

# STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

## DIVISION OF FORESTRY & FIRE PROTECTION

Norm McDonald  
Deputy Director, Fire Protection



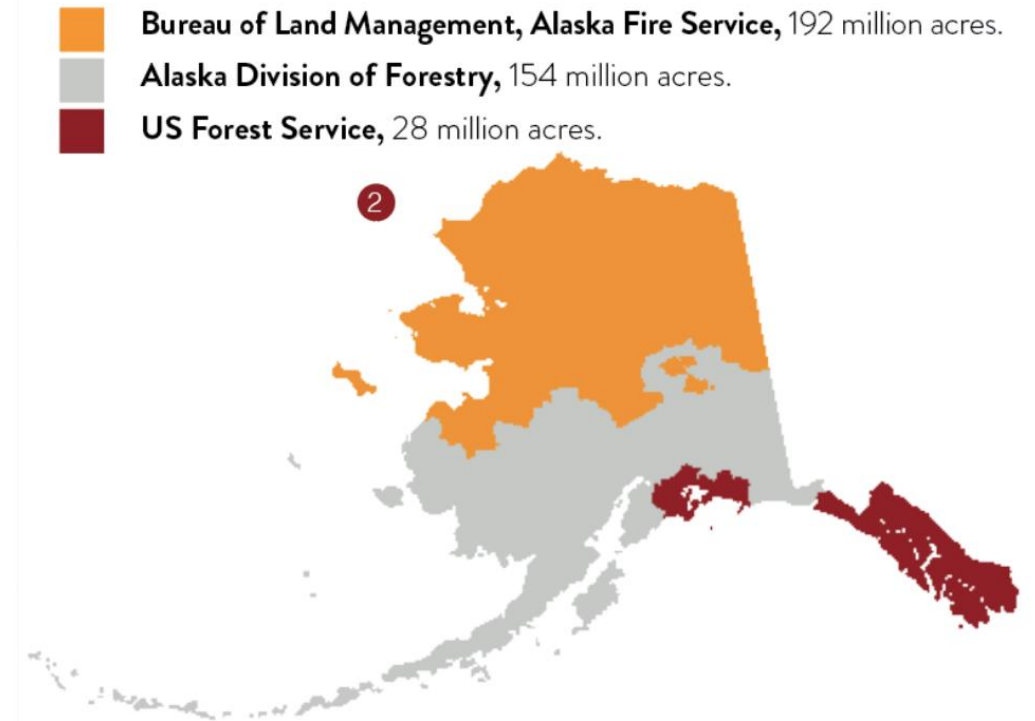
# STATE OF ALASKA'S WILDLAND FIRE SUPPRESSION HISTORY

## History

- 1960** BLM established a contract with the State of Alaska to provide fire protection on state lands
- 
- 1976** State Division of Forestry took over fire management responsibility for Kenai and Anchorage areas
- 
- 1981** State Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR) Division of Forestry was formed. Division of Forestry assumed fire protection for Mat-Su Valley, Copper River, Delta, and Fairbanks areas
- 
- 1982** Division of Forestry's jurisdiction expanded to include the Southwest and the Kenai-Kodiak areas
- 
- 1998** 13 BLM, State, and USFS area fire management plans were consolidated into one, statewide plan - the Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan, in use today.
- 
- 2022** Division of Forestry is reorganized into two branches & renamed "Division of Forestry & Fire Protection" to highlight the Division's evolved responsibilities

## Present Day

Three agencies, 375 million acres



Credit: Grabinski, Z. (2020). Burning again. *Alaska's Changing Wildfire Environment*, Grabinski, Z. and H.R. McFarland, [www.frames.gov/afsc/acwe](http://www.frames.gov/afsc/acwe).



# DOF FIRE PROTECTION PROGRAM MISSION & VISION



## Mission

Safely manage wildland fires that pose a threat to life, property, and critical infrastructure on 150 million acres of land throughout the State of Alaska.

## Vision

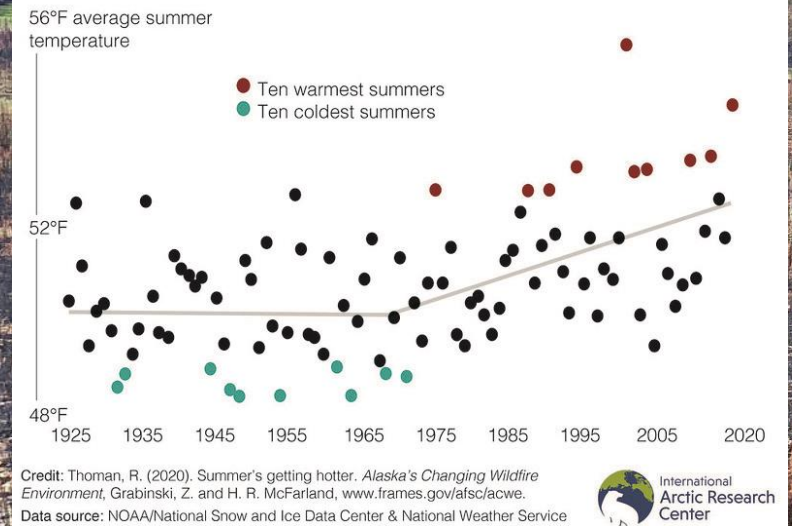
DOF envisions that by investing in the fire programs four primary functions we will benefit Alaskans.

- ✓ Preparedness
- ✓ Prevention
- ✓ Mitigation
- ✓ Suppression

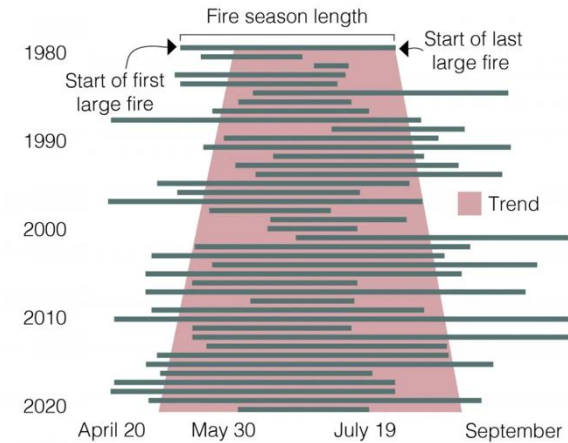
Our communities will be fire adapted and prepared, human-caused fires will be reduced, and we will have a well-trained and available workforce which will reduce suppression costs and provide increased public safety.

# ALASKA'S CHANGING WILDLAND FIRE ENVIRONMENT

## Increasing summer temperature in Alaska



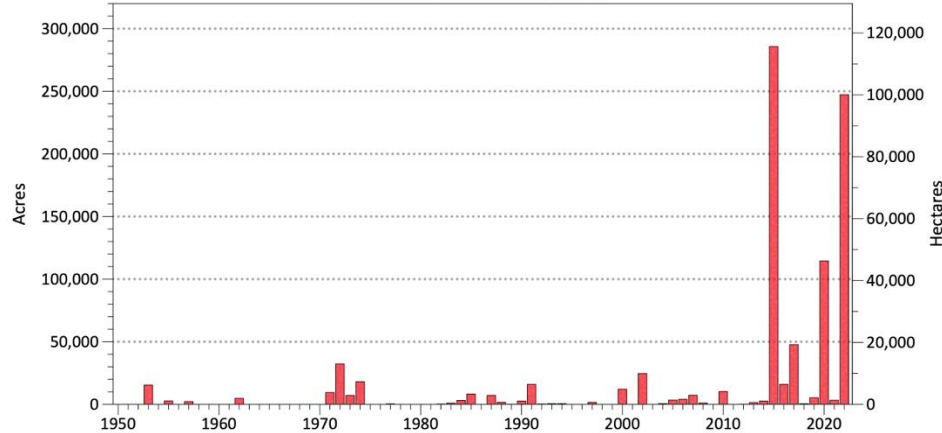
## Alaska's lengthening fire season



Credit: Grabinski, Z. (2020). Longer fire season. *Alaska's Changing Wildfire Environment*, Grabinski, Z. and H. R. McFarland, [www.frames.gov/afsc/acwe](http://www.frames.gov/afsc/acwe).  
Data source: Alaska Interagency Coordination Center

International Arctic Research Center

## Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, 1950-2022 Wildfire Area Burned

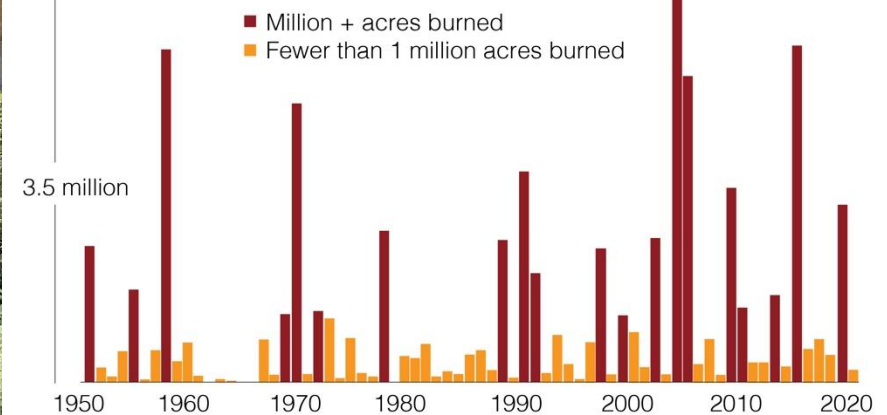


Data source: AICC, J. Christ, C. Waigl  
Updated through June 20, 2022



## Alaska wildfires are burning more acres

7 million acres burned annually

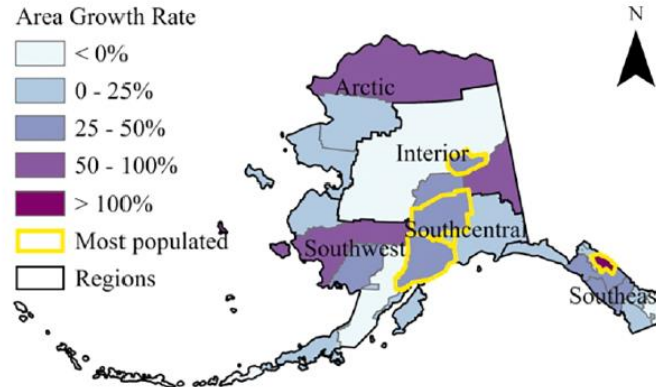
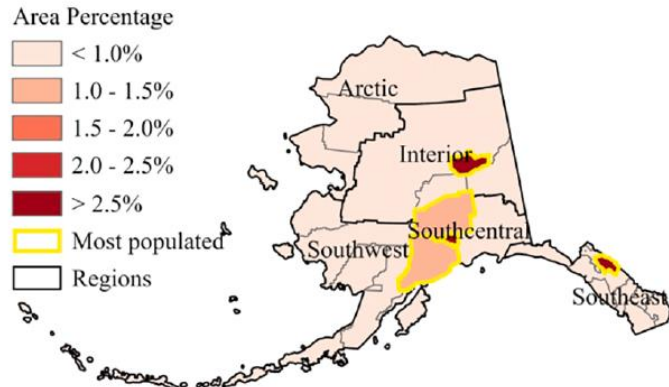


# ALASKA'S GROWING WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE

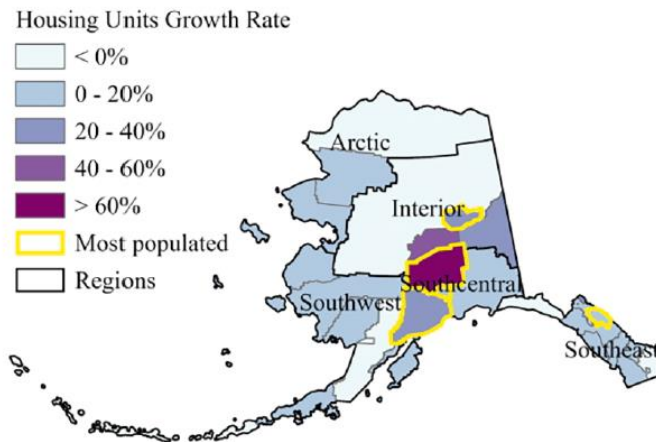
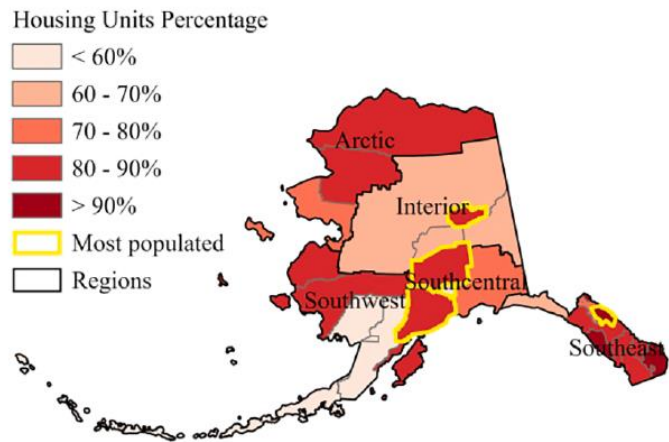
Proportion of borough in 2010

Growth rates compared to 2000

Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Area



Housing units in Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI)



73.5%

Alaska's total Housing units contained in WUI zones

85%

Newly added housing units were found in the WUI

16.4%

Alaska's population increase from 2000 (627,963) to 2020 (731,158)

Top 5

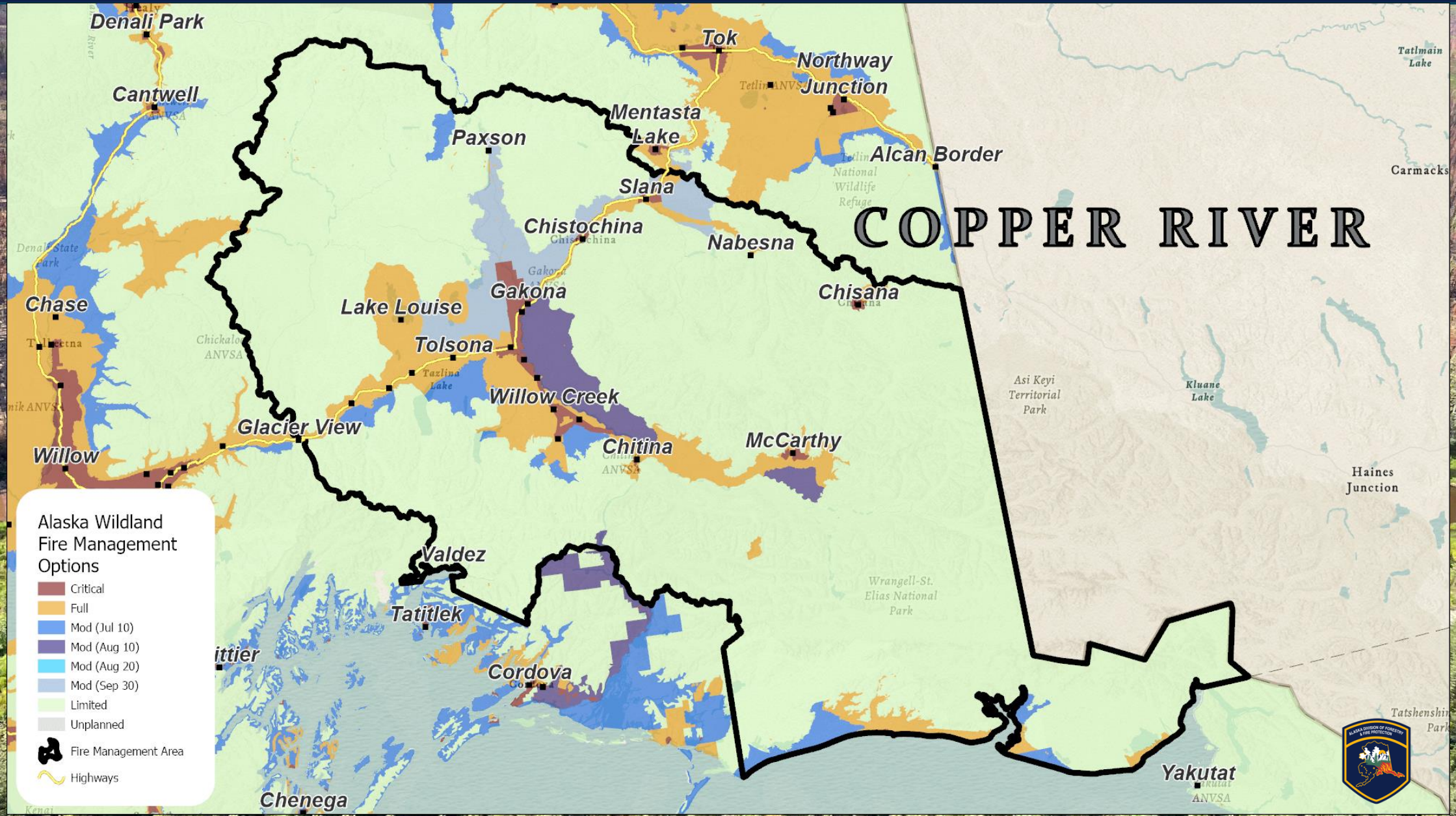
Alaska ranks 5th in the country for state with highest percentage of housing units in WUI

0 250 500 1,000 Kilometers

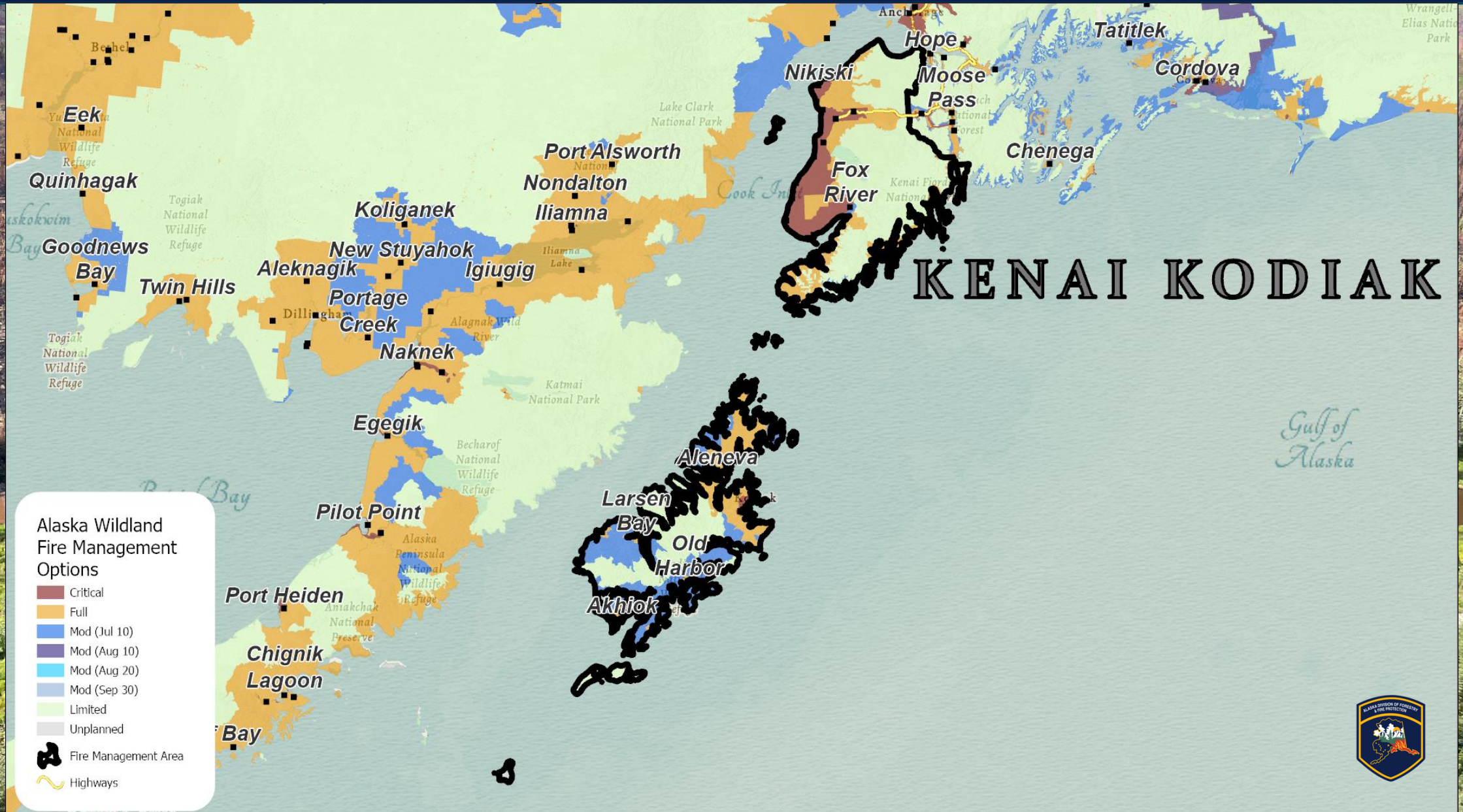
Credit: X. Liang, D. Liu, Z. Wang, and J. Wang (2022). Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) statistics summarized by borough. Characterizing the dynamics of wildland-urban interface and the potential impacts on fire activity in Alaska from 2000 to 2010. [https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Wildland-Urban-Interface-WUI-statistics-summarized-by-borough\\_fig3\\_363347106](https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Wildland-Urban-Interface-WUI-statistics-summarized-by-borough_fig3_363347106)



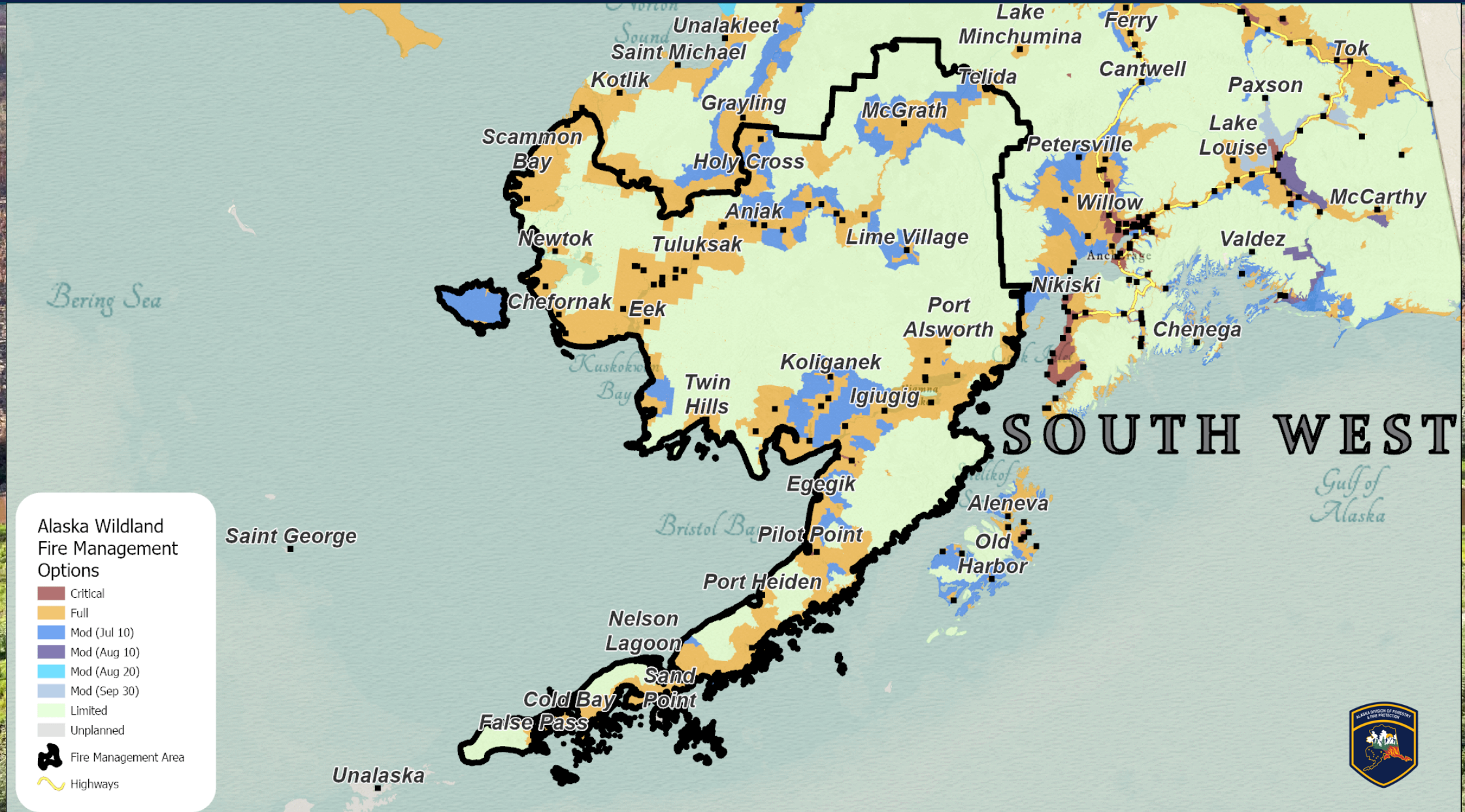
# VALDEZ-COPPER RIVER AREA MANAGEMENT OPTIONS



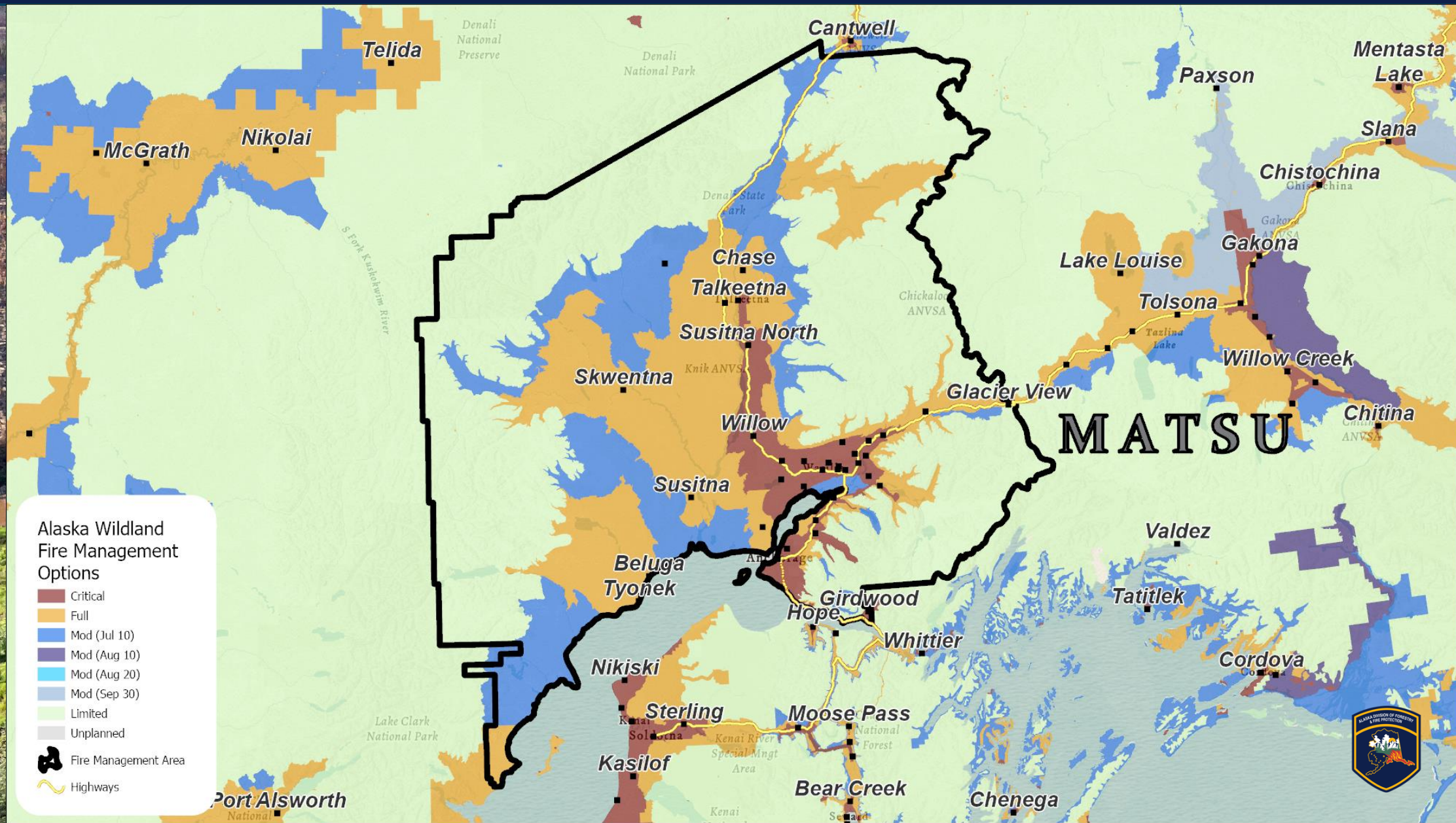
# KENAI-KODIAK AREA MANAGEMENT OPTIONS



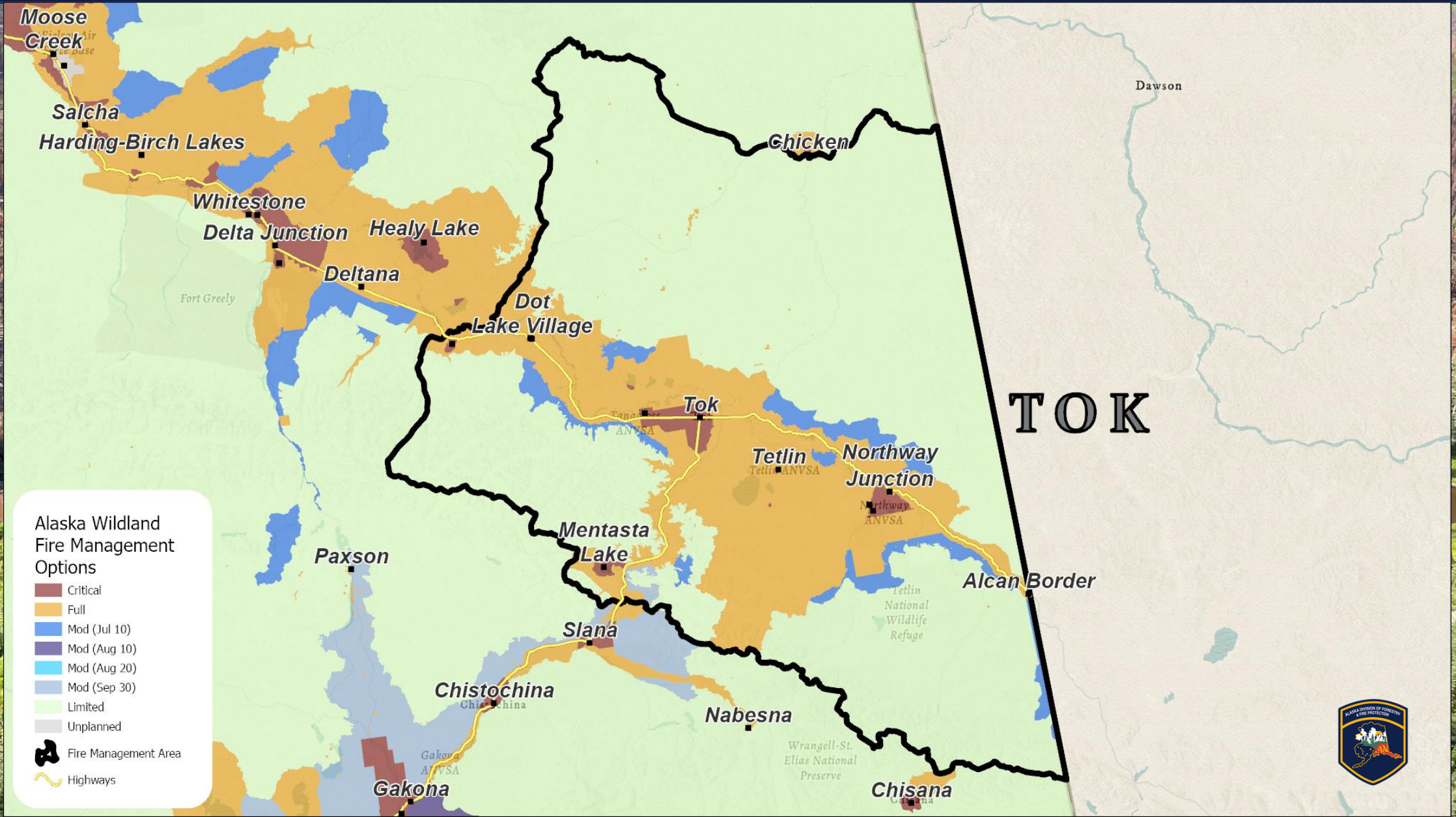
# SOUTHWEST AREA MANAGEMENT OPTIONS



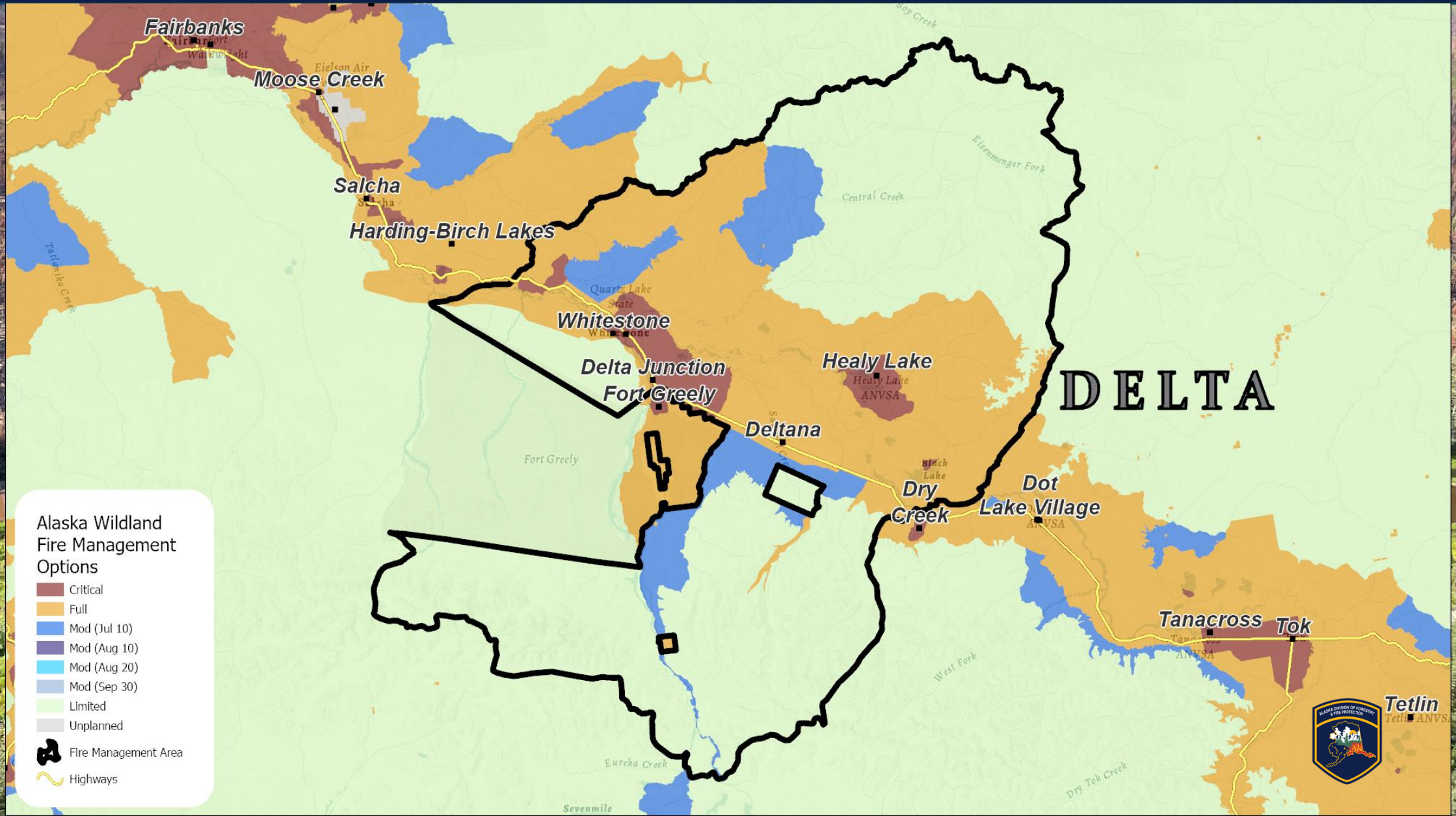
# MAT-SU AREA MANAGEMENT OPTIONS



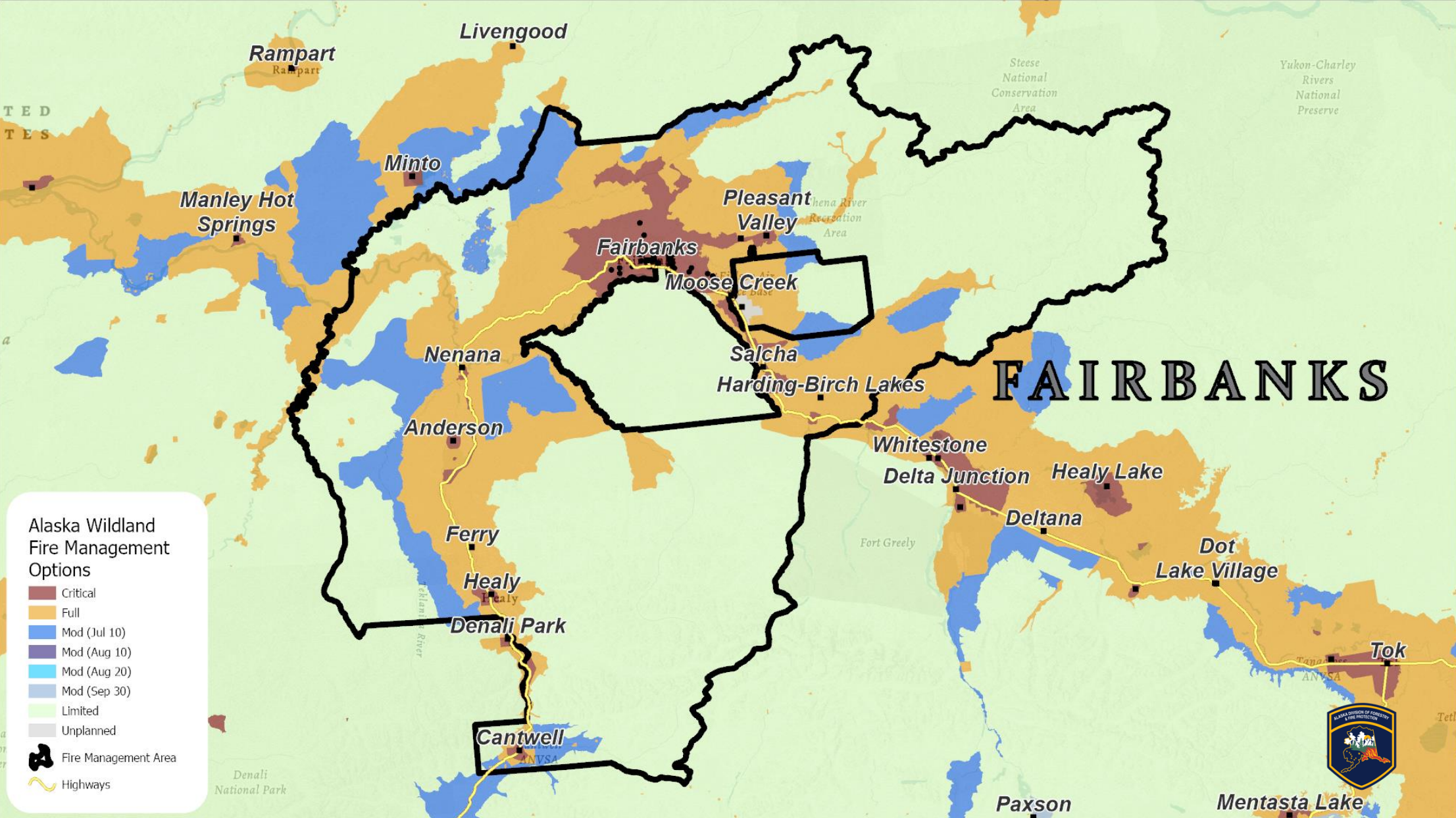
# TOK AREA MANAGEMENT OPTIONS



# DELTA AREA MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

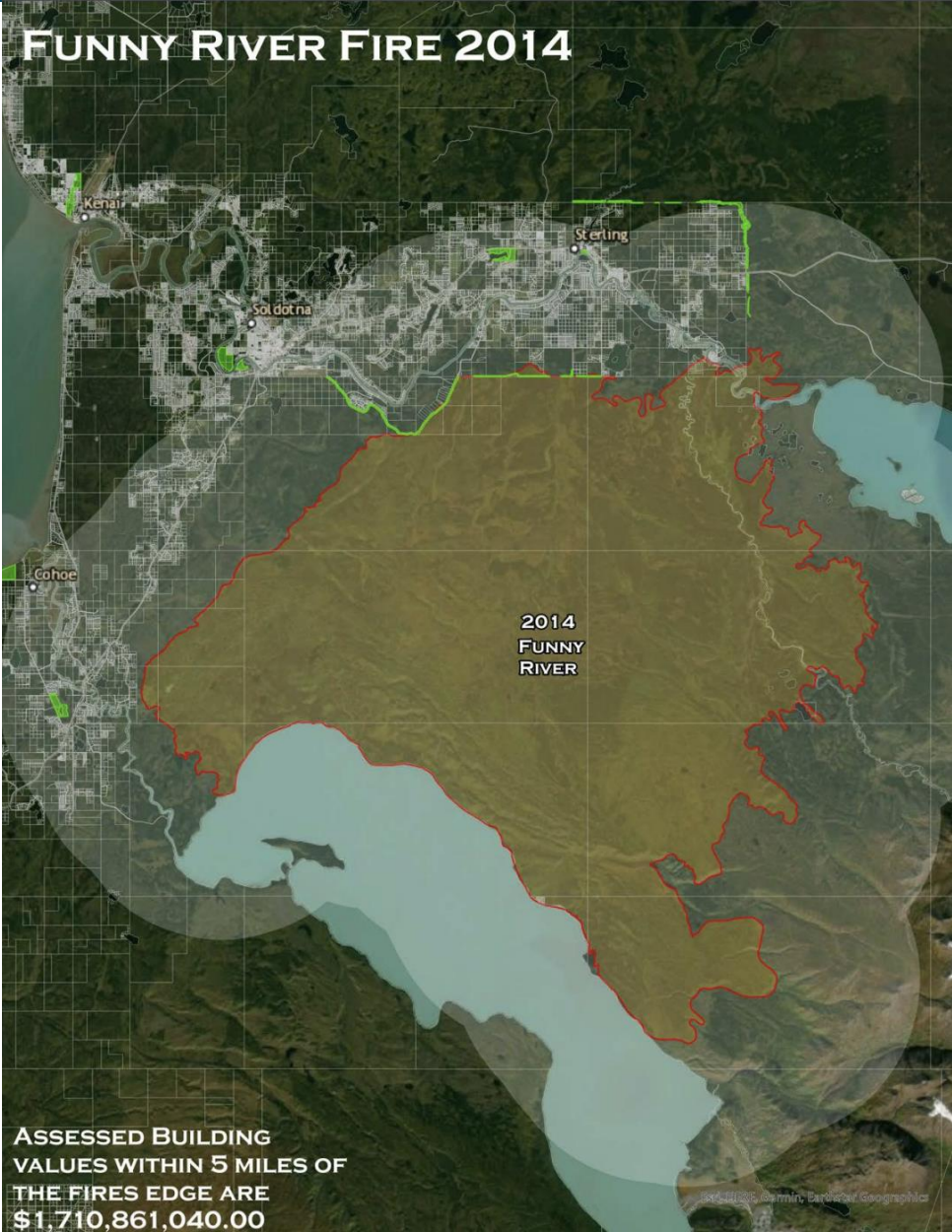


# FAIRBANKS AREA MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

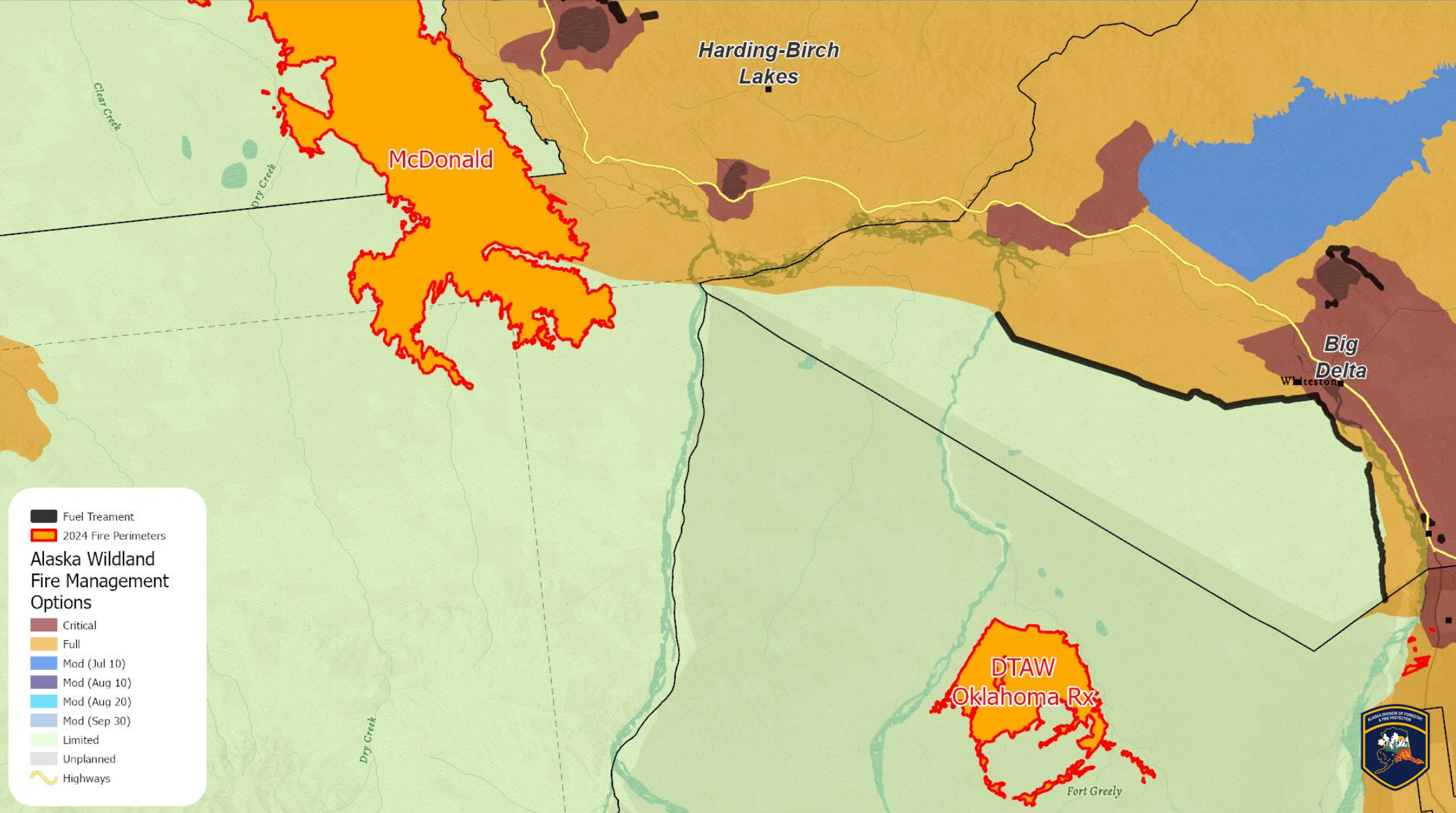


# MITIGATION & FUELS REDUCTION

## FUNNY RIVER FIRE 2014



# MITIGATION & FUELS REDUCTION



# McDONALD AND RILEY FIRE SUPPORT

2024 Riley Fire, Photo/DOF Jessi Morse



Harding Lake Fuel Mitigation Work 2024  
Photo/DOF Jessi Morse





**QUESTIONS?**

