



Incident Information and Media Contact:
2024.kachesscomplex@firenet.gov
+1 509-213-5804

Kachess Complex Fire Update

August 15th, 2024

Reported date: August 9th & 10th, 2024
Cause: Lightning
Total complex size: ~22
Personnel: 192

Fuels: Timber, timber litter, timber understory
Strategy: Full Suppression
Fire behavior: Smoldering, creeping

CLE ELUM, Washington: The Kachess Complex, a group of three lightning-sparked fires, started in the Cle Elum Ranger District of the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest between August 9 and 10, 2024. Size and acreage have been revised due to more accurate mapping. However, the acreage for the Stave Creek fire remains approximate due to the challenging terrain that limits access.

The Kachess Complex Includes:

- **Stave Creek Fire:** Approximately 12 acres and 0% contained located on steep and rugged terrain. Firefighters are actively reinforcing the fire line along the eastern flank, while hot shot crews are assessing both direct and indirect tactics for the northern and northwestern sides. The western flank will maintain support through helicopter bucket drops to control the fire's spread. Given the remote location of the Stave Creek Fire, a dozer line is being constructed to facilitate firefighter transport in case of an emergency.
- **Thomas Fire:** Currently 9 acres and 50% contained. Firefighters have established a handline around the entire perimeter and are now concentrating on mop-up operations within a 50-foot interior zone. Additionally, hoses have been deployed around the perimeter to provide supplementary water for firefighting efforts. Access to the Thomas Fire is by helicopter only and all 48 personnel will anticipate extraction later this afternoon.
- **Waptus:** Currently ½ acre and 100% contained. Firefighters were able to complete a thorough grid of the fire yesterday and concluded it was out. All fire personnel were extracted via helicopter yesterday afternoon.

Message from the Incident Commander, Lino Baca: “Ensuring the safety of firefighters is the top priority for handling these remote and hard-to-reach fires. The team is focused on controlling the spread of each blaze to ensure that, upon departure, the forest can safely move toward containment. For the Stave Creek fire, which is particularly challenging due to its steep and rugged terrain, various strategies are being assessed to manage and limit the fire's growth effectively and safely.”

Location: On the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest northwest of Cle Elum. The Stave Creek and Thomas fires are between Kachess and Cle Elum Lake. The Waptus fire is further north in the wilderness near Waptus Lake.

Safety: The health and safety of firefighters and the public are always the top priority. Members of the public should avoid the Kachess Complex area. A new TFR (temporary flight restriction) is in effect around the fire otherwise noted. Unmanned aircraft such as drones pose a serious risk to firefighting and can cause air operations to cease. The public is reminded that **“If you fly, we can’t!”**. **Temporary flight restriction:** https://tfr.faa.gov/save_pages/detail_4_8687.html

Closures: There are no closures in place for the Kachess Complex, however, the public is encouraged to avoid the surrounding trails of the Stave Creek and Thomas Fires. Fire restrictions are in effect on the Cle Elum Ranger District, for additional information visit: https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/okawen/alerts-notices/?cid=fsbdev3_053600.

Smoke: Minimal smoke may be visible from the towns of Cle Elum, Roslyn, Easton, and Snoqualmie Pass area. Information on air quality can be found at <https://fire.airnow.gov/>.



<https://linktr.ee/KachessComplex>