

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR RECLAMATION OF FIRELINES IN ALASKA**

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### **Reclamation of Firelines, Camp Areas, Staging Areas, Access trails, and Helispots**

1. **Vegetation mat:** Initiate action on reclaiming firelines ASAP. Replace vegetation mat on denuded areas prior to heavy equipment leaving the fire area. Some vegetation material may have to be replaced by hand. This action replaces topsoil, provides seed and propagule source, increases the water holding capacity, decreases drying, and provides shade and shelter. In particular, lines located on north slopes, south toe slopes, or drainages, may require this treatment.
2. **Water bars:** Preferably water diversion structures were initiated during line construction. Add and improve where needed. Water bars should be placed at 50-150 foot intervals depending on slope and soil texture. Coarse soils, containing sand and gravel, generally do not require water bars spaced as frequently as those located on fine-textured materials (silt and clay). Gravelly slopes may be adequately protected with waterbars at 300-ft intervals. Fine-textured, ice-rich materials are subject to severe erosion even with slopes of <2%. Goal is to divert water from the lines or denuded areas at a velocity which will not cause erosion--generally this mean that the diversion channels themselves should be <2% slope. Angle them to divert the water into undisturbed vegetation where possible. Make sure that the diversion cuts or structures are “daylighted” to drain the water rather than just accumulate it until it flows over or around.
3. **Seeding:** Seeding considered somewhat optional. Only necessary to stabilize sites which cannot be protected by replacing vegetative mat. Fall seeding recommendations are 35-50 #/ac of a grass mixture--preferably native spp. (\*For Fed agencies, E.O. 11987 bars intro of exotic species except under certain circumstances, and any use of non-native species has specific requirements, including an EA or EIS.) A Revegetative Guide for Alaska gives seeding rates under variety of conditions as well as advice on planting woody species. Also, Wright, S.J. 1988. Advances in Plant Material and Revegetation Technology in Alaska in Proceedings of the High Altitude Revegetation Conference. CSU, Ft. Collins, CO.
4. **Fertilizer:** Denuded soils tend to be deficient in plant nutrients. Therefore, when no vegetation mat is available to recover and protect the bare soil, and grass seeding is necessary, fertilizing with a 20-20-10 fertilizer applied at 300#/ac is recommended. Fertilization of adjacent undisturbed vegetation to promote seed production may be equally as beneficial in providing a seed source for revegetating the disturbed area.

### **Rehabilitation of Burned Areas**

Normally fires in AK do not remove the organic mat to mineral soil and no not require rehab. If this situation should arise, use the same guidelines for reclaiming denuded firelines.

Exception: fires on private lands?