



Miners Complex fire

Incident Commander: Kent Stanford

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2:00 PM, July 21, 2024

Estimated size: 500 acres
Start Date/Time: July 17, 2024
Area of Origin: 21 air miles east of Darrington WA
Cause: Lightening
Fuels/Topography: timber, rugged terrain
Structures Damaged: None, there are no homes threatened at this time.

The Miners Complex consists of nine wildfires caused by lightning strikes in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. The fires included in the complex are: Miners Fire, Vista Ridge Fire, Dolly Creek Fire, Sulphur Three Fire, Sulphur Four Fire, Sulphur Thirty-Four Fire, Upper Sulphur Thirty-Two Fire, Lower Sulphur Thirty-Two Fire, and Plummer Fire.

Closures:

Trails: Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail #2000.2 from Mica Lake to Suiattle Pass, Suiattle River Trail #784, Miners Ridge Trail #785, Buck Creek Pass Trail #789, Miners Cabin Trail #795, Grassy Point Trail #788, and Sulphur Mountain Trail #794.

Campgrounds and Roads: Cascade River Road at and including Marble Creek Campground, Mineral Park Campground, and all tributary roads, trailheads, and trails.

Full closure orders available at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/mbs>

Evacuations: None, there are no homes threatened at this time.

Update:

Yesterday: Fire managers reported active fire growth for a second day in a row on multiple lightning fires burning in and around the Glacier Peak Wilderness. During a recon flight, another fire was discovered in the Miners Complex called Plummer Fire. Extremely dense, record dry timber spurred fire growth on the Miners Complex of wildfires burning along Sulphur Mountain near the top of the Upper Suiattle Valley in Snohomish County. While crews continued sweeping popular trails for backpackers, helicopters dropped water to cool off hot spots.

“Wildfires love hot weather and bone-dry forests,” said Kit Moffitt, Interim Fire Staff Officer for the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. “Add dense forests and steep slopes to the mix and we’re bracing for these fires to be extremely difficult for the foreseeable future.”



To help increase public safety, backcountry permits are no longer being issued for areas within the closure orders and road access along the Cascade River Road is fully blocked to up-river entry at Mable Creek Campground (Mile Post 8). Hikers with vehicles currently parked above the road closure will be allowed to leave for their own safety.

Today: Western Washington Type 3 Incident Management Team took over command of the Miners Complex beginning July 21, 2024. With this added support, firefighters will continue to engage where terrain and conditions allow them to safely do so. However, few natural holding features and no existing roads in deep Wilderness severely limit effective options to quickly corral any of these fires. In other words, traditional firefighting tools to put in containment lines like dozers, water tenders, and engines are not an option.

“Our goal in responding to these wildfires is life-safety above all else- firefighters, pilots, hikers and more,” added Moffitt. “We’re going to protect what we can but nothing out there is worth a life.”

Additional dry lightning storms are forecasted for the area on Sunday followed by increasing winds into Monday all adding to the difficulty of these fires.

Smoke: In Western Washington, air quality is likely to remain “good” to “moderate” over the weekend across the lowlands. There could be some wildfire smoke/haze from larger Oregon fires passing through at upper levels of the atmosphere on Sunday. So, skies might look a bit less blue than normal but it’s unlikely to affect surface air quality. That being said, those folks seeking out recreation activities in higher elevations of the Olympics and Cascades could have some air quality impacts on Sunday similar to those described for the eastern half of the state. For more information on smoke and air quality please visit: <https://wasmoke.blogspot.com/>

Air Space Restrictions: There are no air space restrictions at this time.

Campfire Restrictions: The Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie will be elevating to a full campfire ban, even in developed campgrounds, starting Wednesday July 24, 2024 to help prevent human-caused starts in this critically dry period. Additional details at: www.fs.usda.gov/mbs

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