



2011 Wildfire Mitigation Project Chugach State Park – Stuckagain Heights

**Municipality of Anchorage
Anchorage Fire Department • Wildfire Mitigation Office**

To mitigate the risk and hazard of wildfire to the adjacent homes and neighborhood, the Anchorage Fire Department has partnered with Chugach State Park to create a fuel break along the southern perimeter of Stuckagain Heights. The area designated for treatment will be approximately 200 feet wide for one mile, set 200 feet south of the property boundary with private land.

The project will treat the dead standing and fallen trees, thin and prune spruce trees, and burn the slash. By removing dead woody material and pruning the live residual trees, less fuel (wood) is available to burn and will help protect both homes and park land from potential fires. The design of this fuel break allows for improved fire suppression if a fire were to occur. By limiting the amount of fuel and changing the arrangement of fuel, fire is more likely to stay “on the ground” instead of “crowning” into the tree tops. This allows for more effective fire suppression by both ground crews and air support (helicopters and retardant planes).

The spruce bark beetle epidemic did impact this area. With the strong winter winds, most of these beetle killed trees have fallen over. The resulting openings in the forest canopy have increased the density of Calamagrostis spp. grass, the primary fire carrier in Southcentral Alaska. When the slash piles are burned this fall, grass seed of a shorter variety will be planted to alleviate a portion of this fire hazard. Additionally, birch seedlings and willow will be planted in the area to maintain soil moisture, thereby reducing fire hazard.

Tree work is scheduled to begin in May 2011 with professional firefighters from the Division of Forestry. Slash pile burning is scheduled for Fall 2011 when cooler temperatures and moist conditions prevail. The area highlighted in red is the treatment area. This area is off of the trail system. Treatment will be modified when trails are encountered to preserve the trail's character.

For more information, please contact AFD Forester Sue Rodman at (907) 267-4902.

<http://www.muni.org/fire>

