

## Community Firewise Workshop Presented at Slana Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, Alaska National Fire Plan – Community Assistance

On April 16, 2005, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (NP/P) staff, Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Forestry (DOF) and AK NPS Fire Management presented a new, interactive Firewise workshop for residents of Slana, Alaska. These workshops are designed for communities adjacent to or within NPS units.

Slana is a small community next to the northwest corner of Wrangell-St. Elias NP/P. Vicki Penwell, Wrangell-St. Elias Interpretive Ranger, welcomed participants and spoke about the significance of the workshop, especially in light of 2004, Alaska's largest fire season. James Savage, NPS Fire Management Forestry Technician, taught the group about the role of wildland fire, fire management in Alaska and local fire history.

Morgan Miller, NPS Regional Fire Communication and Education Specialist, talked about effective Firewise strategies that if implemented around the home, will reduce the risk of wildland fire. Following a Slana Parent Teacher Organization sponsored lunch, Pete Dalton, a park ranger at Wrangell-St. Elias, handed out copies of the fuel reduction special use permits and described that the permit authorizes work on public land within 100 feet of private landowner structures that could become endangered in the event of a wildland fire. Gary Mullen, AK DNR, DOF Copper Center Area Fire Management Officer, wrapped up the workshop with an interactive home assessment based on the Alaska Wildland Fire Coordinating Group home assessment form.

At the conclusion of the workshop all who participated agreed that they gained knowledge to understand and become Firewise. This accomplishment could not have been achieved without the terrific support from Wrangell-St. Elias NP/P staff.

Slana is the first of four community Firewise workshops that Alaska NPS Fire Management and fire interagency partners will present this season.

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*Gary Mullen talks to the group about home assessments. NPS Photo.*