



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve News Release

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Firefighters Continue Work on Cultas Creek Fire in Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve

Fairbanks, Alaska: Firefighters continue work to protect historical cabins from the 32,645-acre Cultas Creek Fire (#223) burning in the Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve. This lightning-caused fire started on June 17, and is burning on both sides of the Charley River upriver from the Yukon River. Fire behavior is predicted to be most active near the mouth of the Charley River. Recreationalists should be mindful of fire activity and smoke in the area and take steps to ensure that their activities do not start a wildfire.

Twelve firefighters from the National Park Service (NPS) and the BLM Alaska Fire Service are basing out of Coal Creek Camp. Work to clear brush and set up sprinkler systems around the historical cabins at Ben Creek and Sam Creek, and the nearby Remote Area Weather Station (RAWS) started on July 3. The fire was within a mile of the Sam Creek cabin and 2.5 miles from the Ben Creek cabins on July 16th. If a rapid increase in fire behavior or activity is experienced, efforts will be upscaled to ensure confidence in the survival of these Gold Rush era sites. The NPS has a helicopter on site and personnel are providing support.

NPS fire management staff have implemented years of fuel reduction projects around both cabin sites. Multiple brushing and burn pile mitigations, including this past spring, have greatly reduced the current and future demand for firefighter support and firefighting resources.

Fire in Alaska's boreal forest is an essential process that restores ecosystem health and helps maintain species diversity. The NPS works with its interagency partners, neighboring communities, and other stakeholders to balance the risks and benefits of wildland fire when making decisions on fire management. Firefighters report that the fire has burned in a mosaic pattern of varying degrees of severity, often leaving pockets of unburned vegetation. The fire will continue to burn and exhibit smoke until it receives a significant amount of precipitation that typically comes with a season-ending weather event.

Landowners can decrease risk to their property by taking steps to make cabins and other structures more defensible against wildfire.

Additional park information is available by calling the Eagle Visitor Center at (907) 547-2343 or the Fairbanks Alaska Public Lands Information Center at (907) 459-3730.

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