

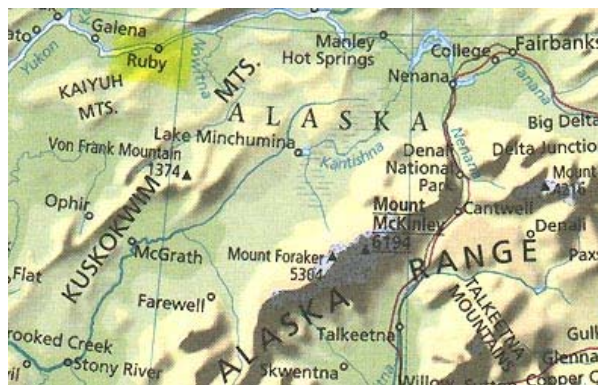


## What Snapped Off Big Trees in A Circle in Ruby, Alaska?

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Large tree snapped off about 30 feet from the ground in a circular area of Nine Mile Island a few miles north of Ruby, Alaska. Right outside the circular area, tall trees stood completely unaffected. Photograph © 2003 by Pat McCarty.



Ruby, Alaska on the Yukon River west of Fairbanks, is a village of 188 people.

**December 13, 2003 Nine Mile Island, Ruby, Alaska** - At the end of August 2003, I reported about a mysterious crop pattern near the Serpent Mound in Ohio discovered on August 24, and the interest of the United States Air Force in that crop pattern and several others that emerged in the Ohio and Wisconsin region during the 2003 summer. What none of us knew was that on the rainy and foggy night of August 22nd near remote Ruby, Alaska (population 188) on the Yukon River, one or more loud jets flew low and loudly up and down the river for about ten minutes, according to witnesses.

Then a couple of days later around August 24th, local residents reported the oddest site they said they had ever seen in the forest: large trees snapped off about 20 to 40 feet above the ground like broken match sticks at a place called Nine Mile Island. The broken trees seemed to be confined to a circular area about 200 feet in diameter.

A meteorologist at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks who did not travel to research the site said he thought it was probably the result of a "microburst" (see More Information below) usually associated with the rush of air down from rain high above and very dry air at ground level. However, the weather conditions were rainy and foggy on the ground in late August.

This week I talked about the discovery with Timothy Stathis, the Principal of the Kangas School in Ruby who traveled with some native American Indians by boat to Nine Mile Island a few weeks ago to see the odd "tree circle."

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## Interview:

**Timothy Stathis, Principal, Kangas School, Ruby, Alaska:** "We had to go through some thickets to get to the area and then suddenly I was quite shocked to see this wide circle of area where huge trees, some with trunks as big as 18 to 24 inches in diameter were snapped off. And not just some trees. We're talking about dozens and dozens of trees all in one area, some blown over and many snapped off anywhere from 20 to 40 feet up in the air, snapped completely like a broken stick, huge trees. I was just shocked. The other men with us were as equally shocked seeing this for the first time. I questioned them all if they had ever seen anything like this before and all of them stated they never had in their entire life living in the forest by the river all their lives out here.



A section of the circular area of tall trees snapped off on Nine Mile Island near Ruby, Alaska. Photograph © 2003 by Pat McCarty.

One of the people with us thought it was a UFO because of the systematic way that it was put in the middle of nowhere.

A few weeks later, I was flying in the area as a passenger on a small plane and I asked the pilot to divert the course to fly over that area so we could see it from the air. It was equally dramatic to see it from the air it does look like a UFO landed there because it is one circular pattern in this vast array of forest. (Unfortunately, on that plane trip, Timothy Stathis did not have his camera for photographs and none of the Fairbanks media took any aerial shots.)

It's hard to imagine this up here because Alaska is truly the last frontier untouched by man and Ruby is just a dot in the midst of the landscape, as many villages are dotted throughout the state. So, one can fly for two hours in a small airplane and not see any sign of civilization. When one is flying toward Ruby and sees this swath of trees in a circle in the middle of nowhere totally cut down, it's quite dramatic.

### ABOUT HOW MUCH DIAMETER?

We estimated the area to be about 200 feet in diameter. As we were on the ground walking around and then later (when I saw it) from the air, there wasn't even any signs of trees having fallen outside of that circular area. It was just this one spot. One would think that if wind hit with such a force, you would at least see some random trees outside that circle that had received some brunt of the wind. There really weren't any other trees outside that circle that were hit. Some of the trees were completely uprooted.



Large uprooted tree inside the circle of snapped off trees on Nine Mile Island near Ruby, Alaska. Photograph © 2003 by Pat McCarty.

## DO YOU THINK THE MICROBURST EXPLANATION SOLVES THIS MYSTERY?

For people in the area after they had read the article or seen the television reports, they were not satisfied because it stirred a lot of conversation among the people of other UFO phenomenon they had seen bright lights, waked up by bright lights, or several people discussed a phenomenon they had seen last year where people simultaneously but from different locations in the village had seen a bright light moving, descending suddenly and then re-ascending suddenly. So this provoked a lot of memories in peoples' minds and they felt it (the downed trees) was more a confirmation of the nearness of UFOs.

Connected to that also some time in August, many people had reported during a storm time when it was very cloudy and there appeared to be a storm nearby that they heard jets nearby Air Force jets. They heard one or more Air Force jets in the area for at least 10 minutes going up and down the river which they thought was extremely unusual. then it was only later that the phenomenon in the woods was noticed and some people put 2 and 2 together and that reinforced for them that the Air Force might have been investigating something that had happened in the area because they were hearing the jets."



Row of small trees laid down, not cut, in circle of tall cut trees. Photograph © 2003 by Pat McCarty.

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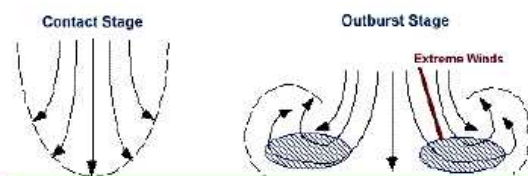
## More Information:

### Microbursts

#### Downburst less than 2.5 miles in diameter

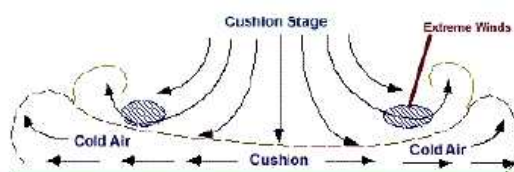
A downburst is a strong downdraft which includes an outburst of potentially damaging winds on or near the ground. If the diameter of the downburst is less than 2.5 miles, it is called a microburst. The diagrams below depict the

evolution of a microburst.



Development of microburst. Graphic courtesy University of Illinois.

A microburst initially develops (above) as the downdraft begins its descent from cloud base. The downdraft accelerates and within minutes, reaches the ground (contact stage). It is during the contact stage that the highest winds are observed. During the outburst stage, the wind "curls" as the cold air of the microburst moves away from the point of impact with the ground. During the cushion stage, winds about the curl continue to accelerate, posing a great threat to nearby aircraft.



Cushion stage of microburst. Drawing courtesy University of Illinois.

### Cushion Stage

These are very weak, high based showers without thunder, but with microbursts. Studies have shown that they predominantly occur in the High Plains and western U.S. - particularly in unstable, very dry low level environments with surface temperature-dew point spreads of 30 to 50 degrees and an area of mid-level moisture as a source for the weak showers.

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## Websites:

[http://ww2010.atmos.uiuc.edu/\(Gh\)/guides/mtr/svr/comp/out/micro/home.rxml](http://ww2010.atmos.uiuc.edu/(Gh)/guides/mtr/svr/comp/out/micro/home.rxml)

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