

McKinley Fire

Update – Saturday, August 31, 2019 @ 9:00 a.m.

Norm McDonald, Incident Commander

Fire Information: 907-313-9826

Email: 2019.mckinley@firenet.gov

Web: www.akfireinfo.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AK.Forestry/>



Acres: 3,288

Containment: 88%

Personnel: 552

Start Date: 8/17/2019

Rain fell last night, the only measurable rain in the month of August. Unfortunately this rain only cools the ground surface. With such dry conditions, heat exists very deep in the ground which is unaffected by light rain.

Yesterday the Matanuska Electric Association reenergized all power lines in the fire area. The only residences without power are ones with damaged electrical meters. Firefighters continue to mop up around structures and around the fire perimeter. Mopping up means they meticulously search for hot spots and extinguish them 50 to 100 feet from the fire's edge to its interior. Crews have been using both handheld and drone-mounted infrared sensors to find these hot spots.

An emergency burn closure remains in effect. All burning, including campfires and charcoal grills, is prohibited in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough including campfires in fire pits or rings in designated campgrounds. This burn closure exists in the Kenai Peninsula as well.

The fire area remains a dangerous place with ash pits, fire-damaged trees, and other hazards. A "Level 2 – Set" evacuation level exists between milepost 81.5 and 92. A "Level 1 – Ready" evacuation level exists between mileposts 79 and 81.5. These evacuation levels are being re-evaluated and may be lowered this afternoon.

Weather: Some light rain fell last night, and any rain this morning should be scattered and minimal. Today should remain cool with cloudy skies. Sunday will have light sprinkles at most. A better chance of rain arrives on Monday with one tenth of an inch of rain expected over the fire. Winds this weekend will blow 5-8 mph from the southwest

Closures: A portion of Willow Swamp (Game Management Unit 14A) is closed due to the Doshka Landing Fire. For more info, visit the Alaska Department of Fish and Game website at <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/>. A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) exists over the McKinley Fire.

Disaster Assistance Information

Matanuska Electric Association. Members needing to be reconnected can call 907-761-9300 or visit www.meo.coop

State of Alaska Homeland Security Disaster Assistance. For individuals and families with damaged primary residences or essential personal property lost in 2019 Mat-Su fires. Register online at ready.alaska.gov or call 907-428-7000

Alaska Red Cross will be distributing emergency relief supplies and providing recovery casework and planning services at the Upper Susitna Senior Center. Relief supplies will also be available Sheep Creek Lodge. To reach a recovery caseworker call 907-764-2407

The Parks Highway remains open through the burned area with a speed limit of 45 mph. Be prepared to stop in this zone where crews and equipment continue working. Road updates available at 511.alaska.gov

Matanuska Susitna Borough will accept debris caused by the McKinley and Doshka Landing Fires at no cost at specific locations. For more information the Solid Waste Division can be reached at 907-861-7600

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) can assist with health and safety issues including air quality, drinking water, food safety and sanitation, wastewater, solid waste, and hazardous substances. Reach the ADEC Disaster Coordination Team at 907-269-4198

Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) distributes donations like clothes, shoes, winter gear, bedding, and food. They have locations in Big Lake, Wasilla, Talkeetna, and Willow. 907-745-5827

Team Rubicon can provide assistance with debris removal and clean up. Team Rubicon unites the skills and experiences of military veterans with first responders to rapidly deploy emergency response teams. 360-975-7944