



**For immediate release  
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## **DCR SENDS 20 FIREFIGHTERS TO HELP BATTLE BLAZES IN ALASKA**

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) sent 20 state firefighters to Alaska to help battle the wildfires that have been caused by lightning strikes.

DCR Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr. responded to a request from the Northeastern Forest Fire Protection Compact for a crew from the Commonwealth. The DCR firefighters will join crews from other New Hampshire and New York as well as the National Park Service in the Fairbanks area of Alaska about twelve miles southwest of Nenana.

“We are extremely proud of the DCR firefighters who have been called upon to help the province of Quebec,” said DCR Commissioner Sullivan. “These are extremely well-trained and dedicated firefighters whose skills are needed there, and whose help, we know, is enormously appreciated.”

Massachusetts has been sending firefighters to help other states since 1985. The firefighters in question are federally certified for the work, having passed a 40-hour firefighting class and physical fitness test. All of DCR’s 34 full-time and 53 seasonal firefighters have taken the 40-hour course.

The DCR crew is called a “Type 2 hand crew,” and will engage in direct fire suppression. Crew members will work on the fire line building fire breaks, securing fire perimeters, containing fires, and protecting structures. For the most part, the firefighters will sleep in tents on the ground in fire camps.

The Northeastern Forest Fire Protection Compact is a partnership among the six New England states, New York, and the Canadian provinces of New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Quebec. The federal government will pay all expenses of the out-of-state crews, including salary, transportation, lodging, and food.

The deployed team includes DCR firefighters as well as local firefighters from various communities.

These DCR fire fighters are going to Alaska:

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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Deval L. Patrick  
Governor

Timothy P. Murray  
Lt. Governor

Ian A. Bowles, Secretary, Executive  
Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Richard K. Sullivan, Jr., Commissioner  
Department of Conservation & Recreation

Mark Teixeira (crew chief), South Dartmouth  
Robert Bromley, Whitinsville  
Shawn Bush, Sutton  
Christel Kalweit, Marstons Mills  
Roy Liard, Millville  
Jameson Lockhart, Florence  
Jacob Martinez, Florence  
Nicholas Neilan, Dartmouth  
Millard Ring, Rockport  
Christopher Siwik, Fairhaven  
Aaron Whiddon, Plymouth  
Gregory Whittier, Springfield

Firefighters from other communities:

Jeffery Belanger, Deerfield  
John Branscombe, North Brookfield  
Harold Fletcher, Westford  
Bruce Forgea, Windsor  
Charles Korby, Erving  
John Lightbody, Walpole  
George Nolette, North Brookfield  
David Woodsome, North Granby, CT

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*The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, dams, and parkways. Led by Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr., the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit [www.mass.gov/dcr](http://www.mass.gov/dcr). Contact us at [mass.parks@state.ma.us](mailto:mass.parks@state.ma.us).*