

# Sourdough Fire Morning Update – Saturday, August 26, 2023

North Cascades National Park

Northwest Incident Management Team 8, Incident Commander Kevin Stock

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Inciweb: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/warlp-sourdough-fire>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NorthCascadesNationalPark>

**Resources:** 205 Total Personnel | 2 Hand Crews | 3 Engines | 3 Water Tenders | 3 Helicopters



**\*\*State Route 20 (SR 20) is open to through-travel only (no stopping or pulling over). Area, trail, and camp closures remain in effect between mile 120 (Newhalem) and 139 (east NPS boundary), as well as other areas along SR 20 due to the Blue Lake Fire. Diablo Lake, Diablo Lake Overlook, Maple Pass, and other areas are not accessible.**

**As we head into the weekend, we urge everyone traveling on SR 20 to exercise extra caution. Firefighters are actively working in the area, and potential gravity hazards like falling rocks and debris may still pose a risk. Please remain vigilant and adhere to all posted signage.\*\*For more information, go to: <https://www.nps.gov/noca/planyourvisit/fire-closures.htm>**

**(Newhalem, Wash.)** -- The Sourdough Fire started with a lightning strike on July 29 near Diablo in the Ross Lake National Recreation Area, 7 miles northeast of Newhalem. The size of the fire remains at approximately 6,138 acres with 25% containment.

The current suppression strategy involves obtaining full containment along the southern portion of the fire that includes SR 20 as well as other infrastructure such as buildings, utility corridors, and other values at risk. In the remote areas of the fire to the north, where the fire continues to burn through drought-stricken forest, the strategy is to keep the fire confined on the west and eastern flanks using natural features and past fire scars. Firefighters are prepared to take action if the fire endangers any values. Incident managers continuously evaluate and refine these management strategies, working toward a clear end state of ensuring the safety and protection of communities, infrastructure, and resources.

**Yesterday:** The cloud coverage and cooler temperatures decreased fire activity. This aided reconnaissance flights to monitor the fire's progression, focusing on the east and west flanks. No concerns were found along the perimeters. Mop-up operations continued with the intention of reinforcing existing containment lines. Incident managers, division heads, park specialists, and resource advisors (READs) met to discuss and evaluate ongoing suppression repair strategies and guidelines for their effectiveness at returning damaged or disturbed areas to natural conditions.

**Today's planned activities:** With SR 20 now open to through-travel, firefighters will continue to take appropriate safety precautions around traffic while conducting patrol and mop-up operations. Equipment no longer needed on the fireline is being backhauled or transported back to the fire camp to be prepared for future use on other incidents. Suppression repair operations will continue today along the secured fireline. Reconnaissance flights will be flown with a key focus on the Sourdough drainage and 2015 Goodell burn scar perimeters.

**Weather:** The fire area received light showers, but precipitation had minimal effect on overall fire behavior. East winds are predicted over the fire area this morning (Saturday), with southerly winds taking over in the afternoon. This weekend, increased temperatures and critical fire conditions arising from hot, dry, and unstable atmospheric conditions are expected. Another front moving in early next week brings the potential for more precipitation.

**Safety:** Firefighter and public safety will be a priority as SR 20 is now open to through-travel in the fire area. Fire danger remains extremely high. The public can help prevent the next wildland fire by observing outdoor burning bans and avoiding other common ignition causes. This is a no-recreation drone zone. Recreational drones pose serious risks to firefighter and public safety and the effectiveness of wildfire suppression efforts. Aerial firefighting is suspended when recreational drones are in the air.

**Smoke:** Information about current conditions and a smoke forecast is located at: <https://wasmoke.blogspot.com>.

For information on how you can prepare for wildfire smoke, go to: <https://www.cdc.gov/air/wildfire-smoke/default.htm> and <https://www.wildlandfiresmoke.net/smoke-ready>

**Closures and Evacuations:** Area, trail, and camp closures remain in effect. For more information, go to: <https://www.nps.gov/noca/planyourvisit/fire-closures.htm>