



Division of Forestry

Alaska Department of Natural Resources



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

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

Shanta Creek Fire Information Update
Wednesday, July 15, 2009, 7:00 p.m.
Fire Information: (907) 260-2338 or (907) 260-2342

Fire Information Websites: <http://kenai.fws.gov> or www.inciweb.org/incident/1724/
Fire E-mail Address: r7shanta@fws.gov

Fire Activity Picks Up on Southeast Side of Shanta Creek Fire

Warm, dry weather brought a surge in fire activity to the Shanta Creek Fire today. While the fire made no advance to the north or west, the smoke from some interior burning and firing operations caught the attention of Soldotna and Funny River Road residents and tourists on local highways. At 5:00 p.m. this afternoon, a large convection column of heat and smoke was rising 4,000 feet into the air above the southeast corner of the fire in the vicinity of Horse Trail Lake along the headwaters of the Funny River. The wind here was out of the northwest, away from town. This area is more than 12 miles southeast of the closest homes along Funny River Road.

With good burning conditions brought on by the higher temperatures and lower relative humidity, firefighters were able to accomplish some of the burnout work deliberately planned for the southern end of the fire. This aerial firing was done at about 4:00 p.m. The smoke mingled with that of the main fire. Five hotshot crews (100 firefighters) continue to cold trail, mop-up and build fire breaks along the western and northern flanks of the fire and secure these portions of the fire's perimeter to keep the fire from further spreading towards homes. They will continue this work for the next few days, staying overnight on the fire line in order to reduce travel time and exposure.

Currently there are 496 firefighters and support personnel assisting with the fire suppression efforts, including: 10 fire engines; 4 bull dozers; 10 helicopters; air tankers and scoopers as needed; five Type 1 Hotshot crews; and 11 Type 2 Alaska Crews. The current fire size is 12,578 acres. Note the reduction in acres and fire size is a result of aerial mapping with GPS equipment giving a more accurate size.

There currently are no evacuation orders. Closure orders for trails or roads have not been issued as a result of the Shanta Creek Fire. A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) remains in place and is being monitored by the local Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). This restriction bans non-fire associated 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.

A Fire Information Center is open from 7:00 a.m. and staffed until 10:00 p.m. daily until further notice. The phone numbers are: (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 www.inciweb.org/incident/1724/.

To comment or ask questions on the incident, please use the fire e-mail address at r7shanta@fws.gov.

###