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Advisory Announcement

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State to Conduct Prescribed Burns at Creamer's Field

(Fairbanks, AK) – The Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection (DOFFP) will be partnering with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to conduct multiple prescribed burns at Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge near Fairbanks starting as soon as weather and fuel conditions permit, likely **May 10 and 11**.

The prescribed burn will treat approximately **37 acres** on the 2,500-acre refuge and occur on the Echo Acres Road fields off of Farmer's Loop Road. Burning the dried grass now not only enhances waterfowl and wildlife habitat but reduces the potential for wildfires later in the fire season when conditions are hotter and drier.

"These prescribed burns are a valuable tool for habitat management," said **Clint Cooper, Alaska Department of Fish and Game wildlife biologist and manager of the Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge**. "Prescribed fire mimics the results of naturally occurring wildfires in a more controlled setting, enhances soil quality and promotes native plant diversity. Post-fire conditions benefit many species and create more nesting habitat for migratory birds and increased browse for our resident moose."

Smoke from the fire will be visible throughout Fairbanks during the burn, but efforts will be made to minimize smoke impacts to the public. The Echo Acres field will be closed to the public during prescribed burn operations. Signs will be posted in the adjoining parking lot to alert the planned prescribed burn.

The prescribed burn also provides valuable, hands-on training for the DOFFP's wildland firefighters as they prepare for the upcoming fire season. It takes about 12 people to light and monitor the fire, and fire managers expect the project to take up to two operational periods to complete.

"Burning the grass at Creamer's Field helps provide our firefighters with an excellent opportunity to put their training to work in advance of the upcoming fire season," said **Fairbanks Area Fire Management Officer Gordon Amundson**.

Firefighters will not initiate ignitions if the temperature, wind speed and direction, relative humidity, and other conditions do not meet the burn plan's prescription parameters. Test burns will be conducted to ensure prescription parameters are met before fully implementing the burn plan.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game manages the Creamer's Field refuge to provide habitat for migratory waterfowl and for compatible public uses including wildlife viewing, research, nature education, and other forms of nonmotorized recreation.

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