

2025

DILLINGHAM AND ALEKNAGIK

COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN



*Cover Photo: 2022 Arcana Creek Fire on Marsh Mountain, East of Aleknagik.
Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection
Photographer: Ezra Butterfield*



**Alaska Venture
Partnerships**



**Alaska
Venture Fund**

Plan prepared by:
Alaska Venture Partnerships and the Alaska Venture Fund

On behalf of:
Bristol Bay Native Association

December 19, 2025

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2. Signature Page

The Dillingham and Aleknagik Community Wildfire Protection Plan has been prepared for the communities of Dillingham and Aleknagik, Alaska in accordance with the following principles:

- It was developed through a collaborative and inclusive process.
- It identifies and prioritizes areas for hazardous fuel reduction and recommends mitigation strategies to enhance the wildfire resilience of people, property, and the environment of Dillingham and Aleknagik.
- It provides recommendations to reduce the ignitability of structures across the area addressed by the plan.

By signing below, the undersigned entities affirm that these standards have been met and express mutual agreement with the content and recommendations of this Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Signing organizations are in alphabetical order.

Norm McDonald

Norm McDonald (Mar 6, 2026 10:32:54 AKST)

Norm McDonald, Deputy Director, Alaska
Division of Forestry & Fire Protection

Gary Chythlook

Gary Chythlook (May 20, 2026 12:59:36 AKDT)

Gary Chythlook, President/CEO, Aleknagik
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Gusty Ilutsik Jr, President, Aleknagik
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Martin Gardiner (Mar 20, 2026 13:55:15 AKDT)

Martin Gardiner, Fire Chief, Aleknagik Volunteer
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Ben Seifert, Fire Management Specialist,
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Gayla Hoseth

Gayla Hoseth, First Chief, Curyung Tribal Council

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Jane Gottschalk, Mayor, City of Aleknagik

Alice A. Ruby

Alice Ruby, Mayor, City of Dillingham

Norman Heyano

Norman Heyano (Mar 23, 2026 11:40:53 AKDT)

Norman Heyano, Fire Chief, Dillingham Volunteer
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William Chaney CEO/gm

Will Chaney, CEO, Nushagak Cooperative

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Jeff Bouschor, Fire Management Officer, U.S. Fish
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3. Introduction

3.1 Acknowledgements

The preparation and finalization of the Dillingham and Aleknagik Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) were made possible through the collaborative efforts, dedication, and expertise of numerous organizations and individuals.

The planning process adhered to the guidelines outlined in *“Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan - A Handbook for Wildland-Urban Interface Communities,”* as published on the State of Alaska’s website. In support of transparency and public engagement, an [interactive website](#) was also established to provide open access to resources and updates throughout all phases of the project’s development.

Core Funding and Support

We express sincere gratitude to the Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA) for providing the essential financial support that initiated and sustained this critical planning effort. Their commitment was foundational to the success of this CWPP. The BBNA also provided significant technical guidance, support for community engagement, and invaluable local expertise throughout the project's development and review phases.

Stakeholder Contributions

This plan benefited significantly from the active participation, technical guidance, diligent review, robust community engagement, and local expertise provided by the following key stakeholders:

- University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) - Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER)
- Nushagak Cooperative
- Aleknagik Traditional Council
- Choggiung Ltd.
- Aleknagik Natives Limited
- City of Dillingham
- City of Aleknagik
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife - Togiak National Wildlife Refuge
- State of Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection (DFFP)

Special acknowledgement is extended to the Local State of Alaska Department of Transportation (DOT), Nushagak Cooperative, and the Bristol Bay Native Association

(BBNA) Land Management Department and Forestry Crew for their proactive roles in wildfire mitigation. Specifically, these organizations are recognized for their efforts in clearing road easements and/or conducting fuels reduction work critical for maintaining safe and effective evacuation routes and improving community defensible space.

Land Acknowledgement

The Dillingham and Aleknagik Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) recognizes and thanks the Dena'ina/Tanaina, Sugpiaq/Alutiiq, and Yup'ik/Yupiaq peoples of Bristol Bay. We recognize the thousands of years of stewardship and acknowledge the people of the region as they continue to be the caretakers of the land.

3.2 About This Plan

What is a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)?

Elements of a Complete CWPP



Wildfire Hazard & Risk Analysis



Prioritizing Mitigation Work



Community Engagement



Preparedness Planning

A Community Wildfire Protection Plan helps the communities of Dillingham and Aleknagik assess their local wildfire hazards and identify strategic actions to reduce risk and strengthen preparedness. The Dillingham and Aleknagik CWPP provides a framework for aligning local knowledge with state and federal wildfire management priorities to protect people, property, and the natural and cultural resources that define the Bristol Bay region.

A CWPP is more than a document, it is a collaborative process that brings together residents, landowners, fire service organizations, land management agencies, and tribal and city leaders to clarify and refine priorities for protecting life, property, and critical infrastructure within the wildland–urban interface (WUI). Through this process, participants evaluate fuel conditions, fire response capacity, and community vulnerabilities to identify effective, locally supported mitigation projects.

The Dillingham and Aleknagik CWPP process emphasizes public participation and community engagement, providing opportunities for residents to work directly with wildfire specialists, planners, and emergency managers. These discussions help identify local concerns, set project priorities, and improve coordination among the Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA), Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection (DFFP), Cities of Dillingham and Aleknagik, Dillingham Volunteer Fire Department, Aleknagik Traditional

Council, University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA), Nushagak Cooperative, and other local entities.

A CWPP can also help unlock funding opportunities. Many federal and state grants for fuels (any material capable of burning) reduction, defensible space, and fire-adapted community projects require an approved CWPP.

The foundation for CWPPs was established under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) of 2003, which directs the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to collaborate with local communities in developing and implementing hazardous fuel reduction projects. To qualify for these opportunities, a community must have an approved CWPP that includes three key components:

- **Collaboration:** The CWPP must be collaboratively developed by local and state government representatives, in consultation with federal agencies and with input from the public.
- **Prioritized Fuel Reduction:** The plan must identify and prioritize areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatments and recommend methods to protect at-risk communities and essential infrastructure.
- **Structural Ignitability:** The plan must recommend actions that residents and communities can take to reduce the ignitability of structures within the planning area.

CWPPs can also be used as a tactical tool for wildfire prevention and management, as it provides a roadmap for how a community can reduce its wildfire risk and improve its resiliency in the face of wildfire events. The Dillingham and Aleknagik CWPP builds on these principles to create a shared, actionable vision for living safely with wildfire, with the ultimate goals of protecting lives, livelihoods, and landscapes across the region.

State and Federal CWPP Guidelines

The Dillingham and Aleknagik Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) align with both federal and state guidance to ensure consistency with national wildfire mitigation and hazard planning standards. This approach supports integration with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) framework for local hazard mitigation planning, while also adhering to the intent of the National Fire Plan and the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA, 2003).

This CWPP has been prepared in accordance with the following key policies and guidance documents:

- **The National Fire Plan: A Collaborative Approach for Reducing Wildland Fire Risks to Communities and the Environment – 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan** (December 2006).
- **Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA, 2003)**: Establishes statutory incentives for collaboration among federal agencies, states, and local communities to reduce hazardous fuels and protect at-risk areas.
- **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): Region 10 Guidelines for Local Hazard Mitigation Plans** (44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 201 and 206), as related to the fire mitigation planning components of a multi-hazard mitigation plan.
- **National Association of State Foresters (2003): Field Guidance for Identifying and Prioritizing Treatments Between Communities** to promote consistent risk assessment and project prioritization.



The objective of integrating these complementary frameworks is to produce a coordinated, risk-informed wildfire mitigation plan that identifies priority fuel reduction areas, recommends site-specific mitigation actions, and supports protection of people, structures, critical infrastructure, and natural resources in and around the Bristol Bay region.

By meeting these guidelines, the Dillingham and Aleknagik CWPP also

positions the community to access federal and state funding for pre-disaster mitigation projects through FEMA, the Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection, and other cooperating agencies.

Why Is the CWPP Relevant to Me?

Living safely with wildfire in the Bristol Bay region requires a shared and ongoing effort from everyone, residents, landowners, farmers, business owners, fire service personnel, and land managers alike. Bristol Bay faces many of the same risk factors seen in other wildfire-prone parts of Alaska and the broader boreal forest; dry summers, abundant fine fuels, and increasing development in and around wildland areas.

This Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) outlines strategies and actions that local, state, and federal agencies, community organizations, and residents can pursue over the next decade to reduce wildfire risk. It also provides practical guidance for individuals to help protect homes, families, and properties such as creating and maintaining defensible space, managing vegetation in the home ignition zone, and developing personal evacuation and communication plans.

The steps you take on your property make a difference. When neighbors work together to reduce fuels, maintain defensible space, and stay prepared, the entire community becomes more resilient and safer for firefighters and residents alike.

The Bristol Bay Native Association, in collaboration with local governments, tribal entities, and the Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection, is committed to supporting Dillingham and Aleknagik residents in building a fire-adapted community that safeguards the people and resources of the Bristol Bay region. Individual community member ownership of this plan and its recommendations are vital to its success.

CWPP Priorities - Life and Property

Fire Adapted Communities

- People and communities are prepared to receive, respond to and recover from wildfire.

Safe, Effective Wildfire Response

- All jurisdictions coordinate to implement safe, effective, risk-based management decisions.

Resilient Landscapes

- Landscapes are resilient to fire, insect, and disease disturbances, regardless of jurisdictional boundaries.

Post-Fire Recovery

- Preparing communities for inevitable fire effects, through pre-fire planning for post-fire response.

3.3 Plan Alignment

The Dillingham and Aleknagik CWPP is designed to integrate existing local, state, and federal planning frameworks so mitigation actions, emergency response, and funding requests are coordinated, consistent, and defensible. The CWPP intentionally aligns with:

- (1) the State of Alaska Hazard Mitigation Plan to ensure consistency with statewide mitigation priorities and FEMA eligibility,
- (2) FEMA mitigation planning requirements and guidance under 44 CFR and the latest Local Mitigation Planning guidance,
- (3) the Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan that sets statewide management options and coordination protocols, and
- (4) national strategies, such as the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy, that provide the all-lands objectives (Restore, Maintain, Adapt, and Respond) used to prioritize cross-jurisdictional work.

Aligning with these plans improves multi-agency coordination during incidents, increases the CWPP's utility for operational decision-making, and strengthens eligibility for federal and state mitigation grants that require conformity with FEMA and state mitigation planning requirements. The Dillingham and Aleknagik CWPP also builds from previous local planning products (including the *2022 City of Dillingham & Curyung Tribal Council Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan*, the *2019-2024 Native Village of Aleknagik Tribal Hazard Mitigation Plan*, and the *City of Dillingham Emergency Operations Plan*) to preserve institutional knowledge, track progress on recommended projects, and update priorities based on new science and community input.

Based on a thorough review of the previous local planning products, the recommendations below will strengthen further CWPP plan alignment:

1. Table 5-7 on page 5-13 of the *2022 City of Dillingham & Curyung Tribal Council Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan* Project 19 "Community defensible space" should be amended to elevate to a "High" priority to match the recommendations of this CWPP. Conflicting priority levels may hinder grant eligibility for the specific projects identified in the CWPP.
2. Annex I: First Responders, II. Situation, D. on page 65 of the *City of Dillingham Emergency Operations Plan* Should be amended to reflect the Dillingham Volunteer Fire Department's limited ability to fight wildland fires and establish immediate activation protocols with the AK Division of Forestry & Fire Protection.

Please review *Appendix I - Plan Alignment Summary* that identifies the relevant provision, goal, or action in each cited plan and describes how the Dillingham and Aleknagik CWPP goals and recommended actions support, implement, or expand those provisions.

3.4 CWPP Development Process

In 2024, the Bristol Bay Native Association received a USDA Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG) to develop a Community Wildfire Protection Plan for Dillingham and Aleknagik. These funds were contingent on using a multi-level, community-engaged process to guide issue identification and strategic planning.

A 12-month timeline was established for writing this CWPP with key milestones at each stage. The below timeline provides a balanced, step-by-step approach to ensure the CWPP is comprehensive, community-driven, and ready for implementation within a year of its publication.

Month	Milestone
1-3	Planning team formation, role assignments, and set communication/decision-making processes. (January - March 2025)
4	Begin community engagement, gather initial input, prepare for risk assessment. (April 2025)
5-6	Conduct wildfire risk assessment, finalize data collection and mapping. (May & June 2025)
7-8	Define CWPP goals, identify priority project areas, engage the community for input. (July & August 2025)
9	Develop detailed action plans and strategies for each project area. (September 2025)
10	Draft the CWPP document, review with the team, and prepare for community feedback. (October 2025)
11	Public review of the draft CWPP, incorporate revisions, finalize with the core team. (November 2025)
12	Finalize and adopt the CWPP, begin implementation planning. (December 2025)

Table 1. Summary of Project Milestones from January – December 2025

Recommendations and Best Practices

To ensure that the Dillingham and Aleknagik CWPP stays aligned with national goals and Alaska Fire Adapted Communities principles, below are some general recommendations:

1. **Update the CWPP** regularly with a review and revision every 3 years and a renewal every 5 years to reflect changes in housing, land ownership, fuels, climate and risk.
2. **Strengthen building/home hardening and defensible space programs**, especially in zones with direct exposure.
3. **Use fuel treatment prioritization** informed by the zonal risk rankings to target high threat/high asset zones first.

4. **Engage the public continuously**, both in awareness and in maintaining responsibilities (e.g. vegetation around homes).
5. **Coordinate among jurisdictions and agencies** to ensure resources are shared, roles defined, and response is integrated.
6. **Integrate response and evacuation planning** explicitly, ensuring that high risk zones consider escape routes, safe zones, and communication systems.
7. **Monitor results** of mitigation actions, share lessons learned, adjust strategies adaptively.

Alaska Wildland Fire Management Options

The Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan recognizes that Federal and State agencies and Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act Corporations have distinct missions and objectives for their lands, and effective wildfire management requires balancing suppression, monitoring, and natural fire spread. To guide decisions, nearly all lands in Alaska are assigned to one of four wildfire management options (Critical, Full, Modified, or Limited) through a collaborative process among jurisdictional and protecting agencies. These designations enable fire managers to prioritize protection efforts, allocate resources efficiently, integrate fire management with broader land-use goals, and ensure suppression costs align with the values at risk.

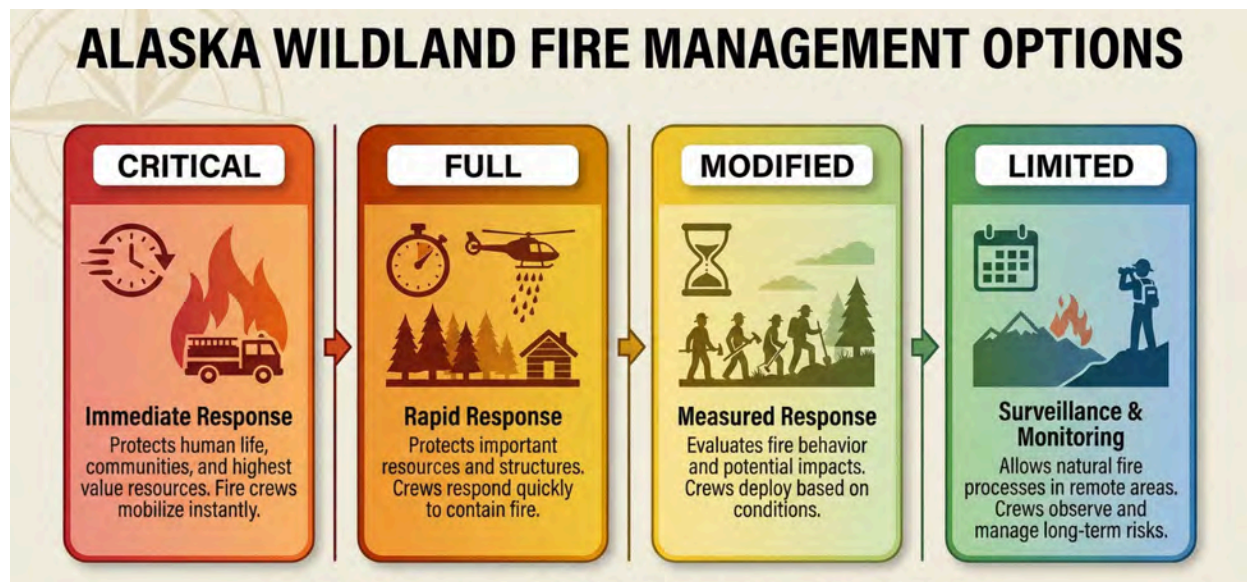


Image 1. Alaska Wildland Fire Management Options

While management options establish default initial responses based on a fire's point of origin, they do not account for incident-specific conditions and may be overridden using a decision support process that incorporates risk analysis and situational assessment. Flexibility is central to the system, as agencies may adjust management designations annually to reflect changes in objectives, fire conditions, land use, or available

technologies. Revisions require collaboration and consensus among all affected parties, with the Alaska Wildland Fire Coordinating Group (AWFCG) serving as the final decision-maker in cases of disagreement. For more information on fire management options, please visit the Alaska Wildland Fire Management Plan <https://fire.ak.blm.gov/administration/asma.php> page.

The fire management options for Dillingham and Aleknagik are currently **full protection** for the entire planning area. DFFP is proposing Management Option changes for both Aleknagik and Dillingham from **full** to **critical**. DFFP is projecting this change to be in effect in 2026.

Management Option	Acres of Land Area
<i>Full Protection</i>	<i>136,537</i>

Table 2. Alaska Wildland Fire Management Options Distribution Rating Chart

4. Background

Wildfire is a growing concern across the region. Although the Bristol Bay area has historically experienced fewer large fires than interior Alaska, recent warm and dry summers, increased lightning activity, and fuel buildup in spruce stands have raised the risk. Limited road access and remote terrain can make suppression operations difficult, and smoke impacts can affect public health and aviation.

Values at risk include residential areas, schools, clinics, airstrips, power and fuel infrastructure, community water sources, and traditional subsistence-use areas. Local fire protection is provided by the Dillingham Volunteer Fire Department and supported by the Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection (DFFP) and cooperating agencies. The Aleknagik Traditional Council plays an important role in coordinating preparedness and outreach within its community.

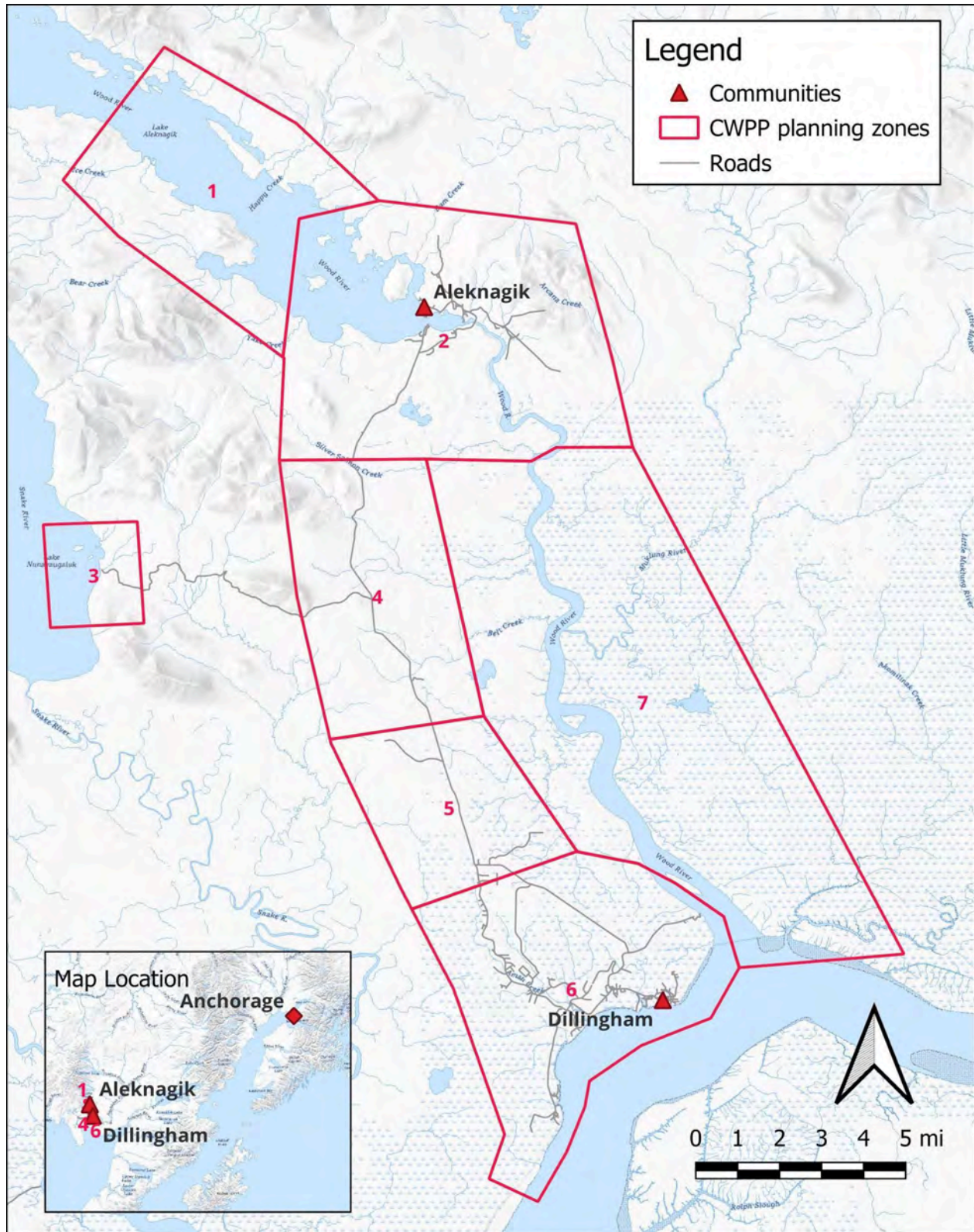
The Dillingham and Aleknagik area represent a classic Wildland–Urban Interface (WUI) environment for coastal Alaska, where homes, infrastructure, and forested landscapes meet. This CWPP aims to strengthen local resilience through risk assessment, mitigation, and implementation of Fire Adapted Community principles consistent with the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy.

4.1 Geography and Location

The communities of Dillingham and Aleknagik are located in southwest Alaska within the Bristol Bay region, at the eastern edge of the Wood–Tikchik State Park and near the Nushagak River system. Dillingham lies at the head of Nushagak Bay, while Aleknagik is situated 20 miles to the north on the southern shore of Lake Aleknagik, connected to Dillingham by a 25-mile road. The area is surrounded by vast wetlands, tundra, and mixed spruce–birch forests that transition into coastal and subarctic ecosystems.

Dillingham serves as the regional hub for Bristol Bay, providing transportation, health, education, and government services for surrounding villages. Aleknagik, a smaller community of primarily Alaska Native residents, serves as a gateway to Wood–Tikchik State Park and is closely tied to the subsistence and fishing economies that define the region. Access to the area is primarily by air and water; Dillingham is not connected to the statewide road system, though it has a well-developed airport and marine access.

The combined planning area for the Dillingham and Aleknagik CWPP includes both incorporated cities and their surrounding wildland interface zones. Vegetation and fuel types range from coastal tundra and wetlands to upland spruce forests and mixed hardwood stands, all of which can support fire spread under the right weather conditions.



Map 1. CWPP Planning Zones

4.2 Community Profile

Demographics

Dillingham (population ~2,250) and Aleknagik (population ~210) are part of the Dillingham Census Area, which has roughly 4,800 residents across several rural communities. Both communities have a strong Alaska Native presence, with more than half of residents identifying as Yup'ik or mixed Alaska Native heritage. Seasonal population increases occur during the commercial fishing season, when hundreds of workers and visitors arrive for the salmon run. The population is diverse, with a median age in the late 30s. Households tend to be family-based, and homeownership is common, though housing availability and energy costs remain challenges.

Economy and Livelihood

The area's economy is built on commercial and subsistence fishing, local government, education, and transportation services, with seasonal spikes in activity during the Bristol Bay salmon season. Dillingham hosts regional offices for the Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA), Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation (BBAHC), and state agencies, while Aleknagik remains a smaller, predominantly residential and subsistence community. The Bristol Bay fishery provides substantial seasonal income, while BBNA, BBAHC, Cities of Dillingham and Aleknagik, UAA, and local schools provide year-round jobs.

CWPP Planning Considerations

Geographic isolation, limited road access, and reliance on air and marine transport shape emergency response strategies. Many homes lie along the road corridor between Dillingham and Aleknagik, interspersed with wetlands and spruce stands that increase fire risk. Cultural and linguistic diversity underscores the importance of community-based outreach, trusted messengers, and tribal engagement in wildfire education and evacuation planning.

The Dillingham and Aleknagik CWPP provides a framework for connecting traditional knowledge, modern science, and coordinated action to create a safer, more resilient future for both communities.

4.3 Landownership

Land ownership is a complex mix of city, state, federal, and Alaska Native corporation lands, including those of the Aleknagik Natives Limited, Choggiung Ltd., and BBNA. Surrounding lands include portions of the Wood–Tikchik State Park and Togiak National Wildlife Refuge, managed for conservation and recreation.

Land Ownership Distribution in the Planning Area		
Ownership / Management	Acres of Land Area	Examples
<i>ANCSA Corporation</i>	<i>78,524.7</i>	<i>Native-owned land and resource entity</i>
<i>City of Dillingham</i>	<i>391.0</i>	<i>City owned lands, Parks and Recreation lands, greenbelts, public facilities, etc.</i>
<i>City of Aleknagik</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>City owned lands, Parks and Recreation lands, greenbelts, public facilities, etc.</i>
<i>Federal</i>	<i>3,043.6</i>	<i>U.S. Fish and Wildlife Refuge, BLM parcels</i>
<i>Native Allotment</i>	<i>16,596.8</i>	<i>Individually held ancestral land parcels</i>
<i>Private</i>	<i>3,423.0</i>	<i>Residential subdivisions, commercial districts, industrial areas</i>
<i>State of Alaska</i>	<i>34,558.4</i>	<i>State Parks, state trust lands, highway corridors, Airports, etc.</i>
<i>Total Acres</i>	<i>136,537.4</i>	

Table 3. Landownership, Source: Bureau of Land Management. (n.d.). Alaska administered lands, SDMS. Retrieved from <https://sdms.ak.blm.gov/sdms/>.

4.4 Transportation

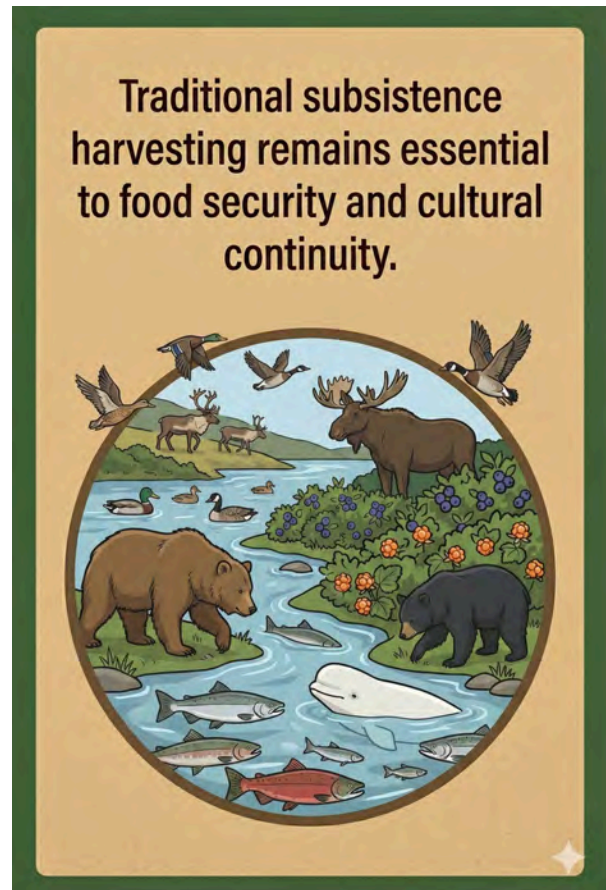
Dillingham is a key transportation hub for the Bristol Bay region, linking rural communities across Southwest Alaska through air, water, and limited road infrastructure. Though the area is not connected to the Alaska Highway system, it serves as the regional gateway for goods, passengers, and emergency operations supporting the western Alaska coast.

- **Air:** The Dillingham Airport is one of the busiest rural airports in Alaska, accommodating commercial passenger flights, cargo operations, and emergency medical transport. Aleknagik Airport provides smaller-scale air access to Lake Aleknagik and surrounding lodges and camps. Air travel is critical year-round for residents, mail, freight, and interagency wildfire support.
- **Roads:** A 25-mile road corridor connects Dillingham and Aleknagik, providing vital access between the two communities. Local roads extend to residential areas, boat landings, and the Dillingham landfill. Road infrastructure is limited and can be vulnerable to flooding, erosion, or wildfire-related closures.
- **Marine Access:** Dillingham's harbor and boat launch facilities support the Bristol Bay commercial fishery, freight shipments, and emergency logistics. Marine routes along the Nushagak River and Nushagak Bay serve as essential transportation links for nearby villages.
- **Public and Emergency Access:** Road and air access form the backbone of emergency response operations, particularly for medical evacuation, wildfire suppression, and supply delivery during seasonal hazards.

4.5 Industry

The Dillingham–Aleknagik area’s economy is defined by a blend of commercial fishing, subsistence, public service, and small business activity, with seasonal spikes during the salmon season.

- **Fisheries:** Dillingham is one of the main ports for the Bristol Bay sockeye salmon fishery, the largest wild salmon fishery in the world. Processing plants, tenders, and support industries operate intensively from June to August, creating substantial seasonal employment.
- **Subsistence Economy:** Year-round, residents depend on subsistence fishing, hunting, and gathering, which remain integral to food security and cultural identity.
- **Public Sector and Education:** Employment in government, education, and health services, through the Cities of Dillingham and Aleknagik, BBNA, BBAHC, and University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA)-Bristol Bay Campus, supports the regional economy year-round.
- **Energy and Utilities:** The Nushagak Electric and Telephone Cooperative (NETC) provides electric and communication services to Dillingham and Aleknagik. Local heating fuel and fuel storage facilities, provided by Vitus Terminals and Bristol Alliance Fuels, are critical infrastructure and potential fire exposure sites.
- **Tourism and Recreation:** Aleknagik serves as the southern access point to Wood–Tikchik State Park, Alaska’s largest state park. Seasonal visitors, anglers, and guided recreation add to the summer economy.



4.6 Natural Resources and Forest Health

The natural environment surrounding Dillingham and Aleknagik includes tundra, forest, wetlands, and extensive freshwater systems that sustain both ecosystems and livelihoods.

- **Forests and Vegetation:** The area's mixed spruce, birch, and alder forests interspersed with wetlands create a mosaic of fuel types. Spruce stands, while limited compared to Interior Alaska, represent the highest wildfire hazard.
- **Water Resources:** The Nushagak River, Wood River, and Lake Aleknagik are the lifeblood of the region, providing habitat for salmon, drinking water, transportation routes, and firefighting water sources.
- **Wildlife:** The region supports abundant moose, caribou, brown and black bears, waterfowl, and migratory birds, which are central to both subsistence and recreation.
- **Fishery Resources:** The Bristol Bay watershed supports globally significant salmon runs, making fishery sustainability and watershed protection critical components of land and fire management.
- **Mineral and Energy Resources:** While large-scale mining is limited near Dillingham and Aleknagik, regional land use plans consider potential mineral exploration and energy projects. Infrastructure development must balance economic opportunities with ecosystem and cultural protection.



Image 2. Windblown Tree in Dillingham, December 2025. Source: Will Chaney

Wood-Tikchik State Park

Wood-Tikchik State Park is the largest state park in the United States, encompassing nearly 1.6 million acres of pristine wilderness directly north of Dillingham and Aleknagik. Established in 1978, the park is managed to protect the area's fish and wildlife populations and to preserve continued subsistence and recreational activities. The park's vast landscape of interconnecting lakes and river systems serves as a critical biological anchor for the region and presents unique wildfire management considerations.

- **Vegetation and Fuel Loading:** The park features a diverse transition of vegetation zones. While the northern and western reaches are dominated by alpine tundra,

spired peaks, and high valleys, the southern and eastern lowlands (below 1,000 feet) support denser forest stands. These forests are primarily composed of white spruce, paper birch, and balsam poplar, often with a dense understory of alder and willow. In the southern portion of the park, continuous stands of spruce and mixed hardwoods create potential for higher-intensity fire behavior, particularly during dry, windy conditions.

- **Ecological and Economic Value:** The park preserves the spawning and rearing grounds for the Bristol Bay sockeye salmon fishery, the largest of its kind in the world and the primary economic driver for the Dillingham region. In addition to commercial fisheries, the park supports a robust tourism economy, including several remote, privately-owned fishing lodges and guided float trips on the Tikchik and Wood Rivers. Protecting these watersheds from catastrophic erosion following high-severity wildfires is a priority for maintaining both the ecosystem and the local economy.
- **Fire Management and Access:** The park is managed with a philosophy of non-development and wilderness maintenance. There are no roads within the park; access is exclusively by aircraft or boat, which significantly increases response times for wildfire suppression assets. Fire prevention regulations are strict: open fires are restricted to non-vegetated gravel bars or metal fire rings, and cutting live trees is prohibited, which limits ad-hoc fuel reduction by visitors.

The Wood-Tikchik State Park is a large, multi-use wilderness that balances essential habitat conservation and subsistence use with significant recreational appeal, all within a landscape that requires careful interagency coordination for wildfire response.

Spruce Bark Beetle Activity and Wildfire Risk

The Spruce Bark Beetle (*Dendroctonus rufipennis*) is the most damaging native forest insect in Alaska, with outbreaks historically concentrated in Southcentral regions like the Kenai Peninsula and Matanuska-Susitna Borough. While *Ips* beetles (*Ips perturbatus* is the northern spruce engraver) also exist, the Spruce Bark Beetle is the primary driver of large-scale spruce mortality.

Impact on Forest Health

- **Tree Mortality:** The beetles burrow into the phloem (the inner bark layer) to lay eggs, disrupting the tree's ability to transport nutrients from the needles to the roots. This effectively "girdles" and starves the tree, often resulting in death.
- **Scale of Infestation:** Alaska has a long history of major outbreaks. The 1990s outbreak affected over 2 million acres, and a more recent outbreak starting around 2016 has impacted over 2.25 million acres. In heavily infested stands, mortality rates can exceed 80-90% of susceptible spruce trees (typically white, Sitka, and Lutz spruce greater than 12 inches in diameter).
- **Contributing Factors:** Outbreaks are exacerbated by warmer temperatures and drought conditions associated with climate change. Increased temperatures shorten the beetle's life cycle from two years to one, allowing for faster population

growth and wider damage. Stressed or damaged trees are also more susceptible to attack.

Impact on Wildfire Potential

Spruce beetle-killed trees significantly alter forest fuels and structure, increasing the overall wildfire risk to communities.

- **Fuel Loading:**
 - **Crown Fuels (Initial Phase):** Immediately following a mass attack (the "red stage" with reddish-brown needles), the standing dead trees have dry, fine needles that remain attached for a time. This can increase the potential for crown fires (fire spreading through the treetops) because the dead, dry needles ignite easily.
 - **Surface and Ladder Fuels (Later Phase):** As time passes (typically 2+ years), the needles fall and dead limbs break off, accumulating as heavy woody debris on the forest floor. This increases the total amount of fuel available to burn, which can lead to:
 - **Greater Fire Intensity:** A fire burning through this heavy fuel load will release more heat, resulting in higher intensity fires that are more difficult to control.
 - **Increased Ignition Risk:** The dead, dry wood is more susceptible to ignition.
 - **Understory Changes:** Increased sunlight reaching the forest floor due to the lack of tree canopy can promote the growth of fine fuels like grasses and shrubs, creating a continuous layer of highly flammable fuel near the ground, which further increases the likelihood of fire ignition and rapid spread.

In summary, the mass mortality caused by the Spruce Bark Beetle creates a significant and prolonged wildfire hazard. The combination of dry, dead material in the canopy (initially) and the eventual heavy accumulation of debris and growth of fine understory fuels on the ground makes infested areas more vulnerable to high intensity, rapidly spreading wildfires. This necessitates strategic fuel reduction and defensible space measures in community wildfire protection planning.

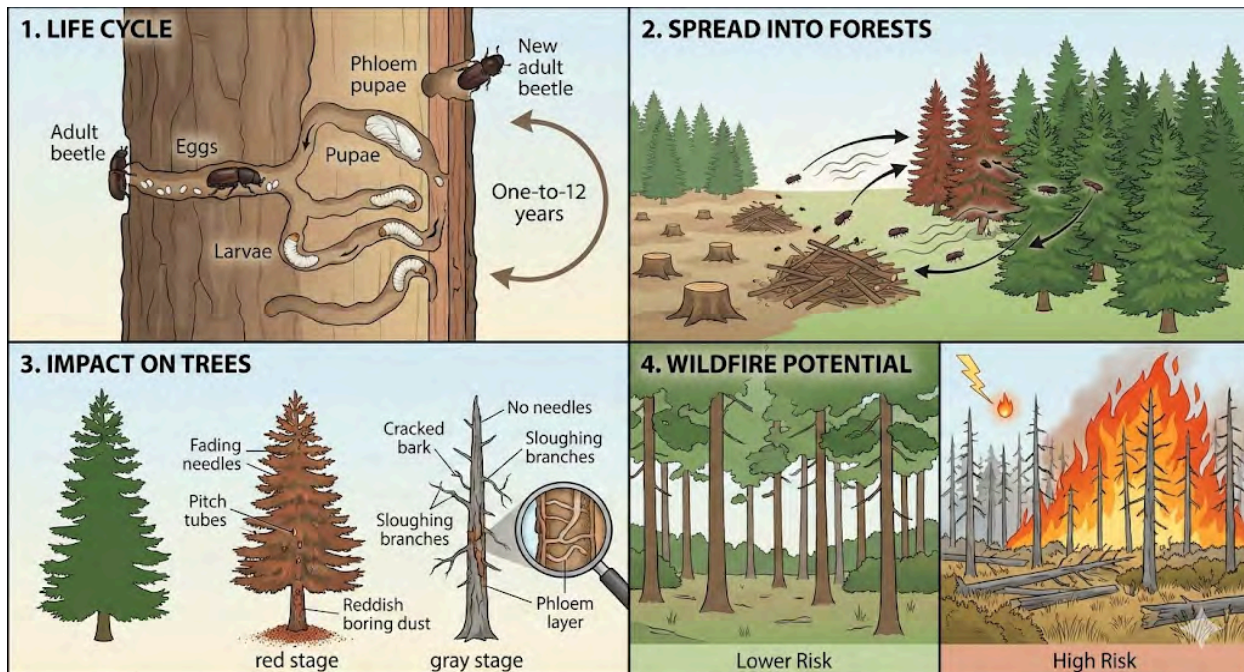


Image 3. Spruce Bark Beetle Implications to Wildfire

For more information on Spruce Beetle Mitigation and Prevention Strategies see *Appendix C - Outreach and Education Resources*.

4.7 Tribal Activities and Entities

Tribal Presence and Governance

The Dillingham–Aleknagik area is part of the ancestral lands of Central Yup'ik and Dena'ina peoples, who have relied on the rivers, forests, and tundra of the Nushagak Basin for millennia. Tribal governments and organizations play essential roles in community leadership, resource management, and cultural preservation.

Key entities in the region include:

- **Aleknagik Traditional Council** – The tribal government for the community of Aleknagik, working to protect the health, safety, and cultural wellbeing of its members while promoting sustainable land and resource management.
- **Curyung Tribal Council** – The tribal government based in Dillingham, providing programs in natural resource management, housing, and community wellness.
- **Bristol Bay Native Association** – The regional tribal consortium representing 31 Bristol Bay tribes; lead grantee for the USDA Community Wildfire Defense Grant supporting this CWPP. BBNA provides planning and wildfire resilience coordination.
- **Choggiung Ltd.** – The ANCSA village corporation for Dillingham, Ekuk, and Portage Creek, managing lands and resources on behalf of shareholders.

- **Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation** – The tribal health provider for the region, supporting emergency response and public health preparedness.

Tribal Activities Relevant to the CWPP

- **Land Management and Subsistence Practices:**
 - Tribes maintain subsistence lands for hunting, fishing, and berry gathering. Wildfire impacts on these lands can threaten food security and cultural practices.
- **Cultural and Environmental Stewardship:**
 - Tribes engage in cultural resource protection, ensuring that archaeological and historic sites are considered in fire mitigation and landscape management. Many tribal programs integrate traditional ecological knowledge into land management, including fire-adapted practices.
- **Tribal Partnerships in Fire Management:**
 - BBNA and local tribal councils work with the Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and State Parks to coordinate fire prevention, response, and training. Recent initiatives emphasize youth engagement and community-based fuel reduction.

Collaboration in Wildfire Planning

The CWPP process recognizes tribal sovereignty and consultation requirements, ensuring that tribal perspectives are incorporated into planning and mitigation strategies. Tribal entities contributed to:

- Mapping high-priority cultural and subsistence areas
- Advising on acceptable fuel reduction and prescribed burning practices
- Supporting community engagement and public education campaigns to increase wildfire awareness and preparedness

4.8 Fire Response Overview

Both the Dillingham and Aleknagik CWPP areas fall within the statutory wildfire protection area of the AK Division of Forestry & Fire Protection (DFFP). Under the Alaska Master Cooperative Wildland Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement, the AK DFFP/Southwest Area is designated as the “Protection Agency”.

The three designated “Protection Agencies” in Alaska are the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry & Fire Protection (DNR/DFFP), the Bureau of Land Management/Alaska Fire Service (BLM/AFS), and the United States Forest Service (USFS). Protecting Agencies maintain and operate wildfire suppression organizations in Alaska with the primary intention of providing safe, cost-effective suppression services and minimizing unnecessary duplication of suppression systems.

The Agreement is entered into by the following agencies:

- State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources (Alaska DNR)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Region 10 (USFS)
- U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Unified Interior Region 11
- U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Unified Interior Region 11
- U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Alaska Region (BIA)
- U.S. Department of the Interior, BLM, Unified Interior Region 11 (BLM)

The remaining land management authorities act as Jurisdictional Agencies within the Master Agreement and are responsible for all planning documents (e.g., land use, resource, and fire management plans) for a unit's wildland fire and fuels management program. Throughout wildfire response and suppression operations, Jurisdictional Agencies ensure management actions taken by the Protecting Agency are compliant with Jurisdictional land management plans and Jurisdictional Agency policies.

The Master Agreement also identifies "Supporting Agencies" across the state. A Supporting Agency provides suppression resources or other assistance to a Protecting Agency. This stipulation of the Agreement allows "cooperator" municipal and community fire departments to enter into local Cooperative Fire Protection Agreements with DFFP which allow a mechanism for local fire departments to be formally integrate into Alaska statewide suppression responses and activities as needed.

In the Dillingham and Aleknagik region, the Dillingham Volunteer Fire Department (VFD) is staffed by about 20 members and is equipped with several fire engines, tanker trucks, and support vehicles. The Aleknagik Volunteer Fire Department, serving a smaller community, has more limited personnel and equipment. However, both VFDs current capacities for wildfire initial attack is minimal to none as they lack specialized wildland firefighting training, heavy equipment, and adequate staffing. In practice, they would rely on DFFP or interagency resources to manage or extinguish a wildfire.

Fire Protection for Alaska Native Allotments

Alaska Native allotments are parcels of land, totaling up to 160 acres, conveyed to an Alaska Native by a restricted deed under the Alaska Native Allotment Act of 1906, its 1956 amendment, or the Alaska Native Veteran Allotment Act of 1998. For the purpose of fire protection, restricted-title Alaska Native allotments are treated as Federally Administered Indian Trust Lands.

Responsibility and Service Provision

- Jurisdictional Agency: The BIA serves as the Jurisdictional Agency for all Indian Trust lands in Alaska, including restricted-title Native allotments. The BIA Regional Fire Management Officer is the primary notification point-of-contact for all trust lands threatened by wildfire.

- **Suppression Services:** Wildland fire suppression services are delegated to the BLM by the Department of the Interior Manual (620 Chapter 5.3). These services are provided by the BLM/AFS and by the State of Alaska and the USFS through the Alaska Master Cooperative Wildland Fire Management Agreement.
- **Cost:** While not explicitly stated for allotments in the same section as ANCSA lands, DFFP provides cost-effective wildland fire suppression services on DOI administered lands (which includes trust lands).

Tribal Government Involvement

Some of the 229 federally recognized Tribes in Alaska have compacted with the BIA to become service providers for allotment owners who are members of the Tribe. These compacted Tribal governments and consortiums (like Bristol Bay Native Association, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Chugachmiut, and AVCP) serve an important role, including:

- Serving as an additional point of contact (a resource advisor) for the Protecting Agencies regarding fire management concerns.
- Maintaining site-specific information for the allotments in their service area.
- Assisting the Protecting Agency in the protection of trust lands during an ongoing incident.

The BIA remains the Jurisdictional Agency and never relinquishes its trust responsibility for these restricted-title lands, even when a Tribe compacts services. Please review the Alaska Master Cooperative Wildland Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement, 2025 Alaska Statewide Operating Plan, Attachment 10 Alaska Native Organizations and land located here; <https://fire.ak.blm.gov/administration/asma.php> for more information.

5. Wildland Fire History

The Dillingham–Aleknagik region lies within a fire-adapted landscape where both boreal forest and tundra ecosystems periodically experience wildfire. Historically, fire occurrence in this part of southwest Alaska was infrequent compared to Interior regions. However, in recent decades, and especially during the 2019 and 2022 fire seasons, climate warming, extended dry periods, and record-setting lightning activity have led to a clear increase in both the frequency and scale of wildfires across the region. These events have reshaped local perspectives on fire risk and underscored the need for proactive community preparedness and interagency coordination.

The 2019 fire season marked a turning point for southwest Alaska. Persistent heat, low humidity, and widespread lightning ignitions produced an unprecedented number of

large fires across tundra and mixed forest landscapes previously considered too wet or patchy to sustain significant burning. The Kuskokwim, Bristol Bay, and Yukon–Kuskokwim Delta regions all experienced large tundra fires, with smoke impacts extending hundreds of miles. These fires demonstrated that under emerging climate conditions, southwest Alaska is no longer insulated from the type of fire activity



historically associated with the Interior.

The trend continued into the 2022 season, one of the most active in Alaska's recorded history. Over 3.1 million acres burned statewide, including multiple fires in the Nushagak and Wood River drainages near Dillingham and Aleknagik. Several tundra and mixed-shrub fires ignited

earlier than usual and burned under extreme conditions rarely seen in the region. The King Salmon, Lime Complex, and Iliamna-area fires tested the limits of regional suppression capacity and led to extensive coordination between state, federal, and local entities, including the Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection and the Bristol Bay Native Association.

These recent fire seasons highlight a significant ecological and operational shift: tundra landscapes that once acted as natural fire breaks are now capable of carrying high-intensity, fast-moving fires during warm, dry periods. Combined with the region's limited road access and dependence on aviation for suppression and evacuation, this new fire environment presents unique challenges for community safety, infrastructure protection, and subsistence resources.

Continued monitoring, planning, and investment in fire-adapted community strategies are essential to maintaining resilience as southwest Alaska adjusts to a changing fire regime.

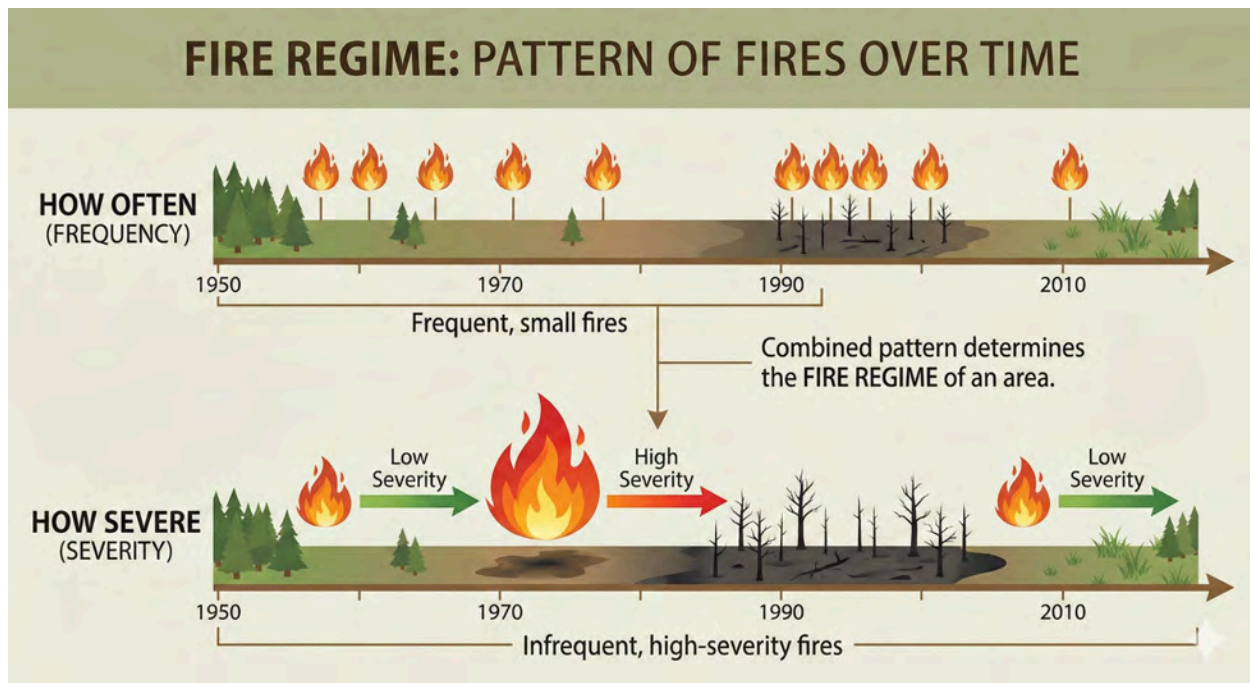


Image 5. Fire Regime Patterns

5.1 Lessons from Recent Fire History

Reflecting on the recent fire history of the Dillingham–Aleknagik area, several key lessons consistently stand out:

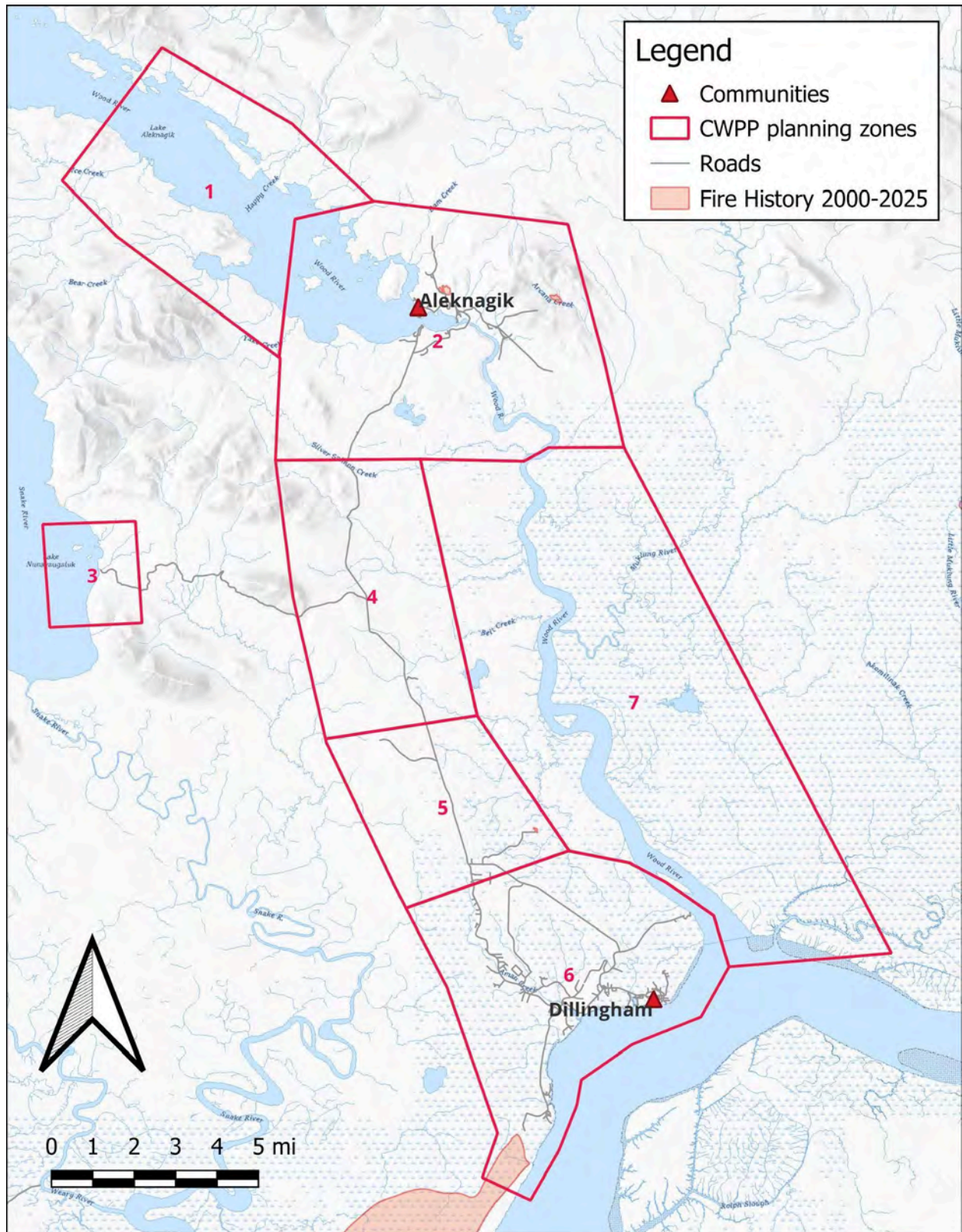
1. **Tundra and shrub landscapes can now sustain large, fast-moving fires.**
The 2019 and 2022 fire seasons showed that warming temperatures and prolonged drying can allow tundra and mixed-vegetation areas, once considered low-risk, to burn with high intensity across vast areas.
2. **Lightning outbreaks and remote ignitions challenge suppression capacity.**
Multiple simultaneous starts across broad, roadless terrain place heavy demand on aviation and logistics resources. Effective response requires early detection, rapid mobilization, and coordinated interagency action.
3. **Limited infrastructure and community isolation increase vulnerability.**
With few transportation routes and dependence on air access, fire near key corridors, fuel storage sites, or power infrastructure can quickly disrupt essential services and evacuation options.
4. **Preparedness and community engagement are essential.**
Fire behavior in southwest Alaska is changing rapidly. Building local readiness, improving defensible space, and planning for smoke, evacuation, and continuity of operations will help communities adapt to a more fire-active future.

Together, these lessons highlight the growing importance of coordinated planning, fuels management, and community-based preparedness as Dillingham and Aleknagik strengthen their resilience within an evolving fire environment.



Images 6 and 7. Dillingham Landscapes, Source: Jeff Ennenga

The map below reflects the fire history within and around Dillingham and Aleknagik CWPP Planning Zones. The lighter orange displays fire burned areas.



Map 2. Dillingham and Aleknagik Area Fire History, 2000-2025

Year	Fire Name / Complex	Approx. Acres Burned	General Location	Key Impacts / Notes
2004	<i>Dillingham Area Lightning Fires</i>	<i>~12,000</i>	<i>North of Dillingham, Wood River area</i>	<i>Early-season lightning ignitions burned in spruce and mixed fuels; reinforced need for interagency readiness.</i>
2015	<i>Chignik Complex</i>	<i>~40,000</i>	<i>Alaska Peninsula</i>	<i>Demonstrated potential for large fire spread under dry, windy southwest coastal conditions.</i>
2019	<i>Multiple Southwest Alaska Fires</i>	<i>>250,000 (regional)</i>	<i>Bristol Bay, Kuskokwim, and Y-K Delta regions</i>	<i>Record heat and lightning; extensive tundra burning; smoke impacts to Dillingham; marked shift in regional fire frequency.</i>
2020	<i>Lake Iliamna Fires</i>	<i>~15,000</i>	<i>Iliamna Basin</i>	<i>Smaller, yet persistent fires under warm summer conditions; limited suppression access.</i>
2022	<i>Lime Complex</i>	<i>>865,000</i>	<i>Southwest Alaska, including Nushagak–Kuskokwim area</i>	<i>One of Alaska’s largest modern fire complexes; tundra and shrub fires burned with high intensity; required statewide resource mobilization.</i>
2022	<i>King Salmon Area Fires</i>	<i>~25,000</i>	<i>Bristol Bay Lowlands</i>	<i>Threatened King Salmon and Naknek infrastructure; smoke and aviation impacts extended to Dillingham.</i>
2022	<i>Dillingham Landfill Fire</i>	<i>~6</i>	<i>Dillingham</i>	<i>The fire emitted a "big, huge, black, cloud of smoke" and continued to smolder for nearly a week afterward and the fire spread beyond the boundaries of the landfill.</i>
2023	<i>Wood River / Tikchik Fires</i>	<i>~8,000</i>	<i>Tikchik Lakes vicinity</i>	<i>Late-season human-caused fires prompted community advisories; underscored recreation-related ignition risk.</i>
2024	<i>Scattered Lightning Fires</i>	<i><5,000</i>	<i>Dillingham–Aleknagik area</i>	<i>Continued trend of early-season ignitions; short duration but demonstrated readiness improvements and rapid response capability.</i>

Table 4. Notable Fire Seasons and Incidents in the Dillingham- Aleknagik Region (2000-2024)
Source: Alaska Interagency Coordination Center (AICC) Annual Fire Reports; Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Togiak National Wildlife Refuge fire records.

5.2 Regional Fire Trends and Implications

Fire records from the past two decades reveal a clear shift in southwest Alaska’s wildfire patterns. Historically characterized by infrequent, low-spread events, the region now experiences more frequent lightning ignitions, longer burn periods, and an increasing share of tundra fires. Warmer spring temperatures and earlier snowmelt have extended

the fire season, while drying peat and shrub-tundra fuels have enabled sustained burning in landscapes once thought too wet to carry fire.

These emerging trends suggest that the Dillingham–Aleknagik area is entering a new fire regime, one defined by broader spatial extents, higher suppression demands, and greater potential overlap with community infrastructure and traditional-use areas. Proactive planning, local readiness, and continued coordination with state and federal partners are essential to adapt to this changing environment.



Image 8. Bristol Bay Fire Trends

5.3 What Wildfire History Means for Residents

Wildfire is increasingly a part of life in southwest Alaska. The forests and tundra surrounding Dillingham and Aleknagik include a mix of spruce, alder, birch, and open shrub-tundra, fuels that can dry quickly and burn intensely when conditions are right. Over the past 25 years, the region has experienced both quiet and highly active fire seasons, revealing important lessons for local residents:

- **Changing local conditions:** The 2019 and 2022 fire seasons showed that landscapes once thought too wet to burn, such as tundra and peat lowlands, can now sustain large, fast-moving fires under warm, dry, and windy conditions.
- **Lightning is the main cause of fire:** Most recent large fires in southwest Alaska began with summer lightning storms. Clusters of lightning ignitions can quickly overwhelm limited suppression resources in remote areas.

- **Infrastructure and access are limited:** With few roads and reliance on aviation, fires near key corridors, such as the Kanakanak Road, Aleknagik Road, and fuel storage areas, can disrupt transportation, power, and emergency response.
- **Fires can move fast:** When dry vegetation and strong winds align, fires can spread rapidly toward communities and subsistence areas, sometimes within hours of ignition.
- **Not every year is extreme:** Some summers bring little activity, but conditions can shift quickly. A few weeks of heat and low humidity are often enough to trigger widespread burning.

The main takeaway is that fire can occur unexpectedly, and preparation matters. Residents can reduce risk by maintaining their Home Ignition Zone (HIZ): keep grass cut short, clear brush and spruce from around structures, and maintain access for emergency vehicles. Understanding and following local evacuation plans, preparing for smoke exposure, and staying informed during fire season all strengthen community resilience.

For more information on being “smoke ready,” see *Appendix E - Public Health*.

6. Area Overview / Zone Identification

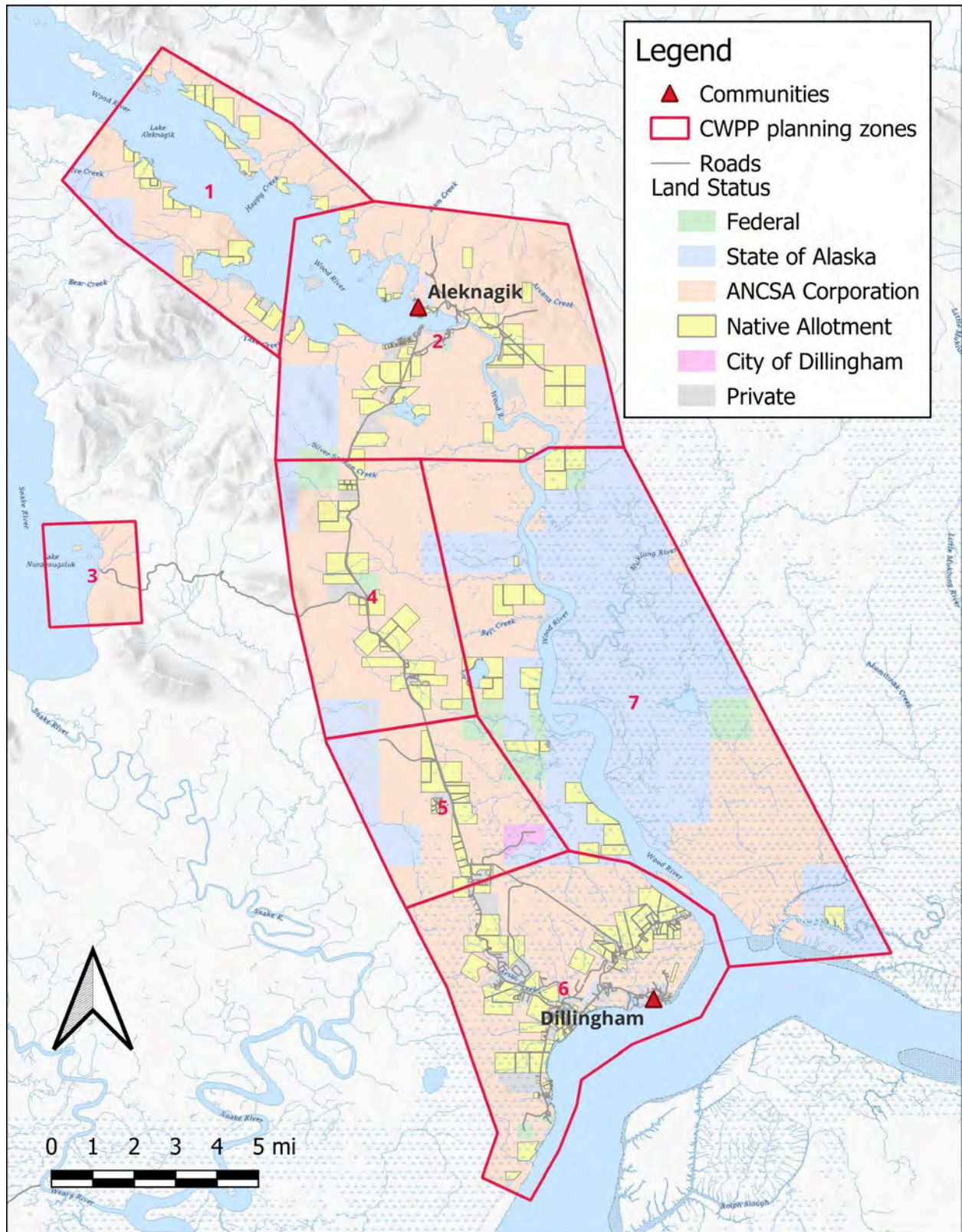
6.1 Description of Zone Area

The Dillingham–Aleknagik CWPP Planning Area encompasses approximately 3.9 million acres across the northern Bristol Bay region of Southwest Alaska. The area includes the communities of Dillingham and Aleknagik, surrounding rural settlements, and adjacent lands extending along the Wood River and Nushagak River drainages.

This CWPP planning area is 136,537 acres and was delineated through a collaborative interagency effort involving the Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA), and local governments and Tribal partners. Boundaries are defined by a combination of geographic, jurisdictional, and community-use factors, including transportation corridors, land ownership, and traditional-use areas

The Dillingham and Aleknagik CWPP provides a framework for reducing wildfire risk by identifying community assets, wildfire hazards, and priority actions. The plan divides the region into seven planning zones (“Areas”), each evaluated for housing and infrastructure density, fuel types and proximity, ignition history, and overall risk. This zonal approach allows the community and its partners to target mitigation and preparedness efforts where they will be most effective.

The map below displays the CWPP planning zones.



Map 3. Dillingham and Aleknagik CWPP Planning Zones and Land Ownership

6.2 Description of the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Boundary

The Wildland–Urban Interface (WUI) represents the area where homes, infrastructure, and community assets meet or intermingle with flammable wildland vegetation. These are the places most at risk from wildfire and smoke impacts.

In Alaska, WUI zones often follow limited road systems and community access routes, areas where suppression access and evacuation options are most constrained. Within the Dillingham–Aleknagik CWPP boundary, the primary WUI includes:

- Developed areas within Dillingham, Aleknagik, and along the Lake Road Corridor,
- Residential and seasonal structures near Lake Aleknagik, Snake Lake, and Waskey Road, and
- Access routes and critical facilities where fuel reduction or preparedness measures can improve safety.

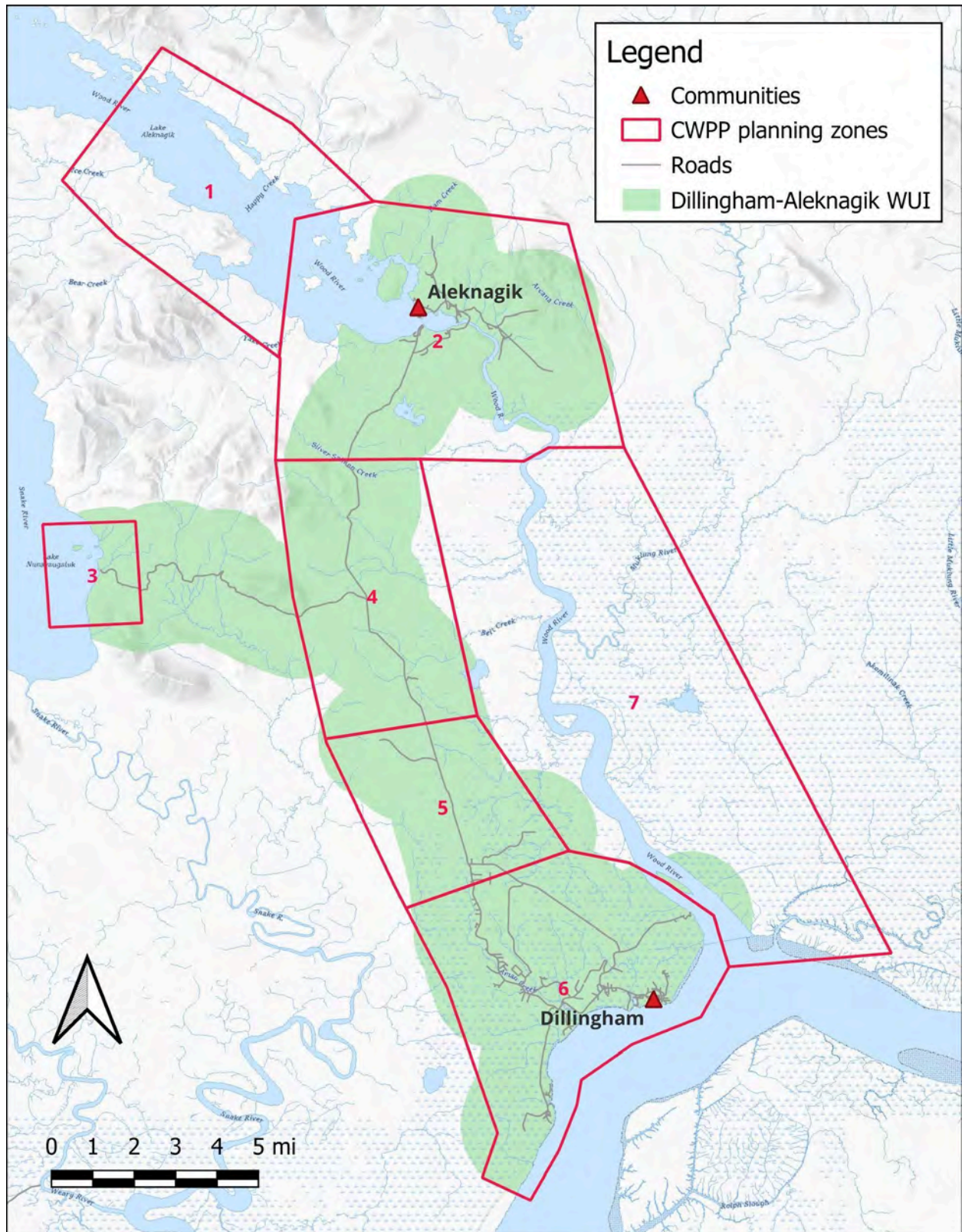
The WUI is often further categorized into two types:

- **Interface WUI:** Areas where there is a clear line of demarcation, with high-density development adjacent to wildland vegetation.
- **Intermix WUI:** Areas where human development (often lower-density housing) and wildland fuels intermingle, meaning there is no clear boundary.

Most of the area is categorized as Intermixed WUI, meaning structures are scattered throughout continuous wildland fuels rather than clustered along a defined edge. This pattern, common across rural Alaska, presents distinct challenges for wildfire protection and fuels management.

The Intermix Community exists where structures are scattered throughout a wildland area. There is no clear line of demarcation; wildland fuels are continuous outside of and within the developed area.





6.3 Planning Zones

To focus mitigation and preparedness efforts, the Dillingham–Aleknagik CWPP divides the planning area into seven Planning Zones (PZs). These zones are based on land ownership, fuel types, development density, access, and fire history. Each zone has unique values at risk and recommended priorities for risk reduction and readiness.

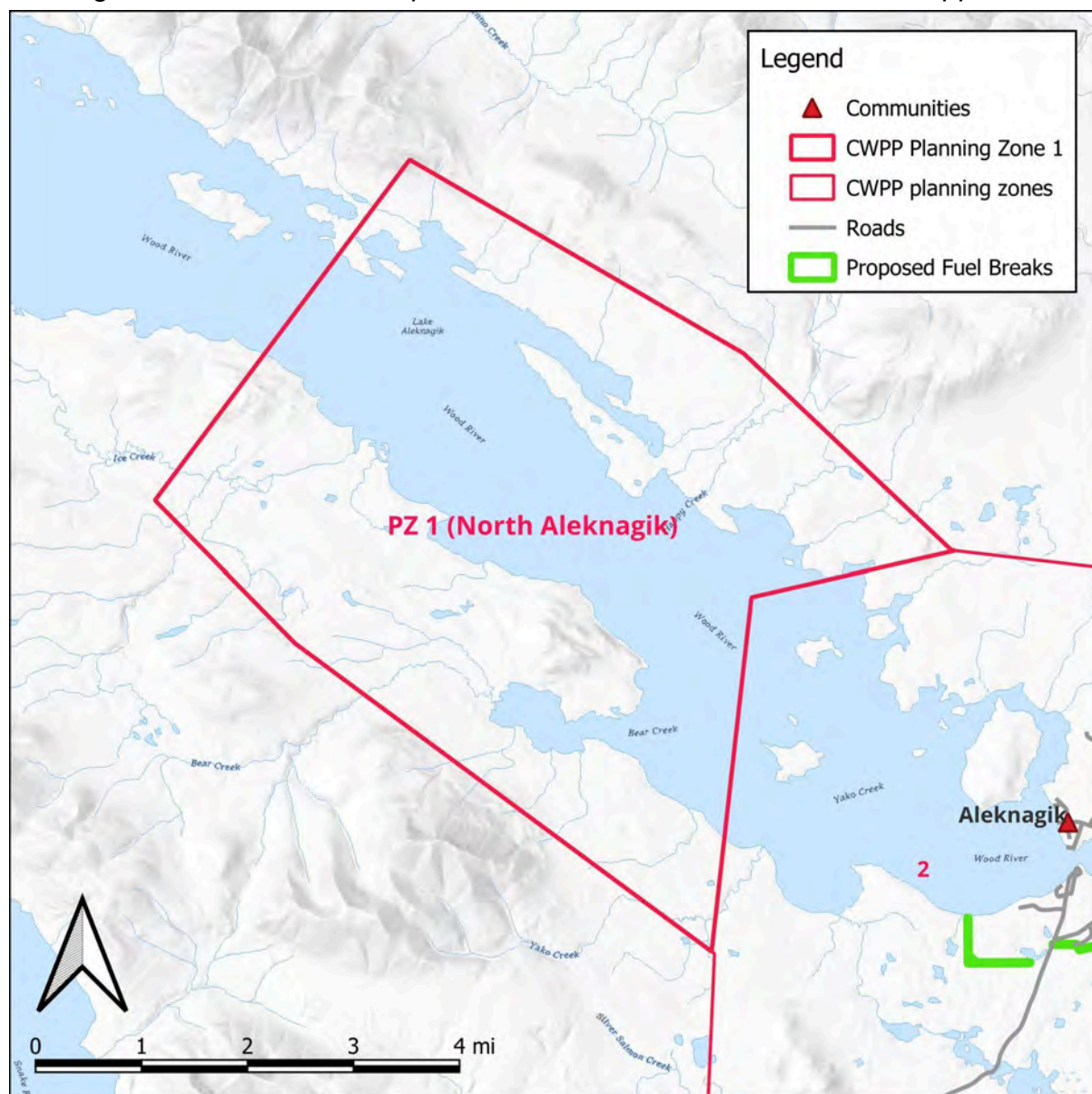
These seven Planning Zones provide a clear, scalable framework for prioritizing wildfire risk reduction, response, and community preparedness across the Dillingham–Aleknagik region. Each zone reflects distinct combinations of land ownership, access, development density, and ecological conditions that influence fire behavior and management options. By organizing mitigation and readiness actions at this scale, partners can focus limited resources where they will most effectively reduce community exposure to wildfire hazards.

See following information detailing each Planning Zone.

PZ 1 – North Aleknagik/ Lake Aleknagik Area

This zone includes the upper portion of Lake Aleknagik, surrounding shorelines, and adjacent uplands. The area contains a mix of residential and seasonal cabins, Native allotments, and ANCSA corporation lands surrounded by spruce forest and mixed hardwoods. Access is primarily by boat or floatplane, with limited ground connectivity.

- **Values at Risk:** Seasonal residences, fuel storage, docks, and recreation assets.
- **Primary Concerns:** Limited suppression access, lightning ignitions, and high flammability of spruce stands near structures.
- **Priority Actions:** Promote defensible space on private lots, improve public awareness for cabin owners, coordinate evacuation planning with both city governments and develop coordinated water-source access for suppression.

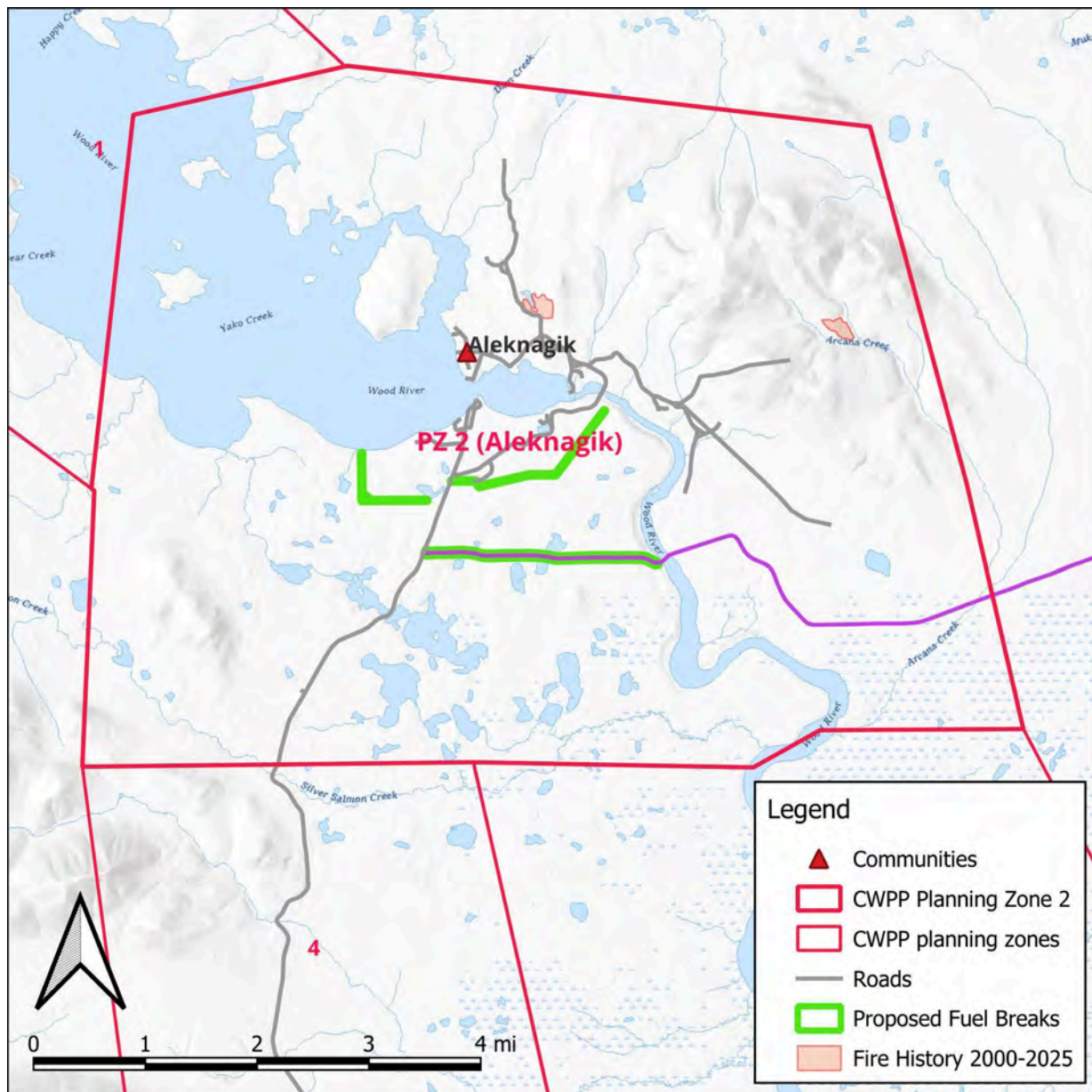


Map 5. Planning Zone 1

PZ 2 – Aleknagik

This zone includes the City of Aleknagik and surrounding residential and commercial areas. Homes and infrastructure are intermixed with spruce and shrub fuels along roadways and drainages.

- **Values at Risk:** Residences, powerlines, road access, and communication infrastructure.
- **Primary Concerns:** Continuous fuels adjacent to structures, limited evacuation options, and smoke impacts.
- **Priority Actions:** Implement roadside fuel reduction, expand defensible space programs, and coordinate evacuation planning with both city governments.

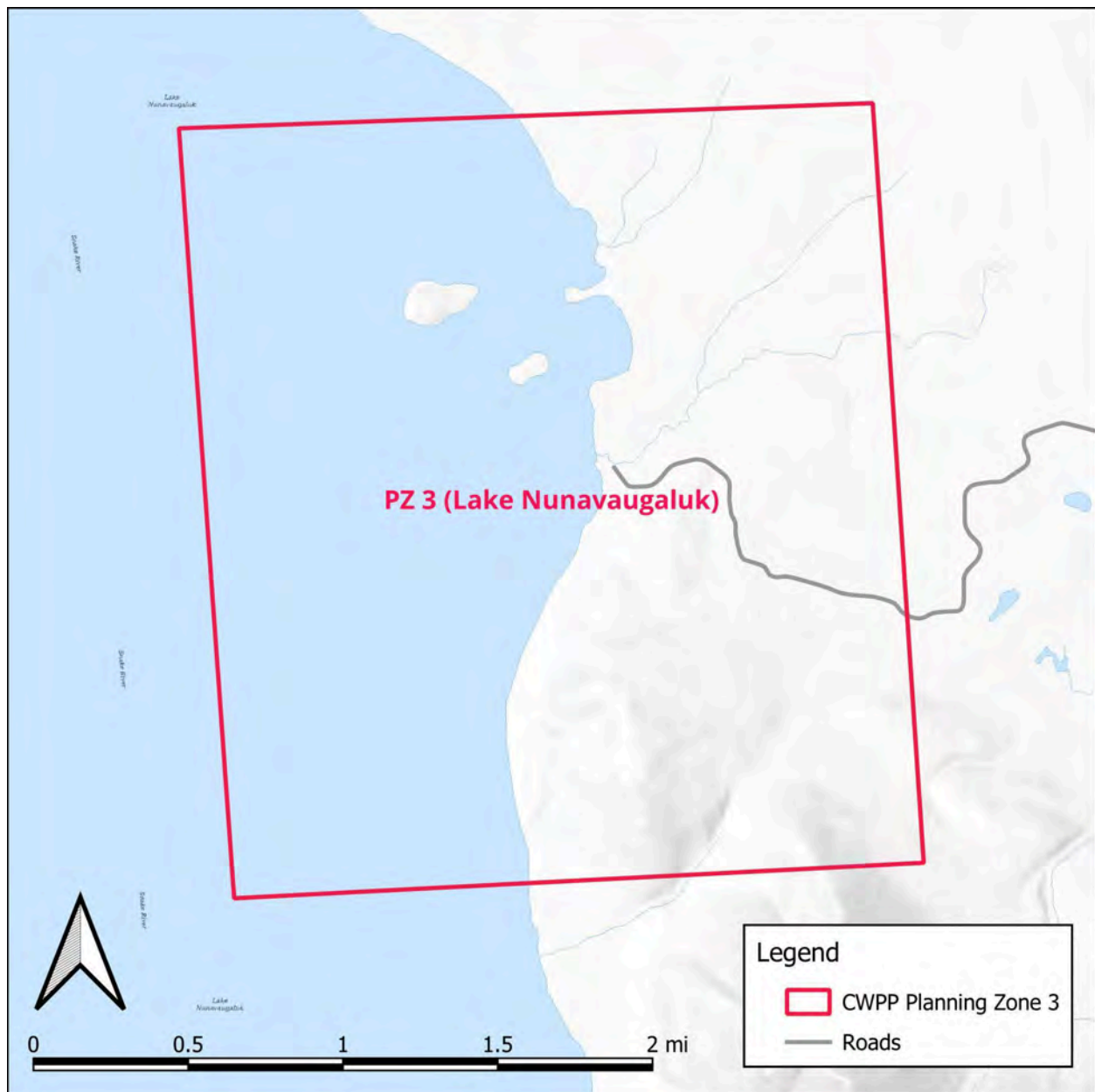


Map 6. Planning Zone 2

PZ 3 – Lake Nunavaugaluk

This small, remote zone west of Dillingham includes Snake Lake and portions of the upper Nushagak River watershed. Development is limited to seasonal cabins and Native allotments. Access is by boat or aircraft only.

- **Values at Risk:** Seasonal residences and traditional-use areas.
- **Primary Concerns:** Long response times, limited suppression capacity, and potential for tundra fires.
- **Priority Actions:** Encourage Firewise practices for cabin owners, establish water-source mapping for aircraft, and monitor lightning-fire trends.

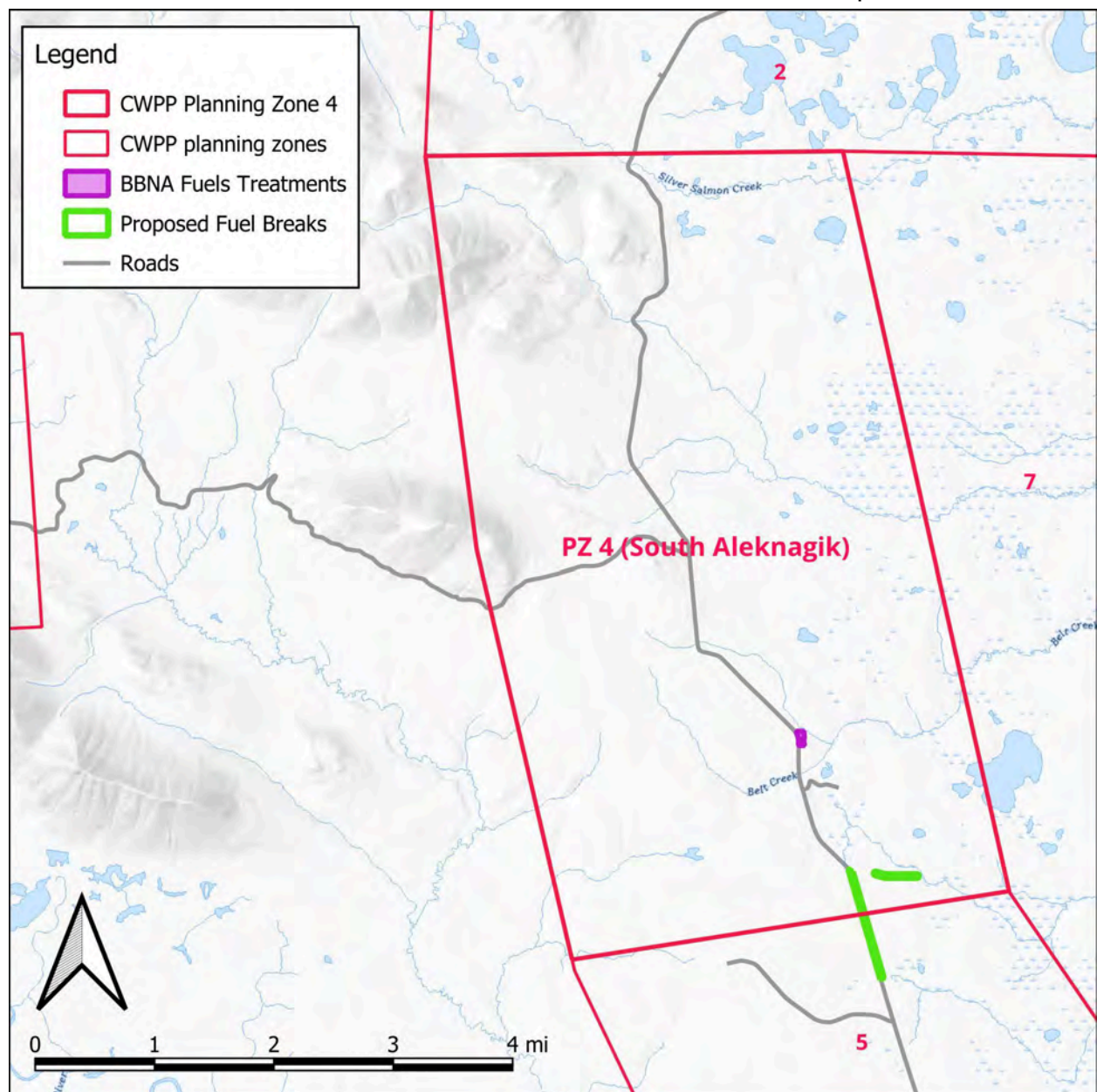


Map 7. Planning Zone 3

PZ 4 – South Aleknagik

Extending south from Lake Aleknagik toward Dillingham, this zone features mixed ANCSA corporation and State of Alaska lands with scattered allotments and undeveloped forest. The terrain transitions from spruce forest to mixed shrub-tundra.

- **Values at Risk:** Cultural and subsistence-use areas, limited residential development.
- **Primary Concerns:** High fuel continuity and potential for lightning ignitions to spread into more populated zones.
- **Priority Actions:** Identify natural firebreaks, prioritize shaded fuel breaks near access roads, and coordinate with BBNA for cultural resource protection.

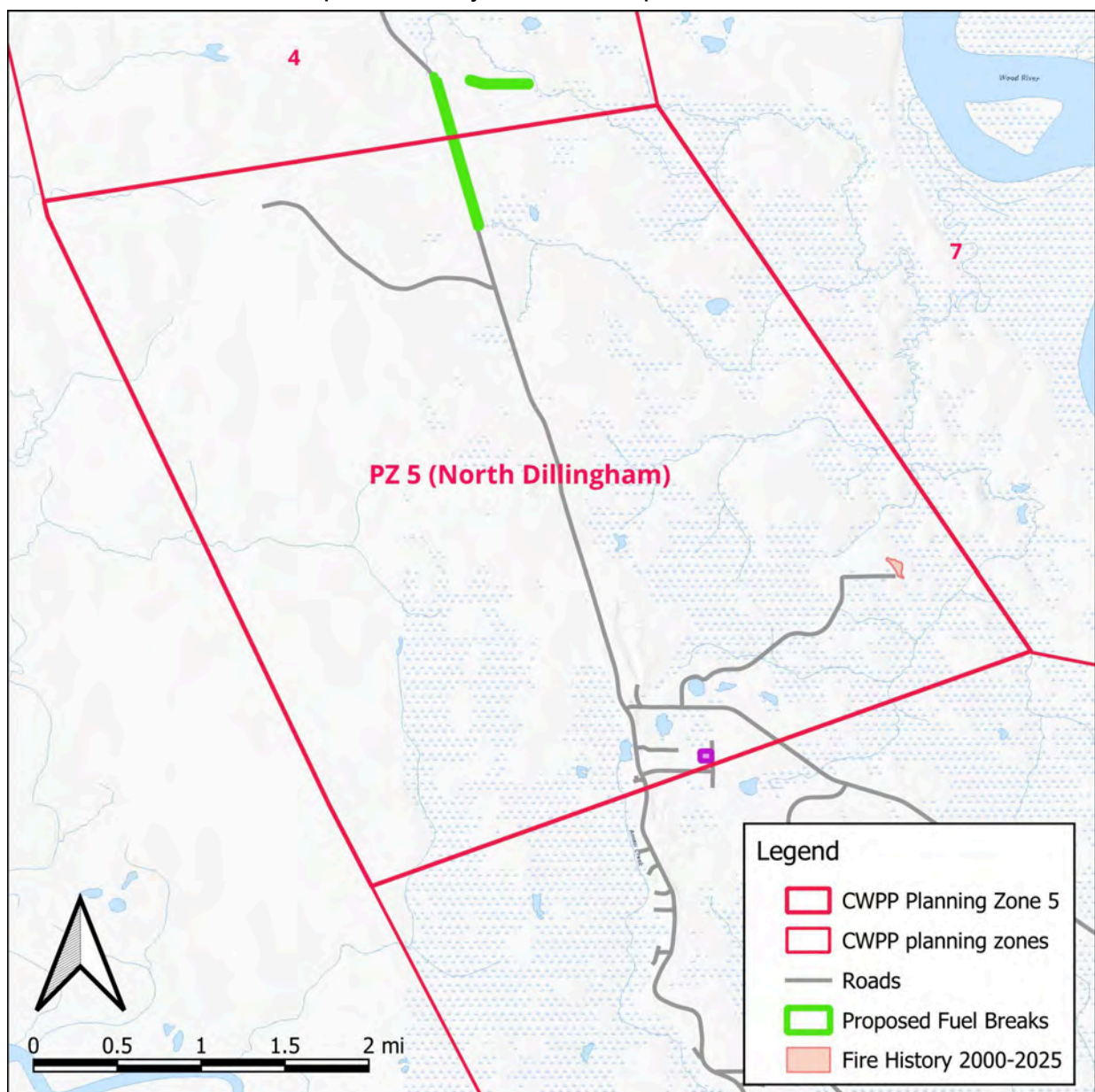


Map 8. Planning Zone 4

PZ 5 – North Dillingham

This central corridor connects the two major communities and contains a mix of residential, commercial, and utility assets. The Alaska Wildlife Troopers hold legal jurisdiction over the highway corridor. The Aleknagik Road passes through continuous spruce forest with multiple side roads and driveways.

- **Values at Risk:** Transportation infrastructure, power lines, homes, and community access.
- **Primary Concerns:** Dense roadside fuels, wind exposure, and limited turnouts for evacuation.
- **Priority Actions:** Conduct roadside thinning projects, establish shaded fuel breaks, and develop community defensible space demonstration sites.

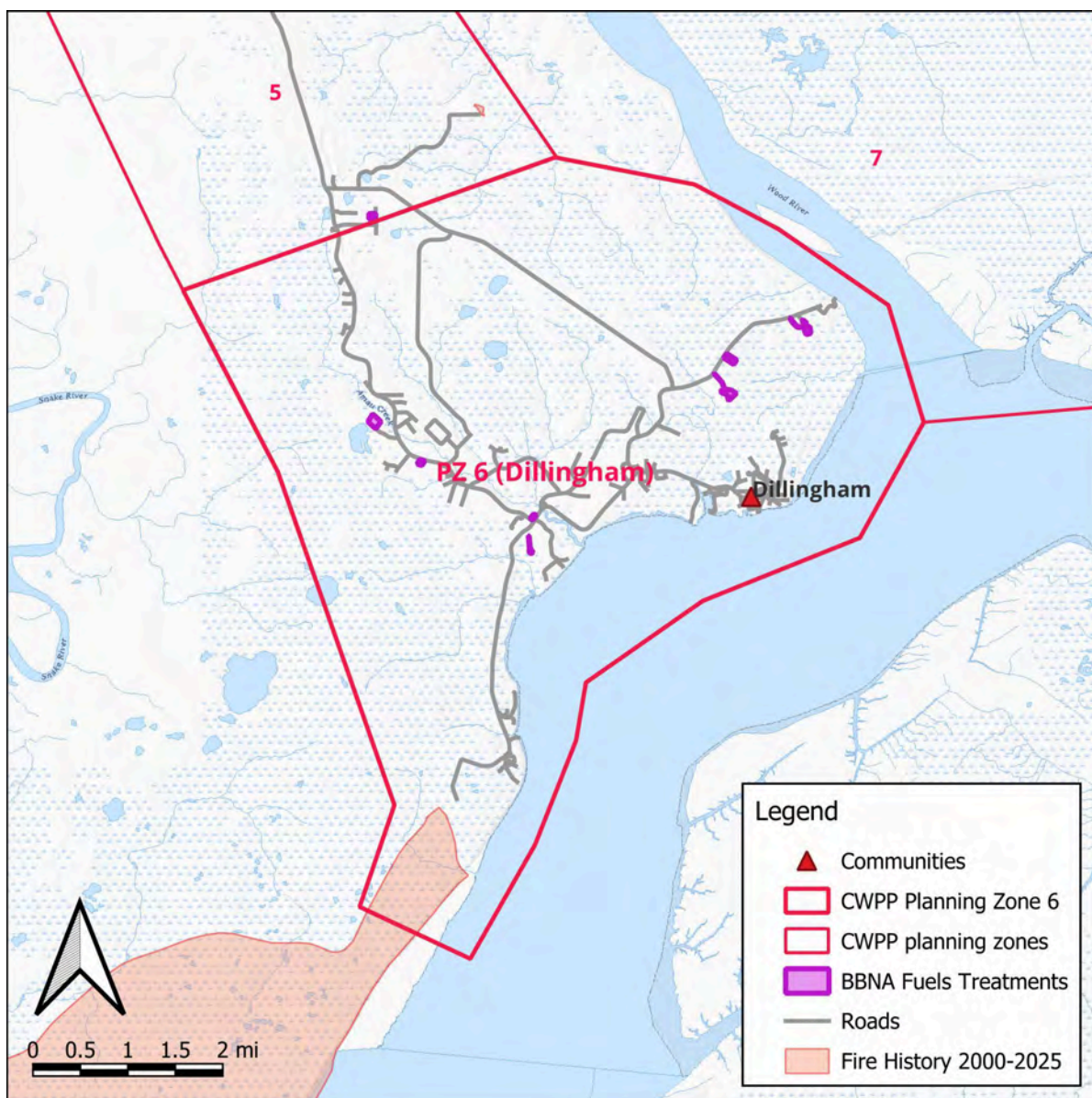


Map 9. Planning Zone 5

PZ 6 – Dillingham

This zone includes the City of Dillingham and surrounding residential and commercial areas. While more developed, the community is still surrounded by natural vegetation, including spruce and alder stands near the airport, harbor, and subdivisions.

- **Values at Risk:** Critical infrastructure, housing, schools, health facilities, and the airport.
- **Primary Concerns:** Urban interface fires, ammonia storage, smoke exposure, and limited ingress/egress routes.
- **Priority Actions:** Integrate wildfire risk reduction into municipal planning, maintain defensible space near structures, and improve public readiness through local outreach.

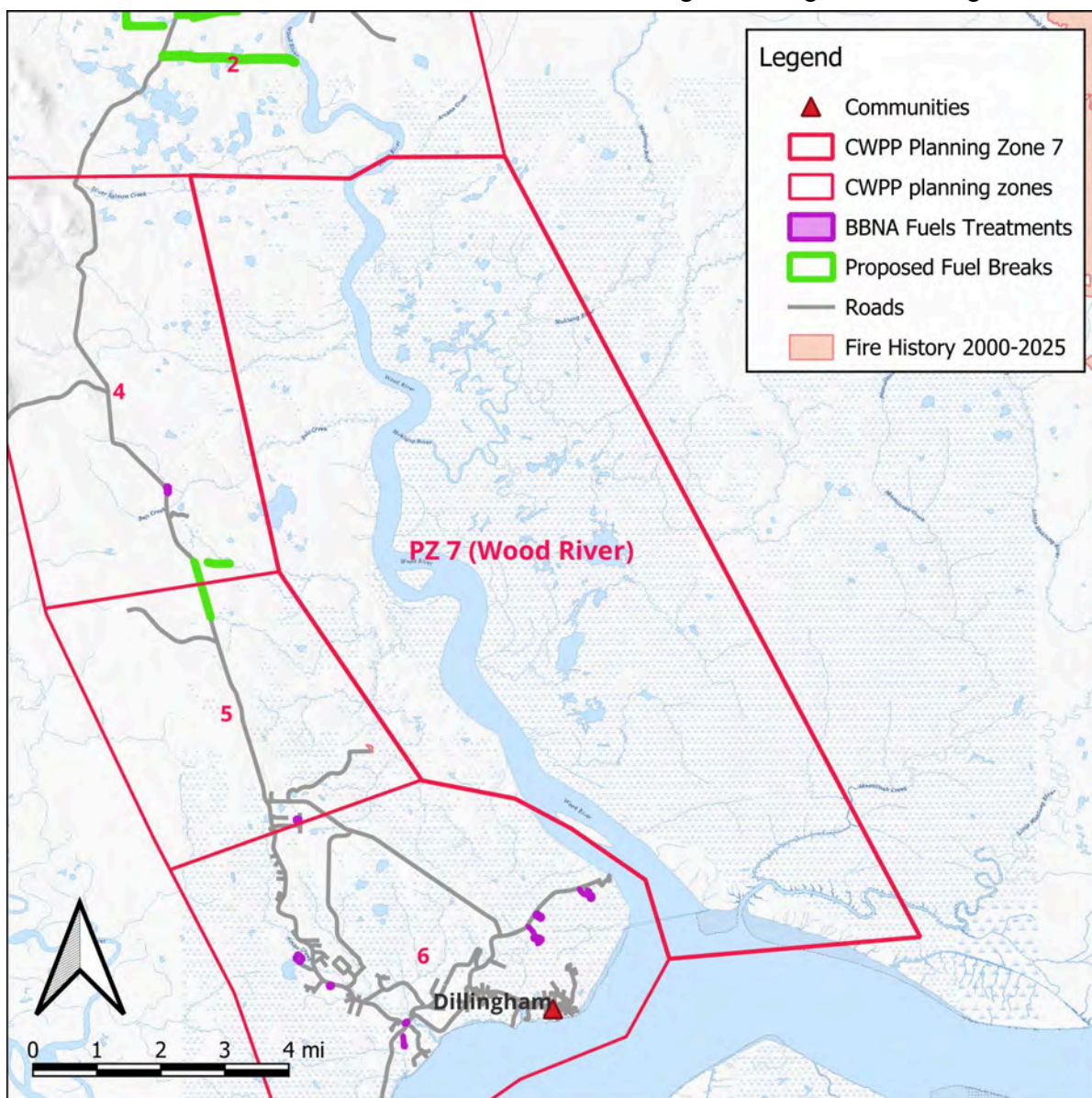


Map 10. Planning Zone 6

PZ 7 – Wood River

This large, primarily wildland zone encompasses eastern Dillingham lands and the lower Wood River basin, including portions of federal and State lands near the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge. Development is sparse but includes subsistence-use areas and seasonal camps.

- **Values at Risk:** Cultural resources, subsistence areas, fish camps, and aviation corridors.
- **Primary Concerns:** Lightning ignitions, remote access, and high tundra fuel continuity.
- **Priority Actions:** Support interagency monitoring, maintain suppression readiness near cultural-use areas, and coordinate with Togiak Refuge fire managers.



Map 11. Planning Zone 7

7. Risk Assessment

7.1 Understanding Wildfire Risk

The Risk Assessment for Dillingham and Aleknagik is focused on impacts to life safety and property. It looks at all the ways a wildfire could threaten the area where thick boreal forest, and open grass all come together.

To determine the total wildfire risk, the risk assessment looks at four main factors and how they interact:

1. **Wildfire Fuels:** Things that can burn (the hazards).
2. **Barriers:** Things that slow down or stop a fire.
3. **Community Exposure:** How vulnerable people and buildings are.
4. **Response Capacity:** How ready the local fire teams are.

Two Types of Hazards

This assessment breaks down fire danger into two categories:

1. Objective Hazards (The Facts): These are the physical things we can measure that make a fire bigger or faster. This includes:

- The type and condition of the fuel (is it dry grass or thick spruce?).
- Vegetation patterns (how plants are spread out).
- Terrain (hills and valleys).
- Weather (how hot, dry, or windy it is?).
- How close buildings are to the wildlands.

Fire models, fuel maps, and old fire records were utilized to study these facts and find the areas with the highest potential danger.

2. Subjective Hazards (The People Factor): These are human and social factors that are harder to measure but are just as important. This includes:

- How much residents know about fire danger.
- How ready people are to clear defensible space around their homes.
- How easy it is to access firefighting resources.
- How well local agencies and landowners work together.

These things often determine how quickly a community can react to and recover from a fire.

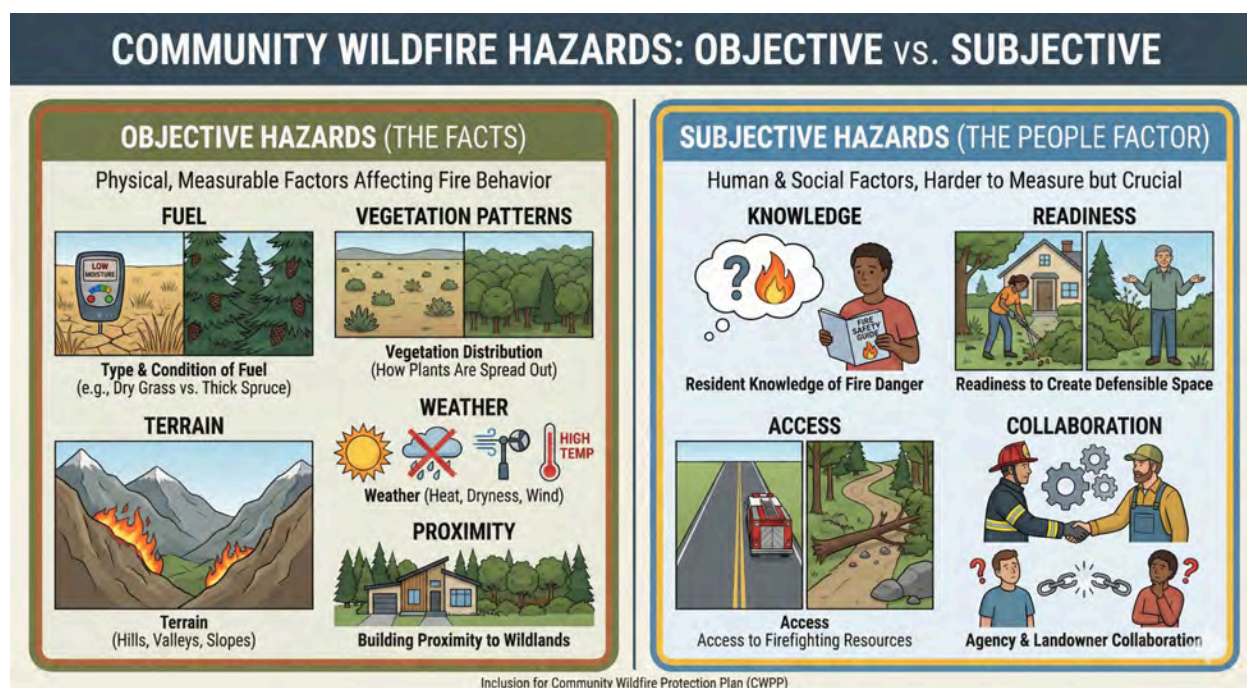


Image 9. Community Wildfire Hazards: Objective & Subjective

Defining Risk and Planning Zones

When you combine both the *Objective (Facts)* and the *Subjective Hazards (People Factor)*, you get the full definition of wildfire risk. Risk is simply the chance of a fire happening and the potential damage it could cause to people, property, and nature.

By figuring out all these hazards, this assessment helps the community decide what actions to take first to prevent fires and become a more "fire-adapted community."

7.2 Risk Assessment Criteria

The risk assessment for the Dillingham and Aleknagik area looks at four main ways to figure out how likely and damaging a wildfire could be. There are four elements that can enhance a community's safety against fire:

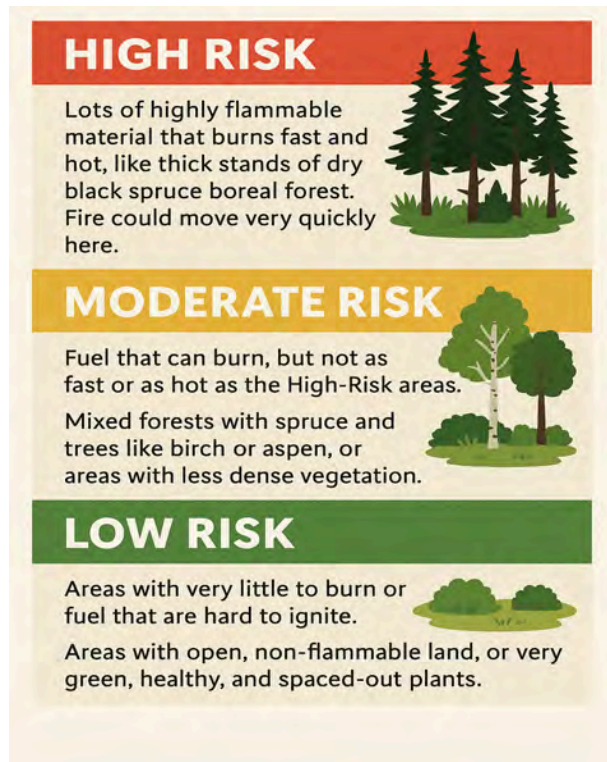
A. Fuels (Wildfire Hazards)

What it means: "Fuels" are all the things that can burn in a wildfire, like trees, grass, brush, and even cars and buildings. This part of the assessment checks how much fuel is around and how easily it will catch fire and spread.

Fire and the Boreal Forest

The Bristol Bay region is known for a few specific Fire Regimes (or fire patterns):

- The region is mainly shaped by fires that happen infrequently, sometimes only every 50 years and sometimes over 200 years. When these fires do happen, they are usually high severity, meaning they are very hot and intense.



- In tundra ecosystems, fire-return intervals are typically very long (many decades to centuries), but under extreme dry conditions, fires do occur, especially in shrub-tundra landscapes.
- Across Alaska, more frequent, larger, and more severe wildfires are now being observed in both boreal and tundra zones, consistent with warming, earlier snowmelt, and increased lightning activity.
- Studies suggest that shortened fire-return intervals, or reburning, are becoming more common in boreal systems under extreme weather, threatening seed regeneration and ecosystem stability.
- In southwest Alaska, both forest and tundra landscapes are showing increased fire activity, meaning the region is shifting toward greater departure from historical fire regimes.

Thus, while Dillingham–Aleknagik is not a

typical interior boreal forest, the same drivers of climate change and ignition pressure are pushing its fire regime toward more active behavior.

B. Barriers to Fire Spread

What it means: Barriers are anything that can stop or slow down wildfire from spreading into or through the community. They can be natural or constructed. The chart below displays the rating of fire breaks in communities and examples of these breaks.

Fire Break Rating		
	Description	Examples
 Excellent	The community is well-protected in most directions by strong barriers.	A large river, lake, major highway, or an airstrip that completely separates the community from thick fuels
 Fair	The community has a barrier, but it might not be as wide, or it only offers protection	A smaller river, a wide clearing, or a change in vegetation to less flammable types
 Poor	Any barriers that exist are very small and would not stop a fire from spreading easily	Small streams, narrow roads, or a thin strip of clear land surrounded by flammable forest

Image 10. Fire Break Rating

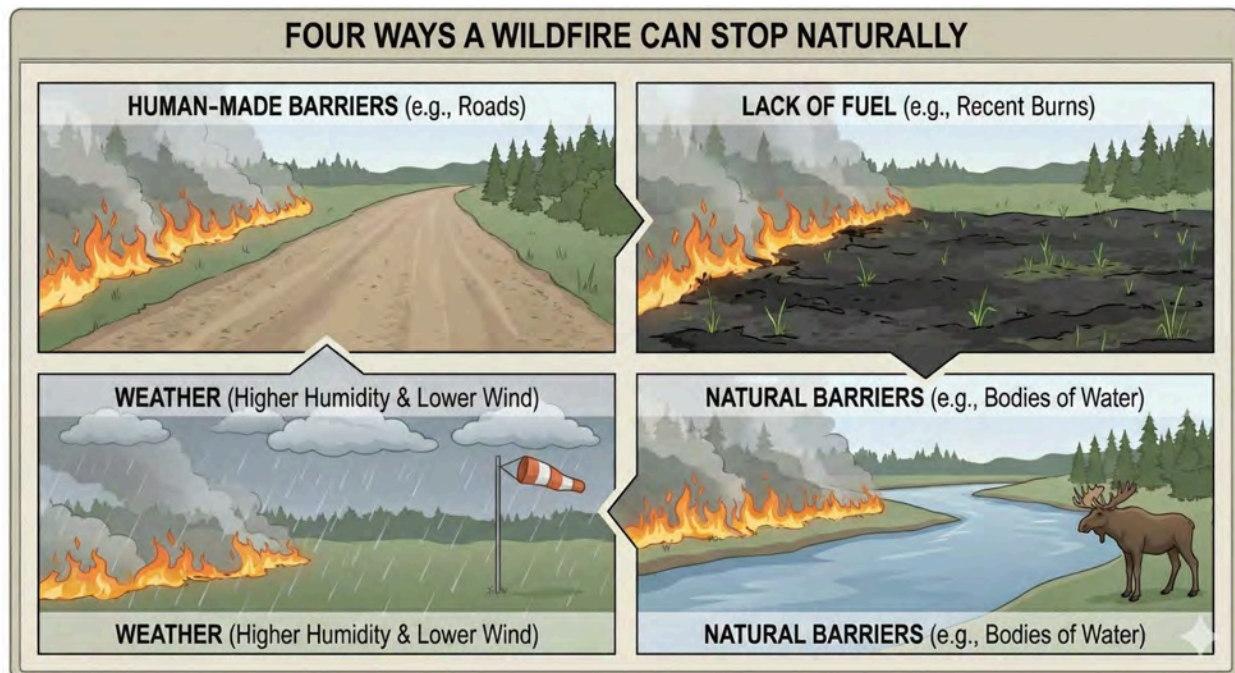


Image 11. Natural Fire Breaks, Resource Article:
<https://wfca.com/wildfire-articles/how-do-wildfires-stop-naturally/>

C. Firewise Rating (Community and Structure Exposure)

What it means: This rating checks how prepared the community is to survive a fire, focusing on homes and the areas right around them. The [Alaska Firewise Program](#) has standards for how people can make their property safer (called "defensible space"). The table below shows that the Firewise Rating is mostly about the actions people take to create a buffer zone around their homes and work together as a community.

Rating	Description	What It Means for the Community
High Risk (Poor Firewise Rating)	Little or no preparation. Most homes have major fire hazards right next to them. People have not created much, if any, defensible space. Coordination among neighbors and fire departments is weak.	Homes are at a very high risk of catching fire from flames or embers. The community is not well-organized for a wildfire event.
Moderate Risk (Fair Firewise Rating)	Some preparation, but more work is needed. Many homes have started to create defensible space, like clearing brush, but flammable materials are still too close to some structures. There is some planning and awareness, but it's not consistent across the whole community.	Homes have a better chance of surviving a fire, but key areas of vulnerability still exist. Continued work and organization are necessary to lower the risk.

Low Risk <i>(Excellent Firewise Rating)</i>	A high level of preparation and organization. Most homes meet or exceed the defensible space standards. The community has a strong Firewise plan, works closely with the fire department, and neighbors are well-educated on fire danger.	Homes have the best chance of surviving wildfire. The entire community is organized, ready to respond, and has taken steps to protect structures from embers and flames.
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Table 5. Firewise Rating Scale



Image 12. Understanding Firebrands

D. Response Capacity

What it means: This looks at how well DFFP, the local fire department, and emergency services can respond to wildfires. It's about having the right people, equipment, and plans ready to go.

Factor	Description
Equipment & Staff	Does the community have trained firefighters, working fire engines, and reliable ways to get water (like hydrants or water tanks)?
Access	Are the roads clear, wide enough, and easy for fire trucks to drive on, especially during an emergency?
Coordination	Do the local fire crews, police, and other agencies work well together and have strong communication with larger state/federal fire crews?
Evacuation	Are there clear, safe routes for people to leave the area quickly if a fire is coming?

Table 6. Response Factors

This rating checks how well the local fire department and emergency services can react to a wildfire event. It measures the strength of their personnel, equipment, and access,

further showing that good response capacity isn't just about the fire truck, it's about the training, the planning, and the access needed to use that equipment effectively.

Rating	Description	What It Means for Fire Suppression
High Risk	Limited or weak ability to fight fires. The community may have few or no trained firefighters, very old or unreliable equipment, and poor ways to get water. Roads might be narrow or overgrown, making it hard for fire trucks to enter and turn around quickly.	The community would rely almost completely on outside help (like state or federal crews). Protecting homes during a fast-moving fire would be extremely difficult.
Moderate Risk	Basic ability to handle smaller fires but quickly overwhelmed by large ones. The community has some trained volunteers and working equipment, and there are some reliable water sources. Access is okay for main roads, but tricky in some neighborhoods. Planning and coordination exist but need improvement.	Local teams can slow down small fires and protect initial structures, but a large, intense wildfire would quickly exceed their limits, requiring major outside support.
Low Risk	Strong ability to fight fires and protect the community. The local fire department has enough trained staff, modern and reliable equipment, and multiple, easy-to-reach water sources. Roads are clear and wide for emergency vehicles. There is a strong, organized plan for how to work with state and federal agencies.	The community has the best chance of quickly containing a fire and protecting homes and property, even under challenging conditions, by combining local power with outside resources.

Table 7. Response Capacity Rating Scale

These four parts (Fuels, Barriers, Response Capacity, and Firewise Rating) are all put together to give a full picture of the wildfire risk of the communities.

Further detail and scientific analysis can be found in *Appendix G - Risk Assessment Methodology*.



Image 13. Home and wildfire.

Source: https://hazardmitigation.ny.gov/assess_risk/natural_hazards/wildfire

8. Overall Zone Ratings

The zone rating tables below show each planning zone along with its ranking for Fuels, Barriers, Response Capacity, and Firewise Rating. The overall rating range is Low, Moderate, and High. The Overall Rating represents the average of these four categories. Unlike the federal risk ratings, very high is not used in these charts.

Planning Zone	Fuels	Barriers	Response	Firewise Rating	Overall Rating
PZ 1 - Aleknagik North / Lake Aleknagik	High	Poor	High	High	High
PZ 2 - Aleknagik South / Lake Road Corridor	High	Poor	High	High	High
PZ 3 - Snake Lake / Nushagak Headwaters	Moderate	Poor	High	High	High
PZ 4 - Wood River Uplands	High	Poor	High	High	High
PZ 5 - Aleknagik Road / Rural Corridor	High	Poor	High	High	High
PZ 6 - City of Dillingham	Moderate	Poor	High	High	High
PZ 7 - Nushagak East / Wood–Togiak Interface	High	Poor	High	High	High

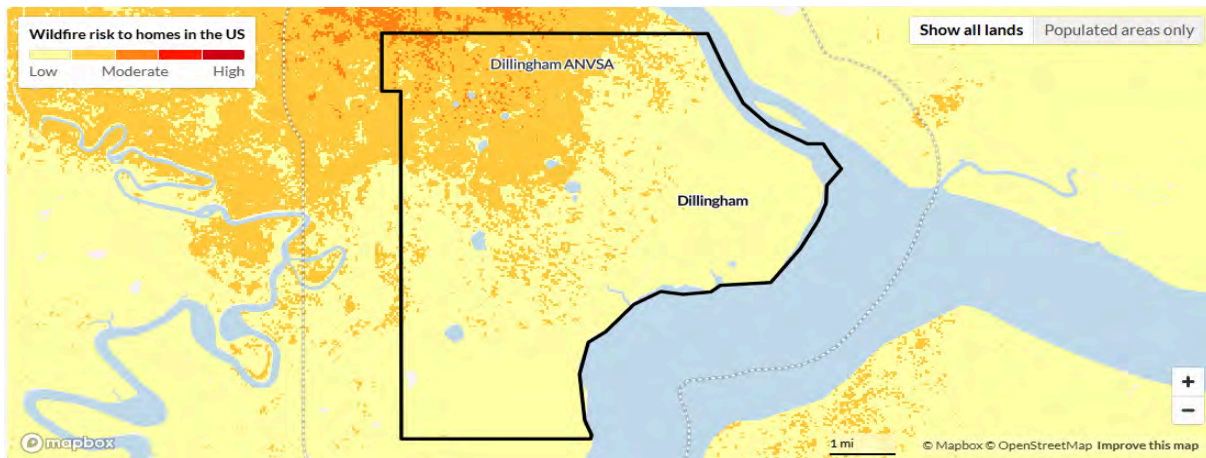
Table 8. Overall Zone Ratings

8.1 National Wildfire Risk to Communities Rating

To obtain a national rating for Dillingham and Aleknagik the [Wildfire Risk to Communities website](#) was utilized. This free, easy-to-use tool was created by the USDA Forest Service to help community leaders understand and explore wildfire risk through interactive maps, charts, and resources.

Dillingham

Dillingham has a high risk of wildfire—higher than 71% of communities in the US.

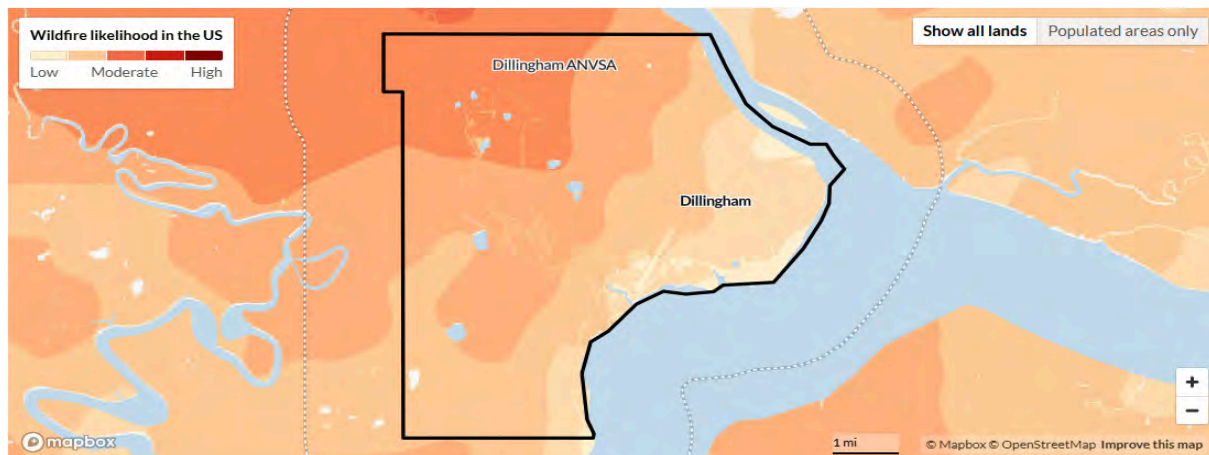


Risk to Homes

HIGH

Homes in Dillingham have, on average, greater risk than 71% of communities in the US. Risk to homes measures the relative consequence of wildfire to residential structures everywhere on the landscape, whether a home exists there or not.

Wildfire Likelihood



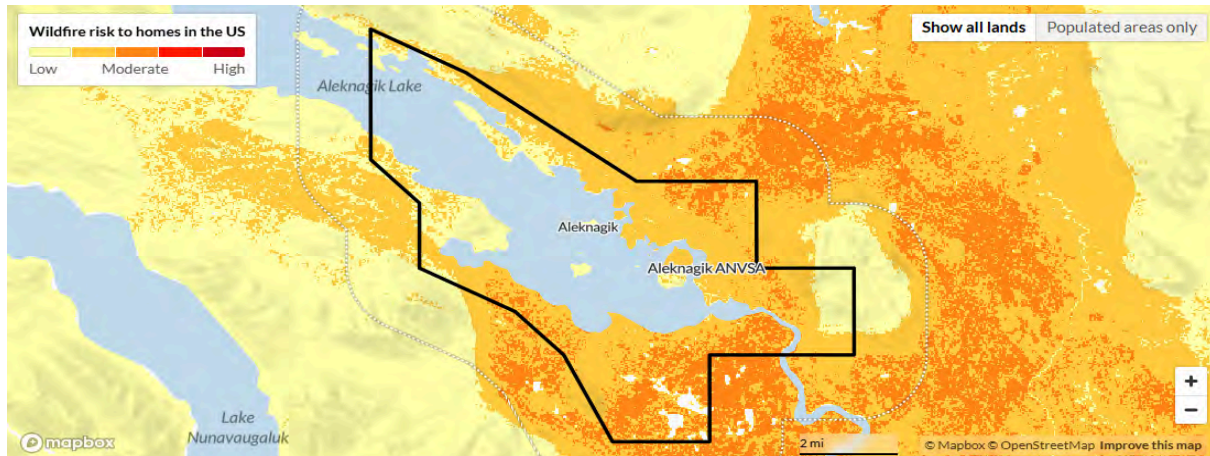
HIGH

Dillingham has, on average, greater wildfire likelihood than 71% of communities in the US. Wildfire likelihood is the probability of wildfire burning in any given year.

Aleknagik

Aleknagik has a high risk of wildfire—higher than 83% of communities in the US.

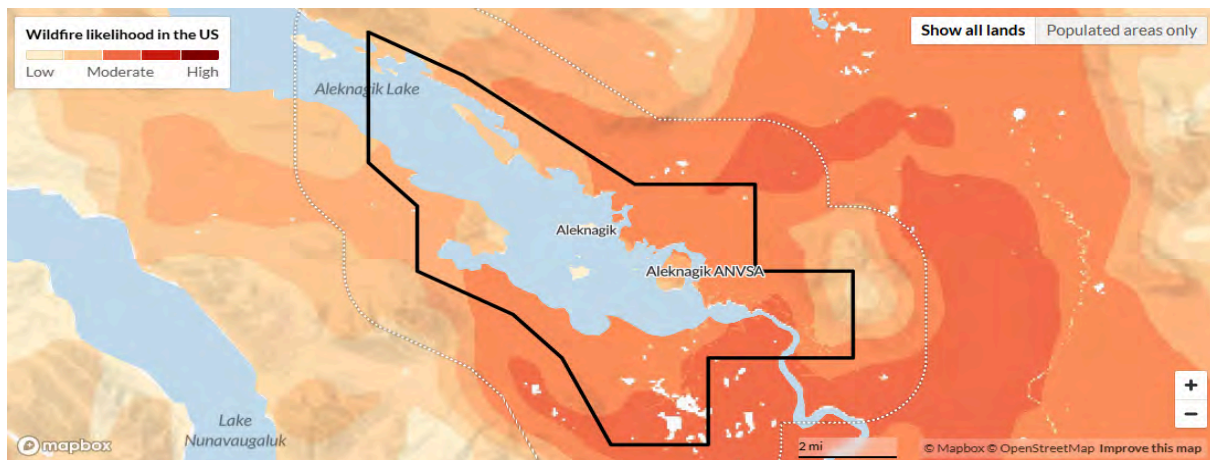
Risk to Homes



HIGH

Homes in Aleknagik have, on average, greater risk than 83% of communities in the US. Risk to homes measures the relative consequence of wildfire to residential structures everywhere on the landscape, whether a home exists there or not.

Wildfire Likelihood



**VERY
HIGH**

Aleknagik has on average greater wildfire likelihood than 81% of communities in the US. Wildfire likelihood is the probability of wildfire burning in any given year.

8.7 Summary

Dillingham

Dillingham has a **high** risk of wildfire, greater than **71%** of communities in the U.S.

- **Risk to Homes:** Homes have, on average, greater risk than **71%** of communities in the U.S. This risk measures the relative consequence of wildfire to residential structures.
- **Wildfire Likelihood:** The likelihood of a wildfire burning in any given year is rated **high**, greater than **71%** of communities in the U.S.

Aleknagik

Aleknagik has a **very high** risk of wildfire, greater than **83%** of communities in the U.S.

- **Risk to Homes:** Homes have, on average, greater risk than **83%** of communities in the U.S.
- **Wildfire Likelihood:** The probability of wildfire burning is rated **very high**, greater than **81%** of communities in the U.S.

Overall, **Aleknagik faces a higher comparative risk** for both general wildfire risk, risk to homes, and wildfire likelihood compared to Dillingham.

9. Community Action Plan

The Dillingham and Aleknagik CWPP Community Action Plan (CAP) outlines coordinated actions to reduce wildfire risk, protect lives and property, and strengthen community resilience across the highest risk WUI Planning Zones. This plan aligns with the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy through three interrelated goals:

1. **Resilient Landscapes** – managing fuels and vegetation to restore ecological balance.
2. **Fire Adapted Communities** – helping residents and organizations coexist safely with fire.
3. **Safe and Effective Response** – ensuring responders have access, training, and coordination.

The priorities reflect current wildfire risk conditions in Alaska's interior boreal forest where high-severity, stand-replacing fires are natural but increasingly frequent due to higher temperatures, longer periods of drying, high winds, lightning, and human ignitions.



Image 14. Community Action Plan alignment with the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy

9.1 Priority Actions

Priority 1: Emergency Planning and Public Education (Life-Safety)

Goal: Strengthen preparedness and community resilience.

Key Actions:

- Educate the public in the fundamental need for Escape Routes and Safety Zones for every household/business.
- Reinforce public wildfire education through schools, workshops, and community events.
- Update Community Emergency Plans for communities in the region to include evacuation routes, contact lists, and evacuation plans.
- Emphasize fire behavior awareness, grass-fire safety, and personal evacuation readiness.
- Develop clear messaging for residents on when and how to evacuate or shelter in place.

Priority 2: Community Firewise and Defensible Space (Property)

Goal: Increase structure survivability and homeowner preparedness.

Key Actions:

- Conduct Firewise education and structure assessments anywhere spruce is prevalent, with a focus on the following priority structures/neighborhoods:
 - All structures on South Shore Aleknagik with priority on structures south of Atstat Road
 - Structures south of John Tugatak Road
 - Structures on the east side of Wood River, Aleknagik
 - Structure clusters along Aleknagik Lake Road with priority closer to Aleknagik
 - Aspen/Alder/Spruce Street neighborhood
 - Nerka neighborhood including Widgeon Lane
 - Trumpeter Drive and South Emperor Way
 - Emperor Way near Lupine
 - Bea and Arctic Avenue neighborhood
 - Structures to the south of Snake Lake Road near the lake
- Establish cost-share incentives for homeowners conducting fuels reduction.
- Remove or reduce spruce near homes and along roads; focus equally on pre-green up and cured grasses, which pose fast-moving ignition risks.
- Improve escape routes, signage, and turnarounds for emergency vehicles.
- Develop a community-wide structure and risk mapping system for use by responders.
- Remove abandoned vehicles and hazardous materials near homes.

Priority 3: Fuel Break Construction and Maintenance

Goal: Create strategic barriers that protect communities and improve suppression safety.

Key Actions:

- Widen pre-existing Fiber Optic Cable cut as a 150-foot-wide clearcut fuel break that spans between Aleknagik Lake Road and Wood River.
- Construct a 150-foot-wide shaded fuel break south of Atstat Subdivision (Aleknagik Southeast Fuel Break). This should connect Aleknagik Lake Road east to the Wood River.
- Construct a 150-foot-wide shaded fuel break south of Foxville Road (Aleknagik Southwest Fuel Break) This should connect Aleknagik Lake Road west and north to Aleknagik Lake.
- Continue to evaluate and prioritize Alaska Native Allotments and construct fuel breaks on property boundaries.
- Identify cultural sites to be protected and implement appropriate measures.
- Connect all breaks into natural or constructed barriers and develop a 3–5-year maintenance plan.
- Consider the co-benefits of fuel breaks in community engagement and design.

Please review Section 9.2 Fuel Breaks for more specific fuels treatment information and maps.

Priority 4: Emergency Infrastructure and Access

Goal: Improve safety and response efficiency in remote or single-access areas.

Key Actions:

- Ensure access roads meet width and load standards for firefighting equipment.
- Evaluate signage and naming conventions to improve navigation during incidents.
- Identify and mitigate any emergency communication gaps.
- Update community contact list with emphasis on households with access issues.

Priority 5: Local Response Capacity and Training

Goal: Strengthen local and interagency firefighting capability.

Key Actions:

- Increase training for Volunteer Fire Department (VFD), BBNA Fuels Crew and Aleknagik VFD/Fire Response, prioritizing NWCG-recognized wildfire qualifications (FFT2, FFT1).
- Secure funding for critical equipment such as portable water systems, including UTV with water tank and pump capacity for small, off-road ignitions.
- Coordinate standard operating procedures between DFFP, VFD, Aleknagik VFD/Fire & EMS Response, BBNA Fuels Crew and the Alaska Wildlife Troopers.
- Explore partnerships with Nushagak Electric & Telephone Cooperative and private landowners to integrate utility corridors into suppression planning.

Priority 6: Biomass and Woody Debris Utilization

Goal: Convert fuel reduction byproducts into community value.

Key Actions:

- Designate a community woody debris site for safe disposal and reuse of vegetation cleared through Firewise projects.
- Evaluate biomass opportunities that complement existing BBNA biomass avenues and local energy initiatives.
- Continue to explore cooperative biomass projects to promote long-term fuel management and economic co-benefits.



Image 15. Dillingham and Aleknagik Priority Actions

9.2 Fuel Breaks

Fuel breaks are strategically located areas where vegetation (fuel) is modified, reduced, or removed to diminish fire spread and intensity, giving firefighters safer access and a tactical advantage. In Alaska, where the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) often features highly flammable black spruce forests, fuel breaks are essential for community protection; recommendations are below.

Dillingham and Aleknagik Primary and Secondary Roads

Using existing constructed barriers (like roads) and/or powerline right of ways can slow and potentially stop surface fire spread. Additionally, reducing or removing fuel along roadways, driveways and trails increases survivability during evacuations. There is no published or agreed on width for fuel breaks using existing roads or other right of ways.

Generally, a reduction or removal of all flammable vegetation 30 feet from the edge of both sides of the road for access and egress is recommended and 150-foot-wide shaded fuel break with 10–15 feet of space between tree canopies to reduce crown fire risk and intensity and a significant reduction in fuels available to burn on the surface is recommended. The 150-foot width can incorporate the road and fuel reduction should be completed on the side of the road opposite the values to protect, i.e. homes or other structures. Even further distances should be considered if there is a greater than 30% slope and/or dense fuel—like spruce, along roadways.

For more information on Fuel Breaks see *Appendix C - Outreach and Education Resources*.

Alaska Native Allotments

The recommendation is the removal of all ladder fuels and surface debris within 150 feet of the perimeter to create a shaded fuel break. Prune tree limbs 6–8 feet high. Thin remaining tree crowns, especially black spruce, to maintain 10–15 feet of space between canopies to reduce crown fire risk and intensity.

Adjacent Landowner Collaboration

Collaboration is critical for a continuous, effective protective barrier. The Alaska Native Allotment owner must coordinate with Federal Agencies (BIA, BLM, NPS) and/or the Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection that often manage adjacent lands. This ensures the fuel break is strategically located, aligns with interagency plans, and helps secure access to resources or funding (like BIA's Hazardous Fuels Reduction or NRCS programs) to complete the treatment on both sides of the boundary.

See below for South Aleknagik fuel break and the fiber optic line fuel break map and description.



Map 12: South Aleknagik fuel break and the fiber optic line fuel break.

South Aleknagik East

Recommend constructing a 150-foot-wide shaded fuel break using mechanical and hand-thinning techniques. Reduce surface fuels, limb trees to no lower than 6 feet and remove dead and dying spruce trees. Thin remaining tree crowns, especially black spruce, to maintain 10–15 feet of space between canopies to reduce crown fire risk and intensity.

South Aleknagik West

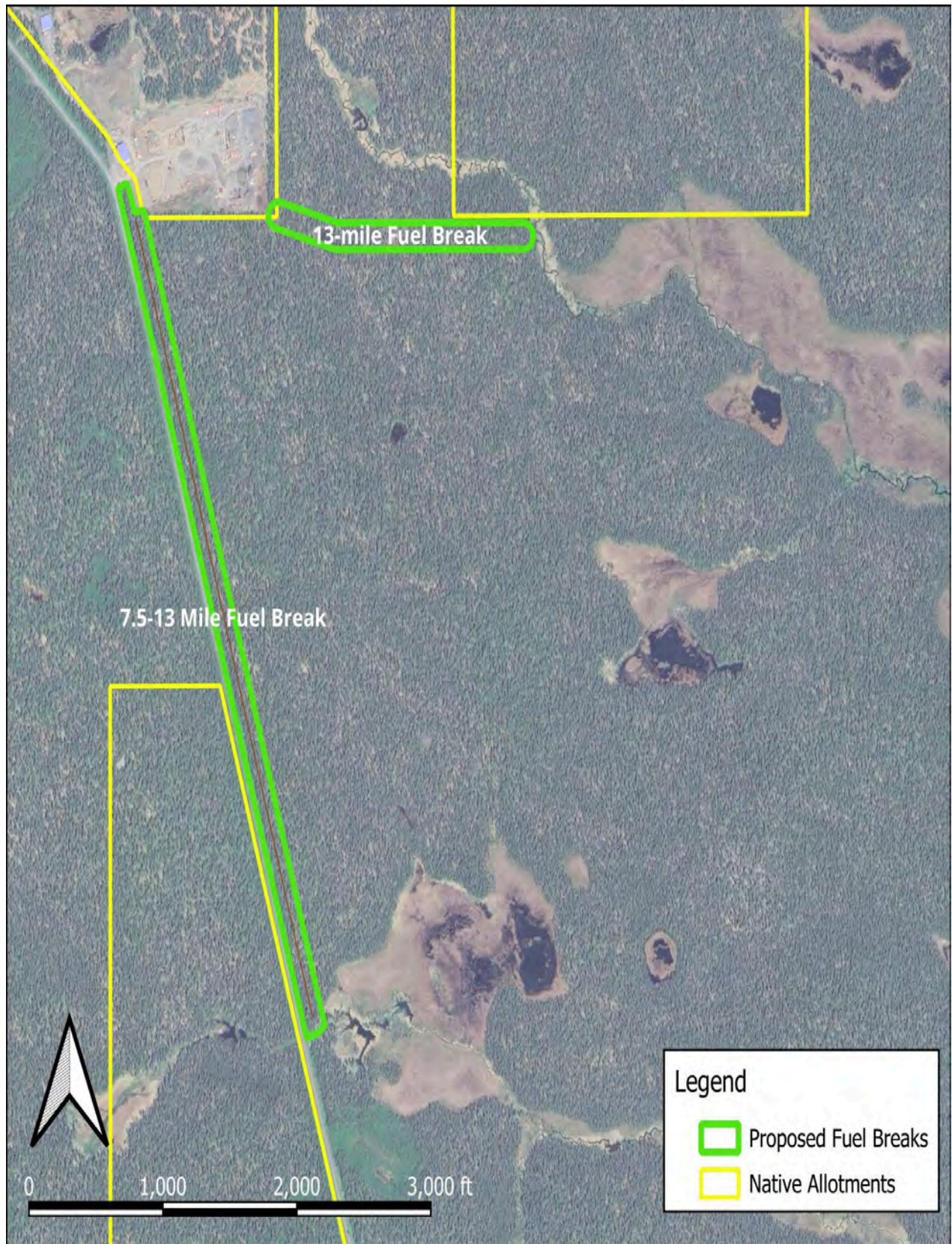
Recommend constructing a 150-foot-wide shaded fuel break using mechanical and hand-thinning techniques. Reduce surface fuels, limb trees to no lower than 6 feet and remove dead and dying spruce trees. Thin remaining tree crowns, especially black spruce, to maintain 10–15 feet of space between canopies to reduce crown fire risk and intensity.

Fiber Optic Fuel Break

Using the existing clearing constructed during the installation of the fiber optic line, it is recommended to construct a 150-foot-wide clearcut fuel break using mechanical and hand-thinning techniques.

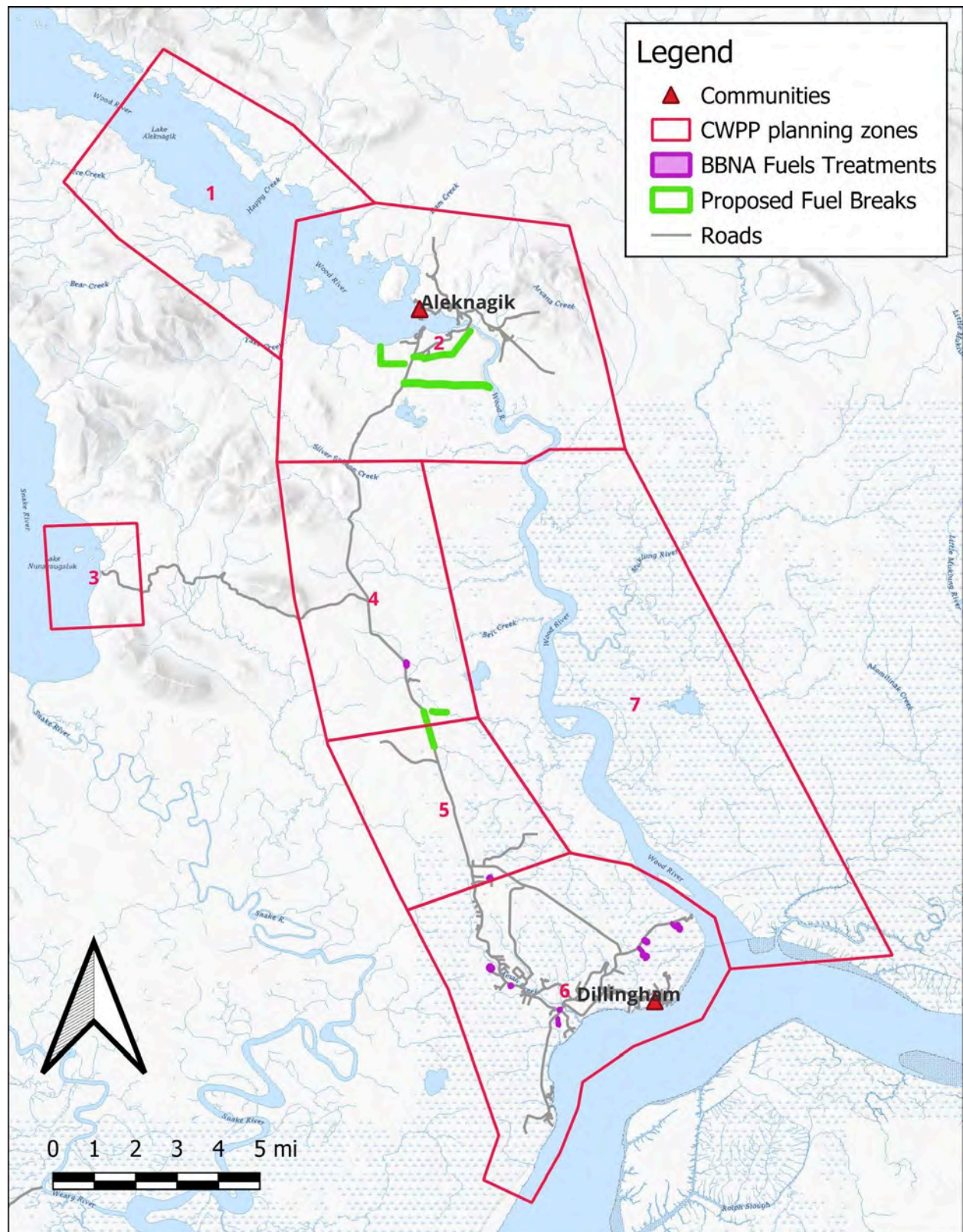
7.5 to 13-Mile and 13-Mile Fuel Breaks

Recommend constructing 2 separate 150-foot-wide shaded fuel breaks using mechanical and hand-thinning techniques. Reduce surface fuels, limb trees to no lower than 6 feet and remove dead and dying spruce trees. Thin remaining tree crowns, especially black spruce, to maintain 10–15 feet of space between canopies to reduce crown fire risk and intensity.



Map 13: 7.5 to 13- Mile and 13-Mile Fuel Breaks

Fuel Break and Fuel Treatment Summary Map



Map 14. Fuel Break and Fuel Treatment Summary Map

9.3 Project Implementation Priorities

The table below is a legend for the Community Action Plan spreadsheet, outlining selections that can be included in the spreadsheet.

Priority Category	Initiation Target	Funding & Capacity Needs	Partner Coordination	Community Engagement	Notes / Key Features
Immediate Action	Begin by 2026	Can be financed within existing capacity of CWDG and partner organizations; supported by grants within 12–18 months	Uses existing relationships with emergency response, land management, and non-profit partners	Minimal additional engagement needed	Offers greatest potential for immediate ROI; can proceed with current staff levels
Short-term Priority	Begin by 2026	Requires moderate increase in financial and implementation capacity	Establish new partnerships and improve coordination among existing ones	Higher community involvement in decision-making	Builds on existing capacity while expanding collaboration
Mid-term Priority	Begin by 2028	Requires multi-year planning and significant grant funding	Demands extensive coordination among all partners	Robust engagement throughout project lifecycle	Major investment in capacity growth for Denali Borough and partners
Long-term Projects	Beyond 5 years from CWPP adoption	Funding and staffing increases not anticipated in current cycle	Partnerships may evolve over time	Minimal engagement until project initiation	Serve as foundation for next CWPP Action Plan; lower near-term impact

Table 9. CAP Spreadsheet Legend

9.4 Summary

The Dillingham and Aleknagik areas face high wildfire potential due to dense spruce fuels, seasonally dry grasses, drying organic layers, and expanding development in historically fire-driven ecosystems.

Implementing this Action Plan will:

- Reduce ignition potential and fire spread near structures and along travel corridors.
- Strengthen local firefighting capacity and interagency coordination.
- Improve emergency planning, communication, and public awareness.
- Support long-term landscape resilience through fuel reduction, biomass use, and community stewardship.

Together, these priorities advance the goals of the National Cohesive Strategy and the Fire Adapted Communities framework, ensuring that the Dillingham/Aleknagik region is safer, more self-reliant, and better prepared to coexist with wildfire.

10. Monitoring Plan

The mitigation measures described in the Community Action Plan are not one-time efforts. Some treatments will take years to complete, and most will require annual maintenance to remain effective. For this reason, Dillingham and Aleknagik, along with supporting agencies and partners, should work together to maintain a clear monitoring plan.

A strong monitoring and maintenance plan should include:

Tracking progress – Document projects with photos, maps, and written updates, showing measurable outcomes such as acres treated or structures prepared.

Updating timelines – Keep timetables current and review them annually to reflect progress and next steps.

Evaluating results – Review completed treatments to ensure they are meeting the goals and objectives of the mitigation plan.

Planning maintenance – Schedule upkeep at least one year before vegetation regrows or conditions change.

Identifying new risks and opportunities – Stay alert to emerging threats and potential funding sources to address them.

Setting future priorities – Establish clear priorities and timeframes for upcoming projects to keep momentum moving forward.

In addition, Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs) must be reviewed every three years, updated every five years, and expire after ten years unless renewed.

Review: 3 years	Update: 5 years	Expire: 10 years
1/1/2029	1/1/2031	1/1/2036

Table 10. CWPP Review Dates

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Appendix E - Public Health Resources

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