



JULY 9, 2021 1:00 p.m. FACT SHEET

2021 SUF West Zone Fires

Date: Friday, July 9, 2021 1:00 p.m.

Fire Information: 218-214-7844 or online at Inciweb: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/> or the Superior National Forest website: www.fs.usda.gov/superior

Incident Names: Delta, Astray, Picketts, and Hassel Fires

Locations: Northeastern Minnesota, Lake County & St. Louis County

- Delta Fire – Township 63 North, Range 9 West, Section 13
- Astray Fire – Township 63 North, Range 10 West, Section 34
- Picketts Lake – Township 63 North, Range 12 West, Section 12
- Hassel Lake – Township 63 North, Range 14 West, Section 16

Description: On July 7, 2021, the Delta and Astray wildfires were reported on the west zone of the Superior National Forest. On July 8th, two additional fires (Picketts and Hassel) were detected. Northeastern Minnesota has been experiencing drought conditions with frequent thunderstorms and lightning.

- The Delta Fire is approximately 62 acres in size and burning in heavy blowdown with Spruce budworm killed balsam fir. The fire is located south of Snowbank Lake, approximately 19 miles east of Ely. It is believed to be caused by lightning.
- The Astray Fire is approximately one acre in size and located inside the BWCAW, east of Clearwater Lake. The fire is within mixed timber and blowdown. It is located 11 miles east of Ely and is presumed started by lightning.
- The Picketts Lake Fire is approximately one-tenth acre in size and is located south of Picketts Lake approximately four miles northeast of Ely. It is presumed to be started by lightning and is burning in balsam and blowdown. The fire is approximately four miles northeast of Ely.
- The Hassel Fire was originally reported on June 4, 2021 southwest of Hassel Lake in the BWCAW. It was placed in patrol and monitor status, but it was reported to have experienced additional fire activity on July 8. The fire is currently 10 acres. It is located west of Crab Lake and Burntside Lake, approximately 10 miles northeast of Tower, and 14 miles northwest of Ely, MN.

Status and Resources:

Delta Fire: Firefighters are conducting suppression tactics on the fire by securing the south line and working west. Additionally, they are working on numerous spot fire outside the main fire to tie that in with the main fire. The fire is active and spotting. Currently, various aircraft, thirteen firefighters, two off-Forest engines, and one local fire engine are assigned to the fire. More staff may be directed to the fire as needed.

ASTRAY FIRE: Aircraft is assisting this fire. A detection flight is scheduled to obtain more information on the fire due to its remote location. Crews are installing hose lays with pumps for suppression. The fire is burning in deep duff.

Picketts Fire: Aircraft knocked much of the active fire yesterday. Two engines are staffing the fire, one from Pennsylvania and the other from Wisconsin. Firefighters will continue to suppress the fire.

Hassel Fire: Three firefighters and two BIA crews are currently suppressing this fire. The fire has burnt over the original containment lines. Additional firefighters will be sent in today to help work this fire.

Planned Actions: Due to the four wildfire incidents in a short time period and the continued drying trend, a MN Incident Command Team is scheduled to take unified command over the fires beginning this afternoon. The Forest has ordered additional resources for initial attack and existing wildfires, including a Type 3 engine, a taskforce leader, and additional

firefighters from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Michigan, and Pennsylvania. However, obtaining fire resources is proving challenging due to national and local resource shortage. Forest visitors should continue to be aware of the dry conditions and expect to see aircraft being used for fire response and detection.

Closures/Campfire Prohibited: Currently, the following BWCAW entry points are closed:

- #56-Kekekabic Trail East
- #74-Kekekabic Trail West/Snowbank are closed

Additionally, the following lakes, campsites, and portages in the BWCAW are closed:

- Parent
- Disappointment
- Jitterbug
- Ahsu
- Becoosin
- Benezie
- Adventure
- Rifle
- Bridge
- Fire
- Drag Primitive Management Area



Hassel Fire on July 8, 2021. Photo credit Timo Rova/USDA Forest Service



Forest Service
Superior National Forest