



# **Fire Risk in Anchorage:**

**A Comparison to West Coast States and Other Areas in Alaska**

# As firefighters battle roaring fires, new evacuations are ordered

UPDATED JANUARY 11, 2025 · 3:19 AM ET ⓘ

By Juliana Kim, Ayana Archie



A firefighting helicopter drops water as the Palisades Fire burns toward the Mandeville Canyon neighborhood on January 10, 2025 in Los Angeles, California.

Mario Tama/Getty Images

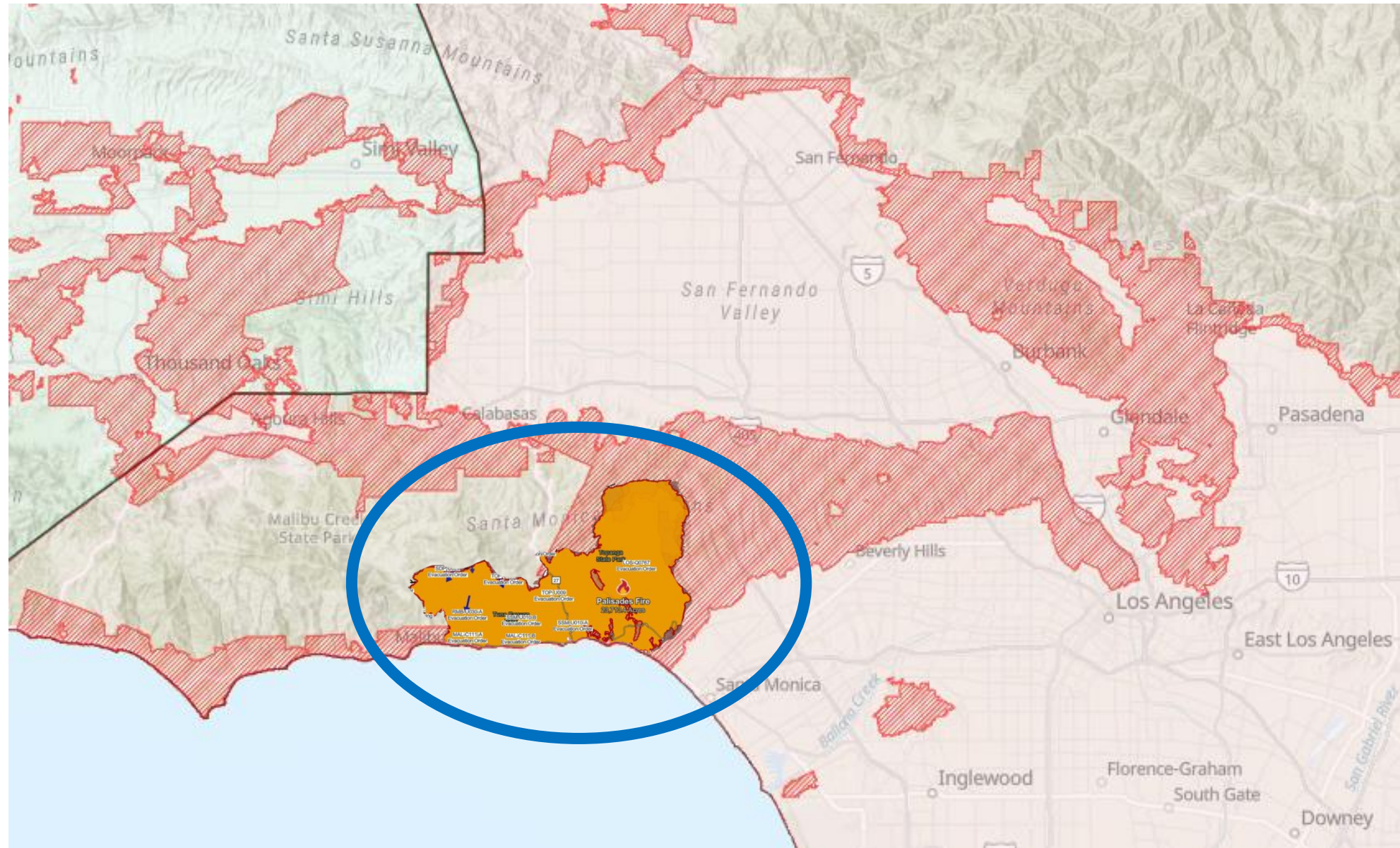
*This is a developing story. For the latest local updates head to [LAist.com](https://www.11alive.com) and sign up for [breaking news alerts](#).*

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Two major wildfires continue to rage largely uncontained in the Los Angeles area, even as firefighters begin to make some progress battling other blazes. The fires have decimated homes and other buildings, prompted hundreds of thousands of evacuations and killed at least 11 people.



## Pacific Palisades Fire, California (High to Moderate Risk)



# Oregon wildfires: Record for acres burned broken, Crater Lake closes north entrance



**Zach Urness**

Salem Statesman Journal

Aug. 12, 2024 | Updated Aug. 13, 2024, 2:35 p.m. PT



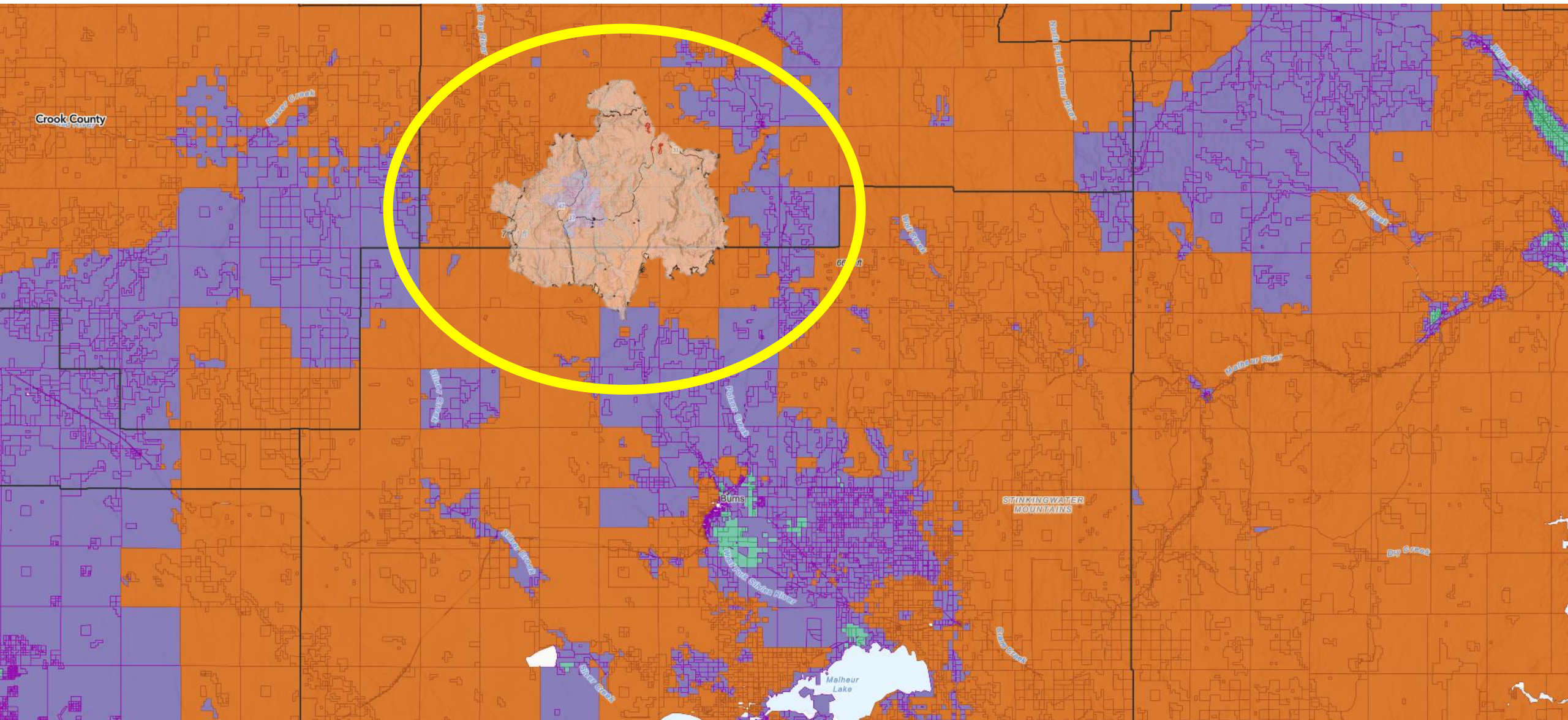
## Oregon sets modern record for acres burned from wildfires

Wildfires in Oregon have burned more acres of land this year than any since reliable records began, according to data from the Northwest Interagency Center.

A total of 1,399 fires have burned 1.49 million acres or 2,200 square miles, surpassing the 2012 total of 1.2 million acres and the 2020 total of 1.14 million acres.



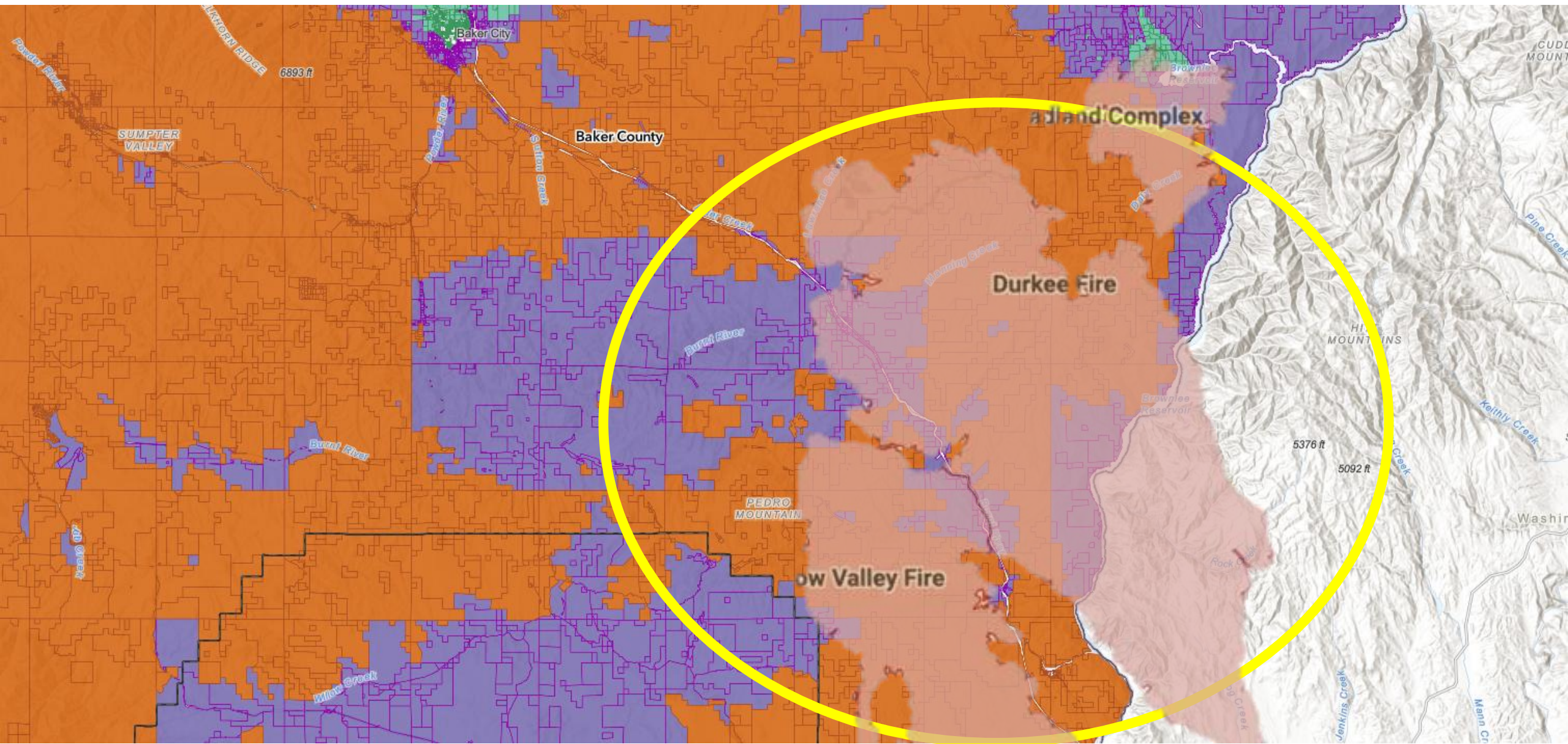
## Falls Fire, Oregon (High to Moderate Risk)



Source: [oregon-explorer.apps.geocortex.com](https://oregon-explorer.apps.geocortex.com) (Oregon Wildfire Risk Explorer)



Cow Valley Fire/Durkee Fire, Oregon (Moderate to High Risk)



Source: [oregon-explorer.apps.geocortex.com](https://oregon-explorer.apps.geocortex.com) (Oregon Wildfire Risk Explorer)





# **Fire Risk Around Alaska**

## Munson Creek Fire near Chena Hot Springs still cooking with hot, dry weather

BY ALASKA DIVISION OF FORESTRY & FIRE PROTECTION on JULY 20, 2021

Recent hot, dry weather has re-energized the Munson Creek Fire near Chena Hot Springs east of Fairbanks. The fire was most recently estimated at 43,746 acres on Saturday but has grown in size since then based on reconnaissance flights Sunday and Monday.

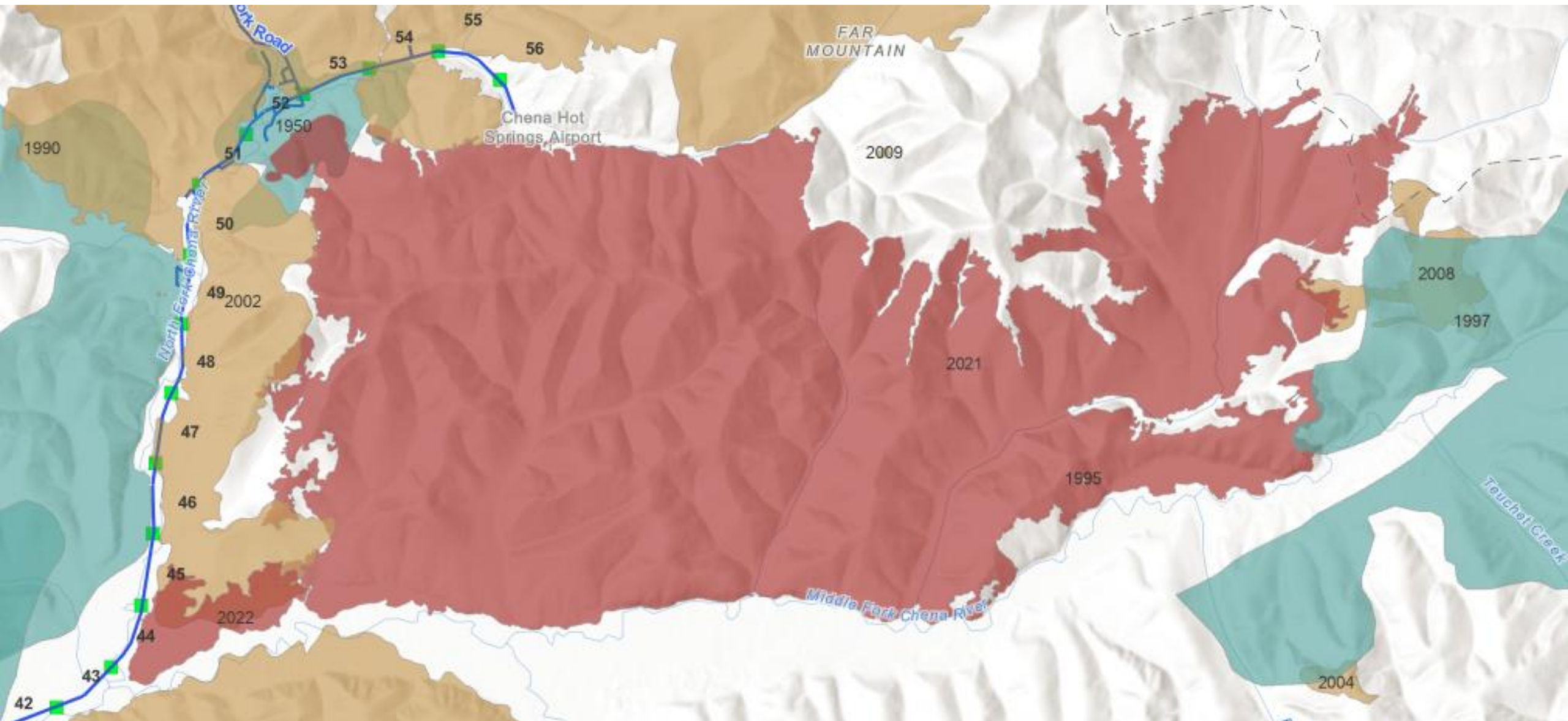
“There was increased activity on all parts of the fire perimeter,” reported Incident Commander Ernest Prax following Monday’s recon flight.



The Munson Creek Fire puts up multiple smoke columns east of Chena Hot Springs on Monday, July 19, 2021. Ernest Prax/Alaska DNR-Division of Forestry



## Munson Creek Fire, Fairbanks





# Firefighters make progress as Swan Lake fire grows to nearly 162,000 acres

By Jeff Parrott  
Published: August 29, 2019



The Swan Lake fire burns close to the Romig Cabin, on the Resurrection Trail, while firefighters work to protect it, Aug. 28, 2019. (Alaska Fire Services)

More than 700 firefighters are now battling the [Swan Lake fire](#), which has burned on the Kenai Peninsula since it was sparked by lightning in early June, fire officials said Thursday.

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### NEWS

## Funny River Trail fire grows to 67,000 acres

By BY MICHAEL ARMSTRONG AND MCKIBBEN JACKINSKY • May 23, 2014 1:43 pm

Tags: [Kenai National Wildlife Refuge](#), [Kenai Peninsula](#), [Local News](#), [Southcentral Alaska](#), [Sterling Highway](#), [Tustumena Lake](#)

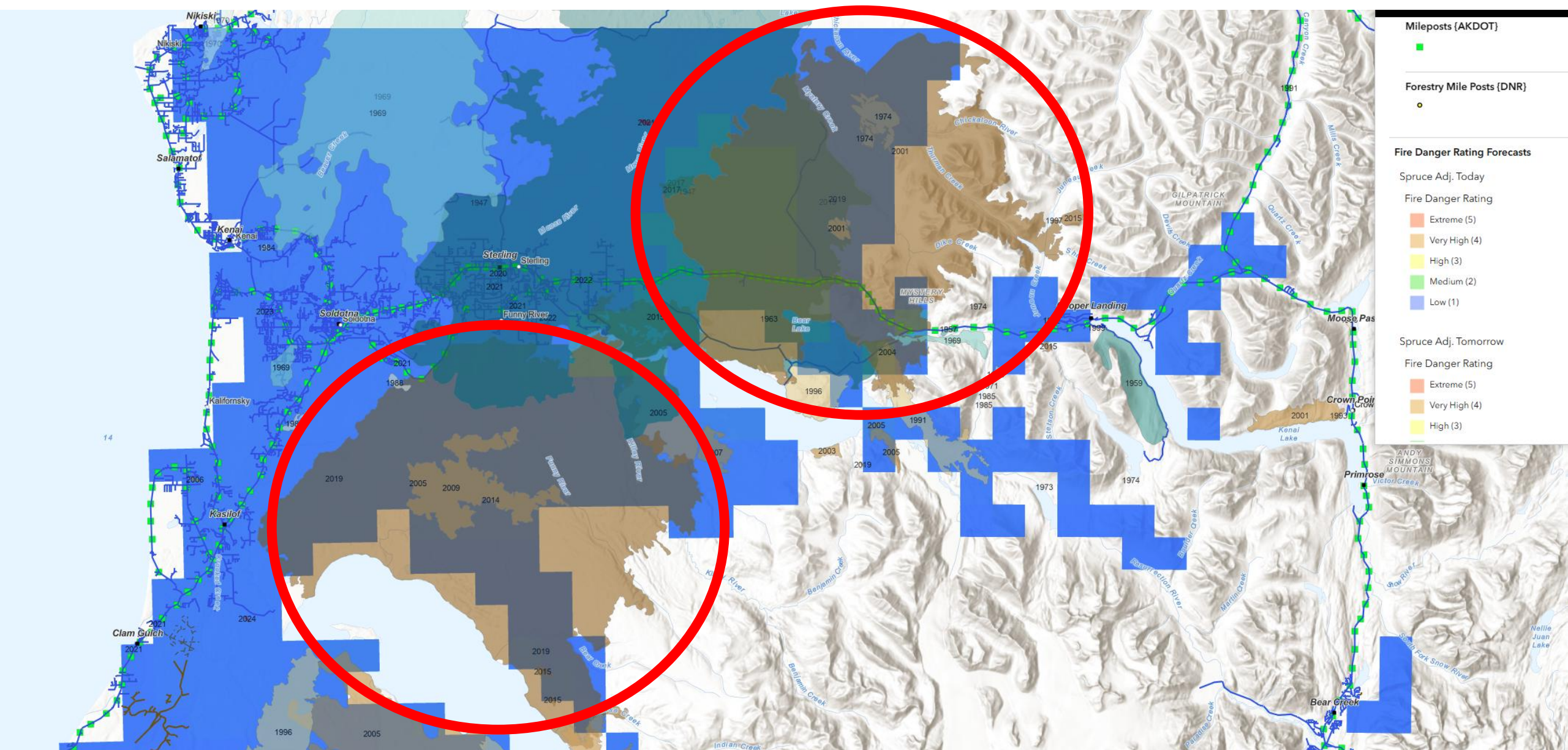


Josh Thompson, firefighter with Central Emergency Services on the Kenai Peninsula, throws brush into a fire along Funny River Road on Thursday May 22, as the group works to control the burning Funny River wildfire which has consumed more than 63,000 acres of Kenai National Wildlife Refuge land.- Photo by Rashah McChesney, Morris News Service

High, dry winds from the southwest could increase activity on the Funny River Horse Trail fire Friday afternoon. In a press release this morning, the Alaska Interagency Incident Management Type 2 Team now calculates the size of the fire as about 67,000 acres, still within the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge south of Soldotna and east of Kasilof. A team of 374 firefighters, including crews from the Lower 48, have contained 15 percent of the fire on the northeast flank near Funny River Road.



# Swan Lake/Funny River Fires, Kenai Peninsula (Low Risk)



# McHugh fire now estimated at 842 acres

July 21, 2016 by Anne Hillman, Alaska Public Media



*An Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter and a State of Alaska Division of Forestry helicopter dump several thousand gallons of water onto the McHugh Creek fire near Anchorage, July 20, 2016. (Public domain photo by photo by Staff Sgt. Balinda O'Neal Dresel/[U.S. Army National Guard](#))*

It's raining in Anchorage, and fire officials say prospects are looking good for the 842-acre McHugh Fire in Chugach State Park.

The five days of predicted rain are improving the situation and the current perimeter likely won't change much, said Alaska Wildland Fire Program Manager Tom Kurth during a morning press briefing Thursday.

"Five days is a good amount. ... We're gonna see some radical diminishing of the fire behavior that we've had here. I'm going to say, again, that the picture here is pretty positive," Kurth said.



McHugh Creek Fire, Turnagain Arm (Low Risk)

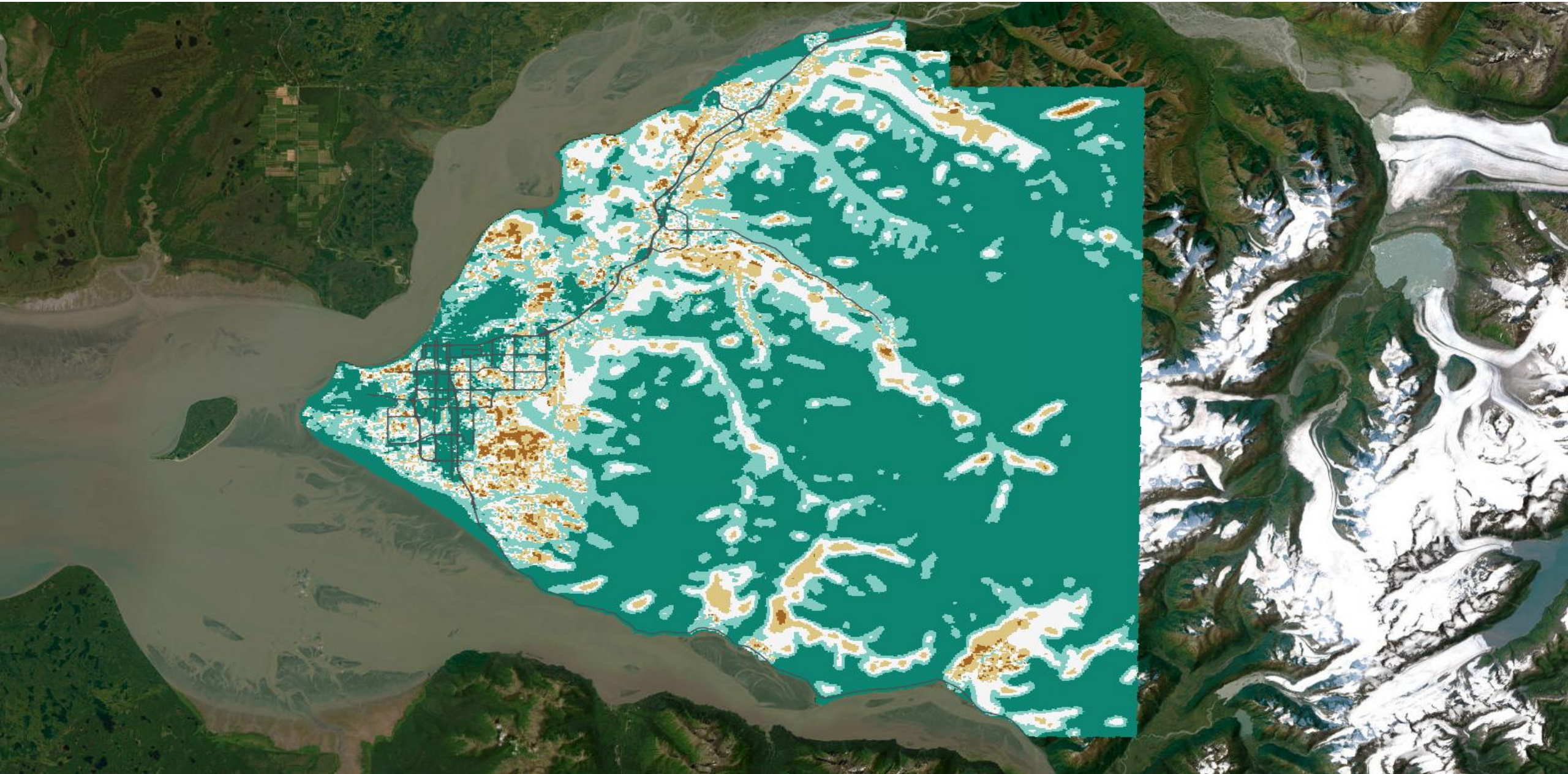




# **Fire Risk in Anchorage**



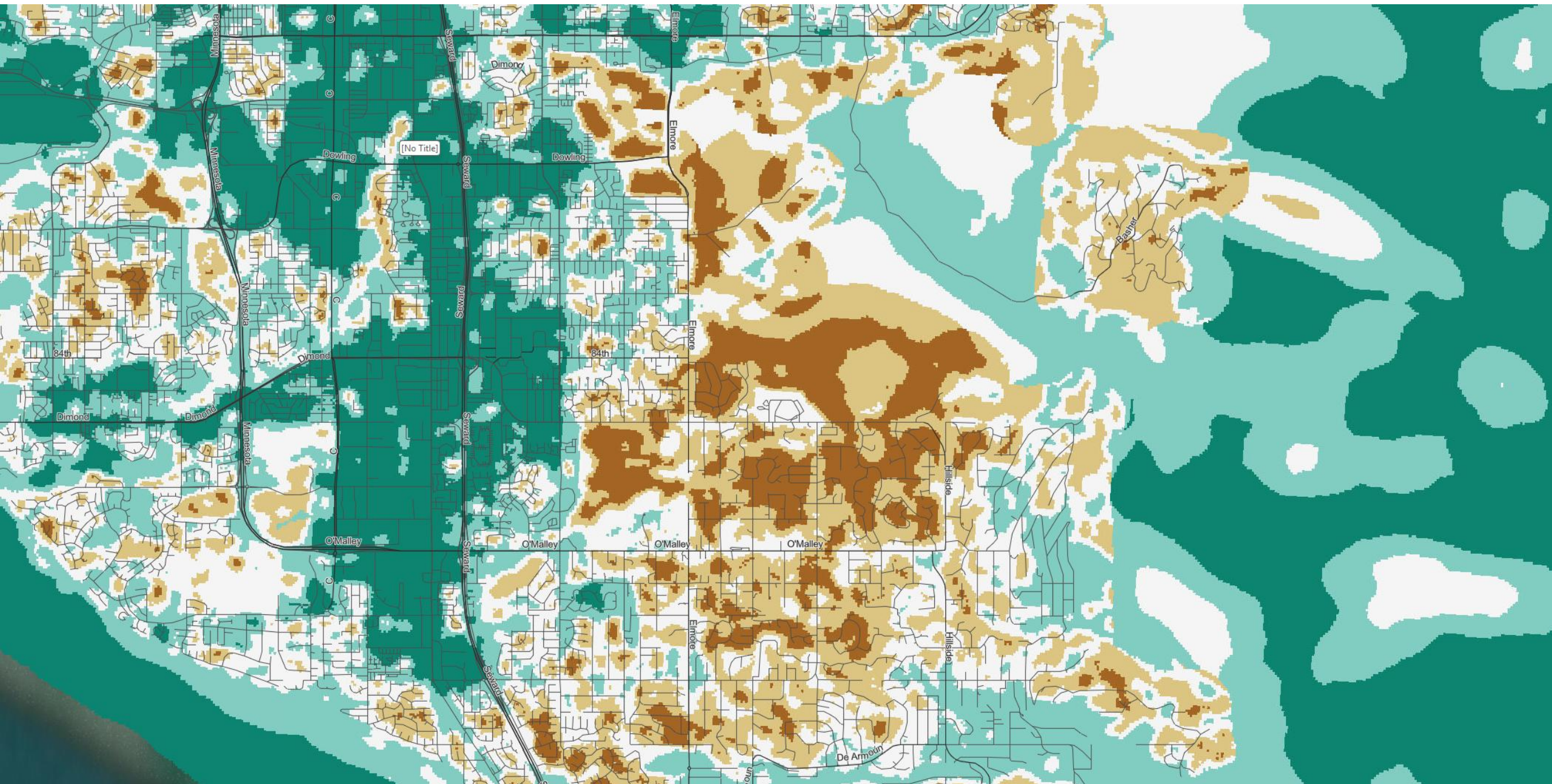
## Anchorage Bowl Fire Risk



Source: [uaa-geomatics.maps.arcgis.com](http://uaa-geomatics.maps.arcgis.com)

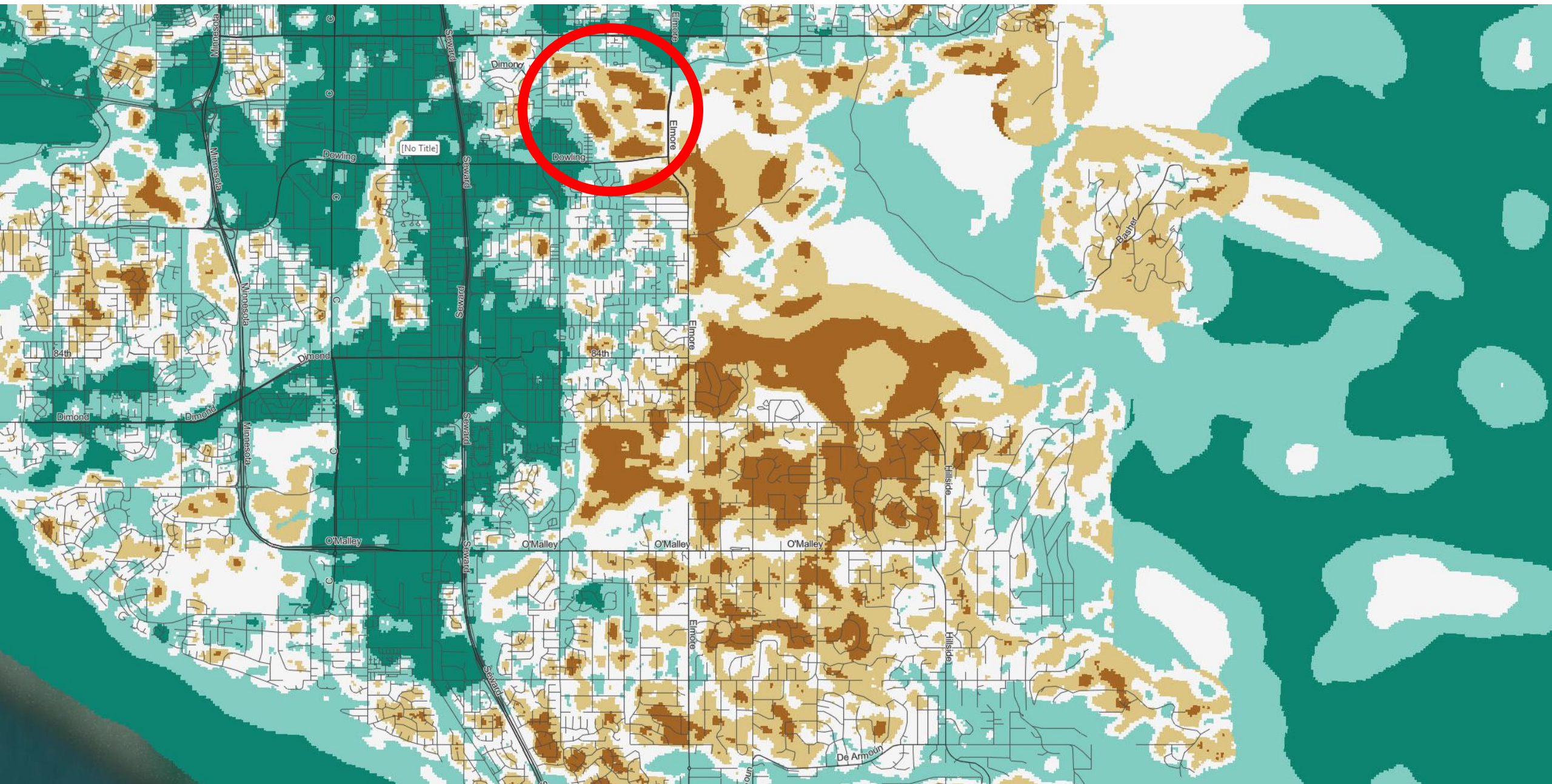


# East Anchorage/Hillside Fire Risk



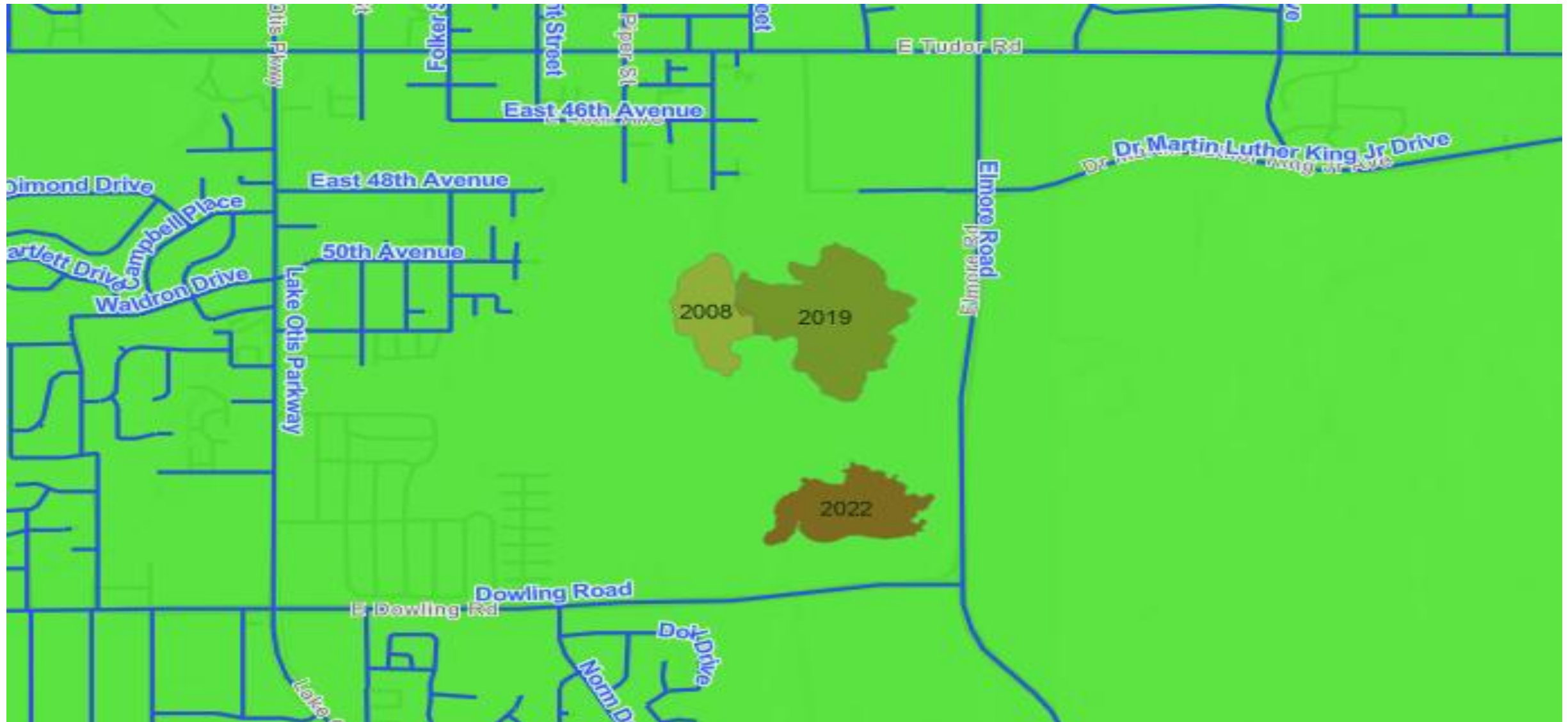


# East Anchorage/Hillside Fire Risk





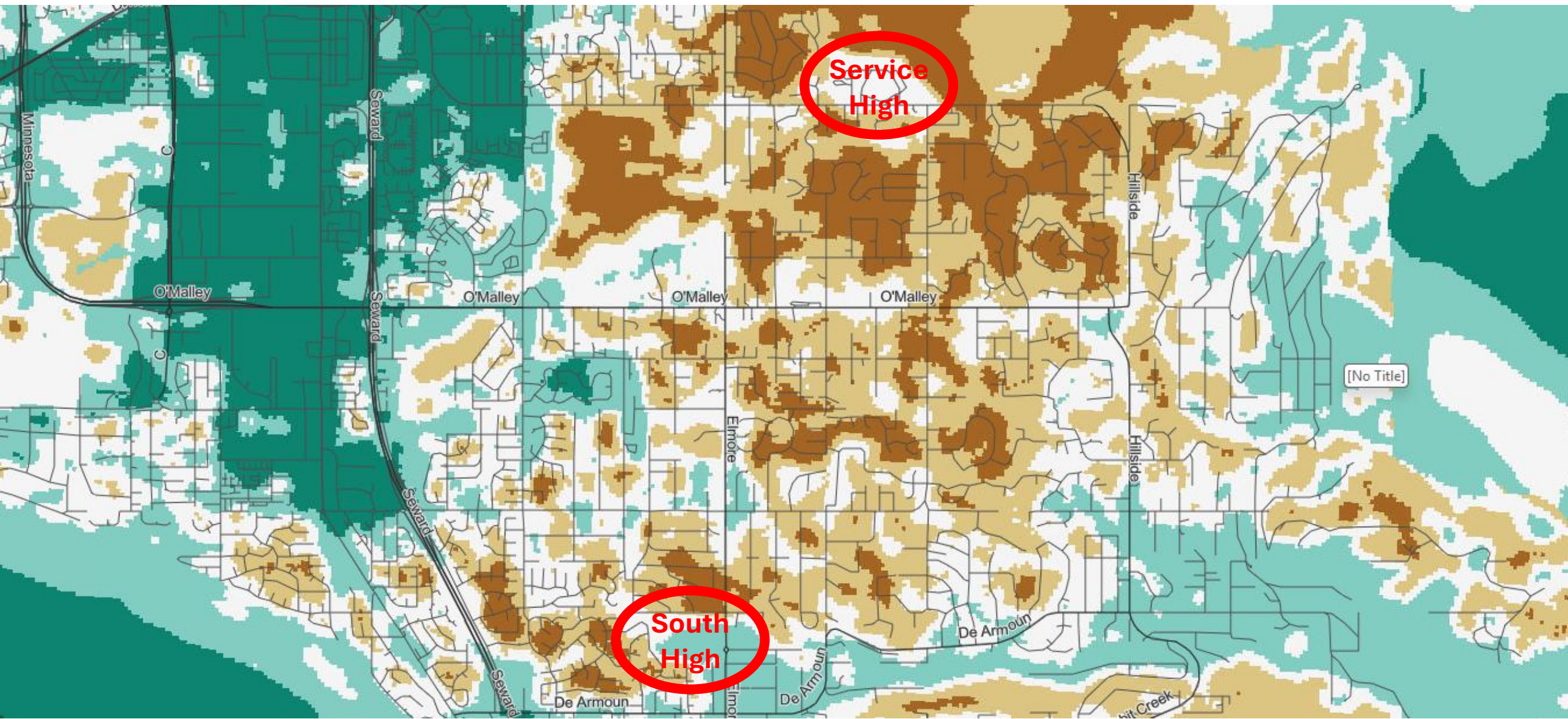
## Campbell Tract Fires, Anchorage



Source: [blm-egis.maps.arcgis.com](http://blm-egis.maps.arcgis.com)

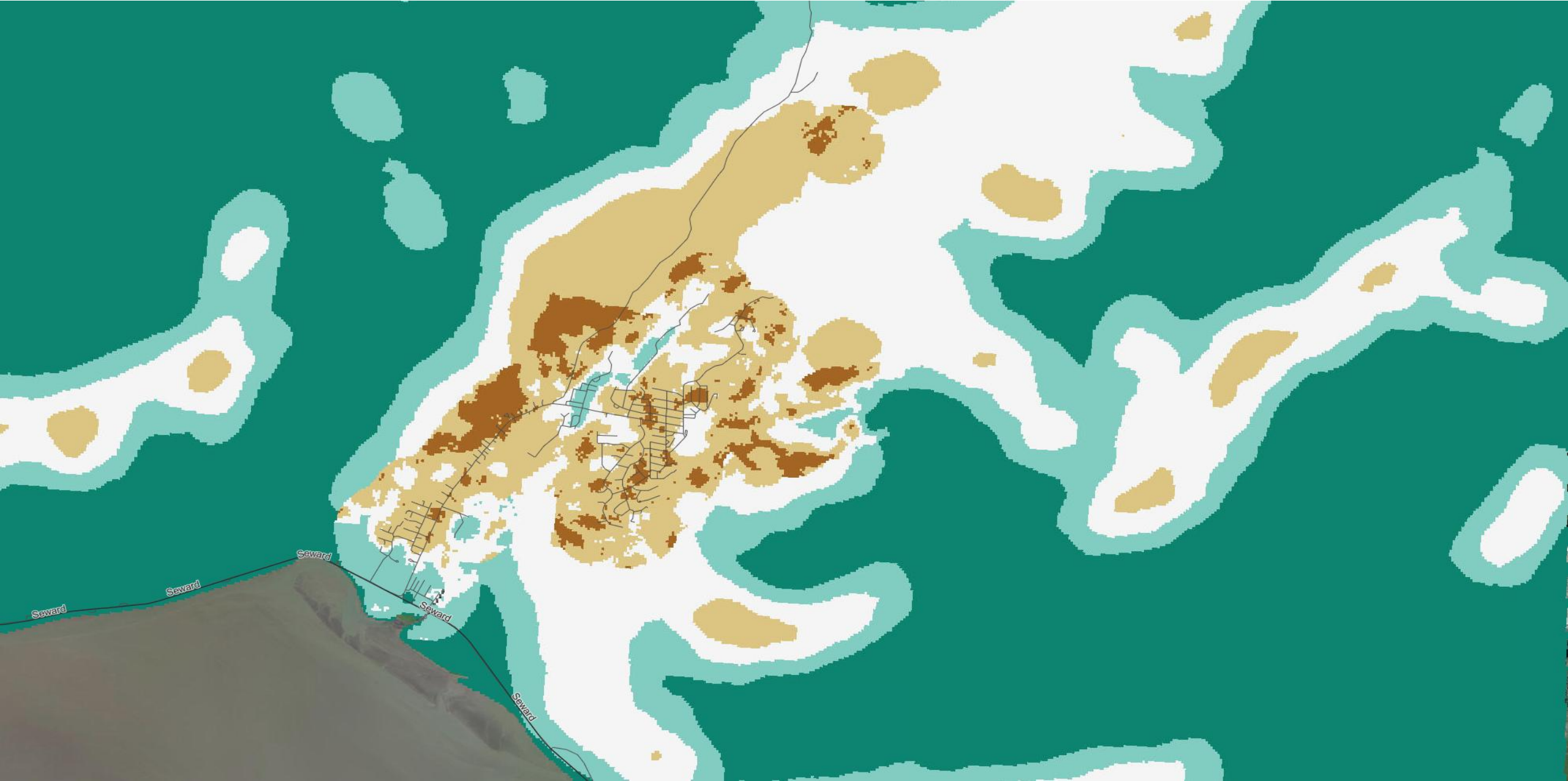


Risk to Schools, Homes, and Businesses





Girdwood Fire Risk





# Conclusion

- This resolution highlights the need for focus on wildfire education, mitigation, and preparation in Alaska. This is to avoid large fires seen near or in population centers in California, Oregon, and other parts of Alaska from occurring in Anchorage.
- Wildfires can move between high and low risk areas particularly when those areas are adjacent to one another.
- With increased wildfire education, mitigation, and preparation Anchorage can avoid the fate of other communities lost to fires in recent years.

Questions?