



Fire Update

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Smokejumpers, Water Scoopers Subdue Fire Near Venetie

(FAIRBANKS, Alaska) – Smokejumpers, aided by water-scooping aircraft, were able to get around a new lightning-caused fire burning 25 miles northeast of Venetie today. The **Flooded Lake Fire (#288)** was one of two new-lightning caused fires Thursday in the BLM Alaska Fire Service Upper Yukon Zone that covers the northeastern portion of Alaska. Twenty smokejumpers were deployed to the fire Thursday night. With the help from two airplanes guiding six Fire Boss scoopers, two CL-415 large scoopers and a large air tanker, they were able to stop the fire from growing larger than nine acres today. The BLM AFS Midnight Suns Hotshots were assigned to the fire and are scheduled to arrive today. The fire was running, creeping, torching and spotting up to quarter a mile ahead of the fire front. It was burning at a moderate rate of speed in thick black spruce with some hardwoods in a full protection area. No nearby ponds or lakes are available for firefighters to tap into when fighting the fire creating challenges for crews on the ground.

The two new fires brings the Upper Yukon Zone's total active fire count to 20 with four staffed, including the **Isom Creek Fire (#187)** burning near the Dalton Highway Yukon River Crossing. Most fires in the region are being monitored and are not threatening people or property. Minimal to no rain fell on fires Thursday night but light rain and isolated thunderstorms are forecast today for much of the region. Precipitation and humidity may moderate fire behavior but won't be sufficient to extinguish fires.

The **Mount Schwatka Fire (#287)** was the first of two new fires reported on Thursday. Personnel aboard a BLM AFS aircraft reported this fire at 1.5 acres creeping in sub-alpine brush and hardwood mix. It is burning in a limited management area about 77 miles southwest of Fort Yukon and will be monitored.

Firefighters surrounded the **Porcupine Fire (#249)** with hose and began spraying the burned area inside the line to cool the edge of the fire. Crews will be working to widen the blackened edge of the fire to 50 feet and keep the sawline clear of blown down trees. Firefighters report little to no rain last night but light rain and isolated thunderstorms are forecast for today and tomorrow. Due to the jagged edge of the fire, mop up is expected to take several days and no demobilization date has been projected. Firefighters identified an osprey next in a white spruce and made sure the tree was outside the fire line to protect the chicks. Crews have also seen one black bear which has not threatened any firefighters. The Porcupine Fire started Saturday and is estimated at 185 acres burning about 17 miles northeast of Fort Yukon in the Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge.

The Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments, or CATG Type 2 contract crew is continuing mop up activities on the **Ninemile Lake Fire (#270)**. Firefighters are working in from the edge, spraying water and cutting and burning downed trees to reduce fuels and the chance of fire escaping the perimeter. The Ninemile Lake fire was started by lightning on Monday and is estimated at 10 acres burning about 30 miles south of Fort Yukon.

For more information, contact the Alaska Interagency Fire Information Office at (907)356-5511.

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