

Appendix F
Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Coordinating Group
Management Option Change Procedure

An essential attribute of the fire planning effort in Alaska is providing the land managers with the flexibility to change the fire management option for lands they manage/own as warranted due to changes in land use, protection needs, laws, mandates or policies. The suppression organizations are encouraged to suggest option changes to Land managers (Field Office staffs) based upon suppression concerns.

Any changes proposed by a land manager will be provided to all adjacent and affected land manager and resource management agencies. Consensus on a proposed fire management option boundary change should be attempted to minimize creating boundaries that reflect administrative units or boundaries that are not operationally or ecologically feasible. The proposed management option boundary change will also be evaluated by the suppression organization to determine if the change is operationally feasible. The Alaska Interagency Coordination Center (AICC) should serve as the central repository for map atlas information.

To accommodate changes in the map atlas and distribution of maps, land manager are encouraged to make changes in their selected fire management option boundaries between September 30 and March 1. All changes should be recorded on the map atlas by April 1. Fire management options boundaries should not be changed during the fire season. However, if a change of the selected management option is requested and can be accommodated by all affected land managers and the suppression organization it may be accepted and recorded on the Map Atlas outside the aforementioned time period.

To ensure consistent documentation of management option changes, all agencies adhere to the following procedure for all future changes:

I. Option Change Process

1. Request for changes are initiated by Land manager, but may be suggested by suppression organizations.
2. Once a proposal for a change is submitted, the suppression Fire Management Officer (FMO) issues a transaction number (for filing purposes) and a descriptive name, e.g. Ruby. Transaction number format is Area/Forest/Zone identifier-year-number.
3. The suppression agency FMO will generally serve as facilitator for an initial meeting between the land manager suggesting the change and any other adjoining land managers/owners who may be affected by the change. As keepers of the map atlas, the suppression organization will provide the official protection maps of the areas in which changes are planned.
4. The FMO or affected land manager(s) may coordinate subsequent meetings between land managers if desired. Time frames for subsequent meetings can be based on any internal agency requirements (NEPA compliance, public meetings, etc.) that need to be completed prior to final acceptance of change(s).
5. Once all the affected parties accept the change(s), the final package will include:
 - a. signature page including a geographic description of the change
 - b. total acreage by option and ownership that is changing
 - c. a map of the area showing before and after boundaries and ownership

The FMO will then circulate this package to all of the affected land managers/owners for signatures. The FMO will sign last to insure that the official map atlas is not changed until all signatures have been gathered. After the FMO signs the final package, the official Area/Forest/Zone map atlas, as well as the map atlas held in the AICC, will be updated.

6. Once the change is official, a copy of the final package will be submitted for storage in a secure archive maintained by AICC.

7. Once the change is official, the new boundaries will be submitted for inclusion in the GIS master database maintained at Alaska Fire Service. The change will be registered under the transaction number issued in step “2” above. Updated GIS files can be distributed to any of the participants who are interested.

II. Elements of Option Change File

1. All files must contain the following required information:
 - a. Signature page
 - b. Geographic description
 - c. Acreage affected by ownership and option (what it was, what it’s changing to)
 - d. Map showing options before and after. Scale to be determined by the size of the change, but the larger the better.
 - e. Map should also show ownership.
2. The file should contain all the information accumulated during the process, such as:
 - a. Reason for management option change. This is very important for historical purposes.
 - b. Copies of any environmental assessments or compliance documents that were done
 - c. Public meeting notes
 - d. Correspondence and internal memos
 - e. Agency endorsements, stakeholder resolutions, etc.