



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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National Park/Preserve

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Wrangell-St. Elias National Park/Preserve

News Release

July 27, 2009

For Immediate Release

Fire Information Office (907) 529-0511

COOL WEATHER TAMPERS CHAKINA FIRE

McCarthy, Alaska— Fire activity moderated yesterday due to cool, moist weather. The Pioneer Peak Hotshot crew worked with property owners to reduce hazardous fuels at sites along the McCarthy Road and monitored areas along the Chitina River targeted by Saturday's burnout operations. The ignited fires continue burning together creating a solid buffer to prevent the fire from jumping the Chitina River.

The fire perimeter is not expected to grow significantly unless the weather turns hot and dry and fire activity increases. Helicopter crews conducted an aerial reconnaissance of the fire to map the perimeter and assess current and projected fire behavior. Smoldering and creeping fire activity continues to produce heavy smoke over the fire area with some drift smoke impacting local residents.

Today's efforts will focus on monitoring and mapping the fire perimeter. A strike team of engines and local volunteer fire department personnel will continue to do structural assessments on residences between McCarthy and Crystal Creek and help interested property owners create defensible space around their homes and other structures. To date 91 structural assessments have been completed and ten sites have had hazardous fuel reduction work done.

Smoldering and creeping fire behavior continues to create a mosaic of burn severity across the fire area. These conditions will contribute to a range of fire effects that improve regeneration of forage for wildlife while maintaining vertical cover. This mosaic will also aid in reducing the severity of future fires.

- **Total Acres:** 35,000
- **Crews:** 1 Type 1
- **Engines:** 4
- **Helicopters:** 2
- **Total Personnel:** 69

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, visit www.nps.gov/wrst/parkmgmt/firemanagement.htm , email chakinafireinfo@gmail.com, contact the local Fire Information Office at (907) 529-0511 or Tina Boehle, NPS contact in Anchorage for interviews: (907) 644-3414.

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