

Reduce Property Losses Due to Wildfires**FY2001 Request: \$200,000**
Reference No: 32537**AP/AL:** Appropriation
Category: Health/Human Services
Location: Statewide
House District: Statewide (HD 1-40)
Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2000 - 06/30/2001**Project Type:** Health and Safety
Contact: Nico Bus
Contact Phone: (907)465-2406**Brief Summary and Statement of Need:**

Preventing unwanted wildland fires from starting is the most cost-effective method available to the state to reduce the overall cost of its fire suppression program. The goal of this CIP is to reduce the numbers of human-caused fires and to educate the public on how to make their homes more defensible from the threat of wildland fire by training homeowners in the Firewise concepts of proper construction, landscaping, and home defense. This CIP will also enable the division to develop pre-attack fire plans and provide additional wildland fire and ICS training to cooperating local government fire departments that have a responsibility to protect structures from the threat of wildland fire in urban interface areas.

Funding:	<u>FY2001</u>	<u>FY2002</u>	<u>FY2003</u>	<u>FY2004</u>	<u>FY2005</u>	<u>FY2006</u>	<u>Total</u>
Gen Fund	\$200,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$700,000
Total:	\$200,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$700,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
<u>One-Time Startup:</u>	0	
Totals:	0	0

Additional Information / Prior Funding History:

Over the years a limited amount of work has been accomplished through the operating budget. The Miller's Reach Fire and the Tok Fire reviews emphasized the need for prevention and creation of defensible space. The numbers of human-caused fires will continue to rise because the urban interface areas of the state continue to grow.

Project Description/Justification:

Description of Work to be done:

This project funds 4 major components:

Prevention - 80% of all fires fought in Alaska are human-caused. This CIP will enable the division to reduce the number of human-caused fires by educating the public on the proper use of fire in debris burning, campfire use and other high-risk human activities. Enforcement of Alaska Statute 41.15.010 (protection of natural resources...) will also be increased in an effort to reduce the occurrence of escaped debris fires, campfires and fireworks fires. This work will be accomplished through close coordination with local Volunteer Fire Departments, and local governments.

Defensible Space - Homeowners must learn to take positive preventative action to make their properties fire resistant prior to the occurrence of a wildland fire. Workshops and home inspections will be accomplished across the state to educate the public on how to make their homes and properties Firewise by creating defensible space and utilizing proper building and landscaping materials.

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Pre-Attack Planning - This project creates a database of information that helps firefighters in making decisions on allocation of scarce resources and what improvements are threatened during the critical initial attack phase of an urban interface fire. Communities, municipalities, and private businesses can also utilize this information to assess and mitigate serious fire hazards on their own. Data collected and organized includes vegetative types, roads, lakes, streams, private property location and specific improvements, and an assessment of defensible space.

Structure Fire Department Assistance - Structure fire departments respond to and assist the division on approximately 80% of fires in the urban interface. This funding will enable the division to train the structure firefighters in safe and efficient methods of wildland fire suppression. Fire safety, fire weather, fire suppression, and Incident Command System (ICS) training will be provided to paid and volunteer firefighters across the state. Funding will also be utilized to provide the structure fire departments with specialized wildland fire fighting and safety equipment.

Project Benefits:

The prevention and fast-efficient control of unwanted wildland fires will reduce the overall cost of the State's fire suppression program. The education of the public in creating defensible space around their homes and properties will reduce the potential for disastrous urban interface fires such as the 1996 Miller's Reach fire near Big Lake. Pre-attack planning will make initial attack of unwanted wildland fires faster, more efficient and will save the State suppression money. Well-trained and equipped structure fire departments available to assist the division will reduce the numbers of escaped fires in the populated areas of the state. The education of the public in the principles of fire prevention and defensible space are the most positive and cost effective actions the state can take to reduce the overall cost of fire suppression.

Economic Development:

This project increases the level of confidence in the private sector that the State is providing a comprehensive program of fire protection and management. This could result in increased investment in Alaska. By increasing public awareness, it is possible for local entrepreneurs to develop a business based on providing labor for creating Defensible Space.

Project Support:

This project will be supported by the general public, villages, and communities, as well as Alaska State Fire Chiefs Association, representing their member fire departments. Mayors, village presidents, and other local officials will support this project because it will improve the State's fire suppression capabilities.

Project Opposition:

None known or anticipated.

Alternative Approaches Considered:

The alternative is to continue with a very low-key approach to Fire Prevention and Education that will result in an escalation of human-caused fires because of the increased numbers of citizens moving into the urban interface areas of the state. Local Structure Fire Departments cannot accomplish the project envisioned, due to staffing and budget constraints.

Alternative Financing Considered:

It may be possible to obtain very limited funds through fines assessed for burning violations. This approach is of limited use for the success of this project, as it doesn't provide enough funding.

Specific Spending Detail:

72000 - (\$ 20.0) Travel will occur as meetings, workshops, and inspections are held.

73000 - (\$ 160.0) Contracting with the private sector to develop maps and materials is needed for this project. Also includes staff time to extend seasonal Forest Technicians to accomplish the training and workshops.

74000 - (\$ 20.0) Materials including prevention literature, computer supplies, and maps.

Projected Revenue to the State:

This project does not raise revenue for the State, but rather provides for money savings in fire suppression.

Does this project leverage other funding for the state?

State of Alaska Capital Project Summary

Governors 2001 Capital w/amend

1/10/11 10:58:57 AM

Department of Natural Resources

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Released April 13, 1999

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Not at this time. No federal funds were provided for this in the FFY00 State Forestry Cooperative Federal Grants