



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Superior National Forest

Forest Service Wildfire Update



Tim Engrav, Public Information Officer/ Complex
Timothy.Engrav@usda.gov
218-248-7240

Fire Information:
218-248-7240 (dedicated file line)

InciWeb at [Mnsuf Spice Lake Fire Information | InciWeb \(nwcg.gov\)](#)

or the Superior National Forest website:
www.fs.usda.gov/superior

Superior National Forest Quick Summary

Duluth, Minn., June 13, 2023—9:30 pm

Incident Name: Spice Lake Fire

Size: Estimated at 20 acres

Location:

Near Spice Lake within the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW), Superior National Forest, Lake County, Township 65 North, Range 6 West, Section 27

Background:

Late in the afternoon on June 13th, a wildfire was detected between Spice Lake and Ogishkemuncie Lake in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) on the Gunflint Ranger District of the Superior National Forest. Spice Lake is located east of Knife and Kekekabic Lakes and southwest of Seagull Lake, approximately 10 miles west of the Gunflint Trail. The cause of the fire has not been determined.

Current Status:

Fire crews started working on indirect suppression tactics by preparing portage trails and natural boundaries to use as fire lines. Working directly along the fire's edge is dangerous with fire weakened trees overhead which could fall without warning. Using existing portages and natural features such as shorelines as fire lines is safer and a minimum impact fire suppression technique used in Wilderness which reduces firefighter exposure to hazards such as additional chainsaw operation and construction of open fire lines. When these fire lines are strengthened and with favorable weather conditions the

crews will burn the vegetation between the line and the active fire edge creating a more secure edge and safe location to begin the mop up work of seeking out and extinguishing hot spots. The fire activity continued to be creeping and smoldering throughout the day

Planned Actions:

Crews will remain on site near the fire and will continue to work on direct and indirect fire suppression lines. Minnesota Type 3 Team B with Aaron Mielke as Incident Commander took over command of the fire this morning providing support for the Forest. Direct and indirect fire suppression tactics will be assessed and continue to be implemented as fire conditions allow. Public safety staff will continue sweeping the area for any visitors located in the fire closure area.

Resources:

A 19-person off-Forest hotshot crew and 2 Forest firefighters. A helicopter and other aerial resources are available to assist suppression activities as needed. The Forest's Beaver airplane will patrol the fire area, shuttle personnel and gear, and could drop water as needed.

Area Closures:

The Superior National Forest has implemented Forest Order (09-09-23-03) for a closure area of lakes, portages, and trails around the fire for public safety. Public safety crews are redirecting visitors and posting portages closed. Details can be found at [Superior National Forest - Alerts & Notices \(usda.gov\)](https://www.fs.usda.gov/superior).

Fire Restrictions:

The Superior National Forest has implemented a Forest Order (09-09-23-02) for campfire restrictions due to continued dry conditions and worsening wildfire danger. This Order will remain in effect until further notice. See the Superior National Forest website <https://www.fs.usda.gov/superior> for more information on fire restrictions.

Updates:

Additional details will be shared as these plans are developed on Wednesday, June 14.

Photo Credit:

USDA Forest Service - Superior NF, Mike Crook

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