



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Wrangell-St. Elias  
National Park/Preserve

P.O. Box 439  
Mile 106.8 Old Richardson  
Highway  
Copper Center, AK 99573

907-822-5234 phone  
907-822-7216 fax

## Wrangell-St. Elias National Park/Preserve News Release

August 2, 2009  
For Immediate Release  
Fire Information Office (907) 529-0511

### CHAKINA FIRE IN MONITOR STATUS

*This is the last update to be issued unless significant activity occurs*

**McCarthy, Alaska**— With the threat to developed areas at a very low level, resources assigned to the Chakina Fire have been reduced to one engine (McCarthy-Kennicott Volunteer Fire Department), one helicopter, and a small contingent of support staff. Daily activities will focus on monitoring and mapping the fire’s gradual growth and doing fire wise assessments around structures.

The fire perimeter will be mapped as smoke conditions allow and ecologists will continue to establish plots to study the effects of fire on the landscape.

Areas within the fire perimeter will continue to burn until significant rain or snow falls on the fire. Growth is primarily occurring on the southeast and northwest corners; no communities or developed areas are being threatened. Smoke will be evident in surrounding areas downwind from the fire; heavy smoke may occur at times dependant on weather conditions. Isolated torching and small areas of active fire may be seen from time to time, especially at night, as the fire backs across the landscape. Daily monitoring will track this activity and additional resources will be called should the need arise.

The mosaic pattern created across the fire area will ultimately improve wildlife habitat by diversifying the species composition and regenerating valuable forage species. This mosaic will also aid in reducing the likelihood and severity of future fires.

Total Acres	Crews	Engines	Helicopters	Total Personnel
52,344	0	1	1	12

**The road from Chitina to McCarthy is open.** Drive with headlights on and anticipate areas of heavy smoke and low visibility. **Pilots should check NOTAMs and Temporary Flight Restrictions.** They should also be aware of fire-related helicopter and fixed-wing traffic and decreased visibility. The local victor frequency is 122.9.

**For additional information.** In the McCarthy/Kennicott area, call **Elizabeth Schafer at (907) 554-1106** or **Stevens Harper at (907) 554-1144**; both are located at the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve office in Kennicott. Tim Whitesell (Incident Commander) will also be available in McCarthy. **Media should call Morgan Warthin, NPS contact in Anchorage, at (907) 644-3418.**

The website [www.nps.gov/wrst/parkmgmt/firemanagement.htm](http://www.nps.gov/wrst/parkmgmt/firemanagement.htm) is available, but no longer being updated.

-NPS-