



INTERIOR **WILDLAND FIRE**

Announcement

U.S. Wildland Fire Service

Media Contact: Beth Ipsen, eipsen@blm.gov, 907-356-5510

March 20, 2026

www.akfireinfo.com

U.S. Wildland Fire Service Alaska Smokejumper Training Jumps Start March 23

Pilots should avoid flying over areas during scheduled jumps and paracargo drops

FAIRBANKS, Alaska – The U.S. Wildland Fire Service (USWFS) will conduct smokejumper training operations in the Fairbanks and North Pole areas beginning March 23 in preparation for the 2026 fire season. Training activities will occur in designated areas from March through May, with increased activity during April and May. Operations will generally take place between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., weather permitting.

Training Locations

Smokejumper training jumps will occur in the following areas:

- Birch Hill area on Fort Wainwright
- Chena River Lakes Flood Control Project
- 2.8 Mile Chena Hot Springs Road
- Nordale Road north of the Chena River Bridge

Schedule

- **March 23–April 24:** Refresher training jumps for returning smokejumpers will occur once or twice daily on select weekdays between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m.
- **May 4–May 15:** Training jumps may occur up to twice daily, excluding weekends, between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m.
- **May 11–May 15 (Salcha area):** Parachuted cargo drops, known as paracargo, may occur up to five times daily between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Training frequency and timing are subject to change based on weather and operational requirements.

Aviation Advisory

Pilots are advised to avoid flying over active training areas during scheduled jumps and paracargo operations. Notices to Airmen (NOTAMs) will be issued for activities occurring outside Fort Wainwright's Ladd Airfield controlled airspace.

Smokejumpers will continue to use these training locations for proficiency operations through mid-September. For additional information, visit the USWFS [Alaska Smokejumpers website](#).

-USWFS-

U.S. Wildland Fire Service, P.O. Box 35005, 1541 Gaffney Road, Fort Wainwright, AK 99703

Need public domain imagery to complement news coverage of the USWFS in Alaska? Visit our [Flickr channel!](#)

Learn more [online](#), and on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).