

Doug Vincent-Lang
Commissioner

Eddie Grasser, Director



Department of
Fish and Game

Division of Wildlife Conservation

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE



For Immediate Release: Aug. 23, 2019

Hunting and public access to Willow Swamp area restricted due to Deshka Landing Fire

(Palmer, AK) – Due to the location of the Deshka Landing Fire and related firefighting activity, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has closed a portion of Game Management Unit 14A to hunting and the Department of Natural Resources has restricted all public access to State lands in the same area. The two agencies issued the closures under their respective authorities limiting hunting and access to the Willow Swamp area and the immediate vicinity effective today, Friday August 23, 2019.

The Willow Swamp is a popular hunting area and moose hunting season in the area is scheduled to open on Sunday, August 25.

The Willow Swamp is located in the middle of the 2,217-acre Deshka Landing Fire burning west of Nancy Lake Recreation Area near Willow. There are currently more than 150 firefighting personnel working to contain and suppress the fire, which started on August 17. State Forester Chris Maisch has determined that allowing hunters in the area could pose a safety hazard to both the public and firefighting personnel and due to record dry conditions increase fire risk. At his recommendation and because firefighter and public safety are the number one priority when it comes to fighting wildfires, ADF&G issued an emergency order. Alaska State Parks closed Nancy Lake Recreation Area to public access earlier this week.

The two orders will remain in effect until fire suppression activities are completed and the closures are rescinded. The closures apply to the following area:

Unit 14(A), that portion north of 61.671297, -150.303068 (Decimal Degree System) on the east bank of the Susitna River directly east to the western boundary of the Nancy Lake State Recreation Area, west of the western boundary of the Nancy Lake State Recreation Area to the western shoreline of Big Darrell Lake, then to and along the

western shoreline of Vera Lake to Deshka Landing Road, south of the South side of Deshka Landing road from Vera Lake, continuing around the south side of the developed Deshka Landing properties and west to the Susitna River, and east of the east bank of the Susitna River to waypoint 61.671297, -150.303068 (Decimal Degree System) on the east bank of the Susitna River.

While the Division of Forestry and Department of Fish and Game recognize that this restriction poses an inconvenience to the public, both agencies request that hunters and other members of the public adhere to the access restrictions to allow firefighters to do their job containing and suppressing the Deshka Landing Fire. Violations of this closure may be prosecuted pursuant to AS 41.15.140.

CONTACT: Tim Mowry, Division of Forestry Public Information Officer, 907-356-5512, tim.mowry@alaska.gov.

CONTACT: Gino Del Frate, (907) 861-2123, gino.delfrate@alaska.gov

###

STAY CONNECTED:

DNR Newsroom: http://dnr.alaska.gov/commis/dnr_newsroom.htm

DNR on Social Media: http://dnr.alaska.gov/commis/social_media.htm

DNR Public Information Center: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/commis/pic/>