



Appendix: Glossary of Terms

a

Access Roads - Roads used by firefighters to reach a fire. They must be clear, wide, and safe for fire engines to drive on.

Agricultural Burning - Burning grass, brush, or leftover crops to clear fields. This requires permits because fires can escape.

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.

Alaska Wildland Fire Management Options - Four categories (Critical, Full, Modified, Limited) used to decide how quickly fire crews respond to a wildfire on different lands.

Assets (Values at Risk) - Important things that could be harmed by fire, like homes, farms, powerlines, roads, or cultural sites.

b

Barriers to Fire Spread - Natural or man-made features that slow or stop fire (roads, rivers, cleared vegetation).

Boreal Forest - The main forest type in Interior Alaska, made up of black spruce, birch, and aspen - highly flammable during summer.

Burn Permits - Required permission from the state to burn brush or debris safely.

C

Chinook Winds - Strong, warm, dry winds that blow down the mountains and can rapidly increase fire danger.

Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) - A local plan that explains wildfire risk, identifies high-risk areas, and lists actions to make the community safer.

Critical Infrastructure - Essential services like roads, hospitals, electric lines, and water systems that need protection during wildfire.

Crown Fire - A fast-moving fire that burns through the tops of trees, often very dangerous and difficult to stop.

d

Defensible Space - The area around a home where grass, brush, and trees are managed or cleared to reduce fire danger.

Dry Fuels - Vegetation like dead grass, branches, and leaves that catch fire easily.

e

Embers (Firebrands) - Burning pieces of wood or plants that can travel on the wind and start new fires, especially near homes.

Evacuation Route - The safest road or path for people to leave a threatened area during a wildfire.

f

Fire Adapted Community - A neighborhood or town that is prepared for wildfire and has taken steps to reduce risk.

Fire Behavior - How a fire moves and grows, influenced by fuels, weather, and terrain.

Fire Break / Fuel Break - A cleared or thinned strip of land that slows down or stops a fire.

Fire Management Options - The level of response a fire will receive based on land category (Critical, Full, Modified, Limited).

Fire Regime - The pattern of fires over time in an area, such as how often fires happen and how severe they are.

Firewise - A program that helps communities reduce home ignition risk using defensible space and safer building practices.

Full Suppression - A fire response strategy where crews work to control and put out the fire as soon as possible.

Fuels - Anything that can burn (trees, grass, houses, vehicles).

Fuel Loading - How much burnable material is in an area.

g

Green-Up - The springtime period when fresh grass and plants grow and become less flammable.

h

Hazardous Fuels - Vegetation or materials that can easily ignite and allow a fire to spread quickly.

High Severity Fire - A very hot fire that kills most trees and vegetation in the area.

Home Ignition Zone (HIZ) -The area within 100 feet of a home that most affects whether the house will burn during a wild fire.

i

Ignition Source - Anything that can start a fire (lightning, equipment, escaped burn piles).

Initial Attack - The first effort by firefighters to stop a new wildfire.

Intermix WUI - Areas where homes and forests are mixed together with no clear boundary.

Interface WUI - Areas where the edge of a neighborhood meets wildland vegetation in a more defined line.

l

Lightning Ignition - A fire started by lightning, common in Interior Alaska.

Limited Response - A fire management option where the fire is monitored, and crews only take action if needed to protect lives or infrastructure.

m

Modified Response - A fire management category where full suppression may happen later in the season depending on conditions.

Mitigation - Actions taken to reduce wildfire risk (clearing vegetation, creating fuel breaks, improving access roads).

Mosaic Burn Pattern - A mix of burned and unburned areas left after a wildfire.

n

Natural Fire Break - A natural feature that slows fire, such as rivers, lakes, or rocky areas.

National Cohesive Strategy - A nationwide plan to improve wildfire resilience through three goals: Fire Adapted Communities, Resilient Landscapes, and Safe/Efficient Response.

p

Planning Zone - One of the smaller mapped areas within the CWPP used to measure fire risk and identify priorities.

Prescribed Fire - Planned, controlled burning used by professionals to reduce fuels or improve habitat.

r

Ready, Set, Go! - Ensuring all communities are informed, prepared, and empowered to respond effectively to wildfire evacuations

Red Flag Warning - A weather alert issued when fire conditions are extremely dangerous (low humidity, high winds, dry fuels).

Response Capacity - The ability of local fire departments to respond to wildfire based on people, equipment, water access, and training.

Risk Assessment - A study of what could burn, how it could burn, and what could be damaged.

S

Safety Zone - A clear, open area where people or firefighters can shelter safely when wildfire is near.

Smoke Ready - Being prepared for wildfire smoke by having masks, air filters, and staying informed about air quality.

Stand-Replacing Fire - A very intense fire that kills most of the trees in an area, leading to full forest regrowth over time.

t

Tactics - The specific actions firefighters take during a fire (digging firelines, using water, structure protection).

Topography - The natural shape of the land (hills, valleys, slopes) that affects how fire spreads.

U

Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) - Dangerous military shells or ammunition that did not explode during training and can make firefighting hazardous.

V

Values at Risk - The important things a community wants to protect from wildfire, such as homes, schools, cultural sites, and powerlines.

W

Wildfire Likelihood - The chance a wildfire will burn an area in any given year.

Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) - Places where homes and wildland vegetation meet; these are often the highest-risk fire areas.

Z

Zonal Risk Rating - The score given to each planning zone describing how high the wildfire danger is.