



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Wrangell-St. Elias  
National Park/Preserve

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## Wrangell-St. Elias National Park/Preserve

### News Release

July 31, 2009  
For Immediate Release  
Fire Information Office (907) 529-0511

### SMOKE FILLED SKIES COVER THE AREA

**McCarthy, Alaska**— Thursday was a smoke filled day over the McCarthy-Kennecott area. A helicopter had a small window of opportunity in the afternoon to monitor areas of the fire along the Chitina River. Smoke from the fire as well as from other fires burning within the state has contributed very smoky skies. A small crew of firefighters are stationed at Jake's Bar located on the Chitina River to check for any spotting across the river to the east.

A public meeting was held at ICP last night which focused on the current status of the fire and the future management of the fire. The fire perimeter was not mapped yesterday due to poor visibility. A moderate increase in the fire occurred on the southeast (south of Louise Lake), otherwise growth was minimal. Areas within the fire perimeter continued to burn together and produce areas of significant smoke.

Today's efforts will focus on mapping the fire perimeter and monitoring and checking for spotting across the Chitina River if conditions permit. Fuel reduction work will also continue. A transfer of command from a type 3 to a type 4 incident commander will take place today. Monitoring of the fire will continue until significant moisture is received on the fire. Resources continue to be demobilized as the need decreases.

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. The fire will continue to produce smoke over the fire area impacting local residents as internal area continue to burn.

- **Total Acres:** 49,365
- **Crews:** 0
- **Engines:** 1
- **Helicopters:** 1
- **Total Personnel:** 18

**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](http://www.nps.gov/wrst/parkmgmt/firemanagement.htm) , email [chakinafireinfo@gmail.com](mailto:chakinafireinfo@gmail.com), contact the local Fire Information Office at (907) 529-0511 or Morgan Warthin, NPS contact in Anchorage for interviews: (907) 644-3418.

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