

HB

395

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

REPRESENTATIVE KURT OLSON

- Co-Chair, Community and Regional Affairs
- Member, Resources



Session: January - May
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
Phone: 907-465-2693
Fax: 907-465-3835

Interim: May - December
145 Main Street Loop, Ste 221
Kenai, AK 99611
Phone: 907-283-2690
Fax 907-283-2763

Official Business

SPONSOR STATEMENT

HB 395 FIRE SEASON START DATE

The spruce bark beetle kill on the Kenai Peninsula has created an enormous amount of dry grass and dead trees susceptible to lightning strikes and man made fires and the threat grows greater every year.

For the past several years the climate in our area has been gradually warming earlier in the year leaving wild areas dry and increasing the probability of a major wildfire.

The largest uncontained fire on the Southern Kenai Peninsula ever recorded, the Tracy Avenue fire, started prior to May 1, 2005, threatening residents and property. This fire might have been contained had the equipment and personnel been available the first day.

Moving the fire season start date to April 1 will allow the state to become actively involved in fire prevention and control earlier in the fire season and hopefully stop the progress of a disastrous pre-summer fire.

I respectfully ask for your support of this bill.

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2006 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: _____
 Bill Version: HB395-DNR-For-02-03-0
 () Publish Date: _____

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____ Dept. Affected: Natural Resources
 Title: An Act Extending the Period of the Fire Season RDU: Statewide Fire Suppression Program
 Component: Fire Suppression Preparedness
 Sponsor: OLSON, Hawker, Seaton
 Requester: (H) RES Component No.: 2705

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
Personal Services	514.5	514.5	514.5	514.5	514.5	514.5
Travel						
Contractual	395.6	395.6	431.5	431.5	431.5	431.5
Supplies	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	922.1	922.1	958.0	958.0	958.0	958.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
-----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

CHANGE IN REVENUES ()						
-------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF	922.1	922.1	958.0	958.0	958.0	958.0
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type-Do not abbreviate)						
TOTAL	922.1	922.1	958.0	958.0	958.0	958.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2006) cost: 0.0

Check this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2007 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Fires are occurring in greater numbers and with a greater risk to life and property earlier in the year than they have historically. The Tracy Avenue Fire, which started in April 2005 and threatened the community of Homer, was the earliest large, complex fire in the State's history. The Division of Forestry is not currently staffed nor equipped to adequately respond to fires that occur this early. This legislation would change the start of the designated fire season and, if funded, would provide the Division of Forestry with the ability to adequately respond to these early fires threatening communities and the ability to regulate open burning through issuance of burn permits.

Prepared by: Chris Maisch, Director Phone (907) 356-5850
 Division: Forestry Date/Time 2/3/2006
 Approved by: Michael Menge, Commissioner Date 2/3/2006
 Agency: Natural Resources

FISCAL NOTE

**STATE OF ALASKA
2006 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

BILL NO. H9395-DNR-For-02-03-0

ANALYSIS CONTINUATION

This bill provides for a one month earlier fire season. This will require extensions to permanent seasonal fire staff and extensions to helicopter and air tanker contracts.

Personal Services \$514.5

This provides an extension to permanent seasonal firefighters, prevention staff, and fire support staff which allows for fire response and fire prevention during the earlier fire season.

Contractual Services \$395.6

This provides for contract extensions for helicopters and an air tanker to cover the earlier fire season plus additional normal operating costs (utilities, lease space, phones, etc.) associated with a longer fire season. Higher contractual costs starting in FY 2009 are based on expected changes in the renegotiations to the next 5 year air tanker contract.

Supplies \$12.0

Routine operating supplies associated with a longer fire season.

Introduced by: Martin
Date: 01/17/06
Action: Adopted
Vote: 8 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent

**KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH
RESOLUTION 2006-008**

**A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE TO AMEND
ALASKA STATUTE 41.15.050 TO CHANGE THE FIRE SEASON START DATE FROM
MAY 1 TO APRIL 1 OF EACH YEAR**

WHEREAS, the Division of Forestry is the lead agency on the Southern Kenai Peninsula for wildland fire protection; and

WHEREAS, recent climate change on the Kenai Peninsula has resulted in warmer weather starting earlier in the year, which has dried out the wildland fuels earlier in the year, increased the length of the wildland fire threat, and raised the mean summer temperatures; and

WHEREAS, the spruce bark beetle infestation has left the Southern Kenai Peninsula with a continuous fuel bed of dead spruce and dry grass; and

WHEREAS, the population growth into the Southern Kenai Peninsula wildland urban interface is rapidly increasing; and

WHEREAS, lightning fires were a common occurrence on the Southern Kenai Peninsula in 2005; and

WHEREAS, the largest uncontained wildfire recorded on the Southern Kenai Peninsula, the Tracy Avenue fire, started before May 1, 2005, and threatened hundreds of residents; and

WHEREAS, the Tracy Avenue Fire could possibly have been contained the first day had equipment been available in the state; and

WHEREAS, the Tracey Avenue fire came at a time of relatively low and benign winds; and

WHEREAS, in the spring of 2005, fires were also burning in other areas of the state; and

WHEREAS, moving the fire season start date to April 1 will improve the state's ability to be prepared for fires earlier each year, potentially saving the state millions of dollars in firefighting costs;


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH:

SECTION 1. To reflect these changes in natural dynamics the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly requests the Alaska State Legislature to amend AS 41.15.050 to make the fire season effective April 1, rather than May 1, of each year, as well as the fire training season effective the same date.

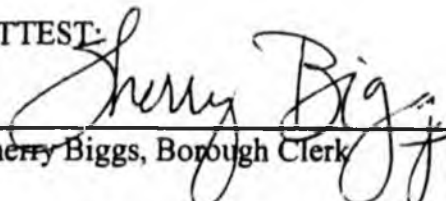
SECTION 2. That copies of this resolution be forwarded to Michael Menge, Commissioner of Department of Natural Resources; Senators Albert Kookesh, Con Bunde, Tom Wagoner, and Gary Stevens; Representatives Mike Hawker, Woodie Salmon, Kurt Olson, Mike Chenault, and Paul Seaton.

SECTION 3. That this resolution takes effect immediately upon its adoption

ADOPTED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH THIS 17TH DAY OF JANUARY, 2006.



Ron Long, Assembly President

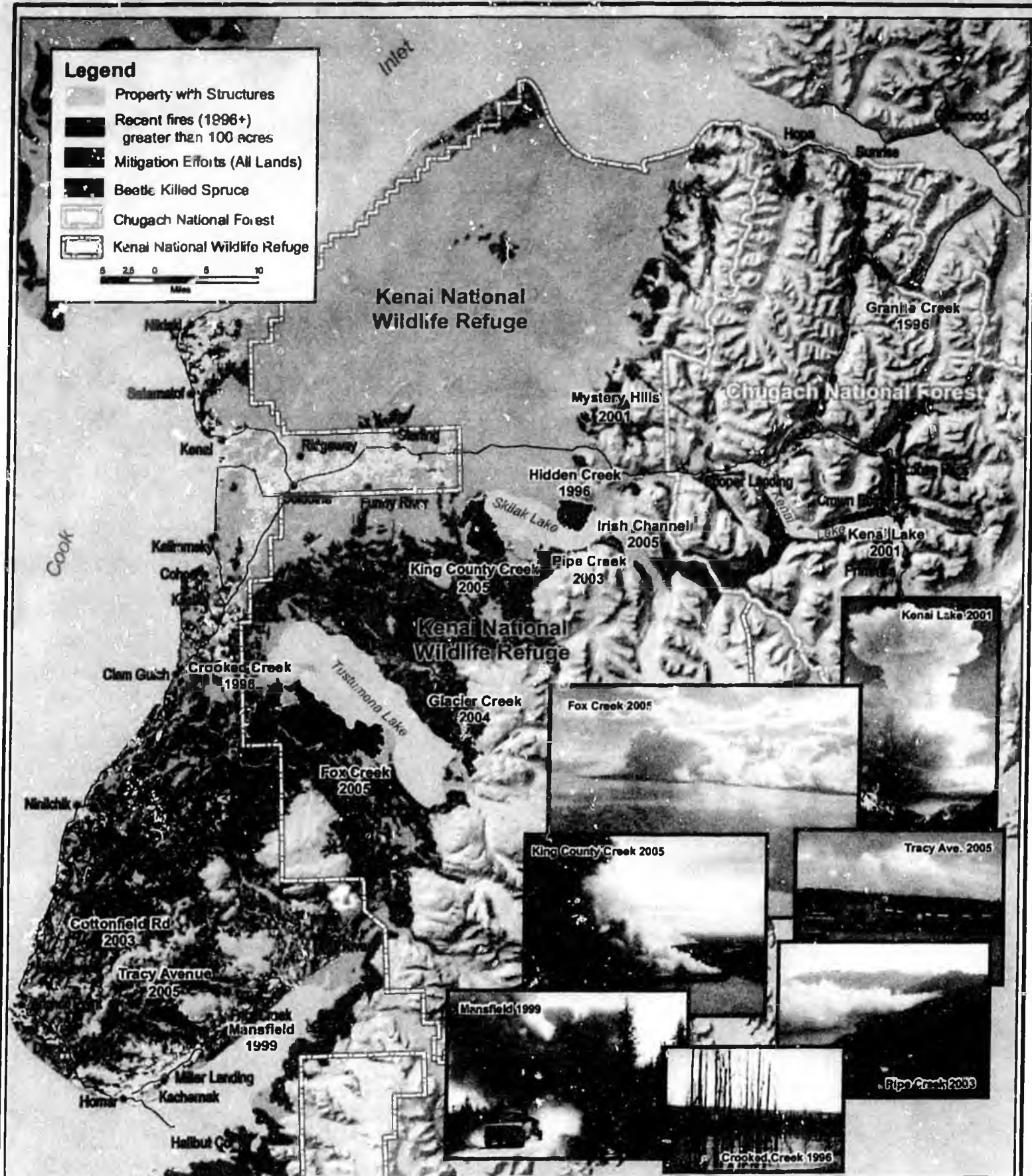
ATTEST:


Sherry Biggs, Borough Clerk



Legend

- Property with Structures
- Recent fires (1996+) greater than 100 acres
- Mitigation Efforts (All Lands)
- Beetle Killed Spruce
- Chugach National Forest
- Kenai National Wildlife Refuge



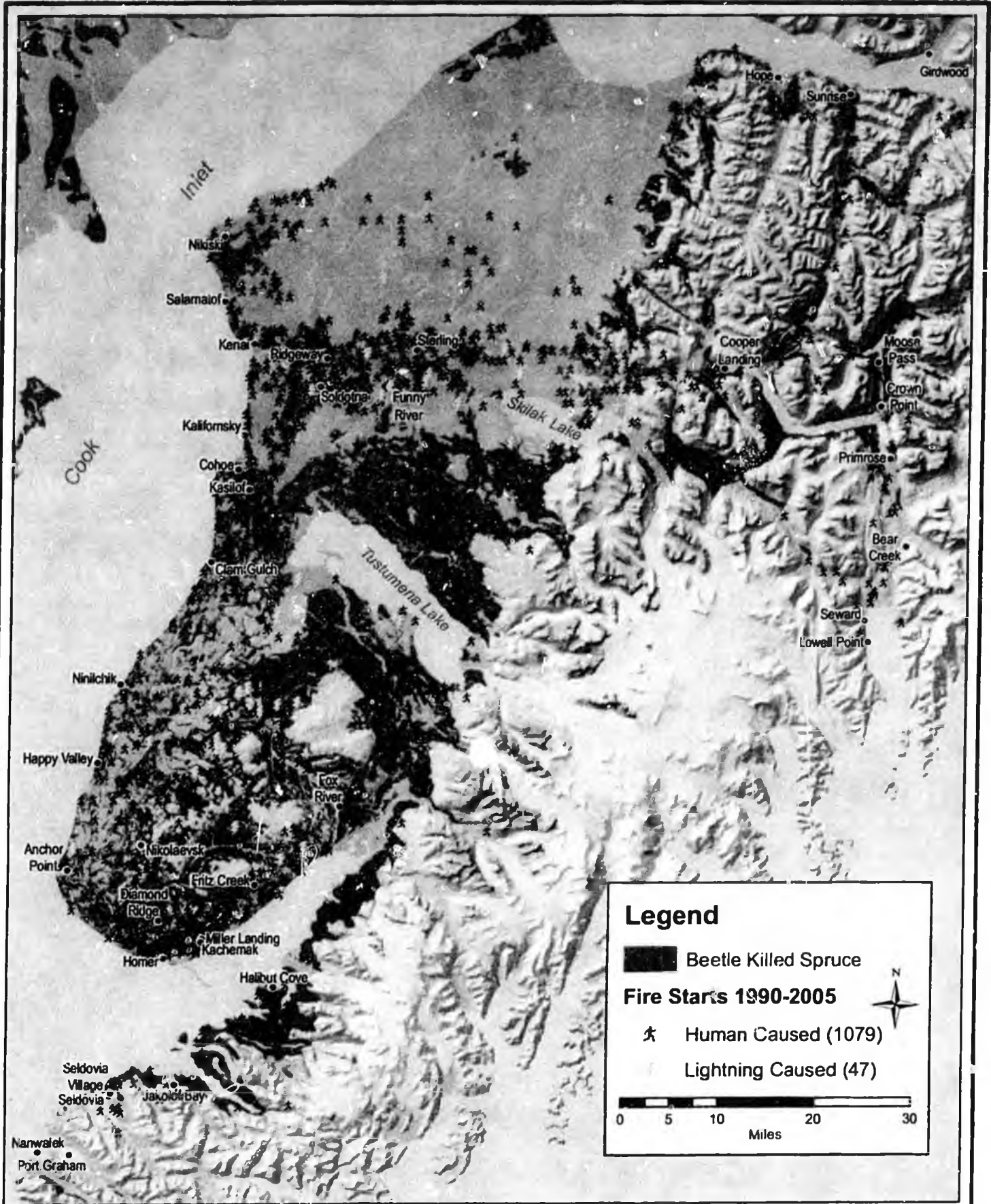
Major Kenai Peninsula Fires 1996+

Total area greater than 77,000 acres

Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB)
Spruce Bark Beetle Mitigation Program (SBBMP)
KPB or SBBMP are not responsible for errors, omissions, or deletions on this map.
Discrepancies in feature or boundary alignments are due to use of data from different sources. This map is not a legal representation,
it is produced for general informational purposes only and is not for sale.
Fire boundaries have come from various sources and agencies. The map represents the most accurate available fire record present at this time.

M:\Project\Fire_Maps\FireMap_1996+.ind
By: Bobbi Jo Lay and Mary Rullis 7/16/05
Support by Alaska Map Company





Kenai Peninsula Fire Starts

Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB), Spruce Bark Beetle Mitigation Program (SBBMP)
 Fire start locations represent number of fire start events and are not intended to represent specific locations of fire starts. Locations of fire starts are based on data from different sources.
 KPB or SBBMP are not responsible for errors, omissions, or delays on this map. No responsibility is assumed for accuracy or boundary alignment due to use of data from different sources.
 This map is not a legal representation, is produced for general informational purposes only and is not for sale.
 Inquiries: C:\DATA\BVT\2005\Fire_Starts\Kenai_Peninsula_AUG_05\STARTS.mxd
 by Bruce J. Loy & Mary Plute

August 1, 2005

