



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

Tuesday, July 21, 2009, 8:00 a.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 Officials Prepare for Transfer-of-Command

Fire officials with the National Interagency Management Organization (NIMO) will continue to manage the Shanta Creek fire for one more day before transferring command back to the Alaska Division of Forestry and Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. Beginning Wednesday morning, a Type 3 Incident Management Team, along with two Alaska Type 2 crews, two helicopters, an excavator, and an assortment of support personnel will take over management of the fire. This contingent of resources will continue monitoring the fire area and completing fireline rehabilitation work. The Shanta Creek Fire is now mapped at 13,221 acres.

Light rain continued to fall over the fire area most of Monday. Resources continue to also demobilize to their home units today and tomorrow. 155 personnel currently remain assigned. With the precipitation from the last two days little or no additional fire spread has occurred or is predicted. Remaining crews are continuing to complete rehabilitation work on the defensive lines constructed to prevent fire movement to the north. These lines will continue to provide protection from future fires that might start close to the Full Protection zone south of Funny River Road.

As this current low pressure and moisture pushes through the fire and potential warmer temperatures return, residents can expect to see isolated burning within the interior portions of the fire and on the southeast corner of the fire. This could produce some smoke visible to residences along Funny River Road. Land managers stress that allowing this interior burning and some fire spread toward the mountains (away from town) will help to reduce heavy fuel loads of beetle-killed spruce and enhance wildlife habitat values.

No evacuation notices for the Funny River Road area remain in effect. There are no roads or trails closed. **However, the Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) has now been lifted allowing local air traffic to resume their normal flying schedule.**

The Kenai Peninsula Borough continues to operate a slash disposal site at which residents within the Funny River Road area can drop off their wood slash and woody debris. No tires, trash or chemical disposal is allowed. Residents must continue to first check into the Funny River Road Central Emergency Services Station 5 on Mile 17, along Funny River Road. Please obey all signs and dispose of slash in designated areas only. The disposal site remains open 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., seven days a week.

The Fire Information Center remains open for one final day at the Skyview High School and will close at 6:00 p.m. today (July 21). The public can call the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters at (907) 262-7021 or the Alaska Division of Forestry at (907) 260-4262 with additional questions. The Incident Command Post at the Skyview High School will shut down on Wednesday morning. All fire resources will relocate to the Alaska Division of Forestry headquarters in Soldotna. NIMO Incident Commander Steve Gage would like to thank the community for allowing firefighters to use the school during the fire emergency.

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.

"Firewise Message"

With the recent welcomed rains coming to the Kenai Peninsula, local residents may breathe a sigh of relief that fire season is finally over....but, it's not. The rains are a good start with their cooler temperatures and rise in moisture, but the months of dry weather won't be erased with a single rain event. The fuels in the forested areas are still very dry and susceptible to fire. Remote Automatic Weather Stations, called RAWS stations, collect and measure the rainfall over a 24-hour period, beginning the evening of the 18th through the evening of the 19th. The three stations measured 7/100ths of an inch up to 14/100ths of an inch. That's a nice start, but it's not nearly enough rain to make the fire danger go away. Residences are asked to continue to be careful with fire and check local regulations and fire restrictions for their area.

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