prescribed Fire is to improve wildlife habitat by restoring the natural disturbance processes that historically shaped Interior Alaska's ecosystems. The project is designed to convert mature, declining black spruce stands into a vibrant mosaic of younger forest conditions, restarting the process of forest succession.

This mosaic effect provides immense, long-term resource benefits for Alaska's iconic wildlife species. The removal of dense black spruce stimulates the rapid regrowth of willow, birch and aspen, creating an abundance of high-quality, nutrient-rich winter browse that is critical for sustaining healthy local moose populations. Furthermore, while fire temporarily alters mature timber, it revitalizes the broader landscape by maintaining ecosystem health, promoting long-term vegetation diversity and ensuring the future availability of large-scale, resilient habitat essential for caribou herd migration and foraging.

Over time, the treated area is expected to produce abundant forage, contributing to increased habitat diversity and long-term ecosystem resilience across the landscape. By utilizing prescribed fire, Alaska's land managers are proactively maintaining a healthy, productive

environment and a variety of other wildlife species pursued by Alaska hunters.

Prescribed fire is a carefully planned and professionally managed tool used to reduce hazardous fuel accumulations, restore natural ecological processes and enhance wildlife habitat. Fire managers will continuously evaluate conditions on the ground to ensure the burn is executed safely and effectively. Additional updates regarding project timing and operations will be provided as implementation approaches.

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