BRITISH COLUMBIA | BC Wildfire Service

July 31, 2021

WILDFIRE UPDATE

Wildfires evolve rapidly and conditions can change extremely quickly. Information in this bulletin is current as of noon on Saturday, July 31. For the latest information, go to BCWILDFIRE.CA

The Southeast Fire Centre is responding to 65 active wildfires. As of July 31, 2021, we've responded to 292 fire starts, compared to 36 at this time last year. The 5 -year average for fire starts as of July 31 is 112.

We are entering August, the month that typically sees the most fires—and the most intense fires—after four months of significantly below-average precipitation. Forests and vegetation are extremely dry and prone to ignition. When fire weather indices reach these extreme levels, fires not only start easily, but spread quickly and challenge suppression efforts.

The Southeast is not the only region in BC experiencing these extreme conditions. The Kamloops and Cariboo fire centres are also experiencing extremely hot and dry conditions and a high volume of large, intense wildfires. In the Coastal Fire Centre, while fire activity has remained reasonably moderate so far this summer, the fire danger rating is predominantly extreme.

A contingent of 34 Australian firefighters arrived in BC on July 27 to assist during this unprecedented fire season. Four are on site at the Trozzo Creek wildfire.

Hot and dry conditions across the Southeast Fire Centre persist. Temperatures on July 31 could reach the upper 30s, depending on smoke density, and even push above 40C in some areas. Winds are expected to be generally light, but Saturday afternoon brings the chance of dry lightning accompanied by wind gusts. The risk of thunderstorms and lightning accompanied by little or no precipitation continues overnight, through Sunday and into Sunday night. Similarly volatile conditions are also possible in the Cariboo, Kamloops and Coastal fire centres.

Dry lightning, hot temperatures and gusting winds bring the potential for new fire starts and increased activity and growth on existing fires. In the Southeast, as elsewhere, resources are stretched across large areas. Please do all you can to prevent human-caused wildfires. Remember fire conditions can change extremely quickly. Respect evacuation orders and area restrictions currently in effect and be prepared for the possibility of further alerts, orders and restrictions over the weekend. The Southeast Fire Centre is grateful for the support and cooperation of the public as we respond to wildfires in our area.

EVACUATION ORDERS AND ALERTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. ALWAYS CONSULT YOUR REGIONAL DISTRICT FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION.

BRITISH COLUMBIA | BC Wildfire Service

July 31, 2021

WILDFIRE UPDATE

Wildfires of Note in the Southeast Fire Centre include:

TROZZO CREEK (N51705), Southeast Fire Centre

Date of detection: July 9, 2021

Location: Originated 7.5 kilometres northeast of Winlaw

Size: 3786 hectares

Status: Out of Control

Cause: Lightning

Resources: 99 personnel, 26 heavy equipment, 3 helicopters

Fire camp in place: No

Planned ignitions remove fuel from a fire's path so it has nothing left to burn. They are used in situations where direct attack has limited effectiveness. Safety is always the top priority on these operations. Crews are using hand ignitions, a type of planned ignition shown above, as one tactic in suppressing many of the wildfires burning in our area.

Objectives: On Saturday, crews will continue fire suppression along Lemon Creek and the Elliot Anderson Forest Service Road (FSR). Tactics include using small hand ignitions as needed and as conditions permit, along with hose lays and sprinkler lines supplied from water tenders, skidders and helicopter buckets. Firefighters continue to mop up along the contained edge in the Trozzo Creek drainage and monitor fire growth toward the east (Baldface Creek) and south (Sproule Creek). Heavy equipment is working on a contingency guard along the Springer and Ottawa FSR, completing an indirect guard along the Monument FSR to prevent growth to the east and establishing an indirect guard from Winlaw Creek to the Pedro and Sproule FSR. Work on containment guards along the north and northeast sides is ongoing, using the Lemon Creek road series and Holmsen drainage. Helicopters support mop up activities, fire monitoring and work to slow fire growth along Lemon Creek. On Friday, a successful planned ignition on the Elliot Anderson FSR increased the reliability of containment. The contingency guard along the Ponderosa FSR to the Dayton FSR is nearing completion. Guard construction along the top of Elliot Anderson Ridge from 8km on the Elliot Anderson FSR shoulder to 5km on the Trozzo FSR is complete. General objectives on this fire remain the same: contain the western flank from Lemon Creek to Winlaw Creek, increase containment depth in the Trozzo Creek drainage, establish contingency guards north and south of the fire and plan containment guards for the south and east flanks to implement once the western flank is contained. Ongoing challenges include: a lack of water resources at high elevations and difficulty delivering by truck due to rough roads; steep, rocky and complex terrain in the Trozzo and Lemon Creek drainages; high volume of dead and downed trees; dense smoke that limits visibility and the ability for fixed-wing aircraft to access the fire. As of 18:00 on July 30, the fire had not jumped the Lemon Creek Forest Service Road.

Evacuations: The Regional District of Central Kootenay has implemented an evacuation order and an evacuation alert in the vicinity of this fire. Further information is available at https://www.rdck.ca

Spot a wildfire, smoke or illegal fire activity? Call 1 800 663-5555 or *5555 on your cellphone.

BRITISH COLUMBIA | BC Wildfire Service

July 31, 2021

Other: An area restriction order is in effect in the vicinity of the Trozzo Creek fire. Further information is available at www.bcwildfire.ca

BILL NYE MOUNTAIN (N11629), Southeast Fire Centre
Date of detection: July 8, 2021
Location: Originated 7 kilometres southeast of Wasa
Size: 2552 hectares
Status: Out of Control
Cause: Lightning
Resources: 60 personnel, 12 heavy equipment, 3 helicopters
Fire camp in place: No
Objectives: On Saturday, crews continue working toward current objectives for this fire: laying out and constructing control lines to the north of the fire to protect structures and building toward containment. Hand ignitions will occur as needed and as conditions allow. BC Hydro is assisting personnel to protect power lines in the area. Structure protection units and specialists are on site and implementation is underway. Helicopters continue to fly personnel to monitor growth and fire behaviour on all flanks, and provide bucketing to support containment within control lines. Heavy equipment continues work to construct a machine guard along the north flanks and around structures. Fire growth is to the north, where the fire is backing down a north-facing slope, primarily as a low to moderately vigorous surface fire. Ongoing challenges include: extreme slopes, heavy concentrations of fuel and poor access.

Fixed-wing aircraft, such as the skimmer shown above, can provide invaluable support to ground crews working to contain wildfires. Heavy smoke across the Southeast Fire Centre in recent days has limited the ability of aircraft to fly safely.

Evacuations: The Regional District of East Kootenay has implemented an evacuation order and an evacuation alert in the vicinity of this fire. Further information is available at https://www.rdek.bc.ca/
Other: An area restriction order is in effect. Further information is available at www.bcwildfire.ca

MINERAL CREEK (N22147), Southeast Fire Centre
Date of detection: July 2, 2021
Location: Originated 25 kilometres southwest of Invermere
Size: 103 hectares

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BRITISH COLUMBIA | BC Wildfire Service

July 31, 2021

Status: Out of control

Cause: Unknown

Resources: 27 personnel, 0 heavy equipment, 2 helicopters

Fire camp in place: No

Objectives: On Saturday, crews continue working on a wetline and mopping up the southwest corner of the fire. Firefighters are also mopping up the northeast corner. The planned ignition for this fire has been called off after further assessments suggested this wasn't the most efficient or effective tactic to meet objectives at this time.
Evacuations: None as of 1100 July 31. For the latest information on evacuation orders and alerts, visit https://www.rdek.bc.ca/
Other: An area restriction is in effect. Further information is available at www.bcwildfire.ca

AKOKLI CREEK (N71686), Southeast Fire Centre

Date of detection: July 9, 2021

Location: Originated 7 kilometres east of Boswell

Size: 2826 hectares

Status: Out of control

Cause: Lightning

Resources: 46 personnel, 5 heavy equipment, 3 helicopters

Fire camp in place: No

Objectives: Crews continue to focus on current objectives for this fire: establishing and solidifying containment on the northwest end of the fire as it meets Lockhart Park. Crews continue to patrol and mop up along the control line and along Akokli FSR to maintain the southern flank of the fire. From Holiday Creek south, the fire has reached containment lines, less a few small areas around Charles Creek. Crews have managed to keep the fire from crossing in these areas. Due to this, fire behaviour has decreased. Heavy equipment remains on site and helicopters are standing by to support ground crews as needed. The on-site structure protection specialist has completed assessments and a plan is in place to deploy structure protection should the need arise. Planning for a control line closer to private land and structures is complete and can be implemented if needed. As of 09:00 July 31, the fire remained within the planned containment area. Conditions permitting, fixed-wing aircraft remain available to support firefighters if required.
Evacuations: The Regional District of Central Kootenay has implemented an evacuation alert in the vicinity of this fire. Further information is available at https://www.rdck.ca
Other: An area restriction order is in effect. Further information is available at www.bcwildfire.ca

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BC Wildfire Service

July 31, 2021

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

- View an interactive map by clicking here or visiting **http://ow.ly/uo2U30oXqzS**
- **Road Closures:** DriveBC |dial 1-800-550-4997 | https://www.drivebc.ca/
- **Drifting Smoke:** www.bcairquality.ca/bluesky/west/index.html
- **Smoke Health Concerns:** HealthLink BC | dial 8-1-1| www.healthlinkbc.ca/kbaltindex.asp
- For info on **Community Support Services**, click here or visit https://www.emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca/

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES			
BC Wildfire Service	**Emergency Management BC**	**Local municipalities and regional districts**	**First Nations**
- BCWS's jurisdiction covers all BC Parks, Crown and private lands, but does not include the boundaries of local governments that have forest fire prevention bylaws and are serviced by a fire department. - BCWS speaks directly about **wildfires** (i.e. fire status, operations, etc.) and is responsible for disseminating wildfire updates to local governments, stakeholders, First Nations and the public. - BCWS does not announce Strategic Evacuation Orders or Alerts. - BCWS does announce Tactical Evacuations. - In the event of an imminent threat to public safety, BCWS can authorize an immediate **Tactical Evacuation** of the affected area.	- EMBC coordinates communication across all agencies and stakeholders to support communities. - EMBC provides advice to evacuees and support to communities regarding Emergency Operations Centres and Emergency Support Services.	- Local Municipalities and Regional Districts speak directly about **Strategic Evacuation Orders and Alerts in** their respective jurisdictions. - Local Municipalities and Regional Districts do not speak about the status of a wildfire unless the fire occurs within their jurisdiction. For example, if a wildfire starts within the boundaries of a local government, BCWS will often assist the local fire department with suppression efforts. If the fire spreads into Crown land to become a wildfire, BCWS will often assume control.	- On IR lands, Evacuation Orders and Alerts are implemented by a Band Council Resolution or other. - A designated person(s) from the respective First Nations community will speak to Evacuation Orders and Alerts on IR lands.

ACCESSING INFORMATION		
BC Wildfire Service Online Communications	**EmergencyInfoBC EMBC Online Communications**	**PreparednessBC EMBC Online Communications**
@BCGovFireInfo	@EmergencyInfoBC	@PreparedBC
www.bcwildfire.ca	www.emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca	www.gov.bc.ca/preparedBC
BC Wildfire Service	BCWS Mobile App	PreparedBC

BC Wildfire Service

July 31, 2021

FIRE STAGES OF CONROL:

Out of Control	Describes a wildfire that is not responding (or only responding on a limited basis) to suppression action, such that the perimeter spread is not being contained.
Being Held	Indicates that (with the resources currently committed to the fire) sufficient suppression action has been taken that the fire is not likely to spread beyond existing or predetermined boundaries under the prevailing and forecasted conditions.
Under Control	The fire has received sufficient suppression action to ensure no further spread of the fire.

WILDFIRE RANKS:

Rank	Description
1	**Characteristics:** Smouldering ground fire, no open flame, white smoke, slow (i.e. creeping) rate of fire spread. **Firefighting tactics:** Direct attack with ground crews using hand tools and water delivery systems (i.e. pumps and hose).
2	**Characteristics:** Surface fire, visible, open flame, unorganised or inconsistent flame front, slow rate of spread. **Firefighting tactics:** Direct attack with ground crews using hand tools, water delivery systems, or heavy equipment. Hand constructed control lines and lines that have been cleared of combustible material will likely be successful.
3	**Characteristics:** Organised flame front – fire progressing in organised manner, occasional candling may be observed along the perimeter and/or within the fire, moderate rate of spread. **Firefighting tactics:** Hand constructed control lines alone are likely to be challenged, ground crews conducting direct attack may require air support from fixed-wing air tankers, skimmers or helicopters conducting bucketing or tanking operations. Control lines constructed by heavy equipment will generally be effective
4	**Characteristics:** Grey to black smoke, organised surface flame front, moderate to fast rate of spread on the ground, short aerial bursts through the forest canopy, short-range spotting. **Firefighting tactics:** Ground operations may not be successful at the head of the fire, indirect tactics may be required to bring the head of the fire under control. Parallel attack may be used along the flanks of the fire to direct the head into favourable ground or fuels. Air operations may be required to support ground personnel.
5	**Characteristics:** Black to copper smoke, organised crown fire front, moderate to long-range spotting and spot fire growth. **Firefighting tactics:** The limited options available include indirect attack and planned ignitions to remove fuel in the path of this type of fire behaviour. Ground operations are often restricted to fighting the least active sections of the fire or conducting ground ignition operations from secure control lines with readily available escape routes and safety zones.
6	**Characteristics:** Organised crown fire front, long-range spotting and independent spot fire growth, possible fireballs and whirls, violent fire behaviour probable, a dominant smoke column may develop which influences fire behaviour. **Firefighting tactics:** Firefighting under these conditions is extremely dangerous. Suppression efforts will be well away from active fire behaviour and may include preparing structure protection measures or conducting indirect large-scale ignition operations in an attempt to steer the fire. Often, the safest and most prudent strategy is to pull resources back to safe areas, ensure that personnel and the general public are safe, and wait for fire behaviour to lessen before re-engaging in fire suppression operations.

RANK 1 RANK 2 RANK 3 RANK 4 RANK 5 RANK 6