

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL



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BC WILDFIRE UPDATE: JULY 12, 2017

UPDATES:

- There are 185 wildfires are burning across B.C. including 12 new fire starts from yesterday. Many of these fires are burning in interface areas across the Kamloops Fire Centre and Cariboo Fire Centre.
- Continuing warm and dry conditions are expected for the rest of the week. The province overall is forecast to see some patchy destabilization, which means that lightning strikes are possible. The chance of lightning occurring in any given area is relatively low, but the area in which lightning strikes are possible is very broad, spanning across most of the province.
- Emergency Management BC said the province remains prepared for the possibility of mass evacuations and Canadian Armed Forces aircraft and helicopters are also standing by in case airlifts are necessary.
- Crews took advantage of calmer conditions Wednesday to make progress on fire guards near Williams Lake.
- First Nations Health Authority continues to monitor air quality, and is working on establishing clean air spaces for those affected by poor air quality. FNHA is also offering mental health supports and encourages those who need help to ask.
- The city of Williams Lake remains on an Evacuation Alert.
- The community of Little Fort remains on an evacuation alert.
- T'kemlups te Secwepemc (Kamloops) have opened their powwow grounds for evacuees. The grounds provide showers, RV space, and food. Moccasin Square Garden is also available.
- T'kemlups te Secwepemc (Kamloops) may have space for livestock, as well as resources such as water and hay. For information call Ron @ 250-819-8012.

BC FIRST NATIONS ADVISORIES

Central Region (Cariboo Fire Centre)

Ashcroft First Nation

The First Nation is under evacuation order to be fully evacuated. On July 11, 2017, the Band Administrator reported that the gas station has been shut down and hydro has not been restored. The RCMP is escorting community members in and out of the community. Ashcroft First Nation will be relocating their Emergency Operations Centre to Bonaparte Indian Band.

Bonaparte Indian Band

The First Nation has no land lines and communication is by cell phone only. On July 11, 2017, Kukpi7 Day reported that the First Nation has trained firefighters and 60 people remained behind to fight the fire. They are coordinating with municipal and provincial officials, and working hand in hand with Forest Service. They are expecting dry conditions for the next 2 months. Kukpi7 Day is able to get in and out of the community with supplies and is also in contact with First Nations Health Authority regarding after-care plans. Infrastructure and water plant are not impacted; the water plant has been their lookout point. A new

account has been set up to accept donations for Bonaparte Indian Band at Royal Bank..

Cook's Ferry

Not currently impacted by a fire, but has accepted 30 evacuees from other areas like Ashcroft and have no fuel or food for them.

Skeetchestn Indian Band

The First Nation has activated their Emergency Operations Centre out of the Band office. On July 11, 2017, Skeetchestn issued a Band Council Resolution for State of Local Emergency. They are clearing around the community. The First Nation has also reported air quality issues and are having water brought in.

Simpcw First Nation

Chief Matthew indicated they are having difficulty transporting essential Band operations people into their territory due to road closures. They are currently under Evacuation Alerts and have no evacuees at this time. On July 10, 2017, it was reported that the fire department is doing patrols and watching for spot fires. They have also gone door to door to update community members, and a water bladder is being set up to ensure water access.

Whispering Pines First Nation

On July 11, 2017, the First Nation has issued a Band Council Resolution for State of Local Emergency. They are clearing around the community and have reported air quality issues.

Northeast Region (Prince George Fire Centre)

Alexis Creek First Nation

On July 10, 2017, according to EMBC, power is still out in some areas and there is no fuel. It was reported that some Anahim Lake evacuees are sheltering in the community. First Nation unable to generate Band Council Resolution to declare State of Local Emergency.

Canim Lake Indian Band

An evacuation alert is in place for the community. They are cut off from 100 Mile which has been evacuated. The First Nation has evacuated elders as smoke is very thick. The Lands Coordinator reported that evacuees continue to arrive with no place to go. They are taking them in so long as community is not ordered to evacuate. The army is available to helicopter people out as the community does not have enough vehicles in their fleet to drive everyone out. Resources are thinning and they are considering requesting Emergency Social Services. The band office remains open for now and they are operating their command centre from the Natural Resources building. They have people evacuated from 103 Mile, 105 Mile, 108 Mile, Lac La Hache IR #1, and 100 Mile and are trying to track them all. The First Nation is communicating regularly with provincial officials. A fire center has also been opened at Canim Lake Bands Natural Resource office, for contact call 250-397-2253.

?Esdilagh First Nation

As of July 11, 2017, the community is under evacuation order on the east and

west side and they are working to evacuate the last 10% of their community members. Road access is limited and travel passes are required.

Soda Creek First Nation (Xat'sull)

Soda Creek IR#1 and Deep Creek IR#2 are under evacuation order. Provincial officials and Red Cross provided detailed information on Emergency Social Services application process. Community members have questions about uninsured homes that are destroyed. Number of homes and evacuees unknown at this time.

Tl'etinqox Government

On July 10, 2017, EMBC indicated that an evacuation of this First Nation has been called. Provincial officials ordered an immediate general evacuation order. Chief Alphonse has indicated that about 300 band members have stayed to fight the fires. The province has indicated that the fire is close to the highway and it is difficult to transport fuel. Members continue to fight back wild fires threatening their communities. Chief Joe Alphonse has put a call out for assistance for items such as portable showers, generators and tents. Tl'etinqox continues to fight the wildfire with volunteer band members, using their own heavy machinery and tools. Any and all assistance is greatly appreciated. Financial contributions are welcome by Paypal: <http://www.tsilhqotin.ca>.

Ulkatcho First Nation

There is a need to get groceries into the community. Evacuation orders in surrounding areas are cutting off road access for food and services. The First Nation would like to get in touch with the Cariboo Regional District to prepare for an evacuation if it comes. They may need to evacuate by air if roads are cut off.

Williams Lake First Nation

Williams Lake is on an evacuation alert. On July 9, 2017, it was reported that the reservoir level is back up to 45% after water had to be shut off in part of the community due to leakage in system. Confirmed that it would not impact hydrants for firefighting purposes. Hydro outage also reported due to one home destroyed by fire. Concerned may still be live wires and Hydro notified. On July 10, 2017, the First Nation requested assistance from provincial officials to clean up around community and help with dozer guards.

Yunesit'in Government

An evacuation order remains in effect. Most community members have evacuated. The Chief is quoted as saying that a couple dozen people have made a decision to stay behind, including their own fire crews.

HIGHWAY CLOSURES

For the latest road closures and conditions, visit www.DriveBC.ca.

- Highways 5 and 16 between Kamloops and the Alberta border are closed to Extraordinary Load traffic, to assist with traffic congestion and evacuation efforts during the current wildfire situation in the Interior.
- Highway 1: closed from Ashcroft to Cache Creek; and both directions east and west out of Cache Creek; and in the westbound lane to Savona.
- Highway 5A: closed in both directions at junction with Highway 3 in Princeton, and closed in both directions at Coalmon Road.

- Highway 97C: closed from Logan Lake to Ashcroft; and from junction with Highway 1 to Government Street in Ashcroft.
- Highway 99: closed from Lillooet to Cache Creek.
- Highway 20: closed to westbound traffic at the Chilcotin Bridge, 25 km west of Williams Lake.
- Likely Road: closed from 150 Mile House to junction with Horsefly Road.

AIR QUALITY

Air quality alerts remain a growing concern in a number of regions. People in the following regions are asked to avoid strenuous outdoor activities and to stay inside if they have breathing difficulties.

- 100 Mile House
- Cariboo - north including Quesnel
- Cariboo - south including Williams Lake
- Fraser Canyon - north including Lillooet
- Fraser Canyon - south including Lytton
- Nicola
- North Thompson
- South Thompson
- Central Okanagan
- North Okanagan
- South Okanagan
- Prince George
- Vanderhoof
- Shuswap
- Similkameen

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Red Cross Emergency Funds
Anyone registered with the Red Cross will immediately receive \$600 via direct transfer to their bank account. To register, or if you have been evacuated, click on the following link www.redcross.ca/gethelp or call 1-800-863-6582.
- British Columbia Fires Appeal donation information: www.redcross.ca
- Red Cross Emergency Preparedness information and tips: www.redcross.ca/beready
- BC Emergency Preparedness
<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/emergencyprogramact/2016/01/11/discussion10/>

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT BC DAILY REGIONAL TELECONFERENCES

For specific support in regional areas please call:

Central Region (Kamloops) 250-371-5261

Northeast Region (Prince George) 250-614-6322

There are **First Nation Coordination calls** based on the regions

- **Northeast region – daily calls at 2:00 pm**
Dial in 1-877-353-9184 participant ID 6160606#
- **Central Region – daily calls at 3:00 pm**

Dial in 1-877-353-9184 Participant ID 5166580#

If you require any further information or support, please contact UBCIC, FNS or BCAFN.