**RATIONALE**

BLM Anchorage Field Office proposes to change the fire protection levels (Fire Management Options), on land north of Russian Mission, Alaska within the AFS Galena Fire Management Protection Zone. Subject lands include multiple jurisdictions including BLM, Calista Corporation, State of Alaska, BIA and FWS Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge directly, and Doyon Limited indirectly.

This identified land covers a large area (445,255 acres) of ownership in Southwest Alaska that is currently assigned “Full” protection status. The BLM Anchorage Field Office and AFS Galena Fire Management Zone formally request the subject lands be changed to “Modified” protection status, with an evaluation date of July 10. The BLM agency administrator, fire staff and protection FMO have considered risk management, firefighter safety and medical extraction, logistical support and suppression costs into this request. The subject land is located in the southern part of the Galena Zone and relatively void of “known sites” values. (The majority of the known sites are well within a “Full” protection area strategically clustered along the Yukon River and nearby tributaries adjacent to this proposed land area).

In recent years, this land area has experienced multiple incidents receiving suppression actions which have proven challenging to provide adequate suppression response and logistical support actions. An example is provided in the attached 2016 decision rationale for incident #237 Kuyukutuk River. These incidents provide an opportunity to reassess the issues of risk management, suppression response, fiscal expenditures and therefore, a re-evaluation of protection levels. Additionally, the proposed land area has natural barriers and is of a large enough scale that fires can naturally occur without imminently threatening values at risk. Changing the area to “modified” protection allows fire managers the option of making suppression decisions based on fire location in relation to values at risk, natural barriers, fuel types, fuels and fire weather indices, personnel exposure, and available resources.

There is one Native Allotment (FF13857), within the proposed area that retain “Full” protection regardless of the proposed change. The proposed changes in no way alter the ability of the AFS Galena Zone suppression forces from providing adequate protection services.

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|  **JURISDICTION** |  **ACRES** |
| ANCSA – Calista Corp |  3,113.01 |
| Bureau of Indian Affairs |  159.97 |
| Bureau of Land Management – Anchorage Field Office |  440,283.06 |
| State of Alaska |  1689.94 |
| USFWS – Yukon Delta NWR |  8.83 |