

Fire funds extended

Juneau - Gov. Jay Hammond has renewed a disaster emergency declaration to authorize the use of appropriated funds to pay fire suppression costs.

Forest and grassland fires have been burning in central and interior Alaska since mid-May and the cost of fighting the fires has wiped out the funds available to pay for fire suppression activities.

Hammond declared a disaster

emergency in mid-June because "the threat of destruction by fire to life and property was of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant" providing total state assistance.

The statutory limit on such a declaration of a disaster emergency is 30 days, but the conditions that required the declaration in the first place still exist and require the allocation of available funds, Hammond said.