

John Crowther
Commissioner-designee

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Department of
Natural Resources

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: April 14, 2026

Prescribed Burn Planned for Matanuska Moose Range in May 2026

(Sutton, AK) – The Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection (DFFP), in partnership with the Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADFG), plans to conduct prescribed burns in the Matanuska Valley Moose Range beginning in May 2026, as weather and fuel conditions allow. The project will treat approximately 375 acres in the Little Granite Creek drainage near Sutton-Alpine.

Smoke may be visible in Sutton and Chickaloon during the burn and for several days afterward. Air quality will be monitored, and advisories will be posted at dec.alaska.gov/air/air-monitoring. For safety, some areas within the Matanuska Valley Moose Range may be temporarily closed, with signs posted at trail access points near the burn units.

Approximately 30 personnel are expected to carry out the operation, which may take place in multiple phases. Burns will only proceed under strict burn plan criteria for temperature, wind, and humidity. A small test fire will be conducted before full ignition to confirm favorable conditions.

The prescribed burns are intended to rejuvenate early-succession plant species that provide critical browse for moose and upland game birds. ADF&G biologists have documented heavy browsing pressure in the area, resulting in declining forest health and reduced habitat quality.

“Prescribed burns are one of our most effective tools for improving habitat at a scale that benefits wildlife populations,” said **John Wagoner, Conservation Coordinator with ADF&G**. “These burns mimic the natural effects of wildfire but are conducted under controlled conditions to meet habitat objectives while ensuring public and staff safety.”

For updates, including possible closures and air quality advisories, please monitor local announcements.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Department of Fish & Game: John Wagoner, 907-262-9368 john.wagoner@alaska.gov

Division of Forestry & Fire Protection: Emery Johnson, 907-795-9382, emery.johnson@alaska.gov

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