



RAGING FIRE—Vast distances, long hours of daylight, high temperatures, dry fuels, frequent lightning strikes, bad terrain, limited equipment and manpower, all com-

bine to make the task of protecting the lands in Alaska from fire one of the toughest assignments of its kind in the United States. —BLM Photo

BLM Warns of Fire Dangers

This time each year thousands of acres of land

are burned by carelessness. Who is to blame?

Everybody should be aware that a dropped cigarette, an untended campfire, a firecracker, or a land clearing burn can result in a conflagration which will leave lasting scars on our landscape and cost many tax dollars.

The Bureau of Land Management and the Alaska Division of Lands remind you there is a real danger in Alaska of repeating the 1966 fire season. Six hundred seventy-four thousand acres of land were burned over that season.

The tundra covered soils in many parts of Alaska are of little agricultural value, but they are important for reindeer, caribou, and other animals, and for sport hunters. The intermingled lakes, ponds and sloughs are production areas for major flights of waterfowl.

The destruction of ground cover by fire, seriously effects all of these and many other uses of the land.

In Alaska, there are laws pertaining to an individuals liability when he is careless or negligent in the use of fire.

Some pertinent points of the law are:

1. The period from April 1 to October 31 of each year is designated the fire season.

2. Throwing away any lighted material on public or private land is a misdemeanor.

3. Building a fire without clearing the ground around it is a misdemeanor.

4. Leaving a fire without totally extinguishing it is a misdemeanor.

5. Allowing a fire to escape is proof in itself of negligence and is a misdemeanor.

6. Malicious or wanton setting of fires is a felony.

7. In a civil action brought as a result of a violation of the fire laws, double the amount of damages sustained may be recovered.

The average individual would be hard put to pay for the cost of extinguishing even a small forest fire. If his carelessness or negligence resulted in a fire of any size and he were taken to court, he could be wiped out by having to pay double damages.

Therefore for your own protection as well as for the

common good everyone should exercise the utmost caution in the use of fire.