



**United States Department of the Interior  
KENAI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**

P.O. Box 2139  
Soldotna, Alaska 99669-2139  
(907) 262-7021



09084mf

Saturday, July 11, 2009, 7:00p.m.

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FIRE INFORMATION: (907) 260-2338 or (907) 260-2342

SUBJECT: Shanta Creek Fire Evening Update

**Fire Information Website:** <http://kenai.fws.gov> - **Email:** [r7shanta@fws.gov](mailto:r7shanta@fws.gov)

## **Weather Keeps Shanta Creek Fire Spread Minimal**

The Shanta Creek Fire moved slowly a short distance to the east this afternoon. At approximately 4:30 p.m., a tall “convection column” could be seen from high points on Funny River Road as the fire flared up in some pockets of beetle-killed spruce on the east flank of the fire, northwest of Horse Trail Lake. Fire managers noted this evening that the water drops made by helicopters have been very successful in cooling hot spots along the west flank east of Bay Lake.

Lower overnight temperatures, coupled with higher relative humidity during the evening hours are expected to slow fire spread during the evening and into Sunday morning.

While fire spread has been minimal, firefighters have been busy preparing for dry, windy weather predicted for the coming week. Bull dozers are being used to clear a contingency line along the Refuge boundary between the fire perimeter and private holdings out Funny River Road. In addition to the mechanical work, crews of firefighters are building fire line in areas inaccessible to the dozers. On the south side of Funny River Road north of the Refuge boundary, crews are reopening an old fuel break and enhancing its fire resistant capabilities.

Within the Refuge, starting south of crews are constructing “hand line” through a long muskeg swamp that starts near the trail head for the Horse Trail and extending southwest, toward Coal Creek Lake.

Residents can expect to see an increase in firefighters and firefighting equipment along Funny River Road for the next several days as these measures are taken to protect private holdings are developed.

**A Community Meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. on Sunday evening at the Funny River Community Center. A number of local officials and fire managers will present updates on the fire situation and will answer questions.**

Closure orders for trails or roads have not been issued as a result of the Shanta Creek Fire. There currently are no evacuation orders. A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) remains in place and is being monitored by the local Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). This restriction bans private aircraft from flying over or near the fire perimeter below 5,000 foot altitude within a 5 mile radius of the fire. Pilots may contact the FAA for further explanation of this restriction. The TFR will remain in place until further notice.

Currently there are more than 350 firefighters and support personnel assisting with the fire suppression efforts. **A Fire Information Center will be open from 7:00 a.m. and will be staffed until 10:00 p.m. daily until further notice. The phone numbers are as follows: (907) 260-2338 and (907) 260-2342.**

For additional information on this incident, please visit the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge web site at <http://kenai.fws.gov>, then click on the link for the Shanta Creek Fire or visit the Shanta Creek fire information on “InciWeb” at <http://www.inciweb.org/incident/1724/>. To comment or ask questions on the incident, please use the fire email address at [r7shanta@fws.gov](mailto:r7shanta@fws.gov).

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