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## Kachess Complex Fire Update

August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Reported date:** August 9th & 10<sup>th</sup>, 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. Fire fighters and aviation resources have been working tirelessly to contain the three fires in very difficult to access terrain. A REMS team (Rapid Extraction Module) have been staged on the Stave Creek Fire to assist in medical extraction if an injury were to occur. A dozer line was recently built off an existing road system as an alternate extraction method in the event of an emergency.

### The Kachess Complex Includes:

- **Stave Creek Fire:** Approximately 12 acres and 0% contained located on steep, rugged, and remote terrain. Firefighters have been reinforcing the eastern flank and exploring different strategies for safely containing the western flank. Due to the remote location of the Stave Creek Fire, a dozer line has been built to enable firefighter access in emergencies if aircraft cannot be used. Aerial bucket drops will keep targeting the fire as weather conditions permit.
- **Thomas Fire:** Currently 9 acres and 76% contained. Firefighters completed mop-up operations and grided the entire fire for heat. Yesterday afternoon all 48 personnel that were inserted on the Thomas fire for multiple days were extracted safely via helicopter. A recon flight is scheduled today to monitor for any remaining smoke.
- **Waptus:** Currently ½ acre and 100% contained. All fire personnel were extracted via helicopter Wednesday afternoon.

**Weather:** Showers and thunderstorms are predicted for Saturday afternoon into Sunday morning in the fire area. A flood watch will be in effect Saturday afternoon for areas within a wildfire burn scar. Marine layers settling over the fire may inhibit aerial operations today.

**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\\_0223.html](https://tfr.faa.gov/save_pages/detail_4_0223.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-notice/?cid=fsbdev3\\_053600](https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/okawen/alerts-notice/?cid=fsbdev3_053600).



<https://linktr.ee/KachessComplex>