



Nenana Ridge Complex Update

July 27, 2025

Bonanza Creek Fire (#238): 12,586 acres, 19% containment

Goldstream Creek Fire (#270): 20,483 acres, 41% containment

Personnel: 304

Evacuation Information: Evacuation levels were downgraded Monday, July 21st by the Fairbanks North Star Borough and the Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management along the Parks Highway corridor.

● Level 3 'GO!':

- Outside the Borough: From the borough's western edge, 4.5 miles west; from Sled Road north for 7 miles from the Alaska Railroad. This includes Standard Creek Road and nearby timber harvest access areas. The areas more than ½ mile west of the highway corridor from MP 317 to the borough boundary. The areas more than ½ mile east of the highway corridor from MP 312 to the borough boundary and to the Tanana River east of the Maich Logging Rd.
- Inside the Borough: Zones include Skinny Dick's Logging Road, Nenana Ridge Forestry Road and Bonanza Creek Forestry Area.

● Level 2 'SET':

- Outside the Borough: Residents within ½ mile on each side of the highway from MP 317 north to the borough boundary.
- Inside the Borough: Residents with ½ mile on each side of the highway from the borough boundary to north MP 338. The Standard Cache zone that includes the middle portion of Standard Creek Road and the beginning of Cache Creek Road.

● Level 1 'READY':

- Outside the Borough: Parks Highway MP 308-317 extending west of the highway to include homes along Little Goldstream Road, agricultural areas, and the Alaska Railroad. Extending east of the highway to include homes and agricultural areas west of the Maich Logging Rd, including Farmview Subdivision.
- Inside the Borough: Evacuation zones Parks Mile 338-342, Old Nenana Highway, Standard Creek, Old Ridge Trail, and Cache Creek Road.

Fire Weather: Sunday will be mostly sunny with a slight chance of showers in the afternoon. Temperatures will fall between 73 and 79 degrees with a minimum relative humidity of 43%. Winds in the valleys will be northeast at 5 mph in the morning and light and variable in the afternoon. At the ridge tops, winds will be light and variable in the morning, picking up later in the day to west, northwest at 5-10 mph.

Fire Update: Black spruce, the predominant fuel type on the Nenana Ridge Complex, is highly susceptible to wildfire. Its dense, resin-rich branches grow from the crown to the base, creating excellent vertical continuity.

This allows flames to easily travel from the forest floor to the treetops. The needles, bark, and cones contain volatile oils that burn intensely, and the species is known to dry quickly after rain.

These trees often grow in dense, continuous stands, contributing to rapid fire spread. Over time, a thick layer of duff—composed of dead needles and decomposing branches—accumulates beneath them. This peat-like material can retain heat for days or even weeks, allowing fire to smolder undetected and later reemerge. Once the base of the spruce ignites, fire can climb easily to the canopy, initiating crown fire behavior. Crown fires are some of the most volatile and fast-moving wildfires, capable of throwing embers ahead of the main front and igniting new fires—a phenomenon known as spotting.

While the fire may appear out from the surface, the slow, repetitive, and thorough work firefighters perform ensures that no hidden embers remain. Snagging operations targeting tangled, jack-strawed piles of trees not only reduce safety hazards but also help prevent reignition from heat embedded in the duff layer below.

On Saturday, firefighters focused on jack-straw patches and hotspots within the duff layer. The northern perimeter of Goldstream Creek Fire remained quiet, as reported from continued monitoring and patrol. Pike Hotshots returned to an uncontained section north of Skinny Dick's Road and west of their spike camp, working to reinforce control lines along the southern edge of the Goldstream Creek Fire. Nulato Hills Type 2 Crew also cleaned up dozer line along the western portion of the fire, east of the Alaska Railroad.

Engine crews patrolled the southern edge of the Bonanza Creek Fire that runs along the Tanana River. Firefighters gridded along the edge of the fire near south of the Bonanza Creek, moving southeast down the line, searching for and working any hotspots. There is a sizable area of jack-strawed trees near the North Sky Lodge that saw work from a masticator on Saturday. Crews continued to work sections along the Parks Highway corridor, felling and hot spotting. Yukon Type 2 Initial Attack Crew and White Mountain Type 2 Initial Attack Crew finished snagging operations on the Nenana Ridge logging road.

Heavy equipment, hazard trees, ash pits, and highway traffic remain potential hazards. As hunting season approaches, hunters and recreators are asked to stay out of the fire areas due to ongoing safety concerns. Crews are still actively engaged in firefighting operations.

No Drone Zone: Flying drones near wildfires is illegal and extremely dangerous, often leading to the grounding of firefighting aircraft and potentially causing harm to firefighters and property. A Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) is in place over the Nenana Ridge Complex. For more information go to <https://tfr.faa.gov>

Road Safety: As you drive the Parks Highway, you may not see much firefighting activity, but crews are working deeper in the fire area and are still accessing these areas via the highway. Please use extra caution and watch for firefighters and equipment, especially from MP 318 to 340. Pilot car operations are taking place through an active construction zone unrelated to fire activities. For more information about this construction project go to: <https://dot.alaska.gov/nreg/parks319to325/>. For real-time road updates, visit 511.alaska.gov.

More Information: For official updates, visit Alaska Wildland Fire Information at akfireinfo.com or follow facebook.com/AK.Forestry.

For the interactive Alaska Wildland Fire Information Map Series go here: <https://arcg.is/1a0yT03> For video briefings and more fire-related content from the Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection, visit our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@AlaskaDNRDOF>

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