



National Park Service  
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## Grand Canyon News Release

Release date: Immediate

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### **Fire Update: Grand Canyon National Park, August 6, 2009** Grand Canyon Fires Receive Precipitation Wednesday Evening The Cape Royal Road is Open with Delays

**Grand Canyon, Ariz.** -- The Cape Royal Road on the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park is open to visitor traffic. Restricted one-lane traffic on the road will be necessary as fire crews continue to work on clearing potential hazards. Possible delays can be expected between 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. in route to Cape Royal.

#### **Fire Activity**

The **Aspen Fire**, located on the Walhalla Plateau east of the North Rim developed area, received precipitation Wednesday evening, cooling visible fire activity. Fire growth and behavior is expected to respond to warmer temperatures and dry, gusty winds forecasted for today. The fire is now estimated at 2,148 acres and is spreading within the 2001 Vista Fire perimeter. The fire continues to burn in residual dead and down logs from the 2001 fire along with ponderosa pine, white fir and New Mexican locust tree re-growth.

Some Aspen Fire personnel will be released today and made available for reassignment due to reduced fire activity. Cooperating agencies include the National Park Service, the US Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Central Yavapai Fire District.

Five additional fires are currently being monitored and managed in Grand Canyon National Park. All are on the North Rim:

- The **Angel Fire** (9 acres) is now being suppressed.
- The **Butte Fire** has been declared out.
- The **Point Fire** has been declared out.
- The **Poplar Fire** (0.1 acres) is inactive.
- The **Thompson Fire** (1 acre) has been controlled and is in monitor status.

#### **Management Objectives**

Fire management objectives for the Aspen fire are to:

- Provide for public and firefighter safety.
- Minimize fire spread to the east of Cape Royal Road.

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- Avoid disturbance to any cultural or natural resources.
- Continue monitoring fire behavior and growth.
- Manage for natural resource benefit.

The natural resource benefits fire managers expect to achieve include: maintaining fire in a fire-dependent ecosystem, reducing heavy fuel loads that can increase the risk of large fires that exhibit undesirable fire behaviors and effects, recycling of nutrients and diversification of wildlife habitat.

### **Smoke**

Visible smoke from the Aspen Fire and other small fires on the North Rim has decreased given precipitation Wednesday evening. An increase in visible smoke is dependent upon local weather over the next several days. Smoke settling into Bright Angel Canyon is cumulative from multiple fires. Coordination with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality is ongoing.

### **Roads and Restrictions**

- The Cape Royal Road is open with areas of one-lane traffic. Possible delays can be expected between 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.
- All other roads and facilities in the park are open.
- Some backcountry restrictions may apply on the Walhalla Plateau as firefighters continue to manage the Aspen Fire. Check in at the North Rim Backcountry Office for the most current information.

For Aspen fire information, please contact Connie Birkland at 928-638-7066 or visit the fire's Inciweb page at <http://www.inciweb.org/incident/1782/>. For information on the Grand Canyon National Park fire management program, please visit the park's web site at: <http://www.nps.gov/grca/parkmgmt/firemanagement.htm>. For backcountry information in the park, please call the backcountry office at 928-638-7875.

Additional news releases about these fires will be posted as significant changes in size, fire activity or management objectives occur.

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