

Mills Canyon / Chiwaukum / Kelly Mountain / Duncan Fire Information 509-548-0139 or 509-548-0101



Chelan County
Fire District 1



Chelan County
Fire District 3



Chelan County
Fire District 8



Chelan County
Fire District 9



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
Natural Resources



Okanogan-
Wenatchee
National Forest



Bureau of Land
Management
Spokane
District



Ed Lewis
Incident
Commander
IMT PNW
Team 3

Fire Update – 07/22/2014 9:00 a.m. PT

Suppression of these fires is an interagency effort, including Chelan County Fire Districts 1, 3, 8 and 9; Washington DNR; Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, and the Bureau of Land Management.

Yesterday

Two Chinook helicopters from the Washington National Guard are supporting the Chiwaukum Creek Fire with water drops on the active areas of the fire.

Chiwaukum Creek Fire: Firefighters are conducting burn out operations on the northern perimeter, bringing the fire to the Thompson Creek drainage to secure the north perimeter. Smoke from this operation was visible from the Leavenworth area. The southern perimeter is creeping southward down the Tumwater Canyon. The active fire is approximately one-half mile south of Swiftwater Campground. Structure protection continued along Highway 2. Fire officials have confirmed two structures, one outbuilding and a seasonal cabin, have been destroyed.

Mills Canyon: Very little heat and smoke remain in Mills Canyon. Crews are using hand held heat detectors to locate and extinguish hot spots along the perimeter. Efforts continue on rehabilitating dozer lines and mitigating other impacts of fire suppression efforts.

Kelly Mountain: Firefighters worked throughout the day on constructing firelines and locating and extinguishing small spots outside the fire perimeter. The fire did not grow yesterday. In anticipation of changing weather conditions and cloud cover air support may be reduced. Due these weather concerns fire crews were extracted from the fire area.

Duncan: The fire is growing slowly toward Entiat River. Efforts continued on setting up sprinklers and clearing fuels around the 14 recreational residences located along the river, and assessing opportunities for containment lines further to the east near Shady Pass.

Quick Facts Incident Summary	
Approximate Size:	Chiwaukum Creek: 10,664 ac Mills Canyon: 22,571 ac Kelly Mountain: 122 ac Duncan: 997 ac
Fire Containment:	Chiwaukum Creek: 10% Mills Canyon: 85% Kelly Mountain: 30% Duncan: 0%
Incident Commander:	Ed Lewis, PNW Team 3
Resources on the Fire:	Crews: 24 Helicopters: 7 Engines: 105 Dozers: 9 Water Tenders: 21
Total Personnel:	Chiwaukum Complex: 979 Mills Canyon Fire: 124
Jurisdiction:	Chelan Co. Fire Districts 1, 3 & 9 USDI-Bureau of Land Management Washington State DNR USDA-Forest Service

Rain and Wildfire

Does rain help the firefighting efforts? The answer is a definite MAYBE.

The rain slows the fire spread and lowers intensity (flame length) allowing firefighters to directly attack the fire front. This is particularly important in the lower elevations where the grass and sage are the primary fuels for the fires. The fine fuels absorb moisture much more rapidly but also dry much faster.

At higher elevations in heavy forested areas much of this rain is intercepted by the tree canopy and may never reach the forest floor but greatly causes the relative humidity. This means a couple days of low intensity fire behavior and may delay planned burnout operations critical to containment efforts. Once the conditions change to warmer and drier conditions firing operations may return.

Rain exposes firefighters to additional safety hazards due to slick walking conditions and roads. Heavy rains may even cause minor landslides and flooding. Many times aviation resources have to be grounded due to low cloud cover and safety concerns.

The "most" favorable precipitation for firefighters is a week of steady soaking rain or snow. This is called a "season ending" event. It's arrival ends fire season for the year.

The rain that the Chiwaukum Complex is experiencing now is NOT a season ending event. We are still a good two months or more away from that "event".

So please, be vigilant with the possibility of new fire starts. We are a long way from the end of fire season and firefighters could use a break from new starts.